UNIVERSITY OF EDUCATION, WINNEBA

REMEDIAL TEACHING IN ENGLISH READING COMPREHENSION: THE CASE OF STUDENTS OF PRESBYTERIAN COLLEGE OF EDUCATION

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## DECLARATION

STUDENT'S DECLARATION

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

SIGNATURE……………………………………………………………………..

DATE…………………………………………………………………………..

SUPERVISOR'S DECLARATION

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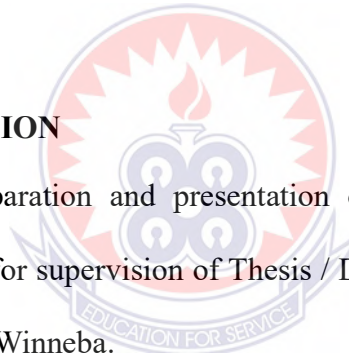
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DEDICATION

This thesis is dedicated to my mother, Miss Emma Ida Manukure. She gave me the strength to complete this work and stood by me when the going got tough. I would have been lost without her.

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ABSTRACT

The study investigated the impact of remedial lessons in English reading comprehension on students' reading comprehension achievement among students of Presbyterian College of Education in Ghana. The study specifically sought to examine the specific reading comprehension problems of the students, the causes of the problems and the impact remedial lessons have on the English reading comprehension achievement of the students. To achieve the objectives of the study, mixed method research approach was used. The participants of this study were students who offer the English Language Studies Course which had reading comprehension as a component and teachers who teach this course to the students. In all 441 Level 200 students, and 5 English Language teachers participated in the study. The analysis of the data was carried out using both descriptive and inferential statistics. The descriptive statistics used for the analysis of the data include frequency and percentages, while the inferential statistics used for the analysis of the data is the Ordinary Simple Linear Regression Analysis. An alpha level of 5% was used as the threshold for statistical significance. The findings of the study revealed that students' inadequate knowledge of grammar, students' inadequate background knowledge, students' ineffective reading skills, students' inability to understand complex sentences, and students' inadequate vocabulary knowledge are the main specific difficulties faced by the students in English reading comprehension. The results of the study also indicated that the major causes of these problems are students' poor language processing abilities, students' weak executive functioning skills, students' underdeveloped word decoding skills, and students' weak oral language skills. The results of the Ordinary Simple Linear Regression Analysis revealed that remedial lessons had a significant positive impact on the achievement of the students. The results of the coefficient of determination indicated that students' participation in remedial lessons accounted for at least 30% of the variation in dependent variables. In conclusion, based on the study it is recommended that authorities at the Presbyterian College of Education should pay attention to the methodological and pedagogical approach in the teaching of remedial lessons in English reading comprehension at the institution.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.0   Introduction

This study seeks to investigate the impact of remedial lessons on students' English reading comprehension achievement among students of Presbyterian College of Education in Ghana. The study specifically seeks to examine the specific reading comprehension problems of the students, the causes of the problems and the impact the remedial lessons have on the English reading comprehension achievement of the students. This chapter presents the study background, the problem statement, questions that guided the study, objectives, purpose of the study, limitations and delimitations of the study, and significance of the study. The chapter concludes by defining terms and concepts used in the study and also presents the organization of the study.

1.1   Background and General Concepts

Remedial Education has long been part of formal education. The literature on remedial education indicates that remedial education can be traced back to the 17th century when Harvard University in America implemented special courses for freshmen with insufficiencies in writing skills and inadequately prepared students (Oklahoma State System of Higher Education, 2009). Also, in 1849 the University of Wisconsin established the first preparatory program for students with inadequate preparation for college studies (Oklahoma State System of Higher Education, 2009). Since the 17th century till date, students' demand for remediation has increased, especially, in recent decades (Calcagno & Long, 2008).

Harvard University and the University of Wisconsin offered remedial programmes due to the under-preparedness of their students for postsecondary education. The available literature on remedial education also cite the same reason. For example, Brants and Struyven (nd) in their research found that one of the numerous reasons why European universities are

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adopting remedial strategies are the transitional problems students face when entering tertiary institutions.

Remediation essentially cannot be decoupled from any form of formal education. Remediation refers to the provision of remedial teaching or therapy. Remediation work as a form of cooperation and supportive learning between students and teachers aims to cater for individual differences, help students who lag behind and help students in critical thinking skills in learning. Remedial teaching is meant to improve a learning skill or rectify a particular problem area in a student.

Remedial teaching can also be seen as the process of providing help to students who are experiencing difficulties so that they can understand the concept with which they are struggling. Remedial Teaching is situated within remedial education. When remedial education is mentioned, terms such as developmental education, preparatory studies, academic support programmes, compensatory education, basic skills education, college preparation amongst others may come up (Kozeracki, 2002) especially in western countries.

Defining remedial education actually to a large extent depends on who is defining it and where. This is because research has shown that remedial education varies tremendously from country to country. Consequently, what goes or should go into remedial education, the variety of students who take remedial courses as well as the scope of remedial offerings is relative (Merisotis & Phipps, 2000; Kozeracki, 2002). Eldah (2005, p.1) for instance, says that "remedial education is a part of education concerned with the prevention, investigation and treatment of learning difficulties from whatever source they may emanate and which hinder normal development of pupils".

Remedial education, according to the World Development Report (2007, p.90) is "any specific educational interventions aimed at addressing learning needs of a targeted group of children who are lagging behind academically or not mastering specific competencies in the

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early grades". They can be an important element among the efforts to improve education outcomes of low performing students of different ages and in very diverse environments, particularly the most disadvantaged. Bustillos (2012, p.37) points out that "remedial education in postsecondary is a course or a sequence of courses for college-admitted students who, upon taking required placement examinations, are found not to have the knowledge and skills necessary for success in college-level courses."

Calcagno and Long (2008, p.1) also define "remedial or developmental education as coursework below college-level offered at a postsecondary institution". By "coursework below college-level", Calcagno and Long imply any academic endeavor or programme involving teaching and learning that takes place after secondary education but before college education. Battistin et al. (2002), view remedial programmes as "a course consisting of extra-class time offered to low-achieving students in order to improve their performance in one or more subjects".

Related to remedial education is remedial education program. Remedial education program "is an education program that schools routinely use to bring low achieving learners' academic performance closer to the standards of their grade in school" (Melton, 2010, p.12). In other words, it is the learning and teaching program designed to bring learners who are lagging behind up to the level of achievement realized by their peers (Smith and Wallace, 2011). Remedial program acknowledges the shortcomings that any educational system is bound to have, considering the human weaknesses and therefore attempts to save pupils who might not otherwise achieve their full potential if there is no early detection and intervention (Chireshe & Mapfumo, 2002).

Globally, remedial learning program has been going on not only in primary schools but also in secondary schools and tertiary colleges (Eldah, 2005). In the United States and Canada, remedial education is common at all levels of schooling. The most common remedial

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programs focus on developing basic skills in reading, writing and mathematics (Sigafoos & Elkons, 1994). In America for instance, remediation has become an important part of basic education. Community Colleges play an epical role in remediation as they provide services to over 60 percent of their first year learners (Conroy, 1993).

In Canada, funding for remedial program education is more decentralized. School district receives general education funding from their territory's Ministry of Education and each district decides on its own how much to fund the remedial program for academic upgrading (Topping & Whitely, 1999; Haskell, 2000). In Ireland, the formal provision of remedial education within the national school system coincides with genesis of a more child-centered philosophy of education. At first, the service developed slowly and tentatively, but the format of provision as it expanded tended to reflect contemporary trends in education. In European countries, remedial education programs point out that by relating the individual learning differences to pupils' developmental situations, teachers can develop appropriate activities that meet the needs of their learners (Leyser & Tappendorf, 2001).

In Ghana, since the adoption of the Senior Secondary School (SSS) system, remedial institutions have played and continue to play significant roles in students' performance. Remedial institutes help students to qualify for tertiary institutions by preparing such students to resit the November and December Senior Secondary School Certificate Examinations (SSCE) or West African Secondary School Certificate Examination (WASSCE) examination (Essibu, 2018). Thus, remedial institutes have bridged the gap and closed the barriers to tertiary education, by providing adequate academic tuition. Remedial education programs in Ghana aims at contributing, supporting and increasing the academic performance of students who do not meet the entry requirements of the various tertiary institutions in the regular examinations. Aside this, remedial schools aim at improving and building the competencies of students who performed poorly in the regular examination (Essibu, 2018).

Many college students take remedial course to improve their literacy skills in their first year of college. The National Center for Education Statistics reported that about one third of first-year College students take remedial courses (Snyder, Tan, & Hoffman, 2004). At some postsecondary institutions, the percentage of first-year students who enroll in remedial classes is as high as 60% (Bettinger & Long, 2009). Haycock and Huang (2001, p.2), "studying remedial education in the United States, place the numbers of those in need of remediation at 49 per cent of all freshmen entering 4 year colleges". The Alliance for Excellent Education (2011,p.1) claims that "one out of every three students entering postsecondary education will have to take at least one remedial course" while Bettinger and Long (2008) estimate that by 2001, underprepared students entering post-secondary institutions in the United States were one third of the total number of students entering this level.

Wineburg (2006) noted that the difficulty lies in reading comprehension, which affects students' reading and writing abilities as well as their ability to perform well on college-level research assignments. High school and college students must be taught the skills to locate and analyze complicated information, to solve problems they encounter while reading, and to connect ideas and concepts (Hammond, 2008; Jobs for the Future, 2005). These high numbers underscore the importance of successful remedial education in reading comprehension enabling these students to draw on the benefits that the knowledge, skills, and attitudes imparted at university empowers them with (Luoch, 2016). Students' reading comprehension difficulties need to be specifically addressed (Wineburg, 2006).

Reading is an activity performed to develop an understanding of a subject or topic. Reading is an essential skill that individuals need to possess in order to be successful in life. Reading keeps individuals informed, up-to-date and thinking. Reading is both a receptive and active process. It is a dynamic process in which the reader is searching for connections of

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ideas in the text. Reading requires the utilization of many mental processes as information is collected, processed and analyzed. Also, reading is a source of enjoyment for individuals (Li & Wilhelm, 2008). While reading is a very important part of an individual's personal and educational growth, it is the concept of comprehension that may be even more important. Reading in and of itself is not enough: in addition, an individual needs to be able to breakdown, to analyze and to re-organize ideas and information. A person needs the ability to understand what the writer is attempting to communicate.

Comprehension depends on knowledge. Comprehension as defined by Bernhardt (1987, p.7) is "the process of relating new or incoming information to information already stored in the memory (background knowledge)". Obviously, during the process of reading, readers must not only look at words on the pages (bottom-up processing), but also activate background knowledge (top-down processing) and then build all the elements into comprehension (Rumelhart, 1980).

Reading comprehension is a complex multiple task ability. These processes were divided into two equally difficult main types, lower-level and higher-level processes (Grabe & Stoller, 2002). The lower-level abilities include word recognition, graphophonic and others, while the higher-level abilities include syntactic, semantic and other processes. To be able to comprehend what is read, a person needs to be familiar with text structure and topic, aware of reading strategies, how to use these strategies in the processing of material and word recognition (Pang, 2008).

Reading comprehension can be defined as "the ability to understand a text, to analyze the information and to interpret correctly what the writer is stating. No one process defines reading comprehension by itself, but together they provide a fairly accurate account of the processes required for fluent reading" (Grabe & Stoller, 2002, p.17). Reading comprehension is essential for successful functioning in our society. In virtually all instances, the goal of

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reading is to identify the meaning or message of the text at hand. Doing so involves the execution and integration of many processes (Panayiota, et al., 2015).

English reading comprehension is taught at the basic, secondary and tertiary levels of education in Ghana. At the college of education level, reading comprehension forms an aspect of the English Language Studies Course. It is an aspect in which students encounter a number of difficulties that eventually translate into their low achievement or outright failure in reading comprehension exercises and tests. The persistent low achievement and sometimes outright failure in reading comprehension exercises and tests affects students' overall proficiency in the English Language.

Many studies have examined the crucial effects of remediation on students' English reading comprehension achievement (Jarrar, 2014, Alghamdi & Siddiqui, 2016, Alghamdi & Siddiqui, 2017 and Eno, 2019) at various levels and have concluded that remedial teaching impacts positively on students' reading comprehension achievement. However, there is a paucity of research on the impact of remedial education on students' English reading comprehension among college students in Ghana. The current study therefore seeks to find out the impact of remedial lessons on English reading comprehension among college students in Ghana, using students of the Presbyterian College of Education as a case study.

1.2   Statement of the Problem

Colleges of education students are given explicit classroom instruction in reading comprehension vis-à-vis explicit instruction in the other language skills of speaking, listening and writing so as to make them proficient in the English Language. In spite of the explicit classroom instruction in reading comprehension, many colleges of education students have low achievement and sometimes even fail their reading comprehension exercises, mid and end of semester tests largely because they encounter a myriad of reading comprehension

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difficulties (Denton & Al Otaiba, 2011). Current research such as Jarrar (2014) and Eno (2019) have confirmed students' reading comprehension difficulties and the impact of remediation on students' reading comprehension difficulties. Reading comprehension involves understanding and responding to questions raised after reading a text. Comprehension is an essential aspect of the English language studies course in which students are required to pass. College students continue to attain low grades in reading comprehension even after they have been taught the skills of reading comprehension.

Students at the Presbyterian College of Education for instance, have been observed to fail in English reading comprehension. This has necessitated the need to integrate remediation strategies with classroom activities in the face of this persistent phenomenon. This is important because continuous low achievement and outright failure in reading comprehension exercises and tests can affect students' proficiency in the English Language. It also causes frustration among colleges of education students in that they cannot graduate with a Diploma in Basic Education without a pass in the English Language Studies Course. Additionally, the Ghana Education Service (GES) does not post trainee teachers who have not passed the required number of courses including the English Language Studies Course.

Additionally, to the best of my knowledge, no studies have been found in the available literature in Ghana, examining remedial lessons in English reading comprehension. Owing to these problems and the fact that students who attain low grades in reading comprehension need to take remedial lessons in English reading comprehension, this study seeks to determine whether the remediation at the College is helping the students to improve upon their English reading comprehension, in order to attain high grade for successful passage. The study seeks to examine the impact the remedial lessons in English reading comprehension, provided for students at the Presbyterian College of Education in Ghana, have on the students' English reading comprehension achievement. The study specifically seeks to find

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out the specific English reading comprehension problems of the students of Presbyterian College of Education, the causes of Presbyterian College of Education students' English reading comprehension problems and the impact the remedial lessons have on the English reading comprehension achievement of the students.

1.3   Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study is to find out whether the remediation in English reading comprehension provided for students at the Presbyterian College of Education in Ghana has effect on the students' English reading comprehension achievement. The goal is to determine whether the remedial lessons at the College are helping the students to improve upon their English reading comprehension.

1.4   Objectives of the Study

The study sought to achieve the following objectives:

1) To identify the specific reading comprehension problems of students of Presbyterian College of Education

2) To determine the causes of Presbyterian College of Education students' reading comprehension problems

3) To examine the impact of remediation on the reading comprehension achievement of students of Presbyterian College of Education

1.5   Research Questions

To achieve the objectives of the study, the following research questions were formulated to guide the study:

1) What are the specific reading comprehension problems of students of Presbyterian College of Education?

2) What are the causes of Presbyterian College of Education students' reading comprehension problems?

3) What is the impact of remediation on the reading comprehension achievement of students of Presbyterian College of Education?

1.6   Significance of the Study

It is envisaged that the findings of the study will have implications for pedagogy, policy and further research. In terms of pedagogy, the findings of the study will help to provide areas, methods, techniques, and strategies for the teaching of English reading comprehension in the classroom, particularly at the Presbyterian College of Education and also at the Colleges of Education in general, where the English Language is taught and used as a medium of communication.

Moreover, teachers and facilitators involved in remedial education curricula and instructional design may find the study helpful in recognizing the importance of utilizing various methods of instruction including differentiated and blended instructions, group activities and one-on-one conferences. In addition, the findings of the study could have impact on how remediation in reading comprehension is carried out at the various levels of education in general and at the college level in particular so as to draw attention to students' reading comprehension needs and difficulties.

In terms of policy, while much of the developing world has succeeded in drastically increasing enrolment in Colleges of Education, cost-effective methods for improving learning outcomes have been much more elusive, with many governments focusing on infrastructure in the absence of good information on what works. The evaluation of the remedial education programme at the Presbyterian College of Education

will provide invaluable information on the most effective and cost-effective way forward for remedial education policy in Ghana. It will also help policy makers and stakeholders of the Ghana Education Service to take a critical look at the teaching of the English Language at our basic level of education, where the reading comprehension difficulties begin.

Besides, it is envisaged that the findings of this study will open other areas on the subject for further research. Additionally, it is anticipated the findings of this study will contribute to the existing knowledge on remedial lessons and its impact on achievement of students. The study will also contribute to the existing knowledge on the problems faced by students in English reading comprehension, the causes of such problems as well as the factors that could contribute to such problems.

1.7   Study Limitations

It is important to acknowledge some limitations of this study. First, the population from which the sample of this study was drawn was from students and tutors of Presbyterian College of Education. These students and tutors serve a low percentage of students and tutors with students having difficulties in English reading comprehension in Colleges of Education in Ghana. It is therefore important to replicate this study with samples drawn from students as well as tutors from all the Colleges of Education in Ghana.

Second, the measures of reading comprehension difficulties as well as the causes of reading comprehension difficulties were relatively brief. The difficulties and the causes of English reading comprehension were assessed using questionnaire and interviews with few direct observations. It is also very important to measure these variables using a standard scale of measurement, such as students' participation in a test or the use of a test instrument. Third, comprehension abilities are often assessed using an oral-format as opposed to a written

format as was the main focal point in this present study. This is because with a text-based measure, it is difficult to determine whether students are doing poorly because they do not comprehend the passage or otherwise.

Fourth, the study was conducted in Presbyterian College of Education and more specifically it investigated whether remedial teaching in reading comprehension was provided for students of Presbyterian College of Education among other things therefore, it could be argued that the results cannot be generalized to all colleges of education in Ghana. Finally, due to time constraints the research could not be extended to include other colleges of education in the country.

1.8   Delimitations of the Study

The research was delimited to Presbyterian College of Education. The selection of the sample for the study was confined to only level 200 students and level 200 English Language Studies teachers. In addition, the study focused only on remedial teaching in English reading comprehension.
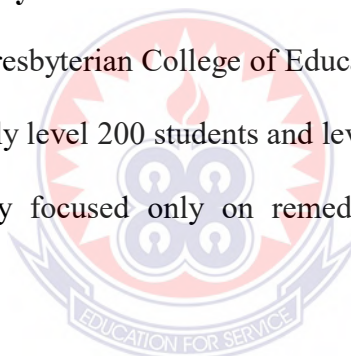
1.9   Organization of the Study

The rest of the study are organized as follows. Chapter Two, looks at the review of the relevant literature on the research. This chapter includes an exhaustive but incisive review of relevant literature in the research area. The review is geared towards justifying the defined objectives of the research and establishing the theoretical framework for the research work. It also identifies the gaps in the literature which the study attempts to fill. In Chapter Three, the general methodology of the study is described. This chapter includes the research design, the population and the sample of the study, the sampling technique, a description of the research instrument that is used in the data collection, the procedure for the collection of the data as

well as the method of data analysis. Chapter Four focuses on results and the discussions of the study. Chapter Five, which is the final chapter of the study deals with the summary, conclusions and recommendations including suggestions for future research.

1.10   Definition of Key Terms

There are fundamental terms that require definition in order to understand their relation for the purposes of the study. They are as follows:

Remediation: Remediation "is the provision of remedial teaching or therapy. Remediation work as a form of cooperation and supportive learning between students and teachers aims to cater for individual differences, help students who lag behind and help students in critical thinking skills in learning" (Sharma, 2005, p.217).

Remedial Teaching: Remedial teaching is meant to improve a learning skill or rectify a particular problem area in a student. Remedial teaching can also be seen as the process of providing help to students who are experiencing difficulties so that they can understand the concept with which they are struggling (Abu, 2011).

Remedial Education: "Remedial Education is a part of education concerned with the prevention, investigation and treatment of learning difficulties from whatever source they may emanate and which hinder normal development of pupils" (Eldah, 2005, p.5).

Remedial Education Program: Remedial education program is an "education program that schools routinely use to bring low achieving learners' academic performance closer to the standards of their grade in school" (Melton, 2010, p.12).

Reading Comprehension: Reading comprehension is the "ability to understand a text, to analyze the information and to interpret correctly what the writer is stating. No one

process defines reading comprehension by itself, but together they provide a fairly accurate account of the processes required for fluent reading" (Grabe & Stoller, 2002, p.13).

Presbyterian College of Education: PCE is a tertiary institution that runs a four-year degree program in basic education in the subject areas of Science, Mathematics, Information Communications Technology, Technical Skills, Visual Arts, Agricultural Science, Religious and Moral Education, Primary Education and Home Economics. It was established by the Basel Missionaries on July 3, 1848 to train teachers to teach in the basic schools.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0   Introduction

This chapter presents the review of the relevant literature in the research area. The relevant related literature is divided into four sections and arranged thematically. The first section presents the review of the concepts related to the objectives of the study. The second section of the review presents the theoretical framework of the study. The third section of the review looks at the conceptual framework of the study. Finally, the fourth section of the review offers some empirical studies on remedial education and their impact on students' performance. It also identifies the gaps in the literature which the study attempts to fill. There is also a summary of the literature review presented in this section.

2.1   Conceptual Review

This section provides the review of literature on the concepts of remedial education. This includes the definition of remedial education, remedial education programme, remedial education programme design, modes of remedial implementation and delivery, delivering remedial education programme, instructors of remedial education programme, English reading comprehension difficulties, types of English reading comprehension difficulties, causes of English reading comprehension difficulties, improving English reading comprehension difficulties, prevalence of English reading comprehension difficulties, and the impact of remedial education and interventions on improvement of learning outcomes.

2.1.1   Remedial Education

Remedial education "is a part of education which is concerned with the prevention, investigation and treatment of learning difficulties from whatever source they may emanate

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and which hinder normal development of pupils" (Eldah, 2005, p.5). Remedial education is given to children who function at a lower than average level because of certain learning or behavioral problem, but it can also be offered to pupils who achieve at higher than average level. According to Sigafoos and Elkons (1994, p.21), "pupils who need remediation portray several characteristics that guide the teacher in their intervention". Generally, learners who require remedial education have poor memory, short attention span and are easily distracted by other things, have relatively poor comprehension power, lack learning motivation and self-confidence and exhibit relatively low expectation. They are also weak in problem solving, fail to grasp information quickly and mix things up easily. Others have difficulty in understanding abstract concepts and need more time to complete assignments or tasks.

Remedial education programs "consist of educational interventions aimed at addressing learning needs of a targeted group of children who are lagging behind academically or not mastering specific competencies, starting in the early grades" (Analice, 2012, p.6). Remedial education can be implemented as a standalone program in or outside of school hours (Banerjee, Cole, Duflo, & Linden 2006), integrated in programs that are implemented as components of a more comprehensive educational program or project (UNICEF, 2007); be a component within a country's curriculum guidelines and even of a country's education policy. One important feature of remedial education programs is determining the competencies that need improvement and the learning levels of program participants at the time of selection, during, and after the intervention. It has been argued that programs have to be explicit, systematic and focused to be effective: for example Houtveen & van de Grift (2007) found that children who fail to learn how to read in the first grade as expected, can significantly improve reading and spelling from remediation that is explicit, systematic, and focused on both word level skills and frequent opportunities for text-based reading.

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This argument cannot be made about students of colleges of education in Ghana. This is because no studies have been conducted in Ghana that examine remedial education among students of colleges of education. It is because of this that this study is being carried out to examine the remedial education programme at the Presbyterian College of Education in Ghana to find out how the programme is influencing students' comprehension outcomes, and to also determine whether the remedial education programme is effective.

2.1.2 Remedial Education Programme

Remedial education programme "is as an educational programme that schools routinely use to bring low achieving learners' academic performance closer to the standards of their grade in school" (Melton, 2010, p.12). In other words, it is the learning and teaching programme designed to bring learners who are lagging behind up to the level of achievement realized by their peers (Smith & Wallace, 2011). Remedial education is necessary where the learner is cognitively average or above average in intellectual ability and is therefore able to quickly assimilate the missed concept and relate it to the rest of the topic or area of study (Chakuchichi & Badza, 2004). The remedial programme acknowledges the shortcomings that any educational system is bound to have, considering the human weaknesses and therefore attempts to save pupils who might not otherwise achieve their full potential if there is no early detection and intervention (Chireshe & Mapfumo, 2002).Globally, remedial learning has been going on not only in primary schools but also in secondary schools and tertiary colleges (Eldah, 2005). In the United States and Canada, remedial education is common at all levels of schooling.

The most common remedial programmes focus on developing basic skills in reading, writing and mathematics (Sigafoos & Elkons, 1994). Remedial programmes are based on the assumption that a student underachieves because of extrinsic factors such as poverty and

insufficient access to quality education. In America, remediation has become an important part of basic education. According to a 1996 study by National Center for Education statistics (NCES), nearly 34% percent of all incoming first year learners require remedial education in reading, writing and mathematics (Conroy, 1993). Community colleges play an epical role in remediation as they provide services to over 60 percent of their first-year learners (Conroy, 1993). Also, the Federal Title Program administered by the US Department of Education provides funding for remedial programs in approximately 90 percent of all schools in the district. A school becomes eligible for the funds for remedial programme based on the estimated number of children in the district who come from low income families (Avramidis, 2000; Reusen, 2001).

In Canada, funding for remedial education is more decentralized. School district receives general education funding from their territory's ministry of education and each district decides on its own how much to fund the remedial programs for academic upgrading (Topping & Whitely, 1999; Haskell, 2000). In Ireland, the formal provision of remedial education within the national school system coincides with the genesis of a more child centered philosophy of education. At first, the service developed slowly and tentatively, but the format of provision as it expanded tended to reflect contemporary trends in education. In European countries, remedial education program points out that by relating the individual learning differences to pupils' developmental situations, teachers can develop appropriate activities that meet the needs of their learners (Leyser & Tappendof, 2001).

In developing countries, remedial programmes have not been very successful, particularly for the most disadvantaged, and therefore there is an urgent need for low income countries to implement evidence based interventions that would efficiently promote learning for all of its students, and not just the privileged few (Analice, 2012). Implementing extra academic support in already poor resourced school systems can be very challenging in terms

of human and financial resources (Instituto Ayrton Senna, 2011; PARI Senegal, 2011), and for that reason remedial programs in low income countries are few and they have not been fully researched. However, some programs do exist and it is important to know what they are and what we can learn from them. Baxter and Bethke (2009) make a distinction between remedial and accelerated programs, where the former originates from assessing the core learning competencies and focuses on the mastery of those competencies such as the "Read India" remedial summer program (Banerji &Walton, 2011). The accelerated programs provide the same content as the formal curriculum but at a faster pace, mostly targeting over aged students , out of school children or children leaving in remote areas with little access to primary education as in the case of students from the Schools for Life in Ghana (DeStefano, Moore, Balwanz, & Hartwell, 2007).

