UNIVERSITY OF EDUCATION, WINNEBA

READING AND COMPREHENSION PROBLEMS AT NDEWURA JAKPA SENIOR HIGH TECHNICAL SCHOOL. A CASE STUDY

BRAIMAH ADAM

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A DISSERTATION PRESENTED TO THE DEPARTMENT OF APPLIED LINGUISTICS, FACULTY OF FOREIGN LANGUAGES EDUCATION AND COMMUNICATION, SUBMITTED TO THE SCHOOL OF GRADUATE STUDIES, UNIVERSITY OF EDUCATION, WINNEBA IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE AWARD OF MASTER OF EDUCATION DEGREE IN TEACHING ENGLISH AS A SECOND LANGAUAGE (TESL)
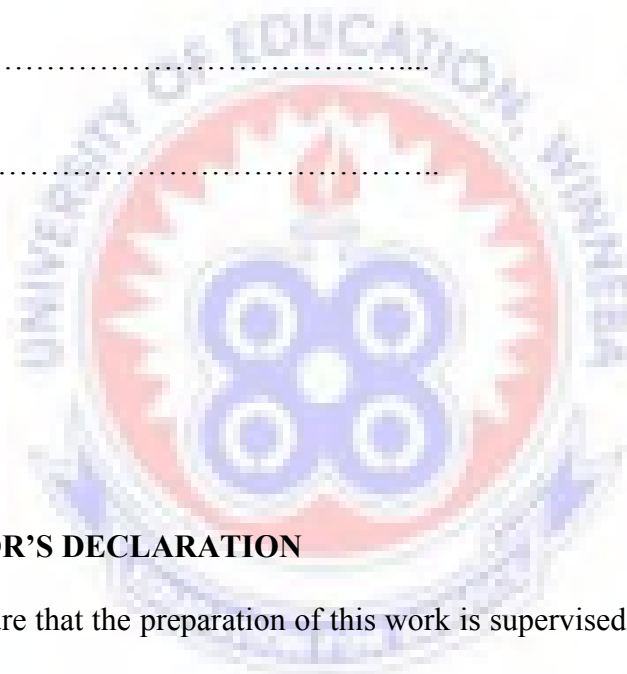
AUGUST, 2017

DECLARATION

STUDENT'S DECLARATION

I **BRAIMAH ADAM**, declare that this dissertation, 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 of this work is supervised in accordance with the guidelines for supervision of dissertation laid down by the University of Education, Winneba.

NAME OF SUPERVISOR, DR. KWAKU OFORI

Signature……………………………………….

Date…………………………………………

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To him, I say Ayikoo!

Finally, I will sound ungrateful if I fail to appreciate the efforts of the Headmistress of Ndewura Jakpa Senior High Technical School, Mrs. Awupare Elizabeth in making this work possible, God bless you.
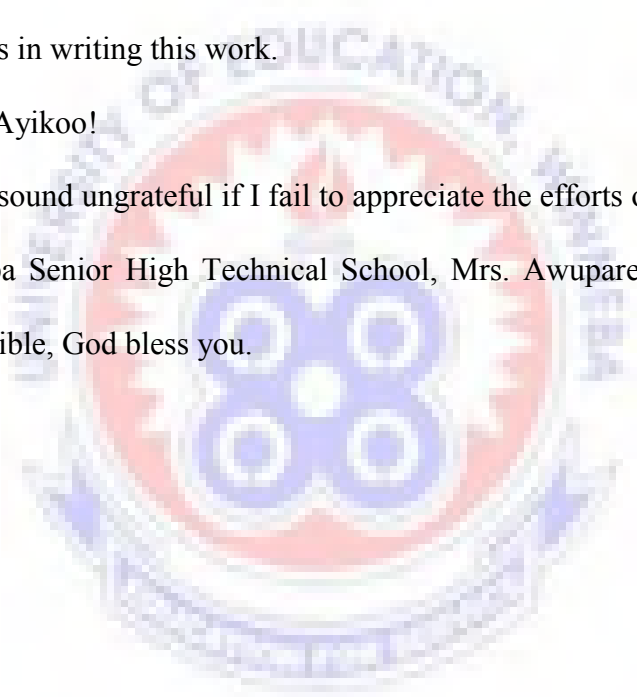
DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to my only friend Zakaria Abdul-Majeed. May your soul rest in peace. I also dedicate to my caring parents Alhaji Braimah and Wuria.Without your support, love and care, I would not have reached this far.

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ABSTRACT

This work looks at some of the problems associated with reading and comprehension among students in Ndewura Jakpa Senior High Technical School. It is basically a qualitative study of reading comprehension difficulties among students at Ndewura Jakpa Senior High Technical School. It will also suggest ways of enhancing students" abilities in comprehension. The purpose of the study is to investigate causes of students" poor performance in reading and comprehension, its effects on their academic performance and how to address the situation. The sample size used is forty-five (45) made up of forty (40) students and five (5) teachers in the English department. Findings from the study revealed that the cause of students poor performance in reading and comprehension results from text difficulty coupled with low word power of students, ineffective teaching approaches, lazy attitude of teachers, foreign text background, failure to see how a material is organized, negative attitude of students, limited text scope and poor reading and comprehension techniques. It was also found that poor reading comprehension skills affect student"s performance, not in only English but in other subject areas. It also affects student"s abilities in effective communication and even in essay writing. The study has recommended the following strategies that can be used to enhance students" performance in reading and comprehension: using culturally friendly text for reading, understanding the structure of the text, using appropriate methodologies to teaching, constant practice of comprehension, equipping students with essential skills needed for comprehension, having prediction activities before reading, understanding word relations and giving enough time to reading and comprehension practice regardless of pressure exerted by examination.

CHAPTER ONE

1.0 Introduction

This chapter introduces the research work. It gives a greater view on Reading, brings to light the background of the study, statement of the problem and the scope. Also, this chapter highlights the purpose of the study, objectives and research questions and finally the significance of the study, limitations and delimitation are also highlighted.

1.1 backgrounds to the study

Reading and comprehension like any other child"s literacy has become a major challenge in our schools of today. Traditionally, literacy was perceived to be the child"s ability to read and to write in the second language. But recent studies have revealed that child"s literacy looks at all aspects of knowledge that will lead to total development both in school and outside the school. Our ability to read, write and understand what we read is vital to our ability to function well in the literate environment. Reading and comprehension has been a serious problem among both teachers and students in all levels of Education in Ghana. Most students find it difficult to understand whatever they read. This makes it difficult for them to supply accurate answers to questions based on materials they read. The 2014 Chief examiner"s report revealed that students with poor skills in reading and comprehension performed badly in English while those with good reading skills have limited challenges in areas such as speaking and writing. It is noted that, basic Education in Ghana seeks to produce literate citizens. This means that people who undergo series of instructions should be able to communicate effectively through reading and writing. It is therefore expected that an individual student should be able to read and understand a material written in English Language. Based on this reason, reading and comprehension is taught in schools in order to enhance students" abilities

in reading and understanding. The ability of students to read and understand is very vital in the literate environment. Our society is surrounded by written information at every corner. For instance in front of shops, adverts, road signs etc. it is therefore unfortunate if students have difficulty in reading and comprehension. Reading involves the construction of meaning of a written or spoken communication through a reciprocal, holistic interchange of ideas between the interpreter and the message in a particular communicative context. Meaning is constructed when readers make connections between what they know (prior knowledge) and what they are reading (the text) (Duke and Pearson 2002). The teacher must be informed about the social constructivist nature of reading and comprehension that stipulates that comprehension is a multi-faceted process. Factors such as constructivist beliefs, influential teacher, active readers, text and type of instruction play important roles in the construction of meaning.

The principle of motivation by social constructivist view of reading and comprehension postulates that classroom cultures that foster reading and comprehension are characterized by a teacher who acts as a reading model, a back-rich classroom environment, opportunities for choice, familiarity with books and literacy related incentives that reflect that value of reading (Gambrell, 1996).

My study will look at reading and comprehension difficulties among students of Ndewura Jakpa Senior High Technical School-a case study. This is a school that was established in 1991 to provide technical education to students. The school is located in the West Gonja District of the Northern Region.

 Damongo is a farming community that provides farmers opportunities to grow varieties of crops like yam, maize, rice, groundnut etc. The school lies in the heart of the town-Damongo. Even though it is walled, students can still find their way out of

the school at any time instead of relying on their books. The school has a population of one thousand two hundred (1,200) students. This large number of students population, brings about high enrolment of students in the classroom.

Though, the school"s library is well built, it has not been equipped with reading materials. Students of Ndewura Jakpa Senior High Technical School do not really show any positive attitude towards reading and studies as a whole. First year students are always laborers of the school and only a few students in the second year have interest in reading. These are the possible causes of any reading and comprehension difficulties, which the researcher intends to look at.

Reading is an exercise that trains students to understand completely and be aware of situations, facts and information (Aziz, 2011), argues further that comprehension is the ability to understand what is read. One can build one"s own vocabulary through reading. When one becomes fluent in speech and it makes one to develop the ability to think critically before taking decisions, making analysis or drawing conclusions. Unfortunately there are a number of problems associated with teaching reading and comprehension in our schools. Most schools lack libraries, if they exist at all, they are poorly equipped. The kind of literature that students would like to read and enjoy is not available. Most students consider reading as tedious skill and so are not interested in reading. It makes students" abilities in reading very weak and that makes it difficult for them to enjoy reading with their poor vocabulary. It therefore becomes difficult for them either to understand or appreciate whatever they read. Most second language teachers lack knowledge in linguistics and that affects effective teaching of the English Language. A skill of the teacher in guiding students in reading and comprehension is very important in language study. The second language teacher should motivate the students to read with understanding so that they can enjoy what

they read. This study therefore aims at finding out some causes of reading and comprehension challenges among students of Ndewura Jakpa Senior High Technical School and suggesting certain measures for these challenges.

1.2 Statement of the problem

Reading is one of the skills that differentiate between literate and illiterate people. It is commonly believed that students who are able to read will succeed academically. Therefore, because many parents want to see their children reading well, some parents pass bad comments about their children who appear to be struggling with reading. However, parents whose children can read newspapers, WhatsApp messages, emails and advertisement on television and relate them to life and share their knowledge to others feel happy and make delightful comments.

Why parents are so eager to see children read well is seen in the words of Barr and Johnson (1991), "Children do not know what is on the minds of adults" and so they must read. The fear that non-literate people may be cheated on their ignorance pushes many a parent to see that their wards acquire reading skills at school. Gould et al (1990), States "reading allows us to discourse new ideas, to see things afresh, to develop opinions and resist manipulations by others".

The researcher finds it interesting to learn that parents and guardians whose children attend Ndewura Jakpa Senior High Technical School openly discuss their wards" reading ability. They sometimes compare the performance of their wards to other schools. The comments they raise are that they wish their children could read and understand better. Teachers at Ndewura Jakpa Senior High Technical School become unhappy when they hear such comments from concerned parents.

During lessons delivery at Ndewura Jakpa Senior High Technical School, the researcher observed that some of the students have difficulty in pronouncing new

words. Also, the mood of some students during a comprehension lesson shows that something was wrong with their reading. These and other observations triggered the desire of the researcher to investigate the causes of reading difficulties among Ndewura Jakpa Senior High Technical from one (c) students.

