

**UNIVERSITY OF EDUCATION, WINNEBA**

**ASSESSING TEACHERS' KNOWLEDGE AND USE OF  
SCAFFOLDING AS A TOOL FOR READING COMPREHENSION  
LESSONS IN NEW JUABEN SOUTH MUNICIPALITY**



**MASTER OF PHILOSOPHY**

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**UNIVERSITY OF EDUCATION, WINNEBA**

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A TOOL FOR READING COMPREHENSION LESSONS IN NEW JUABEN  
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**A thesis in the Department of Basic Education, Faculty of  
Educational Studies, submitted to the School of  
Graduate Studies, in partial fulfilment  
of the requirements for the award of the degree of  
Master of Philosophy  
(Basic Education)  
in the University of Education, Winneba**

**MARCH, 2022**

## DECLARATION

### Student's Declaration

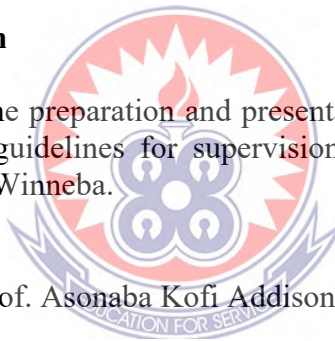
I, Ebenezer Tiekou, declare that this thesis, with the exception of quotations and references contained in published works which have been identified and duly acknowledged, is entirely my own work, and it has not been submitted either in part or whole for another degree elsewhere.

Signature.....

Date.....

### Supervisors' Declaration

We hereby declare that the preparation and presentation of this work was supervised in accordance with the guidelines for supervision of Thesis as laid down by the University of Education, Winneba.



**Principal Supervisor:** Prof. Asonaba Kofi Addison

Signature.....

Date.....

**Co-Supervisor:** Dr. Emma Sarah Eshun

Signature.....

Date.....

## DEDICATION

To my dear wife, Diana and my children Dionetta, Danessa, “The Dukes” and Diandra.



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My profound gratitude goes to my two supervisors, Prof. Asonaba Kofi Addison and Dr. Emma Sarah Eshun both of the University of Education, Winneba for their unflinching support, encouragement and ultimately making time out of their busy schedules to supervise this thesis. I say God richly bless them.

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## GLOSSARY

<b>A</b>	Agree
<b>ANCOVA</b>	Analysis of Covariance
<b>ANOVA</b>	Analysis of Variance
<b>ASCD</b>	Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development
<b>BECE</b>	Basic Education Certificate Examination
<b>COVID-19</b>	Corona Virus Disease
<b>D</b>	Disagree
<b>DART</b>	Development Assessment Resource for Teachers
<b>DEAR</b>	Drop Everything and Read
<b>EFL</b>	English as Foreign Language
<b>ESL</b>	English as Second Language
<b>F</b>	Frequency
<b>FUR</b>	Free Uninterrupted Reading
<b>FVR</b>	Free voluntary reading
<b>GES</b>	Ghana Education Service
<b>HOTS</b>	Higher Order Thinking Skills
<b>ICT</b>	Information and Communication Technology
<b>INSET</b>	In-service Training and Education
<b>IS</b>	Instructional Scaffolding
<b>MANCOVA</b>	Multivariate analysis of covariance
<b>MN</b>	Mean
<b>MOE</b>	Ministry of Education
<b>N</b>	Neutral
<b>NaCCA</b>	National Council for Curriculum and Assessment



<b>NGOs</b>	Non-Governmental Organizations
<b>NICHHD</b>	National Institute of Child Health and Human Development
<b>NRC</b>	National Reading Council
<b>NRP</b>	National Reading Panel
<b>SA</b>	Strongly Agree
<b>SCT</b>	Socio-cultural Theory
<b>SD</b>	Strongly Disagree
<b>SDV</b>	Standard Deviation
<b>SISO</b>	School Improvement Support Officer
<b>SPSS</b>	Statistical Package for Social Science
<b>SSR</b>	Sustained Silent Reading
<b>TOEFL</b>	Test of English as a Foreign Language
<b>UNESCO</b>	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
<b>UNICEF</b>	United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund
<b>UNRWA</b>	United Nations Relief and Workers Agency
<b>USAID</b>	United States Agency for International Development
<b>WAEC</b>	West African Examination Council
<b>ZAD</b>	Zone of Actual Development
<b>ZPD</b>	Zone of Proximal Development

## ABSTRACT

The study assessed teachers' knowledge and use of Scaffolding as a tool for Reading Comprehension lessons in the New Juaben South Municipality. It was carried out using the sequential explanatory mixed method design with a sample size of ten primary six teachers and forty primary six learners. Data were collected using questionnaires, interview guides and Observation guide. SPSS tools: frequencies, percentages, mean and standard deviations were used to analyze the questionnaire and observation data. The interview data were transcribed, put into themes and analyzed. The study found that teachers have an average level of knowledge about the scaffolding model and its use. It also found that teachers use basic types of scaffolding techniques. Scaffolding has influence on the learners' attitude. It was also found that teachers face challenges in using scaffolding model to teach reading comprehension. They include: teachers' lack of enhanced knowledge and skill, insufficient teaching and learning resources, insufficient time to complete scaffolding lessons. The study concludes that teachers have average level of knowledge, use some types of scaffolding techniques, scaffolding has influence on learners' attitude and the use of scaffolding for ELRC has challenges. Following the findings, a number of recommendations were made one of which is that, the GES should organize workshops for teachers to update and upgrade their skills and knowledge in the teaching of reading comprehension lesson at the basic school level.



## CHAPTER ONE

### INTRODUCTION

#### 1.0 Overview

This chapter deals with the background to the study, statement of the problem, purpose and objectives of the study. It also deals with the research questions that guide the study and the significance of the study. It further presents the delimitation and scope of the study and the organization of the study.

#### 1.1 Background to the Study

Reading is regarded as the most vital skill for students; consequently, it is believed that the more one reads, the more one learns. Alan (2011, p.37) believes that “reading is the most important skill a child can develop; learning to read is an important skill every child must develop to be successful in school”. Researchers have agreed that reading comprehension is an essential skill that enables students to acquire knowledge and it paves the way for any good education. If readers read without comprehension, the aim of reading is not fulfilled.

Harmer (2007) states that reading is fruitful not only for careers, study, and pleasure, but also for language acquisition. He further states that reading provides a good model for English writing, provides opportunities to study vocabulary, grammar, and punctuation, and demonstrates the way to construct sentences, paragraphs, and whole texts.

One key aspect of the Primary school English Language Curriculum in Ghana focuses on is reading comprehension. The general aim of the language and literacy curriculum is to enable learners develop an appreciation and understanding of the English language and to use it effectively, making meaning with it in ways that are purposeful,

imaginative, creative and critical (NaCCA, 2019). The objectives/aims of studying English language at the primary level are “to help learners acquire the basic skills that will help them decode any text, read age-level texts easily, fluently and with comprehension; cultivate the habit of reading widely for pleasure and information” (NaCCA, 2019). To be able achieve these, the active role of students during teaching and learning is paramount. However, many students are not ready for this role which, in turn, makes learning more challenging (Suherdi, 2008).

In order to overcome language barriers, grasp new information and prepare the learners for life, learners should learn how to construct their knowledge and comprehension through interaction at the primary level before entering the final face of their basic education. It has been noticed that children who lack sufficient reading comprehension skills need help and assistance to perform better in reading comprehension tasks. Dawoud (2013) observes some students want to read, but cannot read. Lack of basic reading skills blocks their way. Generally, practice and encouragement lead to independent readers. The students’ low performance on reading comprehension tasks, lessons, and tests, requires reconsidering the traditional strategies and adopting new ones that depend on support, assistance and explicit instruction.

Recent and emerging instructional approaches emphasize learning by engaging learners in knowledge construction. The use of child-centred approaches that enable learners to interact and construct their own meaning of concepts have been recommended. Bell (1999) asserts that empirical evidence has proven that there are many child centred teaching methods that teachers can use in class. Which method to use is determined by a number of such factors as availability of resources, the topic

being covered, calibre of learners, as well as the teachers' expertise and experience on particular methods.

Authorities such as Bell (1999), McInnis (2000), Burdett (2003), Erickson (2007), Thornburg (2005) suggest the following child centred methods and strategies to teaching and learning in classrooms: brainstorming, group work, debates, using ICT, case studies, discussions, guided discovery, questioning, laboratory teaching and facilitation. Reiser (2004) points out that if learners receive support and assistance, they will successfully perform certain tasks and move to more complex ones. Without such assistance, these tasks would be beyond their ability; therefore, building on the acquired experience and skills, learners reshape their knowledge and improve their performance. Olson and Land (2007) reinforce the importance of explicit teaching, modeling and providing guided practice in a variety of strategies to help learners read and write about challenging texts and involving students as partners in a community of learners. Sukyadi and Hasanah (2010) also assert that students need appropriate instruction from the teachers. In this case, teachers should play a role as an additional power to gear students' ability in improving their reading skills. They should assist the students from the very beginning level. They should help learners to move toward new skills, concepts, or levels of understanding by considering their current ability. Teachers are responsible to initiate each new step of learning, building on what students are currently able to do alone. Vacca (2008) also suggests that when guided, supported and provided with the necessary attributes, learners become more responsible for their learning, more motivated, and more successful. English language teachers have to adopt emerging child-centred strategies in their classes in order to improve their students' reading comprehension skills and achievement.

One emerging trend in child-centred strategies, according to Mahmoud (2015), which has been recommended by authority in the field of teaching and learning in general and English Language comprehension lessons in particular is the scaffolding model. Scaffolding is perceived as the strategy used by teachers to facilitate learners' transition from assisted to independent performance (Cooper, 2000; Gibbons, 2002). The philosophy underpinning this approach is substantially explained in the writing of Bruner built from the works of Vygotsky (Pinter, 2006). Scaffolding is used to bridge the gap between students' independent and supported operating levels. Scaffolding is temporarily provided and it is gradually removed bit by bit as the learners become more competent independently (Collins in Yu, 2004; Cameron, 2001). Fisher and Frey (2010) state that, the underlying idea for learning scaffolds is relatively old. The concept is mostly linked to the constructivist Lev Vygotsky's (1978) idea of the "zone of proximal development" (ZPD) which is the discrepancy between what a child can do independently and what he/she can do under adult guidance or in collaboration with the teacher or more capable peers.

Vygotsky argued that knowledge is constructed through social interaction and then within the individual. Guidance and collaboration with a more knowledgeable person cause movement of learners from a lower level to a higher level (Mahmoud, 2015). This process is what led Vygotsky to write: "Through others, we become ourselves" (Rieber, Smith and Noah, 1998). In Vygotsky's words, the zone of proximal development "awakens a variety of internal developmental processes that are able to operate only when the child is interacting with people in his environment".

However, Vygotsky did not use the term scaffold or scaffolding. The term scaffold, as applied to learning situations, is generally attributed to Wood, Bruner and Ross (1978), who described it as "... a process that enables a child or a novice to solve a



problem, carry out a task, or achieve a goal which would be beyond his unassisted efforts” (p. 90). In other words, it is the process of temporarily providing support to a learner within a social context and then gradually withdrawing this support as the learner becomes capable of independence in performing tasks and children could accomplish the task at a higher level. Similar to the scaffolding used in construction, “scaffolding is actually a bridge used to build upon what students already know to arrive at something they do not know. If scaffolding is properly administered, it will act as an enabler, not as a disabler” (Benson, 1997). Once students are able to complete or master the task, the scaffolding is gradually removed or fades away and the responsibility of learning shifts from the instructor to the student.

Several key characteristics of scaffolding can be identified: the interaction must be collaborative within the learner’s zone of proximal development, (Beed, Hawkins, & Roller, 1991; Wood & Wood, 1996) the “scaffolder” must access the learner’s level of comprehension and then work at a slightly beyond that level, drawing the learning into new areas of exploration (Rogoff, 1990), and scaffold is gradually withdrawn as the learner becomes more competent (Palincsar, 1986).

Many researchers and many studies have contributed to instructional scaffolding methods and techniques. Palincsar (1986) identifies modeling, questioning and explanation which can be used to make the task requirements explicit. Billett (1993) suggests ways to gradual removal of scaffolding as knowledge and skill increase: initial knowledge building, demonstration, initial practice, guided practice, independent practice, assessment. Hogan and Pressley (1997) list eight essential elements of scaffolded instruction: pre-engagement; establishing a shared goal; actively diagnosing the understandings and needs of the learners; providing tailored

assistance; maintaining pursuit of the goal; giving feedback; controlling for frustration and risk; and assisting internalization, independence, and generalization to other contexts. Larkin (2002) provides a simple structure of scaffolded instruction. First, the instructor does it. Second, the class does it. Third, the group does it. Fourth, the individual does it. Alibali (2006) suggests a variety of scaffolds to accommodate students' different levels of knowledge: advance organizers, cue cards, concept and mind map, examples, explanations, handouts, hints, prompts, question cards, question stems, stories and visual scaffolds. Walqui (2006) identifies six main types of scaffolding instruction in teaching English: modeling, bridging, contextualization, schema building, re-presenting text and developing meta-cognition.

Based on these assumptions and insights, the researcher recognizes the need to carry out this study to assess teacher's knowledge and use of Scaffolding as a tool for English Language reading comprehension lessons in New Juaben South Municipality.

## **1.2 Statement of the Problem**

The learners at the upper primary level must be able to “read coherently and answer questions arising from the passage read” (NaCCA, 2019, p.9). They should also be able to “summarize passages read in their own words to show understanding of the passages” (NaCCA, 2019, p.9). This is expected to be achieved when teachers employ the right methodology during the teaching and learning process. However, the current situations in schools paint a worrying picture contrary to expectations.

Primary six learners in the Oguaa circuit were among the worst performers during reading comprehension by the New Juaben Municipal Education Directorate. About 70% could not read and comprehend passages (NJSED, 2019). This may be due to a number of factors such as teachers' knowledge and use of the right child-centred

methodology during the English language reading comprehension lesson (Abudu, 2017).

Government in a bid to solve the problem of poor performance of learners in English Language has embarked on series of educational reforms, organized workshops to train English language teachers to become abreast with the demands of the new curriculum at the Regional, District and circuit levels. But it appears the challenge of poor communication, reading and comprehension ability of learners is still visible amongst learners in our primary schools in Ghana and in New Juaben South Municipality specifically (Buabeng, et al 2020).

Many researchers have conducted research on child-centred strategies for teaching and learning of English Language (reading comprehension, writing in particular) across the globe. For instance, Badr ElDeen (2009) assessed the effect of assisted extensive reading”; Abu Shamla (2010) designed a program based on prior knowledge; El-Kahlout (2010) explored guided discovery; Haboush (2010) multiple intelligences program; Abu Nejme (2011) Higher Order Thinking Skills (HOTS) strategies; AlFarra (2011) Lexical and Cohesive Devices Knowledge; Al Udaini (2011) constructed a computerized program; El khateeb (2012) using web quests; Abu Youniss ( 2013) K.W.L. strategy; Bahlool ( 2013) differentiated instruction strategy; Dawoud (2013) reading clinic program and Ghorab (2013) picture reading strategy.

Also, in Ghana some works have also been done on other child-centred approaches and problems associated with the teaching of English Language and other subjects. Okyere (2018) conducted a research on the role of language games in the teaching of reading; Appiah-Baidoo, (2018) also embarked on a study with the purpose of assessing the effective teaching of vocabulary learning in English language; Ampofo,

(2019) also did a study with the aim of investigating reading difficulties among class six pupils of Wa Basic School Complex; Abudu (2017) in a research, also investigated the challenges associated with Primary four (4) pupils' inability to read text in English Language especially, in reading fluently, reading comprehension, spelling and linguistic competencies among others.

However, with regard to research on scaffolding strategy, most of the works done are found in foreign countries. Some of the research works are done in other subject areas. Only few were carried out in English Language and specifically reading (comprehension). These include Mahmoud (2015) who conducted a study on the effectiveness of using scaffolding strategy on developing seventh graders' reading comprehension skills in Palestine; Gagné and Park (2013) did a study on Cooperative learning tasks in a Grade 6 intensive ESL class: Role of scaffolding; Santoso (2010) looked at Scaffolding as an EFL (English as foreign language).

Few research works have been conducted in Africa on scaffolding strategy. They include Enyew, Yigzaw and Muche (2015) study on the effects of teacher scaffolding on students' oral fluency and Monica and Olatubosun (2013) research on assessing effects of using scaffolding strategy on the academic achievement of students in integrated science in the Junior Secondary School (JSS) among others could be identified.

The trend is not different in Ghana as much research has not been done on scaffolding strategy to assess teachers' knowledge, use and its effectiveness in teaching English Language (reading and comprehension) at the basic and second cycle levels.

The few research works that have been done, however, were conducted in other subject areas other than English Language and at higher level of education.

Nevertheless, literature seems silent on any research work on scaffolding strategy on English Language (reading comprehension) in the Ghanaian context.

The emphasis placed on the effectiveness of scaffolding model in the English Language curriculum makes it imperative for this research to be conducted. It is against this background that this study seeks to assess teachers' knowledge and use of scaffolding as a tool for Reading Comprehension lessons in the New Juaben South Municipality.

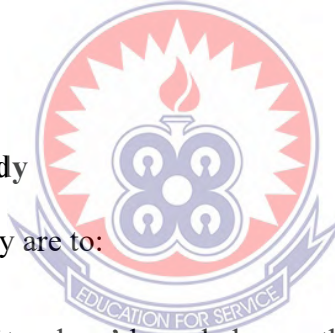
### **1.3 Purpose of the study**

The purpose of this study is to assess knowledge and use of scaffolding model by teachers as a tool for Reading Comprehension lessons in New Juaben South Municipality.

### **1.4 Objectives of the study**

The objectives of the study are to:

1. assess the level of teachers' knowledge on the use of (Vygotsky's) scaffolding model for teaching reading comprehension lessons.
2. examine the types of scaffolding techniques teachers engage children in during reading comprehension lessons.
3. determine the influence of the use of the scaffolding model on learners' attitude toward the learning of English Language reading comprehension lessons.
4. examine challenges faced in employing scaffolding techniques during reading comprehension lessons.



## 1.5 Research Questions

The following research questions guided the study:

1. What is the level of knowledge of teachers in the New Juaben Municipality on the use of scaffolding model for teaching reading comprehension lessons?
2. Which scaffolding techniques do teachers in the New Juaben Municipality use to teach English reading comprehension lessons?
3. What influence does the use of the scaffolding model by New Juaben Municipality teachers have on learners' attitude toward the learning of English Language reading comprehension lessons?
4. What challenges do teachers and pupils in the New Juaben municipality encounter when scaffolding model is employed during reading comprehension lessons?

## 1.6 Significance of the study

The findings of the study are envisaged to produce benefits in three areas of theory, policy and practice.

### a. Theoretical Significance

It is hoped that the findings of this study may contribute to providing theoretical basis to further understand the role of scaffolding instruction in improving reading comprehension and improving the pedagogical process of teaching English Language in general and the reading comprehension skills in particular.

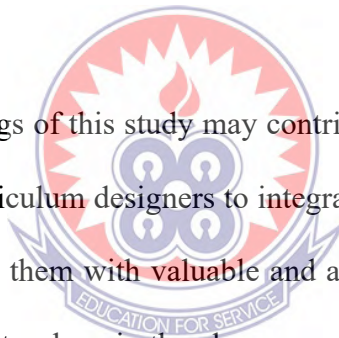
### b. Practical Significance

It is hoped that the findings of this study may contribute to bringing to the attention of education authorities the constraints teachers and pupil face in employing Scaffolding

model in reading comprehension lessons in the primary school classroom to improve pupils' performance. Authorities will thus provide resources needed in applying the strategy in the classroom for the benefit of pupils. Also, the study may help supervisors at National/ Regional/ District education offices, head teachers to carry out In-Service Training and Education (INSET) training for teachers of English Language by raising their awareness on the important role, the various techniques, and application of scaffolding model in the English Language classroom to promote teaching and learning. It may open a wide gate for researchers in the future to explore the use of scaffolding on other skills such as listening, writing or speaking or in other subjects.

**c) Policy Significance:**

It is hoped that the findings of this study may contribute to providing policy direction for English language curriculum designers to integrating scaffolding techniques in the curriculum and providing them with valuable and adequate information to lead to its successful application by teachers in the classroom. This will help learners to benefit adequately from its use in Ghanaian classrooms.



**1.7 Delimitation and Scope of the study**

The study was carried out in the New Juaben South Municipality of the Eastern Region. It was restricted to Basic Six Teachers and learners in the Ten (10) public primary schools in the Ogua Circuit. The mixed methods sequential explanatory design was used to assess the knowledge, techniques, influence on learners' attitudes and challenges of the scaffolding model usage during reading comprehension lessons.

## 1.8 Organization of the Study

This study was organized into five chapters, and their contents are as follows: Chapter One comprises the Introduction of the study and consists of the following sub-headings: Background to the study, Statement of the problem, Purpose of the study, Research Objectives, Research Questions, Significance of the study, Delimitations, and Organization of the study. Chapter Two is captioned Review of Related Literature. The review of the related literature has been done on Theoretical and Conceptual framework, Theoretical and Empirical studies. Chapter Three of this study discusses the Methodology employed for the study. The chapter explained how the study was conducted. Sub-headings used are: Philosophical Underpinnings of the Study, Approaches, Research Design, Population, Sample and Sampling Procedure, Instrument(s), Data Collection Procedure, and Data Analysis. The Chapter Four of the study has the title Results and Discussion. In this chapter, the results of the study are presented and discussed in reference to the literature/previous findings. Chapter Five, the final chapter of this research, is titled Summary, Conclusions and Recommendations. In this chapter, an overview of the research study is given, and the results and findings as well as recommendations on the findings from the study are presented.



## CHAPTER TWO

### REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

#### 2.0 Overview

This chapter first looks at Reading and Reading Comprehension, Scaffolding Strategy and Empirical Studies on Scaffolding model. It then considers the theoretical and conceptual frameworks.

#### 2.1 Reading and Reading Comprehension

##### 2.1.1 Introduction

Reading has a way of changing human being's perspective about life in general. It leads to learning, it helps people to grow, and it enables people to acquire different experiences in life. Reading can entertain you and amuse you, but most of all it will enrich you with knowledge and experiences narrated. Reading purely for leisure is fun, but there exist certain reading skills and strategies, which, if mastered at an early stage, can help us be better and comprehensive readers (Manohar, 2011). Reading literally helps us to live other lives in other places and times even in other planets. It contributes to shaping our personality and identity. Reading facilitates our learning of things that help us in our daily life. Through reading, we experience sorrow, joy and relaxation depending on the content of what we read at a particular point in time. We consciously and unconsciously read as we go about our normal life's activities. We read when we check email, we read when we watch TV. We read when we walk in streets, we read when we drive cars, do shopping. The act of reading is an everyday function, it is part and parcel in our daily life. The ability to read and write is called literacy and a person who can read is said to be literate and a person who cannot is illiterate. (Bhlool, 2013). According to Vacca (2008, p.57), reading arouses an innate

curiosity in students and stimulates them to dig deeper into a text to find answers and meanings. However, the desire to become active readers is often not shared by all students, mainly because they do not have “the spur of motivation nor competency in reading”.

Reading is a key skill for most students who study English as a second/ foreign language and it should therefore take its rightful position aside from the nurture of the other three skills of language namely listening, speaking and writing. The ultimate application and use at the end of studying language is reading because most materials are printed, so it is actually the basic skills for learners. Further, “the ability to read will stay longer than the other skills, and it is the skill that will be most convenient to use. Reading remains a valid goal in the second language classroom” (Akyel & Ercetin, 2008, p.135).

Reading and listening are classified as a receptive skill while speaking and writing are as a productive skill. Basically, without reading, second language readers cannot perform at levels they must succeed in reading. Arguably, many people consider reading as the most important of the four skills in a second language classroom. It thus becomes one of the most important skills, if not the most, among the four main language skills. The ability to read is a key factor in living a healthy, happy, and productive life (Bhloul, 2013). The National Institute of Child Health and Human Development (2000, p. 80) considers it as the “new civil right”. Without the ability to read, a child cannot fully access his or her democratic rights. Conversely, the inability to read is considered as “life-threatening diseases”. The ability to read and understand a simple text is one of the most fundamental skills a child can learn.

### **2.1.2 Reading comprehension**

There is a difference between the ability to read words and the ability to comprehend the text being read for instance, the doctors' prescriptions are something difficult and impossible to be read when handed over to most people by the doctors. Rarely, can one understand and comprehend what is written on these prescriptions. Ordinary people see the written letters as unknown symbols. However, when these prescriptions are given to pharmacists, they quickly read, comprehend and bring the required medicine (Mahmoud, 2015).

For practiced readers, this distinction may be taken for granted since the acts of reading and comprehension occur almost simultaneously for us. But for developing readers, this relationship is not as apparent, but is essential for them to become strong, capable readers (K12 reader, 2015).

#### **2.1.2.1 Definitions of Reading comprehension**

In an attempt to paint a vivid picture of what reading comprehension is, many scholars have advanced have definitions for reading comprehension based on their own point of view about the concept. Some of them have opined that, the difference between reading and reading comprehension is debatable.

Few of the definitions of reading comprehension that place emphasis on the two terms interaction and constructing extracting meaning are presented below.

National Reading Panel (2000) affirms that comprehension is an active process between the reader and a text, a process that is both 'intentional and thoughtful'. Similarly, Mayer (2003) asserts that reading comprehension is a "technique for improving students' success in extracting useful knowledge from text".

Some of the definitions are however related to constructing and extracting meaning. Snow (2002) posits that it is the process of simultaneously extracting and constructing meaning through interaction and involvement with written language. It consists of three elements: the reader, the text, and the activity or purpose for reading. Miller (2002) states that reading comprehension is the ability to fathom or to grasp meaning from any type of written text. It is the purpose for reading and remains the essential part of all subject matter learning. In line with previous definitions, Millrood (2001) confirms that “reading as a visual and cognitive process of extracting meaning from writing by understanding the written text, processing information and relating it to known experience”. Cotter (2011) in similar fashion, defines comprehension as the process of simultaneously extracting and constructing meaning through the interaction and involvement with written language. Comprehension therefore consists of three elements; the reader, the text and the purpose of reading. It is the interaction between text, readers and purpose that leads to using reading comprehension strategies to increase comprehension. Tompkins (2011) consequently defines reading comprehension as the level of understanding a text/message. This understanding comes from the interaction between the words that are written and how they trigger knowledge outside the text/message.

The researcher draws conclusions from the previous definitions that reading comprehension is a cognitive process that is meant for decoding meaning embedded in the text in order to understand what the author is communicating to his/ her audience through the message. Without understanding/ comprehension, reading is reduced to symbols that do not provide the reader with any information. To this end, reading comprehension is the ability to read a text and understand the meaning it implies.

### **2.1.2.2 The importance of reading comprehension**

The importance of reading comprehension cannot be over emphasized because it forms a critical component of functional literacy. Without comprehension, reading is nothing more than tracking symbols on a page with your eyes and sounding them out (Mahmoud, 2015). Gu (2003) explains that reading enables students to gain exposure to the target language and receive valuable linguistic input to build up language proficiency. Moreover, students need reading to reinforce acquisition of other language skills. People read for many reasons, but understanding is always a part of their purpose. Reading comprehension is important because without it reading does not provide the reader with any information. Reading comprehension is essential to life. In order to survive and thrive in today's world, individuals must be able to comprehend basic texts such as bills, prescriptions, contracts and documents. Kaddoumi (1995) also indicates that a reading knowledge of a second/ foreign language is often important to academic studies, professional success and personal development. Reading comprehension enables us to communicate effectively in second language and also facilitate the building of new vocabulary. In summary, it helps us be more comfortable with written English.

### **2.1.2.3 Reading Aloud/Oral vs. Silent Reading**

Reading aloud is the foundation for literacy development. It is the single most important activity for reading success (Neuman, Bredekamp, & Copple, 2000). It provides children with a demonstration of phrased, fluent reading (Fountas & Pinnell, 1996). It reveals the rewards of reading, and develops the listener's interest in books and desire to be a reader (Mooney, 1990). We live in a time when silent reading ability will probably buy you more than oral reading skills. However, that doesn't mean oral reading is without value- especially for 11, 12, or 13year old kids. When it

comes to oral and silent reading, it is difficult to pick one over the other. It is a difficult choice that confuses outcomes and inputs. There is no question that our goal as teachers is to develop readers who can read a text with a depth of understanding.

With practice, both oral and silent reading contributes to the accomplishment of that goal so it is important for every discerning teacher not to align him/ herself to one to the detriment of the other (Shanahan, 2014).

Some of the differences between oral reading and silent reading are listed in the table below.

**Table (5)**  
**Differences between oral reading and silent reading**

<b>Oral reading</b>	<b>Silent reading</b>
Provides the thought from the printed page	Silent readers absorb the thought from the text.
Follows an instant recognition of a thought.	Silent readers immediately get the thought.
Involves mental interpretations based on eye sweeps of the text accompanied by vocalization.	Silent readers simply interpret the material through a series of eye sweeps (without delays resulting from vocalization).
Gives much importance to the pronunciation of the words. Vocalization reduces (and limits) the speed of oral readers	The meanings of the words are the most important. A problem that doesn't affect silent readers.
Oral readers are likely to be considerably slower, with little variation.	Silent readers are likely to be considerably faster and varied (according to individual differences).
Teachers should provide opportunities for students to read aloud with some guidance and feedback (NICHD, 2000).	There is insufficient support from empirical research to suggest that independent, silent reading can be used to help students improve their fluency (NICHD, 2000)
Types of oral reading: -Round Robin Reading RRR. -Performance Reading.	Types of silent reading: -Drop Everything and Read (DEAR). - Sustained Silent Reading (SSR). -Free voluntary reading (FVR). -Free Uninterrupted Reading (FUR).

**Source: Adopted from Mahmoud (2015).**

### 2.1.3 Strategies to Teach Students Text Comprehension

Comprehension strategies are conscious plans-sets of steps that good readers use to make sense of text. Comprehension strategy instruction helps students become purposeful, active readers who are in control of their own reading comprehension. A long list of instructional strategies does not represent a ready-made curriculum for reading instruction. In fact, students' needs determine the success or not of the adopted strategies. It is apparent that developing fluent L2 readers is a challenging task requiring much time, resources, and effort (Armbruster, 2010). Over the past two decades, a set of strategies for L2 reading instruction has emerged. Adler (2001) proposes seven strategies to teach reading comprehension. These are monitoring comprehension; metacognition; graphic and semantic organizers; answering questions; generating questions; recognizing story structure and finally summarizing.

Duke & Pearson (2002) from their perspective also suggest the following strategies: setting purposes for reading, previewing and predicting, activating prior knowledge, monitoring, clarifying, and fixing, visualizing, drawing inferences, self-questioning and thinking aloud, summarizing and retelling.

Trabasso and Bouchard (2002) similarly, identify nine individual reading strategies as having a significant influence on reading comprehension: prior knowledge, mental imagery, graphic organizers, text structure awareness, comprehension monitoring, question answering, question generating, mnemonic support practice, and summarization.

#### **2.1.4 Reading comprehension strategies**

Reading comprehension is the ultimate goal of learning to read. The purpose of mastery of each of the four previous skills is to enable comprehension. Likewise, reading comprehension facilitates mastery of the other four skills.

##### **2.1.4.1 Models of Reading Comprehension**

There are three cognitive processes that are widely referred to as the bottom-up, top-down and interactive model (Mahmoud, 2015, p.56).

###### **2.1.4.1.1 The Bottom-up Model**

The Bottom-up model is also known as text-driven model, surface structure and part to whole model. The reader tends to understand each word in the text and then, gradually, he/she builds up an interpretation of the whole. Some theorists believe that this model is good for teaching second language learners because it offers them the probability to know the linguistic and structural part of the English language (Wallace, 1992). According to Nunan (1991), reading in this view is basically a matter of decoding a series of written symbols into their aural equivalents in the quest for making sense of the text. Some teachers teach reading by introducing new vocabulary and new structures first and then going over the text sentence by sentence. This is followed by some questions and answers and reading aloud practice. This way of teaching reading reflects the belief that reading comprehension is based on the understanding and mastery of all the new words, new phrases, and new structures as well as a lot of reading aloud practice. Also, this reading follows a linear process from the recognition of letters, to words, to phrases, to sentences, to paragraphs, and then to the meaning of the whole text. This traditional model of reading has almost always



been under attack as being insufficient and defective for the main reason that it relies on the formal features of the language, mainly words and structures (Pardede, 2006).

The researcher believes that the ability to follow the process of recognizing letters, words, phrases, sentences and paragraphs and then deducing the meaning of the whole text facilitates comprehension of the text. Therefore, despite its flaws, the model is quite instructive if well applied.

#### **2.1.4.1.2 The Top-down Model**

This model is also known as: inside-out model, concept-driven model, deep-structure, whole to part model. It is the cognitive view of reading. It encourages reading for meaning and to focus more on understanding the main ideas of a passage instead of word-by-word decoding. Even if students do not understand each word, they are likely to grasp the meaning of a text as a whole. We may read an article with some new words or new structures in it, but we can guess the meaning of the article based on our knowledge about the topic without too much difficulty. Therefore, it is believed that in teaching reading, the teacher should teach the background knowledge first so that students equipped with such knowledge will be able to guess meaning from the printed page (Mahmoud, 2015). Schema or the plural schemata theory is related to this model, in the way the reader interprets the text depending on his/her prior knowledge. Cook (2001) defines it as the background knowledge on which the interpretation of a text depends. The top-down reading models has the potential to assist those learning a second language since they enable students to concentrate on the whole meaning of a text. The theory also works with those just learning to read, as readers rely on their previous knowledge to decipher text or unfamiliar words (Cook, 2001).

The researcher thinks this model should be used frequently in a second language classroom to help students decode the meaning of the passage based on the background knowledge they have acquired prior to the reading process.

#### **2.1.4.1.3 The Interactive Model**

Neither the bottom-up nor the top down models of reading process totally account for what occurs during the reading process (Zakaluke, 2004). The interactive model of reading came to be the new method for teaching comprehension. This model has been described by many theorists as one of the most successful models of reading that helps the student to decode and comprehend the meaning of a text (Coles, 1998).

The interactive model views reading as an interaction between reader and text, not simply a one-way exchange of information. It views reading as an interactive process. That is to say, the brain receives visual information and at the same time, interprets or reconstructs the meaning the writer had in mind when he wrote the text. This process does not only involve the printed page but also the reader's knowledge of the language in general, of the world, and of the text types. During the process of reading, all these factors interact with each other and compensate each other. Therefore, a proficient reader should have good language skills: recognizing words and phrases, understanding sentence structures. Also, he/she should have relevant knowledge about the topic, the organization of the type of text and general knowledge about the world.

