

UNIVERSITY OF EDUCATION, WINNEBA

**READING COMPREHENSION AMONG STUDENTS: A CASE STUDY OF
KADE SDA JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL**

SHEILA SAFOA OWUSU

(7231970006)



**A dissertation in the Department of Applied Linguistics,
Faculty of Foreign Languages Education, submitted to the School of
Graduate studies in partial fulfillment
of the requirement for the award of the degree of
Master of Education
(Teaching English as a Second Language)
in the University of Education, Winneba**

September, 2024

DECLARATION

Student's Declaration

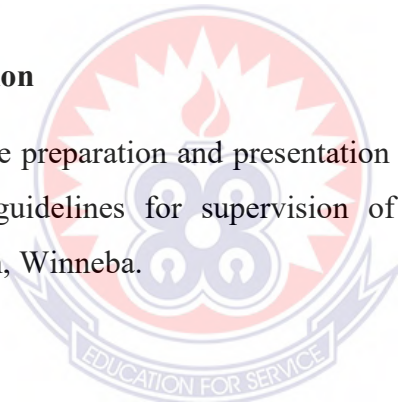
I, Sheila Safoa Owusu, declare that this thesis, with the exception of quotations and references contained in published works which have all been identified and duly acknowledged, is entirely my own original work, and it has not been submitted, either in part or whole, for another degree elsewhere.

Signature.

Date:

Supervisor's Declaration

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



Supervisor's name: Dr. Sefa Owusu (Supervisor)

Signature:

Date:

DEDICATION

This dissertation is dedicated to my son Jayden Agyei Frempong for being an inspiration.



ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

My sincerest gratitude goes to God almighty for seeing me through this programme, for granting me life, good health and travelling mercies. My sincere gratitude also goes to my supervisor, Dr. Sefa Owusu for his advice, guidance and contributions to the successful completion of this research. I would also like to appreciate my lecturers for their significant comments and contributions during presentation sessions, which have this work. I exceptionally appreciate everyone who helped in diverse ways throughout this period of study, especially Mr. Evans Asumadu. I am immensely grateful. Thank you.



TABLE OF CONTENTS

Contents	Page
DECLARATION	iii
DEDICATION	iv
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	v
TABLE OF CONTENTS	vi
LIST OF TABLES	ix
ABSTRACT	x
CHAPTER 1 : INTRODUCTION	1
1.1 Introduction	1
1.2 Background to the study	2
1.3 Statement of the Problem	5
1.4 Purpose of the research	8
1.5 Objectives of the research	8
1.6 Research questions	8
1.7 Scope of the research	8
1.8 Limitations of the study	9
CHAPTER 2 : LITRATURE REVIEW	10
2.1 Introduction	10
2.2 Vocabulary and Multiword Units (MWUS)	11
2.3 Context in Reading Comprehension	12
2.4 Structure of Text Coherence	14
2.5 Functions of Discourse Words	15
2.6 Focus of the Research Study	17

2.7 The Concept of Reading	20
2.8 Related Studies	33
2.9 Conclusion	34
CHAPTER 3 : RESEARCH METHODOLOGY	35
3.1 Introduction	35
3.2 Study area	35
3.3 Research approach	36
3.4 Research design	36
3.5 Population	37
3.6 Sample	37
3.7 Sampling techniques	38
3.8 Data collection instruments	39
3.8.1 Observation Guide	39
3.8.2 Interview Guide	43
3.9 Data analysis procedure	44
3.10 Validity and reliability	45
3.11 Ethical consideration	46
3.12 Summary	46
CHAPTER 4 : RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS	47
4.1 Introduction	47
4.2 Participants' Demographics	48
4.3 Reading hindrances	49
4.4 Reading comprehension	52
4.6 Teachers reading comprehension strategies	53

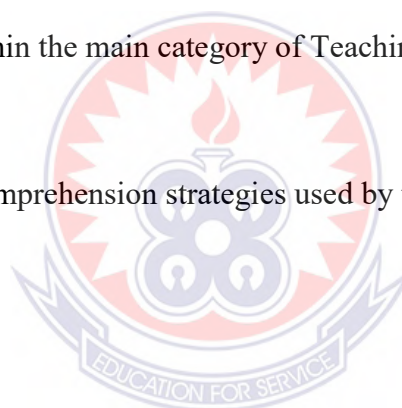


4.5 Classroom observation	54
4.5.1 Part-I: teaching reading practice	55
4.5.2 Part II: teaching reading text comprehension	61
4.6 Conclusion	69
CHAPTER 5 : SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMENDATIONS	70
5.1 Introduction	70
5.2 Summary	71
5.2.1 The main findings	73
5.2.2 Contribution to knowledge	74
5.2.3 Implications	75
5.3 Conclusion	76
5.4 Recommendations	76
REFERENCES	78
APPENDICIES	86
Appendix I: Consent form for teacher	86
Appendix-II: Reading material Evaluation used for assessing the materials.	89
Appendix-III: Classroom Observation Checklist used for investigating the teaching methods.	91



LIST OF TABLES

Table	Page
3.1: Interview technique by De Vos et. al. (2005, p. 293).	43
4.1: Number of years taught	48
4.2: Respondents gender demographics	48
4.3: Respondents professional background	49
4.4: Demographic characteristics of pupils by gender.	49
4.5: Analysis of Reading Hindrances	50
4.6: Sub-categories within the main category of Teaching Reading Practice.	56
4.7: Teaching reading strategies used by the teachers (n=03).	61
4.8: Subcategories within the main category of Teaching Reading Text Comprehension	63
4.9: Teaching Text Comprehension strategies used by the teachers (n=03).	67



ABSTRACT

This study investigated reading comprehension among students: a case study of Kade SDA Junior High School in the Kwaebibirem Municipal Assembly. The study utilized a qualitative approach with a case study design. The target population was the entire students and staff of Kade SDA JHS. The researcher used a sample of 30 students and 3 English teachers to participate in the study using observation, interview and document review as data collection tools. Data was analyzed through themes. There were three main findings of the study, first, majority of the learners translate English text into mother tongue because they lack reading comprehension. Second, it was observed that, reading comprehension is taught through Grammar Translation Method (GTM) in the classroom and lastly, learners' practice loud reading to improve pronunciation or learn grammar to become proficient in English. On the basis of the findings it was recommended that, extensive reading strategies must be included in the textbook to give learners confidence and support for discourse comprehension and critical thinking, also, stakeholders that is GES must periodically organize training workshops and professional development programs for English language teachers for them to be abreast with current pedagogical strategies on teaching comprehension skills.



CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

According to National Education Policy (NEP, 2009), English is introduced as a compulsory subject and the Medium of Instruction (MoI) in public sector schools and colleges of Ghana from 1957 to 1963, replacing Ghanaian languages. The purpose of teaching English especially in the context of Ghana Government schools is to make balanced cultural preservation with global connectivity, ensuring Ghanaian learners proficient in language skills so that they can acquire education using English as the medium at JHS level while appreciating their local language and heritage. They also require strong proficiency in reading skills to become successful in their academic as well as professional career (Grabe, 2009). Despite learning English as a compulsory subject, concerns have been expressed regarding the low proficiency of the learners. The current pedagogical practices, prescribed textbooks, and the large classrooms can be responsible for the lack of reading comprehension among the students at JHS level. The research studies on classroom teaching practices have proved that the learners using translation method mostly fail to develop reading comprehension skills in English as a Second Language (ESL) context (Zhang, 2014). This seems to be one of the major reasons behind the learners' weak proficiency in English to acquire competence in reading comprehension. The English teachers' language competence, pedagogical awareness, and the ability to teach the prescribed textbooks could also affect the performance of the students in the classroom context. Therefore, the present research study explores reading comprehension and discourse understanding problems faced by the learners at JHS level.

1.2 Background to the study

Reading in English as a Second Language (ESL) has undergone various development phases from Grammar Translation Method (GTM) to the emergence of Audio-lingual and Communicative Approaches (CA) to English Language Teaching (ELT). These transformations in the field of language education have viewed reading as a cognitive process of acquiring new knowledge from the texts, printed materials and other electronic resources (Bloom et al., 1956). It involves comprehension strategies to recognize words in the text, guess meaning from context, build ideas from the structures, and successfully understand the discourse to know the underlying meaning of a text (Bellet & Gursoy, 2008). However, the learners from traditional language background may not be able to operate reading strategies because they translate the text to know meaning in mother tongue.

The learners of Kade SDA JHS1 are taught English as a compulsory subject through prescribed textbooks to develop competence in reading skills. Majority of these learners from traditional language background are unable to carry out comprehension activities because they lack reading strategies to extract the information from the text. It is indicated that the traditional teaching methods have been the major sources of hindrances for English as a Second Language learners to acquire reading comprehension skills at JHS level (Spooks, 2012). Therefore, the present research study intends to investigate the pedagogical gap causing reading comprehension problems and discourse related issues for the students of Kade SDA JHS. According to Zafar and Mahmood (2015), JHS 1 English Textbooks (IET) designed to meet the language learning needs of the students consist of activities on comprehension, composition, and grammar structures. The selected texts in view of Dar (2012) mostly mismatch the learners' reading interests and the academic needs

because the contents provide religious and historical accounts rather than the modern scientific information (Dar, 2012, p.132). The activities designed to develop reading skills contain questions to locate the information in the text but the lack of instructions can cause problems for the readers to employ the appropriate strategies to comprehend the text successfully.

The learners using independent reading strategies can easily apply linguistic knowledge to deduce meaning from context and develop ideas from the connected text. On the contrary, the learners from traditional language background mostly translate the text to understand the meaning in their L1 or practice loud reading as mentioned by Zheng and Seepho (2013) in the studies on L2 reading comprehension strategies.

Moreover, the traditional practice of JHS level English lessons cannot develop discourse comprehension of a text because it focuses on questions and answers activity. However, the comprehension questions can be useful if they engage readers to explore data for the deeper understanding of ideas conveyed in the text. This process involves mental interaction between a reader and a text for the construction of meaning from the language clues employed in a text (Gabe, 1991). Unfortunately, a learner in a traditional language classroom may fail to construct meaning from context because his previous learning experience greatly hinders the process of learning a foreign language from a text.

According to Grabe (2002), development of reading comprehension necessarily involves understanding of discourse to get the intended message conveyed in a text. The most fluent readers from foreign language settings apply predicting, clarifying, guessing, evaluating, and other associated skills to comprehend the information from a text. However, the less proficient learners from public sector

schools may experience comprehension problems regarding the strategies applied to understand a text. Thus, the strategic awareness not only improves reading comprehension, but also contributes discourse understanding of a text in English as a Second Language.

Research on English as a Second language reading indicates that the deficiency of vocabulary development, inefficiency to understand context, and the lack of structural knowledge may cause reading comprehension and discourse understanding problems (Grabe, 2002). There may be some other factors, such as the practice of loud reading and translation method creating difficulty in comprehension and discourse understanding. It has been observed that the learners lose interest and motivation in reading text and fail to decode message from discourse resulting into incompetence, and fossilized bad reading habits (Zhang & Seepho, 2013). To probe the underlying issues in reading text comprehension and discourse understanding, there is the need of research and investigation in pedagogical practices and materials used for reading purpose.

Reading in a classroom context requires accomplishment of certain tasks, such as identifying and locating general and specific information while using sub-skills like scanning and skimming. A number of fluent readers can independently work with the reading tasks by using such strategies to achieve the objectives in the classroom and the less privileged readers fail to attempt comprehension due to incompetence and fossilized reading habits. This, however, seems to be overlooked by the teachers in public sector schools mainly because they teach reading through translation method and the learners being passive listeners rarely get chance of reading text silently.

Research on teaching reading discourse highlights the importance of text structure as a significant aspect of reading comprehension, and the learners being

aware of discourse structures have better comprehension abilities Grabe (2003). There may be some textbooks in Ghanaian context which contain some sections on the learning of a text structures contributing the development of reading text comprehension. Pedagogically, the ability to teach structure of a foreign text may not have been developed in most of language classrooms in Ghanaian context. Therefore, reading seems to be taught traditionally through Grammar Translation Method (GTM) and the loud reading practice in the classroom.

Koda (2005) in a recent study on discourse analysis identifies that the context influences reader's mind creating complication for a non-native learner to understand language employed in a text. A large number of the learners may find a text difficult because they cannot apply linguistic knowledge to deduce meaning from the context of a text. This incompetence is hardly addressed in language textbooks introduced for developing reading skills of the students at Kade SDA JHS. There could be many lessons lacking communicative approach in JHS level English Textbooks and ignore students' academic context to access and identify text situation. Thus, the selected texts may result in frustration and the lack of motivation among the students to develop reading skills in the classroom teaching context.

1.3 Statement of the Problem

Reading in view of Grabe and Hunt (2003) is considered as a cognitive process of learning the language from the textbooks used for academic purposes. It is not merely a matter of comprehending information by guessing words and structures to reconstruct meaning encoded in a text. This recent shift in viewing reading as a discourse activity focusses on the ability of identifying, analyzing, and evaluating texts introduced for academic purposes compels one to review the old reading practice and texts taught to JHS students at lower level. The research insights from

Grabe (2002) highlight the importance and influence of discourse structures essentially develop the conceptual understanding of a text used to teach reading comprehension skills.

In Ghana, there is the need for such research so as to help learners develop reading comprehension and discourse understanding skills. The researcher observed that pupils of Kade S.D.A JHS have various degrees of reading difficulty. In the various classes that the researcher has taught over the years, more than half of the class struggle to read satisfactorily. The problem of poor reading ability among the pupils has made the majority of the pupils to develop lack of interest for reading and comprehension activities in the classroom. The observation by the researcher is evident in the research carried out by Dar (2012) which indicates lack of authentic materials, efficiency, and practice in most basic school in Ghana. This observation triggered the desire of the researcher to find out the causes of reading comprehension DI among the pupils. Therefore, the present research study intends to investigate reading comprehension and the strategies used by teachers to teach by the students at Kade S.D.A JHS.

English is introduced as a compulsory subject for the students of public sector schools to develop proficiency in four language skills. The students, despite learning English for six years from the primary school to JHS level, may lack reading comprehension and the discourse understanding skills. The fossilized reading habits and the prescribed textbook could be the major reasons behind the weak proficiency in reading comprehension skills (Dar, 2012). Though, there might be pedagogical and curriculum issues affecting the overall performance of teachers and learners at JHS level. However, this research study point to the factors affecting reading comprehension and pedagogical practices applied by teachers in their respective

classroom settings. Not only this, but there could also be the problems related to the orthodox attitude of English language teachers badly discouraging learning in a language classroom (Naseem et al., 2015). Therefore, the professional development is suggested for the teachers teaching English as a compulsory subject to the students of JHS level.

Recent research studies focus on learners' language needs and finding ways to remove hindrances in academic context to develop learners' skills to cope with the issues in second language learning context, such as Ghanaian (Rahman, 2004). In view of research insights, it becomes necessary to involve learners in reading process activities and tasks for developing text comprehension and discourse understanding skills. Therefore, the pedagogical practices need to change for developing competence in reading comprehension.