According to Conroy (1993), there are various ways in which remedial programs can be carried out in primary schools. In Conroy's view, it is the obligation of the remedial teacher to choose the best that suits his or her learners. The method to be chosen should reinforce the foundation of learning, help pupils to overcome their learning difficulties and develop their potentials. Topping and Whitely (1991) emphasize the need for detailed planning of the program, careful selection and matching of children, a wide choice of reading materials, the appropriate training of tutor and tutee and the careful monitoring and evaluation of the whole process. While proponents of remedial education argue that remediation provides opportunities for underprepared learners to gain the necessary competencies, critics suggest that it provides disincentives for learners and that remedial lessons impede individual progress (Kuester, 2000).

In remedial programs students are usually given assessment to determine their level of competency. Based on test results, students are placed in classes which are most likely to provide benefits. Classes are often small with focus on high teacher-student interaction.

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Unlike in developed countries, remedial education or teaching is not funded in Ghana. Some schools offer remedial lessons while others do not. Consequently, large numbers of learners slip through primary and secondary school through to college and miss one or two basic skills or concepts in reading or mathematics. Yet early detection and assistance in the form of remedial teaching is required for these learners to grab a chance to develop their potentials.

Some aspects of remedial programs overlap with what sometimes has been defined as complementary models (DeStefano, Moore, Balwanz, & Hartwell, 2007) or alternative education programs (Baxter & Bethke, 2009) in terms of goals, target population, and effectiveness in improving learning outcomes and reaching the most underserved. Baxter and Bethke (2009) make a distinction between remedial and accelerated programs, where the former originates from assessing the core learning competencies and focuses on the mastery of those competencies such as the "Read India" remedial summer program (Banerji &Walton, 2011), and the accelerated programs provide the same content as the formal curriculum but at a faster pace, mostly targeting over aged students, out of school children or children leaving in remote areas with little access to primary education as in the case of students from the Schools for Life (DeStefano, et al., 2007) in Ghana.

It could be expected that, to be more effective, remedial interventions should start early on: for example, the sooner reading difficulties are addressed the faster reading outcomes will improve. However remedial interventions that address the problems of students early on may be more costly (as they may be less targeted to struggling students), but could be justified if they result in learning improvement from the lowest achievers, less repetition and drop-out rates, and an increase in the completion rates for basic education. Yet, evaluation results from the "Read India" or the Schools for Life (Ghana) programs indicate that remedial programs can be effective even when interventions occur later on, i.e., remedial programs that are not bound to the age-grade system can be effective in reducing the learning

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deficits found in a country's education system (Banerji &Walton, 2011). Meanwhile, such assertion by Banerji & Walton (2011) has not been proven by further research. This study therefore tries to find out whether the assertion is true in the case of students of colleges of education in Ghana by using the remedial lesson program among students of the Presbyterian College of Education.

2.1.3   Remedial Education Programme Design

Remedial education programs share many features with complementary and alternative education models. A key feature for all these is the goal to provide alternative or additional means of reaching underserved populations, provide access to learning opportunities, at some level reduce inequity, and produce significant learning outcomes – that is, children who learn to read and write with fluency or children who may be able to show adequate performance and pass to the next grade (Analice, 2012). As remediation can take so many forms in such a variety of settings, it is important to focus on its most important aspects in order to make the best decisions for interventions to be most effective. Identifying students with learning difficulties and low achievers, defining the competencies and other learning needs of the target learners that need to be addressed, how and by whom the instruction will be delivered, and how progress will be measured and monitored are key issues that need to be addressed (Analice, 2012). Following the recommendations of Analice (2012), this study assesses how the remedial education of the Presbyterian College of Education is designed. The study assesses whether the programme has taken into consideration the learning difficulties of the students and how and by whom the instructions are delivered, and whether the progress of the students is measured and how the progress of the students is measured.

2.1.3.1 Low Performing Students

Students needing remedial education may be identified by their teachers, informally selected among students with low test scores, or may be part of a specific group selected for a remedial intervention. Teachers may receive training on how to better identify student's learning needs. To receive remedial instruction in the ESCUP project in Cambodia, students considered slow learners are the ones who score below average on the semester exams (AIR & World Education, Inc., 2008). It is not uncommon for remedial interventions, such as in the format of teacher training to improve the quality of early literacy instruction, to be delivered to entire classrooms or schools where baseline assessment results indicate very low levels of literacy for a majority of assessed students. In selected schools in Malawi, 95% of tested second grade students scored zero in fluency, accuracy and comprehension before the implementation of Literacy Boost program by Save the Children (Save the Children, 2010).

The remedial lessons being provided at the Presbyterian College of Education serve as an intervention to assist students who fail in their English reading comprehension course. It is to help the students to gain additional knowledge and comprehension skills that will help them to be able to pass their final examination before they leave campus. It is also to help the students to acquire the skills they need to teach in English when they go out of school.

2.1.3.2 Remedial Intervention Goals

Improving Reading and English Skills

Early fluency in reading is fundamental to success in school, laying a strong and necessary foundation for future academic achievement (Scarborough, 2001; Abadzi, 2006). It is widely expected that children should be able to be fluent readers by the end of first grade. Since automatic readers do not lapse back into illiteracy, children who drop out but who are able to read fluently should improve comprehension and skills as they go to work (Abadzi,

2010). Existing research emphasizes that learning to read at an early age (Scarborough, 2001) as well as the development of concrete early English skills (Duncan, Dowsett, Claessens, Magnuson, Huston, Klebanov, Pagani, Feinstein, Engel, Brooks-Gunn, Sexton & Japel, 2007) lay a strong foundation for future academic success. Therefore, learning gaps need to be detected and addressed as early as possible while they can be remediated more effectively. This is one of the goals of the remedial lessons being carried out at the Presbyterian College of Education in English reading comprehension. The goal is to identify the problems being faced by the students in English reading comprehension at the initial stages of their college Education so that remedial lessons are conducted to help them improve.

Alternative to Grade Repetition and Avoiding Drop Out

Children repeat grades when they fail to achieve the expected competencies within the model of being grouped by grade defined by curriculum content and cognitive demand independent of age and capability, and ordering progression sequentially from grade to grade (Lewin, 2007). Well targeted and well implemented remedial interventions can give an opportunity for low performing students to catch up with their peers and possibly avoid grade repetition. To prevent grade repetition, the PARI program in Senegal selects at risk students from Grade 1 and from Grade 5 and provides summer remedial programs that deliver academic support so students at risk of repeating a grade can have a chance to master the content necessary to progress to the next grade (PARI Senegal, 2011).

The objective of the remedial programme that is being run by the Presbyterian College of Education in English reading comprehension is to avoid repetition of students and also school drop-out or dismissal based on academic performance. This is to ensure that every student who enrolls at the institution leaves with a certificate, be able to teach and earn a living to be able to take care of himself or herself and the family.

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2.1.3.3 Indicators of Expected Outcomes

Indicators of expected outcomes of the remedial interventions will be planned based on the learner's level and educational needs. They can be as broad as passing the grade or as specific as acquiring reading fluency. In terms of improvement of access, the PARI program in Senegal expects that: at least 80% of selected students should be enrolled in the support program in CI (first grade) with 50% being girls; at least 80% of selected students in CM1 (5th grade) should be enrolled in the program with 50% being girls. As of expected performance, 100% of students from which at least 50% being girls should pass the post test. According to the World Bank (2010), while results of the posttest are not yet available, anecdotal evidence from the PARI program actors indicated important improvements as far as the students' achievement level and in terms of reducing repetition rates.

In Chile, the remedial program for children living in extreme poverty implemented by the nonprofit Un Techo para Chile expects that children will improve their Spanish and math scores as well as study and social skills and continue to be attending school in the following school year (Contreras & Herrera, 2005). Evaluations from the Literacy Boost program implemented in Malawi and Mozambique aimed at improving children's core reading skills have used even more specific indicators to measure improvement of students in Grades 2 and 4 such as % of letters identified, % of words read correctly, and words read correctly per minute. Tests also included 16 numeracy questions (Save the Children, 2011).

In addition to improve learning for low performing students, outcomes of remedial education programs may also include the ability of participants to go to next level of their educational journey as for example being able to return to the appropriate grade, complete basic education or successfully re-enter the formal school system in the case of out-of-school students. Pull out programs for students with reading difficulties such as Reading for Success in the US are designed to be related to the general education curriculum, with an actualized

plan for returning the student to regular education (Idol, 2010). Other countries have implemented similar models to address problems of inefficiency in the school system.

The current remedial lesson programme being run in English reading comprehension by the Presbyterian College of Education expects that students at the end of the programme should be able to improve upon their English reading comprehension in the areas of vocabulary, grammar, background knowledge, reading skills, ability to read and organize information, ability to use simple strategies in English reading comprehension, and ability to determine the main ideas in an English reading comprehension.

2.1.4   Modes of Remedial Implementation and Delivery

2.1.4.1 Small Group Tutoring

Small group reading interventions for example, can be effective for students who are not being able to make progress in the regular classroom reading instruction. In low income countries where the public education system faces many challenges to provide quality education, it may be very costly in terms of financial and human resources to have separate small classes to deliver more intensive instruction for students lagging behind. In the United States, when progress-monitoring assessments indicate that students are not making enough progress with quality classroom reading instruction alone, schools can provide extra small-group reading intervention to ensure that all children learn to read in the early grades (Denton & Mathes, 2003; Fletcher, Denton, Fuchs, & Vaughn, 2005; Vaughn, Wanzek, Woodruff, & Linan-Thompson, 2007).

Research evidence points out that the most effective format to improve reading is one teacher for three students (Elbaum, Vaughn, Hughes & Moody, 2000; Vaughn et al., 2003). Clearly this is not feasible in low income country contexts, however there are remedial programs that provide remedial support for larger groups with some positive results. The

Balsakhi program in India is an affordable way that enables low income children from grades 3 and 4 who were identified as low achievers to benefit from tutoring programs. The tutors were women selected from the community and were paid very low fees by Pratham, the implementing NGO. Children are taken out of the classroom and the tutors work in groups of 15-20 low performing learners for two hours each day (the school day last about 4 hours) (Banerjee, Cole, Duflo, & Linden, 2006).

2.1.4.2 Separate Classrooms for Low Performing Students

In some states in Brazil, public schools can form a separate classroom to support low achieving students in the first five years of schooling if there are at least fifteen students identified as needing remediation by their teachers. Students would return to the regular classes once they master the required skills (Secretaria Municipal de Educação de São Paulo, 2006).

2.1.4.3 Grouping Students by Ability

There is mixed evidence on the effectiveness of interventions that group students by ability, what may be classified as "tracking". In some contexts, it may improve the quality of instruction for all students. Evaluation of the Extra Teacher program in Kenya designed to allow schools to add an additional section in the first grade benefited lower-achieving pupils indirectly by allowing teachers to teach at a level more appropriate to them (Duflo, Duplas & Kremer, 2009). Program evaluation results showed students in classes grouped by ability performed better in the post test when compared to students who were in extra Grade 1 class with randomly assigned students, and concluded that positive effects for low achieving students were due mainly because students received a more tailored instruction to their needs under tracking which outweighed the reduction on peer quality.

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Notwithstanding, in some cases tracking can have detrimental effects for low achievers if it results in discrimination and further exclusion of disadvantaged groups. Some argue that low achieving students may feel penalized and not be motivated to learn (Placco, de André, & de Almeida, 1999). Students from "acceleration classes" in Brazil reported experiencing difficulties at the conclusion of the program and re-integration into the regular classrooms where they did not receive the same attention as they did in the acceleration classes, particularly in terms of building their self-esteem. At the same time, teachers in the regular classrooms had not been prepared in ways to best integrated students returning from acceleration classes (Placco, de André & de Almeida, 1999). Qualitative evidence from Zimbabwe also supported this conclusion pointing out to teacher's discriminatory attitudes towards the low achieving class (Chisaka, 2002).

2.1.4.4 Volunteer Tutoring

Volunteer reading tutoring programs may be an affordable way for low income children to have access to this type of delivery. In the United States, Ritter, Denny, Albin, Barnett, and Blankenship (2006) reviewed 21 articles or reports based on the data from 1,676 study participants in 28 studies that assessed volunteer tutoring programs. They reviewed randomized only field trials published from January 1985 to August 2005 which yielded academic impacts. The programs were aimed at students in grades K – 8, and only used where adult, non-professional (volunteer) tutors. Results from this review showed that these programs can positively influence language and reading outcomes of elementary school students with an average effect size of .30. Training for tutors, assessment-based instruction, structured reading sessions, and use of an on-site coordinator have been described as essential components of a tutoring program (Invernizzi, 2001).

2.1.4.5 Peer Tutoring

Peer tutoring may also be an affordable option that can benefit all involved. Those activities where children work together in a learning task may help students to develop their sense of self-esteem and responsibility being active participants on their peer's learning. In the ESCUP project in Cambodia students helped their peers to learn, practice or review an academic skill that the class teacher has planned. For example, grade 5 and 6 teachers teach their students on how to help younger children to read and write (3 hours), so in their free time these students will help grades 1 and 2 students under the teacher's supervision. This support can also be given in homework clubs where older students teach their peers to learn, practice or review an academic skill that has been assigned by the teacher as homework and in the case of Cambodia for example, it covered Khmer language and math (AIR & World Education Inc., 2008).

2.1.4.6 One-to-One Tutoring

Clearly private tutoring has been the default approach to deliver remedial instruction, particularly in high income countries where it may be affordable. Programs that provide one-to-one, phonetic tutoring to students who continue to experience reading difficulties can result in positive effects (Slavin et al, 2010) and improve reading performance (Slavin et al., 2009). One-to- one instruction can be very costly for low income students whose families have already high opportunity costs of keeping their children in school. Low income and disadvantaged students who are struggling academically can only rely on support that does not incur any furthers costs. Public school systems in low income countries also have scarce resources to implement programs outside the regular classroom delivery.

It is important to acknowledge that private tutoring, meaning instruction that is delivered for a profit, has become a thriving business in developing countries and it can

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contribute to the increase of social inequalities (Bray, 2007). One of the major costs in Bangladesh private tutoring is a phenomenon that is perpetuating inequality in education since children whose families cannot afford private tutors to prepare them for exams, they will likely have low performance (Hossain & Zeitlyn, 2010).

Currently, the remedial lesson programme at the Presbyterian College of Education is being done at the group or class level, where all the students are put in one classroom or lecture hall and are given the same lesson. This way all the students are taught the same thing irrespective of the student's peculiar problem. This is one of the disadvantages the programme that needs to be addressed by the authorities of the College.

2.1.4.7 Computer Assisted Interventions (CAI)

There is some evidence that Computer Assisted Interventions can also be one tool to address low performance. A computer assisted learning program was implemented by Pratham in the city of Vadodara in India targeting all children, but adapted to each child's current level of achievement attending grade 4.They received two hours of shared computer time per week, during which they played games that involved solving math problems whose level of difficulty responded to their ability to solve them. An evaluation of such intervention showed that the computer-assisted learning increased math scores by 0.35 standard deviations the first year, and 0.47 the second year, and was equally effective for all students. One year after the end of the program, students at all levels of aptitude performed better in math (0.1 SD) if they were in schools where the computer-assisted math learning program was implemented (Banerjee, Cole, Duflo & Linden, 2006).

Anecdotal evidence from a CAI type of program implemented in the public municipal schools of the city of Campinas in Brazil for grades 1 to 5 indicated that low performing students can improve their learning after being tutored by older peers on open source

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educational programs at their school computer labs. Those peer tutors are students who have been previously trained. They also help teachers to feel more comfortable and proficient in using the computer labs for instruction. As a result, teachers started to use the lab as a means to give remedial support to low performing students (Fernandes & Peluci, 2011).

The remedial programme at the Presbyterian College is a face-to-face one delivery through blackboard and marker. So far there is no known computer programme that has been introduced by the institution to assist in the delivery of the lessons. School authorities could assess how computer assisted programme could be adopted to enhance the teaching and delivery of the programme, since it has been found to be effective in the delivery of remedial lessons. Students can even have access to remedial lessons at any time of the day without necessarily being there face-to-face with a tutor or lecturer.

2.1.5 Delivering Remedial Programmes

2.1.5.1 Remedial Education during School Hours – Curricular

The literature on remedial education indicates that remediation is most effective as a complement to teachers' existing techniques rather than as a pure substitute. There is evidence in low income countries that remedial education implemented at school can have significant effects particularly for low performers.

Even with the best quality regular instruction as in the case of high income settings, still there will be some students with reading difficulties in the early grades. Direct Instruction is an example of a teaching methodology that was first implemented and evaluated in the United Sates and later tested in low income countries such as South Africa and Liberia. Research findings showed that that students in treatment classrooms had significantly improved their reading scores (DIBELS) when compared to students in the control classroom (Stockard, 2010).

In some low income countries, the formal school system has planned for remedial activities at school. The basic education curriculum in Mali allocates 25% of weekly time for remedial activities which can be delivered during school hours or by the means of projects. Similarly, Botswana's curriculum expects 315 to 405 minutes per week to be dedicated to such activities from grades 1 to 4 of primary school (Georgescu, Stabback, Jahn, Ag-Muphtah, & de Castro, 2008).

In Brazil, State and Municipal Secretariats of Education have established curricular projects in the public school system that take place inside and outside the regular classroom to address the low levels of achievement in math and to prevent grade repetition focusing on the early grades. To focus on students' achieving reading and writing skills by the end of the first year of school, each Grade 1 classroom is assigned a university student enrolled in an education program to help the teacher with literacy activities.

This project, called Toda Força (All the Power) has been implemented through a partnership with participating universities and the students majoring in Education receive stipend to participate in the program for the students in last year of lower primary education. In the project Ler e Escrever (Reading and Writing), struggling students are identified by their teachers and receive thirty hours per week of remedial instruction. In the following grades, the project Ler e Escrever is supposed to expand to all subject areas of the curriculum where teachers are trained to continue to work on reading comprehension and writing skills (Secretaria Municipal de Educação de São Paulo, 2006).

Evaluation of the SMRS (Systematic Method for Reading Success) pilots which supplement a literacy program with a 30-45 minute addition to the regular curriculum carried out in Niger and Mali indicated that the program can be easily implemented alongside the school curricula with minimal disruptions because it lasts for four- to five-month period at the beginning of the school year. Results also showed that the SMRS could effectively put into

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place the necessary building blocks for reading acquisition over a relatively short period, even shorter than what was observed in government managed primary schools (Mitton, 2008). The remedial lessons at the Presbyterian College of Education is currently being organized both during school hours and on weekends. However, although, students are coping with the ones conducted during the normal school hours, it seems that students are finding it very difficult to deal with the divided attention in terms of the school hour programme and the normal course work.

2.1.5.2 Remedial Education after School Hours – Co-Curricular and Extra-Curricular

There is also evidence that learning gaps in early grades can be addressed outside school and result in improvements in learning for students lagging behind. Home based remediation in Cambodia takes place in the home of students who scored below average on the semester exams. Teachers go to the student's home after school and provide support in the areas students classified as slow learners have most difficulties (AIR & World Education Inc., 2008). The Pratham's Shishuvachan curriculum in India was implemented in three different settings aimed to improve literacy skills.

 Researchers wanted to find where the intervention could be most effective. Evaluation results showed that the program was effective on average and improved literacy skills for all students when implemented in and outside public schools. However, scores were significantly higher for the out of school time version which increased test scores by 0.24 standard deviations beyond the 0.26 standard deviation effect of the within school model. The evidence indicated that Shishuvachan was most effective when implemented as a complement to school curricula (He, Linden & MacLeod, 2009). Currently, the remedial lessons being run by the Presbyterian College of Education are done both on weekends and also on school days. Based on the findings that remedial lessons after school hours improve student learning

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outcomes, it will be good and prudent if the remedial programme is considered a weekend programme only. This will help the students to concentrate and to also deal with the divided attention they are facing with the current approach.

2.1.5.3 Remedial Education as a Summer Program

Evidence of significant improvement of programs implemented outside the classroom may explain the effectiveness of programs implemented during the summer vacation, another mode of delivery that is more effective when evaluating the same intervention implemented in different settings. Similar to the Pratham's Shishuvachan (He, Linden & MacLeod 2009), remedial education provided in the format of a summer program, as implemented in Senegal for example, has helped thousands of children to improve their reading and math skills. In Senegal, the government implemented educational policies in 2010-2011 in order to reduce drop-out rates and improve primary completion rates.

Aiming at improving quality and efficiency of the school system, one of the measures was the delivery of two-month remedial summer courses, the PARI program aimed to improve reading and math, targeted at underperforming students in Grades 1 and 5 from schools with high repetition and drop-out rates. Post test results in French and math showed that from the 7,510 participant students in Grade 1, 5,450 were successful (76.62%) from which 3,134 were girls (57.50%). Some regions did better than others. As for Grade 5, 81.62% of participant students were successful according to the post test measures (PARI Senegal, 2011).

On a larger scale, READ India implemented as summer program has reached thousands of children. In Bihar over 12,000 children, in 158 villages, and 264 government schools participated. The program targeted children in Grades 3, 4 and 5 who were not yet reading or doing arithmetic at Grade 2 level. Teachers were paid for an extra month's work to

give remedial education and were supported by school-based unpaid village volunteers. A randomized controlled evaluation of the program compared learning outcomes for different interventions with the control group. Read India implemented during summer vacation showed significant impacts in Hindi and math. Implementation of "Read India" during regular school hours had no significant effects. The study concluded that positive impacts were due to "grouping children in homogenous groups by ability level and conducting classroom activities designed for each group using appropriate teaching-learning materials" (Banerji & Walton, 2011, p. 4). The remedial summer programme is a noble idea the remedial lesson programme can adopt, where the students will undertake the remedial lessons during the summer or vacation. Currently, the remedial programme is being run concurrently with the normal class, where students have been allocated time during the week or weekend to undertake the lessons.

2.1.5.4 Remedial Centers

Remedial Teaching centers have been implemented as a mode of delivery that supports students outside school. They enroll students who are or have been out of the formal education system and may be considered remedial in nature since returning students may start studying again at different levels based on their previous experiences in the formal school system, if any. In the Democratic Republic of Congo where almost half of school age children are excluded from the educational system or drop out early because of the cost of schooling and as a result are an easy target by armed groups, UNICEF in partnership with the government and NGOs, have provided support to students in remedial teaching centers where students are taught by primary school teachers who use the same textbooks and teaching materials from the formal school. The program in the remedial centers has reached thousands

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of children only after a couple of years of implementation. To enroll in the remedial centers, children had to be out of school in the last two years (UNICEF, 2010).

In the case of students at the Presbyterian College of Education, remedial lessons are conducted at the school premises and by the school, when the students are in school. This is done so that the students are able to improve their reading comprehension skills in order to better their achievement in reading comprehension to enable them go through the English Language Studies Course and also acquire the skills of teaching reading comprehension to their pupils after college. The students are supposed to pass the English Language Course in the second year before they proceed to the third year where they write their final year examination. Failure to do so will mean that the student will not be able to graduate and obtain a certificate. It is often difficult for students to go out for one year to do national service and come back to resit the English Language Studies Course that is why this remedial lesson approach is being implemented at the institution.

2.1.6   Instructors of Remedial Education Programme

Remedial education has been delivered by several education professionals as well as by members of the community and even by student peers. All of them have in some way been able to improve learning outcomes. Ideally, teachers should be trained to have the best tools to address the learning needs of all students. However, there is a shortage of qualified teachers in low income countries and the demand is rapidly increasing. Another 1.9 million teachers will be needed by 2015 to achieve universal primary education, more than half of them in sub-Saharan Africa (UNESCO, 2010).

In addition to needing more teachers, appropriate training with research based effective methodology is critical for effective instructional delivery. In high poverty communities with shortages of teachers, allocating scarce qualified teachers to small numbers

of children may be hard to justify. For those reasons, many schools have long used para-professionals or volunteers as tutors, usually with materials specifically designed for this purpose. Wasik (1997) and Ritter et al. (2009) reviewed research on volunteer tutoring programs, and both reported substantial positive effects.

2.1.6.1 Teachers

Teachers who receive quality professional development may be able to be more effective with low achievers. In the US six remedial reading teachers in a large, rural school district participated in a form of professional development called Teaching as Intentional Learning focused on formative assessment. Teacher's feedback was positive and they felt they grew professionally. In Grade 1, at-risk students assigned to these project teachers had increased reading readiness scores on one measure (DIBELS) compared with at-risk students assigned to non-project teachers (Brookhart, Moss, & Long, 2010).

Training teachers to be able to identify low performing students and provide the tools to address low achievement can yield important learning gains particularly on low income countries. The EGRA plus intervention in Liberia, an adapted form of EGRA to support teachers in monitoring education quality in its schools based on Early Grade Reading Assessment (EGRA), after only 4 months of implementation showed significant improvements for students in Grades 2 and Grade 3: participant children increased letter naming fluency by 21.0 letters per minute, phonemic awareness scores by 17.7%, familiar word fluency by 15.7 words per minute, unfamiliar word fluency by 12.8 words per minute, oral reading fluency by 24.3 words per minute on connected text, and reading comprehension by 30.2%.

In Cambodia, teacher education activities included support for remedial activities at both primary and secondary school level (World Education, 2010). The Local Language

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Initial Literacy (LLIL) in Ghana hires supplementary language teachers to teach literacy in local languages in Grade 1 and Grade 3 of primary school. Teacher training lasts for about three weeks each year and additional in-service training is offered throughout the year (DeStefano, et al., 2007). This remedial teaching method could be adopted at the Presbyterian College of Education. The normal classes could be allowed to go on for the stipulated four months in the semester. Remedial lessons will then be carried out during the vacation. In this way, more time could be spent with the students which will be of immense help in dealing with their English reading comprehension problems. On the other hand, the institution can also hire teachers whose job will be to teach remedial lessons only.

2.1.6.2 Community Members, Volunteers

Research on volunteer tutoring programs in the United States reported substantial positive effects (Wasik, 1997; Ritter et al., 2009). Paraprofessionals and volunteer instructors can positively influence language and reading outcomes for students (Slavin et al., 2009). A review of alternative approaches to educational delivery in developing countries showed that motivated young adults, often with little formal qualifications, can serve – and serve well – as teachers when provided with ongoing professional training and support. All the programs studied had networks of well trained teachers who made visits once a month to the program schools. This support comes from decentralized systems that rely on local partners and nongovernmental intermediaries, providing effective ongoing services where ministry programs of in-service training and school supervision seldom succeed (DeStefano, et al., 2007).

Nonprofit organizations such as Un Techo para Chile (A Roof for Chile) recruits and trains volunteers, mostly university students who are interested in working with children, to teach remedial sessions in math and Spanish twice a week to children attending basic

education living in areas of extreme poverty. A randomized evaluation of the program shows significant improvement in scores for participants compared to eligible children not enrolled in the program (Contreras &Herrera, 2005).