#### **2.1.5 Levels of Reading Comprehension**

There are different levels of reading comprehension (Mahmoud, 2015, p.59). This section takes a look at four levels.

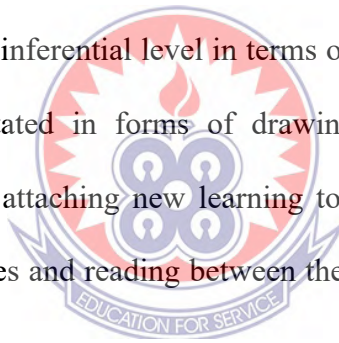
### **2.1.5.1 Literal level**

Whitten (2004) treats the literal level as what is actually stated in terms of facts and details, rote learning, memorization, and surface understanding only. At this level, there is no need to go deeply on what was stated; the material has just to be absorbed. It deals with what is stated in the material. Making predictions, scanning and skimming are sub skills at this level.

### **2.1.5.2 Inferential level**

It means to read between the lines to understand what is meant or implied; in other words, students attempt to recognize that what they need to read carefully and analyze what they read (Hub Pages, 2012).

Whitten (2004) treats the inferential level in terms of what is implied or meant, rather than what is actually stated in forms of drawing inferences, tapping into prior knowledge / experience, attaching new learning to old information, making logical leaps and educated guesses and reading between the lines to determine what is meant by what is stated.



### **2.1.5.3 Evaluative level**

At this level, judgment of text by taking what is said (literal) and then what is meant (inferential) and this requires great background knowledge of the reader. Readers need to combine ideas, draw conclusions, interpret, evaluate and deduce the meaning from what they know and the messages in the text (Hub Pages, 2012). This level involves critical analysis which imposes the readers to be critical, to form opinions, to identify points of view, to consider the power of texts and their messages and to infer motives of themes (Mahmoud, 2015).

#### **2.1.5.4 Creative level**

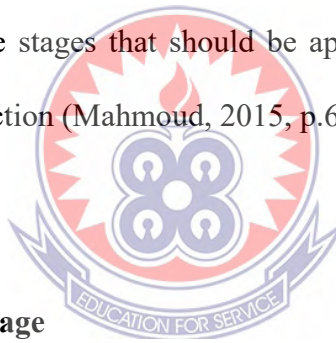
This level requires the reader to be creative and to read beyond the material presented by the writer and to use his imagination to draw new ideas or alternative solutions (Yossuke, 2011). The creative level occurs after the students have understood the text and started to draw new ideas about the text. Skills of this level include:

- Generate questions about a reading text.
- Relate text to personal experience, opinion, or evaluation.
- Extract and synthesize information from different sources.

#### **2.1.6 Teaching Reading Comprehension Skills in Classrooms**

Generally, there are three stages that should be applied to ESL (English as Second Language) reading instruction (Mahmoud, 2015, p.60)

These stages are:



##### **2.1.6.1 Before reading stage**

This is the stage where all the preliminary activities are carried out. Before reading activities include: discussing the text type, brainstorming, considering titles, skimming and scanning for structure and future directions (Colorado, 2008). Teachers arouse the students' interest, let them talk about the pictures and predict what the text will be about, activate their prior knowledge and schemata as well (Mahmoud, 2015).

##### **2.1.6.2. During Reading Stage**

Babbitt (2002) states teachers monitor understanding by questioning, guessing word meanings, analyzing reference words, predicting text content, reading for specific pieces of information and learning to use the dictionary effectively. The teachers

should guide the students to understand the real content and the meaning of the text. It focuses on developing students' reading skills through answering multi-level comprehension questions such as general understanding questions, detailed-answer questions and high-order thinking questions.

### **2.1.6.3. Post Reading Stage**

In this stage, teachers first check students' comprehension and then lead students to a deeper analysis of the text to notice if the text was understood clearly or not. The student can remember all the ideas that are included in the text and then the teacher tries to relate the text to the student's experiences. The students go beyond the reading text by reflecting, relating, summarizing and judging (Mahmoud, 2015).

## **2.2 Scaffolding Strategy**

Reading is the gateway to learning; without it, L2 learners cannot access a broad and balanced curriculum (Clarke, 2009). This importance may be partly due to the recognition of reading as the most important skill in academic contexts (Grabe, 1991) and partly because of the increase in the number of students who learn English as their foreign or second language worldwide as it is in Ghana. Bassiri, (2012) asserts that because of the high demand to learn English language, different approaches to reading have appeared. Undoubtedly, scaffolding is one of the emerging approaches that has been touted by researchers as an enabler when it comes to reading in English language classroom. Lack of knowledge and application on the use approaches like scaffolding hinder the comprehension of primary school English learners during reading. Scaffolding therefore plays a key role in fostering reading comprehension (Lutz, Guthrie, & Davis, 2006; Markee, 2004). In an effort to assess teachers knowledge and application of scaffolding strategy in Basic Six class in primary

schools in the new Juaben South Municipality, the researcher reviewed many studies on scaffolding strategy in foreign countries which has rarely been done in Ghana and never been conducted in the New Juaben South Municipality and in the Oguaa circuit of the eastern region. Most of the researchers focused in their studies the scaffolding strategy and its impact on developing English language learners' skills. Others also emphasized on how to employ scaffolding strategy during teaching and learning process to assist learners grasp concepts.

Reiser (2004) for instance, posits that in scaffolding, learners receive support and assistance, they will successfully perform certain tasks and move to more complex ones. Students become more responsible for their learning, more motivated, and more successful, when guided, supported and provided with the necessary attributes (Vacca, 2008). The importance of explicit teaching, modeling and providing guided practice in a variety of strategies to help students read and write about challenging texts; and involving students as partners in a community of learners. (Olson & Land, 2007).



Other studies highlight the teacher's role in implementing scaffolding strategy in the classroom. Sukyadi & Hasanah (2010) reiterate that teachers should assist the students from the very beginning level. They should help students to move toward new skills, concepts, or level of understanding by considering their current ability. They are responsible to initiate each new step of learning, building on what students are currently able to do alone. Walqui (2006) ultimately concludes that learners of English whose teachers invite them to engage in high challenge tasks and provide them with high levels of support, and aware of their progress and the tools needed to attain it, will build up confidence in themselves and their own abilities.

Fung, Wilkinson & Moore (2003) believe that the effective teacher is the one who provides explicit explanation, modeling, and scaffolding to help students construct clear understanding of the text content. Such a teacher meets the requirements of a scaffolding teacher.

As scaffolding strategy has been successful in a large number of studies all over the world, it has not been extensively explored and assessed in Ghana. It is as a result of this that the researcher sought to give the strategy the leverage it deserves in the municipality and in Ghana for that matter with this study.

Accordingly, this aspect is dedicated to deeply assess scaffolding strategy, its effects on learners' attitude and also to explore the role of scaffolding within the zone of proximal development (ZPD) in reading comprehension lessons in Basic Six Classroom in the New Juaben South Municipality.

### **2.2.1 Definitions of Instructional Scaffolding (IS)**

The Wood, Bruner and Ross in 1976 together coined the term scaffolding as a metaphor to describe the effective process by which an adult, a peer, or a competent person assists a child to perform a task beyond his or her current capability.

Wood, Bruner and Ross (1976, p. 90) define scaffolding as “a process that enables a child or a novice to solve a problem, carry out a task, or achieve a goal which would be beyond his unassisted efforts.”

Bruner (1983) similarly defines scaffolding as a process of creating or arranging a situation to make the child's entry easy and successful and then gradually withdrawing and handing the role to the child as he becomes skilled enough to manage that situation.

Wood (1988) corroborates Bruner's assertion and also defines scaffolding as tutorial behavior that is contingent, collaborative and interactive. Since then, an increasing number of educational specialists and experts have used the concept to describe and explain the role of adults or more knowledgeable peers in guiding children's learning and development (Hammond, 2002; Daniels, 2001).

Instructional Scaffolding is the means through which assistance is given and adjusted, and it plays the function of 'facilitating the collaboration necessary between the novice and the expert for the novice to acquire the cognitive strategy or strategies' (Palinscar, 1986).

Like training wheels, scaffolding enables learners to do more advanced activities and to engage in more advanced thinking and problem solving than they could without such help (NRC, 2000).

Instructional scaffolding, is an old concept with a new name. Most teachers have used scaffolding activities in the classroom in one or more ways. Research suggests that providing assistance and support to students through instructional scaffolding optimizes student learning. It is similar to the scaffolding used in construction to support workers as they work on specific tasks (Huggins & Edwards, 2011).

According to Clark & Graves (2004), scaffolding has proven to be one of the most recommended, versatile, and powerful instructional techniques of socio-constructivist teaching. Davis and Miyake (2004) provide a different dimension to the definition to the definition of scaffolding. They define scaffolding simply as support in the form of reminders or help. They view scaffolding as a component of a larger set of methodology in activity-based learning: modeling (demonstrating), coaching, articulation, reflection, and exploration. Gillies & Boyle (2005) believes that



scaffolding can lend support to help close a gap between what students know and can do, versus what they don't know or can't do, but intended to know and do. It is one of the principles of effective instruction that enables teachers to accommodate individual student needs (Simmons et al., 2002).

The support teachers provide to learners through scaffolding does not continue unabated throughout the lesson. It has a point in a lesson where it begins and ends. Yu and Cameron (2004, 2001) therefore state that Scaffolding is temporarily provided and it is gradually removed bit by bit as the learners become more competent independently. This means, conceptually, scaffolding means providing students with instructions during the early stage of learning before slowly shifting the responsibility to them as they develop their own understanding and skills. Lawson, (2002) in reiterating this fact, says that in the classroom, scaffolding is a process by which a teacher provides students with a temporary framework for learning. When scaffolding is done correctly, students are encouraged to develop their own creativity, motivation, and resourcefulness. As students gather knowledge and increase their skills on their own, fundamentals of the framework are dismantled. At the completion of the lesson, the scaffolding is removed altogether and students no longer need it. Bradley and Bradley (2004) also consider scaffolding as the contextual support for meaning that is offered through simplified language as in avoiding the use of idioms; teacher modeling; using graphic organizers, tables, graphs, and visuals; hands-on learning; and cooperative learning. This means that the strategy provides learners with adequate avenue to conceptualize and comprehend concepts during teaching and learning process. Apart from the afore-mentioned definitions proffered by researchers, instructional scaffolding is socio-cultural in nature. Sharpe (2006) as a result expounds the notion of scaffolding as being congruent with the essentially social

nature of learning and affirms the importance of language in making meaning within this process.

The role of the teacher or experienced adult cannot be underestimated in an attempt to explain scaffolding. Bruner (1978) created a concept of scaffolding based on his readings of Vygotsky's zone of proximal development. His use of the term scaffolding seemingly describes what mothers often do to enable and make more manageable children's learning of language: The mother's support includes helping the child focus his or her attention to pertinent aspects of the task and modeling her expectations of the child (Bruner, 1978; Stewart, 2002). The teacher brings the student to new levels of skill and understanding by breaking up a task into smaller and more comprehensible steps. Some steps are more complex than others and require more support (intellectually and emotionally). The teacher's task is to determine students' current levels of knowledge and skill, and then develop activities that guide these students to higher levels of practice. Just as mothers extend the range of contexts and serve as "communicative ratchets" for their children helping them to avoid sliding backwards once they have made forward steps teachers must use this skill in the classroom (Bruner, 1978; Stewart, 2002). Teachers must assume this role in the classroom and become the communicative ratchets helping children build and maintain literacy competencies. The desired outcome is for students to need less and less support to complete a task successfully; therefore, the teacher gradually provides less support until it has been removed totally. The student should ultimately perform the task independently, internalize the rules governing the task, and re-create it alone. To extend the student's learning, the teacher may then create a new level of difficulty, or move the student into a new area of challenge (Burch, 2007). For instance, Jumaat and Tasir (2014) in emphasizing on the role of adult thus define instructional

scaffolding as a guidance or support from teachers, instructors or other knowledgeable persons that facilitate students to achieve their goals in learning. The holistic understanding the strategy offers cannot be overemphasized. In his quest to amplify its usefulness in the learning process, Sawyer (2006) defines instructional scaffolding as a learning process designed to promote a deeper level of learning. Scaffolding is the support given during the learning process which is tailored to the needs of the student with the intention of helping the student to achieve his/her learning goals.

From the above definitions, instructional scaffolding can be thought of as three related pedagogical 'scales'. First, there is the meaning of providing a support structure to enable certain activities and skills to develop. Second, there is the actual carrying out of particular activities in class. And, third, there is the assistance provided in moment-to-moment interaction (Gibbons, 2003). All the definitions of scaffolding point to the fact that the strategy positively influences teaching and learning and thus enables learners to adequately comprehend a concept. It must involve always the collaboration of an experienced adult (the teacher) or peers and the learner. And it must also be introduced gradually by the teacher as the learner learns from known to unknown, complex to simple. It basically applies different means which include pictures, modelling, audio visual materials, group work etc. if it is to achieve the intended goal in a reading comprehension lesson.

### **2.2.2 Why and the need for Scaffolding?**

Many researchers have espoused the importance, benefits, role and the need for scaffolding in instruction. According to Spectrum (2008) one of the main benefits of scaffolded instruction is that it provides for a supportive learning environment. Instructors are caring and interested in helping students learn. He further believes when scaffolding strategy is employed in instruction, students are free to ask

questions, provide feedback and support their peers in learning new material. An instructor who uses instructional scaffolding becomes more of a mentor and facilitator of knowledge than the dominant content expert. This teaching style provides the incentive for students to take a more active role in their own learning. Students share the responsibility of teaching and learning through scaffolds that require them to move beyond their current skill and knowledge levels (Mahmoud, 2015). Through this interaction, students are able to take ownership of the learning event. The need to implement a scaffold will occur when you realize a student is not progressing on some aspect of a task or unable to understand a particular concept. Although scaffolding is often carried out between the instructor and one student, scaffolds can successfully be used for an entire class (Mahmoud, 2015).

According to McKenzie (1999), there are eight characteristics of educational scaffolding: it provides clear directions; clarifies purpose; keeps student on task; offers assessment to clarify expectations; points students to worthy sources; reduces uncertainty, surprise and disappointment; delivers efficiency; creates momentum. Reigeluth and Moore (1999) on the other hand classified support for learning into two categories: cognitive support and emotional support. Cognitive support assists students' growth in subject matter. Emotional support influences students' attitude, motivation, and self-confidence towards learning. Scaffolding supports learners both cognitively and affectively (Bean & Stevens, 2002; Dennen, 2004). Cognitively, scaffolding can focus learners' attention to relevant information or critical aspects of a problem, leverage cognitive burden, foster higher order thinking, and offer strategies for problem solving (Gaskins et al., 1997; Stone, 1993; Wood et al., 1976). Affectively, scaffolding creates unthreatening and engaging environments, in which learners can achieve learning goals that they cannot accomplish by themselves and

thus become confident and attach positive feeling to learning. Cognitive support is very essential for learners during instruction. For learning to occur it is essential to get learners' attention. According to information processing theory, getting learners' attention is critical to transforming information from sensory memory to working memory. Without attention, information will not be processed or learned. In a new or complex learning environment, for many reasons learners may not be able to focus their attention on information relevant to learning or task at hand (Deyu, 2006). Under this circumstance, scaffolding from teacher or others can draw learners' attention to the task and keep them on the right track. Scaffolding can also be used to reduce learners' cognitive load (Oliver, 1999) and prevent them from feeling frustrated by difficult tasks (Rosenshine & Meister, 1992). If learners have to struggle with a task all by themselves and keep experiencing failure, they will quickly feel frustrated and may eventually give up. Support from other people or tools can "shoulder some of the intellectual burden" (Jackson, Stratford, & Krajcik, 1996, p. 1) so that learners can focus on more critical components within a task.

To regulate the difficulty of a task, scaffolder can provide a simplified version of the task at the beginning and gradually increase the difficulty or divide a complex task into small manageable pieces that learners can handle (Rosenshine & Meister, 1992). However, leveraging cognitive load does not mean taking over all intellectual burden from students. Good instruction should always balance between challenge and support (Roehler & Cantlon, 1997). As students become more competent, it is important to gradually take away support and hand over more responsibility to students. Otherwise, they might either become overly rely on the help or not be able to tackle with the full version of a task.

Scaffolding can also engage learners in learning. In scaffolding, instructors, peers, or technological agents often guide students through the learning process. Learners are more likely to focus on task in guided learning experience (Hmelo & Day, 1999). According to learning theories, such as information processing theory, organizing, elaborating, and reflecting can enhance learning. In addition to fostering learners' cognitive development, scaffolding can also promote metacognitive growth. Metacognition is the knowledge of what one knows, how one knows, and how to regulate one's learning process. Students with better metacognitive knowledge and skills have better achievement. Many learners, however, do not have enough metacognitive knowledge and skills to learn effectively (Ormrod, 2004). Thus, it is necessary to provide them help to foster their metacognitive development.

Researchers (Jarvela, 1995; Kaptelinin & Cole, 2001) indicate that teacher's scaffolding, such as checking on students' progress or questioning their choice, fostered learners to monitor and regulate their own thinking, which they were not able to do on their own. In addition to cognitive support, scaffolding can offer students emotional (affective) support as well (Bean & Stevens, 2002). In scaffolded instruction, teachers support students by ignoring some errors, providing unthreatening environments, and preventing failure (Bean & Stevens, 2002). With the support, students are willing to participate in instructional activities and are able to perform a task that they cannot do on their own. Through the success they gain confidence (Driscoll, 2000) or attach positive feeling to learning (Lepper et al., 1997). In addition, scaffolding requires shared understanding and shared responsibilities between learner and scaffolder, which have to be achieved through active engagement from both parties (Deyu, 2006). Hogan and Pressley (1997) indicate that teacher's

respectful engagement with students' idea undoubtedly created a positive emotional in students about learning.

While scaffolding plays an important role in enhancing student learning, it should be applied only when it is needed. Whether students need assistance is related to the difficulty of an instructional task as well as students' capabilities. Many researchers including Ormrod (2004) propose that challenging rather than easy tasks promote maximum cognitive growth. Learners tend to lose interests to instructional activities that they can finish easily and feel frustrated with tasks too difficult for them. Ideally, they should be provided with challenging tasks that they cannot finish independently but can accomplish with help from more capable others or tools (Deyu, 2006). Deyu (2006) suggests that in recent years much attention has been focused on developing learners' higher order thinking skills. However, research findings (Bean & Stevens, 2002; Lin, 2001) consistently show that as a consequence of the mismatch between the difficulty of the task and students' limited competencies, they do not spontaneously engage in higher order thinking.

Scaffolding, targeting at filling in the gap with support, has demonstrated effective in fostering the development of higher order thinking skills (McLoughlin & Oliver, 1998; Oliver, 1999; Sharma, 2001) as cited in Deyu (2006). Puntambekar & Kolodner, (2005) give a different perspective to the need and why scaffolding is crucial. They state that the fact that not all students can learn effectively indicates their incompetence and needs for help. Learning problems may result from lack of cognitive and metacognitive skills and (Azevedo, Cromley, Thomas et al., 2003) and these problems can be solved by providing students appropriate support. Again, scaffolding has been successfully used to help students monitor and regulate their own learning (Azevedo, Cromley, Seibert, & Tron, 2003; Davis, 2003). Learning problems

may also be the result of lack of encouragement or motivation (Jackson et al., 1996), but this can be solved through scaffolding. For example, students with low self-efficacy tend to give up quickly in the face of difficulty, which further lowers their self-efficacy (Deyu, 2006). Scaffolding these students to accomplish meaningful and challenging tasks may boost their self-efficacy and help create positive feeling towards learning, which in turn improves students' involvement in similar activities (Lepper et al., 1997).

Aside from all the afore-mentioned, the application of some learning philosophies makes scaffolding an essential component of instruction. Historically, the process of learning was perceived as information transmission from teacher to students, wherein students are only passive recipients. However, with the evolvement of diverse learning philosophies, such as social constructivism, students are not recognized as passive recipients anymore. They are actively engaged in instructional activities and also have more responsibility of their own learning (Deyu, 2006).

In summary, the impact scaffolding brings to bear on learners' overall performance during instruction and how it assists individual learners with different level difficulty in understanding activities to be performed confirm the essence for scaffolding especially when tasks are complex, difficult and new to learners during instruction.

### **2.2.3 History of Scaffolding**

Scaffolding, originally, was used in the initial studies to reflect parent-child interactions (Bruner, as cited in Mahmoud, 2015). Bruner's notion of scaffolding was developed in the 1970s in the context of an intensive investigation of six infants (ages 7-18 months) over a period of 10 months, as they and their mothers played games. The researchers focused particularly on the game of 'peekaboo', which was played



frequently over the entire period. The game consists of an initial contact, the establishment of joint attention, disappearance, reappearance and re-establishment of contact. These are the obligatory features of the 'syntax' of the game, whereas other features, such as vocalizations to sustain the infant's interest, responses to the infant's attempts to uncover the mother's face, etc. are optional. These 'non-rule bound' parts of the game are an instance of the mother providing a 'scaffold' for the child (Bruner & Sherwood, 1975, p. 280). The game becomes conventionalized, a ritual, but at the same time it allows for variations. Gradually, there is a shift in agency, a 'take-over', with the child becoming self-directed and the roles of agent and recipient being reversed. Eventually, the child can play the peekaboo game on her own, with a toy animal, or with other children or adults. Wood and Middleton (1975) observed how mothers interacted with their children to build the 3D model. The type of support included: general encouragement, specific instructions, direct demonstration e.g. showing the child how to place one block on another. The results of the study showed that no single strategy was best for helping the child to progress. Mothers whose assistance was most effective were those who varied their strategy according to how the child was doing. When the child was doing well, they became less specific in their help. When the child started to struggle, they gave increasingly specific instructions until the child started to make progress again. Wood, Bruner and Ross's (1976) study in which children at the age of three, four and five years, engaged in a task of building a pyramid from interlocking blocks, with guidance from a tutor. Each child was tutored individually and the tutor followed a set of guidelines for her tutoring. But the tutor did not always follow pre-set rules in her interactions; instead she provided just enough assistance to help the child move forward—assistance that was sensitive to, and adapted based on, the child's progress. Wood and colleagues documented six types of

support that an adult can provide: recruiting the child's interest, reducing the degrees of freedom by simplifying the task, maintaining direction, highlighting the critical task features, controlling frustration, and demonstrating ideal solution paths.

Judging from the history of scaffolding, every teacher or experienced adult who employs the strategy in language classroom is expected to act like a mother in the house who guides her child in different ways to ensure mastery of an idea, knowledge and culture she desires to see her children acquire. The teacher is supposed to be a mentor who models, leads and direct learners to the right path to develop, create knowledge and formulate principles in the language classroom.

#### **2.2.4 Theory and theoretical basis of scaffolding**

Scaffolding hinges on certain theories which serve as the basis for its use during instruction. Scaffolding has been interpreted in a wide sense as “a form of support for the development and learning of children and young people” (Rasmussen, as cited in Mahmoud, 2015). The term can be used as an umbrella metaphor to describe the way that “teachers or peers supply students with the tools they need in order to learn” (Jacobs, 2001, p.125). Hammond et al (2002) argue that extended understanding of scaffolding in language and literacy education is needed. They point out the crucial role of language in scaffolding.

It is generally believed that scaffolding instruction as a teaching strategy originates from Lev Vygotsky’s sociocultural theory and his concept of the zone of proximal development (ZPD). In Vygotsky's view, the learner does not learn in isolation. Instead learning is strongly influenced by social interactions, which take place in meaningful contexts. Children's social interaction with more knowledgeable or capable others and their environment significantly impacts their ways of thinking and

interpreting situations. A child develops his or her intellect through internalizing concepts based on his or her own interpretation of an activity that occurs in a social setting (Stufy, 2002). Field (2004) consequently describes the relationship between scaffolding and Zone of proximal development (ZPD) as follows: An adult provides help to a developing child by way of prompting his attention in a task, guiding him towards appropriate goals, marking prominent features of a task and showing related strategies. Scaffolding has a significant role in supporting a child to progress into his ZPD. Thus, the zone of proximal development is the distance between what a person can do with and without help. The term proximal (nearby) indicates that the assistance provided goes just slightly beyond the learner's current competence complementing and building on their existing abilities (Cole & Cole, 2001). Studies have actually shown that in the absence of guided learning experiences and social interaction, learning and development are hindered (Bransford, Brown, and Cocking, 2000).

From the above, it can be deduced that there are three common and significant features of scaffolding. These include the collaborative interaction between the learner and the expert, the need for learning to occur in the learner's zone of proximal development and the support and guidance provided by the expert, which is gradually withdrawn as the learner becomes more competent.

According to many researchers the concept of scaffolding is grounded in Vygotsky's developmental theories (Beed et al, Dabbagh, Gakins et al. as cited in Deyu, 2006) and its implications on the relationship between the Zone of Proximal Development and Scaffolding.

#### 2.2.4.1 Vygotsky Developmental Theory

Vygotsky was interested in the development of higher mental functions, such as categorical perception, voluntary attention, logical memory, conceptual thinking, and self-regulation of learning (Day, 1983; Gredler, 2001; Lee, 1985). He believes that higher mental functions are acquired through interacting with other people and rooted in social and historical contexts. Therefore, Vygotsky's developmental theory is also referred to as socio-historical theory.

According to Vygotsky, social interaction is translated into psychological functions via "psychological tools", which "direct the mind and change the process of thinking" (Gredler, 2001, p. 241). Language, signs, and symbols are all examples of psychological tools and they are different from culture to culture.

When explaining how social interaction is translated into higher psychological functions, Vygotsky (1978) claims that mental function appears twice in its development: first at the social level and then at individual level; first between people and then inside individual. Higher mental functions develop as the social functions are converted to mental functions. This conversion is mediated through the use of tools and signs. During social interaction, an individual actively modifies the stimulus situation as part of the process of responding to it. Gradually it develops into a sign for use in the individual's mind. This process is called internalization, in which the higher mental functions first go through external stage and then are internalized.

Vygotsky (as cited in Deyu, 2006) illustrated this process through the development of pointing in a child. Initially the child's grasping is just an unsuccessful attempt. When an adult interprets and acts on it, it becomes a gesture of pointing for the adult. Later the child gradually understands the same meaning as the adult and takes the gesture as

a sign for pointing. They thus form a shared understanding of the pointing gesture. As the child transforms the interpersonal activity to intrapersonal activity, internalization occurs. As a result of constant social interaction, higher mental functions develop continuously.

During the development, an individual's higher mental functions are at different levels.

Vygotsky claims that what a child can already do is not a good indicator of his or her mental development. He states that students can accomplish more difficult tasks with the assistance of more capable others, which is a more accurate indication of their developmental level. Based on this understanding, he introduced the concept of zone of proximal development (ZPD) and believes that it is a more accurate measure and prediction of learner's cognitive development.

According to Vygotsky, the zone of proximal development is “the distance between the actual developmental level as determined by independent problem solving and the level of potential development as determined through problem solving under adult guidance or in collaboration with more capable peers” (1978, p. 86). Later, the “problem solving” ability specified by Vygotsky was expanded to capabilities in any area (Tharp & Gallimore, 1988). Thus, there are three levels of capabilities along the continuum of an individual's cognitive development: (a) developed capability, that is what an individual can do without others' help; (b) developing capability, that is what an individual can do with assistance from adults or collaborating with more capable peers, but cannot do without assistance; and (c) underdeveloped capability, that is what an individual cannot do even with assistance. Corresponding to the concept of ZPD, developing capabilities are within an individual's ZPD.

An individual's ZPD is not contextually independent. Because of their cultural and personal experience (Tharp & Gallimore, 1988), learners are different in many ways, such as verbal intelligence, logical thinking, scientific intelligence, learning style, prior knowledge, motivation, and epistemological beliefs (Graesser, Bowers, & Hacker, 1997). They also have different ZPDs and vary in how much and which type of scaffolding they need to successfully learn (Hogan, 1997; Hogan & Pressley, 1997).

#### **2.2.4.2 ZPD and Scaffolding**

An important implication of Vygotsky's theory is that every student is able to learn if appropriate support is provided in their ZPD, that is, students only vary in the amount of help they need for learning to occur (Pressley, Hogan, Wharton-McDonald, Mistretta, & Ettenberger, 1996). With this in mind, then, it is important to know learners' ZPD before selecting tasks that are in the learner's ZPD. Palincsar (1998) elucidates on how important it is to know learners' ZPD from her own research experience. In their research, she and her associates initially wanted to teach children with learning disabilities how to plan and organize writing. However, through their classroom observation at the beginning of the research, they found that the children did not even reach the understanding that the purpose of writing is to communicate. Lacking this understanding, there is no point for them to learn how to plan and organize writing. Under this circumstance, no matter how advanced the original scaffolding strategies and how devoted the teachers might be, they would fail to assist the students effectively, simply because the target skills are beyond the learners' ZPD. Existing literature (Day, 1983), however, shows that measuring learners' ZPD is more at the theoretical than practical level. Under this circumstance, teachers can make

informed guess about learners' ZPDs based on their prior knowledge. Many studies proved that this method is feasible (Fago, 1995; Schunk & Rice, 1993) and could be applied to an individual student as well as classroom settings, where many students' ZPDs need to be estimated.

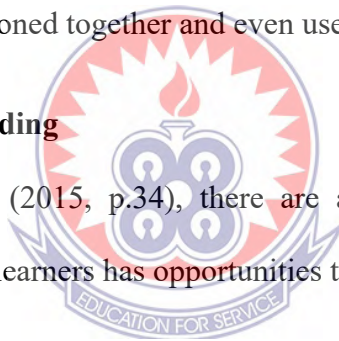
With learners' ZPDs identified, Vygotsky claims that good instruction as well as scaffolding should occur in the learners' ZPD. However, he pointed out that learning is different from mental development but "should match in some manner with the child's developmental level" (Bruner, 1978, p. 85). More specifically, he indicates that learning precedes development and instruction should occur in learner's ZPD. He further argues that "learning which is oriented toward developmental levels that have already been reached is ineffective" and "the only 'good learning' is that which is in advance of development" (1978, p. 89). Following Vygotsky's thoughts, Bruner (1985) believes that Vygotsky's idea about learning is that individuals enter into a culture via introduction and guidance from more experienced members and the entry point should be within learner's ZPD. If the instruction is below his or her ZPD, the individual has already mastered the skill and may not need support. If the instruction is beyond his or her ZPD, the individual could not finish the task even with others' help and may feel frustrated. Only when a task is within a learner's ZPD could it bring maximum mental development. For a task within a learner's ZPD, however, the individual could not finish it on his or her own and thus needs support from more skilled others or tools. This support could be scaffolding. As good instruction and scaffolding helped students learn, their ZPDs move forward. Students are now able to finish some tasks in their previous ZPDs independently or accomplish some tasks that fell beyond their ZPDs with scaffolding. To further assist students, scaffolding should match students' changing ZPD. Wells (1999) described this as "aiming at a moving

target” (p. 319). Thus, another important feature of scaffolding is its dynamic nature. The dynamic nature of scaffolding has two aspects. First, as learners become more competent at a task, scaffolding should fade. This will give learners increasing chances to accomplish the task on their own. Second, as learners master certain skills, an instructor can raise demands by providing more difficult tasks in the learners’ new ZPD and offer scaffolding to the new tasks. Each time when learners need help with a new task the whole scaffolding process begins and repeats. From this viewpoint, scaffolding is helical in nature (Lepper et al., 1997).

Although scaffolding was not connected to Vygotsky’s developmental theory when it was first introduced, it fits in the theory very well to a degree that scaffolding and ZPD are frequently mentioned together and even used interchangeably by mistake.

### **2.2.5 Contexts of Scaffolding**

According to Mahmoud (2015, p.34), there are at least four sources/contextes of scaffolding by which the learners has opportunities to learn.



#### **2.2.5.1 Expert-novice Scaffolding**

The learner is being assisted by an expert, by giving him guidance, advice and modeling. That is a more knowledgeable person (a teacher or parent) interacting with a less knowledgeable person (a student or child).

#### **2.2.5.2 Collective Scaffolding**

The idea of scaffolding has been expanded to include not only an expert-novice relationship, but also a relationship of equal knowledge, such as in a group of learners working on a shared task. Such scaffolding can be called ‘collective scaffolding’ (Donato, 1994; Moll, 1990), and researchers have shown that students working in groups can produce results that none of them would have been capable of producing



on their own. In such circumstances learners create zones of proximal development for each other and engage in mutual scaffolding. The learner is collaborating with other learners, “to construct learning together” (Donato, 1994; Gibbons, 2002; Mercer, 1995; Rogoff, 1995). The social context of the school classroom provides a setting for the culture of the classroom community and the internalization of curriculum concepts. This social context has a direct affect upon the scaffolding that is used within the classroom to support student learning (Burch, 2007).

Van Lier (1996) suggested two further contexts in which students can work within their ZPD.

#### **2.2.5.3 Interaction with less capable peers**

Assisting a lower-level learner who is at a lower level of understanding, and the need to teach him is an opportunity to verbalize, clarify and extend their own knowledge of the subject matter. Therefore, a more knowledgeable person, helping (supporting or scaffolding) them to identify and clarify the conventions of print, is necessary to help them to depend on meaning and the larger structures of language (Burch, 2007).

#### **2.2.5.4 Inner resources**

Working alone, when internalized practices and strategies, inner speech, inner resources, and experimentation are used. Learners can draw on their own resources, the models remembered from their teachers and peers and other resources in their environment-to supplement the shortcomings of their own knowledge and skills.

These four participation contexts during teaching and learning process afford the learner opportunities to learn, but in different ways.

## 2.2.6. Scaffolding Guidelines and Features

In over the decades that researchers have been working to clarify instructional scaffolding, there are a number of general guidelines that have been proposed. Hitherto, the original notion of scaffolding assumed that a single more knowledgeable person, such as a parent or a teacher, helps individual learners, providing them with exactly the support they need to move forward (e.g., Bruner, 1975; Wood et al., 1976).

### 2.2.6.1 Scaffolding Guidelines

One of the most critical aspects of scaffolding is the role of the expert who is knowledgeable about the content of instruction as well as a facilitator with the skills, strategies and processes required for teaching. The expert not only helps motivate learners by providing just enough support to enable them to accomplish the goal, but also provides support in the form of modeling, highlighting the critical features of the task, and providing hints and questions that might help learners to reflect (Wood, 1988).

In this conception then, the expert's role has perceptual and cognitive as well as affective components (Stone, 1998). For Chi (2007) effective scaffolders have to be sensitive to individual difficulties and decide what to scaffold. To provide more collaborative scaffolding, teachers and educators are highly recommended to ask reflective questions and prompt deep reasoning. Direct instruction is essential and can help students during scaffolding e.g., to explain difficult words or concepts. An effective scaffolder takes students' questions seriously and uses them as material for moving their thinking along.