1.3 The scope of the study

There are 40 students in Ndewura Jakpa Senior High School Form1 (c). They consist of 34 females and 6 males. There is only one teacher who handles all the aspects of English in this class. The researcher intends to investigate and tackle the reading difficulties of Form 1 (c) students of the school.

1.4 Purpose of the study

The purpose of the study is to investigate the causes of reading difficulties among first years form1(c) students of Ndewura Jakpa Senior High Technical School. The research also seeks to identify ways to assists students to overcome the reading problems.

1.5 Objectives of the study

The objectives of the research work are based on the fact that reading difficulties are universal. The work therefore seeks to:

1. To help students of Ndewura Jakpa Senior High Technical School to develop good reading habit.
2. To encourage teachers at Ndewura Jakpa Senior High Technical School to tackle students reading difficulties.

1.6 Research questions

1. What are the some of the reading difficulties students of Ndewura Jakpa Senior High Technical School face during reading and comprehension lessons?

2. What are the effects of students'' difficulties in reading and comprehension on their academic performance?

3. What techniques will teachers of Ndewura Jakpa Senior High Technical School use to minimize students reading difficulties?

1.7 Significance of the study

1. Teachers of English language will use appropriate strategies to teach reading and comprehension.

2. It will help teachers to tackle reading difficulties of pupils from primary one.

3. Help curriculum designers to give more consideration to reading and comprehension at the Senior High School level.

1.8 Limitations

This work could have produced better results if it was conducted in the whole school and for that matter the whole district at large. It was however not possible due to a number of challenges. To gather information from participants, heavy work schedule of the researcher and sometimes money and other logistics.

The next challenge was co-operation from the respondents. Many at times, the teachers use for the study will fail their appointed time for interview, thereby making the researcher to trace them on countless occasions before administering the interview. Students involved also felt reserved and reluctant to give accurate responses to the interview questions. This really made the study a difficult task. This

is because some of the questions might be sensitive, and therefore strategies such as strict assurance of confidentiality of information will be provided and the protection of participants anonymity. Despite many challenges that were encountered by the researcher in conducting this study, the study was successfully carried out through skills, efforts and techniques that the researcher used.

1.9 Delimitations

The research is basically a qualitative study of problems associated in reading and comprehension among students of Ndewura Jakpa Senior High Technical School. Thus, the importance of reading, problems of students" inability to read and understand a text read as well as the effects of these problems on the academic performance of students would be investigated. In addition, it would address concrete measures and strategies that will instill in students essential elements and skills required for reading and comprehension. The study will not discuss reading readiness and methods such as phonic and syllabic methods of teaching beginners. This is because the researcher"s focus is to look at certain possible causes of reading and comprehension among students and suggest possible ways of handling such difficulties rather than looking at pronunciation or spelling as aspect of grammar. In the same way extensive reading will not be captured in the study. However, review of related literature would capture these spheres of reading.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2. 0 Introduction

This chapter looks at the review of related literature. Thus works of authorities that are related to the topic under study are examined under the following sub-headings.

- The concept of reading

- Characteristics of reading

- The types of reading comprehension

- Importance of reading and comprehension

- Causes of reading comprehension difficulties among students.

- Effects of reading comprehension difficulties on the academic performance of students.

- Teaching methods and strategies that can promote comprehension skills among students.

- Theories of comprehension.

2. 1 the concept of reading

Reading is the act of understanding the meaning of a printed material by looking at the printed written characters and interpreting them (the world book encyclopedia 1990). The document further explains comprehension as the act, ability or capacities of understanding .Reading and comprehension in this sense, is a student's ability to read a passage and make meaning out of it. Pardo (2004) stated that once teachers understand what is involved in comprehension and how factors of reading, in text, and context to create meaning, they can more easily teach their students to be effective comprehenders.

Reading is not simply a matter of hanging back and waiting for a piece, or its author to tell you, what the writing has to say. The reader who needs to have access to something in an essay way can use simply memory aids. A reader can go back and scan for one thing, to find massages or examples that might be worth considering, or a reader can construct personal index, making marks in the margins or underlining passage that seems interesting or difficult. Reading in the view of petrosky and Bartholamae (1993) is to make meaning out of a text. Unfortunately, the researcher has realized that locating meaning in a text has become a major challenge to many students in Ndewura Jakpa Senior High Technical School. Students of this school find it difficult to understand a text that they read. They find it difficult to make meaning from a text.

Goald et al (1990) consider reading as a creative art just like writing, painting, sculpting or composing music. To create therefore is to make something, to bring it to being or to cause it to grow. They argue further that reading is a living art because it involves processes of making potential meaning real for ourselves and for others. From the scholar‟s view, we make meanings from what we read by following a number of reading procedures. The main purpose of reading is to understand and make sense of the text. This phenomenon of understanding and making sense of a text is what Goald referred to as interpretation. Reading also enables readers to discover new ideas and to see things afresh, to develop new opinions and to resist manipulations by others. Reading can also mean our abilities to respond to text. The views of these writers about reading are relevant to the researcher in his attempt to investigate reading and comprehension problems among the students in Ndewura Jakpa Senior High Technical School. Sekyi-Baidoo (2003), considers reading as a way of decoding, interpreting or making meaning from written symbols. He argues

further that reading is not merely a physical or visual contact with written symbols but rather extracting meanings from these symbols. He argues also that reading is considered effective only when we are able to generate the deepest meaning from a text. For reading to be effective, it must go with speed.

Reading can therefore be equated to speed plus (+) meaning. Making meaning from a text is one thing and the rate at which this is done is another. Students of Ndewura Jakpa Senior High Technical School do not possess the skills in making meaning from written symbols. This situation retards their reading speed and for that matter their ability to understand what they read. The researcher aims at using ideas of various writers to assist develop abilities of students of Ndewura Jakpa Senior High Technical School to read and understand.

Recognizing a triangle is perceiving it, and recognizing the printed word "dog" is perceiving it, but perceiving "dog" is reading when "dog" is part of sequences of words used by a writer to express an idea so that the readers create that idea (Harris and Sipay, 1979). This means that we read if we are able to extract meaning from the words "triangle" and "dog". They also argue that reading comprehension involves the use of one‟s knowledge of syntax and semantics to extract meaning from a series of sequential perceptions of words. Success in recreating the author‟s intended meaning depends partly on the degree to which the reader‟s concept match those of the writer‟s and the syntactic patterns in the materials. It also depends on the degree to which the author has supplied enough cues to minimize uncertainty about the intended meaning. The views of these writers and the syntactic patterns in the materials. It also depends on the degree to which the author has supplied enough cues to minimize uncertainty about the intended meaning. The views of these writers will serve as a tool for my study. This is because having knowledge about reading and how it should be done can

help address reading and comprehension problems among student in Ndewura Jakpa Senior High Technical School. Aziz (2011) cited in Frisby, also considers reading as an ability to decode meaning from a printed text. He argues further that reading is a kind of exercise that trains students to understand completely and be aware of situations and facts. From this reading is seen as an exercise to test a student‟s ability to figure out fact and information from a given text. Frisby (1970) considers reading as a mental act. It has been described as thinking under the stimulus of a written or printed page. Aziz (2011) and Frisby (1970) argue that individuals read for pleasure and information. Our own reading should be practical. It is this that we must aim at in schools. Reading aloud is however considered necessary for certain reasons. The views of these writers are necessary to assist the researcher in developing the abilities of students of Ndewura Jakpa Senior High Technical School to decode meaning from printed texts. Reading is considered as something done by the mind through written characters or printed pages. Reading can either be silent or loud. But silent reading is necessary. Reading and comprehension interwove and thus implies the ability to understand what one is being told (Gbosong, 2011). Argues further that, the purpose of communication is to understand what is being communicated. The view of this writer is that the purpose of reading is to deduce meaning from conversation and printed materials as well. This idea about reading will help students of Ndewura Jakpa Senior High School to communicate effectively with texts.

Yemah N. (2011), sees reading comprehension as an exercise that is meant to equip readers with:

1. Ability to grasp the main theme of a piece of writing and make a logical arrangement of the facts or ideas, and to answer specific questions relating to inference and interpretation.

Ii. Ability to summarize what has been read.

iii. Ability to appreciate the style and intention of the writer.

Yemah (2011), argues further that the process of reading with understanding is more complex than many students realize .Complexity does not mean difficulty. To simplify a concept, it must be broken down into basic component parts. The researcher has agreed to what Yemeh (2011) said about reading and comprehension. That notwithstanding, the researcher would want to explain reading and comprehension as reading and interpreting words, phrases, clauses, sentences paragraphs and passages. Hence this definition would serve as a working model to assists students of Ndewura Jakpa Senior High Technical School to be able to appreciate the style and intention of writers to be able to summarize what they read and to develop their abilities to gasp the main theme of a text and make a logical arrangement of the ideas.

2.2 Characteristics of Reading

Dechant (1964) considers the following as characteristics of reading. reading as a sensory process, reading as perceptual process, reading as a response, reading as learnt response, reading as a development task and interest, reading as a learning process and a means of communication. Tyler et al (1960) also argue that reading is a perfect inter-action between ocular functions and interpretive factors. With these characteristics mentioned by Dechant (1964), the researcher‟s work is to investigate some reading and comprehension difficulties which cannot be analyzed without what Dechant has stated. The researcher‟s work and that of Dechant‟s work are related. This is possible because reading and comprehension are two similar sides of a coin. You won‟t comprehend text/message when you do not read the text. The main goal of reading instruction is to help students become effective and proficient readers. Student

read as much as possible it could be in a classroom or outside the classroom. A variety of material on a wide range of topics can be given to student so as to encourage reading for different reason and different ways.

The purpose of reading is usually related to pleasure, information and general understanding. The purposes are determined by the nature of the material and the interest of the student (net: llwww.google.com). There is a few or no follow-up exercise after reading.

Reading materials are within the linguistics of the student in terms of vocabulary and grammar. Dictionaries are rarely used while reading because the constant stopping look up words makes fluent reading difficult. Reading is individual and silent. The reader reads with much concentration and efforts. Reading is done either in the classroom or outside the classroom. It is done when the student chooses.

The above information about the nature of reading is useful to my study. This is because it presents to me some characteristics of reading in everyday life. This will help me carry out a work which is perhaps, similar to what has been discussed. Reading is also characterized by certain items. Items that test your ability to understand material and situations you meet for the first time (Wasp, et al, 1994:46). They argue further that you need to know about a subject before you can make meaning and answer question out of it correctly. The answer to the question that follows after we read may request common sense, however to them, questions after reading are in two parts. The first part is generally going over the text silently by reading the essay and the second part deals with questions about what has been read. You can find several alternative answers to these questions.

The skills a particular item tests depends on the reading selection. If the selection is an essay the question may gauge whether you can find the main idea and distinguish it

from the manor ideas. You may have to identify something that is not actually written in the reading materials but the selection of the reading materials leads you to predict. Sometimes, reading selections will be scientific or technical material. The questions may ask you to do figuring in your head. You may have to deduce meaning of new words. Other questions might require you to reason through the material to reach a logical conclusion. These characteristics of a reading material will assist the researcher to address reading and comprehension challenges among student at Ndewura Jakpa Senior High Technical School.