Pratham, a NGO that has been implementing large scale remedial education programs in India, has employed community volunteers as instructors in the remedial programs they implement. Volunteers earn less than regular teachers and experience from the Balsakhi remedial tutoring program showed that they foster a non-threatening learning environment, the tutor, called a balsakhi, or "child's friend," was typically a young woman hired from the local community and has completed at least secondary education (Banerjee, Cole, Duflo & Linden, 2006). Volunteers, in terms of teaching assistants who are very good at English reading comprehension could be employed by the Presbyterian College of Education to assist the teachers in handling the remedial lessons at the institution. This will afford the teachers the time to assess each student's learning difficulties so that appropriate attention is given to each student.
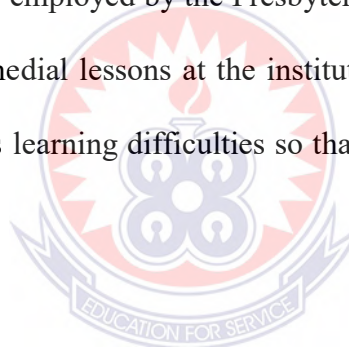
2.1.6.3 Family Members

Because of school closures and lack of access by thousands of students in the West Bank and Gaza, a UNICEF program funded by the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) has trained thousands of teachers and parents to help students study on their own or at home with remedial worksheets. Since its beginning in 2000, more than three quarters of a million students throughout the West Bank and Gaza have been using remedial worksheets covering core subjects like Mathematics, Science, English and Arabic. Some children have been using the worksheets at home for as long as three years (Ceraldi, 2006). The remedial lesson programmes for students of colleges of education in Ghana, especially the kind that is provided for the students of Presbyterian College of Education in Ghana,

could look at this area in dispensing remedial education programmes to college students, since the remedial programme is carried out only by the teachers of the institution, and mostly in the classroom. This will help in dealing with the infrastructural challenges being faced by the institution.

2.1.7 English Reading Comprehension Difficulties

English reading comprehension is considered as one of the prominent English skills for learners. In this skill, students are required to catch some implied and stated information from the text by interpreting or analyzing the sentences to really get the answers for the questions. Reading comprehension is defined as "a thinking process by which a reader selects facts, information, or ideas from printed materials; determines the meanings the author intended to transmit; decide how they relate to previous knowledge; and judge their appropriateness and worth for meeting the learner's own objectives" Veeravagu, et al (2010, p.23).

English reading comprehension, which has been defined as gaining an understanding of written text through a process of extracting and constructing meaning (RAND, 2002), is perhaps one of the most essential academic skills (National Institute of Child Health and Human Development, 2000;Nash & Snowling, 2006). Although difficulty in decoding the words on a page is a frequent cause of reading comprehension problems, between 10 and 15% of children experience poor comprehension despite maintaining normal levels of reading accuracy and fluency (Yuill & Oakhill, 1991; Stothard & Hulme, 1995).

One explanation of poor reading comprehension despite normal levels of reading accuracy and fluency is provided by the simple view of reading (Gough & Tumner, 1986; Hoover & Gough, 1990) which asserts that reading comprehension is the product of decoding

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and oral language comprehension skills. According to the simple view of reading, poor reading comprehension despite adequate decoding would be attributed to a problem with oral language. Understanding text covers catching some information from text. Reading comprehension demands students to comprehend a text shown by answering some questions related to text. This activity can be difficult for students considering their low frequency of reading habit (Nurjanah, 2018).

Iftanti (2012) in her study states that most EFL students did not have good reading habit though they formally learnt English at school. She explained that the problem may be as a result of less motivation given by teacher or parents at home. Reading habit is a repeated form of reading practice which means the activity needs to be done regularly. Reading comprehension requires familiarity with the topic to motivate students in reading it. Usually people are interested in reading when they think that the reading will be useful to them. This is why the topic given in the classroom should be the one the students think they need.

Reading comprehension disability, a term that has been used to describe readers who struggle with reading comprehension, has been operationally defined in at least four ways: (a) a discrepancy between reading comprehension and word-level decoding (Oakhill, Yuill, & Parkin, 1986; Nation & Snowling, 1998), (b) discrepancies between reading comprehension and both decoding and chronological age (Yuill & Oakhill, 1988; Cain, 2003, 2006; Cain & Oakhill, 1999, 2000, 2006, 2011; Cain, Cain, Oakhill, & Bryant, 2000; Cain, Oakhill, Barnes, & Bryant, 2001; Oakhill, & Lemmon, 2004; Oakhill, Hartt, & Samols, 2005; Weekes, Hamilton, Oakhill, & Holliday, 2008); (c) a discrepancy between reading comprehension and decoding and the requirement that decoding be in the normal range (Cataldo & Oakhill, 2000), or (d) just scoring below a given percentile on a measure of reading comprehension

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(Sesma, Mahone, Levin, Eason, & Cutting, 2009; Locascio, Mahone, Eason, & Cutting, 2010).

Relations between decoding, oral language, and reading comprehension have been extensively studied, with decoding and oral language explaining unique variance in reading comprehension (Kendeou, van den Broek, White, & Lynch, 2009). For example, Kendeou, Bohn-Gettler, and van den Broek (2008) investigated relations among inference generation, language skills, vocabulary, and comprehension skills across different media (i.e., television, audio, and written modalities) in a longitudinal study of two cohorts of children 4 to 6 years old and 6 to 8 years old. Their findings indicated that inference-making skills generalized across different media and were highly correlated with reading comprehension; however, children's inference-making skills were inconsistently related to vocabulary and not at all related to other language skills – including word identification. These findings are consistent with other investigations (Kendeou, Lynch, van den Broek, Espin, White, & Kremer, 2005) and suggest that although decoding and oral language skills are highly correlated with reading comprehension, their development is independent. This argument cannot be made about students of colleges of Education in Ghana, since no studies have been carried out to examine the English reading comprehension difficulties among students of colleges of education in Ghana. It is therefore in this light that this study is being conducted to examine the English comprehension difficulties among students of Presbyterian College of Education in Ghana in order to contribute to the debate on English reading comprehension difficulties among students.

2.1.8   Types of English Reading Comprehension Difficulties

Individual children do vary in important ways, including in their specific interests, personalities, and prior learning experiences. However, when it comes to reading problems,

three common patterns of difficulties tend to recur repeatedly. The three common difficulties (often termed profiles) of poor English reading comprehension involve specific word-reading difficulties (SWRD), specific reading comprehension difficulties (SRCD), and mixed reading difficulties (MRD) (Leach, Scarborough, & Rescorla, 2003; Lipka, Lesaux, & Siegel, 2006; Lesaux & Kieffer, 2010; Valencia, 2011; Catts, Compton, Tomblin, & Bridges, 2012). Recognizing the underlying pattern of the poor English reading comprehension is particularly helpful to providing effective intervention and differentiation of classroom instruction.

Children with SWRD have problems related specifically to reading words, not to core comprehension areas such as vocabulary or background knowledge. Those with SRCD have the opposite pattern: poor reading comprehension despite at least average word-reading skills. And those with MRD have a combination of weaknesses in word-reading skills and core comprehension areas. Knowledge of these patterns is useful for helping students with many kinds of reading problems – not only those involving certain disabilities (Aaron, Joshi, Gooden, & Bentum, 2008; Nation, Clarke, Wright, & Williams, 2006) but also more experientially based reading difficulties, such as those sometimes found among English learners or children from low-socioeconomic-status backgrounds (Allington & McGill-Franzen, 2008; Kieffer, 2010; Lesaux & Kieffer, 2010).
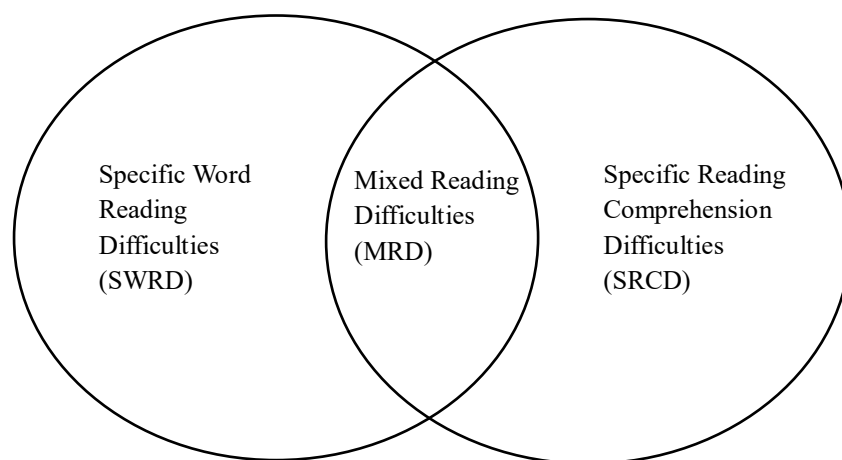
Source: Spear-Swerling (2015, p.514).

Figure 2.1: Common types of English reading comprehension difficulties

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Many studies have shown that children with difficulties in word reading benefit from explicit, systematic phonics interventions, whereas children with comprehension difficulties benefit from explicit teaching and modeling of text comprehension strategies as well as from interventions that promote vocabulary and oral language development (Ehri, 2004; Aaron et al., 2008; Clarke, Snowling, Truelove, & Hulme, 2010; Snowling & Hulme, 2012). Aaron, Joshi, Gooden and Bentum (2008) studied the performance of elementary-age struggling readers who received differentially targeted interventions, depending on whether they had weaknesses specific to word recognition (systematic phonemic awareness and phonics intervention) or comprehension (intervention in comprehension strategies such as questioning and summarization). Relative to comparison children who received undifferentiated intervention in resource rooms, the intervention groups made significantly more progress in their weak area of reading.

Differentiating classroom instruction according to different patterns also may improve children's reading outcomes. For example, Juel and Minden-Cupp (1999-2000) observed four experienced grade 1 teachers at two schools serving primarily low-income students throughout a school year. At the end of the year, overall reading achievement was lowest in the classroom of the teacher who provided the least differentiation of instruction. In addition, however, children who entered first grade with the lowest phonics skills did best in reading with the teacher who provided the most emphasis on explicit, systematic phonics for the first half of the school year, with more emphasis on vocabulary and discussion of text later in the year. Conversely, children who began grade 1 with strong basic reading skills did very well in reading with a teacher who provided relatively little direct phonics teaching but emphasized discussion of text from trade books and meaning-oriented writing activities from the start; presumably, these children had less need for systematic phonics teaching because they already possessed these skills.

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Studies suggest that differentiating classroom reading instruction according to individual children's word recognition and comprehension needs can be beneficial. However, this cannot be said about students of colleges of Education in Ghana, since no studies have been carried out to investigate the classroom reading instruction among students of colleges of education in Ghana. Hence, this study is being carried out to bridge this gap in literature.

2.1.9   Causes of English Reading Comprehension Difficulties

Many students have serious difficulties comprehending what they read even when they have adequate decoding skills (Taylor & Williams, 1983; Englert & Thomas, 1987; Gersten, et al., in press). For example, when text is read aloud to students with comprehension problems to eliminate the possibility that decoding difficulties are causing the comprehension breakdowns, their struggles with comprehension persist. In many cases, students with comprehension problems seem unaware of their comprehension difficulties. This section presents some of the most important sources of comprehension difficulties.

2.1.9.1 Vocabulary Development and Background Knowledge

Limitations in vocabulary and background knowledge are a primary cause of comprehension failure, especially after the third grade (Becker, 1977; Graves & Palmer, 1981; Graves & Cooke, 1983; Graves, Cooke, & LaBerge, 1983; Stanovich, 1986a; Baumann & Kame'enui, 1991; Baker, Simmons, & Kame'enui, 1998a, 1998b). Compared with their peers, students with reading comprehension problems know less about most topics they are expected to read about and understand. Knowledge gaps in history, geography, and science interfere with how well these students adequately understand their assigned reading material. Most contemporary approaches to reading comprehension instruction (Palincsar & Brown, 1984; Bos & Anders, 1990; Klingner & Vaughn, 1996) attempt to assess students' background knowledge about a given topic before they read about it, and encourage students

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to ask their peers or the teacher when their background knowledge is limited (Klingner & Vaughn, 1996).

The relationship between reading comprehension and vocabulary knowledge also is strong and unequivocal (Stanovich, 1986b; Paul & O'Rourke, 1988; Baumann & Kame'enui, 1991; Baker, et al., 1998a, 1998b). Although the precise causal nature of the relationship is not completely understood, it does seem to be largely reciprocal. In other words, it appears vocabulary knowledge contributes to reading comprehension (Stanovich, 1986b), but also that knowledge of word meanings grows through reading experiences (Cunningham & Stanovich, 1998). The reciprocal nature of the relationship seems to hold true for readers at all skill and age levels. Even weak readers' vocabulary knowledge is strongly correlated with the amount of reading they do (Cunningham & Stanovich, 1998), and increased reading increases their vocabulary.

Directly teaching students word meanings to increase their vocabulary knowledge can do no more than explicitly deal with a small fraction of the words that students need to learn during their K–12 years (Baker, et al., 1998a, 1998b). Despite the limitations of explicit, teacher-directed vocabulary instruction, there appears to be a beneficial snowballing effect to at least some explicit vocabulary instruction. Directly teaching a small, select number of word meanings can have a significant impact not only on comprehension of passages containing those words but also on comprehension in general, and on the ability to learn new words in context. For example, Beck, Perfetti, and McKeown (1982) found that students who were given direct instruction in word meanings were better able to discern meanings of untaught words than other students. Stahl and Fairbanks (1986) suggest that teaching 350 words each year may augment learning from context by 10–30%, a significant amount.

On their own, students do learn word meanings in the course of reading connected text, but the process is not particularly efficient (Beck & McKeown, 1991). Beck and

McKeown noted that research spanning several decades "failed to uncover strong evidence that word meanings are routinely acquired from context" (p. 799). Jenkins, Stein, and Wysocki (1984) found that students needed up to 6 or 10 exposures to words in context before they learned their meanings. If students were told their definitions prior to passage reading, however, then only two encounters were necessary to produce positive effects. This difference represents a significant increase in efficiency and a feasible approach for teachers in the classroom. Jenkins et al.'s research has direct classroom applications.

2.1.9.2 Strategic Processing of Text

Breakdowns in strategic processing of text and how well students monitor their understanding of what they are reading (i.e., metacognition) contribute to comprehension difficulties (Gersten et al., in press). Students may lack appropriate reading strategies or they may not know when to use strategies they, in fact, do possess. Students may not realize, or they may ignore, the importance of actively monitoring their comprehension by rereading passages that are confusing, for example.

Williams (1993) proposed that some students with comprehension problems have difficulty "getting the point," most likely because they are unable to create effective representations of the text being read. She found, for example, that students with learning disabilities had more trouble identifying important information when they summarized or discussed what they read than students without disabilities. Williams (1991) also found that students who tended to idiosyncratically introduce into stories inaccurate or irrelevant information also had more difficulty making accurate predictions based on story content.

Torgesen (1977, p.33) described students who had difficulty strategically processing text as "inactive learners." In one study, he conducted, students were taught specific techniques to increase retention of material read, such as how to underline. Even with a

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seemingly simple technique such as underlining, students with comprehension problems displayed improvements in reading performance, albeit erratic, unlike their peers without comprehension problems whose improvements were much more consistent (Torgesen, 1982).

2.1.9.3 Text Structures

Descriptive research indicates that students with comprehension problems frequently possess limited knowledge of how various types of texts are organized and structured. Texts are commonly divided into two types of basic structures. Narrative texts are fictional stories and are typically structured to contain elements associated with a plot, setting, characters, a central problem or problems, and efforts by principle characters to solve problems. Usually there is some type of resolution at the conclusion of the story (Baker, Gersten, & Grossen, 2002).

Expository texts are nonfiction, and their structure is more complex because it is more varied. Some purposes of expository texts are to inform, explain how to do something, make a persuasive argument in favor of a controversial issue, or describe a place or person. Each of these expository styles is structured differently, and different expository styles are typically interwoven into the same source. In other words, in the same textbook chapter an author might describe ancient Egyptians, explain how they lived, and argue their position as an advanced early civilization (Baker, Gersten, & Grossen, 2002).

Many students are unaware of even very broad distinctions between the standard organizations of narrative texts versus the organization of expository texts. Children with good comprehension skills typically have developed an understanding of how stories are structured even before they are taught to read. Once they begin reading on their own, they expect stories to unfold in certain ways. As they make the transition to reading expository text, they develop expectations for how this text might be organized. Knowledge of text

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structures leads students to ask relevant questions about the material they are reading as they are reading it, and to form internal predictions about the content, which produces considerable benefits in terms of reading comprehension (Baker, Gersten, & Grossen, 2002).

Research has shown that the more students know about how narrative texts are structured – that is, that stories have a beginning, middle, and end, and typically include a plot, setting, and characters – the more information they are able to recall related specifically to these major narrative categories compared to other information in the story (Hansen, 1978; Weaver & Dickinson, 1982; Williams, 1993). Students with this "story-grammar" knowledge also are better able to recognize which story events are closely related to the basic causal chain in a story (Wolman, 1991). Students with comprehension problems are less able to distinguish between essential and nonessential material (Taylor & Williams, 1983). They are also less adept at formulating hypotheses about upcoming details in the text.

The way expository texts are structured is more troublesome for students with comprehension problems than narrative texts, in part because there are so many different types of structures. The number of expository structures varies depending on the source of the information. Essentially one type of structure fits the vast majority of narrative texts. As is the case with narrative texts, skill at discerning expository structures – and using them – facilitates reading comprehension (Hiebert, Englert, & Brennan, 1983; Taylor & Beach, 1984).

Students' awareness of text structure is acquired in a predictable pattern over time (Brown & Smiley, 1977; Englert & Hiebert, 1984), and some expository text structures are more obvious and easier to comprehend than others (Englert & Hiebert, 1984). Some commonly identified expository structures include (a) description, (b) temporal sequence of events, (c) explanation (of concepts or terminology), (d) compare/ contrast, and (e) problem-solution-effect (Anderson & Armbruster, 1984). In reality, few texts are written solely

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according to any one of these formats. Most chapters in content-area texts, for example, are a hybrid of several of these structures (Dimino & Kolar, 1990; Armbruster, Anderson, & Meyer, 1991).

Readers who are unaware of how expository texts are structured do not approach text reading with any particular "plan of action," appearing, instead, to retrieve information in a seemingly random way (Meyer, Brandt, & Bluth, 1980). Students with more sophisticated knowledge of text structures, on the other hand, tend to "chunk" and organize the text as they are reading it. When researchers have examined these chunks of information from proficient readers, the underlying structures used to organize the text are revealed. And when some type of prompt is provided that helps students chunk information, their comprehension increases. For example, Wong (1980) demonstrated that students with comprehension problems could recall as many main ideas as their peers when questions were used to prompt responses, but performed significantly less well when prompting questions were not provided.

2.1.9.4 Reading Fluency

The importance of fluent reading, reading with a combination of speed and accuracy, in successful comprehension is undeniable. Studies have demonstrated that correlations between measures of reading fluency and comprehension are consistently robust, usually on the order of .70 to .90 (Deno, Mirkin, & Chiang, 1982; Fuchs, Fuchs, & Maxwell, 1988; Jenkins & Jewell, 1993). Cunningham and Stanovich (1998) present a rationale for the link that researchers always find between reading fluency and comprehension this way:

> "Slow, capacity-draining word recognition processes require cognition resources that should be allocated to comprehension. Thus, reading for meaning is hindered; unrewarding reading experiences multiply; and practice is avoided or merely tolerated without real cognitive involvement"(p. 8).

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In other words, when too much attention is allocated to low-level processes such as word recognition, not enough attentional resources are available to accomplish the higher-order processing involved in comprehension (LaBerge & Samuels, 1974). Furthermore, reading becomes an unpleasant task, one that students tend to avoid. One promising technique for improving reading fluency is called repeated readings (Samuels, 1979; Sindelar, Monda, & O'Shea, 1990), and as its name implies, the technique involves having students reread passages and stories as a way to improve fluency.

Repeated readings clearly improve students' overall reading fluency and comprehension on the passages they read multiple times, which itself is important because it gives students a tangible sense of what successful fluent reading is like. Whether the strategy generalizes to improvements in reading fluency and comprehension when students read unfamiliar stories has not been established empirically, however. A reasonable intervention approach would be to use repeated readings as a supplement to direct reading comprehension instruction.

2.1.9.5 Encouraging Task Persistence

Early academic experiences that consistently end in failure can easily decrease students' motivation to engage in the hard work reading requires. The consequence is that many unsuccessful readers learn to avoid settings and activities that require reading skills, both at school and at home (Stanovich, 1986b). Many adults can relate to this pattern in their own lives. In an academic environment, for example, many beginning graduate students have a very negative experience in their first statistics class. They quickly learn to avoid all but the requirement statistics classes and frequently go to great lengths to avoid other types of classes as well, such as those having to do with more conceptual approaches to research design.

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Research increasingly stresses that task persistence is a major source of variability in comprehension among students, especially when it comes to expository text (DeWitz, 1997). As reading material becomes more complex and involved, all readers must expend more effort deriving meaning, and layers of meaning, from the text. The persistence they demonstrate in working out text meaning increases as the difficulty of the material increases. Beginning readers may struggle quite a bit to determine the meaning of even seemingly simple narrative or expository passages. Many students with serious reading problems seem to have limited reserves of task persistence when compared with their peers. This finding was highlighted in a large observational study by McKinney, Osborne, and Schulte (1993). A major movement in the field of comprehension research has been to develop teaching approaches that actively encourage students to persist in "figuring out" what the text is saying (Beck, McKeown, Sandora, Kucan, & Worthy, 1996).

It has been established that there are different causes of English reading comprehension problems among students at each level of education. Some students face difficulties in English reading comprehension because of their limitations in vocabulary and background knowledge, others face difficulties in English reading comprehension because of lack of appropriate reading strategies. Yet, others face difficulties in English reading comprehension because they are unaware of even very broad distinctions between the standard organizations of narrative texts versus the organization of expository texts. Meanwhile, other students face difficulties in English reading comprehension because of lack of reading fluency as well as the lack of teaching approaches that actively encourage students to persist in "figuring out" what the text is putting across. While the causes of these English reading difficulties have been established among students in other countries and also at other levels of education that cannot be said about students of colleges of education in Ghana. This

study therefore fills this void by finding out the specific causes of the English reading comprehension difficulties among students of Presbyterian College of Education in Ghana.

2.1.10 Improving English Reading Comprehension Difficulties

Students' reading comprehension difficulties need to be specifically addressed (Wineburg, 2006). When college students read, they oftentimes choose ineffective or inefficient strategies (Wood, Motz, & Willoughby, 1998). Thiede, Griffen, Wiley, and Anderson (2010) found that students with poor metacomprehension were unable to use corrective strategies to improve their comprehension. Metacomprehension refers to the ability to monitor understanding of information communicated or to recognize a lack of comprehension, and then to apply corrective strategies to clarify comprehension. Interventions are necessary to direct students on ways to enhance comprehension.

Prior research on assisting students with developmental reading has suggested strategies that include activating prior knowledge (Dole, Valencia, Greer, & Wardrop, 1991), summarizing text (Armbruster, Anderson, & Ostertag, 1987), crafting questions to establish the main idea of the reading (Rosenshine, Meister, & Chapman, 1996), and using concept maps to connect ideas to other related ideas within the reading (Hammond, 2008; Thiede et al., 2010). Remedial lessons approach incorporates these strategies through the study of summarizing, questioning, clarifying, and predicting (Palincsar & Brown, 1984; Vacca et al., 2011).

Yang (2010) studied an online transitional reading program for college students based on remedial approach in which students' reading processes and interactions with peers were observed in verbal and written forms. Yang (2010) found that students did not know how to apply comprehension strategies needed to understand the readings or to monitor their own learning. The strategies employed in the remedial lessons process – prediction, questioning,

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clarification, and summarization – can be helpful in improving reading comprehension (Palincsar & Brown, 1984; Fung, Wilkinson, & Moore, 2003; Vacca et al., 2011). This section presents some of the methods used in remedial lessons to improve English reading comprehension difficulties among students.

2.1.10.1 Prediction

Prediction refers to the hypothesis generated or the assumptions made about what is expressed within the text. During prediction, students activate prior knowledge about a topic in the text. To be able to practice this strategy, they should be able to reevaluate predictions to revise them if needed. This practice assists students in self-monitoring their comprehension. However, the prediction skill is found to be lacking in transitional college readers (Palincsar, 1986; Teele, 2004).

2.1.10.2 Questioning

The questioning strategy necessitates that students generate questions about the main idea and supporting information. Questions sometimes rely on the reader drawing inferences from the reading. The questioning strategy may improve student comprehension within the subject area. This concept is another skill in which students may be lacking (Palincsar & Brown, 1984; King, 1993; Millis & Cottell, 1998).

2.1.10.3 Clarification

The strategy of clarification requires that students identify information that may hinder or obstruct comprehension. Examples of information that can hinder comprehension include new concepts, vocabulary, and reference words. If students can identify such information, they are able to take actions to correct their learning, such as rereading or asking for

clarification from others (Palincsar & Brown, 1984). College students who struggle with college-level texts may initially not know how to utilize this strategy (Yang, 2010).

2.1.10.4 Summarization

The summarization technique entails students identifying the main idea and important details within the reading. A summary involves the retelling of the text in a concise way that includes important details only (Irwin, 1991; Duffy, 2003). This strategy proves challenging for students in transitional reading classes because it can be difficult to determine what information is important to keep in a summary. When students do not effectively identify and categorize important information, it can adversely affect their writing (Jones, 1999; Duffy, 2003). Concept maps may assist students in connecting ideas and relationships of concepts within the reading. Students may use this tool as an aid to create a summary, verbal or written (Hammond, 2008; Thiede et al., 2010).

When writing, students who struggle with college-level textbooks do not use key words, headings, and databases in the most effective way. Skills to address these concerns may be learned by students. They need skills such as summarization to be able to narrow down and identify key words and use headings. This ability may help students improve research skills and writing in college classes. Students may use the identification of main ideas and supporting details to create an outline for writing so that they may accurately develop a topic they are asked to write about (O'Sullivan & Dallas, 2010).

Student interaction – being able to read, write, speak, and listen to others – is especially important for transitional college readers and writers (Tatum, 2000; Vacca et al., 2011; Yang, 2010). Reciprocal teaching, as mentioned by Yang (2010), may improve comprehension by encouraging student interaction in a guided way. Using an online forum for the interactions may also assist students with correcting mechanics and grammar.

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Mechanics and grammar misuse is common and goes hand-in-hand with other reading and writing issues (Benjamin, Brewer, & Hebl, 2000). Mechanics and grammar issues may be pointed out by peers or the instructor, discussed, and then corrected. The instructor may scaffold the learning with regard to mechanics and grammar by asking questions or assigning tasks that may help clarify identified issues and assist students with proper usage (Palincsar & Brown, 1984; Benjamin et al., 2000; Gruenbaum, 2010).