Larkin (2002) suggests other guidelines for effective scaffolding that teachers shared including the following: Begin with what the students can do. Students need to be aware of their strengths and to feel good about tasks they can do with little or no assistance. Help students achieve success quickly. Although students need challenging work in order to learn, frustration and a “cycle of failure” may set in quickly if students do not experience frequent success. Help students to “be” like everyone else. Students want to be similar to and accepted by their peers. If given the opportunity and support, some students may work harder at tasks in order to appear more like their peers. Know when it is time to stop. Practicing is important to help students remember and apply their knowledge, but too much may impede the learning. “Less is more” may be the rule when students have demonstrated that they can perform the task. Help students to be independent when they have command of the activity. Teachers need to watch for clues from their students that show when and how much teacher assistance is needed. Scaffolding should be removed gradually as students begin to demonstrate mastery and then no longer provided when students can perform the task independently.

According to The Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development (ASCD) (2001) there are three guidelines to scaffold effectively: Know your students i.e. where they are in their current understanding and where you want to take them. The teacher has to know the best way the learner learns best. Then, have various techniques such as note taking aids, manipulatives, varied-level readings, learning buddies, graphic organizers, time-management aid, previewing questions (about the next lesson). Also, monitor students' success and get feedback about how things go.

Gibbons (2003) on his as far as guidelines for effective scaffolding is concerned confirms other systems such as visuals, gestures and actions act as agents of scaffolding as they help to mediate learning and they contribute to the creation of 'message abundancy'. The use of these systems enables learners to receive the message in a variety of modes such as oral or written explanations or visual diagrams to aid learners' understanding.

The guidelines are necessary since successful scaffold of activities depends largely on how the teachers are able assist the learners to understand instructions or strategies being employed during the activities.

#### **2.2.6.2 Features of Scaffolding**

There are different characteristics or features of scaffolding according different researchers based on the purpose of the study carried out. Few are discussed below:

According to van Lier (2004) scaffolding has six central features: First, there should be continuity where tasks are repeated with variations and connected to one another (e.g. as part of projects). Secondly, Contextual support must be provided for exploration to be encouraged in a safe, supportive environment; access to means and goals is promoted in a variety of ways. Moreover, Inter-subjectivity which ensures mutual engagement and rapport are established; there is encouragement and nonthreatening participation in a shared community of practice. Again, Contingency where task procedures are adjusted depending on actions of learners; contributions and utterances are oriented towards each other and may be co-constructed. Furthermore, Handover/takeover where there is an increasing role for the learner as skills and confidence increase; the teacher watches carefully for the learner's readiness to take over increasing parts of the action. Finally, ensure flow i.e. skills and

challenges are in balance; participants are focused on the task and are ‘in tune’ with each other.

Puntambekar and Hübscher (2005) in a similar way identify four features of scaffolds.

**i. Inter-subjectivity:** The first component necessary for instructional scaffolds to be effective involves the joint ownership of the task between the student(s) and teacher. This requires that the task be defined and redefined by the student(s) and teacher such that the student(s) begin to understand the task from the perspective of the more knowledgeable other. As Wood and colleagues (1976) note, this involves “making it worthwhile for the learner to risk the next step.”

**ii. Ongoing diagnosis:** The teacher must be continually aware of what the learner understands and still needs to learn. This requires a deep understanding of the task at hand, including the subtasks required for mastery, and a keen level of knowledge about the individual learner.

**iii. Dialogic and interactive:** This relates to the conversation that the student(s) and teacher have as part of the learning situation. The teacher, by dialogue, monitors student understanding and progress. It requires a fairly feedback system in which the teacher is regularly checking for understanding and collecting assessment information.

**iv. Fading:** This theoretical feature requires that the teacher fade the support provided to the learner(s). In Vygotskian terms, this occurs when the learner has reached internalization. Vygotsky (1978) hypothesized that cognition first occurs between people (inter-psychological) before moving to intra-psychological (within one’s own

self). Without fading, this process of internalization cannot happen; students become “prompt-dependent”, not independent.

Lipscomb, Swanson and West (2004) opine that scaffolding is a natural approach to ensure the learning of the student. The teacher therefore offers assistance with only those skills that are beyond the students’ capability. According to Rodgers & Rodgers (2004) it is the teacher who decides if help should be given, how much help should be given, the timing of giving the help, and the goal of the instruction. When scaffolding a lesson, we must always keep our learners and their ZPD in mind. A students’ ZPD is always changing.

Rodgers (2004) suggests that teachers should provide students with opportunities to make errors. Provoking or noticing these errors provides the teacher with an opportunity to prompt, cue, or explain and model. In doing so, the students and teacher pay joint attention to the task and work together to reach an understanding. Fisher and Frey (2010) called it “productive failure”. However, these errors must be balanced, because too few errors suggest that the task is too easy and scaffolds are not necessary (and thus the student is not working in the zone of proximal development), and too many errors can be “counterproductive to the learning process” (p. 526).

### **2.2.7 Techniques of scaffolding.**

Basic step by step instructions, expectations, directions, guidance, strict observations etc. as students perform scaffold tasks are quite imperative in scaffolding strategies. These are called techniques which are embedded in the main scaffolding strategies.

The skillful teacher provides scaffolds that guide, not simply tell, steps back and observes what students do, continuously assesses how well instruction is sticking, and

gradually releases responsibility to the student. The use of these scaffolds represents the intersection of the art and the science of teaching (Fisher & Frey, 2010).

Wood, et al. (as cited in Mahmoud, 2015) outline certain processes that aid effective scaffolding. They include: Gaining and maintaining the learner's interest in the task, making the task simple, emphasizing certain aspects that will help with the solution, control the child's level of frustration and demonstrate the task.

Copple and Bredekamp (2009) opine that scaffolding is a key feature of effective teaching and can include modeling a skill, providing hints or cues, and adapting material or activity. Maloch (2002) also finds that teacher scaffolds included "direct and indirect explanations and modeling. She suggests a new type of scaffolding, "reconstructive caps" in which the adult highlights the success of the student with the goal of encouraging the student to engage in that behavior or skill again. These reconstructive caps are one more scaffold that adults can use to facilitate student understanding. Baralt (2013) however, clarifies that the differences in the types and amounts of scaffolds provided changes depending on the age of the individual providing support, the age of the student receiving the support, and the task itself. According to Hartman (2002), in the educational setting, scaffolds may include various techniques of support such as models, cues, prompts, hints, partial solutions, think-aloud modeling and direct instruction. Gibbons (2002), moreover, suggests that scaffolding provides high levels of initial, deliberate, and well-planned support, and gradually reduces this as students move towards independent control of the learning activity or text. However, it is the teacher's responsibility to watch and decide when and how much support and help is needed; scaffolding can be a moment-to moment help (Davis & Miyake, 2004).

Silver (2011) mentions four steps for scaffolding instruction which can be performed with just about any task. These are: Assess the learner's current knowledge and experience, relate content to what students already understand or can do, break a task into small, more manageable tasks with feedback and use verbal cues and prompts to assist students.

Fisher and Frey (2010) similarly support four techniques for effective scaffolding: Questioning to check for understanding, prompting to facilitate students' cognitive and metacognitive processes, cueing to shift students' attention to focus on specific information, errors, or partial understandings and explaining and modeling when students do not have sufficient knowledge to complete tasks.

The four points below are excerpted from Ellis and Larkin (1998), as cited in Larkin (2003), provide a simple structure of scaffolded instruction:

***First, the instructor does it:*** (Teacher does/ students watch). In other words, the instructor models how to perform a new or difficult task, such as how to use a graphic organizer.

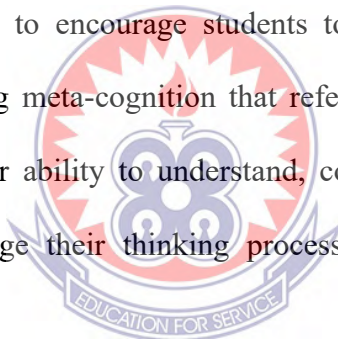
***Second, the class does it:*** (Teacher does/ students help). The instructor and students then work together to perform the task. Teacher provides supported practice via prompts and cues to ensure correct performance.

***Third, the group does it:*** (Students do /teacher helps). At this point, students work with a partner or a small cooperative group to complete the task. Cooperative teams perform the skill together; provide the needed support for each other.



***Fourth, the individual does it:*** (Students do/teacher watches). This is the independent practice stage where individual students practice the skill independently without external assistance.

Walqui (2006) on the other hand identifies six main types of scaffolding instruction techniques in teaching English: They are: One, Modeling where the teacher uses verbal explanations and body language as he/she elaborates and demonstrates the new material. Two, bridging where students activate prior knowledge. This helps create a personal link between the student and the subject matter. Three, contextualizing which can be offered in various forms. Four, Schema building that can be defined as clusters of meaning that are organized and interconnected. Five, representing the text can be one of the ways to encourage students to start the appropriation of new language. Six, developing meta-cognition that refers to learners' awareness of their own knowledge and their ability to understand, control and monitor their level of understanding and manage their thinking process in order to decide when it is adequate.



Alibali (2006) also suggests that instructors can use a variety of scaffolds to accommodate different levels of knowledge. The context of learning (i.e. novice experience, complexity of the task) may require more than one scaffold strategy in order for the student to master new content.

### **2.2.8 Implementing Scaffolding for Teaching Reading**

Recent studies by Mahmoud (2015), Safadi and Ghaleb (2012); Pishghadam and Ghardiri (2011); McKenzie (2011); Mehdian (2009), Sukyadi and Hasanah (2010) etc have investigated the use of scaffolding for teaching reading. The findings of these studies have confirmed the importance and effectiveness of scaffolding instruction on

developing students' reading, and writing skills as well (e.g., using graphic organizers, mapping, working in pairs and groups, questioning, thinking aloud, planning, monitoring, evaluation, inference). Moreover, Cooke (2002) has also mentioned that studies have shown that scaffolding students' reading can be a powerful instructional technique in classrooms, small groups and one-to-one tutoring. "Scaffolding Reading Experience/s SRE" is an approach introduced by many researchers (Graves & Fitzgerald, 2004; Tierney & Readence, 2000). It is considered as a comprehensive reading program, that helps the children understand what they read, enjoy the experience of reading and learn from what they read. The Scaffolding Reading Experience (SRE) framework has two parts or phases. The first phase is the planning phase, during which you plan and create the entire experience. Planning considers the students, the reading selection and the reading purpose. The second phase is the implementation phase which includes pre-reading activities, during reading activities and post-reading activities (Mahmoud, 2015)

Archer (2008) therefore divides scaffolding reading comprehension into three phases:

***Before Reading:*** At this stage the teacher does the following: Teach the pronunciation of difficult words, teach the meaning of critical, unknown vocabulary words, teach or activate any necessary background knowledge and preview the story or the article.

***During Reading:*** The teacher at this stage must: Utilize passage reading procedures

that provide adequate reading practice, ask appropriate questions during passage reading, teach strategies that can be applied to passage reading and use graphic organizers to enhance comprehension.

***After Reading:*** The teacher at this stage should: Engage students in a discussion, have students answer written questions, provide explicit instruction on comprehension skills, provide engaging vocabulary practice and have students write summaries of what they have read.

Graves and Fitzgerald (2004) prior to Archer's (2008) four divisions of scaffolding reading comprehension, provide the possible components of a scaffolded reading lesson which are stated in a tabular form under each of the three reading stages: Pre reading activities, during-reading activities and post-reading activities.

### **2.2.9 Scaffolding Challenges**

Scaffolding strategy like many other well recognized strategies used in teaching different aspects of English Language including reading comprehension has its own weaknesses or challenges when employed during teaching and learning. Pressley, (1996) for instant, states that although scaffolding can be used to optimize learning for all students, it is a very demanding form of instruction.

The following are some challenges and cautions for scaffolding instruction.

A big challenge for classroom teachers is having to teach learners who all have different zones of proximal development (Mahmoud, 2015). Within a class, the ZPD for many students may be similar, but there is the likelihood that some students' zone would be quite different. As a result of the discrepancies in the ZPD of different students in the same class, some researchers have begun to examine how scaffolding can be flexibly designed/ structured to meet the needs of diverse students, recognizing that scaffolding should provide that extra support learners need to successfully complete a just out of reach task. Savery (1998) finds evidence that learners do not all need the same amount of scaffolding. He made use of six forms of scaffolded assistance although each occurred in different amounts based on student need. Instructing, questioning, modeling, and cognitive structuring were part of the teachers' interaction with the students.

Puntambekar and Kolodner (2005) on their part categorically state that one form of scaffolding may not be sufficient to meet all learners' needs at all times. Thus recommend the concept of distributed scaffolding. When the teacher distributes different level scaffolding to the meet the needs of different learners with different ZPD, it promotes equal opportunity for learners to learn at different pace.

Another challenge is that classroom situations involving many students do not allow for the fine-tuned, sensitive, personalized exchange that occurs in one-on-one or small-group scaffolding (Rogoff, 1990). Therefore, instead of one teacher working with each student, support is provided in a paper or software tool that individuals interact with, or classroom activities are redefined so that peers can help each other (e.g., Bell & Davis, 2000; Pun-tambekar & Kolodner, 2002; Reiser et al., 2001). Hogan and Pressley (1997) explored the challenges of scaffolding in the classroom setting. They offered several solutions for scaffolding with large classes. They suggested that students may be organized in groups so the groups are scaffolded rather than individuals. Also, groups could be given cue cards, question cards, or question stems to help them.

Spectrum (2008) also itemizes some challenges of scaffolding from his own perspective: He believes that: One, Planning for and implementing scaffolds is time consuming and demanding. It takes time and effort to be able to successfully implement planned scaffold activities. Two, selecting appropriate scaffolds that match the diverse learning and communication styles of students does not come cheap. Three, knowing when to remove the scaffold so the student does not rely on the support at time is quite difficult. Four, not knowing the students well enough (their cognitive and affective abilities) to provide appropriate scaffolds becomes an impediment for the teacher.

Himmele and Himmele (2009) consequently warn teachers to be careful not to “over scaffold” and get in the way of what would happen naturally. Oftentimes, when we over scaffold, we end up restricting the creativity of the end product.

Stufy, (2002) alludes that scaffold instruction is normally individualized, so it can benefit each learner. However, this is also the biggest disadvantage for the teacher since developing the supports and scaffolded lessons to meet the needs of each individual would be extremely time consuming. Implementation of individualized scaffolds in a classroom with a large number of students would be challenging. Finally, he adds that the teachers’ manuals and curriculum guides that they have been exposed to do not include examples of scaffolds or outlines of scaffolding methods.

Smith (2003) also claims that Scaffolding has 'a slightly slippery' nature and with 'potential fuzzy' areas. This is perhaps particularly so in the context of learning a second language, where language is both the content and the medium or vehicle for learning, and where the emotional and interactional context (the classroom) differs markedly from the context of first language acquisition and parental tutoring at home in which the term was originally developed. Gibbon (2002) in a related development, argues that the processes involved in scaffolding, by which language and cognitive abilities are developed through interaction with others, may also operate in second or foreign language classrooms as well. In order to address the diversity of the participants' ZPDs during the study, the researcher depended on various types of scaffolding and techniques.

### **2.3 Review of Empirical Studies on Scaffolding**

This section brings to the fore some of the previous studies that looked at the use of scaffolding strategy in teaching English language. The researcher selected the

previous studies that examined the use of scaffolding on developing learners English language learning and skills. The main emphasis was on reading comprehension skill. However, some studies that investigated the use of scaffolding on writing, speaking and grammar would be included.

### **Mahmoud (2015)**

The purpose of the study was to examine the effectiveness of using scaffolding strategy on developing reading comprehension skills for the seventh graders at United Nations Relief and Workers Agency (UNRWA) schools in Gaza. In order to achieve the aim of the study, the researcher adopted an experimental research design. The sample of the study which was purposefully chosen consisted of (63) students. The experimental group included (32) students taught reading comprehension by scaffolding techniques, while the control group included (31) students who were taught reading comprehension by an ordinary way.

T-test Independent Sample was used to measure the differences in reading comprehension skills between the experimental group and control group in the post test. Furthermore, the effectiveness of scaffolding strategy was measured by “Effect Size” technique to ensure that the effect on the levels of the reading comprehension skills had not taken place accidentally. The results of the study indicated that there were statistically significant differences between the mean scores of the experimental group and those of the control group in favour of the experimental group. The differences were attributed to the use of scaffolding strategy. Based on the findings, the researcher recommended English language teachers adopt scaffolding strategy in teaching English in general and in teaching reading in particular.

### **Zarandi & Rahbar (2014)**

The purpose of the study was to address effectiveness of interactive strategies of scaffolding on English as a foreign language (EFL) learners' speaking ability. A sample of 60 Iranian EFL learners was selected based on a result of their performance on Oxford Placement Test. Afterward, they took a speaking pretest, and they were randomly assigned to one experimental and one control groups. Interactive strategies of scaffolding were given to experimental group. The control group received routine speaking instruction in ten sessions. Finally, the groups' performance was tested by speaking posttest. The participants were examined in pairs by two examiners. The inter-rater reliability of the examiners was calculated. The results of paired-samples t-test indicated that interactive scaffolding strategies were effective in enhancing EFL learners' speaking ability. The findings of this study provided insights for EFL teachers in a way that they found scaffolding provided the teachers both with the learners' actual level of performance and with their learning potential. They could prescribe different individual learning plans for learners with different learning needs.

### **Gagné and Parks (2013)**

This research aimed to investigate how children in intensive sixth grade ESL classroom interact and scaffold each other while doing cooperative learning activities. The researchers found out that while carrying out cooperative learning tasks, learners provided scaffolding and assisted each other through the use of strategies that included co-construction and other correction. The participants were (29) students in Quebec, Canada. The data analysis found out that students were working as a group and used different types of scaffolding strategies including request for assistance, co-construction, continuer, other-correction, and use of resources. The students were working in teams and were actively involved in scaffolding each other's language

production. Although the students resorted to a variety of strategies, the two most commonly used scaffolding strategies were request for assistance (53.9%) and other correction (23.9%). The findings of the study showed that peers collaborated and used peer-peer scaffolding techniques in constructing oral and written language which led to 73% of successful tasks.

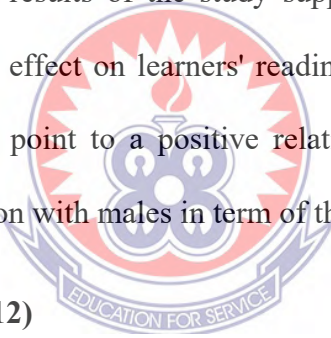
### **Samana (2013)**

This study investigated the scaffolding interaction and the learning development resulting from the interaction in a classroom while students were doing pair work. It presented only the scaffolding provided by the teacher of the classroom and by classmates. As the participants were EFL university students with low English proficiency, they enrolled on an English course. They were seven females and five males (18- 19 years old). The research compared the scaffolding strategies used by the teacher to by the classmates. The participants were given collaborative pairs tasks; each task was audio recorded. The scaffolding interactions were counted and analyzed. In addition, the participants were interviewed to give reflections on their interaction. The data in the study was based on audio recordings collected while the participants were pairing up to do eight (8) tasks at the end of each classroom session. The findings of the study were; not only the teacher can scaffold students, students with low level of English proficiency can also successfully scaffold their peers; scaffolded assistance can be from the teacher and from the students. The interview showed that they wanted to try by themselves before getting the teacher's support. It was found that the students with low level of proficiency tended to request help from the teacher (58%) more than from their classmates (41%). The data further revealed that out of the teacher's scaffolded assistance, (87%) led to positive outcomes. Out of students' scaffolded assistance, (49%) led to positive outcomes.



**Bassiri (2012)**

The purposes of the study were to examine the impact of scaffolding on reading comprehension, motivation and attitude in Iranian L2 classroom and the possible impact of gender. The participants of this study were 34 intermediate learners of English affiliated to an English language institute in Iran. They were both male and female. They were chosen on the basis of their performance on a pre-test administered among the intermediate level learners. Then, they were randomly divided into two groups of scaffolding and non-scaffolding. They received one semester of instruction (17 sessions). At the end of each session their reading comprehension was tested by quizzes whose average score were later used for the assessment of each student' overall performance. The results of the study supported the initial predictions that scaffolding has a positive effect on learners' reading comprehension and motivation scores. The findings also point to a positive relationship between female learners' achievements in comparison with males in term of their reading and motivation.



**Safadi and Rababah (2012)**

The study implemented a scaffolding instruction program, which lasted for 9 weeks, to find out its impact on 11th grade Jordanian EFL learners' reading comprehension skills. The control group comprised 55 students (2 classes), while the experimental group comprised 52 students (2 classes). Using scaffolding instruction, the experimental group was taught three units selected from the participants' English textbook, while the control group was taught the same units with no scaffolding. Pre- and post-test procedure was used to measure the impact of the scaffolding program on the students' achievement. One-way analysis of co-variance (ANCOVA) was used to measure any statistically significant differences in the mean scores of both groups. Multivariate analysis of covariance (MANCOVA) was also used to find any

significant differences in their posttest mean scores. Results of the study showed that there are significant differences in the subjects' achievement in reading comprehension skills, in favor of the experimental group.

### **Attarzadeh (2011)**

This study drew upon experimental design to examine the effects of scaffolding language on learning reading comprehension of various text modes on Iranian EFL learners with different levels of language proficiency. 180 EFL learners were randomly selected and divided into three groups of low, mid and high proficiency through the TOEFL language proficiency test. They were taught different text types such as narrations, argumentations, descriptions and explanations. The scaffolded groups were exposed to a constructivist-interactive model of learning while the non-scaffolded groups were subjected to the traditional individual reading. At the end of the treatment provision period, a post test was administered. A two-way ANOVA was performed. The findings suggested a choice in favor of scaffolded narrative text types for mid-level of learners. The findings support the idea of the effects of scaffolding language on learning reading comprehension.

### **Huggins and Edwards (2011)**

This study aimed at assessing the effectiveness of utilizing instructional scaffolding in reading and writing courses on the college level. The purpose was to determine if instructional scaffolding would make an impact on students' reading and writing performance. Results show that the scaffolding tools in the classroom can help to improve reading comprehension. Instructional scaffolding activities included giving students a graphic organizer so they could organize their thoughts, reading the poem aloud, engaging students in dialog as the students defined terms, asking probing

questions, making a few interpretive remarks, and having students to re-read the poem and record facts and conclusions on the graphic organizer. In summary, students gained a better understanding of the poem. The graphic organizer, a type of scaffold, encouraged students to think about information in new ways. Results show that graphic organizers, as scaffolding tools in the classroom, can help to improve reading comprehension, and students can benefit in several ways when teachers scaffold the process of writing a research paper. Research suggested that providing assistance and support to students through instructional scaffolding optimizes student learning.

### **Pishghadam and Ghadiri (2011)**

The main purpose of this study was to compare the effect of Symmetrical (S) and Asymmetrical (AS) scaffolding on reading comprehension of adult learners in an English as a foreign language (EFL) setting in Iran. The comparison is between the theory of Vygotsky and Piaget's in cognitive development. This study was conducted on 52 participants. Two types of instrumentation were used the pre-test utilized in the process of the research was a reading comprehension test, a post-test was administered to the students at the end of the study in order to compare the students' performance after treatment. The second instrument was an interview. At the end of the study, the S and AS groups took the post-test in order to compare the subjects' performance on this test after treatment. The students' interviews were conducted in Persian (mother tongue). These interviews were, then, transcribed and analyzed. The findings of this study revealed that AS scaffolding is more effective than S scaffolding in promoting English reading comprehension achievement. The interviews revealed that most of the respondents were highly motivated to cooperate with more competent students since they believed that their presence would enhance

their progress. This may imply that AS scaffolding instruction is vital to improving EFL learners' reading comprehension.

### **Sukyadi and Hasanah (2010)**

The study tried to investigate the effectiveness of using think-aloud instructional scaffolding in teaching reading to the first year students of a Senior High School in Indonesia. The study employed quantitative method, with quasi experimental design called non-equivalent control group. The data were obtained from pretest, posttest and questionnaire, and were analyzed using t-test, eta square, and ANOVA. In addition, qualitative interview was used to triangulate the data and elaborate the results. The findings revealed that despite some limitations, the teaching program was successful. The two groups started from a similar level in pretest, however, the experimental group performed better on reading comprehension than the control group did in the Post-test, indicating that think-aloud improved students' reading comprehension better than the standard teaching strategy. The questionnaire addressed to the experimental group also showed that the respondents used reading strategies better after the implementation of think-aloud.

### **Mehdian (2009)**

This study exposed seventeen secondary school leavers, who were attending a language school to improve their English language, to eight-week intervention (35 hours) after which they all sat for a posttest. The participant teacher used modeling and carefully prepared scaffolding strategies. He offered personalized scaffolding, in addition to guided practice for pair and group work. The students made use of the second level of apprenticeship by working together, by thinking together and by making their thinking process visible to themselves and to the other students as well.

Think-aloud process, cueing, prompting, and group discussions were also applied. Gradually, the students were offered more reading tasks and were asked to try their best to perform them independently. Data were collected using observation field notes, students' reflections, insights from the final interview and the overall feedback obtained from the peer observation sessions. The comparison between the pre and posttest scores of all students revealed better performance on the posttest. It was also found that the scaffolding provided was effective in terms of building self-confidence, better students' reflections, and better reading and comprehension.

### **Burch (2007)**

The study examined scaffolding of ten first graders in reading and writing. She used Developmental Reading assessment, checklists, observational data, writing samples, running records and other data collection techniques. Teachers' scaffolding techniques included specific prompts, guided reading and writing groups, direct and explicit teaching, mini lessons, small group instruction, and instruction driven by performance-based assessment. The study revealed that the use of scaffolding was of great importance and effectiveness. Its importance stems from being an effective means of moving students from being at risk of failure to confident, independent, and self-regulated learners. The study revealed consistent progress among students when supported and scaffolded in their literacy acquisition. Their reading and writing performance exceeded the expected level.

### **Chi (2007)**

This study investigated and compared scaffolding strategies employed by two EFL teachers. Primary goals were to investigate and compare scaffolding strategies used by these teachers in the process of instructing more and less proficient students, as

well as most effective strategies perceived by each group of students. To attain these goals, the researcher amassed data from multiple sources: instructional data, semi-structured oral interviews, and reading comprehension tests before and after the instruction. As for data analysis, episodes were first sorted out; thematic analyses were then used to group relevant episodes into themes. Four themes on scaffolding instruction were generated as discussion framework. Semi-structured oral interviewing shed more light on how more and less proficient students' perceived effective strategies used on them. The results showed implementing scaffolding strategy effectively in the process of instruction students' reading comprehension upgraded students' reading comprehension.

#### **Vethamani and Nair (2007)**

This study was carried out to identify the types and characteristics of scaffolding utilized by teacher trainees during peer discussion in their attempts to comprehend short stories. The focus of the study was the teacher trainees' use of analogy. This paper reports on the teacher trainees' use of analogy in the process of trying to understand literary texts. A study of tape scripts made it evident that subjects used analogy as a form of scaffolding to assist their partners' understanding. The subjects for this study consisted of sixteen Bachelor of Education. These teacher trainees were involved in the study of short stories as one of the components in the English Studies programme for one semester. Hence, they were accustomed to reading and discussing literary texts. Since the purpose of this study was to look into ways low and high proficiency trainee teachers respond to, subjects were selected based on the proficiency test administered by the researchers. From a total of 96 trainee teachers, 16 subjects consisting of 8 high and 8 low proficiency subjects were selected. They were paired at random and each dyad consisted of one high and one low proficiency

subject. This was necessary to allow scaffolding to take place where a capable peer can assist a novice in comprehending literary texts.

### **Culican, Milburn, and Oakley (2006)**

This study used “scaffolding literacy program” as a literacy intervention approach on at risk students and within the mainstream classrooms in Melbourne, Australia. The project aimed to improve the literacy outcomes for middle year’s students who were facing critical educational problems. A total of 95 educationally disadvantaged students were involved. The project was based on Development Assessment Resource for Teachers (DART) instrument, selected pre and post assessment purposefully designed to collect data on the scaffolding literacy impact, classroom observation and samples of students’ work. School based-data along with students and teachers’ interviews were conducted. In the interviews, teachers said they were able to detect positive impact on students’ knowledge and literacy skills. Both primary and secondary teachers reported the improvement of the comprehension skills along with the improvement on the mechanics of writing and structure in the students’ writing. Students’ self-confidence, development of higher order skills, analysis and critical thinking were also observed by the teachers. The students expressed their satisfaction and awareness of their skills enhancement after being exposed to the scaffolding literacy approach. This kind of awareness motivated them to acknowledge how they learn and the skills required to improve their learning. It was recommended to apply scaffolding literacy in the middle years schooling for its significant impact on the students’ progress and on the teachers’ practices and recognition of their students’ potentials.

## 2.4. Theoretical Framework

The theory that guided the study was the *Vygotsky's Sociocultural Theory* (SCT). Constructivists believe learners create meaning by building upon previous experiences. The acquisition of knowledge is a learner-centered, hands-on process where students construct new ideas or concepts and fit those ideas and concepts into their existing knowledge (Schuh & Barab, 2008). Johnson et al. (2005) also similarly argue that construction of knowledge takes place during play, exploration, manipulation of objects and materials, and imitation. Hands-on exploration of the learning environment and its materials through problem solving as well as opportunities for creative expression are keys to learning (Bodrova & Leong, 2005).

There has been a move from behaviorism to constructivism in educational psychology. Constructivists posit that the learner constructs knowledge rather than passively absorbing it (Katz, 1996). Vygotsky's theory represents a transition from classical to non-classical psychology (Robbins & Stetsenko, 2002). Vygotsky criticized the behaviorist approach as being too narrow, specialized, isolated and intrapersonal. Vygotsky's sociocultural theory (SCT) views on language learning provide a psycholinguistic explanation of the sociocultural circumstances and processes through which pedagogy can foster learning that leads to language development (Nassaji & Cumming, 2000). The basic theme of the Vygotskian theory is that learning takes place in social settings. Vygotsky was more interested in the learning potential that a child might have and what the child might accomplish with the guidance of adults or older peers (Vygotsky, 1978). In Vygotsky's work and the neo-Vygotskians such as Cole (1996), Lantolf and Appel (1994), and Wertsch (1998, 1991, 1985), one finds a theoretical perspective in which language is understood as mediating and it derives its mediating cognitive functions from social activities, that is



to say, not in isolated individual activities. In the Vygotskian perspective, knowledge is not individually constructed, but co-constructed between two people under guidance or in collaboration with more capable peers. Learners move from one lower level to a higher level. This guidance or collaboration is named later “scaffolding”.

According to Walqui; Burch; and Mahmoud (2006, 2015), the main tenet of Vygotsky’s learning theory can be summarized in five points: Learning precedes development, Language is the main vehicle (tool) of thought, Mediation is central to learning, Social interaction and internalization, The Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD).

### ***Applying the theory to the study***

From the five elements of the sociocultural theory as advanced by Vygotsky, the import or the central theme is the learner being guided or led by a more experienced person by way of activity. Applying the theme to the current study, it can be established that an activity such as scaffolding which is used by the teacher to enhance the learner’s ability to read and understand sets in tune with what the study says. In other words, the teacher who is a more knowledgeable person thus leads the learner to achieve the purpose of reading and comprehension by using scaffolding strategy.

## 2.5. Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework of a study basically represents the system of concepts, assumptions, expectations, beliefs, and theories that support and inform one's research (Miles & Huberman, 1994). Robson, (2011) as cited in Miles and Huberman (1994) defined a conceptual framework as a visual or written product, one that “explains, either graphically or in narrative form, the main things to be studied i.e. the key factors, concepts, or variables and the presumed relationships among them” (p. 18). The key concepts and variables of this study are Reading comprehension, scaffolding strategy and learners as well as teachers.



One major aspect of the English Language curriculum across continents is the Reading Comprehension. Reading comprehension lessons have ways of improving learners' proficiency, comprehension skills and over all development of English Language. In Ghana, English language has been adopted as a lingua franca (official language for government business). It is therefore very important for teachers to adopt child-centred strategies that facilitate and promote the learning of the language in Ghana.

Scaffolding strategy after reviewing many literatures has been discovered as an emerging child-centred approach that supports learners when used by teachers of

English language. A strategy that bridges the gap between what the learner knows and what he/she does not know. It has been described as an enabler of learning.

The concept map above depicts the aspect of English language, Reading Comprehension which is the focus of the study. Reading Comprehension is the Dependent Variable. It then explains the intervening variable, the child-centred approach under consideration (scaffolding strategy) as a tool that the researcher seeks to assess its knowledge and use in English Language reading comprehension classroom in basic six classrooms. When a classroom teacher employs the scaffolding strategy he does not use it in isolation, but with learners to achieve an objective in the classroom. The teachers and learners in this regard represent the independent variable. It is therefore crucial to assess and examine the knowledge and use of the scaffolding strategy (intervening variable) by teachers with the learners (independent variable) in primary six classrooms to ascertain some implications in reading comprehension (dependent variable) lessons. The theories likely to be derived to affirm or refute existing theories on scaffolding strategy are teacher's knowledge and use, common techniques of scaffolding used by teachers, impact on learners' attitudes and challenges encountered in employing the strategy.

## **2.6 Summary**

This chapter discussed Reading and Reading Comprehension, Definitions of Reading Comprehension and its importance. It further considered Reading Aloud/oral Vs. Silent Reading, Strategies to Teach Students Text Comprehension, Models of Reading comprehension, Levels of Reading Comprehension and Teaching Reading Comprehension Skills Stages in Classrooms. This chapter also discussed the scaffolding strategy with focus on the origin of the term scaffolding and its

definitions. Then, the researcher looked at the history, importance and theory/theoretical basis of scaffolding, the features/ characteristics, contexts and techniques were then presented, the important issues that go into implementing scaffolding for teaching reading comprehension were also considered and some of the challenges of scaffolding were also outlined. Then it looked at the Empirical Studies (Previous Studies on scaffolding) and ended with the Theoretical and Conceptual Frameworks.



## CHAPTER THREE

### METHODOLOGY

#### 3.0 Overview

This chapter outlines the methodology that was employed in conducting the study. It discusses the following sub-headings: Philosophical underpinning; research approaches; type of research design; researcher's role; data collection procedure; population; sample and sampling techniques; instruments; managing and recording data; validity and reliability of data, data analysis procedures and ethical considerations.

#### 3.1 Philosophical Underpinning

The word Paradigm was first used by Thomas Kuhn in 1962 to represent a Philosophical way of thinking (Kivunja & Kuyini, 2017). A Paradigm can be understood as a set of beliefs that represents a worldview (Guba & Lincoln, 1994). It can also be defined as a mental model or a framework of thought or belief through which one interprets the reality. A paradigm speaks about researcher's philosophical orientation which decides ontology, epistemology, methodology & methods to be used. It reflects the researcher's abstract beliefs that guide his interpretation of reality. It also helps the researcher to grasp the clear picture of the world. A researcher is undertaking his research journey under the framework of some paradigms, whether he is aware of it or not. Paradigm decides how a researcher should view a phenomenon and which research methodology to use to study those phenomena (Tuli, 2010).