2.3 Importance of Reading

It has been said that nothing happens within an institution, organization or society unless we use communication, (Wilson 1968). This is perhaps correct if one reflects on it. Without communications, there could be little or no group action, sharing of information and transacting and societies could not have functions effectively. Rules, regulations, practices, polities are all forms of communication that have been formulated primarily to control and direct the action of people in a society. Many are written documents; some are situations which will have to be understood only through reading. It is a fact that we communicate through reading, writing, and even non-verbal forms.

In all these, we have to deduce meaning by examining the situation critically. We do reading in each of these situations. Without communication, a supervision could not direct the actions of his group. This could be a written document that prescribes guidelines for people to read and follow.

My headmistress always says that "you can talk to administration or speak with administration through communication. This takes any form of communication channels. By this, he argues that you can read information on the notice board and

make your suggestions, suggestion that will improve standards in the school. Most of these things are realized through reading. Students of Ndewura Jakpa Senior High Technical School do not realize the need to communicate through written symbols. This attitude retards their reading and comprehension skills. This is what the researcher intends to address.

The ability to read and comprehends is important to this era of technology. It is therefore important for teachers to demonstrate to student how to read and comprehend within their environment (Burns, Roe and Ross, 1999). They indicate further that, every aspect of life involve reading. For example, read sign direct users of roads how to use roads appropriately in order to arrive at certain destinations. They communicate to drivers about hazards and constantly remind people about traffic regulations. You can also find information about these through reading comprehension enable us to develop critical thinking skills.

Conly (1992) complements this by saying that without the ability to use reading to engage in a variety of ways of thinking, our students will be incapable of communicating and surviving in our print-based society.

The performance the child in a language. The improvement is seen in both competence and performance in the second language.

Another importance of reading is that it improves the writing skills of students. As students read widely, they are improved in both vocabulary and the word power of the second language. This improvement enhances their ways of organizing ideas to convey meaning in texts.

2.4 Types/Forms of Reading Comprehension

Harris and sipay (1984:75-79) have identified two main form of reading comprehension.

These are:

   i. Listening comprehension

   ii Reading comprehension

Reading as a tool of language acquisition provides students with specific skills so that they can communicate with others in the more fluent and accurate manners (Garland, 1978). The scholar has identified two major forms of comprehension. These, he says are the listening comprehension and reading comprehension. Students of Ndewura Jakpa Senior High Technical school need knowledge in the various form of reading to enable them acquire reading abilities.

2.4.1 What is involved in Listening Comprehension?

In many instances, when listening comprehension is discussed, it is discussed in relationship to reading comprehension, usually to answer the questions. How and when do readers then acquire comprehension skills?

Psycholinguistics and cognitively-oriented research studies. Listening as a phenomenon is incidental to those efforts; it is often only a convenient vehicle for evaluating the effects of manipulations in factors such as text structure.

It is true by explanation that you cannot understand auditory messages in a language unless you have some command over key components of that language. These components are phonology (sound structure), syntax (sentence structure), semantics (word meanings and the relationships among meanings) and text structure conventions about events and assertions in narrative and expositions. The key to listening comprehension is, of course the ability to orchestrate all these grammatical components simultaneously. The idea of listening comprehension will enhance in developing abilities of students of Ndewura Jakpa Secondary Technical School to analyze texts considering the key components of the semantics of a language.

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2.4.2 Skills in Good listening

Langan (1989), claims that, individuals can do effective listening if they are able to follow certain memory cues in a text. Good listeners pay attention to the production of the sounds of words in text. The researchers will work closely with Lagan"s view about reading in order to assist students of Ndewura Jakpa Senior High Technical School to read and understand. According to Langan (1989) a skill in listening enable readers to take certain salient idea in text. When you listen effectively to a reading material you are able to follow occurrence of events in a text. This enables you to understand what the text is all about.

2.4.3 Reading Comprehension

In reading comprehension, we provide learners with innumerable opportunities to practice and learn how to perform various comprehension skills (Durkin, 1978).It should be part of our learning activities to involved learners in reading and comprehension techniques.

The fact is that, many students do so poorly under reading and comprehension in English and other subject areas. Students of Ndewura Jakpa Secondary school are not left out as far as this situation is concerned. The researchers considers this important because it will assist him investigate why students of Ndewura Jakpa Senior High Technical School perform poorly in reading and comprehension. The researcher will again suggest certain measures for this problem.

2.5 Techniques of Teaching Reading and Comprehension

Reading and comprehension is about reading to understand and after you explore your first response to something you have read, the next step is to turn to the selection and read carefully (Standford,1995:23).

During the first reading, it easy to skip over key points, miss important evidence, or being attracted by emotions of the text. Second and third readings help you understand what the writer is saying and see how author get the message across readers.

Writing down and talking about your first response and then returning to the text before making firm evaluations are essential part of critical thinking. While this steps are part of critical thoughtful reading, they are particularly important for reading across cultures. When we read something written from a different cultural viewpoint, it is easy to jump quickly to unclear conclusion or fail to see the author's point clearly. Stanford (1995) considers the following as ways to understand a text clearly:

- Understand the unfamiliar words.

- Summarize to understand the main ideas and the supporting ideas in the text.

Understand inferences by nothing the writer's choice of words. Be aware of words and their connections. The writer's views are relevant to researcher's work because they suggest guideline for comprehension, the researcher will use these guidelines to enhance performance of students of Ndewura Jakpa Secondary Technical School in reading and comprehension. "Reading and comprehension is considered as a funny thing. Teaching learners how to do it is not sometimes easy. It requires that the language tutor employs a number of activities to enable students understand whatever they read", (Donald, J. and Charles, Kinzer, 2003:300-301).Kinzer and Donald (2003) argue further that one important technique is to use literacy processes in handling reading and comprehension effectively. An effective literacy program should integrate systematic instructions in reading comprehension (Andersn, Hiebert, Scoilt and Wilkinson, 1985; National reading panel, 2000; Snow, Burks and Grriffin, 1998).

We should not assume that all children will naturally develop effective reading comprehension strategies. For example, when we use the internet as inference in teaching reading comprehension, it will enable us to bring meanings to contribute to the text, such that, you see clearly the source of many comprehension problems, and will enable you the teacher to help individual children who have difficulties with comprehension. The views of these writers are focused on children at the early stage in schools. Preparing children read and understand should be done through multiple literacy that focus on varied means of making children read and understand in the second language.

There are two main aims of reading comprehension passages (Tregido and Ogundipe, (1991).

These are a short-term aim and long-time aim. The short-term aim is simply to understand the passage, but the long-term aim is to train students in some of the reading skills in particular:

*Silent

* Skimming through a text to get the general information

*Scanning a text to find a specific information

*Inferring meaning from the context.

The aim, in other word, is to make each student a better and more efficient reader.

Ogundipe and Tregdo (1991) have also outline the following as some possible reading procedures.

i.   Set the scene, using the picture, the title of the text and introduction of the text.

ii. Tell the students to read the questions

iii. .Tell the student quickly read the text to get a general idea.

iv.   Tell the student to mark question number in the margin of the text to show where specific information is located.

v.   Students should then read the comprehension questions and the sentences in the text and write their answers in their note books.

The views of these writers about comprehension are relevant to the researcher‟s work because they both deal with ways of improving reading and comprehension abilities among students.

Chris (1978) identifies the following as some of the guidelines for a better reading comprehension:

*Find the main idea of the text

*Sport details from the text

*Draw conclusion from what you read.

*Make use of what you read.

*Take simple notes to enable you recall what you have read.

*Examine how words are used in the context.

In reading and comprehension, our focus is to extract meaning from what we read either in a print text, or visual information. These guideline will help improve abilities of students of Ndewura Jakpa Senior High Technical School to read and understand passage effectively.

Robson (1997) argues that we can extract meaning from what we read by first thinking about what the writer is trying to do this in a text. That is, the information conveyed by the writer in his/her text. In order to do this, you should note the significant idea about the essay. Also take a mental note of what the main ideas are. This might include statements of purpose and any definitional statements. In reading, it is important that, the reader understands the content of discussion and the author‟s purpose as quickly as

possible. When you do this, you will understand the information conveyed by the essay/passage. Reading involves perceiving the written form of language, either visually or kinesthetically (using Braille) (Alderson, 2000).

A further alternative view about reading is analyzed into certain parts by carver. These include word recognition skills. Reading rate or reading fluency and problem-solving comprehension. (Carver, 1982, 1983, 1984, 1990, 1992a, 1992b) has outline five different reading processes.

These include raiding, memorizing, studying, skimming and scanning. He considers raiding as the normal reading when an individual reader is comprehending all or most of the thoughts the author intends to convey.

Lewis (1996) considers reading comprehension strategies the same as when a pilot first learns how to fly. It is mandatory that the flight instructor sits alongside during flight time. After many hours of practice and a series of demanding tests, the pilot is set free from the instructor. At this point, the pilot becomes totally charge of what happens in the skies. The writer considers this situation the same as preparing yourself to read comprehension texts.

Each time you begin to read a new text, it is critical that you mentally prepare yourself to read. By doing so, you are again taking charge of your reading, putting yourself in control.

Several strategies will help you do this. You must first of all actively preview the chapter.

You will want to know what the chapter message is about before you begin reading the chapter. Previewing the chapter or passage is the key to understand. This occurs when you read the introduction, summaries, titles, sub-titles, questions and graphic

aids at the end of the passage. You can do this by skimming, scanning, and memorizing.

The researcher depends on Lewis"s views about comprehension because they are means of addressing comprehension problems for which the researcher also intends to look at.

Deborah and Nancy (2004) consider reading comprehension as a form of communication using written language or symbols (text) or an interpretation and understanding of what is being read. Reading is an active process that depends on both an author"s ability to convey meaning using words and the reader"s ability to create meaning from these symbols. Deborah and Nancy (2004) have outlined the following as some key strategies for comprehension among students.

* First, locate the main ideas.

*Find the supporting details.

*Use inference to identify main ideas.

*Use preview, study-read and review strategies.

When a reader employs these strategies in reading a text, understanding of the text is simplified.

Apart from this, determine the prior knowledge that you can use with your reading assignment.

Ask questions like: how much do I already know about this topic? What have I read heard about it?

How might I be able to apply this information to life? This prior knowledge on a subject matter will help you have a memory bank of information that will help you comprehend new material text. Your memory bank will assist you in recalling related concepts, similar situations or characters and your emotional responses to the subject.

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This strategy will enable you make connection between the new information and what you already know, which in the end will make the new material easier to learn and more meaningful to you. The view of Deborah and Nancy (2004), have similar view about comprehension as that of the researcher.

Reading cannot take place unless meaning is involved in the transaction between the reader and the writer or the text. This brings about comprehension. In simple sense, comprehension is the act of exploring and making meaning in a text by reading the text. (Vacca, and Vacca, 1986).