To meet this requirement and to bring about change in reading comprehension, a communicative task-based approach needs to be introduced for setting the objectives in teaching reading comprehension and discourse. This change is possible only when the English teachers are provided training opportunities in the field of English Language Teaching and creating such awareness regarding problems and hindrances related to reading comprehension for JHS English teachers in Kade SDA JHS. Thus, there should also be regular sittings and inter-communication between English language teachers for sharing teaching and learning problems.

Thus, the present research study attempts to answer the research questions by reviewing the literature, evaluating and observing participants for a close investigation of prevailing classroom teaching practices. It also intends to uncover the methods and strategies applied by the teachers teaching reading comprehension through the prescribed English course introduced for JHS students of Kade SDA JHS

Students in the Kwaebibirem Municipality. The study aims to assess the factors affecting reading comprehension and find the various methods teachers use in teaching the pupils. Finally, the research study offers suggestions/recommendations in view of the results obtained from research study.

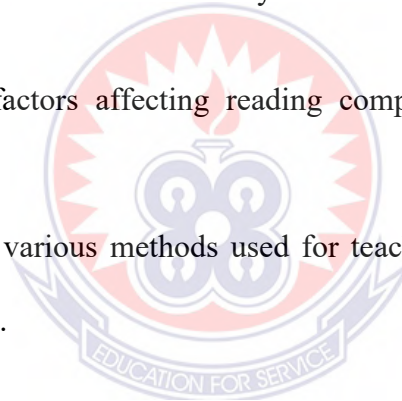
1.4 Purpose of the research

The present research study aims to investigate problems in reading text comprehension and discourse understanding of the learners in the academic context of Kade SDA JHS in the Kwaebibirem Municipality.

1.5 Objectives of the research

The specific objectives of the research study are:

1. to assess the factors affecting reading comprehension at Kade SDA JHS Students
2. to find out the various methods used for teaching reading comprehension at Kade SDA JHS.



1.6 Research questions

1. RQ1: What are the factors affecting reading comprehension at Kade SDA JHS?
2. RQ2: How is reading comprehension taught at Kade SDA JHS?

1.7 Scope of the research

The research questions in this study are based on objectives that collectively represent an overall idea of exploring reading comprehension and discourse based issues in the academic context of Basic schools in Ghana. The specified objectives may contribute improvements in the context of current education system which falls short of the latest

trends in the field of English Language Teaching (ELT). Moreover, the objectives may enhance practitioners' awareness about teaching reading skills through a prescribed course at JHS level. Subject to the findings, this study aims at highlighting the specific areas of concern for language teachers and stake holders to provide professional development opportunities to the teachers working in public sector school at Kade SDA JHS.

1.8 Limitations of the study

Some of the major limitations regarding this research study are mentioned as under:

- This research had a limited sample size of thirty participants, which may not be representative of the larger population. Future studies should aim to recruit a more diverse and larger sample size.
- The reading comprehension assessment tool used in this study may not have fully captured the complexity of reading comprehension skills. Therefore, future studies should consider using multiple assessment tools to provide more comprehensive picture.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

Research on English as a Second Language learning has widely recognized the importance of reading skills for the students at primary and JHS level in the academic settings of Ghana. The ability to comprehend information in English largely depends upon a learner's proficiency to construct meaning and build a network of ideas from the text employing discourse from history, literature, and science (Grabe, 2002). However, the less proficient learners often find it difficult and time consuming activity because they lack linguistic knowledge and reading comprehension strategies. The issues identified in the research studies are the lack of lexical knowledge, unfamiliarity with the context and the structure of text coherence, and the inefficiency to understand the functions of discourse words (Sparks, 2012).

Thus, the literature review discusses the following aspects of reading comprehension and the problems highlighted in the research studies with a specific focus on the development of discourse in English as a Second language learning context.

- Vocabulary and Multiword Units (Section 2.2)
- Context in Reading Comprehension (Section 2.3)
- Structure of Text Coherence (Section 2.4)
- Functions of Discourse Words (Section 2.5)
- Focus of the Research Study (Section 2.6)

2.2 Vocabulary and Multiword Units (MWUS)

Learning a large amount of vocabulary is necessary for the development of reading skills. The lack of lexical knowledge mainly hinders the comprehension of a learner because a large number of them fail to know the meaning of unknown words used in a text. (Grabe, 2003) considers it necessary to know the maximum amount of words for developing reading fluency of a foreign text. He argues that “a reader should know 95% or more of the words encountered in a text for minimal comprehension, and these words need to be recognized automatically with minimal conscious effort” (Grobe 2003; p.280).

It therefore becomes important in the light of quoted statement that the foreign language readers should read extensively for developing vocabulary knowledge and comprehension skills.

Moreover, the vocabulary in discourse is not merely an occurrence of isolated words in a text. It includes multiword units which collectively form a pattern to convey authors' intended message and bring about coherence in a text. These multiword units are consisted of idioms and phrasal verbs formulating a string in a sentence to represent a single meaning that is used as a conventional form of speech. Its use in a text is either specific or a conventional one, for example, a watched pot never boils, by and large, to smell a rat; honesty is the best policy and no way. The use of such expressions in a text is as complicated as a slight change in the structure can distort the whole meaning of a text. On the pedagogical point of view, no one has yet been able to offer a truly satisfactory way of teaching them due to the cultural complexity of language implied in the context of a text (Schmitt, 2000).

They were of the opinion that the use of bilingual dictionaries in foreign language reading generally helped learners to know the meaning in their L1 on account of

providing the entries of words in English and their translated synonyms. Low proficient language learners may refer translations while the advanced ones can concentrate on English section. This teaching strategy involves the learners to know the lexical information offered by a dictionary and the said information have implications on raising awareness regarding the meaning and the use of words in a text.

2.3 Context in Reading Comprehension

According to Long and Richards (1987), “guessing vocabulary from context is perhaps the most important of the word attack skills. The students should be made aware of the number of language clues available to them when they are stopped by an unfamiliar word” (Long & Richards 1987, p. 240). Most efficient readers apply it unconsciously to deduce meaning from the context but the less proficient users may find it difficult and time-consuming activity due to the lack of interest and weak reading skills. However, applying context-based teaching approach in a reading class may train them using word attack technique to solve the underlying reading problems.

In an article on reading discourse, (Harmer, 1991) attaches importance to teaching of reactivating reading sub-skills like previewing, context, and background information. The learners have these skills in their own language but are less effective when exposed to reading in a foreign language. Generally, the English teachers teaching receptive skills need to make learners conscious of their natural ability. The consciousness raising factor may cognitively improve their reading efficiency, and may involve them to apply both the sub-skills for better comprehension of a text. It is therefore important to involve learners in context-based reading strategies for developing semantic efficiency to understand the background of a reading text.

(Nation 2003, p.271) discovers that guessing meaning of unknown words in context is one of the important reading strategies dealing with the semantic based activities of comprehending a text.

He states that “it involves learners consciously focusing on unknown words, interrupting their normal reading, and systematically drawing on the available clues to work out the unknown word’s meaning”. This process shifts learners’ reading focus from the ideas to the contextual clues of the passage to know the meaning of unfamiliar words determined by the context. Hence, it is a conscious mental activity which specifically focuses on guessing meaning from context and later becomes a regular practice of a learner’s memory.

(Nation, 2003) is of the opinion that there are a number of benefits of guessing practice such as, giving learners’ confidence to learn the meaning of unknown words, raising their awareness of contextual clues, and helping them to avoid unnecessary concentration on the structures to exactly guess the meaning. The structures may enlarge readers’ knowledge about the organizational pattern in the text but cannot help them understand the meaning of such syntactical formations. Therefore, understanding the sense or an idea becomes more important than knowing about the formation of structures.

Improving vocabulary through context-based activities is an unconscious reading strategy which fluently goes along with reading text information, but a planned attempt to learn only vocabulary includes learning of its other features like synonyms and antonyms. It alerts the readers about multiple meanings of a word at different places of a text and facilitates them to know the accurate one in the real language context. Thus, English as Second a Language Learners (ESL) may be

facilitated with such reading strategies to practice matching exercises for locating the synonyms of the words given in the textual activities (Nation, 2003).

2.4 Structure of Text Coherence

A text, it being scientific, literary or any other is composed of sentences and paragraphs. There are ideas, constructed in a way to transfer writer's intended message to the readers. The sequence of ideas makes a text coherent, and also helps in comprehending the information conveying meaning in the background of a text. As Koda (2005, p. 127), strongly argues that the "text is not an amalgamation of randomly ordered sentences. It is organized in ways that facilitate its message transmission to form coherent text representations so as the reader must understand the specific ways coherence relations among text elements are signaled both explicitly and implicitly". The message transmission includes sentences and discourse devices to make shifting in the ideas, and bring about connection between the sentences. Thus, it is the linking between different segments of text that creates a path way for the readers to read without hindrance.

In another study on text coherence, Koda, (2005) finds that a large number of foreign language learners generally lack knowledge regarding the structural aspects of text coherence. This knowledge is comprised of text segments, organization of information through the words, key sentences and paragraphs. These are collectively based on a pattern to formulate a sequence in the occurrence of topic sentence, main idea, and the conclusion. Identifying each segment in a reading text is an obligatory part of understanding the text coherence because many efficient readers follow the same pattern in all English texts.

Moreover, there are linguistic as well as organizational clues such as, linking words, headings, and sections contributing to the overall development of text

coherence. These clues perform certain specific functions of presenting the information in a way to show contradiction, comparison, additional information, and the connection between different ideas of a text. The English language teachers may raise learners' awareness of reading text organization and coherence based on the modern pedagogical strategies involving the learners to recognize the functions of linguistic clues used in English texts to become efficient readers (Grabe,2005).

2.5 Functions of Discourse Words

Discourse words play significant roles in the linking of information, logical sequence in the ideas, and the context used in a text. These functions are known as text guiding signals showing the connection, contradiction, comparison, and divergence in the arrangement of ideas. As in view of (Long & Richards 1987, p. 241), that the “discourse markers make students conscious of the effect of organization on the message of a writer”. He further elaborates that a writer makes use of discourse devices to convey his message to the readers but their primary purpose is to raise awareness regarding the discourse pattern of a text to understand that message. Thus, the foreign language learners need to develop comprehension skills and the ability to understand the meaning based on the functions of discourse words.

Furthermore, recognizing the sentence pattern to know how one idea leads to another improves upon the discourse learning but a large number of English as Second Language learners lack this ability, and need to be aware of the use of sentence connectors employed in a text as discussed by Harmer, (1991) in his work *The Practice of English Language Teaching*. He further highlights the importance of teaching reading discourse that facilitates the learners understanding of various functions being performed by the discourse markers employed in a text. Though,

most of the second language learners have reading discourse problems yet modern teaching can help them remove the underlying difficulties in comprehending English as a second language.

Reading discourse implies pedagogical implications on the language learning process, particularly the instructional strategies that involve the learners in knowing the use of reference words, comparisons, contradictions, and the role of other grammar structures in the context of a reading text. The teaching strategies not only ensure reading involvement but also cognitively impact upon the discourse learning as it improves comprehension, and enable the learners to acquire the language skills more proficiently. Furthermore, the instructions designed to raise contextual cues provide background information for deducing the underlying sense of a structure used in a text. It is therefore important for the second language readers to develop the comprehension ability of understanding the discourse as a process of knowing the meaning, and the use of language in different contexts focusing on the linking of sentences, coherence, and the shifting of ideas in a text (Schmitt, 2000).

Reading discourse however, is consisted of vocabulary, context, structure of text coherence, and the functions of sentence connectors contributing to establish text coherence, and perform certain linguistic functions in a text. As vocabulary in context gives an accurate meaning while the sentence connectors link the ideas to communicate information through text conveying meaning. Finally, the transference of information requires the readers to have a good understanding of reading discourse as an important aspect of comprehension skills, and the instructional design must emphasize the development of discourse through the text based activities. It is therefore strongly suggested in view of the literature reviewed that the English language teachers should involve the learners in reading based tasks for the

development of comprehension skills and the discourse understanding to deduce the underlying meaning in the context of a text (Schmitt, 2000 & Harmer, 1991).

2.6 Focus of the Research Study

Keeping in view the research insights discussed in the literature review (See Section 2.2, 2.3 and 2.4 for further details), the present study focuses on reading comprehension problems associated with the pedagogical practices and the materials used in a classroom (Bellet & Gursoy, 2008). The development of reading comprehension as indicated in box 'a' is closely associated with the pedagogical process highlighted in the box 'b' below (Zheng, 2014). The role of language teaching materials in box 'c' is also shown as the strongest indicator of engaging the learners in reading comprehension process (Zafar & Mahmood, 2015). Therefore, this research study shows that the development of reading comprehension is pedagogically associated with the effective teaching methods and materials used in a classroom.

Reading comprehension process

Bellet and Gursoy define reading as an ability to extract information, comprehend ideas, and build meaning from a text. This process involves interaction of the reader with a text to recognize words, process sentences, and interpret meaning from the lexical and syntactical clues available in a text. However, the learners' language learning background, strategic awareness, and the development of linguistic knowledge can significantly influence the overall comprehension of a text (Singhal, 2000). There are psychological and individual differences, such as the translation of text into mother tongue and the transference of knowledge from L1 into L2 are also responsible for the poor comprehension abilities. Therefore, the successful reading

comprehension can only take place when the learners are engaged in meaningful activities (Grabe, 2009).

Pedagogical Process

Pedagogical process refers to the methods and strategies applied to develop reading comprehension skills of the students in English as a Second Language context. The approaches to English Language Teaching (ELT) have undergone various development phases from Grammar Translation Method (GTM) to the development of Communicative Approach (CA) in language teaching contexts. A recently held view regarding the use of pedagogical process attaches importance to the comprehensible input provided through the language instructions in a classroom setting (Krashen & Terrel, 1983).

However, the traditional practice of reading skills in public sector colleges of Sindh focuses on loud reading and the translation of text in mother tongue (Dar, 2014). Thus, the pedagogical awareness among the English language teachers is necessary for applying the appropriate teaching strategies so as to facilitate reading comprehension skills (Nation, 2003). Nation, I. S. (2008). *Teaching ESL/EFL reading and writing*. Routledge.

Materials Evaluation

Language teaching and learning materials can significantly contribute the development of reading comprehension skills in English as a Second Language context. The materials evaluation is considered as an important aspect of surveying the language learning needs of the students in accordance with the textbooks used in classroom (Miekley, 2005). However, the prescribed textbooks used in public sector colleges of Sindh need to be evaluated to judge communicative aspects of language

learning, authenticity of selected texts, a wide range of linguistic and cognitive tasks included in the book (Naseem et al., 2015).

A number of texts in view of research insights are selected from political history, religion, literature and science, but the selection proves to be less effective because it provides old and outdated information (Dar, 2012). Therefore, a framework suggested by (Miekley, 2005) is designed to evaluate the JHS English lessons in terms of addressing language learning needs of the students.