Paradigms are thus important because they provide beliefs and dictates, which, for scholars in a particular discipline, influence what should be studied, how it should be

studied, and how the results of the study should be interpreted (Kivunja and Kuyini, 2017).

According to Atieno (2009), a paradigm can be understood either as an approach or a design. So, there are some paradigms which are favourable for quantitative approach while there are others which are favourable for qualitative approach and yet there are some other paradigms which are favourable for both approaches known as mixed method approach (Mackenzie & Knipe, 2006). There are a number of paradigms which are competing against each other. The three most used types of paradigms that will give the essence of the entire research process are: Positivism, Interpretivism and Pragmatism (Diwakar, 2019).

This study was anchored on the pragmatist philosophy. “Pragmatism was born out of paradigm war between two diametrically opposite worldview as proposed by Positivist on the one hand and Interpretivist on the other hand” (Kivunja & Kuyini, 2017, p.10). Some philosophers felt that in order to understand the reality of the world, neither the scientific methods as proposed by positivism paradigm nor socially constructed reality proposed by interpretivism paradigm is sufficient (Kivunja & Kuyini, 2017). They feel that instead of focusing on mono-paradigmatic approach, it is better to focus on a worldview that supports the methods of research to understand the research problem under study (Kivunja & Kuyini, 2017). So, they advocated a pluralistic and practical approach to understand the phenomenon at hand. It does not belong to any one philosophical school or the nature of reality (Diwakar, 2019).

The pragmatist paradigm was chosen because the researcher desired to make the research more meaningful and legitimate since research conducted within this

framework is free to use the methodology of qualitative research (interpretivism) as well as quantitative research (positivism) paradigms.

### **3.2 Research Approach**

Creswell (2014) explains that research approaches are plans and the procedures for research that span the steps from broad assumptions to detailed methods of data collection, analysis, and interpretation. This plan involves several decisions. The overall decision involves which approach should be used to study a topic. Informing this decision should be the philosophical assumptions the researcher brings to the study; procedures of inquiry (called research designs); and specific research methods of data collection, analysis, and interpretation. The selection of a research approach is also based on the nature of the research problem or issue being addressed, the researchers' personal experiences, and the audiences for the study.

In line with the pragmatist paradigm, the study employed the mixed methods research approach that is, both quantitative and qualitative research approaches.

Burke-Johnson et al. (2007) define mixed methods as “The type of research in which researchers combine elements of qualitative and quantitative research approaches for the broad purposes of breadth and depth of understanding and corroboration (p.9). Mixed methods may be defined as “research in which the investigator collects, and analyses data, integrates the findings and draws inferences using both qualitative and quantitative approaches in a single study” (Tashakkori and Creswell, 2007, p.4). This means that researcher employs two different approaches in data collection, analysis which culminate into the findings drawn from the study. Greene (2007) therefore believes that this approach provides researchers with opportunities to compensate for inherent method weaknesses, or inherent method strengths, and offset inevitable

method biases. To him, the weaknesses in one approach will be complemented by the strength of the other which will lead to people having confidence in the findings, since any biases would have been dealt with as a result.

Creswell and Plano-Clark (2011) comment that this approach enables a greater degree of understanding to be formulated than if a single approach were adopted to specific studies. According to Creswell (2014), mixed methods approach has the following characteristics: One, It involves the collection of both qualitative (open-ended) and quantitative (closed-ended) data in response to research questions or hypotheses. The researcher uses both qualitative and quantitative data instruments to gather information from subjects of the study. Two, it includes the analysis of both forms of data. The researcher who employs this approach ensures the analysis of the two forms of data using different tools. Three, the procedures for both qualitative and quantitative data collection and analysis need to be conducted rigorously (e.g., adequate sampling, sources of information, data analysis steps). Four, the two forms of data are integrated in the design analysis through merging the data, connecting the data, or embedding the data. It means the researcher analyses both data to arrive at a finding. Five, these procedures are incorporated into a distinct mixed method design that also includes the timing of the data collection (concurrent or sequential) as well as the emphasis (equal or unequal) for each database. Data can thus be collected at the same time or one after the other depending on the type mixed method approach being used. Six, these procedures can also be informed by a philosophical worldview or a theory.

Mixed methods approach has some strengths. According to Greene et al. (1989), there are distinct justifications for using this approach. Triangulation provides opportunities for convergence and corroboration of results that are derived from different research



methods. Complementarity “seeks elaboration, enhancement, illustration, clarification of the results from one method with the results from another”. Development sees researchers utilizing the results from one method to inform another method which covers all aspects of the inquiry. Initiation involves the discoveries of contradictions or inconsistencies within the data sets which can result in the reformulation of questions or additional questions being raised.

The challenges with this approach are that: One, it is critical that researchers are aware of their skills sets and whether they are able to cope with the demands of utilizing a mixed methods approach (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011). Two, deciding which mixed method research design is most appropriate for your particular study can be very demanding. It will depend upon where you feel your project lies on the continuum of research approaches. The researcher has to decide also whether the approach will be purely mixed which gives equal status to both quantitative and qualitative information or will it be dominated by one approach or the other (Burke-Johnson et al., 2007). Three, data collection is quite extensive. This is because the researcher will collect two or more different forms of data for the study. Four, it is also time-intensive in nature. Much time is needed for collecting and analyzing both qualitative and quantitative data. Five, it requires the researcher to be familiar with both quantitative and qualitative forms of research. Lack of familiarity with both forms of research can hinder the progress of the study. Six, the complexity of the design also calls for clear, visual models to understand the details and the flow of research activities in this design (Creswell, 2014).

At a general level, mixed methods approach is chosen because of its strength of drawing on both qualitative and quantitative research and minimizing the limitations of both approaches. At a practical level, mixed method provides a sophisticated,

complex approach to research that appeals to those on the forefront of new research procedures (Creswell, 2014).

The researcher used this approach because the researcher used both quantitative data collection instrument (Questionnaires) and Qualitative data collection instruments (Interviews and observations) in this research to increase confidence in the findings. The use of this approach offered the researcher “the opportunity to compensate for inherent individual approach weaknesses, or inherent approach strengths, and offset inevitable approach biases” (Creswell, 2014, p.31).

### **3.3 Research Design**

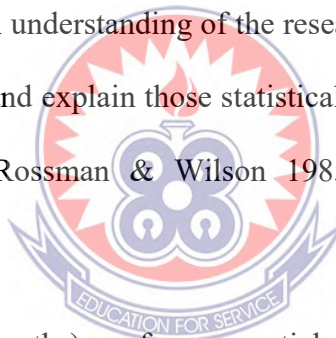
The design of a research is to show the procedures the researcher employs in conducting the research and the condition in which the research data is obtained.

Owu-Ewie (2012) observes that a research design is the procedure the researcher employs to achieve accurate and valid answers to research questions. Leedy (1997) defines research design as a plan for a study, providing the overall framework for collecting data. For Burns and Grove (2003), research design is a blue-print for conducting a study with maximum control over factors that may interfere with the validity of the findings. Their view is supported by Kothari (2008) who believes that research design is a plan, a roadmap, and blueprint of investigation conceived in order to obtain answers to research questions. Thus, research design is a model or action plan upon which the entire study is built. It dictates the manner in which a study is conducted and provides the roadmap of the study in terms of sample, data collection, instruments and analysis of data.

The Research Design for the study is Sequential Explanatory Design. The mixed-methods sequential explanatory design is highly popular among researchers and

implies collecting and analyzing first quantitative and then qualitative data in two consecutive phases within one study (Janz et al., 1996). The mixed-methods sequential explanatory design consists of two distinct phases: quantitative followed by qualitative (Creswell et al., 2003). In this design, a researcher first collects and analyzes the quantitative (numeric) data. The qualitative (text) data are collected and analyzed, second, in the sequence and help explain, or elaborate on, the quantitative results obtained in the first phase. The second, qualitative, phase builds on the first, quantitative, phase, and the two phases are connected in the intermediate stage in the study (Creswell et al. 2003).

The rationale for this approach is that the quantitative data and their subsequent analysis provide a general understanding of the research problem. The qualitative data and their analysis refine and explain those statistical results by exploring participants' views in more depth (Rossman & Wilson 1985; Tashakkori & Teddlie 1998; Creswell, 2003).



The advantages (strengths) of sequential explanatory design include straightforwardness and opportunities for the exploration of the quantitative results in more detail. This design can be especially useful when unexpected results arise from a quantitative study (Morse 1991).

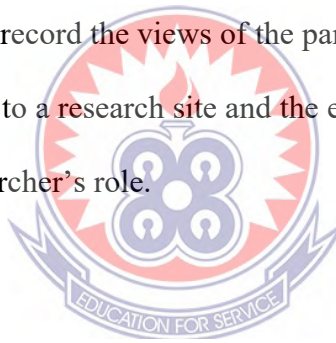
The limitations of this design are the lengthy time and feasibility of resources to collect and analyze both types of data.

The researcher decided to use these mixed methods design to achieve the purpose of the study in the new Juaben South Municipality. First, the researcher collected quantitative data through questionnaires. The data and its subsequent analysis provided a general understanding of the research problem. Secondly, the researcher

collected qualitative data through interviews and observation and presented the findings for analysis. This helped in refining and explaining the statistical results when participants' views were explored in more depth. The researcher, believed; the use of this design helped in building confidence in the research findings.

### **3.4 Researcher's role**

The researcher developed and adopted the questionnaire, observation sheet/ checklist, interview guide where necessary. The researcher with the help of colleagues at the work place visited the setting of the study to administer the quantitative data instrument (questionnaires) to teachers and learners after a pilot test has been conducted. The researcher in collecting qualitative data personally went to the school to observe, interview and record the views of the participants of the study for analysis. In addition, gaining entry to a research site and the ethical issues that might arise were also elements of the researcher's role.



### **3.5 Population**

According to Agyedu, Donkor and Obeng (2011), population in research is the complete set of individuals (subjects), objects or events with common observable features for which a researcher is interested in studying. It is also regarded as the larger group from which individuals are selected to participate in a study. A population is also defined as a group of individuals or people with the same characteristics and in whom the researcher is interested (Blanche, 1999). Kusi (2012, p. 80) also defines population as "a group of individuals that the researcher generalizes his/her findings". The population for the study was all primary school teachers and learners in New Juaben South Municipality. Statistics from the New Juaben South Municipal Education Directorate indicate that there are fifty-four (54)

primary schools in the municipality. Out of this number, forty-four (44) are public primary schools and ten (10) are privately owned. There are 446 public primary school teachers and 22,340 pupils in all public primary schools in the Municipality.

### **3.5.1 Target Population**

The New Juaben South Municipality has seven (7) circuits. The Oguaa circuit where the research was conducted per statistics from the Municipal education office has ten (10) primary schools with a teacher population of 65 and 3,191 primary school learners. The target population for this study was all Sixty Five (65) primary school teachers and Three Thousand, One Hundred and Ninety One (3,191) learners in the Oguaa Circuit of the New Juaben South Municipality. All the primary schools in the circuit were used for the study because; that is where the problem of the study was identified, the researcher saw the number of schools as convenient for the study.

### **3.5.2 Accessible Population**

Johnson & Christensen (2012) assert that accessible population is the research participants who are available for participation in a given research. Therefore, the accessible population for this research is all the ten (10) primary six schools teachers and Four Hundred and One primary six learners. Each primary school in the circuit on the average has one primary six teacher who also teaches English language.

### **3.6 Sample and Sampling**

A sample can be defined as “a group of relatively smaller number of people selected from a population for investigation purpose” (Alvi, 2016, p.12). The members of the sample are called participants. Sampling is the process through which a sample is selected from a population (Alvi, 2016. p.12). In investigation, it is impossible to assess every single element of a population so a group of people (smaller in number

than the population) is selected for the assessment. On the basis of information obtained from the sample, the inferences are drawn for the population. The more the samples are representative of the population, the higher is the accuracy of the inferences and better are the results generalizable. A sample is said to be representative when the characteristics of elements selected are similar to that of entire target population. The results are said to be generalizable when the findings obtained from the sample are equally true for the entire target population (Alvi, 2016, p.12).

### **3.7 Sampling Techniques**

Sampling techniques are broadly categorized into two major types: Probability sampling methods and Non-probability sampling methods. Probability sampling (random sampling) is also called representative sampling. Alvi, (2016, p.13) asserts that “in probability sampling every member of the population has a known (non-zero) probability of being included in the sample.” Some form of random selection is used. The probabilities can be assigned to each unit of the population objectively. Non-Probability sampling is also known as judgmental or non-random sampling. Every unit of population does not get an equal chance of participation in the investigation. No random selection is made. The selection of the sample is made on the basis of subjective judgment of the investigator. (Alvi, 2016, p.14).

Due to the type of approach being used, that is mixed methods, sampling requires an understanding and acknowledgement of the sampling strategies that occur in qualitative and quantitative research. Probability sampling techniques are used most often in quantitative research to obtain a sample that most accurately represents the entire population (Graff, 2017). However, purposive (non- probability) sampling

techniques are used mainly in qualitative research to select participants or other units of study who can provide or yield data that will address the research questions (Graff, 2017).

Mixed methods therefore must include features of both purposive and probability sampling. The researcher employed multiple sampling techniques. It involved both the use of probability sampling techniques (Simple random and stratified random sample techniques) and non-probability sampling techniques (Purposive sampling).

### **3.7.1 Stratified Random Sampling**

This type of sampling method is used when population is heterogeneous. i.e. every element of population does not match all the characteristics of the predefined criteria. The elements (learners) differ from one another on a characteristic. So, the sub-groups are formed that are homogenous i.e. all the elements within a group contains same kind of characteristics (keep in mind, those characteristics are to be taken into account that defines the target population). The sub groups are called as strata (single stratum). The topic and nature of the investigation tells what criterion the strata are to be made (Alvi, 2016). The criterion based on which the strata were made was gender.

Learners in class six in each school were put into two strata (sub-groups) based on gender (male and female) before samples of two from each stratum were randomly selected to participate in the study in term their involvement in quantitative data collection. This was done to avoid gender bias in choosing/ selecting participants for the study. Generally, all the ten schools earmarked for the study virtually have equally good number of male and female learners. In all, 40 learners were sampled for this study. Because this research uses a mixed methods approach, 10 percent of the

learners were sampled. Gay and Airasian (2003) suggest that the sample size in quantitative studies should be between 10%-20% of the accessible population.

### 3.7.2 Simple random sampling

Alvis (2016, p.17) explains that simple random sample means that every case of the population has an equal probability of inclusion in the sample. In this type of sampling, each and every element of the population has an equal chance of being selected in the sample. The population must contain a finite number of elements that can be listed or mapped. Every element must be mutually exclusive i.e. able to distinguish from one another and does not have any overlapping characteristics. The population must be homogenous i.e. every element contains same kind of characteristics that meets the described criteria of target population.

Disadvantages associated with simple random sampling include (Ghauri and Gronhaug, 2005): One, a complete frame (a list of all units in the whole population) is needed. This implies that all subjects must be included for sampling. Two, in some studies, such as surveys by personal interviews, the costs of obtaining the sample can be high if the units are geographically widely scattered. This means, visiting each subject to collect data especially qualitative data through interviews might affect the researcher's finances due to different locations of participants. Three, the standard errors of estimators can be high. It is possible to sample for instance, only boys in an accessible population which has equal number of girls.

Simple random was used to sample learners so each learner in class six in each of the ten (10) primary schools had equal chance of being included in the study. Simple random sampling was employed after learners in basic six in each of the ten schools were independently put into strata of boys and girls for the collection of quantitative



data. In all, 40 learners were randomly sampled as far as quantitative data collection of the study was concerned.

### **3.7.3 Purposive or judgmental sampling**

Purposive or judgmental sampling is a strategy in which particular settings, persons or events are selected deliberately in order to provide important information that cannot be obtained from other choices (Maxwell, 1996). The New Juaben South Municipality was purposively sampled for the study because the municipality has a good number of public primary schools to be considered for the study. The municipality has seven (7) circuits. The circuit used for the study was the Oguaa Circuit. All the ten (10) public primary schools in the circuit were purposively sampled for the study. This is because, the problem of the study was identified there and a large number of the public primary schools in municipality were found in the circuit. Again, the public primary schools in the circuit are mixed schools with equally good number of learners who are boys and girls as well as male and female teachers.

The study was conducted at the basic stage six classes of the ten (10) primary schools in the circuit. Basic stage Six (6) classes were purposively chosen because the problem of the study was specifically found there. Also, the learners were quite mature to respond to items in the questionnaire and also were able to share their opinion on issues during the interview. Also, basic six stage class is a transition class from where the learners move to the final stage of their basic education. Therefore, all ten (10) primary school teachers in each of the ten schools were purposively sampled for the study for the collection of quantitative data, while five (5) of them were purposively sampled for collection of qualitative data. With regard to the learners, ten (10) out of forty (40) of them were purposively sampled for the collection of

qualitative data. Taherdoost (2016) opines that the researcher includes cases or participants in the sample because he believes that they deserve inclusion. All the basic six (6) teachers teach English Language in addition to other subjects and therefore merited inclusion in the study since their number is also convenient for the researcher to collect both quantitative and qualitative data from within a specific period of time in addition to the learners who were sampled.

The participants selected depended on the results of the quantitative data. The quantitative results typically inform the types of participants to be purposefully selected for the qualitative phase and the types of questions that will be asked of the participants (Creswell, 2014).

Creswell (2005, p.151), further suggests that selecting a large number of interviewees (participants) “results in superficial perspectives... the overall ability of a researcher to provide an in-depth picture diminishes with the addition of each new individual or site”. Data saturation could however, increase or decrease the sub-set of the sample size selected. Data saturation is reached when there is enough information to replicate the study (O’Reilly & Parker, 2012; Walker, 2012), when the ability to obtain additional new information has been attained (Guest et al., 2006), and when further coding is no longer feasible (Guest et al., 2006).

The participants (both teachers and learners) were given questionnaires to respond to initially and the results analyzed. After this, a sub-set of the participants was observed during English Language reading comprehension lesson from the beginning to the end. They were also interviewed in their school environment and data analyzed. The key idea is that the qualitative data collection will build directly on the quantitative results (Creswell, 2014).

The participants that were sampled for qualitative data collection i.e. five (5) teachers and 10 learners were code-named as ET1, ET2, ET3, ET4, ET5... and EL1, EL2, EL3, EL4, EL5, EL6, EL7, EL8, EL9, EL10... respectively.

### **3.8 Research Instruments**

The researcher collected primary data (both quantitative and qualitative) from the participants. The researcher used questionnaires to gather quantitative data; and observation and interview to gather qualitative data from the participants. The instruments for gathering data (Questionnaires, Interview guide/ observation checklist) were developed by the researcher.

#### **3.8.1 Questionnaires**

Questionnaires are doubtless one of the primary sources of obtaining data in any research endeavor. However, the critical point is that when designing a questionnaire, the researcher should ensure that it is “valid, reliable and unambiguous” (Richards & Schmidt, 2002, p. 438). On the whole, questionnaires can appear in three types: closed-ended (or structured) questionnaires, open-ended (or unstructured) questionnaires and a mixture of closed-ended and open-ended questionnaires.

As a matter of fact, closed-ended questionnaires provide the inquirer with quantitative or numerical data (Zohrabi, 2013). Blaxter et al. (2006, p.170) divide questionnaires into “seven basic question types: quantity or information category, list or multiple choice, scale, ranking, complex grid or table, and open-ended.” Generally, a questionnaire might make use of one or several types of these question forms. The researcher therefore administered closed ended (structured) questionnaires to all the respondents i.e. teachers (10) and learners (40) to collect the quantitative data on broad topics based on the research questions.

### 3.8.2 Classroom Observation

Observation is a preplanned research tool which is carried out purposefully to serve research questions and objectives. It was used as one of the techniques for collecting qualitative data during the study. When using this method, the researcher observes the “classroom interactions and events, as they actually occur” (Burns, 1999, p. 80). Flick (2006, p. 219) also argues that observation “is an attempt to observe events as they naturally occur.” More importantly, observation enables the researcher to combine it with questionnaires and interviews to collect “relatively objective firsthand information” (Johnson & Turner, 2003, p. 314). To this end, Merriam (1998, p. 96) believes that observation is a kind of data triangulation in order to “substantiate the findings.” Fraenkel and Wallen (2003, p. 453) state that the observers “study the subjective factors objectively.”

However, Nation (1997, p. 276) contends that the researchers try to study the “representations of behaviour rather than the behaviour itself.” Observational data represent a firsthand picture of the events, is carried out in a natural field setting and enable the researcher to obtain contextual factors. The researcher used this instrument to enable him ascertain what goes on during reading comprehension lessons to enable him answer the research questions and also achieve the objective of the study. The researcher conducted focused and selected observations which were pertinent to the research objectives and questions (Zohrabi, 2013).

Zohrabi (2013) posits that in general terms, observation can take place through two methods: non-participant and participant. In non-participant observation, the observer only watches and records the classroom activities without any involvement. Burns (1999, p. 82) expresses that the inquirer’s goal “is to remain aloof and distant and to have little or no contact with the subjects of the research.” Also, Fraenkel and Wallen

(2003, p. 451) confirm that “researchers do not participate in the activity being observed but rather sit on the sidelines and watch.” However, in participant observation, the observers enter the classroom and integrate with the students directly. Burns (1999, p. 82) is of the opinion that “The researcher becomes a member of the context and participates in its culture and activities.” In this regard, Flick (2006, p. 220) emphasizes that the observers “dive headlong into the field”. Nevertheless, participant observation has attracted some criticism in the field. For instance, Merriam (1998) notes that the researcher loses sight of the students and their activities. The observer becomes too much involved in the classroom processes which consequently cannot concentrate on selected behaviors and activities.

The researcher conducted non-participant observation to avoid interfering with the activities to be observed in the classroom and in order not to lose track of what to observe and record.

Five lessons in all involving each of the 5 teachers and their learners were observed using an observation checklist. The researcher spent a maximum of 60 minutes in observing each lesson.

### **3.8.3 Interviews**

Creswell, (2014, p.240) posits that in qualitative interviews, the researcher conducts face-to-face interviews with participants, telephone interviews, or engages in focus group interviews with six to eight interviewees in each group. These interviews involve unstructured and generally open-ended questions that are few in number and intended to elicit views and opinions from the participants. The researcher wanted to get firsthand information directly from some knowledgeable informants. The inquirer intends “to obtain a special kind of information” (Merriam, 1998, p. 71) and

investigates for himself/herself what is going on in the respondents' mind. The researcher cannot observe the informants' feelings and thinking, so that interviewing is a key to understand what and how people perceive and "interpret the world around them" (Zohrabi, 2013). Flick (2006, p. 160) adds that the purpose of interview "is to reveal existing knowledge in a way that can be expressed in the form of answers and so become accessible to interpretation."

The researcher therefore employed a face-to-face semi-structured interview with subset of the sampled size (5 teachers and 10 learners) to seek their views and concerns on the topic. The interview was done before observation of lessons involving participants. The interview guide consisted of a formally prepared set of questions and all the participants answered the same questions. The questions were planned and written on paper for the participants to respond to and also served as a guide to the participants and the researcher.

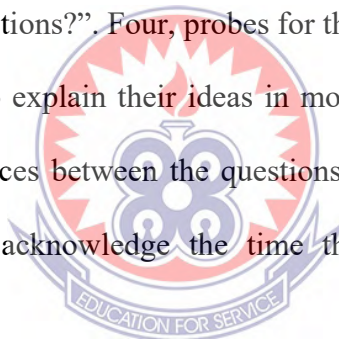
### **3.9 Managing and recording data**

The researcher in person and with support of others sent the questionnaires to all the respondents to respond to. The questionnaires were collected on a stipulated or agreed date. The researcher kept the questionnaires (quantitative data) and later analyzed it.

The researcher conducted a non-participant observation of five lessons in all involving five (5) of the ten (10) teachers and their learners using an already prepared structured and close-ended observation guide. The researcher recorded key aspects of each lesson. For the purposes of the research, the researcher observed these recorded lessons again to complete the observation sheet checklist with findings.

The researcher conducted a semi-structured, open-ended interview, took notes and recorded (audiotape) the interview, and transcribed the interview to complement the notes taken during the interview.

The researcher followed some interview protocols. Creswell, (2014, p.244) suggests that the interview protocols needs to include the following components: One, a heading (date, place, interviewer, interviewee). Two, instructions for the interviewer to follow so that standard procedures are used from one interview to another. Three, the questions (typically an ice-breaker question at the beginning followed by four to five questions that are often the sub-questions in a qualitative research plan, followed by some concluding statement or a question, such as, “Who should I visit with to learn more about my questions?”). Four, probes for the four to five questions, to follow up and ask individuals to explain their ideas in more detail, or to elaborate on what they have said. Five, spaces between the questions to record responses. Six, a final thank-you statement to acknowledge the time the interviewee spent during the interview.



### **3.10 Setting**

The setting of a study basically is the physical, social, or experimental context within which research is conducted. The setting of this study is the New Juaben South Municipality of the Eastern Region of Ghana. Below are some characteristics in terms of population, occupation, and education in the New Juaben South Municipality.

#### **3.10.1 Education**

More than 90 percent of the population aged 11 years and older in the Municipality is literate. Females have higher proportion of not literate population than males. Close

to three quarters (72.0%) of the literate population are literate in English and a Ghanaian language(s). Less than one percent is literate in English and French.

The majority (54.9%) of the population currently in school are in basic schools, i.e., primary and JSS/JHS. Persons in senior secondary schools constitute 12 percent of the population currently in school. The proportion (57.0%) of females in basic schools is higher than that of males (52.8%), but the reverse is the case for those in tertiary education i.e. 9.7 % for females and 15.3% for males (Ghana Statistical Service, (2014).

The New Juaben South Municipality boasts of a number Basic, Senior Schools and Tertiary Institutions (both private and public). The table below presents the number of public schools in the municipality as well as students' enrolment and staffing.

(Table 3.1)

**Number of Public Basic/ Second Cycle Schools in the municipality**

<b>CATEGORY</b>	<b>NUMBER OF SCHOOLS</b>
K.G	43
PRIM	49
JHS	49
SHS/STS	4
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>145</b>



(Table 3.2)

**Students' Enrollment and Staffing In Public Basic and Second Cycle Schools**

CATEGORY	ENROLLMENT			STAFFING		
	BOYS	GIRLS	TOTAL	MALE	FEMALE	TOTAL
K.G	1160	1053	2213	2	200	202
PRIMARY	5431	5652	11083	123	361	484
JHS	3111	3431	6542	244	300	544
SHS / STS	5414	4175	9589	379	96	475
<b>GRAND TOTAL</b>	<b>15116</b>	<b>13321</b>	<b>29427</b>	<b>748</b>	<b>957</b>	<b>1705</b>

**3.11 Validity and Reliability of Quantitative Data and findings.****3.11.1 Validity**

Validity is concerned with whether our research is believable and true and whether it is evaluating what it is supposed or purports to evaluate. It basically has to do with the appropriateness of the instruments for collecting as well as findings of the study. Face and content validity have been defined by McBurney (1994, p. 123) as following: "Face validity is the idea that a test should appear superficially to test what it is suppose to test; and Content validity is the notion that a test should sample the range of behaviours represented by the theoretical concept being tested". These were checked by my supervisors and peers. A pilot assessment was done to ascertain the validity of the instruments using ten (10) Primary Six English Language learners and three (3) primary six English Language teachers in the Adweso Circuit of the New Juaben South Municipality of the Eastern Region. It was embarked upon to assess learners and teachers' response to the items, the clarity, and appropriateness or

otherwise of the items, the need to add or remove some items and correct some mistakes that were not detected initially.

### **3.11.2 Reliability**

Reliability on the other hand, deals with the consistency, dependability and replicability of “the results obtained from a piece of research” (Nunan, 1999, p. 14). It is one of the main requirements of any research process in terms of collection of data and findings. Ruland, Bakken and Roisien in Sintuo (2019) assert that reliability concerns the degree to which an experiment, test, or any measuring procedure yields the same results on repeated trial. A reliability analyses of the piloted questionnaires using Cronbach’s Alpha Coefficient with the aid of the IBM SPSS statistics 20 was done and the result was  $\alpha = 0.75$ . Creswell (2007) opines that Cronbach’s Alpha Reliability Coefficient values of 0.70 and above are considered reliable.

### **3.11.3 Trustworthiness of the Qualitative Data and findings.**

Guba (1981) proposes four criteria that he believes should be considered by qualitative researchers in pursuit of a trustworthy study. These are credibility, transferability, confirmability and dependability.

#### **3. 11.3.1 Credibility:**

Credibility is defined as the confidence that can be placed in the truth of the research findings (Holloway & Wheeler, 2002; Macnee & McCabe, 2008). The researcher used triangulation to show the research study’s findings are credible.

### **3.11.3.2 Transferability**

Transferability refers to the degree to which the results of qualitative research can be transferred to other contexts or settings with other respondents (Bitsch, 2005; Tobin & Begley, 2004). The researcher included thick descriptive data, i.e. a rich and extensive set of details concerning methodology and context to enable judgments about how well the research context fits with other contexts.

### **3.11.3.3 Confirmability**

Confirmability refers to the degree to which the results of the inquiry could be confirmed or corroborated by other researchers as neutral (Baxter & Eyles, 1997). The researcher ensured this through an audit trail of every step of data analysis as well as triangulation of data.

### **3.11.3.4 Dependability**

Dependability involves participants' evaluation of the findings, interpretation and recommendations of the study such that all are supported by the data as received from informants of the study (Cohen et al., 2011; Tobin & Begley, 2004). The researcher ensured this through audit trail and peer examination.



## **3.12 Data Analysis Procedures**

Ten (10) class six teachers and forty (40) learners generally were given questionnaires, five lessons were observed, five teachers and ten pupils were interviewed to assess knowledge and use of scaffolding model as tool for reading comprehension lessons. After the collection of data, the respondents' responses to questionnaires (quantitative data) were entered into the IBM SPSS statistics 20 and

analysis using descriptive statistics tools such as percentages, frequencies, mean and standard deviation.

The recorded class observation results were analyzed by grouping the elements observed into themes and were subsequently analyzed by means of percentages and frequencies. The responses of the teacher and pupils from the interviews were also transcribed and the responses grouped under the broad themes:

Knowledge of the scaffolding model, types of scaffolding techniques, influence of scaffolding model and challenges associated with use of scaffolding model.

The findings of both quantitative and qualitative data were discussed during the research report. The researcher did not use all the qualitative data collected from all the participants. The researcher hand coded the qualitative data. Guest, MacQueen, & Namey, (2012), state “because text and image data are so dense and rich, not all of the information can be used in a qualitative study. Thus, in the analysis of the data, researchers need to “winnow” the data a process of focusing in on some of the data and disregarding other parts of it”. (Creswell, 2013) in agreement asserts that “in qualitative research, the impact of this process is to aggregate data into a small number of themes, something like five to seven themes”.

### **3.13 Ethical Considerations**

The researcher requested a letter from the department of Basic Education addressed to the Municipal Director of Education, New Juaben South seeking permission to conduct research in the Municipality and specifically Oguaa circuit. Permission was also sought from the Regional Manager of Presbyterian Schools because six out of the ten primary schools in that circuit are Presbyterian schools. The School Improvement Support Officer (SISO) of the circuit and Head teachers of the schools were informed

after the permission granted by the Regional Manager of Presbyterian Schools/ or Municipal Director of Education. The nature of the research was explained to them. The consent of the teachers was sought and that of parents for the learners before their participation in the study. The researcher also assured the Head teacher, participants of their confidentiality.

### **3.14 Summary of the Chapter**

In this chapter researcher considered the philosophical underpinnings, research approach, research designs, populations, settings, the sample and sampling techniques, research instruments, data collection and procedures, validity and reliability of the instruments, data analysis and ethical considerations.



## CHAPTER FOUR

### RESULTS, ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSIONS

#### 4.0 Overview

This chapter illustrates the results, presents analysis and the discussion of the data. It has been categorized into two parts. The first part provides detailed analysis of the quantitative data, while the second part discusses the qualitative data result.

#### 4.1 Part One: Quantitative Data Analysis

This part is subdivided into sections A to E. Section ‘A’ looks at the demographic data of the respondents (teachers and pupils). Section ‘B’ deals with respondents’ knowledge of the scaffolding model; Section ‘C’ considers the types of scaffolding techniques. Section ‘D’ looks at the impact of scaffolding model and finally Section ‘E’ explores the challenges associated with the use of scaffolding model during English Language reading comprehension lessons.

#### 4.2 Section A: Demographic Data of respondents.

**Table 4.1.1: Sex of Teachers**

Sex	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Male	6	60
Female	4	40
<b>Total</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>100</b>

*Source: Field Data – Questionnaire (2021).*

**Table 4.1.2: Sex of Pupils**

Sex	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Male	20	50
Female	20	50
<b>Total</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>100</b>

*Source: Field Data – Questionnaire (2021).*

The data in Table 4.1.2 shows that out of the ten (10) teachers who responded to the questionnaire, six (6) representing 60% were males and four (4) representing 40% were females. This shows that there are more male teachers teaching English Language in class six in Primary schools in the Oguaa circuit of the New Juaben South Municipality than female teachers.

The results in Table 4.1.2 on the other hand, show that equal number of male pupils twenty 20 (50%) and female pupils 20 (50%) were subjects of the study. This is indicative of the fact that primary schools in the Oguaa Circuit of the municipality probably have almost equal number male and female pupils in class six.

**Table 4.2.1: Age Range of Teachers**

Age (in years)	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Less Than 25	1	10
25-35	4	40
Above 35	5	50
<b>Total</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>100</b>

*Source: Field Data – Questionnaire (2021).*

**Table 4.2.2 Age range of Pupils**

Age (in years)	Frequency	Percentage (%)
10-13	36	90
14+	4	10
<b>Total</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>100</b>

*Source: Field Data – Questionnaire (2021).*

Results Data in Table 4.2.1 indicate that one (1) of the teachers, who represents 10% of the number of the teachers was less than twenty (25) years; four (4) of the teachers representing 40% were in the age range of 25-35 while Five (5) teachers out the ten (10) representing 50% were above 35 years of age. It can therefore be concluded that majority of the teachers who took part in this study were 25 years or more with half of them being above the age of 35 years.

This clearly suggests that most of them are fairly old and thus they must have been teaching English Language at the primary level for quite a longer period. As such they are expected to have considerable experiences when it comes to the teaching of English Language reading comprehension.

Data in Table 4.2.2 show that 36 of the pupils who represent 90% are aged in the range 10-13 years while four (4) of them representing 10% were 14 years or above. This also confirms the fact that most of the pupils fall within the normal age range (10-13) of the basic six pupils and therefore should be in the position to respond to statements on the questionnaire when given guidance.