They argue further that, reading comprehension can be handled comfortably in a classroom by examining some underlying procedures required in a comprehension text. Among these unique procedures are:

1. Recalling word meaning.

2. Drawing inference from context about the meaning of a word.

3. Find answers to questions explicitly or otherwise in the text.

4. Weaving together ideas in the context.

5. Drawing inference from the context.

6. Recognizing the writer''s purpose, attitude, tone and mood.

7. Identify the writer''s technique.

8. Follow the structure of the passage paragraph after paragraph, this will enhance comprehension

Davis (1972) argues that a reading comprehension is not a unitary mental process. It is apparently a composite of at least five underlying mental skills as listed above. Davis (1972) refers to these skills as discrete skills. These skills are not independent of one another but are interactive.

The researcher‟s view in respect of the information above on comprehension skills is that comprehension has more often than not become a major challenge among students, which needs a serious attention. The researcher‟s work is related to (Vacca and Vacca) because both deal with easing comprehension problems.

Jacquette (1979) considers a competent reader as one who masters the mechanical of reading and therefor effectively uses letters and word discrimination to extract meaning from text.

Since learners of the second language are affected by the theory of (L1) interference with (L2), it is possible for them to have certain difficulties in understanding what they read or even reading accuracy in the second language. For this reason, Jecquette has suggested the following guidelines for teaching reading and comprehension in a classroom.

*sufficiency in personal standers of English.

*An understanding of the need of the letter.

 *Abilities of students to compare linguistics systems of English and the (L1).

The theory of (L1) interference in Learning (L2) will assist the researcher to effectively make certain comparisons of linguistics units of both the (L2) and that of the (L1) of the learners.

This will address problems associated with reading and comprehension among students of Ndewura Jakpa Secondary Technical School.

In order to enhance reading comprehensions, Gurrey (1969)argues that the usual plan in oral courses in which reading is incidental has to do with passage of reading matter in each lesson that provides vocabulary, grammar sentences and ideas for the class to work upon in order to increase their ability to use the spoken language.

This plan will provide students with knowledge to read a printed language and will teach them the various reading skills.

The first stage in teaching reading comprehension is to:

Treat meanings of unfamiliar words contextually. Use meaningful gestures to do this. Treat also the pronunciation of these vocabularies. This can be done by techniques such as phonic or syllabic methods.

In the second stage allow students to read silently through the passage.

After careful readings, they must be questions for them to answer. These questions will help students understand every detail in the printed text, and therefore should be very constructive.

The views of Gurrey (1996) are relevant to the researcher in his attempt to suggest ways of handling reading comprehension. Therefore, Gurrey‟s views and that of mine are related if not the same.

Most people read poorly, even though they see the words on the printed page and mentally pronounce them; they often do not understand what they read (Jones, Lorch and Huntress, 1964). They argue further that if even step by step process is clearly followed by every able and intelligent reader, the application is usually unconscious, and that the some process should be effective for untrained readers. If it is believed that any reasonable intelligent student can understand the meanings and methods of Essay then he/she should learn how to answer the following questions:

* What does the writer want me to get from the text?

* What is the writer‟s basic plan of organization?

* How does the writer make his/her meaning clear?

* Is my interest captured by the writer?

The researcher has agreed to the views of these writers because reading comprehension is the communication of though and emotions conveyed by the writer to the reader. Must construct meaning as he/she interacts with the printed page.

The researcher therefor considers both reading processes and reading product to be very vital in language studies.

2.6 Types of Reading.

Several types of reading may occur in a classroom and outside the classroom. These include intensive reading,

Extensive, skimming and scanning as well as shared reading.

2.6.1 Intensive Reading

This is the type of reading that call for attention to grammatical forms, discourse markers and other surface structure details for the purpose of understanding literal meaning and rhetorical relationships. This type of reading is also referred to as the "Zoom lens strategy" (net:www.slideshare.net/alonto/types of read).

Intensive reading is characterized by the following:

- Readers are intensively involved in looking inside the text.

- Readers focus on linguistic details of the reading material.

- They concentrate on surface structures details like grammar and discourse markers.

- Readers draw pictures in order to understand what they read (problem solving)

The researcher will engage students of Ndewura Jakpa Secondary school in intensive reading in order to improve their reading and comprehension abilities.

Sekyi-Baidoo (2000, 2003) argues that intensive reading aims at deep knowledge. It is a kind of reading undertaken by people in the academics view point, technical or

vocational. The information acquired in intensive reading is used to achieve certain specific goals. We produce information for a purpose at a given time when we are doing intensive reading. The information gathered under the intensive reading is regarded as indispensable because of its purpose. Materials used under this form of reading include textbooks, academic-professional papers, books and journal as well as thesis and presentations. Intensive reading purposed to achieve the following:

Information is used to solve problems.

Information is used for academic work e.g. exams, interviews, presentations etc.

2.6.2 Extensive Reading

Extensive reading is done to achieve general understanding of text. When students read large amount of high interest materials usually out of class, concentrating on meaning, reading for gist and skipping for unknown words they are reading extensively. The aim of this kind of reading is to build readers confidence and enjoyment. The main purpose of this type of reading is usually related to pleasure, information and general understanding.

Sekyi-Baidoo (2000, 2003) argues also that the extensive form of reading is done to prepare readers widely. A reader reads extensively for recreational purpose or to keep him abreast of events around him. In an extensive reading, materials such as journals, magazines storybooks and newspapers are usually used by readers. One of the main objectives of extensive reading is to broaden the horizon of knowledge of readers. This knowledge would be useful perhaps later in one‟s life.

Readers read extensively for the following reasons:

* Recreation

* Language development-vocabulary, grammar and spellings.

*Information for general life.

The researcher finds this necessary because knowledge in various forms of reading will assist in addressing reading and comprehension challenges among students at Ndewura Jakpa Secondary Technical School.

In close reading, we aim at getting a complete understanding of the entire text. For close reading, all the various aspects of the text are relevant, examples words, punctuations, paragraphing and even style of presentation of the text are analyzed.

Close reading is usually done by students or researchers. Here, individuals attain detail information for research and academic purpose (Sekyi-Baidoo, 2000, 2003) and (Quagie, 2009).

The researcher has considered these views useful to the study since they operate well within his area of study. They both aim at improving reading and comprehension abilities of readers.

2.6.3 Skimming

This is a technique of reading that at obtaining facts. It does not seek to identify specifics but rather to obtain the gist of the text. With skimming, one might not understand the detail information of the entire unlike close reading. Skimming as a reading style seeks to answer questions such as:

  * What is the gist of the text?

  * What is the text about?

   * What are the various elements treated in the text?

An effective skimming is one that provides the best understanding of concerns or the gist of a text within the shortest possible time. The following are very important in skimming.

   * Topics and sub-topics.

    * Special writing forms.

Topic sentences, which are the main ideas of paragraphs, should be targeted in skimming.

Transitional markers such as also, besides etc. should be noted. They are used to trace the movement or development of a story.

Readers who put these to practice are able to make a quick reading of text and can locate facts and opinions within a stipulated time.

2.6.4 Scanning

Scanning is used with technical, scientific or professional materials to locate specific information in a text. This type of reading is Valuable for second language learners to develop so as to analyze a text. This is an exercise to identify or locate some words, expressions, figures on a written material. We scan when we aim at getting specific information in a written text. (Sekyi-Baidoo, 2000, 2003).

Scanning operates on the principles that:

* The reader has an idea about the item he is looking for.

* Reading is a directed activity which focuses on some specific items.

* Reading may not cover all the material. It may focus on certain place in the alphabetical arrangement.

* Information sought is usually short under scanning.

Scanning can be manifest in the following reading activities:

* Locating words in a Dictionary

* Locating words, figures, expression from a passage.

* Locating a book title from a list of books or a catalogue.

* Locating author‟s name from catalogue.

* Locating a book from a shelf using its name.

2.6.5 Shared Reading

In shared reading, students are introduced to reading at early stages. It usually involves reading big books and other text such as stories and poems. Information texts can also be read through shared reading in a way in helping learners build reading fluency that is important to their reading comprehension (Winsor, and Crawford, (2012). Shared reading in its traditional form is a four-step-reading process:

Text is introduced with a picture walk.

Teachers reads the aloud and points to while students listen and read after him.

Teachers and students read the text together (this may happen several times).

Teachers allow students to read on their own by pointing to the text.

It is important that second language teachers employ a variety of reading techniques so as to enhance reading comprehension in their classrooms.

2.7 Causes of Reading and Comprehension difficulties among students.

Reading comprehension is defined as the level of understanding of text. The understanding comes from the interactions between the words that are written and how they trigger knowledge outside the text.

Proficiency reading depends on the ability to recognize words quickly and effortlessly. If word recognition is difficult students use too much of their processing ability to read.

Jordan (1997) argues that one major cause of poor reading and comprehension among students is reading speed. He argues that when we do effective reading, we read at the normal rate. When reading is done word-by word by students, it retains their comprehension ability. Jordan (1997) argues further that there are other factors that

influence reader‛s reading speed could be slow, average and fast. The understanding of a reader largely depends on these reading speeds.

Evidence from personal observations indicates that most students cannot read well let alone extracting meaning from the context they have read. This situation has been a problem in our educational sector.

Mosental (1984) argues that certain factors such as the language teacher, the reading task and the text background can influence student‛s ability to comprehend. The situation organizer is usually the language tutor while the task consists of the various questions and instructions. The setting usually in the classroom with individuals either, in a small group or whole class format. Mosenthal (1984), identifies the following as barriers of comprehension:

- The situation organizer-the second language teacher.
- The nature of the reading task. The consists of the questions and the instructions.
- The setting. This is the classroom, either in small group or whole class format.

Alderson and Urquhart (1992) consider comprehension problems to be the second language itself. They argue that it always difficult to read and understand a text written in the second language. Even information written in learner‛s first language sometimes, becomes difficult to read and understand. It is noticed from the views of these scholars that the sources of comprehension difficulty is the nature of the second language, therefor second language teachers should be competent enough such that they can handle comprehension comfortably.

Quagie (2009) is of the view that student do not derive the level of satisfaction they need from a text due to certain factors:

- The attitude of the reader who interacts with written text. The learner who is passive during reading comprehension is likely to have difficulties in comprehending (Gibbons 1993, graves, Juel, and Graves, 1998).

- The difficult nature of some printed materials can be a barrier for comprehension. When a text is written with new vocabularies and with complex sentences, students find it difficult to understand the message conveyed by such a text.

- Too many unfamiliar vocabularies in the text can also contribute to difficult in comprehending. For example some scientific texts which are more compact and constructed around a great deal of new ideas and technical terms are difficult to be understood by many students.

- Inadequate concentration by students towards comprehension texts.

Another major barrier to the development of a reading culture is the negative attitude that students have towards reading. Many students consider reading as unpleasant experience to be savored and seized at every free moment, Baleeta, (2004). From Baleeta, abaka (2000) claims that there is a general lack of interest in everyday life while Izizinga (2000) also reveals that the negative attitude is unfortunately, found even among literature students of Ndewura Jakpa Senior High Technical School do not cultivate any positive attitude towards reading. They see reading as a difficult activity.