This section has established that students' reading comprehension difficulties can be improved through summarization, crafting questions to establish the main idea of the reading, and using concept maps to connect ideas to other related ideas within the reading. It has also been established that remedial lessons that incorporate these strategies through the study of summarizing, questioning, clarifying, and predicting has achieved success by helping the remedial students to improve upon their English reading difficulties. Based on these findings from previous studies, this study attempts to find out the specific teaching aspects used in the teaching of the English reading comprehension remedial lessons at the Presbyterian College of Education and how these teaching aspects have helped to improve upon the English reading comprehension difficulties of the students.

2.1.11 Prevalence of English Reading Comprehension Difficulties

The prevalence of different types of reading difficulties depends not only on grade level but also on the school population. For instance, many studies suggest that children from certain demographic groups, such as English learners and those from low-income families, may tend to have weaknesses in vocabulary, academic language, and academic background knowledge (August & Shanahan, 2006;Neuman & Celano, 2006; Barone & Xu, 2008). Teachers at schools serving these populations, such as Ms. Jackson, can expect to encounter relatively greater numbers of children with MRD or SRCD as opposed to SWRD. Some

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children will experience decoding problems, but because they may often have vocabulary weaknesses too, they may tend to demonstrate a pattern of MRD rather than SWRD. If schools serving these populations provide a strong emphasis on vocabulary and academic language from the earliest grades, this may help to prevent many children's reading difficulties (Spear-Swerling, 2015).

Certain patterns also tend to be associated with some disabilities. Children with high-functioning autism often have a pattern of SRCD, with poor reading comprehension despite average or even better-than-average word decoding skills and with comprehension difficulties connected to the specific cognitive-linguistic weaknesses associated with autism. Conversely, children with dyslexia typically display a pattern of SWRD (Huemer & Mann, 2010) usually associated with phonological weaknesses. Although assessment of individual poor readers' component abilities always is important, teachers' awareness of the patterns commonly associated with these disabilities can provide an initial basis for planning instruction and accommodations (Spear-Swerling, 2015).

As the preceding discussion suggests, individual children's experiences (including instructional experiences), as well as their intrinsic abilities, can influence their patterns of reading difficulties. Children can have vocabulary weaknesses because of language disabilities or simply because they were not exposed to the vocabulary words; they can have decoding problems because of a learning disability such as dyslexia or because of inadequate phonics instruction (Spear-Swerling, 2015). However, knowledge about causation is not necessary for information about the child's pattern of reading difficulty to be valuable in instruction; children with decoding or vocabulary weaknesses need intervention in those areas regardless of the ultimate cause of the weaknesses (Spear-Swerling, 2015).

English reading learning difficulties have been found to exist among students at all levels, from the pre-school level to the tertiary level. Most of the studies that have been

reviewed in this study suggest that the prevalence of English reading comprehension difficulties among school children include weak phonemic awareness, weak word decoding, lack of fluent text reading, vocabulary weakness, and listening comprehension difficulties. However, the fact that English reading comprehension difficulties exist at all level of education suggests that students at each level of education will have their own or peculiar reading difficulties. This study therefore examines the peculiar English reading comprehension difficulties among students of colleges of Education in Ghana, using students at the Presbyterian College of Education as a case.

2.1.12 The Impact of Remedial Education and Interventions on Improvement of Learning Outcomes

In general, the evidence suggests that adequate remedial interventions can yield fast and significant improvements. The beneficial effects of remedial education programs are broad based and not just limited to developed countries. Studies from the United States (Slavin, Lake, Davis, & Madden, 2009) and from developing countries (Banerjee, Cole, Duflo & Linden, 2005; AIR & World Education Inc., 2008; Save the Children, 2011) have shown that remedial interventions have had beneficial impacts on reading and math skills. Piper (2009) reveals that interventions which train teachers in techniques that emphasize literacy – implemented in combination with scripted lesson plans, and ongoing support – were able to increase oral reading fluency scores by more than 100% in South Africa, Liberia, and Kenya.

Similarly, results from the Early Grade Reading Assessment (EGRA), showed significant improvements from remedial interventions for students in Grades 2 and Grade 3 after only 4 months, in Liberia (Crouch & Korda, 2008). Intermediate results from the ESCUP Project in Cambodia showed improved academic achievement of slow learners with

nearly 6,000 children being identified in need of academic support. After three years of implementation, 72 percent of participating schools reported a decline in repetition rates since the baseline year and at least 50% of students designated as slow learners are promoted each academic year. Promotion rates among failing children reached 68% in Year 1, 87% in Year 2, and 66% in Year 3 (AIR & World Education, Inc., 2008).

Effects of remedial education programs or similar interventions implemented in low income countries, mainly the ones focusing on students with difficulties in learning how to read, may or may not support those findings, and there is a need for rigorous empirical research on the effectiveness of such programs. This may be difficult since many low income countries lack the necessary resources to measure program effects or even have a standardized assessment to provide valid measures of student learning. Where there is some type of assessment of academic support programs, indicators of program success are mainly drawn from of qualitative data such as teacher surveys to report on the program (Luck & Parente, 2007).

Another intervention that targets low performing children in the early grades and that has gathered some evidence of program effect is Literacy Boost a program implemented by Save the Children in various low income countries. The program aims at improving literacy by using assessments to identify gaps in the five core skills (letter knowledge, phonemic awareness, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension); mobilizing communities for reading action, and training teachers to teach the national curriculum with emphasis on reading (Save the Children, 2010).

In Malawi, at the end of school year, Grade 4 literacy boost children read an average of 24 -26 words per minute with 90% and 73% comprehension accuracy. Still, this is very far from the standard 45-60 words per minute to achieve reading fluency and being able to comprehend text (Abadzi, 2010) In Nepal, Comparing the end of year scores of the total

sample of non Nepali speakers between the Literacy Boost group and the comparison group, the students in the Literacy Boost group did significantly better at letter identification (p=0.000), CAP (p=0.000), and numeracy assessments (p=0.001) (Shresta, Pinto & Ochoa , 2010). In Pakistan, Literacy Boost students scored significantly higher on average, reading 30.92 words per minute correctly while students in comparison school read only 10.25 (p=0.00) (Save the Children, 2011).

At the end of the school year in Malawi, there was a significant decrease in the number of Standard 2 students who participated in the Literacy Boost 19 program (Save the Children, 2010) who scored zero in reading fluency, accuracy and comprehension from 95% and over in the pretest to 66%, 68% and 72% in the posttest. While these numbers may be still far from what should be expected, what is most surprisingly is that after a whole year, 95% to 99% of students in the control schools continued to present zero scores in their reading skills posttest. Looking at the scores of both Literacy Boost schools and control schools, it is difficult to identify which results are more striking: the improvements due to the program or the dismal results of the control schools.

Perhaps the best evidence to date on positive effects of large scale remedial education program targeting the most disadvantaged children comes from the randomized evaluation of the "Balsakhi" (meaning children's friend) program in India implemented by the NGO Pratham. The program targeted children in Grades 2, 3 and 4 who were falling behind, specifically children who have not mastered Grade 1 and 2 reading and math competencies, the majority being marginalized children. While results reported a nearly 8% increase of students in the bottom third of program classes who acquired the basic competencies, it is not clear if these gains will be sufficient enough for the children to achieve the required reading skills to succeed in the formal school system and complete basic education. Overall, test scores for all children increased in treatment schools by 0.14 standard deviations after one

year and by 0.28 standard deviations after two years. In other words, the average student participating in the remedial program will achieve a .14 standard deviation unit above the average student who does not participate in a one year period. A year after the program ended a 0.1 standard deviation test score advantage over the comparison schools persisted.

Another interpretation of these results is the Cohen's classification which introduces the concept of effect size (or practical significance). According to Cohen's classification, the effect sizes of .14 and .01 can be interpreted as very small, with about 58% of students in the comparison groups scoring below the mean of the treatment group and about 14.7% overlap in the scores of both groups. Considering that it takes two years of exposure to the program to reach gains of .28, it is still relatively a small effect (Hinkle, Wierma & Jurs, 2003).

On the other hand, research results should be considered within the education environment where the program was implemented. Those are test scores measures and it is not known the importance that other variables such as student's increase in motivation or self-esteem that were not included in this study that may impact students' learning. This particular model of remediation which trained community members to deliver intensive help to children falling behind was expanded to another program called Read India implemented in rural areas (Banerji & Walton 2011). In Niger, the Systematic Method for Reading Success (SMRS) provided three months instruction to children in Grade 1.The program also delivered thirty minutes of daily instruction for children in second chance schools (age 9 to 15 years old). In Mali the same program was implemented for 6 months and post –test results showed significant improvements with children from the targeted schools outperforming children from government schools (Plan, 2008).

In Mali, SMRS was taught in Bamanakan to 1295 students in 22 community schools (ages 6-8). To measure the pilot results, the Ministry randomly sampled six SMRS schools (104 students) and six national curriculum or bilingual schools (121 students). Results

showed that from a baseline of 0.0, after only 4 months of instruction, 49%of students could read 21 or more letters, versus 2% in national schools after a full year of instruction; 42% of SMRS students could read more than 50% of words compared to 2% of students in national schools; 89.7 (SD 11.22) students in the SMRS schools could read fluently with good comprehension, compared to 41.1% (SD 9.6) of the students in national curriculum (or bilingual) schools after a full year of instruction. The same reading passage and comprehension question measure was used in both the control and experimental schools.

In Chile, the NGO Un Techo para Chile in collaboration with the government's social strategies has recruited volunteers to offer remedial support after school hours in the slums where children live in extreme poverty. Evaluation results showed that after one year in the program, participant children significantly improved their Spanish and math scores in relation to the comparison group (Contreras & Herrera, 2005). Unfortunately, particularly for the poor, grade repetition continues to be used in many schools serving the poorest students as a form of remediation. In Chile, this strategy has proven to be very ineffective since repeaters are most likely to dropout (Pérez, Saffirio & Tabilo, 2011).

Programs such as "Enlightening the Hearts Literacy Campaign" in Ghana show that it is feasible to implement research evidence supported programs in deprived rural areas such as the country's Northern region, targeting children 8-14 years old in 55 schools. Language teachers were trained in strategies focused on three core areas: literacy, numeracy and writing in mother tongue. The program is taught in local languages and uses child-centered methodology based on the phonetic approach to language acquisition. Evaluation results reveal that over 60% of learners in P4 to P6 classes were able to acquire basic reading and writing skills within 8 months of the program cycle (CARE International, 2003).
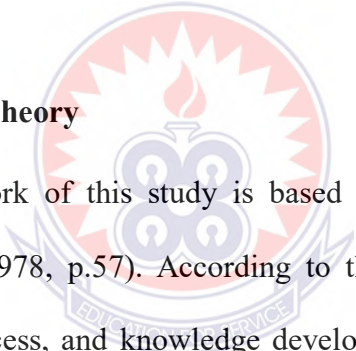
Although, it has been proven in general that remedial education and interventions have an impact on learning outcomes, that cannot be said about students of colleges of

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education in Ghana, since no studies have been conducted to examine the impact of remedial education on students' learning outcomes among students of colleges of education in Ghana. This study therefore contributes to the debate on the findings of the impact of remedial education and interventions on improvement of learning outcomes by examining whether the remediation in English reading comprehension, provided for students at the Presbyterian College of Education in Ghana has effect on the students' English reading comprehension achievement.

2.2   Theoretical Framework

The study was guided by social constructivism theory propounded by Vygotsky in 1978. This section of the literature provides a description and explanation of the social constructivism theory.

2.2.1   Social Constructivism Theory

The theoretical framework of this study is based on social constructivism theory developed by Lev Vygotsky (1978, p.57). According to the social constructivism theory, "learning is a collaborative process, and knowledge develops from individuals' interactions with their culture and society". Vygotsky (1978, p. 57) suggested that, "every function in the child's cultural development appears twice: first, on the social level and, later on, on the individual level; first, between people (inter-psychological) and then inside the child (intra-psychological)".

Social constructivism is a sociological theory of knowledge that focuses on how individuals come to construct and apply knowledge in socially mediated contexts (Fuhrman, 1994; Hutchinson & Huberman, 1993). The fundamental premise of this theory is that knowledge is a human construction and that the learner is an active participant in the learning process (Vygotsky, 1978). Constructivism is based on three assumptions about learning

(Driscoll, 1994; Slavin, 1994; Savery & Duffy, 1995; Steffe & Gale, 1995; Gredler, 1997). First, learning is a result of the individual's interaction with the environment. Knowledge is constructed as the learner makes sense of their experiences in the world. The content of learning is not independent of how the learning is acquired; what a learner comes to understand is a function of the context of learning, the goals of the learner, and the activity the learner is involved in (Boruff et al., 2014).

Second, cognitive dissonance, or the uncomfortable tension that comes from holding two conflicting thoughts at the same time, is the stimulus for learning. It serves as a driving force that compels the mind to acquire new thoughts or to modify existing beliefs in order to reduce the amount of dissonance (conflict). Cognitive dissonance ultimately determines the organization and nature of what is learned (Festinger, 1957). Third, the social environment plays a critical role in the development of knowledge. Other individuals in the environment may attempt to test the learner's understanding and provide alternative views against which the learner questions the viability of his knowledge.

Constructivism supports the acquisition of cognitive processing strategies, self-regulation, and problem solving through socially constructed learning opportunities (Savery & Duffy, 1995; Steffe & Gale, 1995; von Glaserfeld, 1995; Gredler, 1997), all of which are critical skills for evidence-based knowledge uptake and implementation in clinical practice (Thomas, Saroyan & Dauphinee, 2011). Constructivist learning theory underpins a variety of student-centered teaching methods and techniques which contrast with traditional education, whereby knowledge is simply passively transmitted by teachers to students (McLeod, 2019).

Under the social constructivism theory, the primary responsibility of the teacher is to create a collaborative problem-solving environment where students become active participants in their own learning. From this perspective, a teacher acts as a facilitator of learning rather than an instructor. The teacher makes sure he/she understands the students'

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preexisting conceptions, and guides the activity to address them and then build on them (Oliver, 2000). Scaffolding is a key feature of effective teaching, where the adult continually adjusts the level of his or her help in response to the learner's level of performance. In the classroom, scaffolding can include modeling a skill, providing hints or cues, and adapting material or activity (Copple & Bredekamp, 2009).

Tam (2000, p.5) lists the following four basic characteristics of constructivist learning environments, which must be considered when implementing constructivist teaching strategies:

1) Knowledge will be shared between teachers and students.

2) Teachers and students will share authority.

3) The teacher's role is one of a facilitator or guide.

4) Learning groups will consist of small numbers of heterogeneous students.

McLeod (2019) differentiated traditional classroom from that of the social constructivist classroom. According to McLeod (2019) in traditional classroom, strict adherence to a fixed curriculum is highly valued; learning is based on repetition; learning is teacher-centered; teachers disseminate information to students; students are recipients of knowledge (passive learning); teacher's role is directive, rooted in authority; and students work primarily alone (competitive). On the other hand, according to McLeod (2019), in social constructivist classroom, pursuit of student questions and interests is valued; learning is interactive, building on what the student already knows; learning is student-centered; teachers have a dialogue with students, helping students construct their own knowledge (active learning); teacher's role is interactive, rooted in negotiation; and students work primarily in groups (cooperative).

Honebein (1996, p.13) summarizes the seven pedagogical goals of constructivist learning environments:

1) To provide experience with the knowledge construction process (students determine how they will learn).

2) To provide experience in and appreciation for multiple perspectives (evaluation of alternative solutions).

3) To embed learning in realistic contexts (authentic tasks).

4) To encourage ownership and a voice in the learning process (student centered learning).

5) To embed learning in social experience (collaboration).

6) To encourage the use of multiple modes of representation, (video, audio text, etc.)

7) To encourage awareness of the knowledge construction process (reflection, metacognition).

Brooks and Brooks (1993) list twelve descriptors of constructivist teaching behaviors:

1. Encourage and accept student autonomy and initiative. (p. 103)

2. Use raw data and primary sources, along with manipulative, interactive, and physical materials. (p. 104)

3. When framing tasks, use cognitive terminology such as "classify," analyze," "predict," and "create." (p. 104)

4. Allow student responses to drive lessons, shift instructional strategies, and alter content. (p. 105)

5. Inquire about students' understandings of the concepts before sharing [your] own understandings of those concepts. (p. 107)

6. Encourage students to engage in dialogue, both with the teacher and with one another. (p. 108)

7. Encourage student inquiry by asking thoughtful, open-ended questions and encouraging students to ask questions of each other. (p. 110)

8. Seek elaboration of students' initial responses. (p. 111)

9. Engage students in experiences that might engender contradictions to their initial hypotheses and then encourage discussion. (p. 112)

10. Allow wait time after posing questions. (p. 114)

11. Provide time for students to construct relationships and create metaphors. (p. 115)

12. Nurture students' natural curiosity through frequent use of the learning cycle model. (p. 116)

Social constructivism theory promotes a sense of personal agency as students have ownership of their learning and assessment. On the contrary, the biggest disadvantage is its lack of structure. Some students require highly structured learning environments to be able to reach their potential. It also removes grading in the traditional way and instead places more value on students evaluating their own progress, which may lead to students falling behind, as without standardized grading teachers may not know which students are struggling (McLeod, 2019).

Vygotsky's social constructivism theory sets a course to follow for remedial education in the teaching and learning situation at the Presbyterian College of Education in Ghana and as such the features of the social constructivism theory promote student interest; learning is interactive, building on what the student already knows; learning is student-centered; teachers have a dialogue with students, helping students construct their own knowledge (active learning); teacher's role is interactive, rooted in negotiation; and students work primarily in groups (cooperative) is to be used by the present study as the yard stick to measure the effectiveness of the remedial education at the Presbyterian College of Education in Ghana. The other features of the theory that state that the remedial lesson programme encourage the

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use of multiple modes of representation (video, audio text, etc.) to deliver lessons is also to be measured to find out the effectiveness of the remedial education programme at the Presbyterian College of Education.

2.3 Conceptual Framework

Based on the theoretical framework of the study the following conceptual framework of the study is proposed.
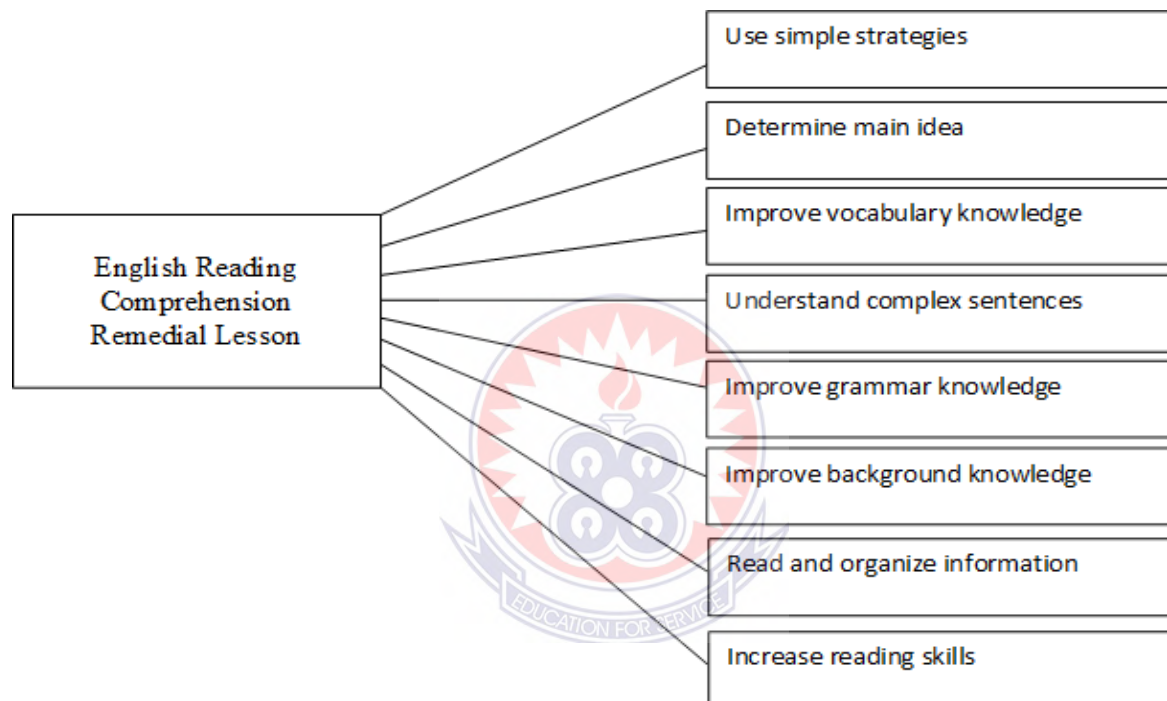
Figure 2.2: Conceptual Framework of the Study

The conceptual framework of the study hypothesized that the English reading comprehension remedial programme at the Presbyterian College of Education has the features of the social constructivism theory, and that it promotes student interest; learning is interactive, building on what the student already knows; learning is student-centered; teachers have a dialogue with students, helping students construct their own knowledge (active learning); teacher's role is interactive, rooted in negotiation; and students work primarily in groups (cooperative). It is also hypothesized that the remedial programme encourage the use of multiple modes of representation, (video, audio text, etc.) to deliver lessons. Again, the conceptual framework of

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the study hypothesizes that as a result of the application of the social constructivism theory in the English reading comprehension remedial lessons, the remedial programme will have a positive impact on the reading comprehension achievement of the students.

2.4   Empirical Review

Connells (2009) conducted a study with children of specific reading difficulties in Australia. The study established that they presented with a mean reading delay of approximately two years before attending school. On the contrary, some children made little progress. Moses (1998) conducted a study on the effect of structural drills in remedial teaching in Chennai, South India, and found that the most frequently occurring grammatical error in learners' written work is the error concerned with subject verb agreement. Desai (2006) developed a remedial program for improving the language ability of children in fourth grade in Mexico. The results showed that most defects committed by these pupils which included errors on spelling, missing letters and faulty pronunciation were minimized by remedial instruction.

Slavin and Madden (2001) designed an intervention program in USA called "Success for All" It involved intensive one - to - one teaching to help improve the literacy learning rate for at – risk children. In this program, junior classes usually regrouped for reading with children going to different classrooms based on their own ability level throughout the primary school. Despite the difficulty applying it in many schools, it had high benefits in the area of reading meaningful text. Machin et al (2010) conducted a study which focused on an intervention with poor learners in English inner-city secondary schools, named "Excellence in Cities" (EiC). The interventions included support to difficult students and advanced teaching for the best 5 – 10 percent "gifted and talented" students in under-performing schools. The results suggested that EiC programme improved students' outcomes in

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mathematics (though not English) although the benefits were only evidence for students with a sufficiently strong background and not for the most "hard to teach" pupils.

Jarrar (2014) investigated the impact of remedial classes on the performance of the fourth grade low achievers in English in public schools in Ramallah District, Palestine. The study also examined the effect of gender and group variables on the performance of the participants. To achieve the aims of the study, Jarrar developed a 59- item English proficiency test that covers the four language skills and also interviewed the teachers who regularly taught the participants in the ordinary classes in their schools. The findings of the study showed that there was an obvious effect of the remedial classes on improving the students' level in English Learning.

Munene et al. (2017) in a study sought to establish the impact of attitude of teachers and pupils towards remedial programme on academic performance of pupils in primary schools in Nyahururu District, Kenya. The study adopted a descriptive survey design and targeted headteachers, teachers, pupils, Zonal Quality Assurance and Standards Officers and Zonal Education Officers. One-hundred and thirty-eight research participants were selected using census and stratified random sampling techniques. The researchers used structured questionnaires and interview schedule to collect data for the study. The study concluded that teachers' and pupils' attitude was a significant factor in determining the effectiveness of remediation. From the findings, majority of the participants strongly agreed that remedial teaching programme improved pupils, performance.

Chikwature and Oyedele (2016) studied the impact of remediation in the teaching and learning of map work at Zimbabwe Junior Certificate (ZJC) level. The researchers followed a case study research design rooted in qualitative research approach. Participants of the study were selected using the random sampling procedure. Questionnaire, interview and observation were the instruments used to gather data for the study. The research findings

showed that remediation is very crucial in the teaching and learning of map work or any other topic or subject and improves the performance of students.

Selvarajan and Vasanthagumar (2012) in a study aimed at identifying the impact of remedial teaching on improving the competencies of low achieving students in Mannar district of Sri Lanka. For this purpose, ninety seven students from rural and urban area were selected from four different schools in Mannar Education Zone. The selection of the primary grade is decided to ensure the effectiveness of the program in primary education. Objectives of this program are to investigate the reasons for the low achievement of students in this zone, to assess the effectiveness of the remedial teaching and to recommend possible actions to be carried out for improvement. The data were collected by interviewing relevant authorities and from the secondary records. Findings show that the socio economic condition of the family and physical and psycho social status of the student cause low achievement. The implemented remedial program proved to be effective with recovering ninety four percent of students in Tamil Language and ninety three percent of students in Mathematics.

Alghamdi and Siddiqui (2016) report on an investigation of an institutionalized remedial approach held by an English language institute (ELI) at a Saudi University in order to support foundation year struggling students who often achieve low grades or fail to pass a certain level of the English language program. The study utilizes semi-structured interviews to address three issues (1) Screening for low-achieving learners; (2) Remedial sessions procedure and significance; (3) Learners' attitudes and conduct during remedial sessions. Thematic analysis of interviews with teachers shows that time limitation and lack of logistical structure lower the effectiveness of remedial sessions in terms of numbers of supported learners and the remedial procedure itself. It was also found that class teachers' role is often lacking in this case-study.

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Low-achieving learners are rarely referred by their teachers, but instead come on their own to seek support. However, this optional nature of the process resulted in remedial sessions receiving learners who are self-motivated, have positive attitude, and exhibit different classroom conduct than students in the mainstream classes. Furthermore, the analysis yields other findings related to the usefulness and significance of remedial intervention. Learners were found to seek remedial support for two main reasons: supportive environment and simplified instruction. Much of this can be addressed in regular classrooms. The study concludes with other implications for remedial session's logistics and practices, as well as for the teaching and learning process of low-achievers.

In an action research investigation, Alghamdi and Siddiqui (2017) explored differentiated instruction as it is being implemented at an EFL remedial program, its procedures and outcomes in Saudi Arabia. They hypothesized that students would benefit from the varied instruction, modified materials and flexible grouping within the class setup. Quantitative data was collected in the form of the grades of a pre-test and a post test. The differences in the results of the two sets of tests showed positive impact of implementing DI on learning, and were found to be statistically significant.

Eno (2019) discussed the benefits of remedial teaching to poor performers or 'at risk' students in an English as a Second or Foreign Language (ESL/EFL) classroom in the United Arab Emirates (UAE). Eno presented a case of remedial teaching to a group of 21 intermediate level students in a technical vocational training institution in the United Arab Emirates (UAE). The learners were all male students between the ages of 16 and 22; trained to work as entry level technicians in the oil and gas industry upon completion of their studies. The participants were identified within the first month of the semester and measures were taken for intervention. To implement the remedial work, Eno used several tools and procedures such as diagnosis, material preparation, motivation, data collection and classroom

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observation. The success rate of the programme provides testimony to the worth of early intervention in curtailing and remedying learning deficiencies and rescuing slow performers at the risk of failing a subject or perhaps dropping out of an entire course.