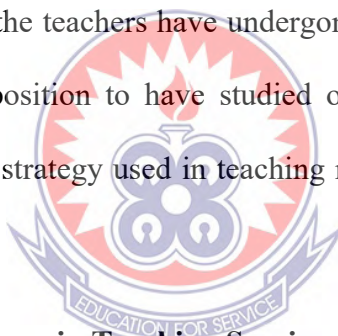


**Table 4.3: Status of Teachers**

<b>Status of Teachers</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage (%)</b>
Professional	10	100.0
Non-Professional	0	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>100</b>

*Source: Field Data – Questionnaire (2021).*

Data in Table 4.3 show that all the ten (10) representing 100% teachers who took part in the study are professional teachers. This means none of them is non-professional. It is therefore clear that all the teachers have undergone professional training. This puts all of them in a better position to have studied or come across various strategies including the scaffolding strategy used in teaching reading comprehension lessons in primary schools.

**Table 4.4: Number of Years in Teaching Service**

<b>No. of Years</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage (%)</b>
1-5	3	30
6-10	0	0
11-15	3	30
Above 16	4	40
<b>Total</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>100</b>

*Source: Field Data – Questionnaire (2021).*

From Table 4.4 above three (3) English Language teachers representing (30%) have spent between one to five (1-5) in the teaching service; none of the teachers has done between six to ten (6-10) years in the teaching service. However, three (3) of the teachers representing (30%) have done between eleven to fifteen (11-15) years in the teaching service, while four (4) of them representing 40% have spent more than sixteen (16) years in the teaching service. This indicates that majority of the teachers (7) are very experienced in the teaching service.

**Table 4.5: Teachers level of Education (Academic)**

Level	Frequency	Percentage (%)
SSSCE/ WASSCE	0	0
Certificate A	1	10
Diploma	4	40
First Degree	4	40
Master's Degree	0	0
Others	1	10
<b>Total</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>100</b>

*Source: Field Data – Questionnaire (2021).*

It can be observed from Table 4.5 that none of the English Language teachers in class six has SSSCE/ WASSCE as highest academic qualification; One (1) of the teachers representing 10% has having Teachers' Certificate 'A' as the highest academic qualification/ certificate. Four (4) teachers representing 40% hold Diploma; Four (4) teachers have First Degree; none of the teachers was possesses Master's degree, One teacher representing 10% holds a non-professional certificate.

It can thus be concluded that majority (8) of the teachers hold diploma and first degree certificates as their highest academic qualifications and therefore have acquired the requisite knowledge that enables them to apply scaffolding strategy when the need arises.

**Table 4.6: Teachers level of Education (Professional)**

Level	Frequency	Percent
Certificate 'A'	1	10
Diploma	3	30
B.Ed Degree	6	60
M.Ed	0	0
Others	0	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>100</b>

*Source: Field Data – Questionnaire (2021).*

From Table 4.6 above, one (1) English Language teacher in class six representing 10% has Teachers' Certificate 'A' as the highest professional qualification. Three (3) representing 30% have Diploma Certificates. Six (6) teachers representing 60% have Bachelor of Education Degree, none of the teachers neither possesses Master's degree nor any other different certificates.

This indicates that all the teachers have been professionally trained in either college of Education or University and thus should be abreast with or have knowledge of child-centred teaching strategies such as the scaffolding strategy and to be able to apply same during reading comprehension lessons in class six when the need arises.

### 4.3 Research Question One: What is the level of teacher’s knowledge on the use of scaffolding model for teaching reading comprehension lessons?

This section presents the research question One which sought to ascertain the level of knowledge of the respondents on the use of scaffolding model for teaching reading comprehension lessons. Table 4.6 below therefore presents the result on data collected based on the research question.

**Table 4.7: Teacher’s Knowledge on the use of Scaffolding Model for Teaching Reading Comprehension Lessons**

Statement/ Item	MN	SDV
I know scaffolding as a child-centred teaching strategy.	3.6	1.3
I have knowledge on scaffolding strategy as a tool for teaching reading comprehension	3.5	1.08
In scaffolding, learners receive support and assistance, successfully perform certain tasks and move to more complex ones.	4.1	0.87
Scaffolding plays a role in ensuring that the child learns what he couldn’t learn by him/herself.	3.8	0.37
Scaffolding is a “tutorial behavior that is contingent, collaborative and interactive.”	3.5	0.97
In scaffolding the teacher supports a child in a learning situation then gradually withdraws the support when he/she can cope with it.	3.7	1.05
Scaffolding involves the teacher acting as a guide and promoting interactions between him/ her and the pupils, among themselves.	3.9	0.87
Scaffolding is a process that enables a child or a novice to solve a problem which would be beyond his unassisted efforts.	3.7	0.81

**Source: Field Data (2021). Key: MN= Mean, SDV= Standard Deviation.**

The data analysis from each of the Tables indicates that, all the ten (10) Primary Six English Language teachers responded to the statements in each of the sections on the questionnaires. This gives a hundred percentage (100%) response rate.

From Table 4.7 and with regard to the statement “I know scaffolding as a child-centred teaching strategy”, 1 (10%) strongly disagreed, 1 (10%) disagreed. However, 5(50%) agreed and 3(30) strongly agreed. In general terms, 2(20%) of the teachers did not agree to the statement but, 8 (80%) of them agreed to the statement. This translates into a mean of 3.6 and a standard deviation of 1.30. This proves that the teachers in the Oguaa circuit of the New Juaben South Municipality know scaffolding as a child-centred teaching strategy.

For the statement “I have knowledge on scaffolding strategy as a tool for teaching reading comprehension”, 2(20%) of the teachers disagreed, 3 (30%) were neutral in agreement to the statement. Three (3) representing (30%) of them and two (2) representing (20%) agreed and strongly agreed to the statement respectively. This gives a mean of 3.5 and a standard deviation of 1.08. In sum, 2(20%) disagreed, 3(30%) were undecided and 5(50%) agreed to the statement. It suggests that, half of the number have knowledge on scaffolding as a strategy for teaching reading comprehension, but half of them lack knowledge or are not sure of scaffolding as a strategy for teaching reading comprehension.

With respect to the statement “In scaffolding, learners receive support and assistance, successfully perform certain tasks and move to more complex ones”, 1(10%) of the teachers disagreed; but 6 (60%) of them agreed while 3(30%) strongly agreed to the statement. In summary, 1(10%) disagreed but 9 (90%) of the teachers generally agreed to the statement leading to a mean 4.1 and a standard deviation of 0.87. This demonstrates that virtually all the teachers have knowledge on scaffolding as a means of learners receiving support and assistance to successfully perform certain tasks and move to more complex ones.

With respect to the statement “Scaffolding plays a role in ensuring that the child learns what he couldn’t learn by him/herself”, 1(10%) of the teachers showed their disagreement to the statement; also 1(10%) were indifferent (partly agree/ disagree) to the statement. Nonetheless, 7(70%) of them agreed and 1(10%) strongly agreed to the statement. In sum, 8 teachers who represent (80%) confirmed their knowledge on the statement. This resulted in a mean of 3.8 and a standard deviation of 0.37. This in effect, implies that majority of the teachers have knowledge on the role scaffolding plays in helping learners learn what they couldn’t learn on their own.

When it comes to the statement “Scaffolding is a “tutorial behaviour that is contingent, collaborative and interactive.” Out of the ten teachers, 2(20%) disagreed; 2(20%) neither agreed nor disagreed but 5 teachers and 1 of the teachers, representing 50% and 10% agreed and strongly disagreed respectively. Therefore, in total 2(20%) of them were not in support of the content of the statement, however, 6 (60%) supported the statement culminating into a mean of 3.5 and standard deviation of 0.97. This is a confirmation that the teachers believe scaffolding is a tutorial behaviour that is contingent, collaborative and interactive during lessons.

With the statement “In scaffolding the teacher supports a child in a learning situation then gradually withdraws the support when he/she can cope with it”, 2 (20%) of the teachers disagreed; 1(10%) remained indifferent, while 5(50%) agreed and 2(20%) strongly agreed. Two (2) representing (20%) did not affirm the statement but 7(70%) affirmed their agreement to the statement which resulted in a mean of 3.7 and a standard deviation of 1.05. It therefore gives a conclusion that most teachers have knowledge on how the teacher must support the child initially and gradually withdraw

the support when the child gets used to the task when using scaffolding to teach reading comprehension.

In terms of the statement “Scaffolding involves the teacher acting as a guide and promoting interactions between him/ her and the pupils, and among themselves”, 1(10%) disagreed; 1(10%) neither agreed nor disagreed, 6(60%) agreed while 2 (20%) strongly agreed to the statement. To sum it up, it means that only 1(10%) clearly disagreed with the statement but a total of 8 (80%) of the teachers categorically agreed to the statement and as a result, the mean is 3.9 and the standard deviation is 0.87. This is an indication that majority of the teachers know their role in the use of scaffolding in teaching reading comprehension.

For the final statement of Table 4.6 which reads “Scaffolding is a process that enables a child to solve a problem which would be beyond his unassisted efforts”, 1 (10%) disagreed to the statement; while 2 (20%) of them remained neutral. That notwithstanding, 6 (60%) of them agreed and 1 (10%) strongly agreed to the statement. Together, only 1(10%) teacher unequivocally refuted the statement as 7 (70%) affirmed same. This consequently gave a mean and a standard deviation of 3.7 and 0.81 respectively. It can therefore be concluded that most of the teachers know that scaffolding enables a child to accomplish a task beyond their personal ability.

#### 4.4 Research Question Two: Which scaffolding techniques do teachers use to teach English reading comprehension lessons?

This section presents the result on research question on the scaffolding techniques.

Table 4.8.1 below therefore shows the result on data collected.

**Table 4.8.1 Types of Scaffolding Techniques Teachers Engage Children In During Reading Comprehension Lessons.**

Statement/ Item	MN	SDV
I model using verbal explanations and body language to elaborate and demonstrate the new material (concept, word etc), then the class do it, groups do it and individual pupils do it.	3.7	1.34
I always allow students to activate/ review prior knowledge/relate content to what students already understand or can do and break a task into small, more manageable tasks with feedback.	4.0	1.25
I contextualize concepts, expressions, new vocabulary using audio visuals, demonstrations, examples etc	3.9	0.99
I always build clusters of meaning that are organized and interconnected (Schema building)	3.9	0.88
I represent text with pictures etc and encourage students to start the appropriation (use) of new language;	3.6	1.10
I guide learners to develop awareness of their own knowledge and their ability to understand, control and monitor their level of understanding.	3.9	0.88
I ask questions during lessons to check for understanding of learners.	4.5	0.97
I provide a cue to shift students' attention to focus on specific information, errors, or partial understandings.	4.0	1.05
I put students into mixed ability groups to help them share experiences and learn from their peers during lessons.	4.1	1.29

**Source: Field Data (2021). Key: MN= Mean, SDV= Standard Deviation.**

The data analysis from Table 4.8.1 and with reference to the statement “I model using verbal explanations and body language to elaborate and demonstrate the new material



(concept, word etc), then the class does it, groups do it and individual pupils do it”, 1(10%) of the teachers strongly disagreed; 1(10%) disagreed; 1(10%) remained neutral. Four (4) representing (40%) of the teachers agreed while 3 (30%) strongly agreed to the statement. Cumulatively, only 2 (20%) disagreed, however, on the other hand, 7 (70%) of the teachers affirmed the statement, giving a mean of 3.7 and a standard deviation of 1.34. This confirms the fact that majority of the teachers per their responses model using various methods to enable the class, groups and individuals to appreciate new material (such as concepts, words etc.) as scaffolding technique during reading comprehension lessons.

With respect to the statement “I always allow students to activate/ review prior knowledge/relate content to what students already understand or can do and break a task into small, more manageable tasks with feedback”, 1 (10%) of the teachers strongly disagreed; 1(10%) of them neither agreed nor disagreed while 4 (40%) of them also agreed, with 4 (40%) of them strongly agreeing to the statement. Overall, only 1(10%) of the teachers categorically did not affirm the statement while a whopping number of 8 (80%) of them confirmed their application of that scaffolding technique. This resulted in a mean of 4.0 and a standard deviation of 1.25. It can therefore be concluded that, majority of the teachers review learners’ prior knowledge and also break tasks into smaller units with feedback.

With the statement “I contextualize concepts, expressions, new vocabulary using audio visuals, demonstrations, examples etc”, none of the teachers strongly disagreed nor disagreed to the statement; however, 5 (50%) of them were neutral to the statement; 1(10%) agreed with 4 (40%) of them strongly agreeing to the statement. In all, none of them disagreed to the statement while 5 (50%) of them agreed to the statement with a resultant mean and standard deviation of 3.9 and 0.99 respectively.

This clearly shows that some of the teachers do not employ the scaffolding technique of conceptualizing concepts, expressions, new vocabulary using audio visuals, demonstrations etc. but others also do during reading comprehension in English Language.

From table 4.8.1, none of the teachers strongly disagreed or disagreed; 4 (40%) of them neither agreed nor disagreed; 3 (30%) and another 3 (30%) agreed and strongly agreed respectively to the statement “I always build clusters of meaning that are organized and interconnected (Schema building).” This in summary, means that 6 (60%) of the teachers generally agreed with the statement culminating into a mean of 3.9 and a standard deviation of 0.88. It can therefore be implied that, a little over half of the number of teachers use scaffolding technique to build clusters of meaning that are organized and interconnected during reading comprehension lessons.

With reference to the statement “I represent text with pictures, etc. and encourage students to start the appropriation (use) of new language;” 1 (10%) of the teachers disagreed, 4 (40%) remained neutral, 3(30%) of them agreed with 2 (20%) strongly agreeing. In total, 5(50%) showed clear disagreement to the statement; while 5 (50%) of them agreed to it, resulting in a mean of 3.6 and a standard deviation of 1.10. This basically leads to a conclusion that, some of the teachers duly represent texts with pictures and encourage learners to start the appropriation of the new language while a good number of them too do not employ this scaffolding technique during reading comprehension lessons.

The analysis on the statement “I guide learners to develop awareness of their own knowledge and their ability to understand, control and monitor their level of understanding”, suggests that none of the teachers strongly disagreed; 1 (10%) of

them disagreed 6 (60%) and 2 (20%) agreed and strongly agreed to the statement respectively. Therefore, in all, only 1(10%) teacher categorically disagreed to the statement; while 8 (80%) of them are in favour of the statement thus giving a mean of 3.9 and a standard deviation of 0.88. This is indicative of the fact that, majority of the teachers employs the scaffolding technique of guiding and monitoring learners to understand concepts during reading comprehension lessons.

On the statement “I ask questions during lessons to check for understanding of learners”, none of the teachers strongly disagreed; 1 (10%) disagreed with none of them being neutral, 2 (20%) of them agreed while 7 (70%) of the teachers also strongly agreed to the statement. Overall, only 1 (10%) teacher was against the statement but a whopping 9 (90%) of them supported the statement resulting in a mean of 4.5 and a standard deviation of 0.97. From the afore-mentioned analysis, it can be concluded that almost all the teachers employ asking questions to check for learners understanding during lessons as a scaffolding technique.

With regard to the statement on the technique “I provide a cue to shift students’ attention to focus on specific information, errors, or partial understandings”, No teacher strongly disagreed, 1 (10%) teacher disagreed with 2 (20%) of them remaining neutral. On the contrary, 3 (30%) agreed and 4 (40%) of them strongly agreed to it. This means only 1 (10%) teacher did not agree to the statement while 7 (70%) of them agreed to the statement. As a result, the mean is 4.0 with the standard deviation being 1.05. This again confirms that majority of the teachers apply the provision of a cue as scaffolding technique to shift learners’ attention to focus on specific information, errors or partial understanding during reading comprehension lessons.

With respect to the last statement “I put students into mixed ability groups to help them share experiences and learn from their peers during lessons”, 1 (10%) of the teachers strongly disagreed; none of them disagreed; 1(10%) neither agreed nor disagreed, 3 (30%) agreed and 4 (40%) strongly agreed. This means that, ultimately, only 1 (10%) disagreed to the statement with only 1(10%) being indecisive while 8 (80%) clearly supported and confirmed the statement thereby presenting a mean of 4.1 and a standard deviation of 1.29. In that regard, a conclusive claim could be adduced to the effect that large number of the teachers in primary six classroom of the Oguaa circuit of the New Juaben South Municipality, on a normal day, put learners into mixed ability groups to enable them share experiences and learn from their peers. This practice undoubtedly, is one of the major techniques of scaffolding strategy.



**Table 4.8.2: Scaffolding Techniques Pupils participate in with Teacher during Reading Comprehension Lessons.**

<b>Statement/ Item</b>	<b>MN</b>	<b>SDV</b>
Teacher models using verbal explanations and body language to explain and demonstrate the new material, word or concept.	3.7	0.83
Teacher allows the class to do, groups do and individual pupils do after showing us how to do something during lessons.	4.1	1.07
Teacher always asks us questions on what we have already learned.	4.4	0.90
Teacher always breaks a task (words, sentences etc) into small, more manageable parts with feedback.	4.1	1.04
Teacher makes concepts, expressions, and new words meaningful to us using audio visuals, demonstrations, examples during lessons.	3.9	1.00
Teacher always groups words, expressions and their meanings as they are interconnected.	3.8	0.91
Teacher shows text with pictures etc. and encourage to use sentences and words well in new language.	3.75	0.58
Teacher always guides us to develop awareness of our own knowledge and ability to understand, control and monitor our level of understanding.	4.3	0.81
Teacher asks questions during lessons to check for our understanding.	4.5	0.72
Teacher provides a cue to shift our attention to focus on specific information, errors, or partial understandings.	4.0	0.89
Teacher puts us into mixed ability groups to help us share experiences and learn from our peers during lessons.	3.5	1.22

**Source: Field Data (2021). Key: MN= Mean, SDV= Standard Deviation.**

The data analysis from each of the Table 4.8.2 depicts that, all the forty (40) Primary Six English Language learners responded to the statements on the type of scaffolding techniques on the questionnaires. This gives a hundred percentage (100%) response rate.

From the first statement “Teacher models using verbal explanations and body language to explain and demonstrate the new material, word or concept”, 1 (2.5%) of the learners strongly disagreed; 4 (10%) of them disagreed while 4 (10%) of them also remained neutral; 15 (37.5%) agreed and 16 (40%) strongly agreed. So, in effect, only 5 representing (12.5%) did not agree to the statement with 4 (10%) being neutral and 31 (77.5%) completely responding in the affirmative to the statement. These resulted in a mean of 3.7 and a standard deviation of 0.83. This basically implies that, majority of the English language learners in the Oguaa circuit of the New Juaben South Municipal observe their teachers modelling using verbal explanations, body language to demonstrate new materials and concepts during reading comprehension lessons.

On the statement “Teacher allows the class do, groups do and individual pupils do after showing us how to do something during lessons” reveals that 2(5%) of the learners strongly disagreed; another 2 (5%) also disagreed with same number of 2 (5%) unable to decide. Nonetheless, 17 (42.5%) agreed with same number of learners 17 (42.5%) strongly agreeing to the statement. In sum, 4 (10%) generally did not agree to the statement; 2 (5%) of them remained neutral, while 34 (85%) of them agreed to the statement, which in consequence gives a mean and a standard deviation of 4.1 and 1.07 respectively. This basically means that majority of the learners experience in class during reading comprehension lessons, that their teachers employ the technique of allowing class to do, groups to do and individuals to do after modelling how something is done in class.

Again, a look at the statement “Teacher always asks us questions on what we have already learned” from the table suggests that, 1 (2.5%), another 1 (2.5%) and 2 (5%) of the learners strongly disagreed, disagreed and remained neutral respectively to the

statement. In contrast, 13 (32.5%) agreed while 23 (57.5%) of them strongly agreed. Overall, only 2 (5%) of the learners categorically disagreed to the statement; as 2 (5%) remained neutral and 36 (90%) of the pupils overwhelmingly affirmed the statement. As a result, a mean of 4.4 and a standard deviation of 0.90 were calculated. With this, it can be asserted that majority of the pupils very often enjoy their “teachers reviewing their prior knowledge” which is a key scaffolding technique, on previous lessons through questions before the commencement of reading comprehension lessons.

For the statement “Teacher always breaks a task (words, sentences etc.) into small, more manageable parts with feedback”, 1 (2.5%) learners strongly disagreed; 3 (7.5%) disagreed and 5 (12.5%) remained indecisive. Meanwhile, 15 (37.5%) and 16 (40.0%) agreed and strongly agreed respectively. This means that, a paltry number of learners 4 (10%) were against the statement while 31 (77.5%) supported the statement thus resulting in a mean of 4.1 and a standard deviation of 1.04. This suggests that a good number of the learners find their teachers break tasks into small parts and provide feedback to learners during lessons. This technique is very crucial during scaffolding lessons.

With reference to the statement “Teacher makes concepts, expressions, and new words meaningful to us using audio visuals, demonstrations, examples during lessons”, 1 (2.5%) of the learners strongly disagreed, 3 (7.5%) disagreed; 7 (17.5%) of them neither agreed nor disagreed. Again, 17 (42.5%) of them agreed as 12 (30%) also strongly agreed. This brings the number and percentage of those who unanimously were not in support of the statement to 4 (10%); those who remained neutral were 7 (17.5%) and those who affirmed the statement were 29 (72.5%)

resulting in a mean of 3.9 and a standard deviation of 1.00. This means that most of the learners observe their teacher use audio visuals, demonstrations etc. to make concepts and expressions meaningful to them during lessons with few of them disagreeing that their teacher uses that scaffolding technique.

As far as the statement “Teacher always group words, expressions and their meanings as they are interconnected” is concerned, 0 (0%) of the learners strongly disagreed; 4 (10%) of them disagreed, 10 (25%) remained neutral. On the other hand, 18 (45%) of them agreed and 8 (20%) also strongly agreed. Overall, 4 (10%) of them did not agree to the statement, 10 (25%) remained neutral and 26 (65%) agreed to the statement. From the response to the statement, the mean was 3.8 with the standard deviation being 0.91. It can be concluded that majority of the pupils believe that their teachers by way of a scaffolding technique, always group words, expressions and their meanings that are interconnected, however, the minority of them think otherwise.

Again, for the statement that “Teacher shows text with pictures etc. and encourage to use sentences and words well in new language”, none of the learners strongly disagreed, though 7 (17.5%) disagreed. 6 (15%) of them neither disagreed nor agreed, 17 (42.5%) agreed and 10 (25%) strongly agreed. This implies that in all, 7 (17.5%) did not agree to the statement though 6 (15%) were neutral. On the other hand, 27 (67.5%) of the learners explicitly showed their agreement to the statement which culminated into a mean of 3.75 and a standard deviation of 0.58. This suggests that the number of learners who believe that their teachers use this scaffolding technique i.e. “teachers normally show text with pictures, encourage them to use sentence and words well in new language” are more than those who do not believe so.



With respect to the statement “Teacher always guides us to develop awareness of our own knowledge and ability to understand, control and monitor our level of understanding”, no learner strongly disagreed, however, 2 (5.0%) disagreed, while 3 (7.5%) neither agreed nor disagreed as far as the statement is concerned. Conversely, a startling 18 (45.5%) and 17 (42.5%) agreed and strongly agreed respectively. In sum, as few as 2 (5.0%) of the pupils were not in support of the statement; similarly, only 3 (7.5%) neither disagreed nor agreed. But a huge number of the learners 35 (88.0%) of them were in support of the statement leading to a mean of 4.25 and standard deviation of 0.81. A conclusion could therefore be drawn to the fact that, the majority of the learners do witness that, their teachers apply the scaffolding technique of guiding them to develop awareness of their own knowledge and ability to understand and monitor their level of understanding during reading comprehension lessons.

For the statement “Teacher asks questions during lessons to check for our understanding”, none of the learners strongly disagreed; though 1 (2.5%) and 2 (5.0%) disagreed and remained indifferent to the statement respectively. Notwithstanding, 13 (32.5%) of them agreed and 24 (60%) also strongly agreed. In sum, this suggests that 1 (2.5%) did not affirm the statement; 2 (5.0%) were inconclusive as far as the statement is concerned, though huge number of the learners i.e. 37 (92.5%), however agreed to the statement, therefore the mean is 4.5 with a standard deviation of 0.72. This clearly implies that almost all the learners attest to the fact that their teachers use the scaffolding technique of asking questions during lessons to check for their understanding during reading comprehension lessons.

With reference to the statement that “Teacher provides a cue to shift our attention to focus on specific information, errors, or partial understandings”, none of the learners strongly disagreed, 3 (7.5%) of them disagreed; 7 (17.5%) remained neutral; while 18

(45.0%) of them agreed and 12 (30%) strongly agreed. The result of the above is 3 (7.5%) of the learners disagreed to the statement, 7 (17.5%) neither agreed nor disagreed while 30 (75.0%) agreed to the statement, thus resulting in a mean of 4.0 and standard deviation of 0.89. This shows that only few of the pupils think that their teachers do not provide a cue to shift their attention to focus on specific information, errors or partial understandings.

Lastly, for the statement “Teacher puts us into mixed ability groups to help us share experiences and learn from our peers during lessons” same number of the learners, i.e. 4 (10%) strongly disagreed and disagreed; 7 (17.5%) remained neutral, 17 (42.5%) agreed and 8 (20%) strongly agreed. Overall, 8 (20%) of the learners generally did not agree to the statement; 7 (17.5%) remained indecisive while 25 (62.5%) of them were in support of the statement. These gave a mean of 3.5 and standard deviation of 1.22. In concluding, it can be deduced from the result that some of the learners do agree to the fact that their teachers employ the mixed ability grouping technique during reading comprehension lessons. However, more of the learners rather believe their teachers employ the mixed ability grouping technique, on a normal day, during reading comprehension lessons.

**4.5 Research Question Three: What influence does the use of the scaffolding model have on learners' attitude toward the learning of English Language reading comprehension lessons?**

Table 4.9.1 below presents the result on data collected based on the research question.

**Table 4.9.1: The Influence of the use of the Scaffolding model on learners' attitude toward the Learning of English Language Reading Comprehension Lessons.**

Statement/ Item	MN	SDV
Learners (students) show great interest during lessons when they are allowed to contribute during lessons.	4.7	0.95
Students find tasks easy and are able to perform them when I offer them assistance at initial stages and it translates into good performance in exercises.	4.4	0.52
The use of different approaches and TLMS such as modelling, questioning, audio-visuals, cues, assists students to participate and understand new concepts well.	4.5	0.71
Students show interest and fully participate in English language reading comprehension lessons when they are put in mixed ability groups to share ideas with their peers and present group works.	4.5	0.71
Students are always ready to perform tasks because of the detailed instructions provided and how tasks are broken into smaller units for them.	4.3	0.67
Most students are always present during reading comprehension lessons and are free to ask questions during lessons for better understanding because of the scaffolding techniques I employ.	3.6	1.35

**Source: Field Data (2021). Key: MN= Mean, SDV= Standard Deviation.**

From Table 4.9.1 above, on the statement “Learners (students) show great interest during lessons when they are allowed to contribute”, No teacher strongly disagreed to it; 1 (10%) of them disagreed and none of them remained neutral. However, as none also agreed, an overwhelming number of 9 (90%) of the teachers strongly agreed to the statement. Generally, 1 (10%) of the teachers did not agree that learners show

great interest during lessons when they are allowed to contribute to the lesson while 9 of them representing 90% affirmed the statement. This resulted in a mean of 4.7 and a standard deviation of 0.95. This implies that an overwhelming majority of the class six English language teachers in the Oguaa circuit of the New Juaben South Municipal believe that learners demonstrate a great deal of interest during lessons when they are allowed to contribute.

The second statement was “Students find tasks easy and are able to perform them when I offer them assistance at initial stages and it translates into good performance in exercises”. Out of the total number of teachers, none, of them strongly disagreed, disagreed and also remained neutral as far as the statement was concerned. On the other hand, 6 (60%) of them agreed and 4 (40%) also strongly agreed. In total, all the 10 (100%) primary six teachers in the Oguaa circuit of the New Juaben South Municipality agreed to the statement. This gives a mean of 4.4 and standard deviation of 0.52. This is indicative of the fact that, all the teachers in the Oguaa circuit conclude that students when offered assistance by the teacher at the initial stages of task will have good performance in exercises.

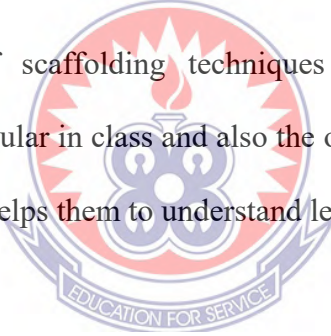
The next statement on the table was “The use of different approaches and TLMS such as modeling, questioning, audio-visuals, cues, assists students to participate and understand new concepts well.” Similar to the earlier statement, none of the teachers strongly disagreed and also disagreed though 1(10%) remained neutral. However, 3 (30%) of them agreed and 6 (60%) strongly agreed to the statement. Therefore, in all, 9 of the teachers representing 90% responded in the affirmative to the statement with only 1(10%) being neutral. This resulted in a mean of 4.5 and standard deviation of 0.71. It can therefore be stated that majority of the Primary six English Language teachers in the circuit admit that the use of different approaches and TLMS as

contained in the statement, enables learners to participate during lesson and understand new concepts well.

The statement “Students show interest and fully participate in English language reading comprehension lessons when they are put in mixed ability groups to share ideas with their peers and present group works”, surprisingly saw same response as the previous one. None of the teachers strongly disagreed and also disagreed, even though 1(10%) remained neutral to the statement. Nonetheless, 3 (30%) of them agreed and 6 (60%) of the teachers also strongly agreed to the statement. Therefore, in all, 9 of the teachers representing 90% agreed to the statement with only 1(10%) being. This also therefore garnered a mean of 4.5 and standard deviation of 0.71. It implies that, virtually all the Primary six English Language teachers in the circuit accept that learners show interest and fully participate in lessons when they are grouped based to mixed abilities criterion during reading comprehension lessons.

The next statement “Students are always ready to perform tasks because of the detailed instructions provided and how tasks are broken into smaller units for them”, saw none of the teachers strongly disagreeing and disagreeing to it; with 1 (10%) remaining neutral. On the contrary, 5 (50%) of the teachers agreed and 4 (40%) strongly agreed to the statement. This suggests that a good majority of the primary six English Language teachers, i.e. 9 (90%) affirmed their support to the statement while only 1 (10%) neither agreed nor disagreed to the statement. This culminated into a mean of 4.3 and a standard deviation of 0.67. This, in sum, affirms that the primary six English Language teachers in the New Juaben Municipality (Oguaa circuit) agree that detailed instructions to learners as well as the breaking of tasks into smaller units facilitate learners’ readiness to perform tasks.

Last but not least statement of table 4.9.1 “Most students are always present during reading comprehension lessons and are free to ask questions during lessons for better understanding because of the scaffolding techniques I employ”, gives quite interesting responses unlike the others. One (10%) of the teachers strongly disagreed to the statement; in the same vein, 1 (10%) of them also disagreed to it. Interestingly, 2 (20%) of them rather remained neutral. However, 3 (30%) of them agreed; other 3 (30%) of them also strongly agreed. In total, 2 (20%) disagreed to the statement while 2 (20%) neither agreed nor disagreed, yet, 6 of them representing 60% were in support of the statement which therefore presented a mean of 3.6 and standard deviation of 1.35. In conclusion, while few of the teachers in the Oguaa circuit disagree and remain neutral to the content of the statement, many more of them believe that the use of scaffolding techniques during reading comprehension encourages students to regular in class and also the opportunity offered learners to ask questions during lessons helps them to understand lesson better.



**Table 4.9.2: The Influence of the use of the Scaffolding model on learners' attitude toward the Learning of English Language Reading Comprehension Lessons.**

Statement/ Item	MN	SDV
We show great interest during lessons when we are allowed to contribute during lessons.	4.2	0.79
Work becomes easy to do and we become happy when our teacher assists us at initial stages.	4.2	1.08
We show much interest in lessons and understand new concepts well when teacher uses different approaches and materials.	4.2	0.98
We fully participate in reading comprehension lessons when we work in groups.	4.2	0.92
We are always ready to do tasks because of the detailed instructions provided and how tasks are broken into smaller units for them.	3.9	0.88
We do not absent ourselves during reading comprehension lessons because lessons are always interesting.	4.1	1.04

**Source: Field Data (2021). Key: MN= Mean, SDV= Standard Deviation.**

From table 4.9.2 and with respect to the first statement “We show great interest during lessons when we are allowed to contribute during lessons”, 1 (2.5%) learner strongly disagreed to it; none of them disagreed; 3 (7.5%) neither agreed nor disagreed; 22 (55%) and 14 (35%) of them agreed and strongly agreed respectively. It does suggest that, in all, 1 (2.5%) of the learners was not in support of the statement while 3 (7.5%) remained neutral. Notwithstanding, 36 (90%) of the learners agreed to the statement, that brings out a mean of 4.2 and standard deviation of 0.79. This confirms that majority of the learners allude to the fact that they really show great interest when they are allowed to contribute during lessons.

For the statement “Work becomes easy to do and we become happy when our teacher assists us at the initial stages”, 1 (2.5%) of the learners strongly disagreed; 2 (5.0%) disagreed; and 3 (7.5%) remained neutral. Seventeen (17) representing (42.5%) of them agreed as 17 (42.5%) of them also strongly agreed. In effect, 3 (7.5%) disagreed to the statement; 3 (7.5%) of them were undecided while 34 (85%) agreed to the statement. This gives 4.2 and 1.08 mean and standard deviation respectively. It implies that, only few of the learners were not in agreement to the statement, but majority of the primary six English Language learners in the Oguaa circuit of the New Juaben Municipality believe that work becomes easy to do and they become happy when their teacher assists them at initial stages of the reading comprehension lessons.

From the table, the analysis of learners’ responses to the statement “We show much interest in lessons and understand new concepts well when teacher uses different approaches and materials”, shows that 1 (2.5%) of them strongly disagreed; 2 (5.0%) disagreed; while 4 (10.0%) of them neither agreed nor disagreed. Sixteen, (16) representing (40.0%) and 17 (42.5%) agreed and disagreed respectively. In sum, 3 (7.5%) basically disagreed to the statement; 4 (10%) neither disagreed nor agreed to the statement, but a total of 33 (82.5%) of the learners agreed to the statement with a resultant mean of 4.2 and a standard deviation of 0.98. This basically means that in as much as a small section of the English Language learners in primary in Oguaa circuit do not believe or are unable to make decision about the statement, majority of the learners admit that they really show much interest and do understand new concepts well, when their teachers use different approaches and materials during lessons in reading comprehension.