The table below is the framework by Miekley 2005

Miekley's framework synthesizes prior frameworks (Byard, 2001; Skierso; 1991) and L2 reading research to provide a comprehensive evaluation tool. The framework address;

Category	Criteria/Focus areas
Textbook quality	Organization, authenticity, cultural representation, genre diversity and integration of reading strategies
Vocabulary and grammar	Logical sequencing and varied presentation methods, spaced repetition and strategy instruction.
Exercise and activities	Interactive, task based design promoting critical thinking and comprehension
Aesthetic and physical features	Visual appeal clarity and student engagement potential
Teacher's manual	Clarity of objective answer keys, methodological guidance and supplementary research
Contextual fit	Alignment with curriculum, learner profile and teacher capabilities.

The ESL textbook Evaluation checklist offers a balanced research informed approach to textbook selection. By integrating theoretical insights with practical criteria, it empowers educators to make informed, context-appropriate choices, enhancing both teaching effectiveness and students learning outcome.

2.7 The Concept of Reading

1. The Nature of Reading

Reading is one of the four skills in English learning. Reading is considered to have a more important role than the others. Reading is more than merely referring to the activity of pronouncing the printed material or following each line of written page because it involves various kinds of activity. It is needed as a tool of communication in written language. Reading is the most important way which is vital in processing information. Reading to get information is the most important purpose that the learner may have in learning English. Because of the great emphasis placed on long assignment in textbooks and reference books, reading ability is an important determiner of school success.

Deboer and Dallmann (1966, p.17) argue that reading is an activity which involves the comprehension and the interpretation of ideas symbolized by written or printed language.

In line with (Aebersold & Field, 1997) define that reading is what happens when people look at a text and assign meaning to the written symbols in that text. Further, the text and the reader are the two physical necessities for the reading process to begin. So, there is an interaction between the reader and the text that contribute actual meaning.

According to Williams (1984) reading is a process whereby one looks at and understands what has been written. The key word here is “understand”–

merely reading aloud without understanding does not count as reading. Besides, (Walberg, 2003) states that reading is about understanding written texts.

It is a complex activity that involves both perception and thought. Reading consists of two related processes: word recognition and comprehension. Word recognition refers to the process of perceiving how written symbols correspond to one's spoken language. Comprehension is the process of making sense of words, sentences, and connected text.

Moreover, Goodman in (William 1984, p.3) defines reading as a psycholinguistic guessing game. The "guessing" however, is far from random. It is principles guessing which draws upon two sources to guide it. First, the text itself and second, what the readers bring to text. It means that before the reader reads the text and he had already had his own concept. After he reads the text, the reader relates his own concept with the text message.

Based on the definitions above, it can be concluded that reading is the process of bringing a concept to the text and relating it with the meaning got from the text including understanding the material and giving interpretation of this process.

2. Reading Comprehension

The result of reading activity is understanding what has been read. Reading without understanding what has been read is useless. Reading cannot be separated from comprehension. One must comprehend the text in order to understand and interpret the written symbols. In Bloomfield taxonomy, there is a level of cognitive domain, namely comprehension which is a type of understanding, such that the individual knows what is being communicated. The following are the definitions of reading comprehension proposed by some experts.

Reading comprehension is a multi-component, highly complex process that involves many interactions between readers and what they bring to the text (previous knowledge, strategy use) as well as variables related to the text itself (interest in text, understanding of text types). He also states that reading comprehension is not only the process of reading the words correctly but also the reader has to understand what they say. In fact, the reader not only need to understand what they sat but also must be able to go beyond the literal meaning of the text, think critically about the message, appreciate what the author is trying to say and understand when the reader does not understand.

According to Robinson (1941, p.140) comprehension accuracy in reading is determined by dividing the number of questions a student answers correctly by number of questions asking about the material he has read.

Besides, Jenkins et. al in Klingner (2007, p.12) state that reading comprehension is a complex process of constructing meaning by coordinating a number of skills related to decoding, word reading, and fluency and the integration of background knowledge, vocabulary, and previous experiences.

In addition, Walberg (2003, p.6) states that comprehension is the process of making sense of words, sentences and connected text.

Readers typically make use of background knowledge, vocabulary, grammatical knowledge, experience with text and other strategies to help them understand written text.

From the ideas above it can be concluded that reading comprehension is the power to get an idea or meaning from a written text, understand it according to experiential background or prior knowledge, and interpret it with the reader's needs and purposes by using such strategies to help them understand written material.

3. The Elements of Reading

Reading has some elements; those elements of reading are:

1. Phonemic Awareness is the ability to hear, identify and manipulate the individual sounds – phonemes – in spoken words.
2. Phonics is the understanding that there is a predictable relationship between phonemes (the sounds of the spoken language) and graphemes (the letters and spellings that represent those sounds in written language).
3. Vocabulary refers to the words we must know to communicate effectively. In general, vocabulary can be described as oral vocabulary and reading vocabulary. Oral vocabulary refers to words we use in speaking or recognize in listening. Reading vocabulary refers to words we recognize or use in print.
4. Fluency is the ability to read a text accurately and quickly. When fluent readers read silently, they recognize words automatically. They group words quickly to help them gain meaning from what they read. Fluent readers read aloud effortlessly and with expression. Their reading sounds natural, as if they are speaking.
5. Comprehension is the reason for reading. If readers can read the words but do not understand what they are reading, they are not really reading.

4. The Purpose of Reading

According to Deboer and Dalman (1966, p.24) the kind of reading a person does will usually depend upon his purpose. He may read for pure recreation and enjoyment or he may read to study. Ideally, he will find pleasure in study-type reading too, but his approach, attitude, and technique will be different. He may read to find the answer to a question or the solution of a problem, to learn the main idea of

a selection or some specific items of information, to discover the outcome of a series of events. For all of these purposes he employs different methods in his reading.

Wallace (1996, p.6-7) classifies the purposes of reading based on the personal reasons as follows:

a. Reading for survival

Reading for survival is reading a text that is very crucial for life. Survival reading serves immediate needs or wishes. For example, a warning sign, an admonition sign, an instruction sign, and etcetera.

b. Reading for Learning

It is expected to be exclusively school-related. Reading is intended to support learning. The reader needs to “translate” the text, literally or metaphorically, to learn vocabulary, to identify “useful” structures or collocations, to use a text as a model for writing and to practice pronunciation. For example, one reads a text loudly, then analyzes it and makes the same kind of text.

c. Reading for pleasure

While reading for survival involves an immediate response to a situation and reading for learning is also goal oriented, albeit in a rather different way, reading for pleasure is done for its own sake. Reading for pleasure is reading to get happiness. The reader wants to enjoy the sound, and rhythm or rhyme of the text. The text being read is written originally to offer enjoyment. For example, read narrative texts.

In addition, Walberg (2003, p.15) argues that there are many different purposes for reading. A reader reads a text to understand its meaning, as well as to put that understanding to use. A person reads a text to learn, to find out information, to be entertained, to reflect or as religious practice. The purpose for reading is

closely connected to a person's motivation for reading. It will also affect the way a book is read.

5. Reading Model

There are complementary ways of processing a text. They are both used whenever we read; sometimes one predominates, sometimes the other, but both are needed. And, though normally unconscious processes, both can be adopted as conscious strategies by the readers approaching a difficult word. Barnett in Aebbersold and Field, (1997, p.18) states that there are three main models of how reading occurs:

1. **Bottom-up-theory** argues that the reader constructs the text from the smallest unit (letters to words to phrases to sentences, etc.) and that the process of constructing the text from those small units becomes so automatic that readers are not aware of how it operates (Eskey 1988, Stannovich 1990).

2. **Top-down-theory** argues that readers bring a great deal of knowledge, expectations, assumptions, and questions to the text and, given a basic understanding of the vocabulary they continue to read as long as the text confirms their expectations (Goodman, 1967). The top-down school of reading theory argues that readers fit the text into knowledge (cultural, syntactic, linguistic, and historical) they already possess, then check back when new or unexpected information appears.

3. **The interactive learning** argues that both top-down and bottom-up processes are occurring, either alternately or at the same time. These theorists describe a process that moves bottom-up and top-down, depending on the type of text as well as on the reader's background knowledge, language proficiency level, motivation, strategy use, and culturally shape beliefs about reading.

6. Reading Technique

Reading technique plays an important role in understanding a reading material. It facilitates students who want to read efficiently in order to comprehend the text. (Brown 1994, p.291-296) offers some strategies in reading comprehension as follow:

1. Identify the purpose in reading

1. Efficient reading consists of clearly identifying the purpose in reading something. By doing so, the readers know what the readers are looking for and can weed out potential distracting information. The readers should make sure that they know their purpose in reading something.
2. Use graphemic rules and patterns to aid in bottom-up decoding (for beginning levels). At the beginning levels of learning English, one of the difficulties students encounter in learning to read is making the correspondences between spoken and written English. Hints, pointers on such pattern and a multitude of other phonics approaches to reading can prove to be useful for teaching children and non-literate adults.
3. Use efficient silent reading techniques for relatively rapid comprehension (for intermediate to advanced levels) in this case the readers don't need to pronounce each word to his or her self. The readers try to visually perceive more than one word at a time preferably phrases. Unless a word is absolutely crucial to global understanding, skip over it and try to infer its meaning through its context.
4. Skimming consists of quickly running one's eyes across a whole text to get the gist. Skimming give readers the advantage of being able to predict the purpose of the passage, the main topic or message, and possibly some of the developing or supporting ideas. This gives them a „head start“ as they embark on more focused reading.

5. Scanning; the second in the “most valuable” category is scanning, or quickly searching for some particular piece or pieces of information in a text. Scanning exercises may ask reader to look for the names or dates, to find a definition of a key concept, or to list a certain number of supporting details. The purpose of scanning is to extract certain specific information without reading the whole text.
6. Semantic mapping or clustering: The strategy of semantic mapping, or grouping ideas into meaningful clusters, helps the reader to provide some order to the chaos. Making such semantic maps can be done individually. Early drafts of these maps can be quite messy which is perfectly acceptable.
7. Guessing: This is an extremely broad category. Learners can use guessing to their advantage to guess the meaning of a word, grammatical relationship, infer implied meaning, to guess about cultural reference and the content message. The readers should utilize all their skills and put forth as much effort as possible to be on target with their hypothesis. The key to successful guessing is to make it reasonably accurate.
8. Vocabulary analysis: One way for readers to make guessing pay off when they don't know immediately recognize a word is to analyze it in terms of what they know about it.
9. Distinguish between literal and implied meanings: This requires the application of sophisticated top-down processing skills. The fact that not all language can be interpreted appropriately by attending to its literal, syntactic surface structure makes special demands on readers. Implied meaning usually has to be derived from processing pragmatic information.
10. Capitalize on discourse makers to process relationship: There are many discourse makers in English that signal relationships among ideas as expressed through

phrases, clauses, and sentences. A clear comprehension of such markers can greatly enhance readers' reading efficiency.

7. Macro and Micro Skill of Reading

According to (Brown 2004, p.291) there are two categories of reading skill. They are macro and micro skill. These are of what the students of ESL need to do in order to become efficient readers.

a. Micro Skill of Reading

1. Discriminate among the distinctive graphemes and orthographic pattern of English.
2. Retain chunks of language of different length in short-term memory.
3. Process writing at an efficient rate of speed to suit the purpose.
4. Recognize a core of words and interpret word order pattern and their significance.
4. Recognize grammatical word classes (nouns, verbs, etc.), system (e.g., tense, agreement, and pluralization), patterns, rules, and elliptical forms.
5. Recognize that a particular meaning may be expressed in different grammatical forms.
6. Recognize cohesive devices in written discourse and their role in signaling the relationship between and among clauses.

b. Macro Skill

1. Recognize the rhetorical forms of written discourse and their significance for interpretation.
2. Recognize the communicative functions of written texts, according to form and purpose.
3. Infer context that is not explicit by using background knowledge.

4. From events, ideas, etc., described, infer links and connections between events, deduce causes and effect such relations as main idea, supporting idea, new information, given information, generalization, and exemplification.
5. Distinguish between literal and implied meanings.
6. Detect culturally specific references and interpret them in a context of the appropriate cultural schemata.
7. Develop of reading strategies, such as scanning and skimming, detecting discourse markers, guessing the meaning of words from the context, and activating schemata for the interpretation of text.

Besides, (Aebersold & Field 1997, p.16) also define that the students can comprehend the text if they are able to:

1. Recognize words quickly
2. Analyze unfamiliar words
3. Guess about the meaning of the text
4. Understand the relationship between the parts of a text
5. Distinguish main ideas from minor idea
6. Use context to build meaning and aid comprehension

Moreover, (Mikulecky, 1990) lists some of reading skills that foster the thinking processes which the students need to develop in order to comprehend reading material.

These skills of reading are as follows:

1. Being able to recognize a word at glance
2. Recognize the topic or finding out what the text is about
3. Classify ideas into main topic and details

4. Identifying the relationship between ideas
5. Recognize and using pronouns, reference and interpret them in a context
6. Guessing the meaning of unknown word from the context

Based on the definition above it can be concluded that reading is an activity of bringing a concept to the text and relating it with the meaning got from the text including understanding the material and giving responses as interpretation of this process which is marked by the ability of the readers to find the main idea of the text, find details information in a text, guess unfamiliar words during reading, detect specific references, and find implied information of the text.

8. Teaching Reading

According to the Brown, teaching is showing or helping someone to learn how to do something, providing with the knowledge, causing to know or understanding (Brown, 1994). According to this statement, it can be concluded that in teaching activity, the teachers are not only demanded to give the material and the task, but also asked to guide the students in doing the task, finding and correcting the mistakes they made and to help them develop their knowledge.

Teaching reading is not only giving the text to the students but also building their consciousness of reading skill. (Harmer 1998, p.68) states that there are many reasons why getting students to read English text is very important of the teacher's job. Teaching reading should be the main priority for the teachers to be considered when the students begin to study.

According to (Harmer 1998, p.69) there are some principles behind the teaching of reading as follows:

1. Reading is not a passive skill

The teacher should motivate the students to be active in reading. The teacher can ask the students to guess what the text is going to, what the word means.

2. Students need to be engaged with what they are reading

Students who are not engaged with reading will not be actively interested in what they are doing. Students need a topic that is really interesting for them.

3. Students should be encouraging to respond to the content of a reading text, not just the language

Students must be given a chance to respond the message of texts in some ways. It is especially important that they should be allowed to express their feelings about the topic.

4. Prediction is a major factor in reading

Teachers should give the students “hints” so that they can predict what’s coming to. The hint process will start our brain to predict what we are going to read. Expectations are set up and the active process of reading is ready to begin.

5. Match the task to the topic

Teachers need to choose good reading task. Asking boring and inappropriate question can undermine the most interesting text, the most commonplace passage can be made really exciting with imaginative and challenging task.

Besides, (Harmer 1991, p.189) also states that there are five basic stages in teaching reading as receptive skill as follows:

1. Lead-in

Here the students and the teacher prepare themselves for the task and familiarize with the topic of reading exercise. One of the major reasons for this is to create expectations and arouse the students' interest in the subject matter of the written text.

2. Teachers direct comprehension task

Here the teacher makes sure that the students know what they are going to do. This is where the teacher explains and directs the students' purpose for reading.

3. Students read for a task

The students then read to a text to perform the task the teacher has set.