Essibu (2018) conducted a comparative analysis of the performance of regular science students and remedial science students in Ghana. The author compared the performance of regular and private student who write the Senior High School certificate examinations. Specifically, the study focused on the four elective Science subjects. Using the aggregated data from 2007 and 2016, the author concluded that regular students perform better in all the elective science subjects for the period under consideration. The only exception was in 2008, where private student performed better than regular students. The author also concluded that there are significant differences between the performances (passes and failures) of regular and private students in the WAEC examination. In the case of both regular and private students, higher passes in an elective subject result in higher passes in the other elective subjects while passes in an elective subject result in a lower failure rate in the other subjects.

Oduro-Ofori, Peprah and Cann (2014) examined the role of remedial schools in the development of education in Ghana. The primary objective of the study was to find out the contributions of remedial schools to development in the country. To achieve this, the study adopted the exploratory research design. It applied both quantitative and qualitative research techniques. Data was collected from both primary and secondary sources and critically analyzed for results. A total of 120 remedial school students were interviewed during the study. Also, data was collected from teachers, school headmasters and the education directorate of the metropolitan local government office. The interview guide and questionnaire were the tools applied in soliciting data from the respondents. The findings of the study were that remedial schools aside preparing students adequately to pass their external examinations, contributed massively to development in diverse ways. For instance,

these schools provide employment; provide a platform to upgrade the skills of workers and also to upgrade the moral standards of society. Interestingly, aside poor performing secondary school graduates who enroll in these schools; workers, school dropouts as well as continuing secondary school students are among the population that make up the remedial schools.

2.5   Summary of the Literature Review and Research Gap

It has been established through a growing body of research that remedial teaching and lessons are provided to learners throughout the world because of various reasons. Remedial lessons are provided during mornings, lunch breaks, evenings and even during weekend. The lessons are provided to boost performance in key subject areas such as languages, Mathematics and Science. The review of the literature of the study has also shown that remedial students in most cases perform even far better on the second attempt than regular students.

Some researchers found that students who failed their reading class in the first grade significantly improved and passed their reading and spelling after taking remedial classes. As emphasized in the review of the literature, remedial institutions serve as clinical teaching grounds by providing diagnostic and recovery stories for students to achieve success in their next resit. Remedial institutions have also been found to provide low achievers with protection from lagging behind students who passed their examination in the first attempt. It also gives them enough support which enhances self-esteem and allows remedial students keep up with the progress made by their classmates.

Meanwhile, there are a number of issues in the literature creating a number of gaps in the literature to be filled out. First, most of these studies relating to remedial lessons in Ghana have mainly focused on primary school pupils, secondary school students and university students, creating a paucity of research studies on remedial lessons among College

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of Education students. Secondly, no studies have been found in the literature in Ghana, examining remedial lessons in only English reading comprehension. The studies on remedial lessons in Ghana have focused mostly on general literacy, Mathematics, Science and other subjects. Thirdly, most of the studies that have been found in the literature have employed quantitative research approach, with few of them employing mixed method approach. Finally, most of this growing body of research is found outside Ghana. This study therefore attempts to fill out these identified gaps in literature by investigating the remedial teaching in English reading comprehension among the students of Presbyterian College of Education. To achieve these objectives, a mixed method research approach would be employed.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.0   Introduction

This study was to find out whether the remediation in English reading comprehension, provided for students at the Presbyterian College of Education in Ghana, has effect on the students' English reading comprehension achievement. This chapter presents the research approach, research design, study site, population and target population, sample size and sampling procedure, data collection instruments, data analysis plan, validity and reliability of research instruments, as well as ethical issues involved in conducting the study.

3.1   Research Approach

The research employed the mixed method approach. The mixed method approach is "a procedure for collecting, analyzing and mixing both quantitative and qualitative methods in a single study or a series of studies to understand a research problem" (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011, p.12). Creswell and Plano Clark (2007) argue that mixed methods research helps answer the research questions that cannot be answered by quantitative or qualitative methods alone and provides a greater repertoire of tools to meet the aims and objectives of a study. The researcher decided to use this approach for the study because the approach helped the researcher to ensure that the findings of the study are grounded in the participants' experiences, which was of vital importance in this study considering the fact that this is the first time this type of study is being carried out among students in Colleges of Education in Ghana. On the other hand, the mixed method approach was considered by the researcher for this study because it gave the researcher the opportunity to compare and contrast the qualitative results with the quantitative findings that was useful in understanding contradictions between the quantitative results and qualitative findings.

3.2 Research Design

To gain an in-depth understanding of the topic, this study has been carried out using the convergent parallel design, a mixed-methods design. The research process can be symbolized as qualitative and quantitative (QUAL+QUAN; Morse, 1991). A convergent parallel design entails that the researcher concurrently conducts the quantitative and qualitative elements in the same phase of the research process, weighs the methods equally, analyzes the two components independently, and interprets the results together (Creswell & Pablo-Clark, 2011). With the purpose of corroboration and validation, the researcher aims to triangulate the methods by directly comparing the quantitative statistical results and qualitative findings. In the research process, two data sets have been obtained, analyzed separately, and compared. The research process in this study is given in Figure 3.1.
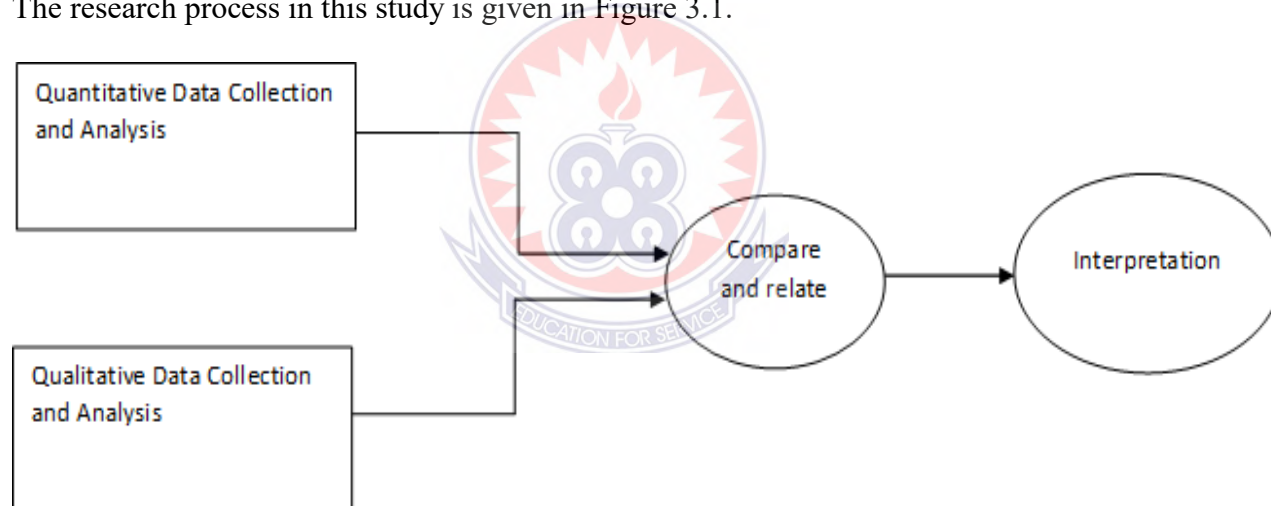
Figure 3.1: The research process in this study using the convergent mixed-parallel design.

3.3 Study Site

Presbyterian College of Education was selected as the study site. Presbyterian College of Education is a tertiary institution that runs a four-year degree program in basic education in the subject areas of Science, Mathematics, Information Communications Technology, Technical Skills, Visual Arts, Agricultural Science, Religious and Moral Education, Primary Education and Home Economics. It was established by the Basel Missionaries on July 3,

1848 to train teachers to teach in the basic schools. The college is located in Akropong-Akuapem which is in the Akuapem-North Municipality of the Eastern Region of Ghana. The male student enrolment is eight hundred and thirty-eight (838) while the female student enrolment is six hundred and seventeen (617). In all, the total student enrolment is one thousand, four hundred and fifty-five (1,455). Presbyterian College of Education has a staff strength of one hundred and five (105). This comprises sixty-three (63) teaching staff and forty-two (42) non-teaching staff.

3.4   Population of the Study

Population: Population of a study is "an entire group about which some information is required to be ascertained" (Banerjee and Chaudhury, 2010, p.60). In selecting a population for study, the research question or purpose of the study will suggest a suitable definition of the population to be studied, in terms of location and restriction to a particular age group, sex or occupation. "The population must be fully defined so that those to be included and excluded are clearly spelt out (inclusion and exclusion criteria)" (Banerjee and Chaudhury, 2010'p.60). The population of this study comprised all the students and teachers at the Presbyterian College of Education. The current student population of Presbyterian College of Education stands at one thousand, four hundred and fifty-five (1,455), while the teacher population is sixty-five (65).

Target population: Target population refers to the "entire group of individuals or objects to which researchers are interested in generalizing the conclusions" (Banerjee and Chaudhury, 2010, p.60). In other words, target population is the population from which any inferences from a sample refer to. The target population usually has varying characteristics and it is also known as the theoretical population (Explorable.com, 2009). The target population of this study comprised all the students who take part in the remedial lessons as

well as all the teachers who participate in the teaching of the remedial lessons at the Presbyterian College of Education. The students were targeted for this study because they are the direct beneficiaries of remedial teaching in English reading comprehension at the College. The teachers are also targeted for this study because they are the ones who provide remediation in English reading comprehension for the students at the College.

3.5   Sample Size

Quantitative study group- students: Presbyterian College of Education has 470 students taking part in the English reading comprehension remedial lessons. All of these students are in Level 200. They were sampled for the study because they were offering the English Language Studies Course which had reading comprehension as a component. Out of the 470 students in Level 200, 253 are males and 217 are females. As a low response rate was expected, all the 470 Level 200 students were sampled for the study.

Qualitative study group-teachers of remedial lessons: Five (5) English Language teachers who teach the course were selected to participate in the study. They were made up of three (3) males and two (2) females.

3.6   Sampling Procedure

Frankfort-Nachmias and Nachmias (2008, p.167) define sampling procedure as a "process or procedure for selecting a portion of a population that is used to make inferences about that population". In other words, sampling procedure is the procedure used in selecting the required sample size in a manner, so that the sample is representative of the study population. They are categorized into probability and non-probability sampling techniques.

Quantitative study group- students: As a result of the fact all the Level 200 remedial students were selected for the study, the non-probability sampling technique of

purposive sampling was used to select the participants of the study. Purposive sampling procedure, also called judgment sampling, is the deliberate choice of an informant due to the qualities the informant possesses. It is a non-random technique that does not need underlying theories or a set number of informants. Simply put, the researcher decides what needs to be known and sets out to find people who can and are willing to provide the information by virtue of knowledge or experience (Bernard, 2002, Lewis & Shep-pard, 2006). Purposive sampling, when used appropriately, is more efficient than random sampling in practical field circumstances (Bernard, 2002) because the random member of a community may not be as knowledgeable and observant as an expert informant (Topp et al., 2004). This method is especially useful when there is not enough funds and other resources (Topp et al., 2004). Purposive sampling can be more realistic than randomization in terms of time, effort and cost needed in finding informants (Topp et al., 2004).

Qualitative study group-teachers of remedial lessons: Criterion sampling, one of the purposeful sampling methods, has been used to determine this study group. The basic criteria for determining the participants include being a teacher of the English reading comprehension remedial lessons, and having taught the remedial course for at least one year, and volunteering to participate in the study.

3.7 Inclusion-Exclusion Criteria

Inclusion criteria are characteristics that the prospective subjects must have if they are to be included in the study, while exclusion criteria are those characteristics that disqualify prospective subjects from inclusion in the study. In this study all the Level 200 students who took part in English reading comprehension remedial lessons were included in the study. On the other hand, all the teachers of the English reading comprehension remedial classes, and having taught the remedial lessons for at least one year were included in the study. On the

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contrary, all students and teachers who are not part of the English reading comprehension remedial classes were excluded from the study.

3.8   Data Collection Instruments

Qualitative data collection instrument. In the qualitative stage, the semi-structured interview form and structured observation form were used. The researcher used the semi-structured interview form to be able to ask additional probe questions to analyze the issue in-depth and to understand the reasons behind participants' answers. The interview form is composed of six main questions and three probe questions. For example, the main questions of "Do your students face difficulties in English comprehension?" and "Do you conduct remedial lessons in English comprehension for your students?" were followed by probes like "If yes, what kind of difficulties do they face?", "If yes, which areas of English comprehension do you focus on? "However, some additional probe questions not included in the interview form were also asked to gain a deeper understanding of participants' views.

Observation: Observational data were also gathered for the study. As Cohen et al (2007, p.396) put it "observational data is useful as it affords the researcher the opportunity to gather 'live' data from 'live' or naturally occurring social situations". A non-participant observation of English reading comprehension lessons were conducted to enhance further understanding of the research topic. Extensive field notes that were guided by an observation schedule were taken during the lesson observations. This provided authentic data on how teachers carried out remedial teaching in English reading comprehension. The observation tool was used to triangulate the data and to see if the views teachers had stated in the interviews complied with their classroom practices. The observation form was designed according to the aims of the study and the data collected from the interviews. One month was

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used in collecting the observational data. Two observations of two hours each per teacher were conducted.

Quantitative data collection instrument: Questionnaire was used as quantitative data collection tool for the research. Two different sets of questionnaires were developed for teachers and students. The two different sets of questionnaires contained both closed and open ended items. The questionnaire for teachers had brief instructions on how to respond to the items. It was in three parts. Part one sought biographical information such as age, sex, teaching experience, academic qualifications and teaching load. Part two contained items that generated information on various ways in which remedial teaching in English reading comprehension was carried out. Part three contained items that elicited information on problems of providing remedial teaching in English reading comprehension. The questionnaire for students was also in three parts. Part one sought biographical information such as age, sex, level and program. Part two generated information on various ways in which remedial teaching in English reading comprehension was done. Part three elicited information on the effects of remedial teaching in English reading comprehension.

3.9   Reliability and Validity

3.9.1   Reliability

Reliability of a research instrument "measures the degree to which the research instrument is free from bias and therefore ensures consistent measurement across time and several items within the instrument" (Kothari, 2004, p.74). Usually, the Cronbach's alpha coefficient is used to determine the internal consistency of the scale. The data collection instruments were piloted on a sample of 30 students outside the study sample and also among 5 teachers who were not part of the main study but met the criteria for the study. This allowed for reliability and validity of the questionnaire to be determined and changes made before the

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actual study was embarked on. The reliability of the data collection instrument was measured using Cronbach's alpha.

Cronbach alpha was computed on the interval or ratio measured variable since those were the variables fit for Cronbach alpha. A Cronbach's alpha of 0.7 to 0.8 is usually considered to be good (Mugenda and Mugenda, 2003; Cooper and Schindler 2008; Sekaran and Bougie, 2013). In all a Cronbach alpha of 0.82 – for remedial lessons impact and 0.84 – for remedial lessons for supported learning were obtained.

3.9.2   Validity

Validity of a research instrument refers to "the degree to which the research instruments measure what it is supposed to measure" (Joppe 2000, p.1; Mugenda, 2008, p.285). The steps for the validity of both the quantitative and qualitative data collection tool development were followed one by one when developing the questionnaire and the interview form. The item pool was created, expert views were taken, and the tool was piloted. The item pool was created in this respect based on studies in the literature.

For the semi-structured interview form nine main questions and six probes were presented to an expert for review. An expert with a PhD and considered to have mastered data collection tool development processes stated that two questions were repeats, one question was irrelevant, and three probes did not serve the study's purpose. The form was revised and the questions that the expert and researcher agreed were problematic were omitted from the form. Later on, the draft form was piloted with five English teachers who had not been included in the study group but who did meet the criteria for inclusion in the study. In this process, the form was revised again, and the final version of the form was obtained.

The observation tool was used to triangulate the data and to see if the views teachers had stated in the interviews complied with their classroom practices. The observation form

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was designed according to the aims of the study and the data collected from the interviews. Later on, an associate professor with a command of qualitative research methods was asked to assess the observation form by considering the study's aims. In this process, items about the classroom atmosphere and teaching strategies, which had not been in the previous draft of the form, were added to the form.

To ensure the face validity of the quantitative data collection instruments, copies of the research instruments - questionnaire, were given to my colleague masters' students for their perusal. The constructive comments were included in the development of the main data collection instruments used for the study. This procedure was used because the face validity of a data collection instrument is usually granted by the peers of the researcher. To achieve the content validity of the data collection instrument, the research instruments were given to experts in the field of research and on the topic. The content validity of the questionnaire was determined by first discussing the items in the questionnaire with three experts with a PhD who were asked to indicate against each item (with a rating scale of 1– 4) in the questionnaire whether it measures what it is meant to measure in relation to the research objectives. The comments given by the experts were considered in the development of the main questionnaire. This procedure of content validity was used because the content validity of a data collection instrument is normally granted by experts in the area.

3.10   Data Collection Procedure

Data collection procedure is "the process one follows to collect and measure the data on the variables of the study, in an established systematic fashion that enables one to answer stated research questions, test hypotheses, and evaluate outcomes, in an ethical manner, and also to ensure anonymity" (Singh, 2007, p.66). In this study, the researcher, sought permission from the authorities of Presbyterian College of Education through a letter

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explaining the purpose of the study and the confidentiality of the information. According to Trochim (2006), the participants of a study need to be made aware of the purpose of the study so that the participants are able to make an informed decision as to whether they will participate in the study or not.

Prior to collecting the data, the potential participants were given the informed consent form to let them know about the aim of the study, confidentiality of the data, and ethical issues; they were also assured that their information would be kept confidential. Only the teachers who filled out the informed consent form were allowed to participate in the study. The administration and collection of the questionnaire lasted for a period of one-month.

3.11   Data Analysis Plan

Qualitative data analysis. The interviews were face-to-face and recorded using an audio recorder. Voice recording was done in all observed classes and field notes were kept frequently. Afterwards, the voice recordings were transcribed. All participants were asked to check the accuracy of the transcriptions and their consent was taken before the analysis. Later on, interview transcriptions and field notes from the observation process were read thoroughly to understand the issue with a holistic point of view, and the files were uploaded to NVivo 10 for open-axial selective coding.

Initially, free-coding processes were followed and then the tree-coding process was completed. Although coding was focused on the interview data, the data was also related to the observation data and two data sources were linked with memos and "see also" links. By using attribute values in NVivo 10, the characteristics of each participant were additionally used for comparative analysis. Direct quotes were used to reflect participants' views more strikingly and to depict the phenomenon more clearly by unfolding it for the readers. The importance of context, process-related reasons, and their mutual effects were taken into

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consideration during coding. Moreover, the codes developed by free coding in content analysis were combined under a common category and transformed into a tree code. In other words, an inductive logical process was followed. The codes obtained were categorized according to similarities and differences, and categories were compared. Meaningful and holistic categories were combined to form themes. The themes are given under different subheadings in the findings and interpretations.

The processes of coding, category development, and theme development continued through a reflexive understanding, accountability being the main principle. The analysis file has been preserved as it could be required in line with the principle of accountability. Tables have also been used to compare the qualitative data with the quantitative data. In the final part of analysis, qualitative querying was conducted using NVivo 10. In particular, matrix-coding queries were performed based on participants' characteristics, and these were compared in terms of age, gender, and ideology. Direct quotes able to highly represent participant's views were chosen for the report. To select the exemplar quotes, the researcher looked for several important criteria; for example, she listened to the voice recordings of all participants and then quoted expressions she thought to be more convincing. In addition, she also looked for repetition, the use of meaning intensifiers, and the number of respondents expressing similar ideas, examining their level of emphasis and tone of voice.

Quantitative Data Analysis. In the quantitative stage, participants' answers obtained from the data collection tools have been processed using the program, IBM SPSS program version 20. Both descriptive and inferential analyses were performed on the data. The descriptive statistics used for the quantitative analysis were frequencies, percentages, mean and standard deviation and presented in APA format tables and graph. The inferential

statistics of ordinary simple linear regression analysis was used for the study. A p-value of 5% was used as the threshold for statistical significance.

3.12   Ethical Consideration

The study was carried out by receiving essential permissions from the authorities of the Presbyterian College of Education and the University of Education, Winneba. In the study, four basic components (credibility, transferability, consistency, and conformability) as well as all ethical principles and processes were carefully observed. The participants were informed about the study and voluntarily participated. To keep participants' identities confidential, the names of the participants were excluded from the analysis, interpretation and the report of the study. Meanwhile, the quantitative data were retrieved in a way that avoided the use of personal names and any other records that could identify the participants. To protect the data collected from the participants, the data was used by the researcher for its intended purpose that is, for academic research purpose only. The questionnaire, audio-tapes, as well as field notes that were used for the analysis of the data are all to be discarded as soon as the study is completed.

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS

4.0   Introduction

This study was to find out the specific reading comprehension problems of students of Presbyterian College of Education, the causes of Presbyterian College of Education students' reading comprehension problems and the impact of remediation on the reading comprehension achievement of students of Presbyterian College of Education. This chapter presents the data presentation and analysis of the findings of the study. The data analysis and presentation are presented according to the specific objectives of the study.

4.1   Background Characteristics of Participants

Table 1 shows the background characteristics of the students who participated in the study. As shown in the table, majority (57.1%) of the students who participated in the study were males, while 42.9% of them were females. In terms of age, the distribution of the background characteristics of the students who participated in the study, as shown in Table 1, indicates that 88.5% of the students were 18-25 years, 10.8% were 26-30 years, while 0.7% were 31-35 years of age. With regard to their programme of study, the results indicate that 9.7% were Visual Arts students, 5.9% were Technical Skills students, while 13.3% were Home Economics students. On the other hand, 5.9% of them were Mathematics students, 23.5% were Religious and Moral Education students, and 11.7% were Science students. The distribution of the programme of study among the students who participated in the study, as shown in Table 1, also indicates that 5.6% of the students who participated in the study were Agriculture students, 9.5% were ICT students while 14.9% were Primary Education students.

Table 1: Background characteristics of students who participated in the study

Background characteristics	Frequency	Percentage
Gender		
Male	252	57.1%
Female	189	42.9%
Age		
18-25	392	88.5%
26-30	48	10.8%
31-35	3	.7%
Programme		
Visual Arts	43	9.7%
Technical Skills	26	5.9%
Home Economics	59	13.3%
Mathematics	26	5.9%
Religious And Moral Education	104	23.5%
Science	52	11.7%
Agriculture	25	5.6%
ICT	42	9.5%
Primary Education	66	14.9%

Table 2 shows the background characteristics of the teachers who participated in the study. As shown in the table, 40% of the teachers who participated in the study were female, while 60% of them were male. The age distribution of the teachers who participated in the study revealed that 60% of the teachers who participated in the study were 41-50 years, while 40% of the teachers were 51-60 years of age.

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Table 2: Background characteristics of teachers who participated in the study

Background characteristics	Frequency	Percentage
Gender		
Male	3	60%
Female	2	40.0%
Age		
41 - 50 years	3	60.0%
51 - 60 years	2	40.0%
Experience		
1 - 5 years	2	40.0%
6 - 10 years	1	20.0%
More than 20 years	2	40.0%
Number of Lessons		
3 Lessons	2	40.0%
4 Lessons	1	20.0%
5 Lessons and above	2	40.0%

On the other hand, 40% of the teachers who participated in the study had 1-5 years teaching experience, 20% of them had 6-10 years teaching experience, while 40% of the teachers had more than 20 years of teaching experience. The distributions of the number of lessons of the teachers who participated in the study revealed that 40% of the teachers had 3 Lessons, 20% had 4 Lessons, while 40% had 5 Lessons and above.

4.1.2 Specific Reading Comprehension Problems of Students of Presbyterian College of Education

The first objective of the study was to identify the specific reading comprehension problems of students of Presbyterian College of Education. To achieve this objective, both the students and teachers were presented with a number of reading comprehension problems and were asked to indicate by ticking the ones that apply to students or the ones that the students are confronted with. The results of the analysis are shown in Figures 4.1 and 4.2.

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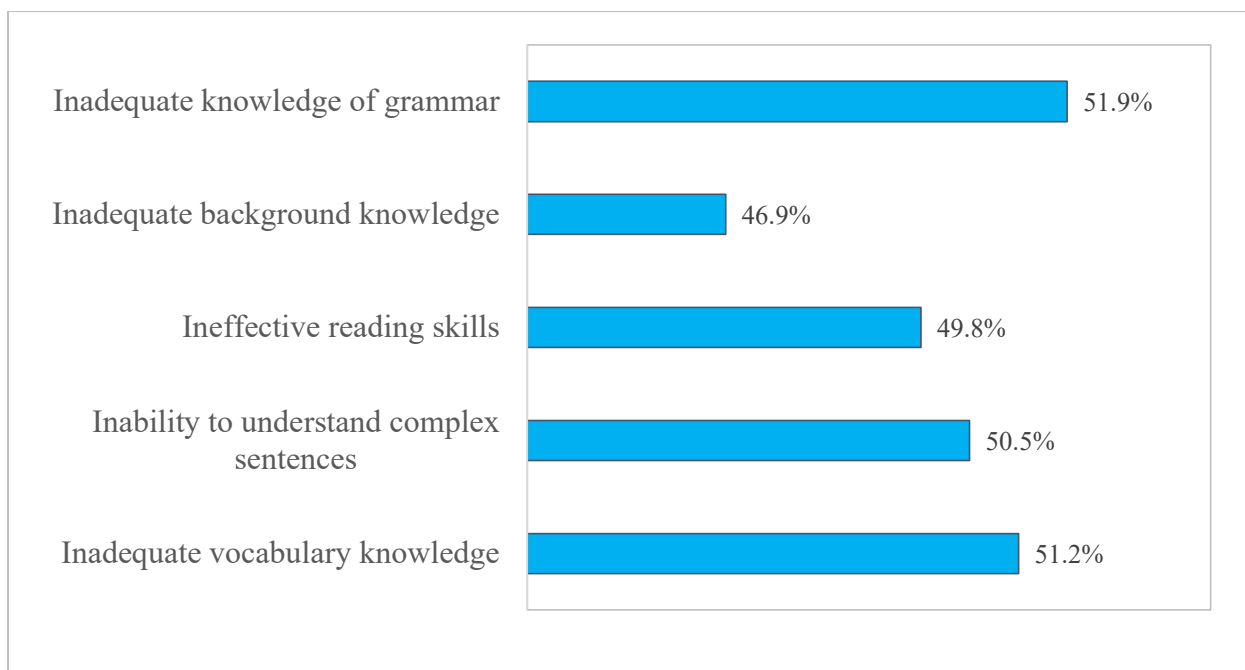
Figure 4.1: Distribution of students' responses showing the specific reading comprehension problems of students of Presbyterian College of Education

Figure 4.1 shows the distribution of responses of the students on the specific reading comprehension problems they encounter, as students of the Presbyterian College of Education. As shown in the figure, 51.9% of the students reported of inadequate knowledge of grammar, which makes it difficult for them to understand complex sentences, 46.9% of the students reported of inadequate background knowledge, while 49.8% of the students reported of ineffective reading skills. On the other hand, 50.5% of the students reported of their inability to understand complex sentences, while 51.2% reported of inadequate vocabulary knowledge.