Again, for the statement “We fully participate in reading comprehension lessons when we work in groups”, 1 (2.5%) and another 1 (2.5%) strongly disagreed and agreed



respectively; while 5 (12.5%) neither disagreed nor agreed. In a similar fashion, 17 (42.5%) agreed and also 16 (40.0%) strongly agreed. This brings the total number of learners that agreed to 2 which represents 5.0%; the number that were indecisive to 5 (12.5%); with those that affirmed the statement to 33 (82.5%) with a mean of 4.2 and standard deviation of 0.92. This concludes the fact that though few of the primary six English Language learners in the Oguaa circuit of the New Juaben North Municipality disagreed and remained neutral to the statement, a good majority of them on the contrary, affirm that they fully participate in reading comprehension lessons when they work in groups.

With regard to the penultimate statement “We are always ready to do a tasks because of the detailed instructions provided and how tasks are broken into smaller units for them”, none of the learners strongly disagreed; though 3 (7.5%) disagreed even as 9 (22.5%) of them remained neutral. Yet, 18 (45.0%) of the learners agreed in as much as 10 (25.0%) strongly agreed to it. This, in sum, makes the number of learners who disagreed 3 (7.5%) with 9 (22.5%) refusing to state their position, while 28 (70%) of them were supportive of the statement. This gives a mean of 3.9 and a standard deviation of 0.88. It can be concluded that, only few of the learners disagreed to the statement as some of them also failed to be decisive, but a good number, forming the majority of them still think that detailed instructions when provided by the teacher as well as tasks broken into smaller units, get them ready for tasks given to them during reading comprehension lessons.

The last statement from the table “We do not absent ourselves during reading comprehension lessons because lessons are always interesting”, provides the following: none of the learners strongly disagreed; 6 (15%) of them disagreed; while 2 (5.0%) remained neutral, 16 (40.0%) and another 16 (40.0%) agreed and strongly

agreed respectively. This also suggests that only 6 (15%) were quite unequivocal in their disagreement to the statement as 2 (5.0%) of the learners were undecided, while majority of them showed their support to the statement. This results in a mean of 4.1 and a standard deviation of 1.04. In sum, it means that while majority of the primary six English Language learners in the circuit, in principle, agreed that they don't absent themselves during reading comprehension lessons because lessons are always interesting, there are few of them that think otherwise and also remain neutral.



#### 4.6 Research Question Four: What challenges do teachers and pupils encounter when scaffolding model is employed during reading comprehension lessons?

Table 4.10.1 below presents the result on data collected on the challenges the respondents encounter in the application of scaffolding model during reading comprehension lessons.

**Table 4.10.1: Challenges faced in employing Scaffolding Techniques during Reading Comprehension Lessons.**

Statement/ Item	MN	SDV
Planning and implementing scaffolds optimize learning for all students but it is a very demanding instructional strategy.	3.8	0.79
Teaching learners with different learning abilities makes using the scaffolding strategy difficult and time consuming.	3.5	0.71
Teaching and learning materials needed for effective scaffolding lessons are difficult to come by.	3.4	0.97
Knowing when to remove the scaffold so the student does not rely on the support at times is quite difficult.	3.3	1.06
In differentiated teaching, scaffolding can hardly be used to teach reading comprehension.	2.9	0.74
Using scaffolding in teaching comprehension in classes with large size is ineffective.	3.0	1.25
Lack of regular in-service education and training on the use of scaffolding in teaching comprehension makes teachers handicapped.	3.5	1.08
The teachers' manuals and curriculum guides do exclude examples of scaffolds or outlines of scaffolding methods.	2.7	0.95

**Source: Field Data (2021). Key: MN= Mean, SDV= Standard Deviation.**

From Table 4.10.1 with regard to the statement “Planning and implementing scaffolds optimize learning for all students but it is a very demanding instructional strategy”, none of the teachers strongly disagreed, 1 (10%) disagreed, 1 (10%) remained neutral; 7 (70%) of them agreed and 1 (10%) strongly agreed to the statement. This means that

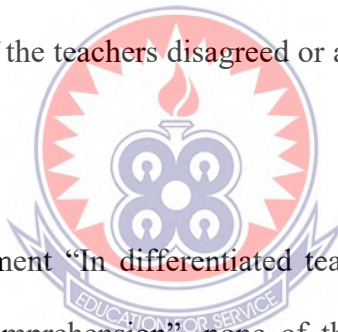
only 1 (10%) of the teachers disagreed to statement, with an equal number of teachers, 1 (10%) also remaining neutral. A whopping 8 (80%) of them affirmed the statement leading to a mean and a standard deviation of 3.8 and 0.79 respectively. This suggests that, to a large extent, few of the teachers in the Oguaa circuit of the New Juaben South Municipality disagreed and remained neutral, as majority of them ascertained that planning and implementing scaffolds optimize learning for all learners but it is a very demanding instructional strategy.

With respect to the statement “Teaching learners with different learning abilities makes using the scaffolding strategy difficult and time consuming”, none of the teachers strongly disagreed; 1 (10%) of them disagreed and 3 (30%) of them were undecided. However, 6 (60%) of them agreed with none of them strongly agreeing to the statement. Basically, only 1 (10%) of the teachers disagreed to the statement; while 3 (30%) of them remained neutral, though 6 (60%) of them affirmed the statement which culminated into a mean of 3.5 and a standard deviation of 0.71. In concluding, it can be said that while only one person disagreed and few of them remained indecisive, a good majority of the teachers in the Oguaa Circuit of the New Juaben South Municipality do believe that it is quite difficult and time consuming to use scaffolding to teach learners with different abilities.

With the statement “Teaching and learning materials needed for effective scaffolding lessons are difficult to come by”, none of the teachers strongly disagreed; 2 (20%) of them disagreed with 3 (30%) of them being undecided. On the other hand, 4 (40%) of them agreed and 1 (10%) strongly agreed. This suggests that 2 (20%) of the teachers disagreed to the statement as 3 (30%) of them remained neutral; while 5 (50%) of them generally agreed to the statement. This presents a mean and a standard deviation of 3.4 and 0.97 respectively. To this end, there is a clear evidence that while some of

the teachers disagree and or undecided in terms of the statement, a good number, representing half of the number of primary six English Language teachers in the Oguaa circuit agreed to the fact that teaching and learning materials needed for effective scaffolding lessons are difficult to come by.

As regards the statement “Knowing when to remove the scaffold so the student does not rely on the support at times is quite difficult”, none of the teachers strongly disagreed, 2 (2%) disagreed; 5 (50%) neither agreed nor disagreed; with 1 (10%) agreeing and 2 (20%) strongly agreeing to the statement. Cumulatively, 2 (20%) disagreed, 5 (50%) remained undecided and 3 (30%) of the teachers agreed to the statement. This results in a mean of 3.3 and a standard deviation of 1.06. This clearly indicates that, majority of the teachers disagreed or are undecided with few of them in support of the statement.



With regard to the statement “In differentiated teaching, scaffolding can hardly be used to teach reading comprehension”, none of the teachers strongly disagreed; 3 (30%) of them disagreed; while half of the number of the teachers, i.e. 5 (50%) remained neutral. But a paltry 2 (20%) of them agreed with none of them strongly agreeing to the statement. In total, 3 (30%) of the teachers disagreed to the statement; 5 (50%), which is half the number of the teachers neither disagreed nor agreed; but 2 (20%) of them firmly agreed to the statement, leading to a mean of 2.9 and a standard deviation of 0.74. This suggests that majority of the teachers in the Oguaa Circuit of the New Juaben South Municipality do not believe and/ or are not sure of the fact that in differentiated teaching, scaffolding can hardly be used to teach comprehension, though a few of the teachers rather do.

With respect to the statement “Using scaffolding in teaching comprehension in classes with large size is ineffective”, 1 (10%) of the teachers strongly disagreed; 3 (30%) of them disagreed; with 2 (20%) of them neither disagreeing nor agreeing; 3 (30%) of the teachers agreed while 1 (10%) of them strongly agreed. This means that, the total number of teachers who fundamentally disagreed to the statement is 4 (40%); 2 (20%) of the teachers were undecided with their responses as 4 (40%) of them agreed to the statement. This gives a 1.25 and 3.0 standard deviation and mean respectively. This in effect points to the fact that, the teachers who do not agree or remain neutral to the statement are more than those who agree that using scaffolding in teaching comprehension in classes with large size is ineffective.

“Lack of regular in-service education and training on the use of scaffolding in teaching comprehension makes teachers handicapped”. With this statement, none of the teachers strongly disagreed; 2 (20%) of them disagreed; 3 (30%) of them neither agreed nor disagreed. Further, 3 (30%) and 2 (20%) of the teachers agreed and strongly agreed respectively. This indicates that while 2 (20%) of the teachers were not in support of the statement, 3 (30%) of them neither disagreed nor agreed; but 5 (50%) of them affirmed the statement. This gives a mean of 3.5 and a standard deviation of 1.08. This ultimately explains that some of the teachers (in fact half the number) either disagree or are not sure that lack of regular in-service education and training on the use of scaffolding in teaching comprehension makes teachers handicapped, but an equally good number of them also believe or agree to the statement.

With respect to the last statement “The teachers’ manuals and curriculum guides do exclude examples of scaffolds or outlines of scaffolding methods”, 1 (10%) of the teachers strongly disagreed; 3 (30%) of them disagreed; 4 (40%) of them neither

agreed nor disagreed; while 2 (20%) of the teachers agreed with none of them strongly agreeing to the statement. In sum, it suggests that 4 (40%) of the teachers disagreed to the statement, 4 (40%) remained neutral and 2 (20%) affirmed the statement, giving a mean of 2.7 and standard deviation of 0.95. From the analysis, it is clear that majority of the primary six English Language teachers in the Oguaa Circuit of the New Juaben Municipality do not agree and are undecided that the teachers' manual and the curriculum guides do exclude examples of scaffolds or outlines of scaffolding methods.

**Table 4.10.2: Challenges faced in employing Scaffolding Techniques during Reading Comprehension Lessons.**

Statement/ Item	MN	SDV
Sometimes I find it difficult to understand when my teacher teaches reading comprehension.	2.4	1.35
I find reading comprehension lessons boring.	1.7	0.80
Because we are many in class sometimes I do not follow what my teacher teaches us during reading comprehension lessons.	2.4	1.37
Group works do bring a lot of noisy atmosphere in our class during reading comprehension lessons	2.8	1.44
My teacher confuses me anytime he teaches us reading comprehension lessons	1.7	1.16
My teacher makes us do too much work during reading comprehension lessons.	2.6	1.31

**Source: Field Data (2021). Key: MN= Mean, SDV= Standard Deviation.**

From Table 4.9.2 and for the first statement “Sometimes I find it difficult to understand when my teacher teaches reading comprehension”, 13 (32.5%) of the learners strongly disagreed; 14 (35.0%) disagreed; 3 (7.5%) neither disagreed nor

agreed; 6 (15.0%) agreed as 4 (10.0%) strongly agreed to the statement. This means that, 27 (67.5%) of the learners disagreed to the statement; 3 (7.5%) remained neutral; while 10 (25.0%) of them agreed to the statement which resulted in a mean of 2.4 and a standard deviation of 1.35. This implies that, majority of the learners in the Primary six English Language in the Oguaa circuit of the New Juaben South Municipality do not believe that sometimes they find it difficult to understand when their teacher teaches reading using scaffolding strategy, though a few remain and believe that the statement is true.

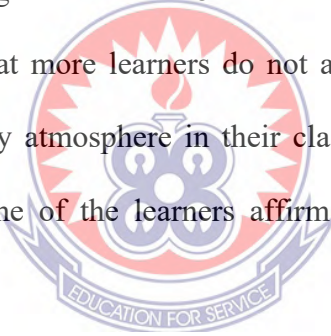
For the next statement “I find reading comprehension lessons boring”, 19 (47.5%) of the learners strongly disagreed; 17 (42.5%) disagreed; 2 (5.0%) neither disagreed nor agreed. On the other hand, 2 (5.0%) and 0 (0%) agreed and strongly agreed respectively. A whopping 36 (90%) of the learners do not agree to the statement; 2 (5.0%) of them remained neutral, while 2 (5.0%) of them agreed to the statement, resulting in a mean of 1.7 and a standard deviation of 0.80. This shows that majority of the primary six English Language learners in the New Juaben South Municipality disagree that they find reading comprehension lessons boring, while unrecognizable few think otherwise.

For the statement “Because we are many in class sometimes I do not follow what my teacher teaches us during reading comprehension lessons”, 13 (32.5%) of the learners strongly disagreed; another 13 (32.5%) of them also disagreed; 5 (12.5%) of them remained undecided; though 4 (10%) agreed and 5 (12.5%) strongly agreed to the statement. This in sum, shows that, 26 (65%) of the learners disagreed to the statement; 5 (12.5%) neither disagreed nor agreed; whereas 9 (22.5%) of the learners agreed to the statement. The resultant mean and standard deviation are 2.4 and 1.37



respectively. It can therefore be also concluded that, majority of the learners do not support the assertion that because they are many in class, sometimes they do not follow what their teachers teach during reading comprehension lessons, even though few of the learners disagree and / or remain neutral to the statement.

With regard to the next statement “Group works do bring a lot of noisy atmosphere in our class during reading comprehension lessons”, 9 (22.5%) of the learners strongly disagreed; 13 (32.5%) of the learners disagreed; while 2 (5.0%) neither disagreed nor agreed. On the contrary, 10 (25%) of the learners agreed and 6 (15.0%) strongly agreed to the statement. Therefore, the sum of those who disagreed remained 22 (55%); those who remained neutral were 2 (5.0%); those who agreed to the statement were 16 (40%), producing a mean of 2.8 and a standard deviation of 1.44. This is therefore an indication that more learners do not agreed to the assertion that group works bring a lot of noisy atmosphere in their class during reading comprehension lessons. Despite this, some of the learners affirm the statement as few also were undecided.



With respect to the statement “My teacher confuses me anytime he teaches us reading comprehension lessons”, 26 (65%) of the learners strongly disagreed; 7 (17.5%) disagreed; 3 (7.5%) neither disagreed nor agreed; while 3 (7.5%) of them agreed and 1 (2.5%) of them strongly agreed to the statement. In total, 33 (82.5%) of the learners disagreed to the statement, 3 (7.5%) of them were undecided and 4 (10%) of them agreed to the statement. This gives a mean of 1.7 and a standard deviation of 1.16. This clearly shows the fact that majority of the learners do not agree to the fact that their teachers confuse them anytime they teach them reading comprehension lessons, though some accept that claim.

With the last statement “My teacher makes us do too much work during reading comprehension lessons”, 9 (22.5%) of the learners strongly disagreed; 14 (35%) of them disagreed, while 6 (15%) of them neither disagreed nor agreed. Nonetheless, 7 (17.5%) of the learners agreed while 4 (10.0%) of the learners strongly agreed to the statement. Overall, 23 (57.5%) of them generally were not in support of the statement; 6 (15%) of them rather remained neutral as far as the statement is concerned; yet 11 (27.5%) of them were in support of the statement, giving a 2.6 and 1.31 mean and standard deviation respectively. It can be concluded that, majority of the primary six English Language learners in the Oguaa circuit of the New Juaben South Municipality do not accept that their teachers make them do too much work during reading comprehension lessons.

#### **4.7 Part Two: Qualitative Data Analysis**

This part consists of the results of the interviews and lesson observations of Primary Six English Language teachers and learners’ knowledge and use of Vygotsky’s scaffolding model as a tool for reading comprehension lessons in New Juaben South Municipality.

#### **4.8 Interviews of Teachers and Pupils**

The interviews were carried out with specific reference to the research questions. The questions were put under four main themes: Teachers’ level of knowledge on use of scaffolding model, scaffolding techniques teachers use to teach pupils, influence of use of the scaffolding model on learners’ attitude and challenges teachers and pupils encounter when scaffolding model is employed. The Primary six English Language teachers and pupils were code named as English Language Teacher 1 to 5 and English Language learner 1 to 10 (ELT 1-ELT 5 and ELL 1 –ELL 10) respectively.

**Research Question 1: What is the level of knowledge of teachers in the New Juaben Municipality on the use of scaffolding model for teaching reading comprehension lessons?**

**Theme One: Teachers' level of knowledge on use of scaffolding model**

After the interview, the researcher derived the following sub-themes: meaning of scaffolding, principles of scaffolding strategy and teacher's role in the scaffolding strategy.

**Question One: Participants (teachers) were asked the question "What in your view does scaffolding as a teaching strategy mean?"**

The interview responses of the teachers were in line with the following sub-themes: building of concept, teacher serving as guide, and a teaching technique that helps the children to progress in learning. They are transcribed as follows:

*"Scaffolding strategy is a teaching strategy which means building a concept in a lesson bit by bit." (ELT 1)*

*"When you talk about scaffolding it is a method of teaching whereby a teacher serves as a guide to guide a learner in order to accomplish a particular task." (ELT 3)*

*"It means teaching technique that helps the children to progress in their learning. It motivates the children during work." (ELT 4)*

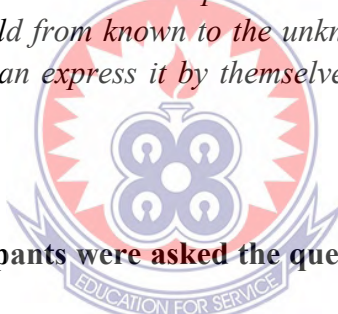
*"Please, this the first time I am hearing this. I don't have any in-depth knowledge about it." (ELT 1). (Interview Data, 2021)*

**Question Two: Participants (teachers) were asked the question “which principles of scaffolding strategy do you usually use to teach your children well?”**

The teachers’ responses could be grouped under the following sub-themes: breaking tasks into smaller unit, teaching from known to unknown, effectiveness no matter class size and guiding to accomplish a tasks and inability to share any principle. Some of these responses are transcribed as follows:

*“The principle is you build the children from known to unknown. That is, you base on what they know already then you leave them to discover what they don’t know.” (ELT 5)*

*“When it comes to teaching English reading comprehension, the teacher breaks the tasks into simpler ones starting from what they know. So, you build from known to the unknown gradually until the point when they can express it by themselves.” (ELT 1). (Interview Data, 2021)*



**Question Three: Participants were asked the question “What role do you play as a teacher in the scaffolding strategy during lessons?”**

Teachers’ responses were identified in the following sub-themes: As a facilitator and a guide. Some of their responses are presented below:

*“My role is that I facilitate. I guide them to achieve their goal or the goal (of the lesson)” (ELT 5)*

*“Mmmmmm you (the teacher) are just the guide. So, you guide the children through the techniques.” (ELT 4)*

*“I generally play a role of a facilitator during reading comprehension lessons. I read and then guide the learners also to read.” (ELT 1)*

*“The role I play is basically as a facilitator. I edge the children to bring out the ideas themselves that is relevant or associated with the topic you are dealing with.” (ELT 2). (Interview Data, 2021)*

**Question Four: Teachers were asked about their knowledge on scaffolding process with this question “What do you think are some of the processes of scaffolding strategy that help students to learn during reading comprehension?”**

Teachers’ responses were captured under the following themes: Review of relevant knowledge, Exploration of meaning and application of new words, Modelling of reading, breaking reading tasks into smaller units in groups, asking questions on passages to check understanding etc. Examples of their responses are transcribed as follows:

*“So as a teacher using the scaffolding (strategy), I base on the learner knowledge from the known to the unknown then I use to build on their previous knowledge in order to build the new skills for the new lesson so I serve as a guide up to the time the learner will gain maximum knowledge about the topic, then I will leave him or her in order to practice it on her own.” (ELT 3).*

*“I first discuss and explain the topic with the pupils. Then we come to the key words in it with the help of a dictionary to bring out the meanings of the words and also form sentences with them for them to have a fair view of the words that they found the meaning of. During the reading itself, I the teacher read first and ask the pupils to also read before we orally answer questions on them” (ELT 1)*

*“Generally, I first take the learners through the key words in the reading comprehension passage. I give it to them on a word card. And then, they pronounce the words and explain the words in their groups. After the explanation of the words, I link the words to the comprehension passage we are going read. I read first twice and let learners also read in turns. After reading, we learn the values of the passage read and then I assess them.” (ELT 2). (Interview Data, 2021).*

**Research Question 2: Which scaffolding techniques do teachers in the New Juaben municipality use to teach English reading comprehension lessons?**

**Theme Two: Scaffolding Techniques**

Both teachers and pupils were asked to share scaffolding (techniques) that characterize the teaching and learning during reading comprehension lessons.

**Question 5: What are the scaffolding techniques you employ to ensure that your pupils understand the lesson and are able to do the reading comprehension exercise?**

Responses of the teachers fell in line with the following sub-themes: Modelling, Exploration, Use of Audio-Visual Materials, Oral Questions and answers, guiding from known to unknown by increasing task difficulty, linking of concept to everyday life situations. The responses are transcribed as follows:

*“I guide them that is I guide them from what they know to the unknown.*

*After that I can give them a task higher than what they have done already to reach the unknown. After that I relate it to everyday experience.” (ELT 5)*

*“With this question, pinpointing specific techniques will honestly be difficult for me because I don’t have knowledge on them but what I can say to it is first help the children to bring out the meaning of the words themselves through the pages of the dictionary so this one they explore the dictionary, then I also find how they understand the word so we use them in sentences. From that time, we begin the reading itself where reading makes easier because most of the key words have been dealt with.” (ELT 1)*

*“First, it is errr questions and answers orally. I have to introduce them to the questions and answers orally so that you make sure they understand what you are arriving at before they do the written exercise.” (ELT 4)*

*“So, in case may be the pronunciation of the words, I will pronounce the words then the learners will pronounce it for me. Then the pictures in the book, I will ask the learner what he/ she can observe from the picture so out that I will be able to come out with the topic for the lesson, I will introduce it to them. For the first time, I will read the passage for them to listen after that I will invite some of the learners those who cannot read and those who can. I do random picking then out of that they read.” (ELT 3). (Interview Data, 2021)*

**Question 2: What are the (scaffolding) techniques/ steps your teacher goes through with you at the end of lessons that help to do reading comprehension exercises well?**

Responses of the learners were grouped into the following sub-themes: Modelling by teacher, Exploration of words, Use of Audio-Visual Materials, Oral Questions and answers, guiding from known to unknown by increasing task difficulty, linking of concept to everyday life situations. The responses are transcribed as follows:

*“When we are about to start, the key words and we search in our dictionary. When we are done with the dictionary, he will start reading and any word we don’t understand he will teach us. When we finish, he will read somewhere and he pause we will continue until we finish reading, he will give us work and when we are done with the work we drop it on his table and he will mark for us.” (ELL 1)*

*“Yes, sometimes before he starts he puts the key words on the board and then would ask us to spell it. He would give the spelling book then he will clean the board for spelling. I think that helps me a lot.” (ELL 6)*

*“Ok Some times when he is teaching us he will also use some actions to show us. Like maybe if you are reading some story like Kweku Ananse he will also do something to encourage us all too... If we finish reading he will ask some questions and he will also ask those who don’t understand what we have just read and he will teach them. Sometimes he will read it for us and sometimes too you only will read so if you make a mistake then he will teach you.” (ELL 3) (Interview Data, 2021)*

**Question 6: Participants (teachers) were asked to “Explain the processes you follow from the start of a lesson to the end when using scaffolding strategy to teach English reading comprehension lessons.”**

Responses of the teachers aligned themselves in the following sub-themes: Preview of previous knowledge, Introduction of new concept, guiding learners to grasp new concepts well, putting learners into mixed ability groups, Model reading, Practice of new concept, linking of concept to everyday life situations. The responses of the teachers are transcribed as follows:

*“I first take the learners through the key words in the reading comprehension passage. I give it to them on a word card. And then, they pronounce the words and explain the words in their groups. After the explanation of the words, I link the words to the comprehension passage we are going read. I read first twice and let learners also read in turns. After reading, we learn the values of the passage read and then I assess them.” (ELT 2)*

*“Normally the starting is based on what they’ve learnt already. So after that then you introduce the new one to them. You make sure they understand the lesson in question. Then afterwards you ask them questions based on what they learned new, the news things they have learned. The pupils are normally put into mixed ability groups so that those who are not fluent can learn from their friends as part of the processes. (ELT 4)*

*“The first activity that is you introduce the topic to them after that you ask them their knowledge about the topic because it must be something that they know already. In case there is a picture you discuss the picture with them to bring out the idea what they perceive to be in the content of what they are about to read. After that you drill them with the key words then after that use them to form sentences so that the words will become part of them. After that you get to the reading proper. You have to set the pace to them then they also follow you suit. After that you ask them some questions in the passage.” (ELT 5)*



*“First of all, I discuss and explain the topic with the pupils. Then we come to the key words in it with the help of a dictionary to bring out the meanings of the words and also form sentences with them for them to have a fair view of the words that they found the meaning of. During the reading itself, I the teacher read first and ask the pupils to also read before we orally answer questions on them”. (ELT 1)*

**Question Three: Participants (learners) were asked to “Explain the processes (in scaffolding strategy) your teacher follows from the start of a lesson to the end when he/ she teaches English reading comprehension lessons.”**

Responses of the learners were put into the following sub-themes: Introduction of topics and key words, Coaching, Model reading, reading in paragraphs/ smaller units, practice of new concepts. The responses of the learners are transcribed as follows:

*“He writes the topic after that he writes the key words. He let us to find the meaning of key words in the dictionary and after that he explain it to us. He will start reading and when he reaches somewhere we also read. He let us talk about what we learn and the lesson we can get. He let us answer questions on the passage.” (ELL 4)*

*“Not sure about that, sometimes he will say in the last lesson, what did you learn, you the student what did you learn, then we continue in this way. I will say that when my teacher is about to teach, he will first write the key words of the story on the board so we revise it with him. After that, he will let us say it role by role. After that he himself will read. After reading he will tell us to read one after the other, even not one after the other, paragraph by graph then we read. After that he will give us some exercise and when we are done it is over. (ELL 6)*

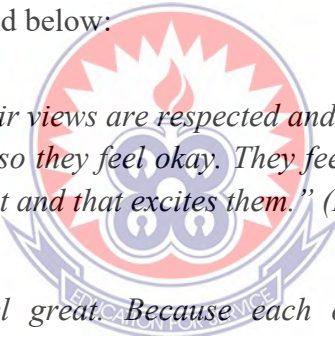
*“Before reading he gives us an energizer to say. Even he will write some words on the board and explain it to us and we will recite it after him. So, when he finishes he will make us to open our books. After that he will call one person to read aloud. After reading it, he will take his time and explain the word to us so that we will understand perfectly. Then he gives us exercise.” (ELL 7). (Interview Data, 2021)*

**Research Question 3: What influence does the use of the scaffolding model by New Juaben Municipality teachers have on learners' attitude toward the learning of English Language reading comprehension lessons?**

Theme Three: Influence of Use of the Scaffolding Model on Learners' Attitude

Question Seven: The participants (teachers) were asked "How do your pupils feel when you scaffold (when you guide them at the initial stages of) classroom work and when you allow them to contribute during reading comprehension lessons?"

The teachers' interview responses were centred on the following sub-themes: excitement, understanding of the lesson, eagerness to contribute to lesson, motivation to be part of lesson, boost of confidence of pupils. Some the responses of the teachers as transcribed are presented below:



*"They feel that their views are respected and then their contributions are also accepted so they feel okay. They feel part of the lesson, yes they are not left out and that excites them." (ELT 5)*

*"I think they feel great. Because each of them was eager to contribute because they have been engaged and they are bringing out the ideas. So, they feel great taking part in the lesson because they are at the centre of it." (ELT 1)*

*"Guiding them boost their confidence level in order to be able participate in the lesson to acquire the necessary skills. They are excited and they also contribute more." (ELT 3)*

*"Oh, they are excited and I'm assured they understand what I have taught very well and can summarize the passage when they are told to so." (ELT 2). (Interview Data, 2021)*

**Question Eight: The teachers were asked “How do your pupils feel when you use different TLMs and approaches, put them into mixed ability groups and provide detailed instructions during reading comprehension lessons?”**

The teachers’ response from the interview comprised the following sub-themes: comfort, excitement, ability to assist others, enlightenment, motivation, discipline. Some of the responses of the teachers as captured from the afore-mentioned sub-themes are presented below after transcription:

*“Bringing TLMs and allowing them to touch the TLMs, it boosts their confidence and also they feel the reality of the things they are learning. So, giving them the necessary guidelines, it helps them to be discipline and also helps them to finish on time.” (ELT 3)*

*“It really helps them to understand what I’m teaching so they feel happy. They are excited and they show interest. They pair their answers to see whether are correct or not.” (ELT 2)*

*“With the resources I normally use like the dictionary and pictures. Each of them describes pictures on the passage from their perspective i.e. how they understand it so they become excited when they interact with TLMs. Our groupings during reading comprehension are mostly mixed ability. So, when they collaborate their communication is enhanced. They also learn some personal leadership development.” (ELT 1).*

*“Using the picture brings the pictorial aspects of the lesson to the pupils. And interacting with them too makes them feel comfortable to share their views with their colleagues. At certain times they might feel an anxiety that may be somebody might laugh at their answers. But when they share it within their peers they are okay with it that is working in groups and since they’re in groups they are able to come out with their abilities.” (ELT 5). (Interview Data, 2021)*

**Question Three: The participants (pupils) too were asked “How do you feel when your teacher guides you at the start of classroom work/ lesson and also when he allows you to contribute your knowledge during reading comprehension lessons?”**

The pupils’ interview responses fall within the following sub-themes: Happiness, Understanding, Ability to help others, Comfort, excitement. Some of the pupils’ responses are transcribed below:

*“It makes me feel like if I don’t understand anything I can ask him and he teach me and I will understand.” (ELL 7)*

*“It is very exciting when he teaches us some of the story. He can use another story to make some example. Like may be someone’s story which has been written in a book, he also read to us which look similar with what we are reading. I feel very good because he is allowing us to express what we can do.” (ELL 3)*

*“I feel free. When I don’t understand anything, I can ask my friend to show me. When I am coming to ask questions I feel free, I don’t fear anybody but may I be shy of somebody. I feel... I feel excited too.” (ELL 1)*

*“Sometimes I feel like eih this word is very hard for me ooh then I will ask my teacher “what does this word mean” and he will explain it for me. So that makes me understand deeply. I feel my teachers let us ask all questions and he helps too and it makes me understand the lesson well.” (ELL 6.) Interview Data, 2021).*

**Question Four: The pupils were again asked “How do you feel as a pupil when your teacher uses different TLMs and approaches, put you into different learning ability groups and provides detailed instructions during reading comprehension lessons?”**

After the responses of the pupils from the interview, the following sub-themes were generated: Ability to share idea, Excitement, Privilege to demonstrate skills, spirit of belongingness. Some of the pupils’ responses as transcribed are presented below:

*“I feel that it is ok because she put us into groups, because when I don’t know something someone knows so when we bring our minds together we can do it. I feel that feel good about it when our teachers bring TLMs during lessons.” (ELL 8)*

*“Yes, I feel very happy that he is using different materials and also he puts us into different ability groups. I feel very happy.” (ELL 1)*

*“When he does that and put us into groups and gives us questions, we share our ideas in the group. I feel like my friends help me and I also help them. So, we help one another. I feel like our teacher wants us to know the thing by seeing it with our own eyes. So, it feels like our teacher wants us to understand it very well that is why he brings the learning materials, so I feel happy seeing real materials during lessons.” (ELL 6)*

*“Ok when he uses those things it brings some concept or an idea of what we are reading so it makes me happy. Sometimes I feel good in groups because, I can help those who do not have the ability to learn fast.” (ELL 3). (Interview Data, 2021)*

**Research Question 4: What challenges do teachers in the New Juaben municipality encounter when scaffolding model is employed during reading comprehension lessons?**

**Theme Four: Challenges with the use of Scaffolding Model**

**Question Nine: The participants (teachers) were asked the question “What are the challenges you face as teacher whenever you use scaffolding strategy in teaching reading comprehension lessons?”**

The teachers’ interview responses centred on the following sub-themes: Time constraints, preparation for scaffolding lesson, availability of right teaching resources, boredom, difficulty in helping weak students, intelligent learners overshadowing others in group works, disturbances, laborious work, class size, attending the needs of all learners. Some of the teachers’ responses from the interviews are presented below.