4. Teachers direct feedback

When the students have performed the task, the teacher will help the students to see if they have completed the task successfully and will find out how well they have done. This may follow a stage in which students check their answers with each other first.

5. Teacher directs text-related task

The teacher will then probably organize some kinds of follow-up task related to the text.

C. Hypothesis

Based on the review of the literature review and the rationale, the hypothesis of this study can be formulated as follows that effective methods can improve students' reading comprehension.

Summary

It has been shown that comprehension comprises both understanding of words and engaging a text with the goal of creating a mental representation of the idea. As a result, comprehension of a text demands multiple skills from the reader. It has also been shown that complexity of the text also affects the comprehension of the reader.

2.8 Related Studies

Hartney, (2011) in a recent study investigated reading difficulties in English as a second language of grade 3 learners in one primary school in the Khomas education region of Namibia. Hartney used mixed-methods approach in the case study which reveals that many children lack proper reading skills and they cannot read properly.

In another study, Qrgez and Ab Rashid (2017) discuss as a foreign language (EFL) reading comprehension difficulties faced by students at a university in Jordan. The researchers obtained data using questionnaires. The questionnaires were administered to 200 students at Yarmouk University. The questionnaire consists of two parts: the first part contains demographic information about the participants and the second part includes two sections: the students' preferences and the students' reading difficulties. The findings of the study indicated that the respondents were motivated to learn as they are in dire need for acquiring English. In spite of their motivation to learn, however, they were confronted with several challenges in reading process, which include ambiguous words, unfamiliar vocabulary and limited available time to cognitively process the text.

Radil (2020), in a study that investigated the reading skills of English as a Second Language in Students of Tidar University. This study sought to examine the problems and to identify the strategies of reading that could be adopted by the

learners to help them overcome their reading problems. The study adopted a descriptive qualitative approach that employed a questionnaire to obtain the data for the research. The findings of the study showed that the problems the learners faced include difficulty when they had to comprehend the texts, difficulty in connecting the ideas the words convey. The result revealed that the strategies the learners employ when confronted with reading difficulties were the use of dictionary, contextual cues, using scanning and skimming techniques, and trying to predict the content of the text. The findings also indicated that to comprehend the texts, the learners needed to master the vocabulary or use formation word (context clue) to predict meaning of words. They also have to predict the content by using the key words in the texts.

The current study therefore seeks to investigate reading hindrances among students of Kade SDA JHS 1 pupils and explore some strategies that can be adopted to improve reading.

2.9 Conclusion

This chapter presented the literature on reading comprehension among students'. Thus, difficulties learners of English as a Second Language face in the course of learning. Aspect of reading comprehension has been highlighted. Different studies on reading comprehension has been reviewed in an attempt to ascertain the factors that impedes learners of English as a Second Language from achieving appreciable reading skills.

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This chapter discusses the research design, population and sample. It also covers the research instrument used and procedure for carrying out the study. Finally, the method of data analysis was also discussed. The aim of the study was to investigate the reading comprehension hindrances among students of Kade SDA JHS.

3.2 Study area

The study was conducted in Kwaebibirem Municipality in the Eastern Region of Ghana. There are one hundred and seven (107) public basic schools in the Municipal Assembly. All these schools have been categorized into seven (7) circuits. The circuits are: Kade 'A' circuit, Kade 'B' circuit (Kade circuit), Abaam circuit, Atobriso circuit, Asuom circuit, Takyiman circuit and Otumi circuit.

The study was conducted in Kade SDA JHS, which is in the Kade 'A' Circuit. Kade SDA JHS was easily accessible to the researcher and provided a suitable context to explore the research questions. The school has a large number of JHS students who are at a critical stage in their academic development because the JHS 1 is the entry point to taking their first certificate examination (BECE).

In the circuit where the school is located, there are about six government basic schools. Pupils to teacher ratio approximately 35:1. Many of the pupils in the school and even the circuit prefer to use the local language thus, (Akuapem Twi) instead of the English language. Most of the teachers try to blend the L1 and L2 but in the end, end up using the L1 throughout the lesson.

3.3 Research approach

This research used qualitative research approach to investigate reading comprehension among pupils of Kade SDA JHS in the Kwaebibirem Municipality. Creswell and Poth (2018), have observed that, qualitative research begins with certain assumptions and it employ interpretative framework to explain the research problems, address the meanings individual or group of people ascribe to social or human problem. According to Cresswell (2013), researchers who conduct their studies within the qualitative research approach adapt an emerging qualitative approach to enquiry whereby data is collected in the natural setting which is sensitive to the people and the places under study, and undertake the analysis of the data both inductively and deductively in order to establish pattern. The researcher adapted this approach for this study because it enables the researcher to collect data from the field where the research participants experience the problem been studied. Additionally, using a qualitative approach offers the researcher the opportunity to conveniently collect the studies data through interview sections from the research participant in a very convenient manner.

3.4 Research design

Mouton (2005, p.55) describes a research design as a plan or blueprint of how one intends to conduct the research, while for McMillan and Schumacher (2016) describes it as how the study will be conducted. It summarizes the procedure for conducting the study including when, from whom and under what conditions the data will be obtained. It is also a general plan of how the research is set up, what happens to the subjects and what methods of data collection are used. Creswell (2014, p.297) refers to the research design as “distinguishing features used by qualitative approach.

The various designs used by qualitative researchers will differ, depending on the purpose of the study, the nature of the research questions and the resources available to the researcher. For this study, the study employed a case study design. Creswell and Creswell (2018, p.475) define case study as a mode of exploration of a bounded system based on the extensive data collection. For this study the researcher collected extensive data on the study's participants. Such data often includes observations and interviews. The researcher spent an extended time on the site and interacted regularly with the participants, recorded details about the context surrounding the case, information on the physical environment and the classroom. In this research, the researcher used observation and interview.

3.5 Population

It is a group of potential participants to whom the research wants to generalize the results of a study (Owu-ewie, 2014, p.23). The target population for the study was 297 JHS students and 12 teachers of SDA JHS. The population for this study constitutes pupils of SDA JHS of the Kwaebibirem Municipal Assembly in the Eastern part of Ghana. This population comprised the pupils in both A and B classes, from basic 7 to basic 9.

3.6 Sample

A sample is a group of people, objects, or items that are taken from a larger population for measurement. The sample should be representative of the population to ensure that we can generalize the findings from the research sample as a whole. It is the process of selecting units from the population from which they were chosen (William, 2006). The population is large so there is always the need to get a feasible size to be able to conduct a meaningful research work.

The population will be too large for the researcher to attempt to study all its members, so a small but carefully chosen sample can be chosen to represent it and reflects the characteristics of those from which it is drawn (Statpac, 2009, p.11). In this study 30 JHS 1 students and 3 teachers were chosen for the students.

3.7 Sampling techniques

According to Tuckman (1999), sampling technique is the process of selecting a suitable sample or part of the population for the purpose or part of a population for the purpose of determining parameters or characteristics of the whole population. Purposive sampling was used for the study.

According to Schwandt (2001), purposive sampling involves deliberately choosing specific sites or cases because there is a compelling reason to believe that the activities or occurrences in those locations.

The purposive sampling technique was used by the researcher in extracting the study participant. A small sample of teachers are selected because they are English language teachers responsible for teaching English language in Kade SDA JHS.

According to Avoke (2005), purposive sampling technique enables the researcher to handpick the cases to be included in the sample based on the researcher's judgement of typicality. Additionally, Fraenkel and Wallen (2009), explained that, in purposive sampling technique, the researcher uses his or her judgement to select a sample that he/she consider based on prior information will provide the needed data. Regarding these reasons, the researcher employed purposive sampling to guide the selection of participant for the study.

3.8 Data collection instruments

According to Creswell (2014), data collection instruments refer to tools or techniques that researchers use to gather data from study participants or sources. For this study on reading comprehension among students of Kade SDA JHS, the researcher employed the use of documentary review, interview guide and class observation as data collection instruments.

3.8.1 Observation Guide

The students and teachers were observed by the researcher using the observation checklist. In this case, the students from JHS 1 were observed as to whether they are able to read text and comprehend them in English language as compared to their L1. The researcher observed whatever done by the English teachers related to the teacher strategies in teaching reading comprehension in the classroom. It was used to investigate the English teaching and learning process in the classroom. It recorded English teaching process that was conducted by the English teachers.

Another qualitative part of this study is to conduct classroom observations of the teachers teaching English as compulsory subject at Kade SDA JHS Students in the Kwaebibirem Municipality. This research tool is designed to collect data from the classrooms for assessing the current pedagogical practices, teaching skills, linguistic awareness, and the professional development to teach English as a Second Language (ESL) in academic context (Bellet & Gursoy, 2008). Thus, the research tool employed in the study mainly focuses on teaching reading practice, students (pupils) reading text comprehension, and teaching reading discourse to the students of JHS level (Carrel et al, 1983).

Teaching reading practice: The first part of classroom observation comprised seven parts mentioned below:

- lesson planning
- reading tasks
- independent reading
- pair work/group work
- lecture information
- translating text
- loud reading

Students reading comprehension and teaching reading practice highlighted as a main category critically provides the descriptive accounts of the prevalent methods and strategies used by the teachers teaching reading skills to the students of JHS level. Using lesson planning, reading tasks, and independent reading as subcategories gather data on the important aspects of reading instructions because these strategies can involve the learners in the activities necessary for developing the comprehension skills (Galton et al., 1999). Whereas, the lecture information, translating text, and loud reading explore the traditional practice of teaching reading skills in the classroom context. Therefore, the main category specified as teaching reading practice investigates the current pedagogical practices applied by the teachers teaching English a compulsory subject at JHS level.

Students' reading text comprehension: The second part of classroom observation checklist is followed by following subcategories:

- brainstorming
- background information
- key ideas

- vocabulary learning
- guessing meaning
- locating information
- long sentences

Teaching reading text comprehension is followed by seven subcategories displaying the major aspects of text instructions in a foreign language classroom setting (Patton, 1990). It involves a close investigation of brainstorming, background information, and key ideas as the essential strategies of teaching text comprehension in English Language Reading research (Duke & Pearson, 2002). Additionally, the observation checklist provides critical insights regarding the use of instructional strategies employed by the teachers teaching JHS English Textbook. Thus, the subcategories obtain data from the practice of teaching reading skills so as to confirm the use of comprehension strategies by the students learning the prescribed textbook (Bellet & Gursoy, 2008).

In view of the past studies on English as a Second Language(ESL) Reading research, the teaching of key ideas, vocabulary learning, guessing meaning, locating information, and long sentences help to familiarize the learners with the structure of text and its comprehension (e.g., Bakken et al., 2002). However, the insights from the observation can reveal the lack of above strategies in the classrooms as the teachers are generally unaware of the instructional strategies used to develop text comprehension skills. Therefore, the investigation of students reading text comprehension and teaching text comprehension in classroom observation may reveal the existing of pedagogical strategies used by the teachers in public sector schools of Ghana (Pearson & Rodriguez, 2002).

Students reading discourse: The third part of classroom observation checklist is followed by following subcategories:

- contextual clues
- deep meaning
- text organization
- discourse word
- constructing meaning

Teaching reading discourse intends to investigate the use of contextual clues, deep meaning, text organization, discourse words, fact and opinion, constructing meaning, identifying text, detailed reading, and shifting of ideas by the teachers in a classroom (Grabe, 2008). The past studies have revealed that the learners in English as a Second Language (FLL) need to be efficient in understanding the context of language used in a text. The first four categories reflect the importance of discourse activities essential for understanding the deep meaning with the help of using contextual cues in the text. However, the evaluation of observation data can reveal the lack of familiarity with the text organization because many studies indicate the use of teaching grammar without integration of reading skills in classroom activities (Ting & Tee, 2008).

Another set of strategies included in the observation show the valuable insights regarding the various functions of sentence connectors linking information in a text. The discourse strategies can raise learners' awareness to evaluate the texts based on the facts and opinion in reading comprehension (Grabe, 2008). However, teaching reading through translation method may fail to develop comprehension skills because the learners cannot deduce meaning from language context of a text (Koda, 2007). The data from teaching reading discourse may highlight the key issues faced

by the learners in developing critical thinking skills to understand the discourse of a text. Therefore, the third part of classroom observation checklist investigates the use of discourse strategies in teaching the JHS level to the students of public sector schools, Ghana.

3.8.2 Interview Guide

Interview guide was prepared with the help of my supervisor, researcher used a semi-structured interview to guide the data collection process. The interview was done with the English teachers after the teaching and learning process was done. This interview was conducted to gain a spoken respond from the participants. To ensure effective interview, the researcher applied the following techniques as cited in De Vos et. al. (2005, p. 293).

Table 3.1: Interview technique by De Vos et. al. (2005, p. 293).

Technique	Description
Semi-structured interviews	Flexible open-ended questioning for depth
Five stage process	Preparation, conducting the interview, termination, post interview reflection, and data saturation
Rapport building onset	Informal opening to ease participant
Naturalistic steering and probing	Encourage depth, maintain focus gently
Language and cultural adaptability	Respect linguistic and cultural nuances
Flexible recording methods	Note taking often preferred in sensitive cases

In conclusion, this research will provide a comprehensive understanding of the factors contributing to reading comprehension difficulties and inform the development of effective intervention to address these difficulties.

3.9 Data analysis procedure

The data gathered from the observation were organized, synthesized, and broken into manageable parts for searching the patterns and themes, for it is a method generally followed to discover the important insights from raw data which deeply decides/guides what to convey to others as a mode of reality and innovation (Bodgan & Bicklen, 1982). The themes emerged out of raw data were obtained through an analytical procedure known as the inductive analysis in qualitative research paradigm (Patton, 1990). Therefore, the data collected from the research context were thoughtfully coded and categorized for the critical analysis and interpretation of the results.

The analysis initially involved and examined the data on the basis of main categories representing the codes as sub categories for the description of critical themes that emerged out of the recorded data. Each main category followed by the sub categories provided an overall description of the pedagogical strategies applied to teach reading skills to the students of Kade SDA JHS. Further, the teaching strategies were coded to reflect upon the thematic analysis of the data obtained from the classroom observations of the teachers teaching reading comprehension (Anmarkrud & Braten, 2012; Ness, 2011).

Coding scheme in the analysis was mainly developed from the past studies on the evidence based practices applied to teach reading comprehension skills to English as a Second Language learners (Zheng, 2014, p. 71). The codes employed in the subcategories were formed from the observation guide to indicate the description of frequently used teaching reading strategies in English as a Second Language learning context (e.g. Galton, Hargreaves, Comber,). However, the observers' comments in the

analysis revealed the prevalent pedagogical practices in terms of teaching reading skills to English as a Second Language learners.

Moreover, the main categories in the analysis indicated three important aspects of teaching reading text comprehension included from the research instrument. Each part of the analysis used four major categories titled such as, (I) main Categories, (II) sub categories, (III) description, and (IV) comments. The main categories focused on Teaching Reading Practice, and Teaching Reading Comprehension, while the sub categories were formed from the statement items for the description and the interpretation of the results. Hence, the section below elaborates the procedure, format, and the structure involved in the analysis of qualitative data obtained from the classroom observations of the teachers teaching reading comprehension at Kade SDA JHS.