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A combination of all	40.0%
Inability to monitor comprehension	60.0%
Inability to understand complex sentences	80.0%
Inadequate vocabulary knowledge	80.0%
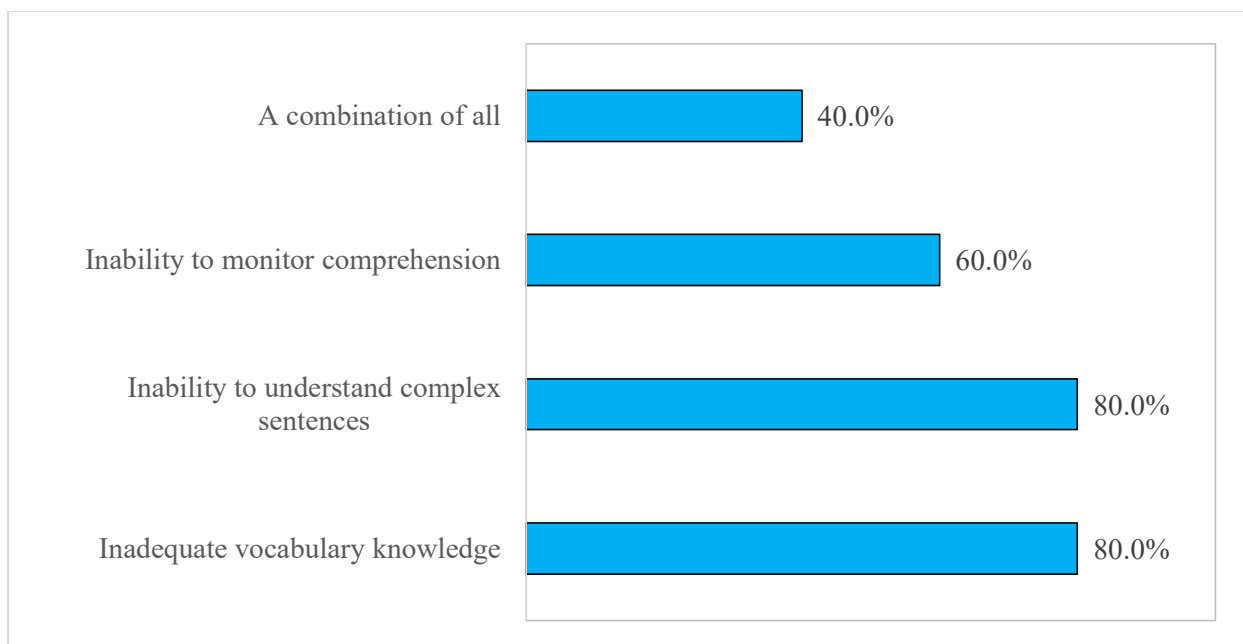
Figure 4.2: Distribution of teachers' responses showing the specific reading comprehension problems of students of Presbyterian College of Education

Figure 4.2 shows the distribution of responses of the teachers on the specific reading comprehension problems faced by the students of the Presbyterian College of Education. As shown in the figure, 60% of the teachers reported of the inability of the students to monitor comprehension to determine whether they understand what they are reading, 80% of the teachers reported of the inability of the students to understand complex sentences, and 80% of the teachers reported of inadequate vocabulary knowledge of the students. Meanwhile, 40% of the teachers indicated that the reading comprehension problems of the students of Presbyterian College Education is a combination of all the problems stipulated. In an interview with the teachers, who participated in the study, on the specific reading comprehension problems of students of Presbyterian College of Education, one of the teachers indicated:

Extract 1:   *"Yes, my students face difficulties in English reading comprehension. Their difficulties include: inadequate vocabulary, lack of answering skills,*

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inadequate knowledge of grammar, lack of summary skills and inability to

identify text structure". (T5)

Another teacher also commented:

Extract 2:   *"It is a combination of factors such as inadequate vocabulary and inability to*

visualize text among others". (T2)

A comment from T1 throws light on the seriousness of the English reading comprehension problems of the students of Presbyterian College of Education. According to the tutor:

Extract 3:   *"Their reading comprehension problems include inability to understand*

comprehension passages, inadequate vocabulary and inability to give

appropriate responses to the types of comprehension questions". (T1)

 A similar problem was expressed by another tutor:

Extract 4:   "*Yes, my students have reading comprehension difficulties such as difficulty in*

identifying text structure, and inadequate vocabulary". (T3)

According to another tutor:

Extract 5:   *"Yes, my students do have reading comprehension difficulties. They have no*

skills in summary, inferencing and virtually no comprehension skills". (T4)

These results are consistent with previous findings (Carlisle, 2000; Nuttall, 2000; Qian, 2002; Vilenius, Tuohimaa, Aunola, & Nurmi, 2008). According to these authors, vocabulary knowledge plays an important role in understanding complex reading materials such as textbooks, particularly those containing technical expressions (Carlisle, 2000; Qian, 2002), and that students with poor vocabulary knowledge face difficulties in understanding technical words such as superordinate, synonyms, antonyms, or words with multiple connotations (Carlisle, 2000; Nuttall, 2000; Qian, 2002; Vilenius, Tuohimaa, Aunola, & Nurmi, 2008). Scot (2009) found that one of the students' specific reading comprehension difficulties is their inability to understand complex sentences in reading comprehension, as

these sentences contain several clauses and conjunctions which are very difficult for some students to understand.

Trehearne and Doctorow (2005) further identified other factors such as reading habits, text form, and ineffective reading comprehension strategies. Other factors influencing reading comprehension skills include exposure to the text organization and concentration (Perfetti, Landi, & Oakhill, 2004, Meniado, 2016). Davoudi and Yousefi (2015) identified the difficulties in reading comprehension for many students to be of environmental, instructional, and biological sources. The authors of these studies (Trehearne & Doctorow, 2005; Perfetti, Landi, & Oakhill, 2004; Davoudi & Yousefi, 2015, Meniado, 2016) posited that students who face reading difficulties have comprehension problems, and for some students, these comprehension problems could be due to imprecise or ineffective word recognition and decoding methods. These results of the authors seem to support the findings of this study, both the students as well as the tutors who participated in this study reported underdeveloped decoding skills as one of the causes of Presbyterian College of Education students' reading comprehension problems.

Students' inadequate background knowledge was found in this study to be one of the specific reading comprehension difficulties among students of Presbyterian College of Education. This finding supports previous findings in literature. Zhang and Shanshan (2011) are of the view that background knowledge is an important factor in reading comprehension; and it is one of the significant factors influencing reading comprehension scores (Nassaji, 2002; Chou, 2011; McNeil, 2011). Nguyen (2007) found that students who had prior or background knowledge comprehend reading materials more easily than those who had no background knowledge. The importance of background knowledge is seen by the fact that it plays a dynamic role in comprehension of text, and its absence can negatively influence reading comprehension (Aebersold & Field, 1997; Hudson, 2007; Vacca & Vacca, 2008).

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The results of the study revealed that students' inadequate knowledge of grammar is one of the specific reading comprehension difficulties among students of Presbyterian College of Education. This finding is found to be in support of previous research findings. Koda (2005) indicated that grammar knowledge has a prominent role in reading comprehension, and that students require grammar knowledge to comprehend meaning of expressions in passages. Bernhardt (2000) also noted that student's reading ability relatively depends on their grammatical knowledge. Haarman (1988) found that there is a strong association between grammatical knowledge and reading comprehension.

These results of the specific reading English comprehension difficulties among the students of Presbyterian College of Education from both the tutors and the students reveal the seriousness of the problem faced by the students. Based on the fact that the students had inadequate vocabulary, the findings of the study therefore suggest that the students with these problems may also have problems with the oral aspect of the English Language, although the study did not find any direct oral English language problem. This revelation is very disturbing. These students are supposed to be good at the English Language since they are going to impart this knowledge to students in the classroom. If these students who are supposed to impart the knowledge lack the requisite skills to do so, then that presents a serious challenge. This underscores the need to take remedial lessons seriously, to make sure that the students who are going to impart knowledge have the skills and the required knowledge to do so. Clarke et al. (2010) are of the view that many comprehension abilities can be developed through listening as well as reading, and also oral language development. These interventions are particularly useful for specific reading comprehension difficulties. These interventions through remedial lessons will help students to master reading comprehension and overcome their specific reading comprehension difficulties.

4.1.2.1 English Reading Comprehension Teaching Methods in Remedial Lessons

To determine whether the teaching methods of the English remedial lessons are in line with the social constructivism theory, and to also help to understand the teaching strategies that should be applied to help the students to improve, the students, as well as the teachers, were asked of the teaching methods used in the English comprehension remedial lessons. The results are presented in Tables 3 and 4.

Table 3: Distribution of students on the teaching methods in remedial lessons

Teaching Methods	Responses		Percent of Cases
	N	Percent	
Note-taking	225	21.4%	54.7%
Lecture	204	19.4%	49.6%
Discussions	207	19.7%	50.4%
Revision	208	19.8%	50.6%
Guided Reading	209	19.8%	50.9%
Total	1053	100.0%	256.2%

Table 3 shows the distribution of the students who participated in the study on the teaching methods of the English reading comprehension remedial lessons at the Presbyterian College of Education. As shown in the table, out of the 441 students who participated in the study, 255(54.7%) of them indicated note-taking, 204(49.6%) indicated lecture, and 207(50.4%) indicated discussions as the main teaching methods used in the teaching of English Comprehension remedial lessons at the Presbyterian College of Education. Besides, 208(50.6%) of the students, and 209(50.9%) of the students, respectively, indicated that revision and guided reading are the main teaching methods of English Comprehension remedial lessons at the Presbyterian College of Education.

Table 4: Distribution of teachers on the teaching methods in remedial lessons

Teaching Methods	Responses		Percent of Cases
	N	Percent	
Note-taking	4	30.8%	80.0%
Lecture Method	3	23.1%	60.0%
Discussion Method	3	23.1%	60.0%
Strategy Practice	3	23.1%	60.0%
Total	13	100.0%	260.0%

Table 4 shows the distribution of the teachers who participated in the study on the teaching methods of the English comprehension remedial lessons at the Presbyterian College of Education. The results as shown in the table, depict that out of the five teachers who participated in the study, 4(80.0%) of them indicated that note-taking is the main teaching method used in teaching remedial lessons in reading comprehension, while 3(60.0%) indicated that lectures, are the main teaching methods used in the teaching of English comprehension remedial lessons at the Presbyterian College of Education. On the other hand, 3(60.0%) of the teachers, as well as 3(60.0%) of the teachers, indicated respectively that discussions and strategy practice are the main teaching methods of English comprehension remedial lessons at the Presbyterian College of Education.

This result is consistent with previous findings. Yang's (2010) in a study on online transitional reading program for college students based on the reciprocal training approach found that students' remediation could be observed in verbal and written forms. Although students are often encouraged to keep notes brief, it turns out that in general, the more notes students take, the more information they tend to remember later. The quantity of notes is directly related to how much information students retain (Nye, Crooks, Powley, & Tripp,

1984). Luo, Kiewra, & Samuelson (2016) reported that when students are given the opportunity to revise, add to, or rewrite their notes, they tend to retain more information. And when that revision happens during deliberate pauses in a lecture or other learning experience, students remember the information better and take better notes than if the revision happens after the learning experience is over.

4.1.2.2 English Reading Comprehension Teaching Aspects of Remedial Lessons

Studies have identified a number of comprehension strategies to that are highly useful in addressing specific reading comprehension problems. These strategies range from the simple to the complex ones. This sub-objective under research question 1 was to find out the comprehension teaching strategies of the remedial lessons adopted by the teachers in addressing the reading problems of the remedial students. The results of the analysis are presented in Tables 5 and 6.

Table 5: Distribution of students on the teaching aspects of the English reading comprehension remedial lessons

Teaching Aspects	Responses		Percent of Cases
	N	Percent	
Prediction skills	216	24.7%	52.6%
Vocabulary skills	230	26.3%	56.0%
Grammatical skills	211	24.1%	51.3%
Answering skills	219	25.0%	53.3%
Total	876	100.0%	213.1%

Table 5 shows the distribution of the students on the teaching aspects of the English comprehension remedial lessons at the Presbyterian College of Education. As shown in the table, the students indicated that prediction skills (52.6%), vocabulary skills (56.0%),

grammatical skills (51.3%), and answering skills (53.3%), are the main focus of the English reading comprehension remedial lessons at the Presbyterian College of Education.

Table 6: Distribution of teachers on the teaching aspects of the English reading comprehension remedial lessons

Teaching Aspects	Responses		Percent of Cases
	N	Percent	
Prediction skills	3	7.1%	60.0%
Vocabulary skills	3	7.1%	60.0%
Visualizing skills	4	9.5%	80.0%
Questioning skills	3	7.1%	60.0%
Answering skills	2	4.8%	40.0%
Using context clues	3	7.1%	60.0%
Summary skills	3	7.1%	60.0%
Metacognition skills	4	9.5%	80.0%
Comprehension monitoring skills	4	9.5%	80.0%
Using graphic organizers	4	9.5%	80.0%
Identifying text structure	1	2.4%	20.0%
Making connections	4	9.5%	80.0%
Making inferences	2	4.8%	40.0%
Synthesizing text	2	4.8%	40.0%
Total	42	100.0%	840.0%

Table 6 shows the distribution of the teachers on the teaching aspects of the English reading comprehension remedial lessons at the Presbyterian College of Education. As shown in the table, out of the five teachers who participated in the study, 3(60.0%) of them respectively indicated that prediction skills, vocabulary skills, questioning skills, using context clues, and summary skills, are the focus of the English comprehension remedial lessons at the Presbyterian College of Education. On the other hand, 4(80.0%) of the teachers indicated that the English reading comprehension remedial lessons at the Presbyterian College of Education focuses on visualizing skills, metacognition skills, comprehension monitoring skills, the use

of graphic organizers, and the making of connections, respectively. Meanwhile, less than 50.0% of the teachers reported of answering skills, the identification of text structure, making inferences, and synthesizing text, as the teaching methods of the English comprehension remedial lessons at the Presbyterian College of Education.

This result is consistent with previous literature. Prior research on assisting students with developmental reading has suggested strategies that include activating prior knowledge (Dole, Valencia, Greer, & Wardrop, 1991), summarizing text (Armbruster, Anderson, & Ostertag, 1987), crafting questions to establish the main idea of the reading (Rosenshine, Meister, & Chapman, 1996), and using concept maps to connect ideas to other related ideas within the reading (Hammond, 2008; Thiede et al., 2010). Remedial lessons approach incorporates these strategies through the study of summarizing, questioning, clarifying, and predicting (Palincsar & Brown, 1984; Vacca et al., 2011). The remedial teaching aspects employed in remedial lesson process – prediction, questioning, clarification, and summarization – can be helpful in improving the English reading comprehension of the students (Palincsar & Brown, 1984;Fung, Wilkinson, & Moore, 2003; Vacca et al., 2011).

4.1.3 The Causes of Presbyterian College of Education Students' Reading Comprehension Problems

The second objective of the study was to find out the causes of Presbyterian College of Education students' reading comprehension problems. To achieve this objective, both the students and teachers who participated in the study were presented with a number of causes of reading comprehension problems and were asked to indicate by ticking the ones that apply to the students. The results of the analysis are shown in Figures 4.3 and 4.4.
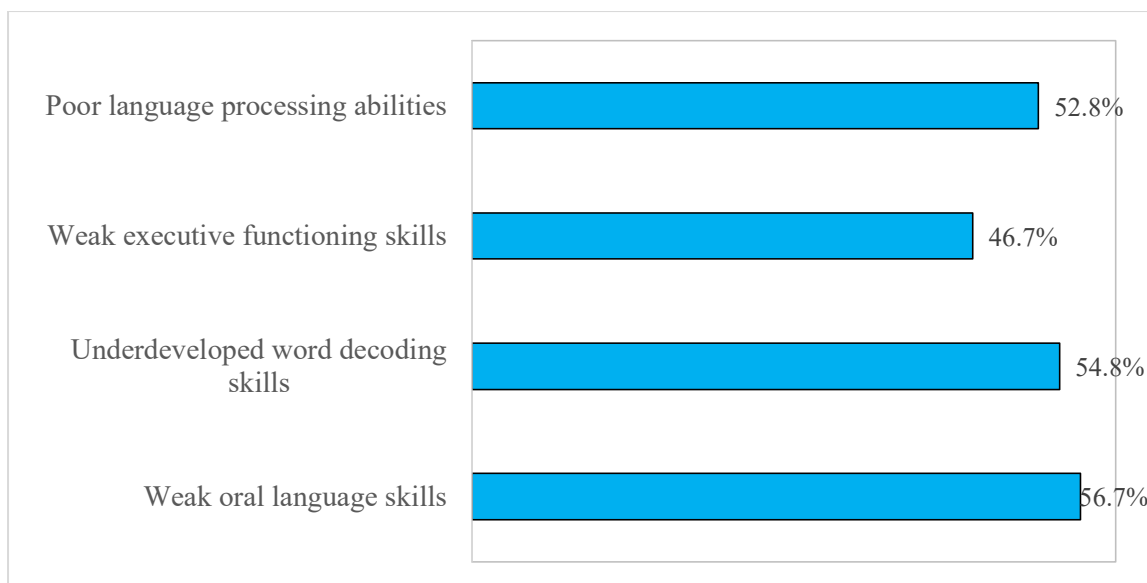
Figure 4.3: Distribution of students' responses of the causes of students' reading comprehension problems.

Figure 4.3 shows the distribution of responses of the students on the causes of students' reading comprehension problems. As shown in the figure, 52.8% of the students reported of poor language processing abilities, 46.7% reported of weak executive functioning skills, 54.8% reported of underdeveloped word decoding skills, and 56.7% reported of weak oral language skills.
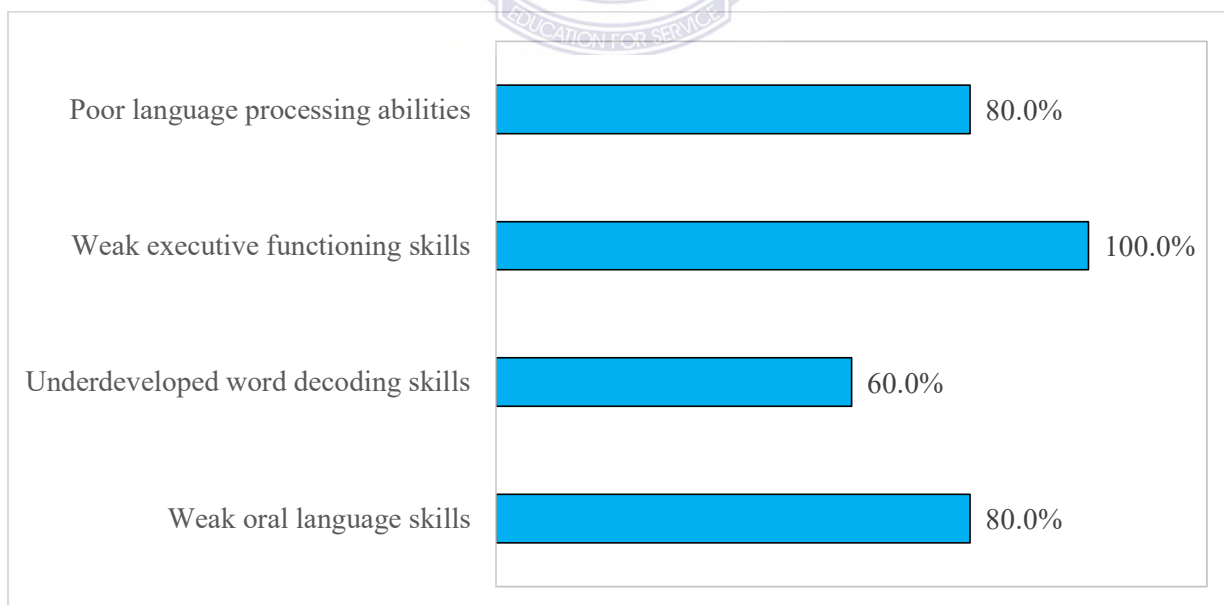
Figure 4.4: Distribution of teachers' responses of the causes of students' reading comprehension problems

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Figure 4.4 shows the distribution of responses of the teachers on the causes of Presbyterian College of Education students' reading comprehension problems. As shown in the figure, 80% of the teachers reported of students' poor language processing abilities as one of the main causes of the student's reading comprehension problems. On the other hand, all the teachers (100%) who participated in the study reported of students' weak executive functioning skills as also one of the causes of the students' reading comprehension problems. Meanwhile, 60% of the teachers who participated in the study reported of students' underdeveloped word decoding skills as a cause of the students' reading comprehension problems. Also, weak oral language skills was indicated by 80% of the teachers who participated in the study as a major cause of the students' reading comprehension problems.

When asked in an interview about the main causes of Presbyterian College of Education students' reading comprehension problems, a tutor commented:

Extract 6:   *"The problem has to do with their weak oral language skills, their inability to process the language and their weak executive functioning skills. These factors, I believe are the main causes of the students' poor English reading comprehension".* (T2)

Another tutor commented:

Extract 7:   *"Their problem has to do with the speaking of the language. That is the grammar. They cannot speak good English, and because of that, they are unable to put words together well. They cannot identify clauses in sentences, verbs, modals and other grammatical issues. This is very difficult for the students. It makes it very hard for them to understand reading comprehension".* (T5)

A tutor lamented:

Extract 8:   *"These days, students do not pay attention to oral language or the grammar. I think technology is to blame. The social media, and the Facebook, twitter, text messaging and the likes have destroyed the construction of good grammatical sentences by the students. Today, it has become difficult for students to form simple sentences without grammatical errors. They are exposed to using short text message sentences, even in writing essays".* (T3)

When asked about the causes of the English reading comprehension problems among the students in Presbyterian College of Education, a tutor reiterated:

Extract 9:   *"Weak decoding and text reading accuracy, as well as fluency (both in terms of rate and prosody). They also lack summary skills as well as knowledge about text structure. Their reading fluency problems are likely due to decoding and language comprehension difficulties".* (T1)

Another tutor commented:

Extract 10:   *"The causes of these problems are uncountable, but as a tutor I say that the problem has to do mainly with their inabilities to decode sentences, their reading habits, speaking habits, and their writing habits. If they are assisted in these areas they will definitely become very good at reading comprehension".* (T4)

The prevalence of these causes of reading comprehension difficulties has been found not to depend only on grade level but also on the school population. For instance, many studies suggest that students from certain demographic groups, such as English learners and those from low-income families, may tend to have weaknesses in vocabulary, academic language, and academic background knowledge (August & Shanahan, 2006; Neuman &

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Celano, 2006; Barone & Xu, 2008). The findings of this study seem to agree with these findings and assertions. A direct observation made by the researcher revealed that most of the students who took part in the remedial lessons are those at Level 200. On the other hand, most of the students who took part in the remedial lessons were also found to be from poor educational background, or those who did not have a good foundation in the English Language. Another observation made was that most of the students who took part in the remedial lessons were male students. This finding goes to support the findings that women are better than men at learning English as a non-native language (Noack, 2015).

The findings of the study indicated that students' poor language processing abilities is one of the main causes of the reading comprehension problems among students of Presbyterian College of Education. This finding supports previous literature. Warren (2016) found that students with poor language processing abilities may struggle with semantic processing; - the process of perceiving words and placing them in a context that allows for deeper meaning; vocabulary - all the words known by an individual person; inferencing - the act or process of reaching a conclusion about something from known facts or evidence; text structure - the many ways text can be organized; and grammar - the study of the classes of words, their inflections, as well as their functions and relations in the sentence.

The results of the study also revealed that students' weak executive functioning skills is one of the main causes of the reading comprehension problems among students of the Presbyterian College of Education. This finding is also consistent with literature. According to Warren (2016) students with weak executive functioning skills, especially in working memory, which involves the use of one's "inner eye" and "inner voice, usually find it very difficult to understand reading comprehension. This is because; they cannot decode sentence structures with their "inner eye" and "inner voice".

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The results of the study also revealed that students' underdeveloped word decoding skills is a major cause of the reading comprehension problems among students of the Presbyterian College of Education. Warren (2016) found that students who have underdeveloped word decoding skills have problems with reading comprehension, and as such are more likely to require explicit instruction in reading comprehension. Spear-Swerling (2015) is of the view that teachers' awareness of these patterns commonly associated with these disabilities can provide an initial basis for planning instruction, interventions and accommodations.

Meanwhile, the findings of the study revealed that students' weak oral language skills is one of the main causes of the reading comprehension problems among students of the Presbyterian College of Education. This finding is also consistent with previous literature. Warren (2016) found that students who have or had weak oral language skills when they were in preschool are more likely to have difficulty in reading comprehension. This result is also corroborated by previous findings in literature that students from certain demographic groups, such as English learners and those from low-income families, may tend to have weaknesses in vocabulary, academic language, and academic background knowledge (August & Shanahan, 2006; Neuman & Celano, 2006; Barone & Xu, 2008). A direct observation made revealed that most of the students who participated in the remedial lessons have poor English background and that could possibly be the reason for their weak oral language skills.

4.1.3.1 Attitudes to English Reading Comprehension Remedial Lessons

The concept of reading attitude "is a system of feelings related to reading which causes the learner to approach or avoid a reading situation" (Alexander & Filler, 1976, p.1). The existence of the impact between students' reading attitude and students' reading comprehension achievement is blossoming by the notion of McKenna et al. (1995) that it is

logical that reading attitudes and causes of reading comprehension problems go hand in hand with each other because they have found from their studies that the students with the highest English comprehension achievement scores had higher reading attitudes in general and vice versa. This sub-objective under research question 2 was to determine the attitudes of the students to the English comprehension remedial lessons to determine if they could play a role in the English reading comprehension problems of the students. Table 7 shows the results of the analysis. Table 7 shows the mean and standard deviation of the attitude of students towards the English comprehension remedial lessons at the Presbyterian College of Education. As shown in the table, the students reported that they like the English comprehension remedial lessons ($M \pm SD = 4.01 \pm 0.77$), they understand the English comprehension remedial lessons better than the normal lessons ($M \pm SD = 3.95 \pm 0.81$), and they participate more in class during the English remedial lessons ($M \pm SD = 3.96 \pm 0.84$). On the other hand, the students indicated that they attend the English remedial class more than the normal class ($M \pm SD = 3.93 \pm 0.79$). This result shows the students' willingness to take the remedial lessons to enable them gain the skills necessary to overcome their English reading comprehension problems. This finding therefore shows that the students have a positive attitude to English reading comprehension and as a result their attitude cannot be said to be a factor in their English reading comprehension problems.

Table 7: Mean and SD of students' attitude toward remedial lessons

Attitude to Remedial Lessons	Mean	SD
I like remedial lessons in English Comprehension	4.01	0.77
I understand remedial lessons in English Comprehension better than during normal lessons	3.95	0.81
I participate more in class during remedial lessons in English Comprehension	3.96	0.84
I attend class more during remedial lessons in English Comprehension than normal lessons	3.93	0.79

This result is consistent with previous results in the literature. Beers (2003) states students with a positive attitude toward reading see reading as a way to connect personally with a text. These students as the readers want to choose their own books, become familiar with authors, go to the library, keep reading journals, and have small group discussions. The relationship between reading attitude and reading achievement also can be seen in the study of Andriani (2005). The author found a significant positive correlation between students' reading attitude and their reading comprehension achievement.

4.1.3.2 The Benefits of the English Reading Comprehension Remedial Lessons

According to the social constructivism theory, which is considered to be a theory about knowledge, how knowledge is represented and organized, is related to the acquisition and benefits of the knowledge. Based on this assertion from the social constructivism theory, this sub-objective under research question 2 was to determine the benefits of the English comprehension remedial lessons to determine whether the benefits of the remedial lessons outweigh the problems. As a result, the students were asked of the benefits of the remedial lessons in English reading comprehension. Figures 4.5 and 4.6 show the results of the

analysis. Figure 4.5 shows the results of the students' responses on the benefits of the remedial lessons in supporting learning outcomes. As shown in the figure, 64.7% of the students reported that to a very large extent, the remedial lessons have supported their learning outcomes, while 26.0% of the students reported that to a certain extent, the remedial lessons have supported their learning outcomes.
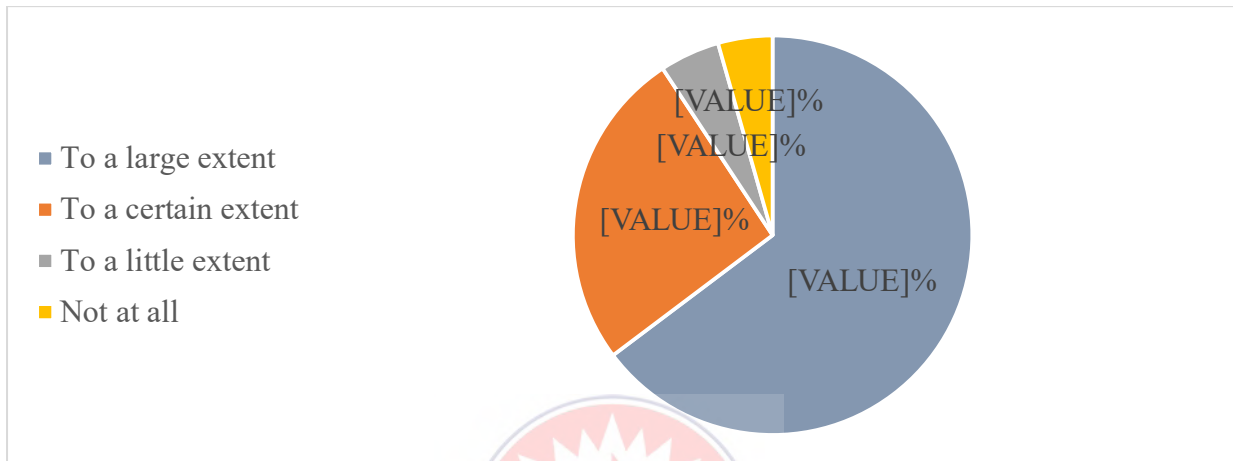
Figure 4.5: Benefits of the remedial lessons in supporting learning outcomes

Meanwhile, 4.9% of the students reported that to a little extent the remediation has supported their learning outcomes, while 4.4% of the students reported that they have not at all benefited from the remedial lessons in English reading comprehension.
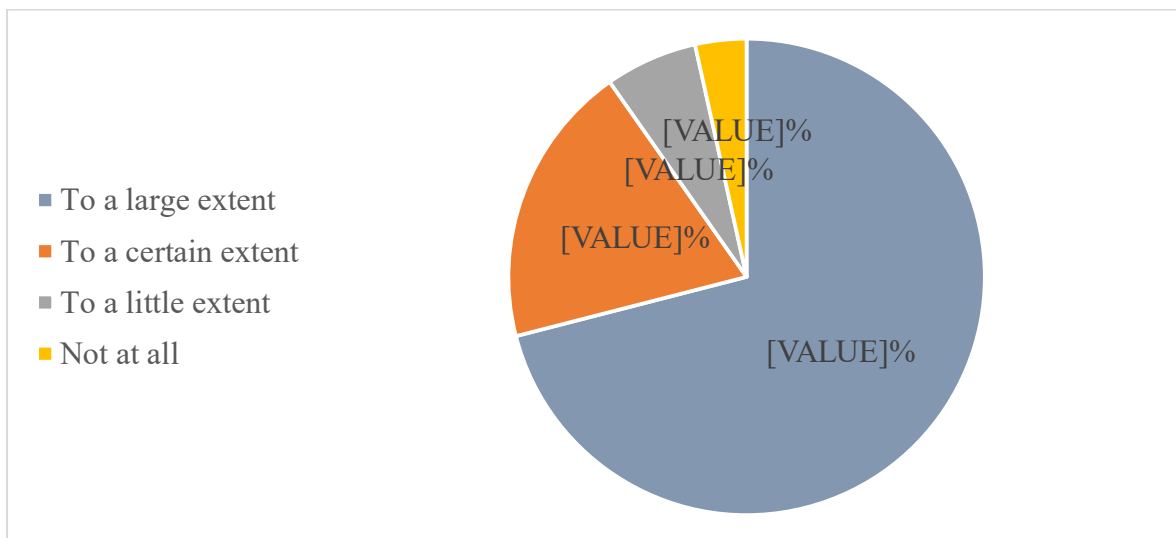
Figure 4.6: Benefits of the remedial lessons in helping to improve upon English reading comprehension knowledge and skills

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Figure 4.6 shows the results of the students' responses on the benefits of the remedial lessons in helping to improve upon English reading comprehension knowledge and skills. As shown in the figure, 71.0% of the students reported that to a very large extent, the remedial lessons have helped to improve upon their English reading comprehension knowledge and skills, while 19.3% of the students reported that to a certain extent, the remedial lessons have helped to improve upon their English reading comprehension knowledge and skills. The students also reported that to a certain extent (6.3%), the remedial lessons have helped to improve upon their English reading comprehension knowledge and skills, while 3.5% of the students reported that the remedial lessons have not at all helped to improve upon their English reading comprehension knowledge and skills.

This finding therefore suggests that the remedial lessons have really been of enormous benefit to the students and that the benefits outweigh the problems. This finding therefore supports the social constructivism theory that how knowledge is represented and organized, is related to the acquisition and benefits of the knowledge. This result is in line with the findings of other researchers. Chikwature and Oyedele (2016) claim that remedial classes afford students the opportunities to catch up and be on the same page as their peers. Hartel et al. (1994) enumerate many benefits of remedial lessons to individuals. Among these are the individual's communication, analytical, and reasoning skills. Desai (2006) developed a remedial program for improving the language ability of children in fourth grade. The results showed that most defects committed by these pupils which included errors on spelling, missing letters and faulty pronunciation were minimized by remedial instruction. Abu (2011) examined the impact of a remedial educational program on English writing skills and the results showed an improved performance after the remediation.

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4.1.4 The impact of remediation on the reading comprehension achievement of students of Presbyterian College of Education

The third objective of the study was to examine the impact of remediation on the reading comprehension achievement of students of Presbyterian College of Education. To achieve this objective of the study, simple linear regression analysis was carried out with remedial lessons or remediation as the independent variable and each of the reading comprehension achievements as a result of the remedial lessons as the dependent variable. Table 8 shows the results of the analysis. Table 8 shows the simple linear regression analysis of the impact of remediation on the reading comprehension achievement of students of Presbyterian College of Education. As shown in the table, the results of the analysis reveal a significant impact of remediation or remedial lessons on the reading comprehension achievement of students. As shown in the table, the remedial lessons or remediation has a significant positive impact on the use of simple strategies in reading comprehension of students (t = 7.967, p <.05).

Table 8: Simple linear regression analysis showing the impact of remediation on the reading comprehension achievement of students of Presbyterian College of Education

Dependent Variables	B Value	Constant	Multiple R	t	Sig.
Use simple strategies	0.428	2.262	0.608	7.967	0.00
Determine the main idea	0.602	1.54	0.732	11.16	0.00
Improve vocabulary knowledge	0.607	1.476	0.693	9.988	0.00
Understand complex sentences	0.721	1.13	0.728	11.05	0.00
Read and organize information	0.423	1.724	0.422	7.437	0.00
Improve background knowledge	0.428	1.719	0.463	7.967	0.00
Improve knowledge of grammar	0.602	2.73	0.298	11.16	0.00
Increased reading skills	0.607	2.22	0.345	9.988	0.00

The results of the Beta coefficient (B-value = 0.428) as shown in Table 8 indicate that a unit increase in remedial lessons in reading comprehension results in 0.428 increase in students' use of simple strategies in reading comprehension. Meanwhile, the multiple R (R^2 =0.608), indicates that 60.8% of the variation in students' use of simple strategies in reading comprehension is accounted for by the students' participation in remedial lessons. The results of the simple linear regression analysis, as shown in Table 8, reveal that remedial lessons have a significant positive impact on students' ability to determine the main ideas in reading comprehension (t= 11.16, p<.05). The results of the Beta coefficient (B-value = 0.602) indicate that a unit increase in remedial lessons in reading comprehension results in 0.602 increase in students' ability to determine the main ideas in reading comprehension. The multiple R results show that 73.2% of the variation in students' ability to determine the main ideas in reading comprehension is attributed to their participation in remedial lessons.

The simple linear regression analysis results also indicate that remedial lessons have a significant positive impact on students' vocabulary knowledge (t= 9.988, p<.05). The results of the Beta coefficient (B-value = 0.607) indicate that a unit increase in remedial lessons results in 0.607 increase in students' vocabulary knowledge. The multiple R results show that 69.3% of the variation in students' vocabulary knowledge is attributed to their participation in remedial lessons. The simple linear regression results, as shown in Table 8, show that remedial lessons have a significant positive impact on students' understanding of complex sentences (t= 11.05, p<.05). The results of the Beta coefficient (B-value = 0.721) indicate that a unit increase in remedial lessons results in 0.721 increase in students' understanding of complex sentences. The multiple R results show that 72.8% of the variation in students' understanding of complex sentences is attributed to their participation in remedial lessons.

The results of the simple linear regression analysis, as shown in Table 8, also reveal that remedial lessons have a significant positive impact on students' ability to read and

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organize information (t = 7.437, p<.05). The results of the Beta coefficient (B-value =0.423) indicate that a unit increase in remedial lessons results in 0.423 increase in students' ability to read and organize information. On the other hand, the multiple R results show that 42.2% of the variation in students' ability to read and organize information is accounted for by the students' participation in remedial lessons. The results of the simple linear regression analysis also reveal that remedial lessons are significantly related to improvement in students' background knowledge (t = 7.967, p <.05). The results of the Beta coefficient (B-value = 0.428) indicate that a unit increase in remedial lessons results in 0.428 increase in improvement in students' background knowledge. Meanwhile, the results of multiple R show that 46.3% of the variation in improvement in students' background knowledge is accounted for by the students' participation in remedial lessons.

The simple linear regression analysis also reveal that remedial teaching is significantly related to improvement in students' knowledge of grammar (t = 11.16, p <.05). The results of the Beta coefficient (B-value = 0.602) indicate that a unit increase in remedial lessons results in 0.602 increase in improvement in students' knowledge of grammar. On the other hand, the multiple R results show that 29.8% of the variation in improvement in students' knowledge of grammar is accounted for by the students' participation in remedial lessons. The results of the simple linear regression analysis indicate that remedial teaching is significantly related to increased students' reading skills (t = 9.988, p <.05). The Beta coefficient (B-value = 0.607) indicates that a unit increase in remedial lessons results in 0.607 increase in students' reading skills. On the other hand, the multiple R results indicate that 34.5% of the variation in students' reading skills is accounted for by the students' participation in remedial lessons.

The results of the interviews conducted among the tutors of Presbyterian College of Education who teach English comprehension also supported the fact that remedial lessons

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have a significant positive impact on the reading comprehension achievement of students.

According to one tutor:

Extract 11:   "*The remedial teaching in English reading comprehension boosts the confidence of my students. Remedial teaching in English reading comprehension enables students to improve upon their performance in reading comprehension*". (T4)

The same tutor commented:

Extract 12:   *"Remedial teaching in English reading comprehension has great impact on students' achievement in reading comprehension in that Differentiated Instruction and Multiple Intelligences theories are catered for. The impact even transcends to students' achievement in other subject areas as a students' ability to read and understand what has been read goes a long way to improve his or her general academic performance.* (T4)

Another tutor commented:

Extract 13:   *"Yes, remedial teaching in reading comprehension boosts the confidence of my students in so many ways. Remedial teaching in reading comprehension helps my students to perform better in reading comprehension than they used to. Remedial teaching in reading comprehension impacts positively on students' achievement".* (T2)

According to another tutor:

Extract 14:   *"Yes, remedial lessons in reading comprehension boosts the confidence of my students in reading comprehension. It enhances their understanding of texts they read, improves their performance in reading comprehension, improves their answering skills, etc. Remedial teaching in reading comprehension to a*

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large extent impacts greatly on students' achievement in reading comprehension as it improves general understanding and performance of students in reading comprehension". (T1)

Another tutor reiterated the impact as:

Extract 15:   *"Remediation boosts the confidence of my students as it gives them the assurance that they can do better in reading comprehension with the support of their teachers. Remedial teaching in English reading comprehension has a great impact on students' achievement in reading comprehension and on their educational achievement in general".* (T3)

T5 on the impact of remedial lessons on the reading comprehension achievement of the students was specific in his comments: According to the tutor:

Extract 16:   *"Remedial teaching in reading comprehension boosts my students' confidence as the benefits influence students' skills in the other language skills of speaking, listening and writing and even other subject areas too. Remediation impacts positively on students' achievement in reading comprehension and the English Language in general. The impact of remediation on students' achievement in reading comprehension also transcends to students' achievement in other subject areas too."* (T5)

These results are found to be in line with previous literature. Desai (2006) developed a remedial program for improving the language ability of children in fourth grade. The results showed that most defects committed by these pupils which included errors in spelling, missing letters and faulty pronunciation were minimized by remedial instruction. Abu (2011), examined the impact of a remedial educational program on English writing skills and the

results showed an improved performance after the remediation. Jarrar (2014) investigated the impact of remedial classes on the performance of the fourth grade low achievers in English in public schools in Ramallah District, Palestine.

The findings of the study showed a significant effect of the remedial classes on improving the students' level in English Learning. Munene et al. (2017) in a study sought to establish the impact of attitude of teachers and pupils towards remedial programme on academic performance of pupils in primary schools in Nyahururu District, Kenya. The study concluded that teachers' and pupils' attitude is a significant factor in determining the effectiveness of remediation, and majority of the participants of the study strongly agreed that remedial teaching programme improved pupil's performance.

Chikwature and Oyedele (2016) studied the impact of remediation in the teaching and learning of map work at Zimbabwe Junior Certificate (ZJC) level. The findings of the study revealed that remediation is very crucial in the teaching and learning of map work or any other topic or subject and improves the performance of students. Selvarajan and Vasanthagumar (2012) in a study aimed at identifying the impact of remedial teaching on improving the competencies of low achieving students in the Mannar District of Sri Lanka, found out that the socio economic conditions of the family and physical and psycho social status of the student cause low achievement. The findings of the study revealed that implemented remedial program proved to be effective with recovering ninety four percent of students in Tamil Language and ninety three percent of students in Mathematics.

Alghamdi and Siddiqui (2016) made an investigation on institutionalized remedial approach held by an English Language Institute (ELI) at a Saudi University in order to support foundation year struggling students who often achieve low grades or fail to pass a certain level of the English language program. The findings of the study revealed that

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students who took part in the remedial lessons became self-motivated, had positive attitude, and exhibited different classroom conduct than students in the mainstream classes.

4.1.4.1 Duration of English Reading Comprehension Remedial Lessons

Research has shown that the duration and the average hours spent on remedial lessons have an impact on the achievements of the students. As a result of this revelation, this study sub-objective under research question 3 sought to determine the duration and the average hours spent on the English reading comprehension remedial lessons at the Presbyterian College of Education. The students as well as the teachers were asked about the period of time the remedial lessons take place. This was to determine how the time of remediation helps to reinforce learning, helps the students to overcome their learning difficulties and develop their potentials. The results of the analysis are shown in Tables 9 and 10.

Table 9: Distribution of the students on the duration of the English reading comprehension remedial lessons

Duration	Responses		Percent of Cases
	N	Percent	
Morning	205	19.3%	49.0%
Lunch Break	219	20.7%	52.4%
Evening	206	19.4%	49.3%
Weekend	210	19.8%	50.2%
All the above	220	20.8%	52.6%
Total	1060	100.0%	253.6%

Table 9 shows the distribution of the responses of the students on the period of time the English comprehension remedial lessons take place. As shown in the table, out of the 441 students who participated in the study, 205(49.0%) indicated that the lessons are carried out in the mornings, 219(52.4%) indicated that the lessons are done during the lunch break, while

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206(49.3%) reported that the lessons are conducted in the evenings. On the other hand, 210(50.2%) of the students indicated that the remedial lessons are conducted at the weekends, while 220(52.6%) indicated that the remedial lessons are carried out at any time of the day.

Table 10: Distribution of the teachers on the duration of the English reading comprehension remedial lessons

	Responses		Percent of Cases
Duration	N	Percent	
Morning	5	41.7%	100.0%
Lunch Break	2	16.7%	40.0%
Evening	2	16.7%	40.0%
No Fixed Time	3	25.0%	60.0%
Total	12	100.0%	240.0%

Table 10 shows the distribution of the responses of the teachers on the period of time the English comprehension remedial lessons are conducted. As shown in the table, out of the 5 teachers who participated in the study, all the 5 (100.0%) indicated that the lessons are carried out in the mornings, 2(40.0%) indicated that the lessons are conducted during the lunch break, while another 2(40.0%) reported that the lessons are conducted in the evenings. Meanwhile, 3(60.0%) of the teachers indicated that there is no fixed time for the remedial lessons.

Topping and Whitely (1991) reported that remedial teachers can teach the weak pupils early in the morning before the lessons start, after lunch from 12.40pm to 2.00pm before the afternoon lessons and later in the evening after 3.30pm. This result of the study therefore seems to support the suggestions of Topping and Whitely (1991). This finding also seems to support the findings of Chikwature and Oyedele (2016). They found out in a study on

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remedial lessons in Zimbabwe that the remedial teaching was usually given once or twice a week at school or in the remedial teachers' own practice. This was done to give the teacher more time to plan and students to feel comfortable. The students were placed in classes which were most likely to provide benefits and classes were often small with focus on high teacher-student interaction and the lessons took place at night or during the day to accommodate various needs. For instance, it was found that some of the remedial students were embarrassed about needing to take remediation classes, and so the classes were held at the time most of the regular students were not around or the students will not be noticed. This finding seems to support the main reason why the remedial lessons at the Presbyterian College are conducted at different time periods.

4.1.4.2 Average Hours of English Reading Comprehension Remedial Lessons

It has been found in literature that the number of hours spent on remedial lessons have a significant impact on the students' achievements. Based on this revelation in the literature, this sub-objective under research question three sought to determine the average hour spent on the teaching and delivery of the English reading comprehension remedial lessons. Both the teachers and the students who participated in the study were asked about the average hours they devote to the English comprehension remedial lessons. The results of the analysis are shown in Figures 4.7 and 4.8.
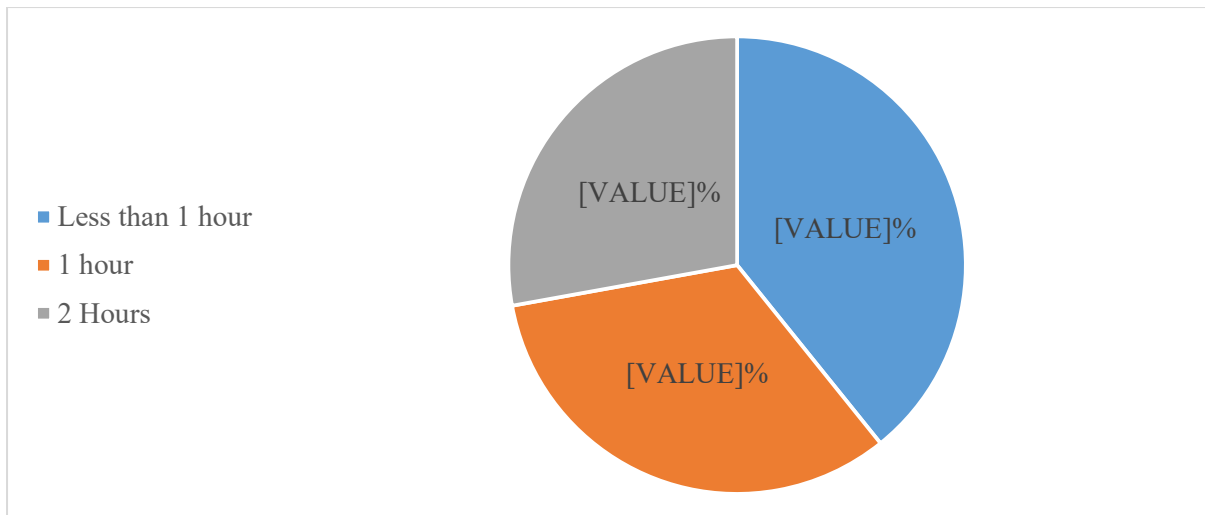
Figure 4.7: Students' response to the average hours devoted to the English reading comprehension remedial lessons

Figure 4.7 shows the responses of the students on the average hours they devote to the learning of the English reading comprehension remedial lessons. As shown in the figure, 39.2% of the students reported that they devote less than 1 hour to the remedial lessons, 32.9% indicated that they devote 1 hour to the remedial lessons, while 27.8% reported that they devote 2 hours to the remedial lessons.
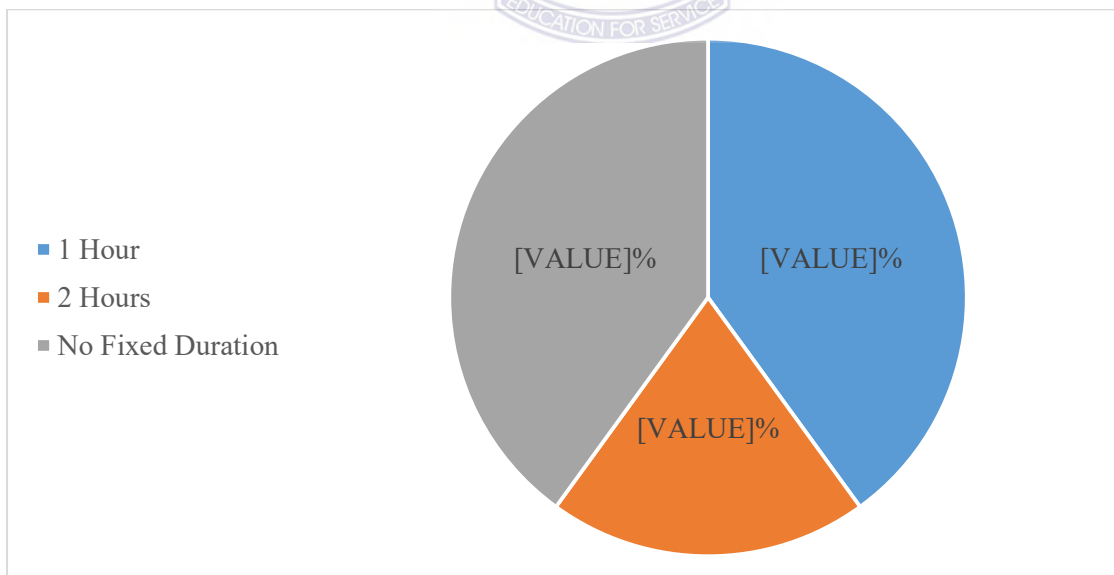
Figure 4.8: Teachers' response to the average hours devoted to the English reading comprehension remedial lessons

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Figure 4.8 shows the responses of the teachers on the average hours they devote to the teaching of the English reading comprehension remedial lessons in class. As shown in the figure, 40.0% of the teachers reported that they devote about an hour to the teaching of the remedial lessons in class, 20.0% indicated that they devote 2 hours to the remedial lessons, while 40.0% of the teachers reported that they do not have any fixed duration. This finding supports the assertions of Chikwature and Oyedele (2016). Chikwature and Oyedele (2016) are of the opinion that for efficient management of time and to ensure that each element of the lesson is allocated an appropriate amount of time, it is useful to subdivide the 30-40 minutes of supplementary teaching session into smaller manageable time segments. This is to ensure that each aspect of a student's individual program receives adequate attention and that appropriate balance between the various learning activities in the lesson is maintained.

4.2   Study Strengths

This study derives its strengths from the fact that, it is the first of its kind in assessing the remedial lessons being offered by the tutors of Presbyterian College of Education to assist students deal with their reading comprehension difficulties. It is a study that has brought to the fore the major difficulties faced by the students in reading comprehension, and also the causes of these difficulties, both from the side of the students themselves and the tutors.

4.3   Implications of Findings

The first major practical implication of this study is that it provides empirical evidence on the difficulties of English reading comprehension faced by the students of Presbyterian College of Education. The study also provides empirical evidence on the causes of the English reading comprehension difficulties faced by the students of Presbyterian College of Education. On the other hand, the study provides a clear picture on the impact

remediation in English reading comprehension has on the reading comprehension achievement of students of Presbyterian College of Education. This revealed information about the difficulties, the causes, and the impact of remediation on students' achievement provides an extremely helpful starting point for the tutors of reading comprehension. Not only that, the information is also a valuable foundation for differentiating instruction and planning effective interventions in reading. On the other hand, students with different reading difficulty tend to benefit from different technology supports and also display different kinds of strengths that can be tapped in the classroom.

Secondly, for the management of Presbyterian College of Education, this study provides a useful information for decision making in connection with the teaching of English reading comprehension at the College of Education. Students with specific reading comprehension difficulties are not likely to profit from phonics intervention, whereas those with specific word-reading difficulties and mixed reading difficulties generally are. Successful phonics intervention should enable struggling readers with specific word-reading difficulties to attain grade-appropriate reading comprehension, whereas those with mixed reading difficulties also will require a comprehension component in their interventions. A fluency intervention that emphasizes speed and automaticity of word decoding may help students with specific word-reading difficulties and mixed reading difficulties, but it is unlikely to help a disfluent reader with specific reading comprehension difficulties, who may benefit much more from interventions focused on vocabulary and comprehension development.