According to Stephenson (1987), a reader and a writer share cultural assumptions and knowledge about social systems and rituals, for this reason, there is much higher level of interaction of the reader with the text. This enhances understanding better than when the reader does not interact with the text. This observation implies particularly to the passages used for tests in English Language and literature prose examinations,

many of which are extracted from texts written by western, (e.g. British and American) authors, and one thus informed by cultural backgrounds that are foreign to students. Yet, pre-reading activities that might guide the readers in navigating these texts are not allowed.

The result is an encounter, on the student‟s part with passage that tests not only their literacy and linguistics abilities but also their knowledge of the cultural from which the writer comes.

The views about comprehension difficulties among readers in Baleeta‟s journal are useful to the researcher in finding out ways of improving students‟ abilities to read and comprehension at Ndewura Jakpa Senior High Technical School.

Maduekwe (2007) argues that students inability to comprehend as a result of slow rate of reading, low word power, poor retention and inadequate retention of vocabulary in the second language. These factors as barriers to effective reading comprehension because students lack the essential skills that are useful to reading comprehension and the roles these elements play in conveying meanings of text to students.

Lack of speed, failure to see how the reading material is organized, failure to grasp the central ideas, and failure to recognize illogical reasoning and fallacies are the main reading problems that leaners face (Koranteg, 2011). These problem as he states emanate from factors such as unfavorable personal attributes, social environment and oral proficiency in English.

Our ability to process textual information depends largely on our information processing ability, (Hall, 1989). When we are able to process information in written text properly, we are able to make meaning from it and when we fail to use our information processing ability properly, we fail also to textually process the information.

These ideas are relevant to the researcher in finding out the cause of students‟ inability to comprehend both factual and inferential information in a written material.

2.7.1 Theories of the Teaching Comprehension

The schemata Theory

In recent years, education and psychologists have been studying the question of how readers understand and learn a text. These studies will rely on the following theories: The schemata theory, (Adams and Collins, 1979; Anderson, 1977; Bartlett, 1932; Minsky, 1975). They argue that when writers write about topics, they are putting ideas of the topics in written forms. The author‟s ideas are organized into material frame work called schemata. These are complex ideas existing in the mind which relate ideas, things and events bound together in person‟s experience to enable him understand what he reads. A person might, for example, has a "birthday party" schema. This schema would typically include the ideas of guests coming together, a one-way giving of gifts, a birthday cake with a certain number of candle as well as singing and dancing. Now, if that person knows how a birthday party is organized as schema, it will serve as a framework of making sense of details that she or he may encounter.

The theory of schema plays a crucial role in comprehension in our school and collages.

When students read passages that are in line with their schema it makes it easy for them to understand the details of these texts, then when they have no schemata about what they see, hear or read.

Wallace and Charles (1982) argue that every reader uses prior information and experiences organized in mental categories called schemata, to understand and interpret what an author has written. Each reader‟s schemata is different from other

readers. The advent of schemata theory has contributed much to our understanding of reading and comprehension and its problems. The theories of schemata have explained some of the best techniques that can be used by the second language tutor in handing comprehension. The directed reading and thinking procedure, the request procedure, pattern guide and the structured overview are such techniques. The researcher's observations do not differ from Wallace and Charles (1982) observations. The researcher will therefor use this comprehension technique to improve reading abilities of students in Ndewura Jakpa Secondary Technical School.

2.7.2 The Literacy Theory

Literacy is commonly considered as the ability to read and write at a designated level of proficiency. It has also been traditionally contrasted with oral communication. Graff (2008) considers literacy as technical capacity to decode or reproduce written or printed signs, symbols or letter combined into words. However, it has become increasingly common to refer to this as graphic literacy. Graff (2008) further indicates that most experts believe that people need a combination of many different forms of literacy to meet the demands of modern life. The concept of literacy skills as fundamental tools for effective performance is analogous to Gardener's theory-multiple intelligence.

Gardener (1993) argues that clear standard for performance depends on multiple-intelligence. He proposes eight instinctual faculties some of which are interpersonal intelligence (ability to understand), linguistic intelligence (ability with words of the language), mathematical intelligence (ability in mathematics and thinking). He is of the view that, ability to combine these skills appropriately would lead to ability to understand what is seen and read.

Moll (1994) opines that literacy is not in isolated bits of knowledge but in learners growing ability to use literacy in more and broader activities. Although both literacy skills and multiple-intelligence involve mastery of symbols, the latter is believed to be relatively fixed while literacy skills re developed through education, experience and practice. When literacy foundation of a child is developed, the child‟s ability to comprehend is enhanced.

This perception about reading and comprehension and for that matter literacy concerns the need for students to understand cultural diversity in language teaching and learning. They must understand the linguistic and cultural differences of information in written forms. This will enhance u understanding abilities among students.

Clay (1966) also argues that for the literacy to be successful, learning to read must start at the earliest possible time rather than the latter. She refers to this as emergent literacy. According to Clay, learners are capable of acquiring knowledge of the second language at any given time even before birth.

The new London Group (1966) also postulate that literacy and for that matter reading and comprehension should focus on cultural diversity, linguistic difference and the new communication technologies. This, the group refers to multiple forms of illiteracies/readings.

This comprises a new modern approach to literacy unlike the traditional notion of literacy that includes ability to understand sort of visual and printed text as well as textual connections such as audio, spatial and gestural. Multiple literacy involves being proficient in new technologies which require both decoding skills as well as understanding skills. It is unfortunate that students of Ndewura Jakpa Secondary

school do not have knowledge about the various form through with knowledge can be acquired to meet societal needs. The researcher will use the literacy theories to help students in reading and comprehension.

2.7.3 The theory of Interaction

The interactive theoretical model of a reading process states that reading is a combination of different types of processes. These include the "top down" (reader based) and the "bottom down" (text-based). This is done in a continuous interaction.

In "top down" processing the act of reading begins with the reader generating hypothesis or making prediction about the material. His ability to use visual cues in a material will enhance understanding (Burns, Rose, Ross, 1999), citing Walberg and Pullman (1981). In "bottom up" processing, reading is initiated by examining the printed symbols and requires little input from the reader.

The translation process begins with print-word identification and proceeds to progressively larger linguistic units, phrases, clauses, the text itself and end in meaning identification.

Reading is seen as a perceptual and cognitive process which bridges the perception and reasoning. The skilled reader should be able to make use of sensory, syntactic, semantic and pragmatic information in order to accomplish the task.

These sources of information appear to interact in many complex ways during the reading process.

2.8 Effect of reading and comprehension difficulties on the academic performances of students.

Students leave schools and cannot perform meaningful reading activity. For instance scanning a phone or a book in order to find emergency numbers or to read any

employment information (Conley, 1992) Conley argues further that a decline in student‟s inability to comprehend written information is a worry. If students are not able to communicate effectively. So their survival in our print based society will be nothing to write home about.

Students will be handicapped in reading and comprehending materials that contain foreign cultural background. So, the impact of reading comprehension is not limited to one subject area but cuts across every subject matter in our educational system. It is possible that the performance of student in any given subject largely depends on his ability to read and write comprehend effectively.

If there is no comprehension between one person and another during communication then we will live in a world of chaos because each person would behave in his own way based on what comes into his mind. That is why it is necessary that comprehension be made part of our school grogram. Comprehension is also useful in business and commerce, politics and even agricultural. Information flow in a company will depend on how employees decode meaning from whatever bill is passed. Failure to understand, distorts the entire system of the company.

In the parliament, member‟s failure to understand or read meaning in an utterance made by colleague members will not yield any consensus.

In fact, an effective communication largely depends on understanding of massage between the sender and the receiver. A failure somewhere brings about misunderstanding.

The effects of comprehension difficulties among students are relevant to the researcher in his quest to finding out the effects of the difficulties in comprehension on the academic, social, political and cultural behaviors of students. Most of my findings are closely related to what others have stated in the literature review.

2.8.1 Conclusion of the Literature Review

The researcher has noticed that the various definitions and explanations of reading, reading comprehension, causes of reading comprehension difficulties, types of comprehension, and theories of comprehension as well as effects of comprehension difficulties among students are somewhat unique. Though, various scholars have expressed their opinions about comprehension and its associated problems, they seem not to be so different. Based on these opinions, the researcher has realized that comprehension basically deals with reading and interpreting meaning in words, phrases, clauses and the text itself. It also deals with identifying paragraphs of a text, determining the topic sentences and the main idea as well as the supporting sentences of a text/passage. Various characteristic of reading comprehension, importance of reading have been looked at as far as the study is concerned.

Following the importance of reading comprehension, the following main issues have been identified.

We read in order to communicate. The ability to function in the society where every bit of information is put in to writing will depend on our ability to read and understand. The various types of readings have been identified, these in cloud extensive reading, intensive reading, shared reading, skimming and scanning. For the types of comprehension, the work has identified silent reading and reading comprehension, but emphasis has been placed on difficulties of students to read and understand. These have been identified by a number of factors including the vocabulary level of students.

Student's attitude towards reading in general as well as cultural diversity between authors and readers, poor reading comprehension techniques, complex nature of

certain reading texts and the linguistics levels of the second language teachers are the major challenges of Ndewura Jakpa Senior High Technical school students.

Various theories about reading and comprehension have also been looked at. Some of these include the theory of schemata, the literacy theory and the interactive model theory. Effects of reading and comprehension difficulties among students have also been discussed. Some of these could be poor reading skills, poor pronunciation and spellings, difficulty in making progress in other subject areas and low performance in language texts.

Some suggested strategies for effective reading and comprehension such as skimming, scanning, intensive and extensive reading have also been outline by various scholars. You can ask questions such as is the material to be read about science, politics or Education in each of the paragraphs. Try to find answers to pre-reading questions, make inference to the text, recognize the writers attitude and purpose, follow the structure of the text using the various kinds of syntactic relations to arrive at contextual meanings of the entire text.

In order to carry out the study, the researcher will adopt an eclectic approach by drawing and working closely with the various models outline in the literature review.

This is because they present the theoretical approaches in teaching reading and comprehension effectively. This is to say that I will lend all the various models appropriately to enhance the ability of students of Ndewura Jakpa Senior High Technical School in reading and comprehension.

The researcher would work closely with the theories and techniques outline by Sekyi-Baidoo (2000, 2003), Wallace and Charles (1982) Graft (2008), Maduekwe (2007) and Aziz (2011).

These theories and techniques would guide the researcher in his quest to investigate some problems associated with reading and comprehension among students of Ndewura Jakpa Secondary school. This work would also suggest some possible ways of improving reading and comprehension among students of Ndewura Jakpa Senior High Technical School and the nation at large.

CHAPTER THREE

MOTHODOLOGY AND DESIGN

3.0 Introduction

This chapter deals with the method and procedures employed in collecting data for the study. It also discusses how the data is analyzed and presented for vivid description. The chapter is sub-divided into sections. These sections include research design, population, sampling technique, sample size, the research site, data collection strategies, data analyses and data presentation.

3.1 Research Design

This work adopts a qualitative research design. It is a case study of Year 1 students of Ndewura Jakpa Senior High Technical School. It is designed in a way to acquire information from two or more people. A qualitative research design is employed in this study because it is the type that is flexible as far as sampling technique is concerned. It is also a holistic approach that gives a complete description of the problem and therefore deals with reality (Owu-Ewei, 2012). It basically deals with human beings and uses subjective information and participant's observation so as to describe the context, or natural setting of the variables under consideration as well as the interaction of the different variable in context. The study seeks to rely on observations and interviews to collect data.