3.10 Validity and reliability

In this study, validity was addressed by ensuring that the findings genuinely reflected the reading comprehension experiences of the participants. Data were collected through multiple sources, including classroom observations, semi-structured interviews, and analysis of students' comprehension exercises, to allow for triangulation. Member checking was employed by sharing emerging interpretations with selected students and their teachers to verify accuracy and authenticity. Rich, thick descriptions of classroom interactions and reading activities were provided to give a detailed context for interpreting the results.

Reliability, conceptualized in qualitative research as dependability, was enhanced through maintaining a comprehensive audit trail documenting all stages of the research process, including data collection procedures, thematic coding decisions, and analytical steps. A clear coding framework for identifying reading strategies and

comprehension challenges was developed and applied consistently. Peer debriefing with a fellow researcher was used to review the coding and thematic interpretations, ensuring consistency and reducing researcher bias. These measures collectively contributed to the trustworthiness of the study, providing a credible and dependable account of the reading comprehension processes observed.

3.11 Ethical consideration

The study adhered strictly to the ethical protocol, data collection and analysis. Prior to the collection of data, the researcher who is also a staff in the school submitted official letter and introductory letter from the Department of Applied Linguistics of the University of Education, Winneba to the Education Office in the Kwaebibirem Municipality where approval was granted by the municipal directorate. The researcher sent a copy of the permission letter, official letter and the introductory letter to the School Improvement Support Officer (SISO) for Kade “A” and the headteacher of Kade SDA JHS. Consent form was later sent to all the participants who agreed to take part in the study. Under no circumstance was each of the participants coerced to respond to the interview. The purpose of the research was communicated to the respondents. More especially, they were assured that the information they would provide would be meant solely for academic purposes.

3.12 Summary

The chapter explained clearly how the various methods employed helped in identifying the challenges in reading comprehension among students. This was followed by an explanation of the research study. This approach is considered most suitable to analyzing the problem as will be developed in the subsequent chapters.

CHAPTER 4

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

4.1 Introduction

The previous chapter discussed in detail the research methodology, research approach, research design and the research tools employed in this study. The study used thirty students and three teachers (participants) for data analysis. The analysis of data provides measures from the observation and interview from the case study.

RQ1: What are the causes of reading difficulties among learners of Kade SDA JHS 1 Students?

Part-I of the interview (Reading Hindrances) deals with the problems frequently discussed in English as a Second language reading research (Hung, 2015, Rahman, 2004, Zhang & Seepho, 2013). These hindrances are generally caused by the lack of vocabulary development, faulty reading habits, and the traditional practice of teaching reading skills in English as a Second language classes. Besides learners' reading hindrances, the existing pedagogical practices may be less effective to develop comprehension skills taught through the textbook reading activities. One possible reason could be the lack of skill development and guidance for the learners to employ comprehension strategies in reading text independently in classroom context. Hence, the items in the first part of the interview investigate the hindrances causing the lack of competence and skill development in reading comprehension of a text at JHS level.

Part-II of the interview (Reading Text Comprehension) includes eleven items on a range of multiple reading strategies discussed by Gursory, (2010) and the factors underlying poor comprehension in English as a Second Language (Komiyana, 2009).

These strategies can involve the learners in comprehension activities to guess meaning from context, understand main ideas, and locate the specific information in reading text. In English as a Second language learning, these strategies are employed as the important ways and means to build meaning from connected text. However, the learners lacking comprehension strategies often use translation to understand meaning into L1 but it hinders comprehension and also distorts the underlying meaning in context. Therefore, the second part of the interview aims to explore the problems in acquiring reading comprehension skills and the strategies through the prescribed textbook of English at JHS level.

4.2 Participants' Demographics

Table 4.1: Number of years taught

Number of years taught	Number of respondents	School
1-5	1	Kade SDA JHS
Above 5 years	2	Kade SDA JHS
Total	3	

Table 4.1 presents the demographic characteristics by the number of years respondents have been teaching in the school Kade SDA JHS. The distributions show that one English language teacher has been in the school for less than five years and two of the teachers have taught for over five years in the school.

Table 4.2: Respondents gender demographics

Gender	Number of respondents	School
Male	1	Kade SDA JHS
Female	2	Kade SDA JHS
Total	3	

from table 4.2, there are two female teachers and one male teacher.

Table 4.3: Respondents professional background

Professional Qualification	Number of respondents	School
Degree	3	Kade SDA JHS

Table 4.3 presents demographic characteristics of respondents by professional qualification. It can be observed that, all the respondents have first degree certificates.

Table 4.4: Demographic characteristics of pupils by gender.

Gender	Number of Pupils	Schol
Male	13	Kade SDA JHS
female	17	Kade SDA JHS
Total	30	

Table 4.4 shows that the pupil respondents for the study comprise of thirteen males and seventeen females. This means more females participated in the study than males.

Part-I Analysis

4.3 Reading hindrances

The table 4.5 below provides analysis of reading hindrances eliciting information from thirty participants on interview for nine statement items given in the first part of the interview (Kothari, 2006). Each interview item in the analysis provides percentage of the problems frequently encountered by the learners in Foreign Language Reading Comprehension (FLRC).

Table 4.5: Analysis of Reading Hindrances

Reading hindrances	All Participants
Statement Item	Percentage
Limited Vocabulary	20.0
Poor Phonemic Awareness	30.4
Weak Decoding Skills.	26.7
Insufficient Background Knowledge	30.0
Language Barriers	20.1
Poor Reading Fluency	23.0
Lack of Reading Motivations	37.1
Learning Difficulties	26.7
Environmental Distraction	37.1

From table 4.5, out of the thirty (30) students, only six (6) of the respondents which represent 20% could understand the vocabulary in the various text. This means that, majority of the learners have limited vocabulary and it prevents them from understanding key words in a text.

It can also be observed from table 4.5, that out of the thirty (30) participants interviewed nine (9) of them which represents 30%. Are able to identify and manipulate sounds. This indicates they have weak phonemic awareness which slows word recognition. There is the importance of sound recognition for decoding and fluency.

Also the findings from table 4.5 shows that only 20.1% of the participants did not have challenges with language barrier. This means that one third of the participants encounter language barriers when reading text. These barriers limit

access to text meaning, slow down comprehension and reduce confidence in reading. Addressing them requires intentional bilingual strategies, explicit vocabulary teaching and culturally responsive instructional practices that ease the transition between learners first language and language of instruction.

The data shows that, 23.7% which represents seven out of the thirty participants can read fluently. This underscores the importance of fluency as a central component of comprehension since fluency bridges word recognition and meaning-making, learners with poor fluency face disrupted comprehension and reduced motivation.

The study revealed that, 37.1% of learners had the motivation to read, this represents eleven (11) out of the thirty (30) students. Motivation is central to reading development since it influences the amount and quality of reading practice. Learners who find reading uninteresting, irrelevant or too difficult often disengage, leading to reduced fluency, weaker vocabulary growth and limited comprehension (Wigfield & Guthrie, 1997). This finding suggest that motivational barriers may outweigh purely linguistics challenges, as discouraged learners are less likely to persist in reading tasks.

The table revealed also that, only 26.7% of learners do not experience learning difficulties making it a significant barrier to reading comprehension. Learning difficulties such as dyslexia and other cognitive processing challenges, often manifesting in persistence problems with decoding, fluency and comprehension (Snowling & Hulme, 2012).

These difficulties limit learners' ability to acquire automatic word recognition and may lead to frustration and the avoidance of reading tasks. According to Lyon et. al., (2003), reading disabilities are among the most common learning difficulties and

without targeted intervention, they can result in long term academic under achievement.

It can also be observed from table 4.5 that, 37.1% which represents eleven (11) out of the thirty (30) participants were not affected by the environmental distraction. This means that, the remaining participants identified environmental distraction as a major hindrance to reading comprehension. This high percentage indicates that external factors within the learning environment play a significant role in impeding pupils ability to focus and process written information.

Research also shows that attention plays a central role in reading comprehension as readers must simultaneously decode words, integrate information and make inference (Cain & Oakhill, 2007). In environments where distractions are frequent, pupils may lose track of text ideas, miss key details or fail to connect sentences into coherent meaning. The relatively high percentages underscore the urgency for teachers and educational institutions to provide conducive learning environment.

In summary, the factors outlined are often interrelated meaning that, the presence of one can amplify the effects of the other. For example, pupils with limited vocabulary may also exhibit poor decoding skills which in turn can reduce reading fluency. Addressing these hindrances holistically can lead to improved reading motivation fluency and overall comprehension among pupils.

4.4 Reading comprehension

The second part of interview deals with reading comprehension strategies employed to understand vocabulary in language context, access information through questions, and construct meaning from language clues (Nezami, 2012).

This study investigated the practice of English language reading strategies among students to improve their comprehension skill. Each statement item as shown in table 4.2 below provides percentage of reading comprehension strategies applied to understand an English text. However, the outcomes obtained from the analysis of interview data revealed the learning problems in acquiring the strategies necessary for developing text comprehension skills (Gursoy, 2010).

RQ 2: How are reading comprehension skills taught to the students of Kade SDA JHS?

4.6 Teachers reading comprehension strategies

To answer research question 2, the data gathered from classroom observation focuses on the factual information related to the practice of teaching reading skills. The data were qualitatively analyzed using codes and categories emerged out of the raw data. The classroom observations recorded factual information, mainly adapted from Rahman (2004); Gursoy (2010); Ro (2003); and Zheng (2014). Thus, the classroom observation explores the teachers' pedagogical awareness, teaching methods, professional development, and the linguistic awareness related to the teaching of reading skills at JHS level (Alyousef, 2005, p. 148).

The rest of the chapter contains the following sections:

- Classroom Observation
- Part-I: Teaching Reading Practice
- Part-II: Teaching Reading Text Comprehension
- Part-III: Teaching Reading Discourse
- Summary

Using the observation method, the study gathered data from participants to focus on the important areas of reading comprehension such as, vocabulary, context,

grammar, and discourse comprehension (Barness, 2012, p. 57). These aspects were included in the observation to confirm the learners' participation and the use of text comprehension strategies as suggested by Carrel et al (1989, p. 647). The teachers' medium of instruction (MoI), management of the lesson plan and organization of activities were also observed to understand the practice of teaching reading skills to participants. Further, the study inquired about the teachers using independent reading strategies or followed the traditional practice to read aloud the text in a classroom. Thus, the teachers' pedagogical approach in terms of traditional or the functional one was also identified in classroom observations of teachers teaching reading comprehension skills (Carrel & Eisterhold, 1983).

4.5 Classroom observation

Following Lincoln and Guba's (1981) model on classroom reading assessment, the current study developed an observation guide comprised of three parts i.e., a) teaching reading practice, b) teaching reading comprehension, and c) teaching reading discourse. The first part comprised seven items recorded data on the prevalent classroom activities and the methods applied to teach reading skills (Rahman, 2004). The second part having the same item numbers explored the teaching strategies used to teach the selected texts and the comprehension exercises given in the textbook (Zheng, 2014). The third part included nine items to investigate the practice of teaching reading discourse using contextual clues to understand the deep meaning of a text (Sparks, 2012). Further, the observer also recorded (Yes/No) responses against each statement item along with the comments by the observer regarding the use of teaching methods/strategies applied to teach text comprehension activities (Merc, 2015). Thus, the overall aim of the observation was to obtain the

factual data from classroom observations of the teachers teaching of reading skills at JHS level.

4.5.1 Part-I: teaching reading practice

The first part of Teaching Reading Practice highlighted as a main category in the table 4.6 below critically provided the accounts of the prevalent methods and strategies used by the teachers teaching reading skills. It was indicated in the analysis that the use of lesson planning, reading tasks, and independent reading focused on the important aspects of reading instructions because these strategies involve the learners in the activities necessary for developing reading comprehension skills (Galton, Hargreaves, Comber, Wall, & Pell, 1999). Whereas, the teacher information, translating text, and loud reading explored the traditional practice of teaching reading skills in the academic context of the research study. Finally, the analysis of the main category specified as a Teaching Reading Practice provided the results of the underlying strategies applied by the teachers in terms of percentage shown in the table 4.6 below.

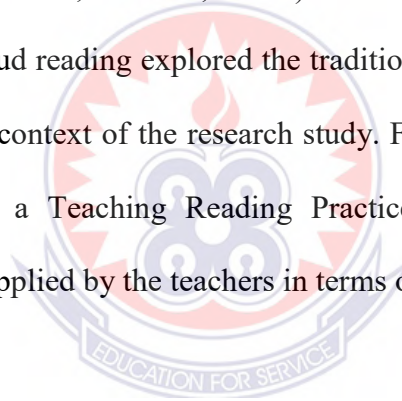


Table 4.6 Sub-categories within the main category of Teaching Reading Practice (n=03).

Subcategories	Description	Comments
Lesson planning	A lesson plan deals with the teaching methods, strategies, and learning objectives achieved through the classroom activities.	Teachers did not practice lesson planning before they enter a classroom.
Reading tasks	Reading tasks are the text-based activities following the language learning procedure from pre-reading to while-reading, and post-reading tasks.	Teacher did not change the design and the presentation of activities (adaptation) given in the textbook.
Independent reading	Reading text independently engages a learner in text comprehension to build meaning from the language clues.	Teacher instructed the students to imitate the translation of a text to understand the meaning in mother tongue.
Pair Work/Group Work	The students collaboratively participate in the classroom activities for achieving the language learning objectives.	Teaching strategies focused on the delivery of information, sight writing, and the interpretation of lines by the teacher.
Teacher Information	Teacher elaborates meaning into L1 and delivers information to the students.	The teacher delivered information on the topic of a reading text in L1
Translating Text	Teacher translates the text into mother tongue for the learners to understand the meaning in their mother tongue.	The translation of text into L1 was a major teaching practice followed by the teachers in the classroom.
Loud Reading	The teacher instructs the students to read aloud the text for improving pronunciation in the classroom.	Loud reading practice was encouraged by the teachers in the classroom.

Lesson Planning

In table 4.6 lesson planning is presented as one of the major subcategories of Teaching Reading Practice to observe the methods and strategies applied by the teachers in a classroom. A teaching plan primarily focuses on the desired objectives and the outcomes achieved through the instructional strategies of a teacher (Farrel, 2007). However, the analysis of the observation data indicated that the teachers teaching comprehension reading skills at Kade SDA JHS hardly plan the lessons for the achievement of objectives because they believe they have mastered the contents over the years.

Reading Tasks

Reading tasks specified as a subcategory in table 4.6 deals with the various types of activities designed in the textbook for developing the reading comprehension skills. The learners participate in the activities to learn language from the text-based tasks on pre-reading to while reading and post reading stages (Richards, Platt and Weber, 1985). However, the critical examination of acquired data indicated that the teachers observed in classrooms were unaware of the pedagogical strategies to involve the students in text comprehension process (Zheng & Seepho, 2013). Thus, the teaching strategies applied to teach reading comprehension skills focused more on the translation of text into L1 rather than reading text independently.