Thirdly, for policy makers and stakeholders, this study is important in showing them areas where educational curricula and subject focus should be given more than the usual attention. The English language is the medium of instruction in all educational institutions in

Ghana. And therefore, teachers who are to impart knowledge to the children through this medium should be well trained in the language. This finding of the study has brought to the fore that teachers in the Educational Colleges in Ghana should be given special training in the English Language, as the difficulties faced by the students in English reading comprehension are very serious to leave it to remedial lessons alone. Other interventions, such as the writing of proficiency test, Standard English examination tests, and Standard English Lessons, should continuously be organized for teachers even when they leave school and are on the teaching field.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSION

5.0   Introduction

This study examined the impact of remedial lessons in reading comprehension provided for students of Presbyterian College of Education on students' reading comprehension achievement. The study specifically sought to find out the specific reading comprehension problems of students of Presbyterian College of Education, the causes of Presbyterian College of Education students' reading comprehension problems and the impact the remedial lessons have on the reading comprehension achievement of students of Presbyterian College of Education. The study used primary data collected through the use of questionnaire and interviews, with a few direct observations. The participants of this study were students who took part in the remedial lessons in English reading comprehension and teachers who provide remedial lessons in English reading comprehension for students. The data analysis of the study was carried out using both descriptive and inferential statistics. The descriptive statistics used for the analysis of the data included frequency and percentages, which are presented in APA format table and graph. The inferential statistics used for the analysis of the data is the Ordinary Simple Linear Regression Analysis. An alpha level of 5% was used as the threshold for statistical significance. This chapter presents the summary of the findings, pedagogical implications and recommendations, suggestions for future studies and conclusion to the study.

5.1   Summary of Findings

5.1.1   Specific Reading Comprehension Problems of Students of Presbyterian College of Education

The results of the study revealed that students' inadequate knowledge of grammar, students' inadequate background knowledge, students' ineffective reading skills, students' inability to understand complex sentences, and students' inadequate vocabulary knowledge are the main specific difficulties faced by the students of Presbyterian College of Education in English reading comprehension. Among the students and the teachers who participated in the study, majority of them expressed these as the main problems students are being confronted with when it comes to English reading comprehension.

Meanwhile, in an interview with the teachers who participated in the study, they expressed that the problems of the students in English reading comprehension are a combination of other factors. They opined that the difficulties encountered by the students of Presbyterian College of Education in reading comprehension are a combination of factors such as inadequate vocabulary, lack of answering skills, inadequate knowledge of grammar, lack of summary skills, inability to identify text structure, inability to understand comprehension passages, inability to visualize text, and their inability to give appropriate responses to the types of comprehension questions.

5.1.1.1 English Reading Comprehension Teaching Methods in Remedial Lessons

More than fifty percent of the students revealed that note-taking, discussions, revision, and guided reading are the English reading comprehension teaching methods applied by the teachers in the teaching of the remedial lessons at the Presbyterian College of Education. Meanwhile, almost 50 per cent of the students indicated that the remedial lessons organized by the teachers at the Presbyterian College of Education are delivered through lecture

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method. On the other hand, more than half of the teachers who participated in the study revealed that note-taking, lecture, discussions, and strategy practice are the main teaching methods they employ in the teaching of the English reading comprehension remedial lessons.

5.1.1.2 English Reading Comprehension Teaching Aspects of Remedial Lessons

In terms of the teaching aspects of the English reading comprehension remedial lessons, more than half of the students who participated in the study revealed that they are taught prediction skills, vocabulary skills, grammatical skills, and answering skills. Meanwhile, majority of the teachers who took part in the study revealed that they teach the students to acquire skills in vocabulary, grammar, questioning, using context clues, summary, visualizing, metacognition, comprehension monitoring, the use of graphic organizers, making of connections, answering, the identification of text structure, making inferences, and synthesizing text.

5.1.2 The Causes of Presbyterian College of Education Students' Reading Comprehension Problems

The findings of the study, as indicated by majority of the students as well as the teachers who participated in the study, revealed that the major causes of the problems confronting the students of Presbyterian College of Education are the students' poor language processing abilities, students' weak executive functioning skills, students' underdeveloped word decoding skills, and students' weak oral language skills. More than half of the students and the teachers who participated in the study expressed these issues as the main causes of reading comprehension problems among students of Presbyterian College of Education.

An interview conducted among five teachers who provide remedial lessons for the students revealed that the English reading comprehension problems among the students are as a result of the students' weak oral language skills, their inability to process language, their

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weak executive functioning skills, their weak English speaking skills, their inability to identify clauses, verbs, modals and other grammatical issues in sentences, lack of summary skills, lack of knowledge about text structure, their inability to decode sentences, their poor reading, speaking, and writing habits. To a teacher who participated in the interview, these problems faced by the students are as a result of their poor English educational background and also the use of modern technology such as Facebook, Twitter, and the likes, which has exposed these students to the use of poor English language, coupled with the use of letters, emoji, and other tools to communicate.

5.1.2.1 Attitudes to English Reading Comprehension Remedial Lessons

The results of the study revealed that the students have a positive attitude towards the English comprehension remedial lessons provided at the Presbyterian College of Education. More than one-half of the students who took part in the study revealed that they like the English reading comprehension remedial lessons, they understand the English reading comprehension remedial lessons better than the normal lessons, and they participate more in class during the English reading comprehension remedial lessons than the normal class. The students also indicated that they attend the English reading comprehension remedial class more than the regular class.

5.1.2.2 The Benefits of the English Reading Comprehension Remedial Lessons

About sixty-five percent of the students who participated in the study reported that to a very large extent, the English comprehension remedial lessons at the College have supported their learning outcomes, while more than seventy percent of the students indicated that to a very large extent, the remedial lessons at the College have helped to improve upon their English reading comprehension knowledge and skills.

5.1.3 The Impact of Remediation on the Reading Comprehension Achievement of Students of Presbyterian College of Education

The findings of the study revealed that the remedial lessons being provided for the students of Presbyterian College of Education have a positive significant impact on the achievement of the students. The results of the ordinary simple linear regression analysis revealed that as the remedial lessons in English reading comprehension increase, students' achievement in English reading comprehension also increases. The results of the ordinary simple linear regression analysis have brought to the fore that a unit increase in the English reading comprehension remedial lessons for the students results in more than forty percent increase in students' use of simple strategies in reading comprehension, students' ability to determine the main ideas in reading comprehension, students' vocabulary knowledge, students' understanding of complex sentences, students' ability to read and organize information, improvement in students' background knowledge, improvement in students' knowledge of grammar, and students' reading skills.

The results of the coefficient of determination (Multiple R) of the ordinary simple linear regression analysis showed that overall, 60.8% of the variance in students' use of simple strategies in reading comprehension, 73.2% of the variance in students' ability to determine the main ideas in reading comprehension, 69.3% of the variance in students' vocabulary knowledge, and 72.8% of the variance in students' understanding of complex sentences, are explained by the students' participation in the remedial lessons in English reading comprehension. On the other hand, 42.2% of the variance in students' ability to read and organize information, 46.3% of the variance in improvement in students' background knowledge, 29.8% of the variance in improvement in students' knowledge of grammar, and 34.5% of the variance in students' reading skills, are explained by the students' participation in the remedial lessons in English reading comprehension.

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These findings were corroborated by the results of the interview conducted among the teachers who provide remedial lessons for the students. The teachers commented that remedial lessons in English reading comprehension have boosted the English confidence level of the students, enabled students to improve upon their performance in reading comprehension, enhanced their understanding of texts they read, improved their answering skills, improved their general understanding of reading comprehension, influenced students' language skills of speaking, listening and writing. According to a teacher, remedial lessons have had significant positive impact in that differentiated instruction and multiple intelligences theories are catered for. On the other hand, it has transcended to other subject areas, as students' ability to read and understand what has been read has gone a long way to improve their general academic performance.

5.1.3.1 Duration of English Reading Comprehension Remedial Lessons

More than fifty percent of the students who participated in the study revealed that the English reading comprehension remedial lessons at the College usually take place at lunch break, and at the weekends. Meanwhile, almost fifty percent of the students who participated in the study indicated that the English reading comprehension remedial lessons at the College take place both in the morning and in the evening. On the other hand, about fifty-three percent of the students indicated that the remedial lessons take place at any time convenient, whether in the morning, evening, at lunch break or at the weekends. Moreover, all the teachers who participated in the study revealed that the English reading comprehension remedial lessons are usually conducted early in the morning before the normal class begins. More than half of the teachers reported that there is no fixed time for the remedial lessons, while others indicated that they conducted their lessons during lunch break and in the evenings.

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5.1.3.2 Average Hours of English Reading Comprehension Remedial Lessons

More than thirty-nine percent of the students reported that they spend less than 1 hour on English reading comprehension remedial lessons. On the contrary, about sixty-one percent of the students indicated that they spend at least one-hour on English comprehension remedial lessons. Meanwhile, eighty percent of the teachers who participated in the study reported that they spend at least one-hour in the teaching of English reading comprehension remedial lessons.

5.2   Pedagogical Implications and Recommendations

The findings of this study have implications for the teaching of English reading comprehension in the classroom in particular at the Presbyterian College of Education and also in the Ghanaian classroom in general where English Language is taught and used as a medium of communication. The findings of the study have demonstrated that remedial lessons in reading comprehension provided by the English teachers of Presbyterian College Education significantly improved the English reading comprehension skills of students with serious reading difficulties. Based on the findings of this study, it implies that classroom teachers can improve student performance in English reading comprehension by using different teaching methods and strategies. There is therefore the need for teachers to continue to explore the use of such methods and strategies to help remedy students' English reading comprehension problems. For instance, teachers can make use of procedural facilitators to help students to deal with comprehension problems. Procedural facilitators are questions, prompts, simple outlines, or other graphic organizers that target important structures critical in reading the text with comprehension. Common story grammar procedural facilitators provide a way for students to approach reading difficult text. It is important to realize they are

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not a summary of the text developed by the teacher but a type of scaffold designed to help students organize their thoughts about a story.

Another important pedagogical implication is that school psychologists play a vital role in meeting the needs of students with reading problems. By working collaboratively with teachers, parents, and other interested stakeholders to develop effective instructional interventions, school psychologists can be seen as part of the solution rather than the problem. In order for reading interventions to be effective, fundamental components of teaching and learning such as scaffolding, shaping, connecting to prior knowledge, motivating, and providing opportunities to practice skills should be implemented. Whether students are learning word level skills or higher order skills, mediations such as teacher facilitation and feedback are crucial to helping struggling readers become fluent. Teacher mediation and other cognitive tools can be seen through, for example, word study phonics, semantic mapping, and reciprocal teaching approaches.

One more vital implication the findings of this study has for English language pedagogy is that there is the need to take a second and critical look at how English reading comprehension is taught at the basic levels of education. The findings of the study revealed that one of the causes of the English reading comprehension problems among the students is their weak English reading comprehension background. This finding therefore suggests that the kind of English reading comprehension being taught at the basic level of education is very weak, making it very difficult for most of the students to grasp basic concepts and skills. Policy makers, and stakeholders of the Ghana Education Service should take a critical look at the teaching of the English Language at the basic level of education. This is because, that is where the students' understanding and acquisition of the reading comprehension skills begin. If students are not able to obtain these skills from that foundation level, it becomes very difficult for them to get the skills as they climb up the educational ladder. Many teachers are

aware of the traditional approaches to literacy instruction that have been used over many years. In situations where these approaches are failing to achieve the required results, as this study suggests, contemporary approaches for meeting the needs of diverse learners should be considered.

There is the need to organise workshops and in-service training programmes by the Ghana Education Service, through the various Municipal, District and Circuits of Education, for teachers at the basic education level on how to use contemporary approaches in teaching the English language at the basic level of education to be able to meet the needs of every student in the classroom. These regular workshops and in-service trainings will equip teachers with the requisite instructional skills and strategies that will go a long way to improve upon their teaching methods in the classroom with improved learner outcome in view.

Curriculum-based measures and other informal measures (e.g., teacher-made probes and informal reading inventories) that indicate specified criterion levels of performance can serve as appropriate assessments for progress monitoring of student performance. School psychologists may support teachers by helping them monitor student progress over time in a systematic fashion. Students should also be encouraged to engage in progress monitoring activities. Graphic representations of data may provide a visual description of whether interventions have been appropriately targeted and applied.

Another implication of the findings of this study for English Language pedagogy is that teachers should frequently seek feedback from students on their English reading comprehension teaching methods, so that the teachers will know where to improve upon to assist the students. On the other hand, it is crucial that students begin to internalize the reading comprehension techniques and approaches they have been taught. Extended practice fosters internalization, but this is best accomplished under the careful guidance of the teacher,

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who can provide support and feedback. Teachers can only provide support and feedback to students if they are more abreast with the peculiar problems of the students. This can only be achieved if teachers on regular basis carry out internal research on their students to find out what their peculiar problems are and what the causes of these problems are and how these problems can be solved. The goal is for teachers to provide support and feedback that will assist their students to personalize comprehension strategies, to use them independently to the point where they become more and more automatic, as they are for good readers.

Many students with severe English reading comprehension problems will become extremely frustrated in the process of becoming better because they will not experience success immediately. Reinforcers may not have been a systematic part of students' instructional histories. In other words, contingencies for reading behavior may have been inconsistent or delivered haphazardly rather than in successive approximations to desired reading behavior. These are the students who find reading not enjoyable and may not experience reading as a reinforcer (e.g., gaining information and pleasure). These students may later find themselves in limited employment and social situations. Therefore, it is crucial that educators and parents shape reading behaviors through praise and rewards contingent upon efforts made at achieving English reading comprehension skills.

Effective instruction includes being aware of what students know. Assessing students' prior understanding and experiences will help teachers facilitate links between what students know and what they need to learn. How quickly one grasps information presented in text depends largely on one's prior knowledge of the content (Gambrell et. al., 1999). Students with learning problems often have limited prior knowledge and experiences on which to "hook" new information. It is especially imperative that teachers provide opportunities for students to gain background knowledge through discussions and activities before students are presented with text that is foreign to them.

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While specific literacy skills are important to teach, educators must keep in mind that the purpose of reading is to construct meaning from text. Capturing the plot of a story, following instructions for putting things together, and learning about current events are among some of the purposes for reading. Several scholars claim that students acquire decoding, spelling, grammar, and comprehension skills more easily if the context from which they are presented is personally meaningful (Gambrell et al., 1999). Higher-order reasoning and new meanings about text can result from students who are provided with meaning-based literacy activities at school and home.

Regardless of diagnostic model, poor readers get poorer without the benefit of effective instruction. This notion is what Stanovich (1986) coined the "Mathew Effects" in reading. In order to prevent the retention of weak literacy skills, appropriate stakeholders such as school psychologists, general education teachers, special education teachers, speech and language specialists, reading specialists, administrators, and parents need to initially establish collective efficacy about the relationship between instruction and performance. In fact, an increase in reading achievement occurred in schools where beliefs about teaching and learning competencies were shared collectively by stakeholders (Goddard, Hoy, & Woolfolk-Hoy, 2000).

5.3   Suggestions for Future Research

Based on the findings of the study the following recommendations for further research are made:

1. It is recommended that further research be carried out to assess the oral language skills of the students because although English reading comprehension may improve, unaddressed deficits in oral language skills for students who have them will limit their English reading comprehension.

2. It is also recommended that further studies be carried out to examine the effectiveness of the various teaching methods of the English reading comprehension remedial lessons at the Presbyterian College of Education.

3. The variables that affect students' English reading comprehension are still not fully understood. It is therefore recommended that further studies be carried out to examine the variables that have influence on students' English reading comprehension.

5.4 Conclusion and Contribution

The purpose of this study was to find out whether remedial lessons in English reading comprehension provided for students at the Presbyterian College of Education have an impact on students' English reading comprehension achievement. The study was specifically to find out the specific reading comprehension problems of the students of Presbyterian College of Education, the causes of the Presbyterian College of Education students' reading comprehension problems and the impact remedial lessons offered by the English Language teachers of the Presbyterian College of Education have on the English reading comprehension achievement of the students.

Based on the findings of the study it can be concluded that students' inadequate knowledge of grammar, students' inadequate background knowledge, students' ineffective reading skills, students' inability to understand complex sentences, and students' inadequate vocabulary knowledge, lack of answering skills, lack of summary skills, inability to identify text structure, inability to understand comprehension passages, inability to visualize text, and their inability to give appropriate responses to the types of comprehension questions are the main specific difficulties faced by the students of Presbyterian College of Education in English reading comprehension.

It can also be concluded based on the findings of the study that students' poor language processing abilities, students' weak oral language skills, their inability to process language, their weak executive functioning skills, their weak English speaking skills, their inability to identify clauses, verbs, modals and other grammatical issues in sentences, lack of knowledge about text structure, their inability to decode sentences as a result of their underdeveloped word decoding skills, and their poor reading, speaking, and writing habits are the main causes of the English reading comprehension problems of the students of Presbyterian College of Education.

It can also be concluded based on the findings of the study that remedial lessons provided for the students in English reading comprehension have a positive significant impact on the English reading comprehension achievement of the students. Based on the results of the ordinary simple linear regression analysis it can be concluded that remedial lessons have an impact on students' use of simple strategies in reading comprehension, students' ability to determine the main ideas in reading comprehension, students' vocabulary knowledge, students' understanding of complex sentences, students' ability to read and organize information, improvement in students' background knowledge, improvement in students' knowledge of grammar, and students' reading skills.

The results of the study show that remedial lessons provided by the English Language teachers of Presbyterian College of Education do not only impact on students' achievement in English reading comprehension but also on their general academic performance. The interview comments by the teachers show that the impact of remedial lessons transcends beyond achievement in English reading comprehension. Students' ability to read and understand what has been read, as a result of their participation in remedial lessons in English

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reading comprehension, has gone a long way to improve upon their general academic performance.

This study contributes to existing knowledge on remedial lessons and their impact on the achievement of students. The study also contributes to the existing knowledge on the problems faced by students in English reading comprehension, the causes of such problems as well as the factors that could contribute to such problems. It is envisaged that these contributions of the study will open other areas on the subject for further research.

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APPENDICES

Appendix A – Questionnaire for Students

Remedial Teaching in English Comprehension: The Case of Students of Presbyterian College of Education

Introduction and Guidelines

The purpose of this questionnaire is to assist in carrying out research on Remedial Teaching in English Comprehension at the 200 Level in Presbyterian College of Education. The questionnaire is in three parts. Part 1 talks about the background information of each respondent. Part 2 is about ways in which remedial teaching in English Comprehension is done. Part 3 looks at the effects of remedial teaching in English Comprehension. Your accurate and honest answers to the questionnaire will go a long way to ensure the success of the research. Any information that you provide is purely for research work and academic purposes only. Your identity will be treated with utmost confidentiality. Please respond to all items. You do not need to write your name. Your cooperation is much anticipated.

PART 1 – BACKGROUND INFORMATION

1. Gender: Male [ ] Female [ ]
2. Age: 18 – 25 years [ ] 26 -30 years [ ] 31 – 35 years [ ]
3. Level: 100 [ ] 200 [ ] 300 [ ]
4. Program: Visual Arts [ ] Technical skills [ ] Home Economics [ ] Mathematics [ ] RME [ ]

   Science [ ] Agriculture [ ] ICT [ ] Primary Education [ ]

PART 2 – WAYS IN WHICH REMEDIAL TEACHING IN ENGLISH COMPREHENSION IS CARRIED OUT

5. What kind of difficulties do you encounter in English Comprehension?

   Inadequate vocabulary knowledge [ ] Inability to understand complex sentences [ ] Ineffective reading skills [ ] Inadequate background knowledge [ ] Inadequate knowledge of grammar [ ]

6. Do your English Teachers provide remedial lessons in English Comprehension?

   All the time [ ] Sometimes [ ] Not at all [ ]

7. When do your English Teachers conduct remedial lessons in English Comprehension?

   Morning [ ] Lunch Break [ ] Evening [ ] Weekend [ ] All the above [ ] None of

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the above

8. How long do remedial lessons in English Comprehension last?

 Less than one hour [ ] One hour [ ] Two hours [ ] None [ ]

9. How do your English Teachers conduct remedial lessons in English Comprehension?

 Note-taking [ ] Lecture [ ] Discussions [ ] Revision [ ] Guided Reading [ ]

10. What aspects of English Comprehension are taught during remedial lessons in English Comprehension?

 Prediction skills [ ] Vocabulary skills [ ] Grammatical skills [ ] Answering skills [ ]

11. Remedial lessons in English Comprehension are given to

 Individuals [ ] Small Groups [ ] Whole Class [ ]

PART 3 – EFFECTS OF REMEDIAL TEACHING IN ENGLISH COMPREHENSION

12. To what extent are students who have learning difficulties in English Comprehension supported during remedial lessons?

 To a large extent [ ] To a certain extent [ ] To a little extent [ ] Not at all [ ]

 Please tick where appropriate

 Key: 1) Very Small Extent (VSE)

     2) Small Extent (SE)

     3) Not Sure (NS)

     4) Large Extent (LE)

     5) Very Large Extent (VLE)
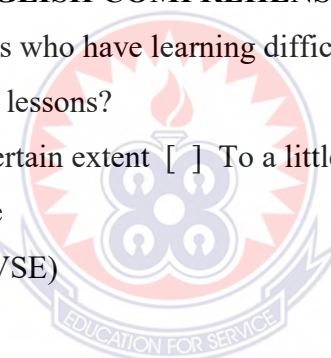
13. What Value do you attach to remedial lessons in English Comprehension?

	1(VSE)	2(SE)	3(NS)	4(LE)	5(VLE)
a. I like remedial lessons in English Comprehension					
b. I understand remedial lessons in English Comprehension better than during normal lessons					
c. I participate more in class during remedial lessons in English Comprehension					
d. All students attend class during remedial lessons in English Comprehension					
e. Remedial lessons in English					

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	1(VSE)	2(SE)	3(NS)	4(LE)	5(VLE)
Comprehension are meant for only students who have learning difficulties					
f. Remedial lessons in English Comprehension are meant for bright students					
g. Remedial lessons in English Comprehension improve my understanding in class					
h. Remedial lessons in English Comprehension boost prestige in students					
i. Remedial lessons in English Comprehension waste my time to do other activities in college					

Appendix B- Questionnaire for Teachers

Remedial Teaching in English Comprehension: The Case of Students of Presbyterian College of Education

Introduction and Guidelines

The purpose of this questionnaire is to assist in carrying out research on Remedial Teaching in English Comprehension at the 200 hundred level in Presbyterian College of Education. The questionnaire is in three parts. Part 1 talks about the background information of each respondent. Part 2 is about ways in which remedial teaching in English Comprehension is done. Part 3 looks at the determinants of provision of remedial teaching in English Comprehension. Your accurate and honest answers to the questionnaire will go a long way to ensure the success of the research. Any information that you provide is purely for research work and academic purposes only. Your identity will be treated with utmost confidentiality. Please respond to all items. You do not need to write your name. Your cooperation is much anticipated.

PART 1 –BACKGROUND INFORMATION

1. Gender: Male [ ] Female [ ]
2. Age: 30 -40 years [ ] 41 -50 years [ ] 51 -60 years [ ]
3. Highest Academic Qualification: First Degree [ ] Master's Degree [ ] Doctoral Degree [ ]
4. Rank: Assistant Tutor [ ] Tutor [ ] Senior Tutor [ ]
5. Number of years you have worked in this college: 1 -5 years [ ] 6 -10 years [ ] 11 - 15 years [ ] 16 – 20 years [ ] More than 20 years [ ]
6. Number of lessons per week: 2 lessons [ ] 3 lessons [ ] 4 lessons [ ] 5 lessons and above [ ]

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PART 2 - WAYS IN WHICH REMEDIAL TEACHING IN
READING COMPREHENSION IS CARRIED OUT

7. What kind of difficulties do your students encounter in reading comprehension?

   Inadequate vocabulary knowledge [ ] Inability to understand complex sentences [ ]

   Inability to monitor comprehension [ ]   A combination of the above [ ]

8. Do you provide remedial lessons in reading comprehension for your students?
   All the time [ ]   Sometimes [ ]   Not at all [ ]

9. When do you conduct remedial lessons in reading comprehension for your students?
   Morning [ ]   Lunch Break [ ]   Evening [ ]   No fixed time [ ]

10. How long do remedial lessons in reading comprehension last?
   Less than an hour [ ]   one hour [ ]   Two hours [ ]   No fixed duration [ ]

11. How do you conduct remedial lessons in reading comprehension for your students?
   Note-taking [ ] Lecture Method [ ] Discussion Method [ ] Strategy Practice [ ]

12. What aspects of reading comprehension do you teach during remedial lessons?
   Please tick as many as are applicable

   Prediction skills [ ] Vocabulary skills [ ] Visualizing skills [ ] Questioning skills [ ]
      Answering skills [ ] Using context clues [ ] Summary skills [ ] Metacognition
      skills [ ] Comprehension monitoring skills [ ] Using graphic organizers [ ]
      Identifying text structure [ ] Making connections [ ] Making inferences [ ]
      Synthesizing text [ ]

13. Remedial lessons in reading comprehension are given to
   Individuals [ ] Small Groups [ ] Whole Class [ ] None of the above [ ]

PART 3 – DETERMINANTS OF PROVISION OF REMEDIAL TEACHING IN READING COMPREHENSION AND THEIR IMPACT ON STUDENTS' ACHIEVEMENT

14. To what extent are students taught during remedial lessons in reading comprehension?

To a large extent [ ] To a certain extent [ ] To a little extent [ ] Not at all [ ]

15. What do you think necessitates the provision of remedial teaching in Reading Comprehension?

_____

_____

_____

_____

16. Please tick as appropriate concerning how remedial teaching in reading comprehension affects your students' achievement in Comprehension

Key: Strongly agree (6), Fairly agree (5), Agree (4), Disagree (3), Fairly disagree (2) Strongly disagree (1)

	6	5	4	3	2	1
a. Activating prior knowledge helps students to connect what they already know to the new text						
b. Predicting helps students to tell what would happen before reading the text						
c. Summarizing helps students to isolate the main ideas in the text						
d. Monitoring comprehension helps students to track their thoughts and repair broken down comprehension						

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	6	5	4	3	2	1
e. Visualizing helps students to picture the text in their mind						
f. Questioning helps students to generate questions about titles, sub-titles, charts and other text features to facilitate comprehension						
g. Context clues help students to pick signal words that lead to the meaning of vocabulary						
h. Literal comprehension helps students to recognise questions that have their answers directly stated in the text						
i. Inferential comprehension helps students to make informed guesses based on information in the text						

17. What can be done in terms of the theories of Multiple Intelligences (MI) and Differentiated Instruction (DI) to reduce the need for remedial lessons in English Comprehension?

_____

_____

_____

_____

Thank you for your cooperation

Appendix C- Semi-Structured Interview Form

1. Do your students face difficulties in English comprehension? If yes, what kind of difficulties do they face?

2. What do you think are the causes of the English reading comprehension faced by the students?

3. Do you conduct remedial lessons in English comprehension for your students? If yes, which areas of English comprehension do you focus on?

4. Do your students request remedial lessons in English comprehension or you propose to meet them for remedial lessons?

5. Does remedial teaching in English comprehension boost the confidence of your students? If yes, in what way(s)?

6. How does the remedial lessons impact on the achievement of the students?