3.2 Population

Senior High Education in Ghana has been the target as far as the study is concerned. However, due to the large number of Senior High Schools and students as well as teachers, this study is specifically targeting schools within the Northern Region and specifically, Ndewura Jakpa Senior High Technical School. The school has one

thousand two-hundred students population currently made up of four-hundred thirty (430) first year students, three-hundred and fifty (350) second year students and four-hundred twenty (420) third year students-. That is from 1 to 3.

For this study to be successful, the researcher selected forty (40) students out of the four-hundred and thirty students from the first year group by using one class, that is form one (C) . The selection was based on non-probability sampling and purposive sampling as well. The researcher selected forty (40) students in order to gather a comprehensive data for the study. In order to gather enough and reliable data, all the five (5) teachers from the English department were interviewed. This represented forty five (45) participants for the study.

Ndewura Jakpa Senior High Technical School was selected because the researcher was a teacher in that school; He had access to reliable data collection.

The researcher would have ample time for the study since he was a member of staff of this school.

The researcher chose the school and a first year class because it was this class where the comprehension difficulties were noticed through sample comprehension tasks as well as students" performance in the end of term exams administrated by the school. The fact also was that, first year student in the school needed to be introduced to the underlying strategies of tackling reading and comprehension to enable them acquire good reading and comprehension skills. This would equip them with knowledge in teaching reading and comprehension after completion. The researcher sort permission from the school"s authorities so as to use the said number of participant for the study.

3.3 Sampling Technique and Sampling Size

Due to limited time and other academic factors the researcher resorted to non-probability sampling using purposive sampling to select the sampling size for a

successful completion of the study. (Owu-Ewie, 2012), argues that purposive sampling is a sampling technique in which elements are chosen based on purpose of the study. Purposive sampling technique was used because the study was a case-study of a clearly defined group.

It is an institution that possesses information necessary to the researcher. The sampling technique was employed because the researcher aimed at doing a qualitative study with a limited work force. Sample was selected based on the fact that participant's possess similar characteristics so that the researcher could easily make observations. Selecting the first years for the study was to examine their level of comprehension since they come from different Junior High Schools and were handled by different English language teachers. The weakness and strengths of these students will reveal to teachers the need to adopt modern approaches to reading and comprehension in their various schools. This would enhance good standards and improve quality in Education as explained in 3.5 below.

3.4 Data Collection Strategies

This deals with various procedures for collecting data for the study. For the purpose of this study, the researcher used interviews and observations in order to gather reliable data.

3.4.1 Interviews

This is two- way approach that permits exchange of ideas and information (Alhassan, 2012). He argues further that interview is a face to face interaction between the interviewer and interviewee.

Owu-Ewie (2012) also argues that interviews are purposeful conversations with a subject in order to obtain information to answer a research question.

The researcher used a semi-structured type of interview where the researcher specifies issues ad topics to be covered in an outline form and the interviewer decides the sequence in the course of the interview (Owu-Ewie 2012).

The researcher employed well prepared questions that allowed flexibility where non-verbal behaviors were used to identify the credibility of the interviewee‟s responses after establishing a friendly atmosphere with the respondents to obtain reliable information. Then, an appropriate process was followed by making it clear to the class teachers and students the purpose of such an interview.

The researcher used interview as a data collection strategy after observation which is the primary technique for collecting data because it ensured accurate and reliable information from respondents. It also ensured privacy and therefore created room for responses of respondents in any form of the communication e g, either verbally or non-verbal. This was to increase the comprehension of data.

3.4.2 Observation

Observation is a primary technique of collecting data on a non-verbal behavior. Observation involves going in to the field, using participants so as to collect data based on certain behaviors (Owu-Ewie 2012). In a qualitative research, observation consists of behaviors, event and context surrounding the events and behaviors (Best and Kahn, 2006).

For purpose of gathering data, the researcher employed observations in comprehension lessons on two classroom teachers and the students.

The purpose of the exercise was made known to participants but detailed explanations of the study were kept within the researcher. This was not exposed to the participants so as to keep them active in providing reliable information for the study. In order to

record observations, the researcher made certain written notes by writing responses of the participants.

Observation was used as a mean of collecting data on non-verbal behaviors that were useful for further studies of individuals under question.

Observation also made way for the researcher to understand that students lack the basic skills to read and comprehend. It again helped the researcher to use his personal knowledge during the interpretation stage of the analysis.

3.5 Data Collection Protocol.

The interview was conducted by the researcher during instructional periods. The researcher sought permission from the school administration. Participants were interviewed one after the other in order to do accurate observation and writing of responses. The researcher appeared so lovely before any interviewee that was interviewed, both facial appearance and the tone in which oral questions were posed, made participants anxious to respond. Interesting topics were introduced to capture the attention of respondents. Interview questions were rehearsed to ensure both validity and reliability before the interview period. The researcher asked question and recorded respondent"s responses by writing and making mental notes. Teachers on the other hand, were interviewed during the break period for two consecutive days. The researcher also observed teachers lessons on reading and comprehension and noted the styles every teacher employed in handling comprehension lesson. Although the teachers concerned were aware of the purpose of such observation, the researcher did not make it known to the participants the questions he prepared for them to answer.

3.6 Data Analysis and Presentation

Data collected was edited and transcribed into a reduced data by using categories against the list of attributes the researcher had prepared for the responses given by the respondents for easy coding and analysis. Data collected from the respondents are analyzed and presented qualitatively in the form of narration in chapter four.

CHAPTER FOUR

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

4.0 Introduction

This chapter presents and analyses data for the study. The researcher has presented this data qualitatively in order to give a comprehensive and vivid description of research findings. This chapter is therefore presented and analyzed based on the research questions:

1. What are the possible causes of students „difficulties in reading and comprehension?

2. How do reading and comprehension difficulties affect students" academic performance?

3. What strategies are useful to assist students in reading and comprehension?

Table 1 number of respondents

The number of respondents employed by this study is represented in the following table

Respondents	Number	Percentage
Teachers	5	15
Students	40	85
Total	**45**	**100**

From the above, the researcher used five teachers representing 15% and forty (40) students representing 85%.

Table 2: qualification of language teachers as well as number of years they have taught in the college.

Teachers	Qualification	Number of years taught
Teacher: 1	Masters in English	2
Teacher: 2	Masters in English	3
Teacher: 3	Degree in English	3
Teacher: 4	Degree in English	3
Teacher: 5	Degree in English	1
Total no. of teachers holding masters		2
Total no. of teachers holding 1st degree		3

From the above table, it was realized that out of the five teachers of the English language, two teachers had second degree in English and had been teaching in the school for two (2) and (3) years respectively. The remaining three (3) teachers held first degree of this category, the number of years taught by each teacher was three (3), four (4) and one (1) respectively.

Using the qualitative analyses of data, the researcher gathered data from both teachers and students and analyzed them in order of importance.

4.1 Research question (RQ) NO. :1

What are some of the possible causes of students" reading and comprehension difficulties? The following were the causes of students" difficulties in reading and comprehension:

A. Poor reading speed caused by difficulty level of the text

The difficulty to comprehend whatever text is read by students is due to poor reading influence.

Reading involves using the eye level as you perceive and decode the written words as they are used in the sentence. To be able to read and understand, we must go by normal reading speed. Reading a text word by word does not foster our students" ability to comprehend whatever information is being conveyed by the text. Ideas in a text are expressed in words, sentence and in paragraph so we understand completely when we are familiar with these grammatical devices and can therefore relate them to the message of text.

The researcher made this observation during a reading and comprehension exercise he gave in a class where thirty (30) students could not read a text titled "living on my own" quickly and fluently. I observed that students had certain difficulties in pronouncing certain words in the text. This made them to read slowly as they paused to pronounce those words. The effects of these poor reading skills were that, students scored below average in the comprehension exercise that was given to them. Out the forty students who took part only eleven students scored 15marks out of (20), twenty (20) students scored eight (8) out of 20marks, five students scored 5 and four (4) students scored 3 out of twenty marks. Consider the table below:

Table 3: Samples of students exercise and scores

No. of students	Marks	Total (%)
20	8	50
11	15	38
5	5	7
4	3	5
Percentage of failure		**75**
Percentage of pass		**5**

In all, 27 students scored below ten (10) representing 75 failure and (11) students scored above ten (10) representing 35% pass. The performance of the students is in relation to what Langan (1997) has argued. According to him, when text structures are difficult, poor readers find it difficult to read fast and fluently". This made it difficult for them to decode meaning from the text. This is in relation to what Jordan (1997) also argued that when a text is naturally difficult, readers" reading rates are lowered. This is because new vocabularies in the text may be difficult for students to pronounce let alone make meaning from them. Inability to decode meaning of certain vocabularies in a text results to total failure in understanding the entire message of the text. Fluency they say does not mean total comprehension of the text. Yemen (2011) argued that fluency is a bridge between students" decoding words and comprehending a text.

My findings attest to the fact that some texts are more compact and constructed around a great deal of new ideas and technical words. In consequences, the findings revealed that unfamiliar vocabularies and complex sentences are some of the factors contributing to comprehension challenges. The difficulty to understand and interpret

the text is due to factors such as decoding difficulty and difficulty of text. The misunderstanding of this was realized when in my observation exercises, students responded to comprehension questions wrongly because these answers were ideas outside the given text. This is because readers found it difficult to decode and understand meaning of certain vocabularies that formed part of the main idea of the text. They tend to respond to ways that are deviating.

B. Inefficient teaching approaches

Another cause of students" difficulty in reading and comprehension is inefficient teaching approaches employed by language teachers in handling comprehension lessons. This study had made it clear that teachers in schools do not use modern approaches to teaching reading and comprehension. They rely on the traditional approaches as the sole means of textual information. Findings during my interview exercise with the teachers revealed that teachers sort to stereotype questions during reading and comprehension. They do not look at strategies in teaching comprehension especially in guided comprehension and finally they are not informed about the theoretical influence in literacy development. Teachers are not informed about the changing faces of language pedagogy". As stated by Goodsman (2002), "teaching and learning will change and traditional practices and assumptions must be re-examined". This is evident from my interview questions on how to use the internet to teach reading and comprehension. Out of five (5) English teachers, only one could give clear explanations. The other four (4) teachers maintained that there are past questions on reading and comprehension which they use in preparing students towards their end of term exams organized by the school. The observation made here is that teachers only teach comprehension as a means of preparing students towards examination.

C. insufficient language teachers

During my interview with students on the number of times students where taught reading and comprehension in class, (25) students said, "Ones a month. Five (5) students said they only discuss pass questions under this aspect. This observation revealed that teachers of English Language where not serious in handling the aspect. My interview with the teachers regarding their qualifications also revealed that none out of the five (5) teachers had a master degree in English. This study lends itself to the argument made by Mosenthal (1984) that students" difficulty in reading and comprehension could be the factor of situation organizer, what he referred to as the second language teacher. Is the second language teacher conversant with the new approaches to teach the language? Does he have any positive attitude towards the teaching of the second language? My interview with respondents on some teachers handling these aspects had difficulty.

My findings also revealed that some of the teachers in the school had little knowledge in second language teaching as such students had not been taught the new approaches to literacy. This led to their poor performance in reading and comprehension during examination. I also noticed that teachers who upgraded themselves in the study of language at higher levels were not interested in applying the various methods of teaching the subject. During my interview, a teacher respondent remarked, it is not easy to take time to teach students how to decode meaning from a text. This is because course content will not permit you. "So it is difficult teaching all the essentials of reading comprehension. You will not be able to finish the course outline before the term ends.

Observation revealed that most teachers faced challenges in handling reading comprehension comfortably. They often devote little time to the teaching of reading

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comprehension in a classroom. This is in relation with the argument made by Mosenthal (1984) that those students" difficulties in reading and comprehension could be the factor of the teacher who teaches the second language.

D. Foreign text background

My study also revealed that students" difficulty in understanding what goes into reading comprehension passage was the foreign background nature of certain texts. Wallace (1982) puts it that readers must have the schemata about the information in the text to enable them deduce full meaning from the text which they read. Writers who write with foreign background put students into difficulty. My observation in a comprehension lesson taught by an English teacher revealed that students in form (1) at Ndewura Jakpa Senior High Technical School found it difficult to read and understand a text titled "the benefits of time to man". I observed in this lesson that out of forty students in the class only two (2) students could explain the ideas in the various paragraphs of the text. After the teacher introduced the lesson, he asked students to discuss what the text was about. Students could not easily do this discussion. When the teacher asked what the problem was, most of the students replied, "The passage is difficult". Teachers also supported this by saying that students score low grades in reading and comprehension exercises when contents and context of materials are foreign to them.

This observation is also in revelation with what Quagi (2009) has postulated in the literature. According to Quagie, content and context of materials to be read pose challenge to students. When materials are fused with foreign background, it is difficult for readers to decode meaning from such materials easily.

E. failure to follow how reading materials are organized

My findings revealed that many students did not understand what they read because they failed to study how reading materials are organized. Reading materials are organized based on various ideas found in them. Writers do not just convey messages in texts anyhow. So these organizations of reading materials are paths leading to total understanding. As indicated in the literature that when readers fail to use context clues so as to guess meanings of unfamiliar words, phrases, clauses and paragraphs which are often introduced by traditional markers, they find it difficult to understand what they read. During my observation in a reading and comprehension lesson, thirty (30) students did not understand the meaning of three (3) words in the text. The remaining ten (10) based their answers on the lexical meaning of those words.

This goes to confirm in the literature that shows that reading for comprehension depends on reading closely to get the author's interested meaning rather than imposing meaning on the author. This means that, failure to use meaning relations will lead to failure to read and understand. This is consistent with Koranteng et, al (2011) who maintained that failure to see how the material is organized and failure to recognize illogical reasoning and fallacies are the main reading problems learners face. There is evidence that failure to understand the text as an entity results in the inability to provide accurate answers to comprehension questions. Students interpret what they read in a disjoint fashion and fail to see and relate sentences and paragraph one to the other.

F. negative attitude of students towards reading

To many students, reading is not a pleasant experience to be savored and seized at every free moment (Baleeta, 2004). My findings are in relation with the findings of Baleeta (2004) in the literature review. In a qualitative analysis of data, I observed

that poor concentration contribute to difficulty in reading and understanding. These findings also revealed that students dislike reading and that cause this failure in comprehending. During my interview with students on the number of novels each student read in a term, only five students read a novel each. The remaining thirty five (35) students had not read a single novel. Even the novel „no sweetness here and other stories‟ that were prescribed for study in the term, only seventeen (7) students out of forty (40) students were able to read the entire book. That is also in line with findings in the literature when Baleeta (2004) claims that the negative attitude is unfortunately found even among literature students who look at the reading task as a burden.

G. Limited text scope

Another cause of students‟ difficulty in reading and comprehension identified by the study was limited text scope. As indicated by the results, students did not have enough reading for comprehension experience outside the plain narrative texts. The observation made was that though students practice how to decode meaning from various text, their analysis did not go beyond reading and comprehension for examination purpose. They had also been limited to text only in the English language instead of looking at text from various sources. A text in other subject areas could also be analyzed for the purpose of attaining more skills in comprehension.

I. Poor reading and comprehension techniques/information processing abilities.

Another cause of student‟s difficulty in reading comprehension was realized as inability to process information conveyed by a text. Information processing abilities involve techniques such as skimming and scanning. These findings are in line with the findings in the literature by Hall (1989) who claim that students comprehension difficulties is as a result of poor processing abilities of students during comprehension

exercise. When we are able to process information in a given text properly, we are able to make meaning from it, and when we fail to use information processing abilities properly, we fail also to textually process the information. A teacher also confirms this by saying that some students do not know what skimming or scanning is, so we find it difficult in analyzing a given text. Finding meanings of certain words as used in a text is a [problem to some students in the class. Some tend to use the dictionary instead of looking at them textually.

4.2 Research question (RQ) 2.

What are the effects of students' difficulty in reading and comprehension on their academic performance?

A. inability to communicate effectively

Students" difficulty in reading comprehension will have adverse effects on their communication skills. My findings are closely related with findings in the literature review that indicate that when students have difficulty in reading and comprehension, it affects their communication competence and limits vocabulary development in them (Conley, 1992). During my interaction with teachers, a teacher said "reading and comprehension difficulty restricts students of Ndewura Jakpa Senior High Technical School to use language effectively" summary alone is as a result of reading and comprehension. Another remark that, one"s communication competence rests on one"s ability to decode meaning quickly from a text, so it will even be difficult for learners to function in our print-base societies of today when they have difficulties for understanding. This also in line with findings in the literature review by Burns, et al (1999) who said communication depends on comprehension, which is affected by all aspects of the reading process.

B. Poor performance in other subject areas

Another effect of comprehension difficulties of students is poor performance in other subject areas. The study revealed that students performed woefully inadequate in many reading subjects as they found it difficult to read and understand text. Failure to read and understand certain questions during examinations will lead to deviations in providing answers. In many subject areas reading comprehension is necessary. During my interview with teachers thirty (30) students were confirmed to fail an exam in other subject areas due to inability to read and understand what the questions demanded. Twenty five (25) failed in social studies because they did not understand the question. E.g. "Explain the concept, extended family". This question posed a lot of difficulties to students simply because they did not understand the word "concept ". This made it difficult for them to answer the question accurately just because they did not understand the requirement of the question given to them. These findings are in line with the findings in the literature review by Korateng (2000) who argues that learner"s performance in other subject areas depends on their ability to read and understand a text.

C. Incompetence in reading and comprehension

My findings again revealed that students" difficulty in reading and comprehension made them incompetent readers in the society. This was revealed to me during the observation I had in their reading lesson. Students found it difficult to read freely and flexibly while recalling information. A student respondent maintained that you forget what you read when you have finished reading the text entirely. A teacher also remark that students become incompetent readers. This is consistent with Maduekwe (2007) who argues that a poor reader has problems of fixation, back skipping or regression as

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well as wondering. Thus, a very poor reader is likely to read and understand if only his memory is tasked.

D. Habit of fear of reading subjects

The study also identified fear of reading subjects as one of the effects of reading problems on the academic performance of students, Students difficulty in reading for comprehension makes them develop fear for subjects that have to do with reading. For example, literature and art related subjects are what most learners will not have interest in just for the mere fact that those subjects involved reading and understanding.

During my interview with students on the programme they will like to pursue in Universities, only five (5) students chose science and English. This observation clearly shows that students have fear for reading courses. The language used in writing some of the stories is complex. A teacher added that most students are afraid to take courses like literature and art related subjects due to their reading cultures. Even some of the so-called literature students of late do not read. So it is difficult for them to read and appreciate text.

Apart from this, most students have made their minds not to pursue the study of language as a course at the higher levels. Some take it just for the purpose of examination. One of the student responded to my question, "How many of you would like to pursue languages as a course at the higher level? "Some of us are just managing to find our way out". We can"t study language as a course at a higher level.

E. Low sources in reading and comprehension tasks

Research findings also revealed that students" performance in reading and comprehension as an aspect of English language was bad. In the analysis of data, it

came out that difficulty in reading and comprehension affects students" performance. I observed that students performed badly in English Language just because most could not perform well in reading and comprehension. A teacher confirmed this by adding that, many students scored zero (0) out of twenty (20) in a reading and comprehension exercise during our last conference marking of end of term scripts. This resulted to hundred (100) students failing in English. The remaining two-hundred (200) students only passed with grades less than grade A1, B2 and B3

4.3 Research Questions 3

What strategies are useful to assist students to read and understand?

(A)Equipping students with reading and comprehension skills

Findings of the study have revealed that in order to assist students" do effective reading and comprehension „they should be assisted to internalize the underlying strategies in reading for comprehension. Such skills include ability to scan, skim, do both intensive and extensive reading. In my interactions with students in a class, thirty students representing 90% of the class did not know how to read and comprehend a text. I identified this when I observed how they (students) supplied answers to questions based on a text they read. The questions had to do with "finding meaning of underlined words in a text" I observed that most students based their answers on dictionary meaning of this words rather than contextual meanings. Some did not take note of the various grammatical names of the underline words. When questions also demand specific information on a text, students were writing volumes of pages. These shows their inability to scan and skim texts. This finding are in line with what Yemen (2011) suggests that the process of reading and understanding is more complex than what students may realize. Complexity does not mean difficulty. To simplify a concept we need to break it into its basic component parts. Sekyi-Baidoo (2003), Aziz

(2011), Donald, J. and Charles, K. Kinzer, (2003: 300-301) and many others in the literature review are of the same view.

(B) Using modern approaches to teaching reading and comprehension.

The study has also identified that it is appropriate when teachers employ modern approaches in teaching reading and comprehension in their classes. This will enhance the development of students" knowledge in reading and understanding. This is consistent with what Baleeta (2004) has suggested in the literature review that reading and comprehension like any other literacy skills can be enhanced when teachers use varied teaching methods in handling it. Reading and comprehension should be seen as an aspect of learner literacy skills that can be enhanced through multiple roots.

During my observation in comprehension lessons, I found that a teacher used prediction activities like relating meaning of pictures, illustration to text meaning, using meaning of titles and tropic sentences as well as discussing a text before reading it. 80% of the class scored 20marks in a comprehension exercise. The remaining 20% of the class scored above 10marks. Seventy (70%) of the class was able to summarize the text accurately. This is in line with what Stanford (1995) has argued in the literature that when readers are able to understand a text they are able to summarize the main ideas and understand inference by noting writer"s choice of words.

(C) Understanding the structure of a text

My findings in the study also revealed that students can become good readers for comprehension when they are helped to understand the structure of a text. Students should be taken through the various parts of a text so as to enhance good reading and comprehension abilities. They should be made to identify titles, paragraph and inter-paragraphs connectives. They should be taken through various sentences and functions both structural and functional types.

During my interactions with students, only fifteen (15) students representing 35% out of forty (40) students in a class could discuss a given passage vividly. The remaining twenty-five (25) students representing 65% found it difficult to identify topic sentences in various paragraphs of the text. My discussions with all the five teachers confirmed that cultural friendly books and materials will be good for reading and comprehension. This will prepare readers towards unfamiliar texts. This is in relation to what Quagie (2009) has suggested in the literature that students" reading and comprehension challenges are as a result of foreign background of content and text of materials to read. My findings are also consistent with findings in the literature by Marther and McCartthy who argued that readers should ask themselves three main questions when dealing with text.

    a. Does the writer write this to send information

    b. Does he write this to entertain?

    c. Does he write it to persuade

D. **Using culturally-friendly text for reading**

As regards content and context of the text, the study has identified that in order for student to read and understand a text, teachers must choose passages and their materials within the cultural background of students. Both observation and interviews revealed that instead of using materials or text that is foreign in background, teachers should resort to using culturally friendly materials and text for reading and comprehension. This text and materials will help develop pupils" comprehension abilities as a foundation for the reading task.

E. Enough time to be given to reading comprehension practice

The study has also identified as one of the factors that can promote students" abilities in reading and comprehension abilities through practice; they should be given enough time for exercise. Time for teaching reading and comprehension should be strengthened; a good number of lessons for comprehension should be taken by teachers and students. As students continue to practice reading and comprehension using different types of passages, it is possible that their abilities in reading and comprehension will be enhanced. As stated by behaviorists, as learners continuously practice what they learn, their level of understanding increases. I also observed that comprehension was only taught purposely to prepare students towards examination rather than equipping students with skills in reading and comprehension that will enable them to become competent in communication and to also function effectively in their societies. Teachers should educate students in this regard-even, on the part of effecting the teaching of reading comprehension no part of the literature review has remarked about examination pressure negatively affecting students" performance of reading and comprehension.

F. Understanding word relation in a text

Another informed strategy that has been identified by this study is equipping students with the skills of understanding word relation within a text. As regards vocabulary difficulty, teachers have suggested that students could be helped to improve their skills of word meaning by resorting to context clues that surrounds unfamiliar words in order to figure out meaning of those as they are used in the context.

During my interaction with teachers, three (3) teachers remarked that students of Ndewura Jakpa Senior High Technical School find it difficult to explain meaning of words contextually. Students use traditional grammar rules to identify words meaning

rather than the functional notion. Contextual meaning of words will enhance understanding of the text. This is the same idea conveyed by Vacca (1986) who argued that an effective reading and comprehension, requires that the reader recalls meaning of difficult vocabularies, draws inference from content about meanings of those words and then weaving together ideas in the content.

G. Having prediction activities before reading

One of the strategies to assist students read and comprehend identified by the research findings is to take students through predictions activities before they go into reading the text. The study has identified prediction activities such as providing information on the author and predicting the form and content of the reading text before reading. Teachers remark that when you take students through prediction activities, you are solving a comprehension problem in the classroom. Students" prediction activities will help them overcome reading and comprehension difficulties. Four (4) teachers said prediction activities will help a lot. The teachers continue by adding that pictures and illustrations as well as topic sentences and titles can help readers to understand the message of a text.

You can do this through questioning such as why has the author written this? What is text the layout? Does the text give information? Does it entertain? Does it ague? When readers are able to provide answers to these questions, their comprehension abilities will be enhanced.

CHAPTER FIVE

CONCLUSION, SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATION

5.0 Introduction

This chapter concludes the study. It provides a brief overview of the study, highlights the major findings to draw conclusions and to suggest possible recommendations for further studies. The chapter is divided into three sections, summary, recommendation and conclusions.

The study aims to:

➢ Identify why students find it difficult in reading and comprehend?

➢ Identify the effects of students, difficulties in reading and comprehension on their academic performance.

➢ Suggest certain strategies to address these challenges.

5.1 Summary

The section provides the summary of the methodology and summary of the findings

5.1.1 Summary of findings

The summary of findings of the study indicated the following as the causes of students" difficulties in reading and comprehension.

i.   Poor reading skills cause by difficult level of text.

ii.   Ineffective teaching approaches.

iii.   Insufficient language teachers

iv.   Foreign text background.

v.   Failure to study how reading text are organized.

vi.   Negative attitude of students towards reading.

vii.   Limited text scope given to students.

viii.   Poor reading and comprehension techniques

The effects of comprehension difficulties on the academic performance of students included the following:

i.   Inability to communicate effectively.

ii.   Poor performance in other subjects areas.

iii.   Incompetence in reading task.

iv.   Habits of fear of reading subjects.

v.   Low scores in reading and comprehension exercise.

Strategies used to enhance students" abilities in reading and comprehension includes the following:

i.   Equipping students with reading and comprehension skills.

ii.   Using modern approach to teaching reading and comprehension.

iii.   Understanding the structure of the text.

iv.   Using culturally friendly text for reading and comprehension practice.

v.   Enough time for reading and comprehension practice.

vi.   Understanding words relating in a text.

vii.   Having prediction activities before reading.

5.2. Recommendations

The recommendations of this study are in two sections, recommendations for improving the topic and recommendation for further research.

5.2.1 Recommendation for improving reading

Based on findings drawn from the study, the researcher arrived at the following recommendation for second language teachers in the classroom, and recommendation for second cycle institutions. As regards content and context of the text, culturally

friendly texts are recommended since learners understand what they learn from the known to the unknown. Thus, instead of using materials and text that are foreign in background, teachers should resort to materials and text which are within the cultural background of the students as a way of preparing them to read and comprehend a text. Besides, teachers should include in their practice guided comprehension that requires both teachers and students to use the various strategies of reading and comprehending text. Students should be made to identify title, paragraphs and their topic sentences and other supporting sentences. They should be assisted to identify author"s purpose of writing a text. Moreover, it is recommended that teachers should integrate strategic instructions into their reading comprehension lessons. Senior High School students should be taught reading and comprehension using the electric method, where a number of methods are integrated in teaching comprehension to enable students to understand the basic principle for comprehension. The curriculum developers should reduce the cause content of the English language by increasing the credit hours for English language so as to give teachers enough time to treat reading and comprehension effectively.

In addition, students of Senior High Schools need a balanced comprehension instruction which integrated sufficiently the teaching of other key components of reading such as word decoding strategies fluency, conceptual vocabulary building, word meaning, prior knowledge and love for skimming, scanning, intensive reading, extensive reading and close/critical reading that are necessary for reading and comprehension.

In all, the researcher recommends the need for teachers to be acquainted with ideas for improving teachers" attitude and skills and the official policy for language

teaching through regular in-service training for language teachers regarding the teaching of reading in Senior High Schools.

5.2.2 Recommendations for further Research

No academic work is said to be perfect and does not attract any criticism or suggestions. For this reason, I therefore suggest that future researchers should conduct the same studies investigating long term strategies for reading and comprehension instead of short term strategies for reading and comprehension. This promotes effective learning and love for extensive reading. I also suggest that since we are in the 21st century, future researchers can also look at teaching and comprehension through the use of ICT so as to enhance students understanding in reading and comprehension.
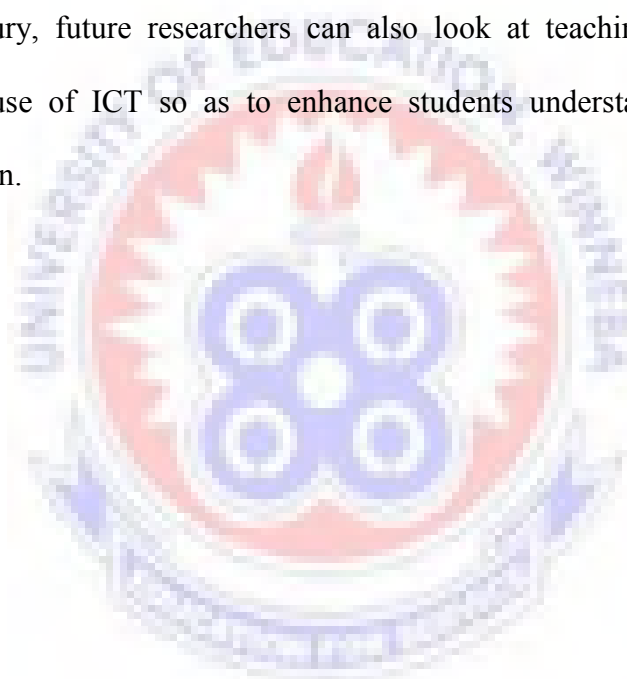
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APPENDIX A

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS FOR TEACHERS

Subject taught:

Number of years of teaching

Number of years taught in the present school.

1. What is your professional qualification?

2. How long have you been teaching English as second language?

3. Do you have enough materials for teaching reading   and comprehension?

4. How many times do you teach reading and comprehension in a week?

5. Do you employ your teaching strategies in teaching reading and comprehension?

6. How do students perform in reading and comprehension exercise?

7. Do students have difficulties in understanding reading and comprehension?

8. Indicate why you think students face some challenges in comprehension?

9. How does this affect students" academic performance?

10. What other strategies do you think would be appropriate to address these problems?

APPENDIX B

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS FOR STUDENTS

1. What do you benefit from reading? Mention at least two.

2. How do you approach reading and comprehension passages?

3. Do you find it difficult in getting meanings from passages?

4. Do you find it difficult in extracting meaning form the passage you read?

5. Do you answer questions under reading and comprehension?

6. If yes, what difficulties do you face answering reading and comprehension questions?

7. Do you perform well in other subject areas?

8. How often do you read?

9. Do you have enough reading materials?

10. Do you have enough teachers?

11. How often do you teachers teach you reading and comprehension?

12. What difficulties do you face when reading a text?

13. What do you think can help address the situation?

APPENDIX C

A SAMPLE TALLY SHEET FOR STUDENTS RESPONSES

1. Inadequate stock of vocabulary

2. Difficult sentences

3. Some text are syntactically more complex.

4. Attitudes of some readers.

5. Foreign text background

6. Poor reading techniques

7. Ineffective teaching approaches.

8. Attitudes of some teachers

9. Inadequate material for reading

10. Insufficient teachers for reading subjects.

APPENDIX D

A SAMPLE OF ATTRIBUTES CHECKLIST FOR OBSERVATION

1. Vocabulary difficulty: simple ☐   moderate ☐   difficult ☐

2. Text difficulty: simple ☐   moderate ☐   difficult ☐

3. Learners attitude: passive ☐   active ☐

4. Text background: familiar ☐   foreign ☐

5. Modern approaches methods: yes ☐   no ☐

6. Concentration of students: high ☐   low ☐   average ☐

7. Informed teaching techniques: yes ☐   no ☐

8. Teacher's attitude: very innovative ☐   innovative ☐   not innovative ☐

9. Material: available ☐   inadequate ☐   not available ☐

10. Syntactically complex sentences : simple ☐   moderate ☐   difficult ☐

11. Difficult sentence structure: simple ☐   moderate ☐   difficult ☐

12. Reading ability: fluent ☐   not fluent ☐

13. Communicative competence: high ☐   low ☐

14. Performance in reading comprehension: high ☐   low ☐   average ☐