Independent Reading

Analyzing the classroom data in table 4.6 further investigated the subcategory of independent reading that deals with the smooth understanding of an English text in English as a Second Language learning context (Alyousef, 2005). The evaluation of independent reading mainly revealed that the teachers observed in the study failed to

advance independent reading process for they lacked skills and awareness of instructional strategies suggested by Duke and Pearson (2002). Generally, the teachers observed in Kade SDA JHS used to practice loud reading for the sake of improving oral skills of the students. In addition, it was also observed in the classroom that the students loudly recited the key ideas of a reading text for the teachers' interpretation of the lines. This practice did not ensure the learners' involvement in reading text independently, but only helped them take part in classroom discussion initiated by the teacher. It is therefore necessary not to mislead the learners through the faulty reading instructions, but to guide them properly as they can develop independent reading skills to comprehend the information of a text (Nezami, 2012).

Pair Work/Group Work

Pair work and Group work are specified as sub-categories in table 4.6 which essentially require the language learners to work collaboratively on a text based activities to achieve the objectives behind the classroom instructions. The data analyzed in the research study revealed that pair work or group were not utilize during the reading lesson. The lack of such interaction means that pupils were confined to individual processing of text which can limits opportunities for peer scaffolding and deeper comprehension. Therefore, the investigation of pair work and group work as subcategories highlighted in table 4.6 explored the absence of collaborative learning in English as a Second language reading instructions while the teachers need to be monitored in public schools (e.g., Galton, Hargreaves, Comber, Wall, & Pell, 1999).

Teacher Information

Teacher information analyzed as a subcategory in table 4.6 is generally used as one of the traditional teaching strategies used to teach reading comprehension skills to English as a Second language learners. It mainly focuses on the textual information orally presented by the teacher to engage the students in listening comprehension in the classroom. The analysis of teacher information in the observational study accounted the lack of learners' involvement in reading text due to their traditional L1 learning background and weak proficiency in English. Similarly, the teachers observed in the classrooms hardly emphasize the reading of text through questions given in the comprehension activities. They rather focused to provide the answers without involving the students in reading text comprehension. As a result, the students fail to develop comprehension skills and the ability to interact with an English textbook prescribed for the students of JHS level (Rahman, 2004).

Translating Text

The analysis of classroom data on the subcategory of translating text in table 4.6 is one of the major issues in teaching reading text comprehension to English as a Second language learners (Rahman, 2004). The outcomes indicated the frequent practice of translation method followed by the English teachers teaching reading skills through a prescribed course of English at JHS level. In addition, the majority of learners were unable to understand the language of an English text due to the lack of vocabulary development and the familiarity with the structural knowledge implied to convey the meaning of a text. However, the English teachers were generally unaware of the current pedagogical strategies that help learners involve in text comprehension to deduce meaning from the context (Grabe, 1991). The close observation in the classroom also indicated the use of L1 in reading instructions for carrying out the

classroom activities on comprehension questions. A few teachers used English for instructing the students to follow the activities on finding out the key ideas in each paragraph of a reading text but the learners failed to achieve the objectives due to certain hindrances such as, the lack of vocabulary and the structural knowledge of language comprehension (Zheng, 2014).

Loud Reading

The data analysis presented in table 4.6 specifies the subcategory of loud reading as one of the major issues faced by the learners in English as a Second Language Reading (ESL) paradigm (Zheng, 2014). It is generally followed as a traditional teaching strategy tending to improve the oral skills of the students through the recitation of text prescribed for Government JHS in Ghana. The data gathered from the classroom context revealed the use of loud reading as one of the frequent teaching practice applied by the teachers to improve pronunciation of the students (Grabe, 1991). Contrary to what the teaching reading skills demand, the current pedagogical practices were hardly supportive and useful for developing the comprehension skills of the learners as it focused more on the pronunciation rather than the understanding of a text. It is therefore obligatory on the part of teachers to address the text comprehension problems of the students by applying the appropriate reading instruction in a classroom context.

Table 4.7 Teaching reading strategies used by the teachers (n=03).

Subcategories	Result	Percentage
Lesson Planning	0/3	0%
Reading Tasks	0/3	0%
Independent Reading	1/3	33.3%
Pair Work/Group Work	0/3	0%
Teacher Information	3/3	100%
Translating Text	2/3	66.67%
Loud Reading	2/3	66.67%

The table 4.7 above presented the results of sub categories being used as the teaching strategies by the teachers observed in Kade SDA JHS. The outcomes indicated that the zero out of three (0/3) teachers prepared lesson plan because they feel they already know the content and can teach without lesson plan. The analysis of reading tasks, independent reading, and pair work/group work revealed the same results except the use of independent reading by the English teachers. Additionally, the first four subcategories of Teaching Reading Practice are frequently used in classroom research due to the pedagogical process involved in the development of reading skills (e.g. Rahman, 2004; Zheng and Seepho, 2013). On the contrary, delivering teacher information, translating text, and loud reading were included in the analysis to draw the results on traditional teaching strategies being practiced by the teachers in their respective classroom settings. The results therefore revealed the use of traditional teaching strategies such as, delivering teacher information, loud reading, and translating text being practiced by the English teachers as shown in the table 4.7.

4.5.2 Part II: teaching reading text comprehension

The second part of the data analysis critically evaluated the main category of Teaching Reading Text Comprehension containing seven coded items as

subcategories in the table 4.7 displaying the major themes from the classroom observations (Patton, 1990). This procedure involved a close investigation of brainstorming, background information, and key ideas as the essential features of text comprehension in English as a Second Language Reading (ESL) research (Duke & Pearson, 2002). Additionally, the analysis provided critical insights regarding the use of instructional strategies employed by the teachers in table 4.7 below. The findings from the subcategories clearly indicated the traditional practice of teaching reading skills contradictory to what the above strategies suggested in the description (Gursoy, 2010).

In view of the past studies on English as a Second Language Reading (ESL), the teaching of key ideas, vocabulary learning, guessing meaning, locating information, and the long sentences help to familiarize the learners with the structure of text and its comprehension (e.g., Bakken, Mastropieri, & Scruggs, 2002; Cook, 1983; Pullido, 2007). The data drawn from the above strategies/subcategories indicated the improvement in reading text due to the learners' involvement in classroom activities. However, the critical insights obtained from the table 4.7 displayed the lack of above strategies in the classrooms as the teachers observed in the study were unaware of the instructional strategies used for developing the comprehension skills. Thus, the findings were also shown in the form of percentage in the table 4.7 displaying the lack of comprehension strategies being practiced by the teachers in their classrooms (Pearson & Rodriguez, 2002).

Table 4.8 Subcategories within the main category of Teaching Reading Text**Comprehension (n=03).**

Subcategories	Description	Comments
Brainstorming	Brainstorming is an instructional strategy aiming to develop the learners' interest and motivation about the topic of a reading text.	Teacher instructed the students to read text without attracting the learners' interest about the topic of a text.
Background Information	Background information is either possessed by the students or provided by the teachers in classroom.	The teacher interpreted the lines from the text instead of activating learners' prior knowledge to the topic.
Key Ideas	Key ideas represent important piece of information in each paragraph of a reading text.	Teacher elaborated the importance of key ideas and interpreted the meaning of lines from the text.
Vocabulary Learning	Vocabulary Learning is an important reading strategy to know the maximum amount of words used in a text.	Teacher taught the meaning of unknown words in mother tongue of the students.
Guessing Meaning	Guessing meaning from the language context results in better comprehension abilities	Sight writing was used to provide the meaning of unknown words used in a text.
Locating Information	Locating information is an important reading strategy to locate the information in the text.	The teacher provided answers to the questions without learners' involvement in reading text.
Long Sentences	The learners can apply structural knowledge to understand the meaning of long sentences used in a text.	Teacher did not involve the students in the activities to comprehend the meaning of long sentences used in a text.

Brainstorming

Brainstorming identified as a subcategory in table 4.8 revealed the results of important insights regarding the instructional strategies used in reading comprehension skills of the students at higher secondary level. The learners develop interest and general idea about the topic based on the questions activating their prior knowledge (schemata) or the background information before reading text comprehension (Grabe, 1991). Though, the analysis of classroom data explored the absence of brainstorming strategy because the English teachers observed in the study were mainly unaware of the advanced teaching methods applied to teach reading comprehension skills. Therefore, the English teachers in the context of research study need to be aware of the pedagogical strategies which significantly contribute the development of text comprehension skills in English as a Second Language.

Background Information

Background information specified as a teaching strategy/subcategory in table 4.8 handles with the idea of providing contextual data to the readers on the topic of a selected text (Pressely, 2006). The learners mostly encounter comprehension problems due to the lack of contextual understanding and the background knowledge implied in a text. In addition, the English teachers hardly help them address the above issue because many of them lack required pedagogical awareness and the skills (Alyousef, 2005). The data analyzed from the Observation too indicated the teachers skipped what the learners wanted to know in the beginning of each text/unit. Thus, the outcomes also measured one out of the three teachers provided the background information in L1 for the learners to understand the meaning of contents but not the Background information to the topic of a reading text.

Key Ideas

The data analyzed from the subcategory of key ideas presented in table 4.8 significantly improves the comprehension of a learner by focusing on the important ideas of a reading text (Gursoy, 2010). However, the English teachers fail to apply the appropriate instructional strategies to develop the learners' understanding about the key ideas used in a reading text due to the traditional teaching strategies employed for developing the text comprehension skills. Further, the outcomes obtained from the analysis of classroom data highlighted the learners' inefficiency in identifying the key ideas because the teachers focused on the explanation of lines rather than development of ability to understand the ideas. The results also revealed that a teacher wrote key ideas on white board and asked the students to write an introductory paragraph on them. As a result, the learners could not perform in the classroom activity because they found it vague in terms of the instructions imparted to them.

Vocabulary Learning

Vocabulary learning specified as a subcategory in table 4.8 is one of the important teaching strategies applied to raise the learners' awareness about the words conveying meaning in the context. On the contrary, during the observation, it was observed that teachers frequently applied translation method for developing the competence to know the meaning of unknown words used in a text. Further, the classroom teaching instructions on vocabulary learning focused more on the teachers' efficiency in translating the meaning of difficult words rather than the learners' ability to deduce the meaning from context (Rahman, 2004). The results drawn from the analysis of observation data also discussed the problems such as, the use of traditional teachings method followed by a good number of the teachers. Therefore, the results declared that the vocabulary learning being an important aspect of text

comprehension was not adequately managed and taught by the teachers of public sector colleges (Nation, 2001).

Guessing Meaning

Guessing meaning in the table 4.7 is highlighted as a subcategory of Teaching Reading Text Comprehension which deals with one of the important aspects of learning vocabulary by using the context of the passage (Koda, 2005). It focuses on the learners' language efficiency to guess the meaning of unknown words by using clues to comprehend the information of a reading text through context-based instructions (Alyousef, 2005). However, the English teachers observed in the research study hardly introduced any reading activity to involve the learners to extract or guess meaning from the textual context. The results of the study explored problems and drawbacks related to the teaching methods which generally focused on the teachers' version of the meaning provided in L1 rather than the ability to guess the meaning in context. Hence, the outcomes mainly identified the traditional practice of reading failing to support the language development to guess the meaning of unknown words used in a text.

Long Sentences

Long Sentences specified as a subcategory of Teaching Reading Comprehension in table 4.8 deals with the language structures and the meaning implied to convey the ideas of a reading text (Grabe, 1991). It has been observed as a major reading hindrance causing difficulty not only in understanding the meaning, but also the functions of various sentence structures transferring message in a text. In addition, the designed activities in the textbook focus on the development of descriptive/structural grammar lacking context, function, and the integration of

language skill in the selected textbook (Sidek, 2012). Further, the learners on account of their little exposure to language comprehension tasks often find it difficult to know the meaning and the functions of the long sentences used in a text. Therefore, they need to be trained and proficient through the integrated activities focusing on the understanding of syntactical and semantic knowledge implied in the language of text. Despite the English teachers engaging the students in language-based tasks, majority of them were observed to explain the ideas and translated the text into L1. Therefore, the English teacher in view of the outcomes need to know the ways of designing the skills integrated activities to help facilitate the learners become efficient in knowing the meaning and the functions of long sentences used in a text (Sparks, 2012).

Table 4.9: Teaching Text Comprehension strategies used by the teachers (n=03).

Subcategories	Result	Percentage
Brainstorming	0/3	0%
Background Information	1/3	33.3%
Key Ideas	2/3	66.67%
Vocabulary Learning	1/3	33.3%
Guessing Meaning	0/3	0%
Long Sentences	1/3	33.3%

The overall analysis of Teaching Reading Comprehension in table 4.9 presented the results of important insights on the subcategories or the teaching strategies used for developing the reading comprehension skills. The results drawn from the classroom data explored that zero out of three (0/3) teachers employed brainstorming strategy because they traditionally introduced the topics of selected texts by providing information into L1 rather than eliciting ideas through questions. In

addition, the outcomes from background information in table 4.9 indicated that one out of three (1/3) teachers provided contextual data for developing the general idea about the topic, while the rest of them asked students to read aloud the text as a part of classroom teaching practice. As a result, a large number of English as a Second Language learners (ESL) failed to develop ability in reading English text independently due to the use of translation method applied by the teachers in classroom.

Moreover, the results identified that two out of three (2/3) teachers practiced key ideas as one of the significant reading strategies to improve text comprehension skills, whereas the rest of them elaborated the meaning of lines. It was also discussed in the analysis that a few teachers only highlighted the importance of key ideas without carrying out the classroom activities for learners to the ability and identify the key ideas in each paragraph of a text.

Further, the outcomes obtained from the table 4.9 indicated the lack of vocabulary learning through context-based teaching strategies as two out of three (2/3) teachers were observed to facilitate vocabulary development. The results also indicated that all other teachers provided meaning of difficult words in Ghanaian language as they found it useful for the learners to understand the meaning in their L1. It was observed that no teacher (0/3) involved the students into guessing the meaning of unknown words used in a text rather they were asked to translate the text loudly in classroom. Another subcategory/strategy analyzed in table 4.8 indicated the same results because guessing meaning was not employed as a teaching strategy to teach the meaning of new words used in context. The outcome drawn from analysis of long sentences specified as a subcategory of Teaching Reading Text Comprehension

reflected that the teachers mainly focused on the para-wise explanation of the passage instead of learners' involvement to understand the semantic network of ideas.

4.6 Conclusion

The chapter demonstrates the dynamic relationship between the challenges learners face and instructional strategies teachers employ. The relatively high percentages of participants who are unable to read underscore the urgency for teachers and educational institutions to provide conducive learning environment. While the strategies used are valuable, their success largely depends on consistency, teacher expertise and access to adequate instructional resources. This points to the need to the need for continuous professional development, the cultivation of supportive classroom environments.



CHAPTER 5

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

This research study explores the problems in reading text comprehension and strategies teachers used in teaching reading comprehension at KDA JHS. An English comprehension is a part of compulsory course taught to the students for developing proficiency in reading comprehension. The purpose of the study is to assess factors affecting reading comprehension at Kade SDA JHS. Additionally, the current pedagogical practices are investigated through the classroom observations of the teachers teaching English as compulsory subject at JHS level. Using qualitative method study design, the study employs interviews, textbook evaluation, and the classroom observations for collecting data from the participants of the study. Thus, the study employs following research questions to investigate the problems and issues faced by the learners in reading comprehension.