*“It makes the lesson very long therefore they get tired on the way. Some few of the pupils cannot read fluently as others will read so. So normally, lesson is extended to allow weak students read fluently.” (ELT 2)*

*“The challenge might be where teaching resources are not available. Scaffolding needs a lot of time. The time frame is a challenge. Using scaffolding to teach is time consuming.” (ELT 5)*

*“The challenge I face is though scaffolding strategy is good but it is time consuming. In finding teaching learning materials, the one that is suitable for the lesson, that is where the problem is. Sometimes you may be tempted to forgo using TLMs and use other teaching techniques or methods.” (ELT 1)*

*“Currently because of Covid-19 groupings become very difficult. Sometimes too the ability pupils in the class over shadow those, yes, they want to prove to them that they better than the others, that’s some of the challenge. I can say getting TLMs to teach reading comprehension is sometimes difficult to come by. I am not able to*

*attend to all the needs of all pupils during lesson also because of time factor so reading like this not all are able to read.” (ELT 4)*

**Question 5: The participants (learners) were also asked the question “What problems/ challenges do you face as a pupil during reading comprehension lessons when your teacher uses scaffolding strategy?”**

After the responses from the learners, the following sub-themes were arrived at: understanding, teasing and mockery, attention loss, disturbances and noise, gender biasness, boredom. Examples of learners’ responses are presented below:

*“For sometimes our class is it is very noisy so that also distract our teacher.” (ELL 6)*

*“When my teacher reads, I feel bored. Sometimes when he reads I just want him to be like very active, but he does not show that. Some of my colleagues also disturbs during lessons.” (ELL 8)*

*“Errmm, most of the times in reading, our teacher calls girls more than boys. I want him to let us read in rows. Some of my also colleagues talk in class during lessons.” (ELL 7)*

*“Sometimes when you are reading some will be talking behind and will be laughing. And sometimes if we finish reading and our teacher ask questions if you make a little mistake they will laughing at you, teasing and mocking about the word you made the mistake.” (ELL 3). (Interview Data, 2021)*

#### **4.9 Lesson Observation**

This section focuses on observation of lessons of 60 minutes duration of five (5) Primary Six English Language teachers on the use scaffolding techniques, influence of use of the scaffolding model on learners’ attitude and challenges they encounter in the use of scaffolding model in teaching Reading Comprehension lessons in the New

Juaben South Municipality. This was accomplished with the assistance of an observation guide which was made up of three different sections. The first focuses on lesson techniques employed by the teachers. The second section highlights the influence of the use of scaffolding model on learners' attitude and the challenges they encounter in the use of scaffolding model. In all the three aspects, the rating scale of 1-5 where 1 is low and 5 is high was used. The scores of the teachers are presented on tables using frequencies and percentages as shown below:

**Table 4.10: Scaffolding Techniques Used**

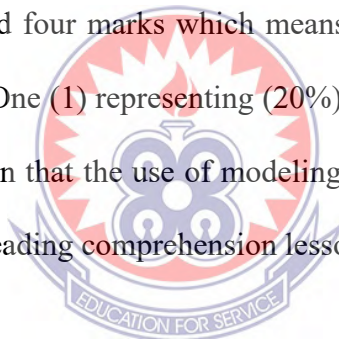
Techniques	1		2		3		4		5		Total	
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
Modeling using verbal explanations and body language	0	(0)	1	(20)	2	(40)	1	(20)	1	(20)	5	(100)
The class does, groups do and individual pupils do it. (e.g pronunciation of words)	2	(40)	1	(20)	1	(20)	0	(0)	1	(20)	5	(100)
Review of pupils' previous knowledge	0	(0)	0	(0)	1	(20)	2	(40)	2	(40)	5	(100)
Break a task (e.g. words pronunciation, reading passages) into small unit.	0	(0)	0	(0)	1	(20)	4	(80)	0	(0)	5	(100)
Give feedback to pupils after performing a task	0	(0)	0	(0)	0	(0)	4	(80)	1	(20)	5	(100)
Contextualize concepts, expressions, new vocabulary using audio visuals, demonstrations, examples.	0	(0)	3	(60)	1	(20)	1	(20)	0	(0)	5	(100)
Build clusters of meaning that are organized and interconnected (Schema building)	2	(40)	2	(40)	1	(20)	0	(0)	0	(0)	5	(100)
Represent text with pictures etc.	4	(80)	1	(20)	0	(0)	0	(0)	0	(0)	5	(100)
Encourage students to start the appropriation of new language	2	(40)	0	(0)	0	(0)	1	(20)	2	(40)	5	(100)
Guide learners to develop awareness of their own knowledge, ability to understand, monitor level of understanding.	1	(20)	0	(0)	0	(0)	3	(60)	1	(20)	5	(100)



Ask questions during lessons to check for understanding of learners.	1 (20)	0 (0)	1 (20)	2 (40)	1 (20)	5 (100)
Provide a cue to shift pupils' attention to focus on specific information etc.	0 (0)	3 (60)	2 (40)	0 (0)	0 (0)	5 (100)
Put pupils into mixed ability groups to work.	5 (100)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	5 (100)

**Source:** Field Data- Observation (2021). Key: Rate 1-5, 1= Low, 5= High, %=Percentage F= Frequency

From Table 4.10, in terms of modeling using verbal explanations and body language during lesson, none of the teachers scored one mark which is low. Two of the teachers representing (20%) scored two marks, which basically means the teachers use of this technique is below average, 2 (40%) of them scored three marks, that is indicative of the fact that some of the teachers use of this technique is average. One (1) representing (20%) scored four marks which means the use of this technique during lesson is above average. One (1) representing (20%) of the teachers scored five marks which is also an indication that the use of modeling and verbal explanation and body language is high during reading comprehension lessons.



The next technique is, the class does, groups do and individual pupils do it. (E.g. pronunciation of words). For this technique, 2 (40%) of the teachers scored two marks which means the use of it is low. One (1) representing (20%) scored two marks which indicates that the application of the technique is below average. One (1) representing (20%) of them scored three marks which means their use of the technique is average. None of the teachers scored four marks. One (1) representing (20%) of them scored 5 marks which shows that their use of this technique is high during lessons.

For the Review of pupils' previous knowledge technique, none of them scored one mark. None of them also scored two marks; while 1 representing (20%) of the

teachers however, scored three marks which means their use of the technique is average. Two (2) representing (40%) of them scored four marks which means their use of the technique is above average. Finally, 2 (40%) of them scored five marks which means their use of the technique is high during reading comprehension lessons. The next technique on the table is Break a task (e.g. words pronunciation, reading passages) into small unit. No teacher scored one as well as two marks. One (1) representing (20%) of them scored three marks which means the teachers' use of the technique is average. Four (4) representing (80%) of them scored four marks which is an indication that the use of the technique of breaking task into smaller unit is above average. None of the teachers scored five marks.

The next technique is Contextualize concepts, expressions, new vocabulary using audio visuals, demonstrations, examples. Out of a total of five (5) lessons observed, no teacher scored one mark. Three (3) representing (60%) of the teachers scored two marks which means their use of the technique is below average. One (1) representing (20%) scored three marks, meaning their use of the technique is average during lessons. One (1) representing (20%) of them also scored four marks which explains that their use of the technique is above average. No teacher scored all five marks.

From the table, the next technique is Build clusters of meaning that are organized and interconnected (Schema building). With this, 2 (40%) of the teachers scored one mark which indicates that the application of that technique is low. Also 2 (40%) of the teachers during lessons scored two marks which means the use of the technique is below average. Again, 1 (20%) of the teachers scored three marks, an indication of average use of that technique during their lesson. However, no teacher scored four and five marks during lessons.

The next technique is 'represent text with pictures etc'. Four (4) representing (80%) of the teachers scored one mark which means their use of the technique is low. One (1) representing (20%) of them scored two marks which is indicative of the fact that their use of this technique is below average. None of them scored three, four or five marks.

From the table, the next technique is Encourage students to start the appropriation of new language. For this, 2 (40%) of the teachers scored one mark which means that the application of the technique is low. No teacher scored two or three marks. However, 1 (20%) scored three marks representing an above average use of the technique while 2 (40%) scored all five marks which indicates that their use of the technique is high.

From the table, out of the 5 teachers, 1 (20%) of them scored one mark which means their use of the technique, Guide learners to develop awareness of their own knowledge, ability to understand, monitor level of understanding, is low. No teacher scored two or three marks. But 3 (60%) of them scored four marks, an indication that their use of the technique during lessons is above average. Also, 1 (20%) of them scored all five marks which means their application of the technique is high.

The next technique is Ask questions during lessons to check for understanding of learners. One (1) representing (20%) scored one mark which means their use of this technique is low. No teacher scored two marks; 1 (20%) scored three marks indicating an average use of the technique. Two (2) representing (40%) scored four marks which means an above average use of the technique and 1 (20%) of them scored all five marks, which indicates high application of the technique during lessons.

Next on the table is, provide a cue to shift pupils' attention to focus on specific information etc. No teacher scored one mark for its use. Three (3) representing (60%) of them scored two marks which means a below average use of the technique; 2

(40%) scored three marks, an indication of an average use of the technique. No teacher scored four or five marks with regard to the use of the technique during lesson.

The final technique from the table is, “Put pupils into mixed ability groups to work”. For this technique, 5 (100%) scored one mark which means their use of this technique is low. No teacher scored two marks, three marks, four marks or five marks as far as the use of the last technique is concerned.

**Table 4.11: Influence of the Use of Scaffolding model on Learners’ Attitude**

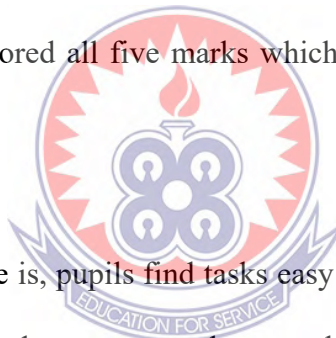
Impact on learners’ attitude	1		2		3		4		5		Total
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	
Learners (students) show great interest during lessons.	0	(0)	1	(20)	1	(20)	3	(60)	0	(0)	5 (100)
Learners contribute to lessons with excitement	0	(0)	0	(0)	1	(20)	2	(40)	2	(40)	5 (100)
Pupils find tasks easy and are able to perform them.	0	(0)	0	(0)	0	(0)	2	(40)	3	(60)	5 (100)
Pupils participate and understand new concept well due to the use of different TLMS and approaches.	1	(20)	0	(0)	2	(40)	2	(40)	0	(0)	5 (100)
Pupils understand new concepts well.	0	(0)	0	(0)	1	(20)	3	(60)	1	(20)	5 (100)
Attendance during lesson.	0	(0)	0	(0)	0	(0)	1	(20)	4	(80)	5 (100)
Participation in group work	5	(100)	0	(0)	0	(0)	0	(0)	0	(0)	5 (100)

**Source:** Field Data- Observation (2021). Key: Rate 1-5, 1= Low, 5= High, %=Percentage F= Frequency

From the table, it can be seen that out of the five (5) lessons observed, no teacher scored one mark for, learners’ show great interest during lessons. One (1) representing (20%) of them during lesson scored two marks which indicates that learners’

demonstration of great interest was below average. One (1) representing (20%) of them scored three marks which means that this impact was average during lesson. Three (3) representing (60%) of the teachers' lessons were scored four marks which means this impact was seen above average during lessons. No teachers' lesson recorded all five marks as far as this impact during lesson is concerned.

From the table, the next item is learners contribute to lessons with excitement. No teacher's lesson scored one mark or two marks. One (1) representing (20%) of the teachers' lesson observed scored three marks which means this impact was average. Two (2) representing (40%) of the teachers' lesson scored 4 marks, an indication that this impact on learners was above average. Again, two (2) representing (40%) of the teachers' lessons were scored all five marks which means that this impact was high during lessons.



The next item on the table is, pupils find tasks easy and are able to perform them. No teachers' lesson was scored one, two or three marks. Two (2) representing (40%) of the teachers' lesson scored four marks which means this impact was observed above average. Three (3) representing (60%) of the teachers' lessons scored all five marks, which is an indication that pupils finding tasks easy and being able to perform them was high.

Pupils participate and understand new concept well due to the use of different TLMS and approaches is the next item on the table. Out of the five (5) lessons observed, 1 (20%) scored one mark. No teachers' lesson scored two marks. Two (2) representing (40%) of the teachers' lesson scored three marks which means this impact was average during those lessons. Two (2) representing (40%) of the teachers' lesson

scored four marks which is indicative of the fact that, learners' participation and understanding of new concepts due to the use of TLMs and approaches was above average. No teacher's lesson scored all five marks.

From the table, the next item is Pupils understand new concepts well. No teacher's lesson scored one or two marks. One (1) representing (20%) of the teacher's lessons scored three marks which shows that pupils understanding of new concepts well was average. Three (3) representing (60%) scored four marks which means in those lessons this impact was above average. One (1) representing (20%) of the lessons scored all five marks, an indication that pupils' understanding of the new concept well was high.

The next item (impact) observed from the table is learners' attendance during lesson. No teacher's lesson scored one, two or three marks as far as learners' attendance is concerned. One (1) representing (20%) of teachers' lessons scored four marks which shows that attendance during lessons was above average. Four (4) representing (80%) of the teacher's lesson scored all five marks which indicates that learners' attendance during lessons was high.

The last item on the table is participation in group work. 5 (100%) of the teachers' lessons scored one mark which means learners participation in group work was low. No teacher's lesson scored two, three, four or five marks.

**Table 4.12: The Challenges encountered in the Use of Scaffolding Model**

Challenges	1		2		3		4		5		Total
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	
Sustaining lesson from start to finish	0	(0)	1	(20)	3	(60)	1	(20)	0	(0)	5 (100)
Teaching pupils with different learning abilities.	4	(80)	1	(20)	0	(0)	0	(0)	0	(0)	5 (100)
The use of TLMs during lessons	4	(80)	0	(0)	1	(20)	0	(0)	0	(0)	5 (100)
Teacher's composure during lesson delivery.	0	(0)	2	(40)	2	(40)	1	(20)	0	(0)	5 (100)
Pupils' involvement in the lesson	0	(0)	0	(0)	3	(60)	1	(20)	1	(20)	5 (100)
Reaching out to all pupils in the class during lessons	3	(60)	2	(40)	0	(0)	0	(0)	0	(0)	5 (100)

**Source:** Field Data- Observation (2021). Key: Rate 1-5, 1= Low, 5= High, %=Percentage F= Frequency

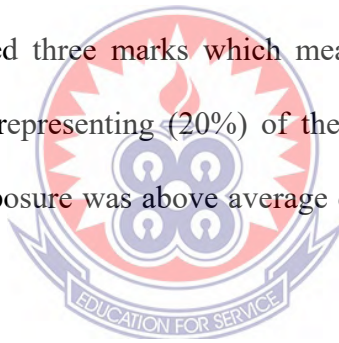
The first item on the table is sustaining lesson from start to finish. Out of the five lessons observed, no teacher's lesson scored one mark. One (1) (20%) of the lessons scored two marks which means the teacher's sustenance of lesson was below average. Three (3) representing (60%) scored three marks which means the teachers' being able to sustain the lesson from start to finish was average. One (1) representing (20%) scored four marks which indicates that teachers performed above average as far as this overcoming this challenge was concerned. No teacher scored all five marks.

Next on the table is teaching pupils with different learning abilities. Four (4) representing (80%) of the teachers scored one mark which means the teachers ability to deal with this challenge was low. One (1) representing (20%) scored two marks which also means that the teachers' ability to teach learners with different learning

abilities was below average. No teacher scored three, four or five marks as far as dealing with this challenge was concerned.

The next item on the table is, the use of TLMs during lessons. Four (4) representing (80%) of the teachers scored one mark for the use of TLMs during lessons. No teacher scored two marks. One (1) representing (20%) scored three marks which means their use of TLMs during lessons is average. No teacher scored four or five marks with respect to the use of TLMs.

Next from the table again is teacher's composure during lesson delivery. No teacher scored one mark. Two (2) representing (40%) of the teachers scored two marks which indicates that their composure during lesson delivery was below average. Two (2) representing (40%) scored three marks which means they had average composure during lessons. One (1) representing (20%) of the teacher's scored four marks, an indication that their composure was above average during lessons. No teacher scored all five marks.



The next item on the table is pupils' involvement in the lesson. No teacher's lesson scored one mark or two marks. Three (3) representing (60%) scored three marks which means pupils' involvement in the lesson is average. One (1) representing (20%) of teachers' lessons scored four marks which means their ability to involve the learners during lessons was above average. One (1) representing (20%) scored all five marks, an indication that learners' involvement in lessons was high.

The last item on the table is reaching out to all pupils in the class during lessons. Three (3) representing (60%) of the teachers scored one mark which means that being able to reach out to all pupils in the class during lessons was low. Two (2) representing (40%) of the teachers scored two marks which explains that dealing with



this challenge was below average during lessons. No teacher scored three, four or five marks as far as this challenge during lesson was concerned.

#### **4.10 Discussion of Results**

This aspect of the chapter outlines the discussions of the results of the data from the questionnaire, the interview data and the lesson observation of the Primary Six English Language teachers and learners in the Oguaa Circuit of the New Juaben South Municipality. The discussions were done with reference to the research questions that guided the study.

##### **4.10.1 Question One: What is the level of knowledge of teachers in the New Juaben Municipality on the use of scaffolding model for teaching reading comprehension lessons?**

This research question was aimed at assessing the level of the teachers' knowledge in the New Juaben Municipality on the use of scaffolding model for teaching reading comprehension lessons. Questionnaire items were first used to assess their level of knowledge and sequel to that, an interview was used as a follow up to confirm or refute results from the questionnaire.

Teachers had a highest mean score of 4.1 on the statement “In scaffolding, learners receive support and assistance, successfully perform certain tasks and move to more complex ones”. This demonstrates that virtually all the teachers have knowledge on scaffolding as a means of learners receiving support and assistance to successfully perform certain tasks and move to more complex ones. Eight (8) representing (80%) of the teachers agreed that Scaffolding involves the teacher acting as a guide and promoting interactions between him/ her and the pupils, among themselves with a mean score of 3.9. This means majority of the teachers have knowledge on their role

in the use of scaffolding model in teaching reading comprehension. Again, 8 (80%) of them confirmed their knowledge on the statement “Scaffolding plays a role in ensuring that the child learns what he couldn’t learn by him/herself” and that resulted in a mean score of 3.8. This in effect also implies that majority of the teachers have knowledge on the role scaffolding plays in helping learners learn what they couldn’t learn on their own. Seven (7) representing (70%) of the teachers also agreed that in scaffolding the teacher supports a child in a learning situation then gradually withdraws the support when he/she can cope with it with a mean score of 3.7. It therefore gives a conclusion that majority of the teachers know how the teacher must support the child initially and gradually withdraw the support when the child gets used to the task when using scaffolding to teach reading comprehension.

This finding contradicts that of Rahman, Abdurrahman, Kadaryanto, & Rusminto (2015). They opine that it may surprise readers in developed countries that teachers’ competence in scaffolding content knowledge is such a big issue in developing countries. Unfortunately, many teachers in Indonesia did not begin with adequate training/education and their limited access to books, computers, and internet connections continue to restrict them from enriching their content knowledge.

In summary, the Mean of Means from the items from the questionnaire is 3.7 and the average of the standard deviations is 0.95. Five (5) out of eight (8) of the mean score are equal or greater than the Mean of mean with only three (3) mean score below the Mean of Means of the items. Those three (3) are still above the mean of the scale used i.e. 3. The average standard deviation is high and therefore indicates the data are more spread out or the data points are above the mean. Based on the afore-mentioned statistics, it is clear that the level of knowledge of Primary Six English Language

teachers on Scaffolding model as a tool for teaching reading comprehension lessons is high.

Secondly, the teachers were interviewed and the interview results point to the effect that they have some knowledge about scaffolding model as a tool for teaching reading comprehension. Some of their views on the meaning of scaffolding as a teaching strategy are:

*“When you talk about scaffolding it is a method of teaching whereby a teacher serves as a guide to guide a learner in order to accomplish a particular task.” (ELT 3)*

*“It means teaching technique that helps the children to progress in their learning. It motivates the children during work.” (ELT 4)*

The views expressed by the teachers on the meaning of scaffolding strategy support the view of Reiser (2004) who posits that in scaffolding, learners receive support and assistance, they will successfully perform certain tasks and move to more complex ones. The findings also corroborate the findings of Davis and Miyake (2004) who define scaffolding simply as support in the form of reminders or help. They view scaffolding as a component of a larger set of methodology in activity-based learning: modeling (demonstrating), coaching, articulation, reflection, and exploration.

The teachers were asked to mention some principles (steps) of scaffolding they use or follow to teach learners well. They shared their thoughts on some principles (steps) as teaching from known to unknown, breaking task into smaller units etc. Examples of their exact responses are presented below:

*“The principle is you build the children from known to unknown. That is, you base on what they know already then you leave them to discover what they don’t know.” (ELT 5)*

*“When it comes to teaching English reading comprehension, the teacher breaks the tasks into simpler ones starting from what they know. So, you build from known to the unknown gradually until the point when they can express it by themselves.”*

These agree with Silver’s (2011) when he asserts that as a principle, the teachers must assess the learner's current knowledge and experience, relate content to what students already understand or can do and also break a task into small, more manageable tasks with feedback to help learners understand the concepts/ lesson.

Again, the teachers were asked to explain the role they play as teachers in the scaffolding strategy during lessons. Their responses also indicate that they quite know the role they play in the scaffolding strategy during lesson. For example:

*“I generally play a role of a facilitator during reading comprehension lessons. I read and then guide the learners also to read.” (ELT 1)*

*“The role I play is basically as a facilitator. I edge the children to bring out the ideas themselves that is relevant or associated with the topic you are dealing with.” (ELT 2).*

The findings agree with the analogy Bruner (1978) cites for teacher’s role in scaffolding model. His use of the term scaffolding seemingly describes what mothers often do to enable and make more manageable children’s learning of language: The mother’s support includes helping the child focus his or her attention to pertinent aspects of the task and modeling her expectations of the child (Bruner, 1978; Stewart, 2002). The teacher brings the student to new levels of skill and understanding by breaking up a task into smaller and more comprehensible steps.

It also affirms Jumaat and Tasir (2014) assertion when they said “instructional scaffolding as a guidance or support from teachers, instructors or other knowledgeable persons that facilitate students to achieve their goals in learning in emphasizing on the role of adult”

Finally, the teachers were asked to share their thoughts on some of the processes of scaffolding strategy that help students to learn during reading comprehension. In response, they explained some of the processes as reviewing of previous knowledge, exploration of meaning and use of new words, reading of passage in smaller units in groups, answering questions on the passage etc. Below are samples of their responses:

*“I first discuss and explain the topic with the pupils. Then we come to the key words in it with the help of a dictionary to bring out the meanings of the words and also form sentences with them for them to have a fair view of the words that they found the meaning of. During the reading itself, I the teacher read first and ask the pupils to also read before we orally answer questions on them” (ELT 1)*

*“Generally, I first take the learners through the key words in the reading comprehension passage. I give it to them on a word card. And then, they pronounce the words and explain the words in their groups. After the explanation of the words, I link the words to the comprehension passage we are going read. I read first twice and let learners also read in turns. After reading, we learn the values of the passage read and then I assess them.” (ELT 2).*

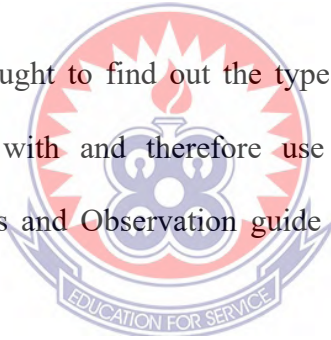
The findings also agree with Ellis and Larkin, as cited in Larkin (2003), who provide a simple structure (processes) of scaffolded instruction as the teacher beginning the lesson with questions to review previous knowledge, modelling the new concepts and words and their use, asking learners in the class, groups and individuals to use new words, read in in smaller units for comprehension and practicing the new concepts at individual level etc.

In summary, the teachers could not express themselves really well during the interview as compared to their response to the statements of the questionnaire. They could allude to basic knowledge on scaffolding model.

It can be concluded from the results of the questionnaire data and the interviews that the Primary Six English Language teachers in the New Juaben South District generally have an average level of knowledge about the scaffolding model as a tool for reading comprehension. This will therefore offer an opportunity for them to use scaffolding in teaching reading comprehension if their knowledge is further enhanced.

#### **4.10.2 Research Question 2: Which scaffolding techniques do teachers in the New Juaben municipality use to teach English reading comprehension lessons?**

This research question sought to find out the type of scaffolding model techniques teachers are conversant with and therefore use during reading comprehension. Questionnaires, Interviews and Observation guide were employed to identify those techniques.



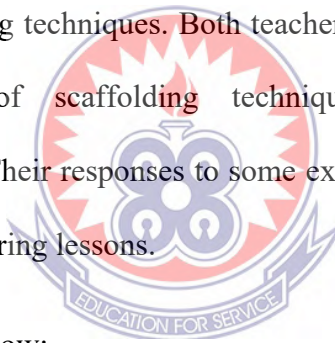
From the questionnaire data, 9 (90%) of the teachers agreed that they employ the scaffolding technique of asking questions during lessons to check for understanding of learners and that translated into a mean score of 4.5. From the questionnaire for the learners on the same item, 37 (92.5%) of the learners, which also resulted in a mean score of 4.5, also agreed that their teachers ask questions during lessons to check for their understanding during lessons. An overwhelming majority of the teachers and learners agree that this technique is employed during reading comprehension lesson. This finding gives confirmation to Fisher and Frey (2010) who posit that questioning to check for understanding is one of four techniques for effective scaffolding. Also, 8 (80) with a mean score of 4.1 supported and confirmed that they put students into

mixed ability groups to help them share experiences and learn from their peers during lessons. Similarly, 25 (62.5%) of learners on the same statement fully supported the statement leading to a mean score of 3.5. Majority of the teachers and learners agreed to the statement that they/ their teachers employ the mixed ability grouping technique, on a normal day, during reading comprehension lessons. This finding corroborates the finding of Larkin (2002) who asserts that students during scaffolding lesson work with a partner or a small cooperative group to complete the task. Cooperative teams perform the skill together; provide the needed support for each other.

Additionally, 7(70%) of the teachers with a resultant mean score of 3.7 affirmed that they model using verbal explanations and body language to elaborate and demonstrate the new material: concept, word etc. Thirty One (31) representing (77.5%) of the pupils with a mean score of 3.7 also responded in the affirmative to the statement. This confirms the fact that majority of the teachers and learners agreed that modelling using various methods to enable the class, groups and individual to appreciate new material such as concepts, words etc. as scaffolding technique is used during reading comprehension lessons. This supports Walqui (2006) who states that modeling; where the teacher uses verbal explanations and body language as he/she elaborates and demonstrates the new material as one of the key scaffolding instruction techniques in teaching English Language (reading comprehension). In summary, the Mean of Means from the items from the teachers' responses is 4.0 and the average of the standard deviation is 1.09. Four (4) out of nine (9) of the mean scores are equal or greater than the Mean of mean score of 4.0 with five (5) mean scores below the Mean of Means. Those five (5) are still above the mean of the scale, i.e. 3.0. The average of the standard deviations is high and therefore indicates the data are more spread out or the data points are above the mean. The Mean of Means from the responses of the

learners was also 4.0 with the average of the standard deviations being 0.92. Six (6) out of eleven (11) of the mean scores are equal or greater than the Mean of means score of 4.0 with five (5) mean scores below the Mean of Means of the items. Those five (5) means are still above the mean of the scale, 3.0. The average of the standard deviations of data from the learners is also high and therefore indicates the data are more spread out or the data points are above the mean. This confirms that the teachers employ some techniques of scaffolding model as a tool for teaching reading comprehension lessons.

To reaffirm that the teachers employ some type of scaffolding model techniques with their learners during reading comprehension lesson, both teachers and learners were interviewed on scaffolding techniques. Both teachers and learners were first asked to mention some type of scaffolding techniques employed during reading comprehension lessons. Their responses to some extent show the use of some type of scaffolding techniques during lessons.



Samples are presented below:

*“I guide (coach) them that is I guide them from what they know to the unknown.*

*After that I can give them a task higher than what they have done already to reach the unknown. After that I relate it to everyday experience.” (ELT 5)*

*“When we are about to start, the key words and we search in our dictionary. When we are done with the dictionary, he (our teacher) will start reading and any word we don’t understand he will teach (explain) us. When we finish, he will read somewhere and he pause we will continue until we finish reading, we will give us work and when we are done with the work we drop it on his table and he will mark for us.” (ELL 1)*



This is in line with assertion by Walqui (2006) who opines that bridging; where students activate prior knowledge (learning from known to unknown) it helps create a personal link between the student and the subject matter and contextualizing concepts can be offered in various forms to help learners relate their experience in the classroom to everyday life.

*“So, in case may be the pronunciation of the words, I will pronounce the words then the learners will pronounce it for me (modelling). Then the pictures in the book, I will ask the learner what he/ she can observe from the picture so out that I will be able to come out with the topic for the lesson, I will introduce it to them. For the first time, I will read the passage for them to listen after that I will invite some of the learners those who cannot read and those who can. I do random picking then out of that they read.” (ELT 3).*

*“Ok some times when he is teaching us he will also use some actions to show us. Like maybe if you are reading some story like Kweku Ananse he will also do something to encourage us all too... If we finish reading he will ask some questions and he will also ask those who don't understand what we have just read and he will teach them. Sometimes he will read it for us and sometimes too you only will read so if you make a mistake then he will teach you.” (ELL 3)*

These findings from the teachers and learners also reinforce the stance of Fisher and Frey (2010), Sukyadi & Hasanah (2010) and Alibali (2006) that explaining and modeling when students do not have sufficient knowledge to complete tasks, modelling the reading strategy/ tasks, invites student's participation, providing explanations representation of text with gestures e.g. diagrams such as charts and graphs; are all important techniques that enhance scaffolding model.

In summary, the sample responses from the teachers and learners from the interview above, don't exactly depict or confirms their highly scored responses from the questionnaires. They only mentioned basic techniques of scaffolding and thus could not explain the use of other more advanced scaffolding techniques during lessons.

To further confirm that the teachers employ some types scaffolding model techniques with their learners during reading comprehension lessons, lesson observation was done during reading comprehension lessons. The results are presented below:

Four (4) representing (80%) of the teachers' lessons observed scored three to five marks (i.e. average to high), an indication that the rate at which the teachers use modeling and verbal explanation and body language is high during reading comprehension lessons. This confirms the result of the data from the questionnaire which indicated that 7 (70%) of the teachers and 31 (77.5%) of the pupils affirmed that modelling using verbal explanations and body language to elaborate and demonstrate the new material: concept, word etc occurs during lessons. It means that the teachers model concepts using verbal explanations and body language for demonstration. This outcome agrees with Billett, as cited by ATHRA (2010) whose findings show that teachers must initially build learners knowledge through modelling, explanation and observation. Also, 5 (100) of the teachers' lessons observed scored three to five marks (average to high) to show that the teachers break tasks (e.g. words pronunciation, reading passages) into small units. This result affirms the result of the data from questionnaire which shows that majority, 8 (80%) of the teachers and 31 (77.5%) of the learners agreed that teachers break tasks (e.g. words pronunciation, reading passages) into small unit and provide feedback to learners during reading comprehension lessons. This clearly establishes the fact that the teachers employ the technique of breaking tasks into smaller unit during lessons. This result is in agreement with the findings of Silver (2011) which state that breaking tasks into small units with feedback to learners is one of the important techniques employed in scaffolding instruction.

It can be judged based on the results of the questionnaire, interviews and lesson observation that, Primary Six English Language teachers in the New Juaben South Municipality fairly use basic types of scaffolding techniques during reading comprehension lessons.

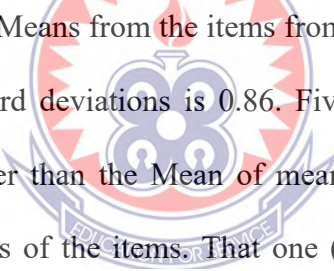
#### **4.10.3 What influence does the use of the scaffolding model by New Juaben Municipality teachers have on learners' attitude toward the learning of English Language reading comprehension lessons?**

To answer this research question, questionnaires, interviews and lesson observation were used. The results from the questionnaire, interviews and lesson observations show that the use of scaffolding model techniques positively have influence on learners' attitude towards the learning of English Language reading comprehension lessons.

With regard to data from the questionnaire, 9 (90%) of the teachers and 36 (90%) of the learners agreed that learners show great interest during lessons when they are allowed to contribute their thoughts during lessons. This confirms that majority of the teachers and learners allude to the fact that they really show great interest when they are allowed to contribute during lessons.

This finding is supported by Spectrum (2008) who asserts that when scaffolding strategy is employed in instruction, students are free (interested) to ask questions. Again, 9 (90%) of the teachers and 33 (82.5%) of the learners with resultant mean scores of 4.5 and 4.2 respectively, which represent majority, affirmed that the use of different scaffolding approaches and TLMS such as modelling, questioning, audio-visuals, cues helps students to participate and understand new concepts well during reading comprehension lessons. This is in line with the findings of Huggins and Edwards (2011), that graphic organizers, and other TLMs as scaffolding tools in the

classroom, can help to improve students' reading comprehension. Also, majority, i.e. 9 of the teachers representing (90%), with a mean score of 4.5 and 33 of the learners representing 82.5% with a mean of 4.2 confirm that learners show interest and fully participate in English language reading comprehension lessons when they are put in mixed ability groups to share ideas with their peers and present group works. This finding is in agreement with the findings of Samana, Gagné and Parks (2013) to the effect that, not only the teacher can scaffold students, students with low level of English proficiency can also successfully scaffold their peers; scaffolded assistance can be from the teacher and from the students in groups. It further showed that peers collaborated and used peer-peer scaffolding techniques in constructing oral and written language.



In summary, the Mean of Means from the items from the teachers' response is 4.3 and the average of the standard deviations is 0.86. Five (5) out of six (6) of the mean scores are equal or greater than the Mean of means with only one (1) mean score below the Mean of Means of the items. That one (1) is still above the mean of the scale, i.e. 3.0. Also, the Mean of Means from the items from the learners' response is 4.3 and the average of the standard deviations is 0.95. Five (5) out of six (6) of the mean scores are equal or greater than the Mean of means with only one (1) mean score below the Mean of Means of the items. That one (1) is still above the mean of the scale which is 3.0. The average of the standard deviations from the data from teachers' questionnaire is high and therefore indicates the data are more spread out or the data points are above the mean. Again, the average of the standard deviations of data from the learners is also far from 0 and therefore indicates the data are more spread out or the data points are above the mean.

Based on the results/ finding from data from the questionnaires, it is clear that the use of scaffolding model as a tool overwhelmingly and positively influences learners' attitude toward the learning of English Language reading comprehension

To ascertain the veracity of the findings of data from the questionnaire, that scaffolding techniques impact on learners' attitude towards the reading comprehension lessons, both teachers and learners were also interviewed and lessons were observed subsequently. They were first quizzed to share how learners feel when teachers scaffold i.e. when teachers guide learners at the initial stages of classroom work and when they allow them to contribute during reading comprehension lessons.

The teachers and learners' responses were as follows:

*"I think they feel great. Because each of them was eager to contribute because they have been engaged and they are bringing out the ideas. So, they feel great taking part in the lesson because they are at the centre of it." (ELT 1)*

*"Guiding them boost their confidence level in order to be able participate in the lesson to acquire the necessary skills. They are excited and they also contribute more." (ELT 3)*

*"It makes me feel like if I don't understand anything I can ask him and he teach me and I will understand." (ELL 7)*

*"I feel free. When I don't understand anything, I can ask my friend to show me. When I am coming to ask questions I feel free, I don't fear anybody but may I be shy of somebody. I feel. I feel excited too." (ELL 1)*

These confirm Burch's (2007) study which revealed that there is consistent progress among students when supported and scaffolded in their literacy acquisition and that their reading and writing performance exceed the expected level.

Teachers and learners were also asked to share their thoughts on how learners feel when different TLMs and approaches are used, put into mixed ability groups and provided detailed instructions during reading comprehension lessons.

*“Using the picture brings the pictorial aspects of the lesson to the pupils. And interacting with them too makes them feel comfortable to share their views with their colleagues. At certain times they might feel an anxiety that may be somebody might laugh at their answers. But when they share it within their peers they are okay with it that is working in groups and since they’re in groups they are able to come out with their abilities.” (ELT 5).*

*“When he does that and put us into groups and gives us questions, we share our ideas in the group. I feel like my friends help me and I also help them. So, we help one another. I feel like our teacher wants us to know the thing by seeing it with our own eyes. So, it feels like our teacher wants us to understand it very well that is why he brings the learning materials, so I feel happy seeing real materials during lessons.” (ELL 6).*

This re-emphasizes the position of Pishghadam and Ghadiri (2011) who conclude that most of the respondents (learners) are highly motivated to cooperate with more competent students during scaffolded lessons since they believe that their presence will enhance their progress.

In summary, the responses point in the same direction as the responses to questionnaires, to the effect that scaffolding model positively influences learners attitude towards reading comprehension lessons.

To further consolidate the findings from the results of the questionnaire and interview data, lesson observation was conducted. The results showed that majority of the lessons observed pointed to the same direction as far as results obtained were concerned. Five (5) representing (100%) of the teachers’ lessons observed scored three to five marks (average to high), an indication that the learners’ excitement and

confidence with which they contributed to lessons as the teachers were employing scaffolding techniques was generally high. Again, 4 (80%) of the teachers' lesson observed scored three and four marks (average and above average) in terms of learners' participation and understanding of the lessons when different TLMs and approaches were employed by the teachers. This means learners participate and understand new concepts well due to the use of different TLMS and approaches. However, 5 (100%) of the teachers' lesson scored one mark (low) with regards to learners' participation in group work. This suggests that the teachers not allow learners to participate in group work. This finding is contrary to the teachers and learners' responses to the questionnaires and interview. They argue that on a normal day, mixed ability groupings were highly used as seen in the results from questionnaire and interview data. The result corroborates Bassiri's (2012) findings which support the initial predictions that scaffolding has a positive effect on learners' reading comprehension and motivation scores. It also supports Huggins and Edwards (2011) who posit that the use of different teaching learning materials and approaches encourage students to think about information in new ways, the use of TLMs like graphic organizers, pictures etc. as scaffolding tools in the classroom, can help to improve reading comprehension and providing assistance and support to students through instructional scaffolding optimizes student learning.

It can be inferred from the results of the questionnaire, interviews and the lesson observations that the use of scaffolding model techniques by Primary Six English Language teachers have positive influence on learners' attitude towards reading Comprehension lessons in many ways: it gives them excitement and confidence because they are able to participate fully in lessons, it facilitates their clear understanding of new concepts which also makes them feel comfortable during

reading comprehension lessons and ultimately enables them to assist one another during lessons when they work in mixed ability groups etc.

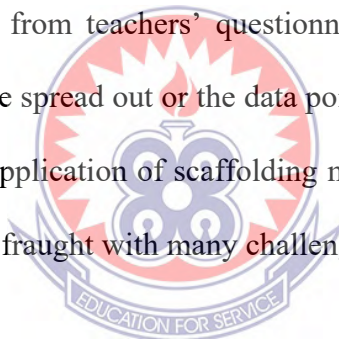
#### **4.10.4 Research Question 4: What challenges do teachers in the New Juaben South Municipality encounter when scaffolding model is employed during reading comprehension lessons?**

To answer this research question, questionnaires were administered, interviews were conducted and lesson observations were conducted to confirm the veracity of the results. The results suggest that teachers encounter several challenges when they employ scaffolding model in teaching reading comprehension lessons. With regard to results of data from the questionnaire, majority, i.e. 8 (80%) of the teachers agreed that planning and implementing scaffolds optimize learning for all students but it is a very demanding instructional strategy. These responses yielded a mean score of 3.8. This finding reinforces Pressley's (1996) finding where he alludes to the fact that although scaffolding can be used to optimize learning for all students, it is a very demanding form of instruction. Again, 6 (60%) of the teachers asserted that teaching learners with different learning abilities makes using the scaffolding strategy difficult and time consuming. This supports the findings of Stufy, (2002) who asserts that developing the supports and scaffolded lessons to meet the needs of each individual with different learning abilities is always extremely time consuming. Moreover, 8 (80%) of the teachers with a mean score of 3.5 believe that lack of regular in- service education and training on the use of scaffolding in teaching comprehension makes them handicapped. This supports the findings of Rahman, Abdurrahman, Kadaryant & Rusminto (2015). They conclude that many teachers do not begin with adequate training or education when it comes to adequate content knowledge on educational strategies such as scaffolding model which makes them handicapped in the classroom.



Five (5) representing (50%) which is half the number of the participants (teachers) with a mean score of 3.4 accepted that teaching and learning materials needed for effective scaffolding lessons are difficult to come by. This is in line with Spectrum (2008) who reports that selecting appropriate scaffolds (including appropriate teaching materials) that match the diverse learning and communication styles of students are not readily available.

In summary, the Mean of Means from the items from the teachers' response is 3.3 and the average of the standard deviations is 0.96. Five (5) out of Eight (8) of the mean scores are equal or greater than the Mean of means score of 3.3 with only three (3) mean scores below the Mean of Means of the items. Also, the average of the standard deviations from the data from teachers' questionnaire is high (0.96) and therefore indicates the data are more spread out or the data points are above the mean. It gives a clear indication that the application of scaffolding model as tool for teaching reading comprehension lessons is fraught with many challenges.



The interview of the teachers and learners also show that the use of scaffolding model to teach reading comprehension faces a lot of challenges. These were some of their responses when they were asked about the challenges they face as teachers whenever they use scaffolding strategy in teaching reading comprehension lessons?

*“It makes the lesson very long therefore they get tired on the way. Some few of the pupils cannot read fluently as others will read so. So normally, lesson is extended to allow weak students read fluently.”*  
(ELT 2)

This affirms Mahmoud's (2015) finding that, a big challenge for classroom teachers is having to teach learners who all have different zones of proximal development.

Within a class, the ZPD for many students may be similar, but there is the likelihood that some students' zone would be quite different. As a result of the discrepancies in the ZPD using scaffolding would be very hectic.

*“The challenge might be where teaching resources are not available. Scaffolding needs a lot of time. The time frame is a challenge. Using scaffolding to teach is time consuming.” (ELT 5)*

*“The challenge I face is though scaffolding strategy is good but it is time consuming. In finding teaching learning materials, the one that is suitable for the lesson, that is where the problem is. Sometimes you may be tempted to forgo using TLMs and use other teaching techniques or methods.” (ELT 1)*

This finding is in line with Stufy's (2002) and Spectrum's (2008) conclusion that developing the supports and scaffolded lessons to meet the needs of each individual with different learning abilities would be extremely time consuming and selecting appropriate scaffolds (including appropriate teaching materials) that match the diverse learning and communication styles of students are not readily available.

Observation of lessons were conducted to confirm the findings from the questionnaire and interviews and the results were not different. Here teachers were observed as they taught reading comprehension and graded on a 1-5 range of marks based on a set of defined challenges with the use scaffolding model.

Five (5) representing (100%), scored one and two marks (low and below average) in teaching pupils with different learning abilities during scaffolding model lessons. This is a clear indication that it is a challenge for the teachers. This clearly suggests that the teachers probably did not have in depth knowledge about the pupils as regards their various abilities and capabilities. This supports Spectrum's (2008) conclusion that not knowing the students well enough (their cognitive and affective abilities) to provide appropriate scaffolds becomes an impediment for the teacher. Also, in the majority of

the lessons observed, i.e. 4 (80%) the teachers scored one (1) mark (a low grade) as far as the use of TLMs during lessons was concerned. This means that they find it difficult getting the right material that can enhance the process of scaffolding instruction during teaching. This suggests that the teachers perhaps could not find and select the right TLMs for the reading comprehension lesson using scaffolding model. A finding which corroborates Mahmoud's (2015) finding that selecting appropriate scaffolds (including appropriate teaching materials) that match the diverse learning and communication styles of students is not readily available. Lastly, in all the lessons, 5 (100%), of the teachers scored one and two marks (low and below average) which means that being able to reach out to all pupils in the class during lessons was low and not encouraging. It suggests that the teachers could not reach out to all pupils with different zone of proximal development. It therefore confirms Mahmoud's, (2015) finding that it is a big challenge for classroom teachers to teach learners who have different zones of proximal development. This also confirms Vygotsky's (1978) finding on zone of proximal development (ZPD) which suggests that it becomes difficult to assist all learners in class if they have different zone of proximal development during scaffolding model instructions.

It can be concluded from the results of the questionnaire, interview as well as the lesson observation that, in spite of the fact that Primary Six English Language Teachers in the New Juaben South Municipality encounter such challenges as, lack of adequate knowledge to implement scaffolding instructions to the maximum benefit of learners, lack of appropriate teaching and learning materials to scaffold reading comprehension, insufficient time to complete a scaffolding model lesson successfully, inadequate materials to build their content knowledge on scaffolding model as tool for

reading comprehension lessons, they have a great potential to use scaffolding model to teach reading comprehension lessons.

#### **4.11 Summary of Chapter**

This chapter focused on the results of data, analysis of the data and discussions of results of data from questionnaire, interview and lessons observation. The quantitative data were analyzed using tables of which frequencies, percentages, mean scores and standard deviation were calculated. The qualitative data were recorded, transcribed and grouped into themes and sub-themes for analysis. After the analysis of the data (quantitative and qualitative), the discussions were subsequently done with reference to the research questions with adequate assistance from relevant literature.



## CHAPTER FIVE

### SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

#### 5.0 Overview

This chapter presents a summary of the findings, conclusions derived from the findings and recommendations made from the findings. Also, limitations and suggested areas for further studies are outlined in the chapter.

#### 5.1 Summary of key Findings

With reference to the discussions, the important findings are outlined as follows:

1. The teachers generally have average level of knowledge about the scaffolding model and its use as tool for teaching reading comprehension. This will therefore offer an opportunity for them to use scaffolding in teaching reading comprehension well if their knowledge is further enhanced through seminars and INSETS at the district/ circuit levels. The teachers again possess knowledge about their role, structure and processes for scaffolding model to teach reading comprehension but they need assistance to improve upon it.
2. The teachers use basic types of scaffolding techniques during reading comprehension lessons, though their skills and use of many other techniques need to be enhanced through INSETS and workshops for better application of the model for the maximum benefits of the learners.
3. The use of scaffolding model techniques by Primary Six English Language teachers have positive influence on the learners' attitude towards reading Comprehension lessons in many ways. The learners

appreciate that the use of techniques from scaffolding model gives them excitement and confidence because they are able to participate fully in lessons, it facilitates their clear understanding of new concepts which also makes them feel comfortable during reading comprehension lessons. Students are able to assist one another, learn from each other during lessons when they work in mixed ability groups etc. Teachers in the district therefore need supports and provision of resources to help its implementation during lessons.

4. The teachers encounter a lot of challenges in the use scaffolding model in teaching reading comprehension. These include: lack of adequate skill to implement scaffolding instructions to the maximum benefit of learners, lack of appropriate teaching and learning materials, laborious preparation needed for scaffolding lessons, insufficient time is a huge challenge for teachers to prepare and complete reading comprehension lessons using scaffolding model etc.

## 5.2 Conclusions

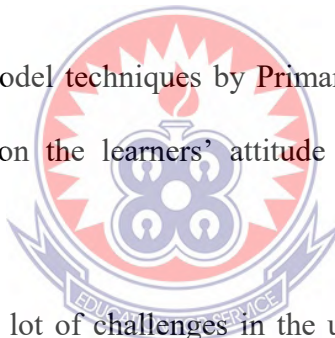
Scaffolding model as a tool is an emerging child-centred approach for teaching and learning. Many studies have justified the role it plays in facilitating learners' confidence, understanding and performances over the years when applied in the teaching of strands of English Language especially reading comprehension lessons. The study discussed the level of teachers' content knowledge, the type of techniques they apply during reading comprehension lessons, the influence of the scaffolding model on learners' attitude and the challenges they encounter in employing the

scaffolding model during reading comprehension lessons in the New Juaben South Municipality.

The teachers generally have average level of knowledge about the scaffolding model in terms of their role, structure and processes for scaffolding model as tool for teaching reading comprehension therefore their knowledge needs to be further enhanced through seminars/ workshops at the district/ circuit levels.

The teachers use some basic types scaffolding techniques during reading comprehension lessons, though their skills and use of many other techniques need to be enhanced through INSET and workshops for better application of the model for the maximum benefits of the learners.

The use of scaffolding model techniques by Primary Six English Language teachers have positive influence on the learners' attitude towards reading Comprehension lessons in many ways.



The teachers encounter a lot of challenges in the use scaffolding model in teaching reading comprehension. These include: lack of adequate skill to implement scaffolding instructions to the maximum benefit of learners, lack of appropriate teaching and learning materials, laborious preparation needed for scaffolding lessons, insufficient time to complete reading comprehension lessons using scaffolding model etc. Therefore, key stakeholders need to organize workshops and INSET to enhance teachers' knowledge and application of many techniques of the scaffolding model to enable them implement the model more appropriately in the classroom, provide resources to teachers to enhance reading comprehension using scaffolding model for the maximum benefits of the learners, restructure the time table. When this is done, it

will help in achieving the goals of the Reading Comprehension strand of English Language curriculum.

### **5.3 Limitations**

Despite the adequate information provided by the respondents, the study was limited in many areas that would need further investigations in the future. To begin with, the study was restricted to only Primary Six English Language teachers and learners in the Oguaa Circuit of the New Juaben South Municipality, as a result, the findings may be difficult to generalize. Secondly, the number of English Language Reading Comprehension lessons observed was limited to one for each of the teachers, which was inadequate to thoroughly assess the teachers' knowledge and use of Vygotsky's scaffolding model as a tool for reading comprehension lessons. Moreover, though the New Juaben South Municipality has both private and public basic schools, the study was limited to only public basic schools. The study was also limited to public basic schools in the Oguaa circuit, so all public basic schools outside the circuit were not involved. Lastly, even though participants in the study were assured of protection of privacy and confidentiality, the teachers' knowledge of the presence of the researcher during lesson observation may have motivated them to present the lessons in a more convincing way than a normal reading comprehension lessons. This may have led to subjectivity in the responses they provided as well as the results obtained.

### **5.4 Suggested Areas for Further Studies**

This study emphasized assessing teachers' knowledge and use of scaffolding model as a tool for reading comprehension lessons in Primary Six classrooms in the Oguaa Circuit of the New Juaben South Municipality. The findings could have been different if perhaps it had been conducted at a different class level, aspects of English



Language Curriculum, circuit, district or region. As a result, the researcher suggests similar research in the following areas:

- i. Research on scaffolding model as a tool for reading comprehension in Lower primary and Junior High Schools in English Language in the New Juaben South Municipality and beyond.
- ii. Research on scaffolding model as a tool for teaching other strands: Writing, Oral Language and Grammar of the English Language Curriculum at both primary and Junior High School levels.

## 5.5 Recommendations

The following recommendations are directed at the Ghana Education Service Universities and Colleges of Education, School Improvement Support Officers, Head teachers and teachers and other key stakeholders to promote effective use of the scaffolding model in basic schools.

1. It is recommended that, to improve and enhance the level of content knowledge of the scaffolding model as a tool for reading comprehension lesson in the Municipal, the Municipal Education Office, the SISO and Head teachers should organize periodic workshops, Seminars and In-Service Education and Training on scaffolding model for all primary school teachers in the district.
2. It is recommended that INSET/ Workshop/ Seminar organized by GES for primary teachers should specifically focus on scaffolding model techniques teachers are not conversant with to enable them acquire the skills of using those techniques when implementing scaffolding model to teach reading comprehension lesson in the district. The Ghana Education Service (G.E.S)

should help in supplying the needed Curriculum resources such as Teachers' Guide, Text books, Laptop Computers, Visual Aids that will facilitate the application of the techniques of scaffolding model during reading comprehension lessons to primary schools in the district.

3. It is recommended that Primary school Head teachers and SISOs should encourage primary six teachers to use scaffolding model by providing support system through regular supervision of English Language Reading Comprehension lessons to teachers or draw their attention to their strengths and weaknesses as they employ the scaffolding model to help them improve in their subsequent lessons. This will help in facilitating the positive influence the model has on learners' attitude during reading comprehension lessons. Again, it is recommended that all educational institutions earmarked to train teachers, most importantly, the Colleges of Education and Universities should highlight and teach scaffolding model as a major child-centred approach in the English Language Methodology course. This will invariably help teacher trainees become abreast with knowledge and application of scaffolding model when they are posted to the classrooms to teach English Language reading comprehension after completion of their programme of study since the model helps learners develop positive attitude towards the reading comprehension lessons.
4. It is recommended that major stakeholders: The Municipal Assembly, PTA/SMC of schools, Churches, Corporate organizations in the municipal should assist with the supply of the necessary logistics such as supplementary readers Teaching Learning Materials to augment what government provides through The Ghana Education Service in the municipal. Ghana Education Service at

the District level in collaboration with the Head teachers, SISO should redesign the primary School Time Table to increase the period allotted for the teaching of English Language Reading Comprehension lessons especially at Primary Six, to enable teachers have ample periods to apply scaffolding model to help learners to improve their reading comprehension abilities and prepare them adequately for the next level in education.

### **5.6 Policy Implications of the Study**

1. All educational institutions earmarked to train teachers, most importantly, the Colleges of Education and Universities, should highlight and teach on scaffolding model as a major child-centred approach in the English Language Methodology course. This will invariably help teacher trainees become abreast with knowledge and application of scaffolding model when they are posted to the classrooms to teach English Language reading comprehension and other strands after completion of their programme of study. This will also help learners develop positive attitude towards the reading comprehension lessons.
2. The Ministry of education through the Ghana Education Service (G.E.S) should help in supplying the needed Curriculum resources such as Teachers' Guide, Text books, Laptop Computers, Visual Aids (Wall Charts) that will facilitate the application of appropriate approaches such as scaffolding model in basic school classrooms.
3. The Ghana Education Service/ NaCCA should consider redesigning the primary School Table and increase the period allotted for the teaching of English Language Reading Comprehension lessons, to enable teachers have

ample periods to apply scaffolding model to help all learners to improve their reading comprehension abilities.

4. The Ghana Education Service should organize periodic workshops, seminars and In-Service Education and Training for teachers already on the field at the Regional/ District and Circuit levels to enhance their content knowledge and application of scaffolding model techniques. This will facilitate teachers' ability to apply the model to bring the needed impact on the learners.
5. Donor partners who support education in Ghana such as, World Bank, USAID, KOICA should be encouraged to supply the necessary logistics such textbooks, supplementary readers Teaching Learning Materials and also sponsor Seminars, Workshops and programmes such as Ghana Accountability for Learning Outcome Projects (GALOP) to build the capacity of teachers in the district (s).



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## APPENDIX A

### QUESTIONNAIRE FOR BASIC SIX ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHERS

Dear Sir/ Madam,

This questionnaire is meant for collecting information for writing thesis report at the University of Education, Winneba. It is aimed at assessing the knowledge and use of Vygotsky's scaffolding model as a tool for reading comprehension lessons in New Juaben South Municipality. As a result, there are no correct or incorrect responses. Kindly provide your honest response as possible to the statements. The details you provide will be kept strictly confidential, and your anonymity is guaranteed.

#### SECTION A: DEMOGRAPHIC DATA (Please tick appropriately)

1. **Sex:** Male [  ] Female [  ].
2. **Age:** Less than 25 years [  ] 25 to 35 years [  ], Above 35 years [  ].
3. **Status:** Professional [  ], Non-Professional [  ].
4. **No. of years in teaching service:** 1-5 [  ], 6-10 [  ], 11-15 [  ] Above 16 [  ].
5. **Highest Academic Qualification:** Post-Sec. Cert. A [  ], Diploma [  ], Bachelor's degree [  ], Post- Bachelor's degree [  ], Others [  ].
6. **Highest Professional Qualification:** Post-Sec. Cert. A [  ], Diploma [  ], B.Ed [  ], Post- B.Ed degree [  ] Others [  ].

**SECTION B: THE TEACHER'S KNOWLEDGE ON THE USE OF SCAFFOLDING MODEL FOR TEACHING READING COMPREHENSION LESSONS.**

Please indicate your degree of agreement or disagreement with the statements below.

SD= Strongly Disagree, D= Disagree, N= Neutral A= Agree SA= Strongly Agree

SN	Statements	SD	D	N	A	SA
1	I know scaffolding as a child-centred teaching strategy					
2	I have knowledge on scaffolding strategy as a tool for teaching reading comprehension					
3	In scaffolding, learners receive support and assistance, successfully perform certain tasks and move to more complex ones.					
4	Scaffolding plays a role in ensuring that the child learns what he couldn't learn by him/herself.					
5	Scaffolding is a "tutorial behavior that is contingent, collaborative and interactive."					
6	In scaffolding the teacher supports a child in a learning situation then gradually withdraws the support when he/she can cope with it.					
7	Scaffolding involves the teacher acting as a guide and promoting interactions between him/ her and the pupils, among themselves.					
8	Scaffolding is a process that enables a child or a novice to solve a problem which would be beyond his unassisted efforts.					



**SECTION C: TYPES OF SCAFFOLDING TECHNIQUES TEACHERS ENGAGE CHILDREN IN DURING READING COMPREHENSION LESSONS.**

Please indicate your degree of agreement or disagreement with the statements below.

SD= Strongly Disagree, D= Disagree, N= Neutral = A= Agree, Strongly Agree =SA

SN	Statements	SD	D	N	A	SA
9	I model using verbal explanations and body language to elaborate and demonstrate the new material (concept, word etc), then the class do it, groups do it and individual pupils do it.					
10	I always allow students to activate/ review prior knowledge/relate content to what students already understand or can do and break a task into small, more manageable tasks with feedback.					
11	I contextualize concepts, expressions, new vocabulary using audio visuals, demonstrations, examples etc					
12	I always build clusters of meaning that are organized and interconnected (Schema building)					
13	I represent text with pictures etc and encourage students to start the appropriation (use) of new language;					
14	I guide learners to develop awareness of their own knowledge and their ability to understand, control and monitor their level of understanding.					
15	I ask questions during lessons to check for understanding of learners.					
16	I provide a cue to shift students' attention to focus on specific information, errors, or partial understandings.					
17	I put students into mixed ability groups to help them share experiences and learn from their peers during lessons.					

**SECTION D: THE INFLUENCE OF THE USE OF THE SCAFFOLDING MODEL ON LEARNERS' ATTITUDE TOWARD THE LEARNING OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE READING COMPREHENSION LESSONS.**

Please indicate your degree of agreement or disagreement with the statements below.

SD= Strongly Disagree, D= Disagree, N= Neutral A= Agree SA= Strongly Agree

SN	Statements	SD	D	N	A	SA
18	Learners (students) show great interest during lessons when they are allowed to contribute during lessons.					
19	Students find tasks easy and are able to perform them when I offer them assistance at initial stages and it translates into good performance in exercises.					
20	The use of different approaches and TLMS such as modelling, questioning, audio-visuals, cues, assists students to participate and understand new concepts well.					
21	Students show interest and fully participate in English language reading comprehension lessons when they are put in mixed ability groups to share ideas with their peers and present group works.					
22	Students are always ready to perform tasks because of the detailed instructions provided and how tasks are broken into smaller units for them.					
23	Most students are always present during reading comprehension lessons and are free to ask questions during lessons for better understanding because of the scaffolding techniques I employ.					

**SECTION E: CHALLENGES FACED IN EMPLOYING SCAFFOLDING TECHNIQUES DURING READING COMPREHENSION LESSONS.**

Please indicate your degree of agreement or disagreement with the statements below.

SD= Strongly Disagree, D= Disagree, N= Neutral A= Agree SA= Strongly Agree

SN	Statements	SD	D	N	A	SA
24	Planning and implementing scaffolds optimize learning for all students but it is a very demanding instructional strategy.					
25	Teaching learners with different learning abilities makes using the scaffolding strategy difficult and time consuming.					
26	Teaching and learning materials needed for effective scaffolding lessons are difficult to come by.					
27	Knowing when to remove the scaffold so the student does not rely on the support at times is quite difficult.					
28	In differentiated teaching, scaffolding can hardly be used to teach reading comprehension.					
29	Using scaffolding in teaching comprehension in classes with large size is ineffective.					
30	Lack of regular in service education and training on the use of scaffolding in teaching comprehension makes teachers handicapped.					
31	The teachers' manuals and curriculum guides do exclude examples of scaffolds or outlines of scaffolding methods.					

## APPENDIX B

### QUESTIONNAIRE FOR BASIC SIX ENGLISH LANGUAGE PUPILS

Dear Pupil,

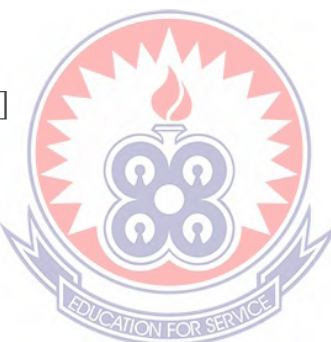
This questionnaire is meant for collecting information for writing thesis report at the University of Education, Winneba. It is aimed at assessing the use of Vygotsky's scaffolding model as a tool for reading comprehension lessons in New Juaben South Municipality. As a result, there are no correct or incorrect responses. Kindly provide your honest response as possible to the statements. The responses you provide will be kept strictly confidential, and your anonymity is protected as well.

#### SECTION A: DEMOGRAPHIC DATA (Please tick appropriately)

1. Sex: Male [  ] Female [  ]

2. Age: [  ]

3. Location: [  ]



**SECTION B: SCAFFOLDING TECHNIQUES PUPILS PARTICIPATE IN WITH TEACHER DURING READING COMPREHENSION LESSONS.**

Please indicate your degree of agreement or disagreement with the statements below.

SD= Strongly Disagree, D= Disagree, N= Neutral A= Agree SA= Strongly Agree

SN	Statements	SD	D	N	A	SA
1	Teacher models using verbal explanations and body language to explain and demonstrate the new material, word or concept.					
2	Teacher allows the class do, groups do and individual pupils do after showing us how to do something during lessons.					
3	Teacher always asks us questions on what we have already learned.					
4	Teacher always breaks a task (words, sentences etc) into small, more manageable parts with feedback.					
5	Teacher makes concepts, expressions, and new words meaningful to us using audio visuals, demonstrations, examples during lessons.					
6	Teacher always groups words, expressions and their meanings as they are interconnected.					
7	Teacher shows text with pictures etc. and encourage to use sentences and words well in new language.					
8	Teacher always guides us to develop awareness of own knowledge and ability to understand, control and monitor our level of understanding.					
9	Teacher asks questions during lessons to check for our understanding.					
10	Teacher provides a cue to shift our attention to focus on specific information, errors, or partial understandings.					
11	Teacher puts us into mixed ability groups to help us share experiences and learn from our peers during lessons.					

**SECTION C: THE INFLUENCE OF THE USE OF THE SCAFFOLDING MODEL ON LEARNERS' ATTITUDE TOWARD THE LEARNING OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE READING COMPREHENSION LESSONS.**

Please indicate your degree of agreement or disagreement with the statements below.

SD= Strongly Disagree, D= Disagree, N= Neutral A= Agree SA= Strongly Agree

SN	Statements	SD	D	N	A	SA
12	We show great interest during lessons when we are allowed to contribute during lessons.					
13	Work becomes easy to do and we become happy when our teacher assists us at initial stages.					
14	We show much interest in lessons and understand new concepts well when teacher uses different approaches and materials.					
15	We fully participate in reading comprehension lessons when we work in groups.					
16	We are always ready to do tasks because of the detailed instructions provided and how tasks are broken into smaller units for them.					
17	We do not absent ourselves during reading comprehension lessons because lessons are always interesting.					

**SECTION D: CHALLENGES FACED IN EMPLOYING SCAFFOLDING TECHNIQUES DURING READING COMPREHENSION LESSONS.**

Please indicate your degree of agreement or disagreement with the statements below.

SD= Strongly Disagree, D= Disagree, N= Neutral A= Agree SA= Strongly Agree

SN	Statements	SD	D	N	A	SA
18	Sometimes I find it difficult to understand when my teacher teaches reading comprehension.					
19	I find reading comprehension lessons boring					
20	Because we are many in class sometimes I do not follow what my teacher teaches us during reading comprehension lessons.					
21	Group works do bring a lot of noisy atmosphere in our class during reading comprehension lessons					
22	My teacher confuses me anytime he teaches us reading comprehension lessons					
23	My teacher makes us do too much work during reading comprehension lessons.					

## APPENDIX C

### INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR BASIC SIX ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHERS

An interview guide on assessing the Knowledge and Use of Vygotsky's Scaffolding Model as a tool for Reading Comprehension Lessons in New Juaben South Municipality.

**Research Question 1: What is the level of knowledge of teachers in the New Juaben Municipality on the use of scaffolding model for teaching reading comprehension lessons?**

1. What in your view does scaffolding as a teaching strategy mean?

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2. Which principles of scaffolding strategy do you usually use to teach your children well?



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3. What role do you play as a teacher in the scaffolding strategy during lessons?

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4. What do you think are some of the processes of scaffolding strategy that help students to learn during reading comprehension?

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The logo of the University of Education, Winneba, is a circular emblem. It features a central lamp with a flame, set against a background of a sunburst. Below the lamp are four stylized human figures. The emblem is surrounded by a banner that reads "EDUCATION FOR SERVICE".

**Research Question 2: Which scaffolding techniques do teachers in the New Juaben municipality use to teach English reading comprehension lessons?**

5. Explain the processes you follow from the start of a lesson to the end when using scaffolding strategy to teach English reading comprehension lessons.

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6. What are the scaffolding techniques you employ to ensure that your pupils understand the lesson and are able to do the reading comprehension exercise?

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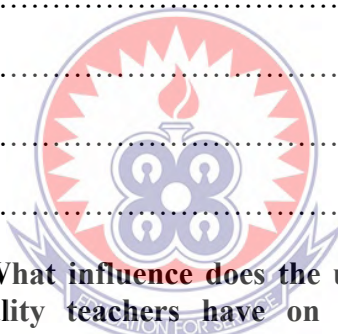
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**Research Question 3: What influence does the use of the scaffolding model by New Juaben Municipality teachers have on learners' attitude toward the learning of English Language reading comprehension lessons?**

7. How do your pupils feel when you scaffold (when you guide them at the initial stages of) classroom work and when you allow them to contribute during reading comprehension lessons?

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8. How do your pupils feel when you use different TLMs and approaches, put them into mixed ability groups and provide detailed instructions during reading comprehension lessons?

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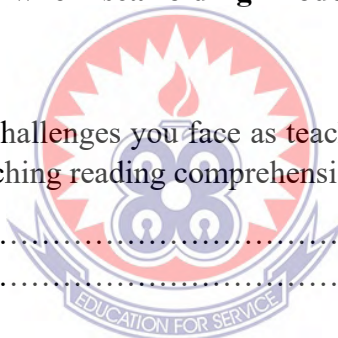
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**Research Question 4: What challenges do teachers in the New Juaben municipality encounter when scaffolding model is employed during reading comprehension lessons?**

9. What are the challenges you face as teacher whenever you use scaffolding strategy in teaching reading comprehension lessons?



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**OBSERVATION CHECKLIST****Observation checklist for assessing the Knowledge and Use of Vygotsky's Scaffolding Model as a tool for Reading Comprehension Lessons in New Juaben South Municipality.**

Name of school.....

Class.....

Enrolment.....

Date.....

Topic.....

Lesson Duration: .....

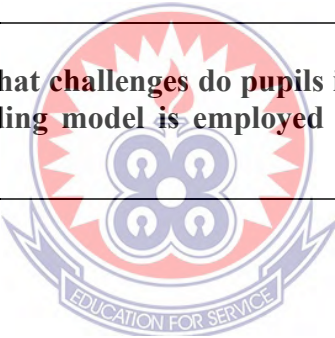
**Research Question 2: Which scaffolding techniques do (your) teachers in the New Juaben municipality use to teach English reading comprehension lessons?**

Elements to observe		Rate 1-5 (1 is low and 5 is high)
1	Modeling using verbal explanations and body language	
2	The class do, groups do and individual pupils do it. (e.g pronunciation of words)	
3	Review of pupils previous knowledge	
4	Break a task (e.g. words pronunciation, reading passages) into small unit.	
5	Give feedback to pupils after performing a task	
6	Contextualize concepts, expressions, new vocabulary using audio visuals, demonstrations, examples.	
7	Build clusters of meaning that are organized and interconnected (Schema building)	
8	Represent text with pictures etc.	
9	Encourage students to start the appropriation of new language	
10	Guide learners' to develop awareness of their own knowledge, ability to understand, monitor level of understanding.	
11	Ask questions during lessons to check for understanding of learners.	
12	Provide a cue to shift pupils' attention to focus on specific information etc.	
13	Put pupils into mixed ability groups to work	

**Research Question 3: What influence does the use of the scaffolding model by New Juaben Municipality teachers have on learners' attitude toward the learning of English Language reading comprehension lessons?**

Elements to observe		Rate 1-5 (1 is low and 5 is high)
1	Learners show interest during lesson	
2	Learners contribute to lessons with excitement	
3	Pupils find tasks easy and are able to perform them.	
4	Pupils participate and understand new concepts well due to use different TLMS and approaches.	
5	Pupils understand new concepts well	
6	Attendance during lesson.	
7	Pupils' participation in group work.	

**Research Question 4: What challenges do pupils in the New Juaben municipality encounter when scaffolding model is employed during reading comprehension lessons?**



Elements to observe		Rate 1-5 (1 is low and 5 is high)
1	Sustaining lesson from start to finish	
2	Teaching pupils with different learning abilities	
3	The use of TLMs during lessons	
4	Teacher's composure during lesson delivery.	
5	Pupils' involvement in the lesson	
6	Reaching out to all pupils in the class during lessons	



UNIVERSITY OF EDUCATION, WINNEBA

FACULTY OF EDUCATIONAL STUDIES  
DEPARTMENT OF BASIC EDUCATION

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Date: April 22, 2021

The Municipal Director  
New Juaben South Municipal Education Directorate  
Koforidua - E/R.

Dear Sir/ Madam,

#### LETTER OF INTRODUCTION

I write to introduce to you Mr. Ebenezer Tiekou, a second year M. Phil student of the Department of Basic Education, University of Education, Winneba, with registration number 200011605.

Mr. Ebenezer Tiekou is to carry out a research on the Topic *“Assessing the Knowledge and Use of Vygotsky’s Scaffolding Model as a tool for Reading Comprehension Lessons in the New Juaben South Municipality”*

We would be grateful if permission is granted him to carry out his studies in the Municipality.

Thank you.

Yours faithfully,

  
.....  
PROF MRS SAKINA ACQUAH (PHD)  
(Head of Department)

DEPT. OF BASIC EDUCATION  
UNIVERSITY OF EDUCATION  
WINNEBA, GHANA

# GHANA EDUCATION SERVICE

## PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF GHANA

### EDUCATION UNIT (EASTERN)

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R REF: KPEU/A18/VOL./



P. O. Box KF 165  
Koforidua  
Ghana  
Date: JULY 16, 2021

UR REF: .....

**THE HEAD TEACHERS  
PRESBYTERIAN PRIMARY SCHOOLS  
OGUA CIRCUIT  
NEW JUABEN SOUTH**

#### LETTER OF INTRODUCTION

I write to formally introduce to you Mr. Ebenezer Tiekou, who is pursuing an M-phil programme in Basic Education at the University of Education, Winneba.

He would wish to meet Presbyterian Basic Six teachers and pupils in Presbyterian Schools in the Ogua Circuit to carry out a research on the topic **“Assessing the teachers Knowledge and Use of Vygotsky’s Scaffolding Model as a tool for Reading Comprehension Lessons in New Juaben South Municipality.”**

I have granted him permission to carry out the study in the designated schools.  
Therefore, please give him the needed assistance to enable him carry out his research in our schools.

Thank You.

  
Regional Manager  
Presbyterian Education Unit  
Koforidua - E/R

**VIDA NKANSA-KYEREMATENG (MRS.)  
AG. REGIONAL MANAGER OF SCHOOLS (ER)**