Reading hindrances have been an important area of concern for researchers to address the issue and suggest some possible ways and means for language learners to acquire proficiency in text comprehension skills (Hung & Ngan, 2015). These hindrances in view of the research studies are mainly caused by the lack of reading skills, insufficient vocabulary knowledge, and the traditional teaching practice in the classroom. Despite the importance of reading comprehension in English as a Second Language learning, there is the need of such research and investigation in the academic context basic schools. It is one of the major reasons that the present study would significantly contribute important insights in the existing body of literature regarding the development of reading comprehension skills in English as a Second Language (ESL) context.

5.2 Summary

Finally, the analysis of the data not only uncover the reading hindrances, but also explores the lack of text comprehension strategies among the participants who encounter discourse related issues while understanding the deep meaning of a text. The participants traditionally practice reading instead of using the comprehension strategies to guess meaning from context, extract information using sub-skills, and develop ideas from the sentence structures used in a text.

The overall analysis of classroom observation data clearly highlighted two main categories of Teaching Reading Practice, and Teaching Reading Text Comprehension to focus on the important aspects of reading text comprehension and discourse understanding along with the teaching strategies being applied by the teachers teaching reading skills at JHS level (Cook & Myres, 2004).

RQ1. What are the factors affecting reading comprehension at Kade JHS?

The development of discourse involves various competencies such as, strategic reading awareness, linguistic knowledge, critical evaluation, and the ability to understand sentence connectors linking information in the text. It also requires a learner to construct meaning by paying attention to complex text structures conveying ideas through specific discourse pattern organized in the text. However, the learners from traditional language background lack discourse comprehension because the strategies used in the classroom focus on the translation of text into L1. This traditional reading practice does not involve a learner in language development process because it focuses on the structural approach rather than the ability to understand language in context. Thus, the findings reveal the lack of independent reading practice and the incompetence in developing the discourse understanding of a text at JHS level.

RQ2: How is reading comprehension skills taught at Kade SDA JHS?

The present study conducted classroom observations of the teachers teaching reading comprehension at Kade SDA JHS. In view of the observations, this study investigated the prevalent pedagogical practices applied to teach the prescribed English textbook. The results revealed that the teachers follow traditional teaching strategies such as, the Grammar Translation Method (GTM), loud reading, and the interpretation of lines from the textbook. Further, the evidences reveal that the traditional teaching reading practice fail to promote independent learning from the textbook introduced for JHS 1 students. It is also evident that the teachers mostly follow the lessons from the textbook without making necessary changes in the design and the organization of activities so as to suit the learners' proficiency level.

It was discovered in the light of findings that the lack of pedagogical awareness causes problems and issues for the teachers to teach reading comprehension through modern teaching methods. They fail to involve the students in reading comprehension process because of the wrongly designed textbook activities lacking instructions and appropriate guidance for the learners. An important drawback is the lack of textbook adaptation for the teachers to introduce interesting and communicative activities for the learners to achieve learning objective from the existing materials. However, the learners in view of the results are not involved in strategic reading process to become proficient in vocabulary, access the information efficiently, understand the context fluently, and draw conclusions quickly. In most classes the learners remain dormant due to the teacher centered approach in the language classroom. Therefore, the learners are demotivated to raise questions and share learning problems in such sort of authoritative situation in the academic settings like public sector schools of Ghana.

5.2.1 The main findings

- Translating the text is the learning behaviour of the students who prefer to receive information through lessons than independently reading text in the classroom activities. They mainly lack competence in vocabulary, inability to build meaning from sentences, and inefficiency to comprehend information from the text. The traditional reading practice also ignores the development of discourse to know the deep meaning of a text implied in the language context.
- The selection of varied texts from history, religion, literature, and earlier scientific inventions proves to be less effective for developing the learners' interest in reading comprehension activities. These activities lack appropriate instructions and guidance for the learners to locate specific information using sub-skills related to the reading skills. A number of activities on composition and grammar structures cannot involve the students in writing procedure due to lack of context, relevance to the text, and the integration of language skills in the textbook. Therefore, the activities designed in the JHS 1 English reading materials fail to address the language learning needs of the students at JHS 1 level.
- The current pedagogical practices reveal the shortcomings and drawbacks in developing reading comprehension skills of the students at Kade SDA JHS. In most classes, the teachers traditionally practice reading by translating the text into L1. The translation method fails to involve the students in text comprehension process and ignores the cognitive development of a learner lacking ability to interact with an English text independently in the classroom. Therefore, the traditional teaching reading practice seems to be less effective

for developing proficiency in reading comprehension and discourse understanding of a text at JHS 1 level.

5.2.2 Contribution to knowledge

This research study contributes meaningful insights regarding reading comprehension problems and discourse understanding issues faced by the participants in Kade SDA JHS. A recent review of the literature in section 2.2 briefly discusses the studies conducted on the various aspects of text construction and reading comprehension in English as a Second Language (Grabe, 2002).

In addition, a number of studies have also been conducted to explore reading comprehension hindrances and suggest strategies to address the issues faced by the English as a Second Language learners (ESL) in their respective academic settings (Gursoy, 2010).

However, the present study in the existing line of research studies significantly contributes knowledge regarding the reading hindrances and the pedagogical problems observed in the respective classroom settings.

An important contribution of this research study is to focus on reading comprehension problems associated with the current pedagogical practices and the materials used in the classroom. The development of reading skills in the context of Kade SDA JHS mainly depends upon the learners' language background, current proficiency in English, and the motivation to satisfy language learning needs. In this regard, English is introduced as a compulsory subject and the medium of instruction to facilitate the learners with the basic requirements of learning a second language. However, the results reveal that the learners fail to develop proficiency in English due to the traditional teaching methods and the lack of authentic texts and tasks designed in the prescribed textbook of English at JHS 1 level.

Another contribution of this research is to uncover the potential problems regarding the selection of various texts from diverse fields of knowledge such as, history, religion, literature, and the earlier scientific inventions. All these areas are an essential source of receiving information but these cannot be useful for teaching a foreign language due to the lack of communicative features used in real life situation. The selection of such texts proves to be less effective because the learners fail to develop interest in reading the contents providing old and outdated information. In addition, the activities designed to develop reading comprehension skills also lack appropriate instructions and guidance for the learners to locate the information in the text. Thus, a number of these activities lack important elements of context, relevance to the text, and the integration of language skills given in the JHS 1 English reading materials.

5.2.3 Implications

This research study contributes significant insights related to the teaching of reading comprehension skills through JHS English reading materials prescribed for schools in Ghana. It intends to raise pedagogical awareness among the teachers, head of the institutions, managers, and policy makers to review the existing English course for making possible changes to make it more functional and communicative. The teachers may seek help from the findings to reflect upon their on-going pedagogical practices for a transition from traditional teaching methods to the advanced reading instructions in facilitating text comprehension and the development of discourse.

Further, the future research on the development of reading comprehension and discourse understanding can significantly contribute improvements in the practice of teaching reading skills to English as a Second language learners. The previous studies have remarkably addressed the reading hindrances in English as a Second Language

but the future research and investigation in the context of public sector schools can bring about practical changes in the teaching methods, materials development, and the development of language skills acquired through the communicative approach. Therefore, the researchers, trainers, academicians and the teachers are suggested to advance their research studies and investigations for addressing the language learning needs of the students so as to meet the modern needs of language education in the public sector schools of Ghana.

5.3 Conclusion

Based on the findings of the study the following conclusions were made: first, it can be concluded that most teaching methods used by the participating teachers for teaching reading comprehension is significant in facilitating reading comprehension. However, there is a need for further training and development of teachers to effectively use these methods to improve student's comprehension.

Additionally, the study found that the main problem encountered by Kade SDA JHS students are poor vocabulary mastery, poor fluency, issues with background. It is therefore considered that efforts should be made to address these problems through the provision of appropriate teaching methods and materials to support students. This study investigated the impact of reading comprehension among the students in Kade SDA JHS on reading.

5.4 Recommendations

JHS 1 English reading materials prescribed for the students across the public sector schools of Ghana fails to improve reading comprehension of the learners lacking discourse understanding skills. The course is still taught through the (Grammar Translation Method) which seems strange on account of developing the language comprehension skills acquired through the textbook. Hence, the following

recommendation are made in the light of literature, analysis and discussion, and it is strongly suggested that the old English course should be changed to meet the modern language learning needs of the students through advanced teaching strategies focusing on the development of text comprehension skills. Finally, the English teachers, course designers, professionals, and the authorities concerned may bring about significant changes in view of the recommendations mentioned below:

- The Government institutions should extensively arrange the training programmes for the professional development of English language teachers and create awareness about the advanced pedagogical strategies applied to teach reading comprehension skills.
- Extensive reading strategies must be included in the textbook to give learners confidence and support for discourse comprehension and critical thinking.
- The English language teachers need to be aware of planning their lessons and design appropriate reading materials for achieving learning aims and the objectives through the classroom teaching activities.
- The English language teachers should reflect upon the choice of reading materials, contents, and the comprehension tasks for facilitating the language learning through textbooks.
- Meaning and context based teaching approaches should be applied to develop the learners' knowledge of contextual clues in a reading text.

REFERENCES

- Ahmadi, D. M. R. (2018). The use of technology in English language learning: A literature review. *International Journal of Research in English Education*, 3(2), 115–125.
- Ahsani, N., & Budairi, A. (2022). A review on L2 models of reading theories and reading teaching strategy. *International Journal of Education and Learning*, 4(1), 13–27.
- Al-Rufai, M. A. H. (1969). *A study of the reading abilities and habits, in English and Arabic, of Baghdad University students* (Doctoral dissertation, Institute of Education, University of London).
- Alyousef, H. S. (2005). *Teaching reading comprehension to ESL students: A case study*.
- Babalola, O. R. (2023). *Communicative and cognitive factors as determinants of learning outcomes in English reading comprehension among senior secondary students in Oyo State, Nigeria* (Doctoral dissertation).
- Badal, B. (2013). *Investigating English home language and L2 learners' ability to access pragmatic and contextual aspects of literary text*.
- Bakken, J. P., Mastropieri, M. A., & Scruggs, T. E. (2002). Reading comprehension strategies for English language learners. *Intervention in School and Clinic*, 37(4), 219–227.
- Beliaeva, Z. *Using authentic video for teaching English as a second language: A teacher's toolkit*.
- Bukari, F. R. A. N. C. I. S. (2019). *Methods and current challenges in teaching English, a case in Bawku Municipality* (Doctoral dissertation, University of Education, Winneba).
- Carrell, P. L. (1984). Evidence of a formal schema in second language comprehension. *Language Learning*, 34(2), 87–108.
- Carrell, P. L., Pharis, B. G., & Liberto, J. C. (1989). Metacognitive strategy training for ESL reading. *TESOL Quarterly*, 23(4), 647–678.
- Carter, R. (1987). Vocabulary and second/foreign language teaching. *Language Teaching*, 20(1), 3–16.

- Chimenya, U. M. (2022). *Academic reading strategies among multilingual first-year students in a South African university* (Doctoral dissertation, University of Johannesburg).
- Creswell, J. W. (2010). *Research design: Qualitative, quantitative and mixed methods approaches* (3rd ed.). Sage Publications.
- Cromer, R. F. (1981). *Developmental language disorders: Cognitive processes, semantics, pragmatics, phonology, and syntax*.
- Crossley, S. A., Allen, L. K., Kyle, K., & McNamara, D. S. (2014). Analyzing discourse processing using a simple natural language processing tool. *Discourse Processes*, 51(5–6), 511–534.
- Cui, S. (2020). *Methods of teaching reading in EFL classes at primary schools in China* (Doctoral dissertation).
- Cummingsworth, A., & Kusel, P. (1991). English language teaching: Textbooks for junior high schools. *RELC Journal*, 22(1), 35–51.
- Dar, A. (2012). Grammar structure and language teaching. *Journal of Language and Linguistics*, 1(2), 1–15.
- Devalina, S. (2015). Implementing clustering technique to improve students' ability in writing paragraph at junior high school 4 Sipirok. *ENGLISH EDUCATION JOURNAL: English Journal for Teaching and Learning*, 3(1), 120–129.
- Dini, D. (2020). *The difficulties of teaching reading comprehension in rural school* (Doctoral dissertation, IKIP PGRI Pontianak).
- Alyousef, H. S. (2005). Teaching reading comprehension to ESL/EFL learners. *The Reading Matrix*, 5(2). Retrieved December 5, 2008, from <http://www.rider.co.id>
- Badal, B. (2013). *Investigating [full thesis title]* (Unpublished master's thesis). University of Stellenbosch.
- Beliaeva, Z. (2023). *Using authentic video for teaching English as a second language: A teacher's toolkit* (Master's thesis). Padua Archive of Theses and Dissertations.
- Cain, K., & Oakhill, J. (2007). *Children's comprehension problems in oral and written language: A cognitive perspective*. Guilford Press.
- Creswell, J. W., & Poth, C. N. (2018). *Qualitative inquiry & research design: Choosing among five approaches* (4th ed.). Sage.

- Cromer, R. F. (1981). Developmental language disorders: Cognitive processes, semantics, pragmatics, phonology and syntax. *Journal of Autism and Developmental Disorders*, 11(1), 57–74. <https://doi.org/10.1007/BF01531351>
- Fraenkel, J. R., & Wallen, N. E. (2009). *How to design and evaluate research in education* (7th ed.). McGraw-Hill.
- Leedy, P. D., & Ormrod, J. E. (2018). *Practical research: Planning and design* (12th ed.). Pearson.
- Moyi, P. (2005). *Special educational needs in Ghana: Policy, practice and research*. University of Education Press.
- Snowling, M. J. (2013). Early identification and interventions for dyslexia: A contemporary view. *Journal of Research in Special Educational Needs*, 13(1), 7–14. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1471-3802.2012.01262.x>
- Sweller, J. (2011). Cognitive load theory. *Psychology of Learning and Motivation*, 55, 37–76. <https://doi.org/10.1016/B978-0-12-387691-1.00002-8>
- Duc, T. N., & Lan, N. T. (2023). Reading comprehension difficulties among English-major sophomores at university in Vietnam. *International Journal of Scientific Research in Science and Technology*, 10(2), 890–905.
- Duke, N. K., & Pearson, P. D. (2002). Effective practices for developing reading comprehension.
- Eskey, D. E. (2005). Reading in a second language. In *Handbook of research in second language teaching and learning* (pp. 563–579). Routledge.
- Eva, S. (2021). *Reading comprehension assessment in English textbook Bright: An English course for junior high school students 9th grade published by Erlangga* (Doctoral dissertation, UIN Prof. KH Syaifuddin Zuhri Purwokerto).
- Fakeye, B., & Fakeye, D. O. (2016). Instruction in text-structure as a determinant of senior secondary school students' achievement in English narrative text in Ido Local Government Area, Oyo State. *AFRREV IJAH: An International Journal of Arts and Humanities*, 5(2), 270–283.
- Galton, M., Hargreaves, L., Comber, C., Wall, D., & Pell, T. (1999). *Inside the primary classroom*.

- Ghuma, M. (2011). *The transferability of reading strategies between L1 (Arabic) and L2* (Doctoral dissertation, Durham University).
- Gillam, R. B., & Gorman, B. K. (2004). Language and discourse contributions to word recognition and text interpretation. *Language and Literacy Learning in Schools*, 63–97.
- Gilstad, J. R. (1974). *Two theories of reading instruction and their significance for reading research*. Indiana University.
- Grabe, B. (2002). Using discourse patterns to improve reading comprehension. *JALT 2002 at Shizuoka Conference Proceedings*, 9–17.
- Grabe, W. (2003). Using discourse patterns to improve reading comprehension. In *JALT2002 at Shizuoka Conference Proceedings* (pp. 9–16).
- Grabe, W. (2008). *Reading in a second language: Moving from theory to practice*. Cambridge University Press.
- Grabe, W., & Stoller, F. L. (2009). Teaching the written foreign language. In *Handbook of foreign language communication and learning* (Vol. 6, pp. 439).
- Grabe, W., & Stoller, F. L. (2019). *Teaching and researching reading*. Routledge.
- Grabe, W., & Zhang, C. (2013). Second language reading-writing relations. *Reconnecting Reading and Writing*, 108–133.
- Harrington, M., & Harrington. (2018). *Lexical facility*. Palgrave Macmillan.
- Hedgcock, J. S., & Ferris, D. R. (2018). *Teaching readers of English: Students, texts, and contexts*. Routledge.
- Huan, N. B., & Ngan, N. T. K. (2017). Summarizing strategy: Potential tool to promote English as a foreign language (EFL) students' reading comprehension at a vocational school, Vietnam. *European Journal of Education Studies*.
- Hunt, A., & Beglar, D. (2005). A framework for developing EFL reading vocabulary. *Reading in a Foreign Language*, 17(1), 23–59.
- Kann, S. (2012). *The effects of glossing and contextual guessing techniques on vocabulary teaching and learning*.

- Khan, K., Khan, W., Hayat, Y., Ahmad, S. M., & Raza, K. K. (2020). A comparative study of students' and teachers' perceptions about English textbooks at intermediate level and their role in promoting students' proficiency in English. *International Journal of English Linguistics*, 10(2), 40–50.
- Koda, K. (2007). Phonology and literacy. In *Phonology in context* (pp. 219–244). Palgrave Macmillan UK.
- Koda, K. (2007). Reading and language: Constraint. In J. Coady & J. M. H. Moreno (Eds.), *Issues in second language reading* (pp. 1–34). TESOL, Inc.
- Kurniatillah, R. E. *The effect of question-answer and relationship (QAR) strategy and reading anxiety on students' reading comprehension of narrative text* (Master's thesis, Jakarta: FITK UIN Syarif Hidayatullah Jakarta).
- Laily, R. (2018). The analysis on students' difficulties in doing reading comprehension final test. *Metathesis: Journal of English Language, Literature, and Teaching*, 2(2), 253. <https://doi.org/10.31002/metathesis.v2i2.958>
- Lebkatem, W. (2012). *Incidental vocabulary acquisition through newspaper reading: The impact of content familiarity*.
- Maala, A., & Mkandawire, S. B. (2022). Factors contributing to low performance in English reading comprehension in selected secondary schools of Lusaka District. *Multidisciplinary Journal of Language and Social Sciences Education*, 5(2), 111–132.
- Maaoui, I. *Impact of pre-vocabulary teaching on EFL elementary learners' reading comprehension: A case study of third-year middle school pupils at Madani Rahmoun Middle School of Biskra* (Doctoral dissertation).
- Maleki, A., Mollae, F., & Khosravi, R. (2014). A content evaluation of Iranian pre-university ELT textbook. *Theory & Practice in Language Studies*, 4(5).
- Marfuah, D. (2020). *The implementation of project-based learning in teaching reading of recount text for the eighth-grade students of MTs N 2 Karanganyar in the academic year* (Doctoral dissertation, State Islamic Institute).
- Mashry, A. A. M. *The contribution of vocabulary in developing EFL reading comprehension: A case study of secondary schools, Khartoum North Locality, Khartoum State*.
- Naseem, M., Shah, S. F., & Tabasum, R. (2014). Analyzing textbook descriptions: A critical discourse analysis. *Journal of Educational Research*, 17(2), 1–13.

- Owu-Owie, C. (2014). Language and literacy education in Ghana: Challenges and prospects. *Journal of Education and Human Development*, 3(2), 1–30.
- Patton, M. Q. (1990). *Qualitative evaluation and research methods* (2nd ed.). Sage Publications.
- Pearson, P. D., & Rodriguez, M. C. (2002). Reading comprehension: Reflections on research, instruction, and assessment.
- Perry, D. (2007). *Constructing meaning and knowledge acquisition from expository texts through self-regulated reading activities in a second language*. Universitat de València.
- Pressley, M. (2002). Metacognition and self-regulated comprehension. *What Research Has to Say About Reading Instruction*, 3, 291–309.
- Qrquez, M., & Ab Rashid, R. (2017). Reading comprehension difficulties among EFL learners: The case of first and second-year students at Yarmouk University in Jordan. *Arab World English Journal*, 8(3). <https://doi.org/10.24093/awej/vol8no3.27>
- Rahmah, S. (2022). *The use of scaffolding talk technique in teaching English speaking* (Doctoral dissertation, UIN Ar-Raniry Banda Aceh, Tarbiyah dan Keguruan).
- Rahman, T. (2004). *Classroom interaction in English language teaching: A qualitative study*.
- Richards, R. J. (2009). *The meaning of evolution: The morphological construction and ideological reconstruction of Darwin's theory*. University of Chicago Press.
- Sarjan, N. (2017). *An analysis on the English teacher strategies in teaching reading comprehension at the second grade of junior high school 1 of Wonomulyo*. Universitas Islam Negeri Alauddin Makassar.
- Savić, V. (2016). *Reading difficulties in English as a foreign language* (Doctoral dissertation, University of Novi Sad, Serbia).
- Schmitt, N., & Schmitt, D. (2020). *Vocabulary in language teaching*. Cambridge University Press.
- Schwandt, T. A. (2001). *Dictionary of qualitative inquiry* (2nd ed.). Sage Publications.

- Shehadeh, A. A. (1991). *Comprehension and performance in second language acquisition: A study of second language learners' production of modified comprehensible output* (Doctoral dissertation, Durham University).
- Soomro, S. A. Sheeraz Ali Soomro. Suglyono. (2008). *Memahami penelitian kualitatif dan R&D*. Alfabeta.
- Swaffar, J. (2014). From language to literacy: The evolving concepts of foreign language teaching at American colleges and universities since 1945. *Transforming Postsecondary Foreign Language Teaching in the United States*, 19–54.
- Taylor, D. (1994). Inauthentic authenticity or authentic inauthenticity. *TESL-EJ*, 1(2), 1–11.
- Ting, S. H., & Tee, M. S. (2008). Grammar instruction without reading: An investigation into ESL teachers' practices. *The English Teacher*, 7(1), 45–63.
- Torky, S. A. E. (2006). *The effectiveness of a task-based instruction program in developing the English language speaking skills of secondary stage students*. Online Submission.
- Tuckman, B. W. (1999). *Conducting educational research* (5th ed.). Harcourt Brace College Publishers.
- Varzegar, M. (1975). *A study of Iranian students' psycholinguistic abilities in reading English and implications for a literature-oriented reading program*. University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign.
- Wibowo, M. W. A. (2014). *An analysis of reading materials in the seventh-grade junior high school textbook English in Focus* (Doctoral dissertation, Yogyakarta State University).
- Williams, E., & Moran, C. (1989). Reading in a foreign language at intermediate and advanced levels with particular reference to English. *Language Teaching*, 22(4), 217–228.
- Zafar, S., & Mahmood, S. (2016). Exploring the relationship between reading comprehension and vocabulary size. *Journal of Language and Linguistics*, 15(3), 553–566.
- Zewdu, K. Y. (2017). *Active learning in teaching English language support courses to first-year students in some Ethiopian universities* (Unpublished doctoral dissertation). University of South Africa.

- Zhang, H., & Lin, J. (2021). Morphological knowledge in second language reading comprehension: Examining mediation through vocabulary knowledge and lexical inference. *Educational Psychology, 41*(5), 563–581.
- Zhang, L., & Seepho, S. (2013). Metacognitive and strategy use and academic reading achievement: Insights from Chinese context. *Electronic Journal of Foreign Language Teaching, 10*, 4–69.
- Zhang, Y., & Shanshan, H. (2011). Background knowledge and reading comprehension. In *International Conference on Computer Technology and Development, 3rd (ICCTD 2011)*. ASME Press. <https://doi.org/10.1115/1.859919.paper333>
- Zwaan, R. A., & Rapp, D. N. (2006). Discourse comprehension. In *Handbook of psycholinguistics* (pp. 725–764). Academic Press.



APPENDICIES

Appendix I: Consent form for teacher

I am a research student of Med. Programme in English (Applied Linguistics) at the University of Education, Winneba. Currently, I am collecting data on the issue Reading Comprehension among students: a case study of Kade SDA JHS. Your cooperation to fill in the questionnaire and provide data will be of great help and support for me to continue my research work. All the information that you supply on the questionnaire will be confidential and used anonymously in writing of the research report.

If you wish to participate then please tick in the box below and sign.

I AGREE

Signature: _____

Thank you very much for your help and support.

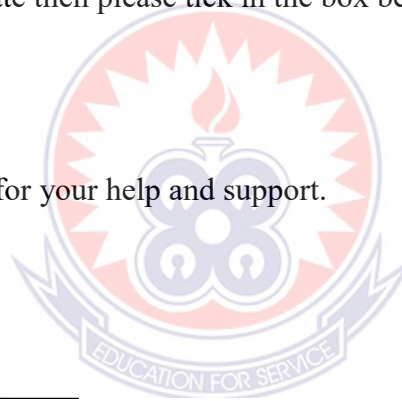
Personal Information

Class: _____

Gender: _____

Age: _____

Place: _____



Part-I: Reading Hindrances

Question Statements
I find reading texts boring in English textbooks
I encounter difficult words while reading text in English.
ISS am asked to read aloud the text with correct pronunciation in classroom.
I imitate translation of reading text by the teacher in classroom.
I skip reading when encountering unknown words in reading lessons.
I lack motivation in reading some texts included in English textbook.
I lack background knowledge to predict the text before reading comprehension.
I cannot concentrate on long sentences to understand the meaning.
I prefer to listen lectures rather than reading text.

Part-II: Text Comprehension Strategies

Statements Items
I predict the main idea of a reading text from the contents of its title
I turn to dictionary when encountering difficult words in reading text.
I guess the meaning of unknown words using context of a reading text.
I locate important information in the passage for answering the questions of reading text comprehension.
I use simple words to replace the difficult ones in sentence understanding.
I associate previous knowledge for the understanding of new ideas .

I comprehend a reading text by focusing on the key sentences of each paragraph .

I read large texts by dividing it into paragraphs

I do not pay attention to sentence structures while reading text comprehension.

I read only the first and the last paragraph of reading text for drawing conclusions quickly.

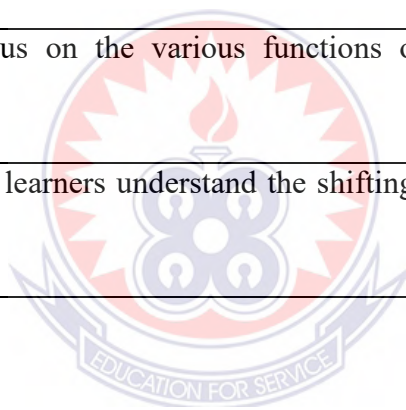
I cannot comprehend a reading text without understanding of its context.



Appendix-II: reading material Evaluation used for assessing the materials.

A. Reading Material Description	Yes	No
1. The contents are interesting in the reading materials.		
2. The reading material contains lessons on foreign language culture.		
3. The reading material lessons provide authentic language used in communication.		
4. The reading material contents provide real life issues to develop interest and motivation of the students.		
5. The texts are selected from a variety literary genres.		
6. The reading material provides scientific contents matching with the learners' language and academic needs.		
B. Skills Evaluation		
7. The skills presented in the reading materials are appropriate to the course.		
8. Each reading text begins by providing preview to the topic.		
9. The reading material provides learners with sufficient guides for learners to develop their comprehension skills.		
10. The skills presented in the reading materials include a wide a range of cognitive skills that will be challenging to the learners.		
C. Activities Evaluation		
11. The exercises are divided into pre-reading, while-reading, and post-reading tasks.		
12. The activities move learners from simple to a more complex learning process.		

13. There are appropriate instructions for the learners to read text for comprehension.		
14. The reading activities involve learners in text comprehension process.		
15. The activities are designed to promote vocabulary learning.		
16. The activities on Grammar enhance knowledge regarding the sentence structures.		
17. The questions designed in the comprehension activities focus on specific information in the text.		
18. The tasks are designed to know the deep meaning of words and sentences.		
19. The activities focus on the various functions of discourse words used in a text.		
20. The activities help learners understand the shifting of ideas in the text.		



Description:-----

Appendix-III: Classroom Observation Checklist used for investigating the teaching methods.

Name of the Teacher (optional) _____ Code No. _____

Topic of the lesson _____ Class _____

Time Duration _____ Objective/s of the Lesson _____

TeachingAids/Materials _____

Statement Items	Yes	No	Remarks
Part-I: Teaching Reading Practice			
The teacher follows PPP or TTT model of the lesson plan.			
The teacher divides reading text/lesson into pre-reading, while reading and post reading tasks.			
The teaching method encourages independent reading practice by the students.			
The teacher manages reading lesson into pair-work or group-work activities.			
The teacher delivers lecture/information on the topic of reading text in a classroom.			
The teacher translates text into mother tongue for			

learners to understand the meaning.			
The teacher invites students for reading aloud the text in a classroom.			
Statement Items	Yes	No	Remarks
Part-II Teaching Reading Comprehension			
The teacher brainstorms the topic for developing learners' interest in reading text comprehension.			
The teacher provides background information before learners' reading text comprehension.			
The teacher explains key ideas of each paragraph of a text.			
The teacher promotes vocabulary learning by providing the meanings of unknown words.			
The teacher helps students guess the meaning of unknown words in the context of reading text.			
The teacher instructs students how to locate the information of comprehension questions.			
The teacher explains the meaning and the structure of long sentences in reading text.			
Statement Items	Yes	No	Remarks

Part-III: Teaching Reading Discourse			
The teacher raises learners' awareness of the contextual clues in reading text.			
The teacher focuses on the ability of understanding deep meaning of reading text.			
The teacher involves students in the process of understanding text organization.			
The teacher focuses on the functions of discourse words in teaching reading text.			
The teacher involves the learners to understand the difference between a fact and an opinion in reading text.			
The teacher trains learners in constructing the meaning by connecting sentences together.			
The teacher engages learners in reading to identify the type of text by understanding the use of language.			
The teacher involves learners in detailed reading for evaluating text critically.			
The teacher teaches shifting of ideas with the help of sentence connectors in reading text.			

Comment by the observer:

