

**UNIVERSITY OF EDUCATION, WINNEBA**

**IMPACT OF POOR READING ON THE WRITINGS OF JUNIOR HIGH  
SCHOOL STUDENTS: THE CASE OF SELECTED SCHOOLS IN THE  
ABUAKWA NORTH MUNICIPALITY**

**HANNAH OKYERE**

**200010076**



**Thesis in the Department of Applied Linguistics, Faculty of Foreign Languages,  
submitted to the School of Graduate Studies in partial fulfilment  
of the requirements for the award of the degree of  
Master of Philosophy  
(Teaching English as a second Language)  
in the University of Education, Winneba**

**SEPTEMBER, 2020**

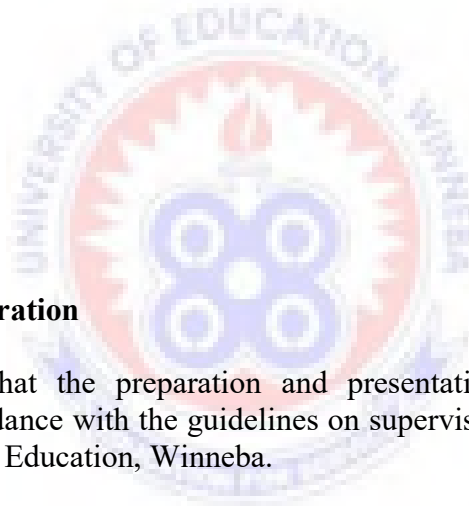
## DECLARATION

### Student's Declaration

I, Hannah Okyere, 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 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 the dissertation was supervised in accordance with the guidelines on supervision of dissertation laid down by the University of Education, Winneba.

SUPERVISOR: Dr. REBECCA AKPANGLO-NARTEY

SIGNATURE: .....

DATE: .....

## **DEDICATION**

To my daughter, Nana Ama Gyekyiwaa Gyekyi



## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I wish to express my profound gratitude to the many individuals who have so greatly supported the completion of this project. I am deeply grateful to my supervisor Dr. Rebecca Akpanglo-Nartey, whose guidance has been productive and insightful. My special thanks goes to all the lecturers in the Department of Applied Linguistics who organized a series of seminars for students of the department which facilitated the completion of the work. Their constructive criticisms closely guided me from the beginning of this thesis to its completion. I am also thankful to JHS teachers and pupils of Abuakwa North Municipality for their participation in the study. I am also grateful to my late father Mr. C.O. Darko for his profound support and encouragement for the success of the work.



## TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>Content</b>	<b>Page</b>
<b>DECLARATION</b>	<b>iii</b>
<b>DEDICATION</b>	<b>iv</b>
<b>ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS</b>	<b>v</b>
<b>TABLE OF CONTENTS</b>	<b>vi</b>
<b>LIST OF TABLES</b>	<b>x</b>
<b>LIST OF FIGURES</b>	<b>xi</b>
<b>ABSTRACT</b>	<b>xii</b>
<b>CHAPTER ONE : INTRODUCTION</b>	<b>1</b>
1.0 Introduction	1
1.1 Background to the study	1
1.2 Statement of the Problem	5
1.3 The Purpose of the Study	7
1.4 Objectives of the Study	7
1.5 Research Questions	8
1.7 Significance of the Study	8
1.8 Delimitations of the Study	9
1.9 Limitations of the Study	9
1.10 Organization of the study	9
<b>CHAPTER TWO : LITERATURE REVIEW</b>	<b>11</b>
2.0 Introduction	11
2.1 The Concept of Reading	11
2.2 The Concept of Poor Reading	18

2.3	Causes of Poor Reading among Students	19
2.3.1	Pupil-Related Causes	19
2.3.2	Lack of appropriate materials to read	21
2.3.3	Home-Related Causes	22
2.3.4	Teacher-Related Causes	24
2.4	Nature of Poor Reading Habits Students Exhibit	26
2.4.1	Limited Vocabulary	27
2.4.3	Slow reading	29
2.4.4	Regression	29
2.4.5	Skipping of words	30
2.4.6	Overlook of punctuation marks	31
2.5	The Concept of Writing	31
2.6	Nature of Writing	34
2.7	The Relationship between Reading and Writing	36
2.8	Importance of Writing	42
2.9.1	Lack of an Appropriate Approach to Teach Writing	45
2.9.2	Lack of Adequate Techniques to Teaching Writing	45
2.9.3	Lack of Teacher's Corrective Feedback and Reinforcement	47
2.9.4	Lack of Motivation to Write	50
2.9.5	Lack of Reading	52
2.9.6	Influence of First Language on Writing in English	54
2.10	Effects of Reading on the Writing of Students	57
2.11	Strategies to Improve Students Writing	64
2.11.1	Creating an Environment Conducive for Students	65
2.11.2	Preparing Students to Write	66

2.11.3	Scaffolding Instruction	69
2.11.4	Technology	70
2.11.5	Journal Writing	72
2.12	Theoretical Framework	74
2.12	Summary	77
<b>CHAPTER THREE : METHODOLOGY</b>		<b>78</b>
3.0	Introduction	78
3.1	Research Design	78
3.2	Research Approach	78
3.3	Population	79
3.4	Sample and Sampling Technique	80
3.5	Research Instruments	80
3.5.1	Reading text and writing a short essay	80
3.5.2	Questionnaire	81
3.5.3	Interview	83
3.5.4	Observation	84
3.6	Data Collection Procedure	84
3.7	Ethical considerations	85
3.8	Data Analysis Procedure	86
3.9	Summary	87
<b>CHAPTER FOUR : RESULTS AND DISCUSSION</b>		<b>88</b>
4.0	Overview	88
4.1	Habits that students with poor reading exhibit	88
4.2	Effects of poor reading on the writing of students	92

4.3	Ways in which reading helps students' writing performance	96
<b>CHAPTER FIVE : SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND</b>		
<b>RECOMMENDATIONS</b>		<b>103</b>
5.0	Introduction	103
5.1	Summary of the Major Findings	103
5.1.1	Habits that student's with poor reading exhibit.	103
5.1.2	Effects of poor reading on students writing	104
5.1.3	Ways reading help students to improve on their writing performance	104
5.2	Conclusions	105
5.3	Pedagogical Implication	106
5.4	Suggestions for Further Studies	106
<b>REFERENCES</b>		<b>107</b>
<b>APPENDIX A : Questionnaire For Teachers</b>		<b>124</b>
<b>APPENDIX B : Interview Guide For Students</b>		<b>127</b>
<b>Appendix C : Writing a short essay</b>		<b>128</b>



## LIST OF TABLES

<b>Table</b>	<b>Page</b>
1: Slow reading habits of students	88
2: Poor reading comprehension by students	90
3: Cohesion in students writing	92
4: Poor writing skills	94
5: Reading improves writing of students	96
6: Building the vocabulary span of students	98



## LIST OF FIGURES

Figure	Page
1: Interactive Model (Shanahan and Lomax, 1986)	77



## ABSTRACT

This study set out to investigate the impact of poor reading on the writings of Junior High School Students in the Abuakwa North Municipality. Descriptive survey design was employed for the study. The study sample was made up of 72 teachers, 48 students and 16 head and assistant headteachers. Questionnaire, interview and observation were used to solicit information from the respondents. Validity and reliability of the instrument was ensured by making the instrument available to the supervisor for scrutiny. The instruments covered three main aspects: habits that poor reading students exhibit, effects of poor reading on students writing and ways reading helps students in their writing performance. The data collected was analyzed using Statistics Products and Service Solutions (SPSS 16). Means and standard deviation were used for all the items on the survey. The study revealed that students ignore punctuation marks when writing. The evidence obtained from the study showed that students found it difficult to put thought in words. The study further revealed that students were not able to invent ideas to put them into statements and paragraphs. Grammatical errors were also identified in the writing of students. The study recommends that, students should be encouraged by teachers to read extensively in order to improve on their writing skills. It was also recommended that teachers should use varieties of contemporary teaching methods to help students improve on both reading and writing skills.



## **CHAPTER ONE**

### **INTRODUCTION**

#### **1.0 Introduction**

The work reports on research on the impact of poor reading on writings of Junior High school students of Abuakwa North Municipality. The first chapter of this report introduces the report by discussing the background to the study, statement of the problem, purpose of the study, objectives of the study, research questions, significance of the study, delimitations and limitations of the study.

#### **1.1 Background to the study**

Reading is a very complex process which requires an active participation on the part of the reader. Some scholars have pointed out their point of view about the reading process to highlight the complexity of reading. According to Harris (2000), the message in the printed text is not something given in advance or given at all but something created by the interaction between the writer and reader as participants in a particular communicative situation. To Smith (2013) reading is asking questions of printed text and reading with comprehension becomes a matter of getting one's questions answered. According to Smith (2013, p. 17) "reading is a thinking process in which the reader is required to understand and perhaps to use different skills such as inferring, questioning, predicting, and drawing conclusions in gaining the information from the text". Reading involves many complex skills that have to come together in order for the reader to be successful. For example, proficient readers recognize the purpose for reading, approach the reading with that purpose in mind, use strategies that have proven successful to them in the past when reading similar texts for similar purposes, monitor their comprehension of the text in light of the

purpose for reading, and if needed adjust their strategy use. Proficient readers know when unknown words will interfere with achieving their purpose for reading, and when they will not. When unknown words arise and their meaning is needed for comprehension, proficient readers have a number of word attack strategies available to them that will allow them to interpret the meaning of the words to the extent that they are needed to achieve the purpose for reading.

However, poor readers find it difficult to read one or two sentences correctly. They also find it difficult to comprehend what they read. According to Applebee (1984) poor reader is a person who experiences difficulty learning to read. According to him this may be due to: speech and language problems, specific learning difficulties, English as a second language acquired at a later age, poor reading instruction when they were learning to read or a combination of the above. Applebee (1984) further purported that many struggling readers are also reluctant readers because they find it difficult, fear failure and are aware that they are falling behind their peers. Many of these pupils experience low self-esteem. Horning and Kraemer (2013) reported that by the end of 1st grade, students proficient at reading will have seen an average of 18,681 words of running text, whereas those who are struggling will have only seen 9,975. According to them, given half as much practice as their more proficient peers, struggling readers lost ground in decoding, automaticity, fluency, and vocabulary growth. Struggling readers typically are anxious about school. They tend not to be very motivated, and often lack self-confidence regarding their ability to read (Kos, 1991). Struggling readers often attribute their problems to the difficulty of the task, interference, too much noise, vision problems, or unfair teachers; seldom do they acknowledge that their own lack of skill is at the heart of the issue. Many give up trying to improve altogether, believing that it is hopeless for

them. In turn, teachers attribute the reluctance of these students to participate in activities as either defiance or lack of motivation, and do not know how to address the problem (Ahn, 2014). Struggling readers, who have experienced many years of frustration and failure, are often skilled evaders who try to either “hide out or act out” so they can avoid reading in front of their peers (Cope, 1997, p.23).

Writing, on the other hand, is the learned process of shaping experiences into text, allowing the writer to discover, develop, clarify and communicate thoughts and feelings. It requires the development of thinking skills. Accordingly, Widdowson (2001) stated that “writing is the use of visual medium to manifest the graphological and grammatical system of the language. This is to say, writing in one sense is the production of sentences as instances of usages” (p.62). Thus, students must master the graphic system of language, its grammatical structure and select the appropriate vocabulary (mechanisms of writing) related to the subject matter. Writing is the expression of language in the form of letters, symbols or words (Utami, 2013).

If any structured comparison is to be made reading and writing must have several aspects in common. Olsen (2003), for example, contends that features such as the cognitive strategies underlying the procedures of the two skills require “planning and setting goals, tapping prior knowledge, asking questions and making connections, constructing the gist, monitoring, revising meaning, reflecting and relating and evaluating” (Olsen, 2003, p. 17). With regard to meaning construction, the reading and writing also share similar processes such as drafting, redrafting and negotiation with each other and so both the reader and writer should be keeping each other in mind (Olsen, 2003). Apart from that, the proficient reader and writer automatically use their skill, which means they should both read and write actively and strategically. Similarly, Tierney and Shanahan (1991, cited in Olsen, 2003) believe that both the

reader and writer need to make sense either of or with print through activating their prior knowledge of the topic and genre, experience, expectations of the reader, writer and culture, and contextual frames of reference. Overall, it seems that the reader and writer adopt similar processes while performing tasks including having confidence and motivation in order to read and write effectively.

As for the pedagogical context, a reader will instinctively pick up vocabulary and language structures while reading and should be able to make use of them in their writing work (Vogt, 2000). According to Vogt, apart from teaching writing skills separately, a number of teachers make use of reading as a means to enhance the writing ability of students. For that reason, they create various strategies to combine the two skills in order to simultaneously achieve their goals of producing not only a skilful reader but also a capable writer. The underlying practice is obvious, use reading as a resource to elaborate on ideas to enhance writing tasks while at the same time use writing as a learning tool in teaching reading strategies.

Reading widely and in large quantities or so called “extensive reading” (ER) is frequently recommended by well-known reading experts such as Grabe (2002), Eskey (2002), Nuttall (1996), Day and Bamford (1998) as well as ER researchers as an easy but powerful means to enhance language skills. Janopoulos (1986) reported that writing proficiency was positively correlated with the quantity of time students studying at a U.S. university spent on pleasure reading but not on L1 pleasure reading. Likewise, numerous studies such as those by, Kaplan and Palhinda (1981), Salyer (1987), Polak and Krashen (1988), Hafiz and Tudor (1990), Constantino (1995) and Al-Rajhi (2004) have also identified similar findings. According to them extensive reading improves the writing ability and skills of students. However, a number of

studies particularly in the EFL contexts, found no relationships between reading and writing, e.g. Lai (1993), Caruso (1994) and Krashen (1996).

In this research, the focus is on the impact of poor reading on writing performance among students of Abuakwa North Municipal Junior High Schools. The results of this research should be able to open the mind of teachers towards the importance of reading to improve the students writing performance. Besides that, the students could see the difficulties in writing that they might face if they do not have the habit of reading.

## **1.2 Statement of the Problem**

At all levels of education such as primary, Junior High School, Senior High School, college and university, writing is one of the language skills that students should perform. Usually a good reader makes a good piece of writing. This statement sufficiently shows that reading and writing have their own connection and share a very close relationship with each other. Reading and writing are two skills which complement each other. However, many students do not realize the existence of the connection between reading and writing and how those skills influence each other. This is exactly what is happening among Junior High School students in the Abuakwa North Municipality. Through observation and interaction with some teachers it was revealed that students exhibit the habit of poor reading. Some of the students exhibit mispronunciation of words, skipping of words and omitting of punctuation marks. It was further noticed that such students also have poor writing skills. According to Alderson (2000), poor reading among students is a problem of concern to educators because it impacts negatively on the writing skills and academic achievement of students. The high failure rate in examinations, the increase in student dropout rate, the problem of students relying on hand-outs rather than doing their own research, are



all affecting the social, economic and political development of many countries. The effort of educators in fighting illiteracy is being thwarted by students who neither read their prescribed textbooks nor for pleasure. Students lack role models both from home and school to encourage and motivate them to read as the groups rarely read for pleasure. Students' attitude towards reading is negative as they view reading as boring and majority would rather watch home videos than read. This is compounded by the fact that teachers teach for exams and mostly use rote methods when teaching to finish the syllabus. Such methods do not develop good readership in the learners.

Students of Abuakwa North Municipal Junior High Schools are not aware that reading actually can help them in writing. The ability to think effectively and evaluate ideas from different perspectives are becoming increasingly important in today's world. Reading and writing are interrelated processes. In many academic institutions, teachers expect students to write critically and grammatically correct passages. Students should use writing to demonstrate not only what they understood when they read, but that they are able to interpret, evaluate and respond critically to it. This ability is essential for students if they have to succeed in their higher education. Unfortunately, students of Abuakwa North Municipal Junior High Schools are denied such ability because of poor reading habits such as mispronunciation of words, skipping of words and omitting of punctuation marks.

Since some teachers are not well informed about the benefits of connecting reading and writing, they do not have the opportunity to use strategies that integrate both reading and writing. Thus, students face various problems in writing such as integrating new information, presenting appropriate details and summarising information from given texts (Alderson, 2000). According to Ibrahim (2006) there is correlation between poor reading and poor writing. He purported that students who

are not able to read well do not have the ability to create effective writings. According to Ibrahim effective writing deals with the writer being able to construct good sentences, use of appropriate punctuation marks and grammar. Mahmoud (2014) was of the view that writing is no longer perceived as an individual task taught separately from other language learning skills. It is instead viewed as a process of pedagogy (prewriting, drafting and post writing) through which students learned to make a relationship between what they read and what they tend to write. Most research works focused on poor reading habit on academic performance of students and causes of student's poor writing skills. Some of these research work includes: effects of poor reading on academic performance of students by Wanjiku (2010), impact of poor reading on the academic performance of students by Caleb, Lisa and Debra (2013) and causes of poor reading on the academic performance of students by Kleopas (2018).

### **1.3 The Purpose of the Study**

This research is aimed at investigating the impact of poor reading on the students writing performance. In addition, this research will shed light on the ways reading help students in writing as well as the difficulties they face in writing when they do not read on regular bases.

### **1.4 Objectives of the Study**

The specific objectives of this study is to:

1. Identify the habit that students with poor reading exhibit in Abuakwa North Municipal Junior High Schools
2. Determine the effects of poor reading on the writing performance of students of Abuakwa North Municipal Junior High Schools.

3. Examine the ways reading help the writing performance of students of Abuakwa North Municipal Junior High Schools.

### **1.5 Research Questions**

The following research questions were formulated to guide the study

1. What are the habits that students with poor reading exhibit in Abuakwa North Municipal Junior High Schools?
2. What are the effects of poor reading on the writing performance of students of Abuakwa North Municipal Junior High Schools?
3. What are the ways reading help the writing performance of students of Abuakwa North Municipal Junior High Schools?

### **1.7 Significance of the Study**

It is hoped that students will be aware that reading will benefits them in writing. Therefore, they will acknowledge that there is a connection between reading and writing performance. Perhaps later on the students will make reading their hobby in their spare time. It is because to have a good piece of writing is not something that can only be learned explicitly but also through reading habits. This research could also provide us with the knowledge of the benefits of reading and how reading can improve their writing performance. This could shed some light for the teachers to help the students improve their writing performance. The teachers can make use of the skills that the students already know in improving their writing performance. Other than that, teachers can design or create activities for the students to help them to improve their writing which involves the reading skills.

The study would serve as a point of reference for future researchers who want to conduct research in a similar field. The study would encourage teachers to use

modern method in their teaching to improve the reading ability as well as the writing skills of students in order to improve their academic performance.

### **1.8 Delimitations of the Study**

The scope of the study is limited to teachers of Abuakwa North Municipal Junior High Schools. The schools were selected for the study because it was observed that students find it difficult to read which affect their writing performance. The school was also selected because of poor performance of students in the English Language. There are various components of reading and writing, however, the study is delimited to the concept of reading, the concept of writing, effects of reading on writing, ways reading help students in their writing and difficulties in writing without extensive reading.

### **1.9 Limitations of the Study**

The study considered teachers in Abuakwa North Municipal Junior High Schools without including teachers of private junior high schools and other public schools who would also have given vital information about the impact of poor reading on writing. Pre-determined questions were used excluding open-ended questions which would have given the respondents the opportunity to give vital information about the impact of poor reading on writing performance of students. The results of the study may not be generalized beyond the specific population from which the sample was drawn.

### **1.10 Organization of the study**

This research is organized into five chapters. Chapter One presents the background, statement of the problem, purpose of the study, objectives of the study, research questions, significance of the study, delimitations of the study and limitation

of the study. Chapter Two of the research reviews literature related to the study. Issues considered are both theoretical and empirical review related to the problem investigated. The methodology and procedures used to gather data for the study are presented in Chapter Three. The results and discussion of the study are contained in Chapter Four. Chapter five is a summary of the study, conclusions drawn from the findings and recommendations.



## CHAPTER TWO

### LITERATURE REVIEW

#### 2.0 Introduction

This chapter reviews literature that underpins the study. The areas that are discussed include: theoretical framework, the concept of reading, the concept of writing, effects of reading on writing, ways reading helps students in their writing and difficulties in writing without extensive reading.

#### 2.1 The Concept of Reading

Many experts have given their definition about what reading really means. Reading is a very important skill that the students must master, because the reading cannot be separated from writing in the process of teaching and learning. Reading is the most important activity in any class, not only as a source of information, but also as a means of consolidating and extending one's idea and knowledge of language. According to Lerner (2000, p. 68), reading is a fluent process of readers combining information from a text and their own background knowledge to build meaning. Aim (2010, p. 5) states that reading is a complex conscious and unconscious mental process in which the reader uses a variety of strategies to reconstruct the meaning that the author is assumed to have intended, based on data from the text and from the reader's prior knowledge. Reading is an active skill. It constantly involves guessing, predicting, checking, and asking oneself questions (Kristy, 2002, p. 1). Reading is the construction of meaning from a printed or written message (Debbie, 2002, p. 12). Reading begins with the accurate, swift, and automatic visual recognition of vocabulary, independent of the context in which it occurs.

According to Bashir and Mattoo (2012) reading is the process of looking at a series of written symbols and getting meaning from them. They purported that, we use

our eyes to receive written symbols (letters, punctuation marks and spaces) and we use our brain to convert them into words, sentences and paragraphs that communicate something to us. From the explanation given by Bashir and Mattoo one can infer that reading is a *receptive* skill and through it we *receive* information. Reading is also said to be a productive skill in that we are both receiving information and transmitting it (even if only to ourselves). Yusuf (2015) in support of Bashir and Mattoo (2012) purported that, reading is a process that is carried and used by readers who want to get the message delivered by the author through the medium of words or written language.

Reading is viewed as a processes of making sense out of written text. Ogbonna (2014) states that reading is decoding and understanding written texts. Decoding requires translating the symbols of writing system (including Braille) into the spoken words which they represent. From the perspective of Ogbonna it can be deduced that reading is the construction of meaning from a printed or written message. It means the construction of meaning involves the reader connecting information from the written message with previous knowledge to arrive at meaning and understanding.

For many years, three basic definitions of reading have driven literacy programmes in the United States (Foertsch, 1998). According to the first definition, reading means learning to pronounce words. According to the second definition, reading means learning to identify words and get their meaning. According to the third definition, reading means learning to bring meaning to a text in order to get meaning from it.

Although these definitions reflect long-standing views of reading, current literacy research such as Bainbridge *et al.* (2000, p.10) purported that “reading is the process by which we identify individual words from their printed and written form

and by which we combine these words into simple ideas or propositions, in order to be able to form a mental model of the text based upon inferences that take us beyond the information given”. Reading also can be said to transform written language into meanings, but it is only occasionally that students need to worry about the meaning of an individual word. Reading is always a continuously smooth activity, because when students do come across unfamiliar words they are disturbed by them and the calm flow of ideas is halted. It recognizes the importance of skill instruction as one piece of the reading process (Heilman, Blair & Rupley 1998; International Reading Association and National Association for the Education of Young Children, 1998; Davies & Eric, 1998).

Reading has been seen to be an interaction between an author and a reader. The interaction includes an encoded message which the reader is expected to make meaning out of. According to Doft, “the interaction always includes three facts: materials to be read, knowledge and physiological and intellectual ability” (Doft, 1989, p. 2). This is in support of Wixon *et al.* (1987) which indicates that reading is the process of constructing meaning through dynamic interaction among the reader, the text and the context of the reading situation. The reading process involves visual motor skills and perception of the symbols by the brain. It is generally broken down into two components: ‘reading’ the words, or decoding and understanding what is read, or comprehension (Cooper, Warnoke & Shipman, 1988; Samuels, 1988).

Manzo and Manzo (1993) explains reading as the act of simultaneously reading the lines, reading between the lines and reading beyond the lines. According to them, reading the lines’ is the process of decoding the words in order to reconstruct the author’s basic message. Reading between the lines is the process of making inferences in order to reconstruct the author’s implied messages. They stated that this



requires an understanding of the integral logic of facts presented as well as an understanding of connotative and figurative language. 'Reading beyond the lines' is the process of judging the significance of the author's message and constructively applying it to other areas of knowledge and experience.

Reading is the ability to understand words contained in a document and make use of the knowledge for personal growth and development (Dadzie, 2008). This implies making meaning out of recorded information either printed or non-printed in the life of an individual. People read for different reasons and purposes, some of which include pleasure, leisure, relaxation, information and knowledge. Reading is the identification of the symbols and the association of appropriate meaning with them. It requires identification and comprehension. Comprehension skills help the learner to understand the meaning of words in isolation and in context (Palani, 2012). Palani is with the view that reading is a process of thinking, evaluating, judging, imagining, reasoning and problem solving. Terry (1976) also saw reading as the interpretation of printed or written symbols into speech. Reading is the ability to interpret printed materials. Terry (1976) cited by Buzan (2010) purported that, reading is the decoding process by which written words are translated in order to gain meaning. According to Conge (1992), reading is a specialized and complex skill involving a number of more general or lesser skill. Reading is an essential skill for facilitating a multitude of day to day task and promoting an easily accessible means for creating today's society.

Reading is an essential tool for knowledge transfer and the habit of reading is an academic activity that increases skills in reading strategies. To know about the world and its environment, a child helps himself through reading books, newspapers and other magazines. Once the child has been taught to read and has developed the

love for books, he/she can explore for himself or herself the wealth of human experiences and knowledge through reading. Children, who miss the opportunity of getting in touch with books in their early stages of life, find it hard to acquire good reading habits in their later years (Deavers, 2000).

Reading is a complex cognitive process of decoding symbols in order to construct or derive meaning (reading comprehension). It is a means of language acquisition, of communication, and of sharing information and ideas. Like all language, it is a complex interaction between the text and the reader which is shaped by the reader's prior knowledge, experiences, attitude, and language community which is culturally and socially situated. The reading process requires continuous practice, development, and refinement (Aim, 2010).

Brook (1989) sees reading as a mental process involving the interpretation of signs perceived through sense organs. Deavers (2000) supported the assertion put forward by Brook (1989). Deavers (2000) perceives reading as a mental process requiring accurate word recognition ability to call to mind particular meaning and ability to shift or re-associate meaning. This suggests that knowledge gained through reading can increase understanding and in turn influence social and personal adjustment, enrich experience and stimulate thinking. This also implies that reading enhances acquisition of knowledge thereby helping individuals to socially, culturally and personally adjust to the society. Kolawole (2005) hold different perspective about reading in comparison to that of Deavers (2000). Kolawole (2005) sees reading as a process of interacting with language that has been encoded in print. Here, the controlled variable is the degree of interaction that is posited. This implies that during reading, one interacts with a word in print and this interaction eventually results in all increased understanding in the reader. According to Kolawole, reading helps to

increase the comprehension level of the reader but Deavers sees reading as helping the individual to adjust to social environment. Operationally, from the perspective of the researcher reading is described as an information-processing task which enables students to acquire skills to process information.

Gallo (2007) and Aim (2010) hold similar perspective of reading. They all hold the view that reading is the process of decoding symbols in order to get meaning out of it. They also see reading is also viewed as a process of decoding written symbols working from smaller units (individual words) to larger ones (clauses and sentences). To him reading as a process involves two approaches and these are the bottom-up approaches and the Top-down approaches. The bottom-up approach deal with incoming message itself, decoding of sounds and words, clauses and sentences. This includes scanning the inputs to identify familiar lexical functions. The top-down approach process uses background knowledge to assist in comprehending or understanding the message. This is what is termed as meta-cognitive knowledge. Here the reader applies a kind of knowledge and experience that he or she has gained to the new material that he or she interact with. In this vain, meaning of what is read is derived from the previous knowledge of the reader. Guthrie, *et al.*, (2007) and Singh (2011) believe that “reading” is the act of getting meaning from printed or written words, which is the basis for learning and one of the most important skills in everyday life. They further explain that reading is usually associated with books as only the written words provide a complete picture of the act of reading. It means that through reading, the individual is able to build or fix things, enjoy stories, discover what others believe and develop ideas or beliefs of their own. Thus, reading provides the key to all forms of information necessary for our day-to-day survival and growth. From the aforementioned definitions and explanations of reading given by the various

authorities the researcher also see reading as the process of interpreting written language, symbols as well as a sign of measuring device.

Reading is the ability to understand words contained in a document and make use of the knowledge for personal growth and development (Unoh, 1995). This implies making meaning out of recorded information either printed or non-printed in the life of an individual. People read for different reasons and purposes, some of which include for pleasure, leisure, relaxation, information and for knowledge. Reading is the identification of the symbols and association of appropriate meaning with them. It requires identification and comprehension. Comprehension skills help the learner to understand the meaning of words in isolation and in context. Reading is believed to be a process of thinking, evaluation, judging, imagining, reasoning, and problem solving. Reading is an essential tool for knowledge transfer and the habit of reading is an academic activity that increases the skills in reading strategies. To know about the world and its environment, a child helps himself through reading books, newspapers and other magazines. Once the child has been taught to read and has developed the love for books, he can explore for himself the wealth of human experience and knowledge through reading. Children, who miss the opportunity of getting in touch with books in their early stages of life, find it hard to acquire good reading habit in their later years.

Wille (2009) believe that reading is the act of getting meaning from printed or written words, which is the basis for learning and one of the most important skills in everyday life. Unoh (1995) further explain that reading is usually associated with books as only the written words provide a complete picture of the act of reading. It means that through reading, the individual is able to build or fix things, enjoy stories, discover what others believe and develop ideas of beliefs of their own. Thus, reading

provides the key to all forms of information necessary for our day-to-day survival and growth. Akinbola (2007) observed that the importance of reading cannot be denied. According to him while quoting the submission of the Nigeria University Commission, reading culture is a sustained regime of reading textual and non-textual materials for the purpose of broadening the horizon of knowledge within and outside one's disciplinary interest.

## **2.2 The Concept of Poor Reading**

Poor reading habits among students are a problem of concern to educators because it affects the communication development of individuals (Aim, 2010). Wille (2009) purported that many children can be poor readers at an early but develop into excellent reader later on. However, Wille, further stated that if a student reading is poor for any length of time between the ages of 8 and 14 their education and self-confidence can be affected even if their reading fully recovers later on.

Anna (1997) purported that most poor readers do not read strategically nor do they have sufficient metacognitive awareness to develop, select, and apply strategies that can enhance their reading ability and comprehension of text. This is supported by Chenoweth (2002). According to him, poor readers rarely prepare before reading. He stressed that they often begin to read without setting goals and they seldom consider how best to read a particular type of text.

Anderson (1994) was of the view that poor readers exhibit difficulty in decoding and so have difficulty reading the words of their texts accurately. Anderson further explained that some poor readers read too slowly, or lack fluency. As a result of their slow, laboured reading, they often do not comprehend much of what they read, and the attention they have to give to figuring out the words keeps them from understanding the text's message. Chall (1990) also argued that poor readers often

lack sufficient background knowledge about the topic of a text. They have trouble connecting the ideas of a text. They are often not familiar with the vocabulary they encounter and have trouble determining word meanings. He further stated that, even when poor readers possess relevant background knowledge, they frequently are not able to activate it to help them understand what they read.

Dombey (2009) posited that poor readers are unaware of text organization. According to him, they do not know enough about the organizational structure of narratives or the various organizational structures of expository texts to help them read and understand. He further stated that after reading, poor readers typically do not think about or reflect upon what they have read. They almost never seek out additional information about a topic. Iwahori (2008) also mentioned that poor readers often lose confidence in their ability to read. According to him because reading is difficult for them, they cannot and do not read widely. As a result, they are exposed to much less text than good readers and so receive much less practice reading. Further, the practice they do receive is often frustrating, because many of the texts they are asked to read are too difficult for them.

### **2.3 Causes of Poor Reading among Students**

There are many causes of poor reading in modern societies. Some of these causes include: pupils related causes, teacher related causes, home related causes and lack of appropriate materials to read.

#### **2.3.1 Pupil-Related Causes**

One of the major causes of reading difficulties among pupils in our public schools is lack of adequate preparation of pupils to achieve reading readiness before being able to start reading. The earliest stage, readiness, encompasses the skills that

young children usually acquire before they can profit from formal reading instruction. Children acquire knowledge of the language and of letter names; they learn that spoken words are composed of separate sounds and that letters can represent these sounds. Other readiness skills are acquired through word and rhyme games. Play with language apparently helps young children focus their attention on the sounds of words as well as on their meanings Lindner, 2008). Robertson (2009) highlight that one key factor that impedes pupils' reading ability is their inability to process the individual sounds of letters which are needed for word recognition; while Rany (2013) claims the limitations of pupils' vocabulary proficiency impedes their reading ability as well as a challenge to teachers when teaching reading strategies to pupils.

Sanford (2015) and Davenport (2002) point out that underdeveloped phonemic awareness and phonics skills do interfere with pupils' ability to read words fluently because reading is a technical process of reading letter by letter and word by word. This is why Swanson *et al.* (2009) assert that weak phonological retention processing results into poor reading abilities of students. Blending sounds within words (retaining phonological information) is essential for learning to read (Swanson, *et al.*, 2009). Joseph (2018) also adds that students who become poor readers experience difficulties with accurately identifying and reading words at lower grades. The National Reading Panel (2000) concludes that the number one reason why pupils have low reading ability is their inability to master phonics (their inability to blend sounds together, to decode words and to break spoken words into their basic sounds).

Poor working memory is another factor that would contribute to students' low reading abilities. For instance, a larger number of scholars (Alloway *et al.*, 2009; Swanson *et al.*, 2009; Sanford, 2015) all claim that working memory allows a pupil to temporarily store information in short-term memory while being engaged in cognitive

tasks. Thus, working memory helps pupils to activate prior knowledge about a topic while reading or using context clues to determine the meaning of a word (Alloway et al., 2009; Swanson et al., 2009). Alloway et al. (2009) and Swanson *et al.* (2009) assert that students with disabilities are known to have low working memory capacities.

Njie (2013) and Rany (2013) also assert that most students have low reading ability as a result of: lack of effective learning strategies, their unwillingness and lack of motivation to learn how to read. McRae and Guthrie (2009) propose that the best type of motivation to stimulate reading in pupil is the internal motivation (intrinsic motivation) where students' own interest in reading is what makes them to read. With intrinsic motivation, students become competent and highly achieving readers (McRae & Guthrie, 2009).

Reading consists of skills and sub-skills. Therefore weakness in one or more of them could interfere with the reader ability to understand. Learning to read begins when children are four to five years old and beginning to learn letters. The central focus is on decoding and recognition of words, learning the alphabet and the sounds that letters make, learning to distinguish sounds in speech, and learning to sound out words. At this stage, children establish a foundation for a lifelong relationship with books, however, researchers such as Lerner (2000), and Dickinson and Neuman (2006) purported that children who are exposed to books in their early years learn to read more easily.

### **2.3.2 Lack of appropriate materials to read**

Student's reading ability and desire to read is affected by the structure of the texts they read. If texts are well organized, have a logical flow, and include relevant information, they are inviting and reader friendly. A study by Taylor, Frye and



Maruyama (1990) revealed that text readability level is influenced by the readers' motivation, ability and interest. According to them in selecting reading texts, the teacher should check text readability level and the students language level. Students' level must be related with text readability level. Thomas and Holly (2004) also pointed out that the appropriateness between textbook readability and students' reading ability will help the students succeed and maintain their motivation in reading. A study conducted by Bahrudin (2016) and Rohmatillah (2017) shows that a high level of textbook readability can improve understanding and reading level of students.

In Ghana, each class at the Primary, Junior High and Senior High Schools have recommended textbooks. These textbooks, varying in content and structure, may not always be child friendly. Aaron and Joshi (1992) says though textbooks have improved greatly, the many changes in the world today introduce new ideas, new concepts and new vocabulary constantly. Aaron and Joshi (1992) said that unrealistic readability levels and limited comprehensibility of texts due to concept loading and related problems contribute to reading problems.

### **2.3.3 Home-Related Causes**

The primary socialization of the child begins from the home. There are some problems which are home based. Our pupils except a few come from homes devoid of books. Children from illiterate homes scarcely ever come in contact with books before they come to school. In such homes, parents do not read and so their children have no models to imitate. Ross (2002) observed that children sometimes see their parent in jobs that do not require great deal of reading and get the impression that it is not necessary to read. Even for those that come from literate homes, their parents do not read for pleasure and so reading culture is not part of the family experience and

practice. Sometimes the situation at home is not conducive to learning or to read (Debbie, 2002). According to Muogilim (2002) parents who do not read are not necessitate to buy books for their children and wards to read.

It is assumed that students from lower socioeconomic levels will have poor reading ability as compared to those students from higher socioeconomic levels. According to Gunn, Simmons & Kameenui (1991) there is no evidence that there is a direct connection between the socioeconomic status of families and their children's ability to reading. A study done by Patrick Groff (cited in Alexander & Filler, 1990) took 305 fifth and sixth graders examined the relationship between socioeconomic level and their ability to read. The researcher placed these students in categories based on their socioeconomic status. He then conducted reading ability surveys with these students to see if he could identify a correlation between socioeconomic status and reading ability of the students. His results indicated that there was an insignificant relationship between socioeconomic status and reading ability of students. Other family characteristics may impact reading ability are academic guidance, attitude toward education, reading materials in the home, and conversations with children about education in the home (Gunn, Simmons & Kameenui, 1991).

According to Laurice (2004), the information and values that parents share with their children about the importance of reading can significantly affect the attitudes children develop towards reading. Since parents are role models for their children, children tend to acquire the similar attitude of that their parents acquired towards reading (Snow, Bums & Griffin, 2004; Laurice, 2004). A study done by Molly (cited in Alexander & Filler, 1990) involved fifth and sixth grade children. The children involved in the study were asked to state any factors that they believed influenced their feelings toward reading. The results indicated that the students

believed that their parents do not influenced them to read. The study by Molly further revealed that parents do not provide reading materials at home such as newspapers, magazines and dictionaries which affect the reading skills of their wards. Laurice (2004) supported Molly argument by stating that parents do not encourage their children to visit the library. He stated that at the library students can select their own reading materials that is of interest to them. According to Laurice 2004), the efforts that parents put forward to promote literacy development can have impact on their children's attitudes toward reading.

#### **2.3.4 Teacher-Related Causes**

Researchers observed that some teachers are not knowledgeable about children's literature, they are not able to introduce students to the wealth of books available, and they may not recognize the effects of their teaching methods on students' attitude toward reading (Short & Pierce 1990). According to Kirigia (1991), a large number of pupils lack sufficient knowledge in English reading comprehension and also have difficulty comprehending English words because of the teaching methods of teachers. Kirigia (1991) furthermore argued that when the children are promoted to secondary school level, such students meet teachers who are not ready to teach reading due to the negative attitude of teachers of English. They believe that teaching reading should be done in primary level by primary school teachers. Lerner (2006) supported this assertion by purporting that the available reading materials are often ignored due to the wrong attitude of teachers towards teaching reading. According to Lerner, teachers forego teaching reading which in turn affects the performance of all the other examinable subjects. Adebayo (2008), Botha *et al.* (2008) and Lindner (2008) point out that many teachers have under-developed understanding of teaching literacy and also have negative attitude towards teaching pupils reading

strategies. Botha *et al.* (2008) claim the employment of unqualified language teachers has had a negative impact on the quality of teaching and learning of how to read. Njie (2013), Lucas (2011) and Harrington (2001) also lament that most pupils have poor literacy skills as a result of teachers' incompetency and the poor teaching methodology they use to teach reading in class. It has also been highlighted by Harrington (2001) that the most significant factor in student's learning is the quality of the teacher.

Some school practices can actually contribute to a child's reading problems. For example, in some cases, teachers might give up entirely on trying to teach a child to read, and instead simply read everything to the child. During reading time, these children might be expected to sit quietly and do nothing. In such situations, the school system does little to help the child with significant reading problems (Lucas, 2011). In the school environment, students with reading problems do not read as much as students who are good readers because the opportunities are not given to them by teachers. In an extensive line of research, Allington (1986) and Stanovich (1993-1994) compared the time spent and amount of reading in low achieving and average students. Unskilled readers spent less time reading in school than did average students. Poor readers read only a third as many words as average students in school. Students who already have reading problems are not practicing enough to improve their reading skills (McRie & Guthrie, 2009). Students with reading problems often have unsatisfactory relationships with teachers in the schools. A study by Lerner and Johns (2012) shows that poor achievers tend to be perceived negatively by teachers, paraprofessionals, and principals. Teachers often identify poor readers as aggressive, lacking self-discipline, and unmotivated. Low achievers receive less praise or acknowledgment from teachers, and they are more likely to be criticized.

Instruction that does not meet a student's needs can be an important factor in a reading problem. When immature children are given formal reading instruction before they can profit from it, they may become frustrated and develop reading problems. If children do not receive sufficient instruction in critical skills, they may fail in the initial stages of learning to read. Research by Blachman, Tangel and Ball (2004) demonstrates that an important link exists between phonemic awareness and early reading. If children do not develop the critical skill of phonemic awareness by first grade, their reading in all of the following grades is affected. Finally, low-achieving students often do not read enough to become better readers (Blachman, Tangel, & Ball, 2004). Although students with reading problems are a challenge to teach, they still must be provided with the best instruction possible.

#### **2.4 Nature of Poor Reading Habits Students Exhibit**

Struggling readers are not identical, however, there are many common characteristics that differentiate struggling readers from good readers. Students that are poor readers do not feel comfortable reading new text. They tend to read easy patterned text that they have memorized through prior experience with the same text (McKenna, 2002; Campbell & Kelly, 2001). One of the obvious characteristics of struggling readers is the difficulty they have in decoding text (McKenna, 2002). McKenna (2002) states that, "this not only affects reading fluency and comprehension but also diminishes the student's interest in reading for learning or entertainment" (p. 8).

Poor readers often have a negative perception toward reading. They view reading as a task that they should only participate in when they are directed to do so by a teacher or adult. Their perception of reading is not that it can be done for enjoyment but rather, it is a task that they do when they are forced to do so (Fountas

& Pinnell, 2001). Poor readers often have very little prior knowledge or experience with different types of text (Wang, 2000). Children who do not have experience with text tend to have an incorrect or incomplete base of prior knowledge. Acquiring prior knowledge and experiences with print is a crucial factor for children when dealing with reading comprehension (Gunn, Simmons & Kameenui, 1991; McKenna, 2002).

Many students who struggle with reading have poor self-regulation skills. These students struggle with understanding and comprehending what they read. In order for students to self-regulate they must monitor their understanding. Struggling readers do not understand the strategies or techniques used to monitor their understanding, self-correct themselves, or set goals for their reading achievement (Fountas & Pinnell, 2001; McKenna, 2002). A part from the aforementioned habits exhibited by poor readers the following are key to poor reading habits.

#### **2.4.1 Limited Vocabulary**

A study by Marzano (2004) depicts clearly that students with poor reading habits often struggle with reading because they do not possess the oral vocabulary that is a prerequisite to their understanding and retention of content area texts. He further explained that limited vocabulary knowledge can negatively impact the development of student's reading skills. Marzano assertion is supported by August *et al.* (2005). According to them there is a strong relationship between vocabulary knowledge and reading; students need to understand the meaning of critical words and they will be able to promote understanding of what they read. Vocabulary knowledge along with background knowledge provides students a better chance of understanding the text they read.

Bintz (2011) is on the view that students who struggle with reading most often read less per day than their typically achieving peers, making it more difficult for them to acquire new vocabulary and comprehend academic text. Farstrup and Samuels (2008) stated that students with poor reading habits may have weak oral language skills which directly impact their vocabulary development. A limited vocabulary hinders a student's ability to be successful in comprehending grade level text, participating in classroom discussions, quizzes and tests.

#### **2.4.2 Poor phonological awareness and ineffective decoding of written words**

Foorman (2003) reported that students who have weakness in phonological awareness their reading skills are affected. According to him such students do not understand the alphabetic principle of English and fail to develop adequate decoding (letter to sound) skills for reading or encoding (sound to letter) skills for spelling. Mann, Cowin and Schoenheimer (1989) and Runo (2010) confirms this by saying that students with poor reading habits found it difficult to decode words.

Studies by Samuels (1988), Santos, (1989), Smith, and Luckasson (1995) clearly indicate that a major portion of the difficulty students have in reading comprehension is related to inaccurate identification of the individual words encountered which is in turn, strongly related to decoding skills. People can read a text aloud without actually understanding what it means, as Leech (2010) observed in Namibian schools. Dickinson and Neuman (2006) maintain that decoding problems are often aggravated by lack of practice. On the other hand, Buzan (2010) noted that ineffective decoding is a result of poor phoneme-grapheme awareness, and that some children lack sufficient awareness of sound units in words. He emphasises that this makes it hard to learn to read (p.165).

Lerner (2000) is of the view that if learners are struggling to understand what they read because of difficult words, concepts, or sentence structure, they will not be able to read quickly. Many learners and students studying through the medium of a second language spend much of their time struggling to read books which are above their level of language proficiency.

### **2.4.3 Slow reading**

Joseph (2018) reported that slow reading is a poor reading habit to many struggling readers. According to Miedema (2009) reading a text one word at a time decreases a person's reading speed and understanding of the material. He further purported that a child becoming a slow reader is fostering a negative attitude towards reading. This is supported by Newkirk (2011). Newkirk opined that children who think that reading is boring will not be able to read faster. Newkirk says that slow reading may be an impediment when it reduces comprehension. Sanford (2015) was on the view that slow reading could also be attributed to readers' inability to read words unfamiliar that seem difficult to them when reading. According to Sanford, during reading, they are likely to stop when encounter difficult words. In an attempt, they may pronounce the individual word instead of reading and sometimes mispronounced the word. Comprehension of the text is affected at the long run. It is apparent that pupils who tend to stare at individual words cannot move faster.

### **2.4.4 Regression**

Booth (2013) purported that regressions allow for the rereading of previously fixated words. Altman (2014) also opined that regression allows a reader to stop the forward motion of the eyes across the word, drag them backwards and re-read the same words. The reader does this sometimes once, twice or many times depending on



how tired or bored they are with what they are reading. Richardson and Spivey (2000) were of the view that average slow reader will re-read as much as one-quarter of a page again. According to them the reader makes conscious decision to retrace and re-read the words that he/she has just read. This is because the person has the feeling he/she did not understand the words that the eyes had just moved over. Baidoo (2003) says, regression certainly wastes reading time and causes early exhaustion and frustration and finally, it reduces understanding and retention. When regression is not a deliberate act to retain information or to ensure comprehension, then it becomes reading difficulty that needs to be addressed.

#### **2.4.5 Skipping of words**

Reading involves moving from one word to an immediate one. The sequence of words in a sentence must be read as such. Skipping is a sign of poor reading habit that must be avoided because skipping of words leads to omission of word or words. Skipping and possible omission of words inhibit proper interpretation, understanding and explicit meaning of a text. Newkirk (2011) writes that reading faulty can be described as inaccuracies in reading and may include: ignoring initial and final consonant clusters. A consonant cluster may be two or more phonetic consonants found at a particular region of a word. The word “stream” /strim/ has three initial consonants: /s/, /t/, /r/. When the /t/ and /r/ are omitted, the same word may sound “seam”- /si:m/.

Some pupils also ignore words endings; generally termed inflectional morphemes. Inflectional morphemes generally show the grammaticality of the word. Altman (2014) explained that inflectional morphemes mark plurals, verb tense form and comparisons of adjectives and adverbs. For example the verb “want” becomes wanted in the past. The noun “girl” becomes “girls” as plural whereas the adjective

“fast” forms the comparative as “faster”. When the inflection “ed”, “s” and the “er” are not sounded when reading, it means part of the word is ignored and meaning is altered. This is typical of Junior High School Students of Abuakwa North Municipality.

#### **2.4.6 Overlook of punctuation marks**

When a reader overlooks punctuation marks, comprehension of a text becomes difficult and the essence of the text is lost. Punctuation marks used in a sentence structure may point to series of items or ideas. For example (,) may be used in place of “but” to show a contrast. Example Yaw came with his children, Kwasi came alone. Lawrence (2001) admits that a comma in the following pair of sentences gives a different interpretation, “In the garden eggs are gold” and “In the garden, eggs are gold”, the first structure means that there is gold in the garden eggs whereas in the second, the structure means eggs are precious as gold in the garden. Punctuation may indicate a long or short pulse. It may also mark the end of a phrase or a sense group. Since comprehension of a text depends on the ability to read according the sense group, students who ignore punctuation marks would have difficulty in comprehension. Since some of the pupils in the target group overlook some punctuation marks, they find it difficult to grasp the meaning of what they read.

#### **2.5 The Concept of Writing**

Widdowson (2001) stated that “writing is the use of visual as a medium to manifest the graphological and grammatical system of the language” (p.62). Thus, students must master the graphic system of language, its grammatical structure and select the appropriate vocabulary (mechanisms of writing) related to the subject matter. Crystal (1999, p. 214) stated that “writing is not merely a mechanical task, a

simple matter of putting speech down on paper. It is an exploration in the use of the graphic potential of a language – a creative process – an act of discovery”.

Writing is a form of expression and communication which enables learners to communicate ideas, feelings and different attitude in a written mode. Writing can be an individual, a personnel and social endeavour. As it is reported by Miller (2001), cited in Richards and Renanya (2003, p. 25) “even though the writing production is an expression of one’s individuality and personality, it is important to remember that writing is also a social endeavour, a way of communicating with people”. Being an expression and a social endeavour, Pincas (1992) goes on to claim that “writing is a system of graphic symbols, that is, letters or combination of letters which relate to the sounds we produce while speaking” (p.125). According to Harmer (2007), writing is a process, that is, the stages the writer goes through in order to produce something in its final form. This process may of course be affected by the content of the writing and the type of writing. This process has four main elements: planning, drafting, editing and final draft, (Richards and Schmidt 2002, p. 529).

Writing is a core skill which impacts on learning in all subject areas. Young people explain and extend their thinking through writing. It requires them to review their knowledge and understanding of subject content to select key ideas and information and recreate this in their own words. Writing is a tool for thinking and learning and a vehicle for assessing learners’ progress. As such it can have a significant impact on achievement and attainment in all areas. Extended writing can offer challenging opportunities for young people to apply their learning and develop higher-order thinking skills such as analysing, evaluating and creating.

Nunan (2003) states that writing is an intellectual activity of finding the ideas and thinking about the way to express and arrange them into a statement and

paragraph that is clear to be understood by people. It indicates that the writers are demanded to show the thoughts and organize them into a good composition. It requires the integration of ideas systematically written. In other words, Brown (2001) reports that writing is simply the graphic representation of spoken language, and that written performance is much like oral performance, the only difference lying in graphic instead of auditory signals.

Berninger (2002) on the other hand purported that, writing is considered as an active creation of text which involves on the one hand lower-order transcription skills such as handwriting, punctuation and spelling and the other hand, higher-order self-regulated thinking processes such as planning, sequencing and expressing the content. According to him, it requires the writer to express the content of writing into a good composition by considering the aspects of writing to be understood by the readers. White and Arndt cited in Hammad (2013) also explained that, writing is a thinking process which demands intellectual efforts and it involves generating ideas, planning, goal setting, monitoring, evaluating what is going to be written as well as what has been written and using language for expressing exact meanings. It means that writing consists of some stages that should be done by the writer in conveying the message of writing.

Spratt and Mary (2005:26) state that writing is a productive skill which involves communicating a message by making signs on a page. According to Gordon in McDonald and McDonald (2002:7), writing is a process in which different things happen at different stages in the process of putting thoughts into words and words into thoughts. Writing can also be defined as both physical and mental activity that is aimed to express and impress (Nunan, 2003, p. 88). As a mental work, the activities of writing focus more on the act of inventing ideas, thinking about how to express and

organize them into statements and paragraphs that enable a reader to understand the ideas of the written work.

Lado (1983, p.34) explains that “writing skill is a chain of symbolic graphs combined together to form a comprehensible text that is a necessary tool of communication”. A good writer is the one who has the ability to employ structure and vocabulary items correctly in order to convince readers and states his/her ideas clearly and precisely to make a comprehensible written piece. Writing is more than visual marks; it is a complex activity as suggested by Jozef (2001, p. 5) who states that "writing is among the most complex human activities. It involves the development of a design idea, the capture of mental representation of knowledge, and of experience with subjects".

## **2.6 Nature of Writing**

Foreign language skills are classified into two main categories: the productive skills (speaking and writing) and the receptive skills (reading and listening). However, their nature is not relevant to this division since listening and speaking are naturally acquired, while reading and writing must be learned at school. This is called literacy, that is, the ability to read and write. Moreover, even if writing and speaking are belonging to the same category, they are sharply different. According to Harmer (2007) the productive skills of writing and speaking are different in many ways. Richards' (1990) viewpoint is that the nature and significance of writing has often been underestimated in language teaching and in foreign language teaching, writing has often been synonymous with teaching grammar and sentence structure. In terms of complexity and difficulty many surveys proved that language production is difficult. According to Nunan (2003) it is easier to learn to speak than to write no matter if it is a first or second language. A similar point is stated by Grabe and Kaplan

(1996). According to them, probably half of the world's population does not know how to write adequately and effectively. Concerning its difficulty as a productive skill, Tribble (1997) claimed that writing is a difficult skill to acquire. This complexity resides in the stages of the process we go through when writing, and the lack of knowledge in the subject matter. Harmer (2007) pointed out that, there are a number of reasons why students find language production difficult. Writing and learning to write has always been one of the most complex language skills.

Besides its complexity, its difficulty and its importance, writing is a dynamic process which allows writers to work with words and ideas no matter if these are right or wrong. This idea is supported by Zamel (1992, p.473) who described writing as a "meaning-making, purposeful, evolving, recursive, dialogic, tentative, fluid, exploratory process". More importantly, writing is a process of discovery, that is, a way to help learners to learn or to discover how to compose a piece of writing. Grabe and Kaplan (1996) think of writing as a technology, that is, a set of skills which must be practiced and learned through practice. On the other hand, Bell and Burnaby (1984) as cited in Nunan (2003, p.23) had similar point to Tribble (1797). They pointed out that:

Writing is a very complex cognitive activity in which writers must show control over content, format, sentence, structure, vocabulary, punctuation, spelling and letter formation, that is, control at the sentence level. Besides, writers must be able to structure and integrate information cohesively and coherently within paragraphs and texts.

According to White and Arndt (1991), writing is also a problem-solving activity developing in progress. This means that writing does not come naturally or automatically, but through cognitive efforts, training, instruction and practice. The nature of writing can be determined according to language transfer, that is, to what extent L1 can affect students' written production in English? In this respect, it was

proven that “writers will transfer writing abilities and strategies, whether good or deficient from their first to their second or third language” (Friedlander, 1997:109). Also, in her study of the writing of L1, L2 and FL, Edelsky (1982) cited in Friedlander (1997, p.110) indicated that “writing knowledge transfer across languages.” This transfer was independent of language proficiency as it is reported in Jones and Tetros’s study (1987, as cited in Friedlander, 1997) that weaker writers’ failure to use writing strategies in English was based on their failure to use these strategies in their first language. Another opposite viewpoint was held by Blanchard and Root (2004, p.1) who argued that “the conventions for writing may change from language to another”. Not everyone is a naturally gifted writer. Writing is a skill that can be learned, practice and mastered.

The nature of writing requires that we write for an audience (reader) whose task is to decode what the writer has encoded previously. It is worth mentioning that, in contrast to speaker-listener relationship situation, in writing there is no interchanging participant and it is impossible to measure the effect of the message on the reader, but it is impossible to determine the reasons that push us to write.

## **2.7 The Relationship between Reading and Writing**

Writing and reading are two distinct skills, that is, the former is productive, whereas the latter is receptive. But, they are interrelated since they lead to the same objective, which is, learning. Writing involves the decoding of a message of some kind; that is, we translate our thoughts into language. Reading has to do with the decoding or interpretation of this message. Both of them are linked with language and communication of ideas. It is argued by Hyland (2003) that “writing, together with reading, is a central aspect of literacy” (p.35). This means that to be a literate person, it is both to be able to read and write.

Most recent trends in teaching English stressed that reading and writing are related, but researchers have only recently begun to explore this connection. Charge and Taylor (1997) as cited in Sadek (2007, p. 202), “reading in the writing classroom is understood as the appropriate input for acquisition of writing skills”. This is because it is generally assumed that reading progress will somehow function as primary models from which writing skill can be learned or at least be inferred. In other words, reading can be an important and an appropriate input to acquire the writing skill. In language correlation studies between reading and writing relationship, Sadek (2007, p.233) concluded that:

1. There are correlations between reading achievement and writing abilities, that is, better writers tend to be better readers.
2. There are correlations between writing quality and reading experience as reported through questionnaires, that is, better writers read more than poorer writers
3. There are correlations between reading ability and measures of syntactic complexity of writing, that is, better readers tend to produce more syntactically natural writing than poorer readers.

Also, studies of reading and writing relationship by Mansouri (2006) suggested three somewhat interrelated hypotheses which he has chosen to describe as models. The first one is the directional hypothesis which means that reading-writing connection is directional, that is, reading influences writing, but that writing knowledge is not useful in reading. What marks the directional model is reading-to-writing model. The second hypothesis is the non-directional hypothesis, where reading and writing are said to derive from single underlying proficiency, that is, the common link being that of the cognitive process of constructing meaning. They



argued that writing, like reading is a process of interactive and dynamic activation, instantiation and refinement of schemata. The third type is the bi-directional hypothesis. It is the most complex model which means that reading and writing as interactive and dependent as well (Charge & Taylor, 1997; Eisterhold, 1991).

There are many other connections between reading and writing, some are simple and others are complex. For instance, readers use writing to help them process what they read. In addition to reading what others have written, we also read our own work, over and over for correction. In this respect, Harris (1993) suggested five interesting relationships which seem more significant to teachers:

1. Reading and writing are personal and social activities that are used in order to communicate. Writers need a response to what they write; readers need to respond to what they read and get responses to their analysis of the text;
2. Reading and writing are reciprocal. Writers can learn much about writing by reading; readers can learn much about reading by writing;
3. Reading and writing are interdependent. Readers cannot read if writers do not write. Likewise, writers cannot write if readers do not read;
4. Reading and writing are parallel. Both have purpose, depend on background knowledge and focus on the construction of meaning;
5. Reading and writing help discover the world around us. As writers write, they need to read and as readers read, they often need to write (p. 86).

Manzo and Manzo (1995, p.113) describe the relationships between reading and writing as an interrelated treatment; they call this connection the “two-way relationship between reading and writing” as it is illustrated in Table 1.

**Table 1: Reading and writing connection (Manzo & Manzo, 1995, p. 113)**

Reading to write	Writing to read
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Reading increases the knowledge Individuals have to write about.</li> <li>2. reading instils knowledge of linguistic pattern and form.</li> <li>3. Reading builds vocabulary and familiarity with writer craft</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Understanding of subjects, making subsequent reading easier</li> <li>2. Writing helps one to read like a writer, hence, sparking insights into writer mechanism and enhancing comprehension.</li> <li>3. Revision in writing or making changes at various point in the process, involves many of the same high-order thinking strategies involved in critical reading.</li> </ol>

Over the past years, reading was the main focus rather than writing. Reading and writing skills are viewed as separated skills. However, these two language skills are complementary and can be closely developed. Johnson (2008, p.07) “believes that the relationship between these two skills is that reading helps learners become better writers, by making them aware of the rules of grammar”. Consequently they develop the language structure, grammar and increase their vocabulary; hence, reading in the writing classroom is understood as the appropriate input for the acquisition of writing skill. It is believed that reading passages will somehow function as primary model for which writing skill can be learned, or at least inferred (Eisterhold, 1990). Eisterhold, believes that the writing abilities development occurs through the comprehensible input with low effective filter, he also claims that writing competence comes from large amounts of self-motivated reading for interest, or for pleasure.

Writing and reading provide a strong relationship and helps students to widen their style, ideas, and accuracy. Thomas (1976) maintains that “a significant relationship existed between writing achievement and the amount and variety of reading experience” (cited in Flippo and Coverly, 2000, p. 15).

Two other research projects were conducted at a university in Arizona to examine the usefulness of integrating language and content and exposing ESL students to a massive amount of reading (Abu-Rass 1997; Ghawi 1996). In both case studies, participating students demonstrated significant gains in language proficiency, especially in writing. The students were also eager to read the assigned novels and enjoyed reading even though they encountered many unfamiliar words (cited in Abu-Rass, 2001).

Hao and Sivell (2002) has analyzed the context of the reading/writing connection and the benefits that students may gain via this connection. The texts, available as a background source for writing, help students feel confident about finding something to say in their writing. This is very important for low and intermediate levels of foreign language learning. Moreover, introducing the materials and giving instruction around them will assist learners in gathering information to support, develop and generate new ideas, and at the same time, they may extend their lexical and syntactical repertoire by imitation and copying. This copying will increase their security in using the foreign language.

The assumption behind this research is that if writing is taught through reading texts, students will gain ideas through which they can write different topics. Moreover, students will have a model for their own writing, and hence the quality of their writing will be enhanced. According to Vandrick (2003, p. 18) “most people like to read about human situations, concerns, problems, solutions, and emotions.

Sometimes people prefer to read stories because they cover universal themes, such as family work, loneliness, love, and mortality, and readers can thus identify with the stories and their characters which in turn may lead to qualified writing”.

According to Chokwe (2013), writing cannot be discussed in isolation from reading. According to Rose (2004) the two complement each other. Rose (2004) argues that the parent-child reading before school is the first stage in a curriculum of reading skills that underlies the content and processes of teaching and learning in each stage of schooling. Rose found that parent-child reading is not practised in rural areas where indigenous people of Australia live. Rose (2004) argues that writing activities in schools tend to be regarded as secondary and dependent on reading proficiency. Furthermore, he suggests that for learners to become better writers, they have to master reading from an early age.

Jurecic (2006) argues that teaching writing in High School is challenging in this era where the reading culture has been eroded by television, movies, videos and games, amongst other factors. He maintains that students need to read more to be prepared for reading and writing in different disciplines. He also suggest that students also need more practice in using writing to explore ideas, develop positions, deliberate about problems and paradoxes, make arguments and think new thoughts about the world.

Zamel (1992) states that writing allows students to write their way into reading, that reading shares much in common with writing, and that reading is also an act of composing. She critiques the way reading is being taught in schools. She observed that students view the purpose of reading as to answer questions that follow after reading. In agreement with Yan (2005), she also noticed that students read textbooks so that they can regurgitate what they read back to the teacher, and that if

students fail to regurgitate information, they feel they are not good readers. She also noted that students are apprehensive about their own writing. Zamel (1992) challenges the structure of reading textbooks which relegates writing to the last activity. Therefore, reading and writing are reciprocal as students read what has been written and incorporate that as part of their writing. She also argues that writing enables us to relook at texts in a way which lets us grapple with uncertainties, reflect on complexities, deal with puzzlements, and offer approximate readings. She also argues that writing dispels the notion that reading is a matter of getting something and getting it at the outset (Zamel, 1992).

## **2.8 Importance of Writing**

Learning a foreign language entails learning to write it. Many foreign students are least proficient in coping with the system. Only a minority feels compelled to use it in some formal situations because it is a difficult skill to acquire. “Writing provides an importance mean to personal self-expression (Mc Arthur, et al., 2008, p. 1). Its importance lies in its power as it is reported by Mc Arthur, et al. (2008, p. 11) “the power of writing is so strong that writing about one’s feelings and experiences can be beneficial psychologically and physiologically because it can reduce depression, lower blood pressure and boost the immune system.

Despite its importance, there is considerable concern about the writing capabilities of school-age children and youth. As it is asserted by National Commission on Writing in America’s School and College (NCW) (2003:7 as cited in Mc Arthur, *et al.*, 2008, p. 1) “the writing of students in the USA is not what it should be”. This bad situation on writing was confirmed by this study which indicated that “three out of every 4<sup>th</sup> - 12<sup>th</sup> grade students demonstrated only partial mastery of the writing skills” (Persky, Campbell & Mazzco, as cited in Mc Arthur, et al., 2008, p. 2).

In this respect, we should not neglect the importance of the writing skill in teaching and learning because it expresses social relationship which exist due to the individuals' creation via discourse, but these relationships are not only discourse. According to Hyland (2003, p. 69) "writing is one of the main ways that we create a coherent social reality through engaging with others".

Also. The practice of writing can provide different learning styles especially for those who find it difficult to learn through the oral skill, for such students writing is likely an aid to retention. It means that students feel more secure and relaxed in writing at distance rather than feeling compelled to deal with immediate communication through oral practice. Moreover, writing provides varieties in classrooms through the assigned activities such as punctuation and grammar to supply different writing models. Furthermore, writing is used in formal and informal testing. For instance, oral ability cannot often be tested through the oral skill as it might seem impossible regarding the large number of students and time allocated. Thus, writing can supply oral testing. These considerations suggest that we can make good use of writing as an integrated skill to learning as it complements the learning skills and serves as a reinforcement of the language learnt orally (Vandrick, 2003). However, some learners of English do not agree with the importance assigned to the writing skill pointed out by Doff (1995) who said that:

If we think only of long-term needs, writing is probably the least important of the four skills for many students, they are more likely to need to listen to, read and speak English than to write it. Their need for writing is most likely to be for study purposes and also as an examination skill (p.148).

Most contexts of life (school, the workplace and the community) call for some levels of the writing skill and each context makes overlapping but not identical demands. Proficient writers can adapt their writing flexibly to the context in which it

takes place. According to Nunan (2003) in the school setting, writing plays many roles: it is a skill that draws on the use of strategies such as planning, evaluating and revising text to accomplish a variety of goals, such as writing a report or expressing an opinion with the support of evidence. He further posited that, it is a skill that draws on sub-skills and processes such as handwriting and spelling, a rich knowledge of vocabulary and mastery of the conventions of punctuation. Ito (2011) supported the argument raised by Nunan, according to Ito, capitalization, word usage, grammar and the use of strategies such as planning, evaluating and revising text are all necessary for the production of coherently organized essays containing well developed and pertinent ideas. He further stated that writing is a means to extend and deepen students' knowledge; it acts as a tool for learning subject matter.

The roles of learning to write and writing to learn are interdependent. For this reason, it is recommended that language teachers use content-area texts to teach the reading and the writing skills that content-area provide instruction and practice in discipline-specific reading and writing. Using writing tasks to learn content offers students opportunities to expand their abilities; to strengthen the planning, evaluating and revising process; and to practice grammar, spelling, punctuation, modes of argumentation and technical writing (Graham & Perin, 2007).

After having investigated some theoretical issues on writing, it is safe to say that writing has become vital nowadays; for the written script is the only proof that ever remains. It can be concluded that, through its history, writing is a recent skill which developed from pictographs to the alphabet. It is viewed and defined differently, that is, from different perspectives. Concerning its nature, writing is the most complex and difficult skill to master even for native speakers. When engaging in writing, each writer has reasons to do so; their reasons can be social, professional or

academic purposes. Comparing writing with the other skills it is the most important one, in addition to its complexity and difficulty because it requires a lot of training compared to the speaking skill. What is important is that, writing cannot be taught alone, but usually with the integration of the other skills.

## **2.9 Causes of Writing Difficulties among Students**

There is a common agreement that writing is the most complex difficulty skill for it requires a lot of training. Like all learning problems, difficulties in producing a good piece of writing can be devastating to the learners' education, self-esteem, self-confidence and motivation to write. Many researchers (Harmer, 2007; Nunan, 2003; Tribble, 1997; Richards & Renandya, 2003) agreed that writing is the most complex and difficult skill. This difficulty lies not only in generating and organizing ideas but also in translating these ideas into readable text. Hence, this section investigates what hinder students to write correctly.

### **2.9.1 Lack of an Appropriate Approach to Teach Writing**

The teaching of writing in EFL classes has witnessed important changes in the last twenty years; strongly influenced by research insights from mother tongue contexts, resulting in pedagogic shifts. For many years, the teaching of writing in any context was largely ignored, forever tested but seldom taught. Thus, the focus was on what the students produce, not on how to do it (Nunan, 2003). Raimes (1995) stressed the importance of how to teach writing not what to teach and drew attention to the approaches used.

### **2.9.2 Lack of Adequate Techniques to Teaching Writing**

Teachers' main task is choosing the best classroom technique. This is a day-to-day business of every writing teacher. Any decision teachers make such as



providing students with a first sentence or not or correcting errors is a decision about technique. Selecting these techniques depend on their suitability with class, students' levels and the approach underlying the curriculum and teaching. According to Nunan (2003) the technique to be used by the teacher should be based on the level of the students. He further posited that if the method and technique is above the comprehension level of the students they cannot assimilate and conceptualized the information given to them. Raimes (1994:15-30) proposed seven basic questions that must be asked by any teacher before class, namely:

1. "How can writing help my students learn their second or foreign language?"
2. How can I find enough topics?
3. How can I help to make the subject matter meaningful?
4. Who will read what my students write?
5. How are the students going to work together in the classroom?
6. How much time should I give my students for their writing?
7. What do I do about errors?"

When asking learners about the teachers they prefer studying with, they immediately point to "X" or "Y" teachers but not to "Z"; the reason is that they learn quickly and understandably with some feel bored with others. According to Richards & Renandya, (2003) no teacher teaches in the same way under the same conditions. They further stated that teachers can be demotivated when they do not enhance learning and incite learners to write confidently preferring to scorn them for having made mistakes, repeat the same activities over and over, do not encourage them to write in the classroom or outside it. In other words, motivated teachers can produce motivated learners.

Accordingly, the teachers have a number of crucial tasks to perform to help the students become better-good writers. Harmer (2007) stated that “the main task of the teacher is to motivate and provoke his students” (p.41). In other words, students writers often find themselves “lost for words” especially when dealing with creative writing. Here the teacher’s role is to provoke the students to have ideas, enthusing them with the value of the task. Sometimes, teachers can help the students by worth words they need to start in writing. In this respect, Harmer (2007) added another issue which is closely allied to the teacher’s role as motivator and provoker is that of supporting. This means that students still need a lot of help and reassurance once they get going. Teachers must be extremely supportive when students engage in writing, by helping them overcome difficulties.

### **2.9.3 Lack of Teacher’s Corrective Feedback and Reinforcement**

The researcher has pinpointed that teachers should intervene by motivating, provoking, supporting and even suggesting or advising students. Students needs reinforcement for them to do better. It is reported in language teaching and applied linguistics (2002, p. 199) that:

“Feedback is very important in the teaching of a foreign language; in teaching, feedback refers to comments or other information that learners receive concerning their success on learning tasks or tests, either from the teacher or other persons”.

Moreover, O’Hagan (1997) cited in Graham and Perin (2007, p. 30) argued that the common practice of giving grades to students for their writing is counter-productive. Many students find this type of feedback demotivating because of its emphasis on performance in relation to others. This create a kind of discrimination among those who always work and those who always participate. This can lead students to be more concerned with failure and avoidance rather than being motivated

to master the writing skill. According to Harmer (2007), teachers' reaction to their students' work can be done in two ways: "correcting" and "responding". According to him "correcting" means correcting mistakes of a student's written performance on issues such as syntax, grammar and collocation. When teachers' intervention is designed to help students edit and move to another new draft, responding is more appropriate than correcting. This means that our task, as teachers' is not to say what is wrong or right but to ask questions, make suggestions and indicate where the student could improve his/her writing either in the content or in the manner of his/her expression. This type of feedback will improve the students' level and they can take advantages of such help.

This way of reaction to students' work makes the teacher seen as evaluator or examiner. Students are generally very interesting in numerical grades, but it is worth understanding where their weaknesses and strengths lie. Hence, teachers should "write at least a brief comment on their work where we mentioned task achievement" (Harmer, 2007:50). These comments are motivating for the students if there are positive, that is, the students will revise their work again and try harder in future. In some cases, the overuse of red ink will frustrate students. Harmer (2007) pointed out that "most students find it very disporting if they get a piece of written work back and it is covered in red, underlining and crossing out" (p. 84). This means that the teacher's over-correction is a problem that hinders student's writing. Even if some pieces of writing are completely full of mistakes over correction can have a very demotivating effect. Thus, the teacher has to achieve and make a sort of balance between being accurate and truthful and treating students sensitively and sympathetically.

Accordingly, to avoid all these troubles, Harmer (2007, p. 110) suggested an appropriate and useful ways of correcting students' work which he called "selective correction". In other words, the teachers do not have to correct everything, that is, they should tell their students that they are going to only correct, for example, mistakes of punctuation, tenses, spelling and paragraph organization. This way can guide students to concentrate on that particular aspect of writing and it cuts down on the correction; all these depends on the teacher himself.

According to Graham and Perin (2007) students write to get good marks in the examination and not for the sake of writing itself. To them, writing is useful only if it brings good marks. However, it is worth mentioning that in addition to giving marks, teachers should write comments at the end of a piece of writing which will reinforce them to work hard to reach a certain writing level. When writing comments, teachers should use comments which praise, motivate and encourage their students. They further purported that students will despise writing because of the frustration they feel when they see only negative marks. Harmer (2006, p. 84) also posited that "correcting is important but it can be time consuming and frustration if students just out their corrected writing away and never look at it again". According to him, teachers should be aware that their students understand their problems committed in writing and then rewrite their pieces of writing again correctly since it is the main aim of that correction. He goes on to claim that:

In big classes, it is difficult for the teacher to make contact with the students at the back and it is difficult for the students to ask for and receive immediate attention but despite this there are things which teachers can do such as the use of worksheet and the use of pair work and group work (Harmer, 2006, p. 128).

Black and William (1998) cited in Mc Arthur, *et al.* (2008) argued strongly that teachers need to give feedback that gives each student a specific guidance on

strength and weaknesses. The implication for teachers of writing is that they must use feedback alongside challenging goals. On other words, receiving no feedback is a frustrating experience for learners. Thus, students need to know how effective their writing is as they long for improvement. There is no reason, then to expect corrections only from the teachers; classmates can also provide valuable support to their colleagues. They further stated that students are not mature enough to accept corrections from their peers. They are just looking at teachers who are troubled with crowded classes to offer them the right feedback.

#### **2.9.4 Lack of Motivation to Write**

It is accepted in most fields of learning that motivation is essential to success and achievement. Accordingly, Harmer (2006) stressed this point and claimed that:

“People involved in language teaching often say that students who really want to learn will succeed whatever circumstances in which they study. They succeed despite using methods which experts consider unsatisfactory. In the phase of such phenomenon, it seems reasonable to suggest that the motivation that students bring to class is the biggest simple factor affecting their success” (Harmer, 2006 p. 3).

This means clearly that motivation is strongly related to achievement and learners’ motivation makes the mission easier and more pleasant for both teachers and learners.

According to Byrne (1991), motivation makes writing pleasant and enjoyable. He argues that writing difficulties are linked to three categories of problems: psychological, linguistic and cognitive problems. The interest in the psychology conceptualization of motivation to write has developed recently; it is started officially at the end of the 1970s. According to Boscolo and Hidi (2008, p. 7), “there are two questions that language skill teachers frequently pose to writing. First, why are

students so often ton motivated to write? Second, how can their motivation to write be increased?”

Harmer (2006) purported that, there are many hidden forces which demotivate students to achieve writing skills. Fear of failure which means the fear of not achieving their goals or value in some context specifically in the context of competence or efficacy. It is also closely related to the fear of rejection. The source of this fear of failure among the majority of our students is that they are afraid of making mistakes. Harmer further argued that students feel weak and never recover the state of protections, so they become haunted by failure. Consequently, they are paralyzed and do not attempt their chances for adventure. Learners do write because they see their friends write or maybe they are under the influence of their teachers. This assertion is supported by Sadek (2007). According to Sadek, learners are prompted by uncertainty when they write and feel doubtful about what they write. Moreover, Sadek posited that some students avoid showing their writing; they intentionally hide their weaknesses and often do not finish on purpose because they are utterly pessimistic and fell a beforehand failure. He was on the view that, the idea of failure should not be let to creep in the learners' consciousness, yet you cannot get rid of it. The main role of the teacher is to encourage the students to write by making writing stimulating and enjoyable as it is reported by Dornyei (2005) who claims that “it is one thing to initially whet the student's appetite with appropriate motivational techniques” (p. 80). In other words, the teacher should be selective in choosing or exposing the students to attractive topics and determines the objective of writing such topic. According to Dornyei, students feel relaxed when expressing their thought and ideas in writing.

Byrne (1991) also reported that, anxiety can cause chronic worry and negative thoughts that distract students from doing their best. According to him, this feeling

can also result in a number of additional negative consequences. For example, when anxiety is directed inward, it causes self-doubt and hesitation that keeps students writing with less confidence and effectively. Harmer (2006) considered writing anxieties very dangerous in the sense that it can result in a negative attitude towards writing. He goes on to explain the causes of students' fear of writing. First, he mentioned lack of practice even in the mother tongue. Second, having nothing to say can also be an obstacle to students writing. He finally said that, some people are simply not interested in the writing activity. He claimed that teachers should develop self-confidence in their students through building the writing habit.

### **2.9.5 Lack of Reading**

Reading is useful tool to improve students writing for it is the study of what is written. A report by Krachen (1984) cited by Harmer (2006) compared classes that did more reading than writing concluded that the reading group showed more progress than the writing ones in the writing test. According to Krachen, even if the two skills are separated for reading is a passive activity while writing is a productive one. They are nonetheless complementary and can be closely developed. Byrne (1991) argued “reading can be a goal in itself and in any case is likely to be a more important one than writing, but the two skills can and should be developed in close collaboration” (p. 22).

In this respect, many surveys are done to confirm the existence of the relationship between reading and writing. The findings proved that really there exists a relationship between them. In the same vein, Eisterhold (1997, p. 88) stated that “better writers tend to be better readers, better writers read more than poorer writers and finally better readers tend to produce more syntactically nature writing than poorer readers”. This means that, the question in second or foreign language learning

concerns the directionality of the skills transfer. The most obvious direction from reading to writing, although some studies (Kroll, 1997; Sadek, 2007) reported that writing activities can be useful for improving reading comprehension and retention of information in particular. In this directional model, skills acquired in one modality can be transferred to the other. It appears, though, that this transfer is not automatic but comes only as a result of direct instruction. Another hypothesis maintains that the link between reading and writing is “no directional” and results from a single underlying proficiency: the cognitive process of constructing meaning. The bidirectional hypothesis claims that reading and writing are interactive, but also independent. Each of these models indicates a different relationship between the developments of reading and writing skills and invites different classroom approaches to the teaching of reading and writing. This issue is further complicated when we consider the second language learner who is already literate in a first language. Evidence suggests that after a certain threshold of language proficiency has been attained, first language literacy may have a positive effect on the development of second language skills. However, research also indicates that this transfer of skills is not automatic. Teachers can help their students to use their first language skills in learning a second or a foreign language by making clear the interrelationship between reading and writing (Eisterhol, 1997).

Reading in the classroom is understood as the appropriate input for the acquisition of writing skills for it is generally assumed that reading passages will somehow function as primary models for which writing can be learned or at least inferred. Accordingly, “it is reading that gives the writer the feel for the look and texture of reader based prose” (Kroll, 1997, p.88). Raimes (1994) emphasized the use of reading technique when teaching writing to the students because “reading can do



far more in the teaching of writing than simply provide subject matter for discussion and for comprehension topics” (p. 60), this means that, when the students read, they engage actively with the new language and culture. She goes on to claim that “the more our students read, the more they become familiar with the vocabulary, idiom, sentence patterns, organizational flow and cultural assumptions of native speakers of the language (Raimes, 1994, p. 66).

In other words, reading is a pre-condition for writing because it plays an important role in its development. One cannot improve writing if he does not read frequently. The two skills go hand-in-hand and one cannot function without manipulating the other. We often read to get the information we need to include in our writing. However, this ideal way to improve students writing is totally neglected among our students.

### **2.9.6 Influence of First Language on Writing in English**

In addition to the lack of both reading and interest in writing, students face another obstacle that hinders their abilities to write correctly. This problem is the main concern of many researchers such as Sadek (2007); Harmer (2006); Stark (2005); and Kroll (1997). Generally, foreign language teachers emphasise the need for EFL writers to think and write as far as possible in English. Friedlander (1997) reported, “writers do any of their work in their first language” (p.109). It means that this way of writing will inhibit acquisition of English due to transfer of structures and vocabulary from first language in an incorrect way. However, Friedlander’s study indicated that writers will transfer writing abilities and strategies, whether good or deficient from their first language to their second language or third language. Regarding the writing of first, second or third language, Edelsky (1882) cited in Fiellander (1997, p. 109) indicated that “writing knowledge transfers across languages”. This means, students’

writers use their strategies and knowledge acquired by their L1 to aid and help their L2 or FL writing.

Jones and Tetroe (1987) cited in Friedlander (1997, p. 111) claimed that “writers transferred both good and weak writing skills from their first language to English”. They added “weaker writers’ failure to use writing strategies in English was based on their failure to use strategies in their first language” (p.112). In other words, students’ writers who have never acquired strategies in their first language could not transfer them to their second or third language. In contrast, many other studies indicate that, it is not necessary to be good writers in L1 to be so in L2 or third language writing. Carson, Carrell, Silberstein, Kroll and Kuehan (1990) concluded that the acquisition of L2 literacy skills by adults already literate in their first language is a complex phenomenon involving multiple variables” (p.110). Another opposite view is held by Blanchard and Root (2004) who argue that:

It is like driving a car, if you have ever driven in another country, you know that some of the rules of the road may be different. Just as the rules of driving differ from country to another, the conventions of writing may change from language to another (p.1).

This means that writing conventions differ from one language to another. Not every person is naturally gifted writer. Writing is a skill that can be learned, practiced and mastered. Writing remains the most difficult skill to be mastered even for native speakers.

This assertion is supported by Nunan (2003) who pointed out that writing is an extremely complex cognitive activity for all which the writer is required to demonstrate control of a number of variables simultaneously. Brooks and Grundy (2009) investigated this issue claiming that “it must be worth asking precisely what is difficult about writing and especially about writing in a second language” (p.10).

Furthermore, in terms of complexity and difficulty many surveys proved that language production is difficult. “There are a number of reasons why students find language production difficult” (Harmer, 2006:251). Writing and learning to write has always been one of the most complex language skills. Nunan (2003) agreed that it is easier to learn to speak than to write no matter if it is a first or second language.

Grabe and Kaplan (1996) said that probably half of the world’s population does not know how to write adequately and effectively. Concerning its difficulty as a productive skill, Tribble (1997) claimed that writing is a difficult skill to acquire. This complexity resides in the stages of the process we go through when writing, the lack of knowledge in the subject matter. Moreover, it can be related also to psychological, linguistic and cognitive factors; this applies to writing L1, L2 and FL.

Bell and Burnaby (1984) cited in Nunan (2003, p. 23) had similar point to Tribble (1997). They pointed out that:

Writing is a very complex cognitive activity in which writers must show control over content, format, sentence, structure, vocabulary, punctuation, spelling and letter formation, that is, control at the sentence level. Besides, writers must be able to structure and integrate information cohesively and coherently within paragraphs and texts (Bell & Burnaby, 1984, as cited in Nunan, 2003, p. 23).

In sum, the factors behind students’ poor performance in writing are endless. Students are not interested in reading which is the most appropriate input to improve their writing; they are not motivated to write and even if they are engaged in writing, their purpose in doing so is just to get good marks. They also suffer from language transfer; they usually use L1 in thinking or writing in English.

## 2.10 Effects of Reading on the Writing of Students

The integration of reading and writing to develop students' literacy learning has been studied by Ito (2011). According to Ito, students who read extensively improved on their writing skills and those who exhibit poor reading their writing ability is affected. The significant role of reading in students' writing was emphasised in a study by Durukan (2011). The study found that there is correlation between extensive reading and writing. According to Durukan (2011) students who read extensively are able to improve on their writing ability while those whose habit of reading is poor faced writing difficulties.

In the learning process, there is a high correlation between reading and writing achievement. Esmaceli (2002) pointed out that there is a positive impact on students' writing when students read extensively. Yoshimura (2009) presented the close relationship between reading and writing in an extremely artistic way. Yoshimura remarked that reading and writing played a complementary role. If characteristics that are missed in methods of reading can be effectively addressed in writing programmes and vice versa, then students' composition skills will begin to grow.

According to Tuan (2012), the correlation between reading and writing helps students improve their writing skill. However, despite the fair amount of studies that have been conducted in this field, Horning (2007; 2013) still believed that even in the United States, where English is spoken as a first language, connecting reading and writing to facilitate learning is not paid sufficient attention to by instructors. Jolliffe (2007), one of the famous scholars of reading and writing studies, agreed with this and mentioned that in almost all writing classes, reading is treated as an alien concept, showing that students are not involved in reading as much as expected.

In terms of research evidence, the majority of effective reading research concentrated more on the quantities and length of time readers were exposed to language input and so the two factors are mainly used as a basis to compare the effects of extensive reading on a reader's writing ability. Different contextual ESL and EFL studies such as Brown (2001) have reported inconsistent results regarding the influences of reading on writing abilities of learners across different age groups.

With regard to the extent or volume of exposure to the target language of learners, Silva and Matsuda (2002) found positive relationships between reading amounts and writing scores there was reported a wide range of quantities and durations of exposure to input. Given that more emphasis had been placed on quantities of reading engagement alone, the writing abilities were reported to have been increased based on various ranges of exposure to the target input.

The following studies are examples of this and are ordered from the least amount of reading upwards. Hong Kong students who read 14.2 graded readers over four weeks and had score gains of only 1.1 in a reading comprehension test did show an increase in their writing scores (Lai, 1993). In Japan, 100 second year university students who read for a total of 90 minutes per week and read an average of 759 pages outside the class were found to have improved their writing ability (Hayashi, 1999). Mason and Krashen (1997) also report similar findings from 104 English major students reading an average of 1,500 pages of graded readers and gaining scores in writing with impressionistic measures. In another case, Japanese college students who read an average of 2,300 pages over three semesters without any practice or additional instruction in writing showed an improvement in their writing ability over the groups with only writing practice (Mason, 2004).

With regard to the length of time spent reading, empirical evidence drawn from experiments, particularly with ESL learners, reports an improvement in writing as a result of engaging in wide reading, even of a relatively short duration. A study conducted by Hafiz and Tudor (1990) found that there were significant gains in both the fluency and accuracy of the use of expressions by the subjects, though not in the range of structures used. Advice drawn from the research is that effective reading can provide learners with a set of linguistic models, which may then by a process of overlearning, be assimilated and incorporated into the learners' active L2 repertoire. Tudor and Hafiz (1990) set up a three-month extensive reading programme using 'graded reading books' to improve the learners' language competency. Results demonstrated an improvement in the learners' reading and writing skills and a simpler but more correct use of syntax in the L2. Similarly, in a one-semester reading class of adult lower intermediate students in the U.S. Constantino (1995) reported that as the course progressed, more and more students not only wrote journal entries but the length of these entries increased.

While negative gains in writing scores resulting from poor reading a lot of books have been reported more often with ESL learners, for EFL learners more negative results have been revealed both from short- and long-term reading engagements in several contexts. For example, Lee and Krashen (1996) found that a group of 318 high school students in Taiwan had a negative relationship between poor reading and their writing ability because they do not read extensively. In a nine-week experiment by Caruso (1994) eight classes of 'Spanish 4' students could not read and summarise a variety of interesting material during the first 15 minutes of each class while the control groups spent the first 15 minutes of class practicing productive skills involving speaking or writing. After the experiment the writing complexity of the

texts produced by the students was evaluated comparing pre- and post-test mean unit lengths. Statistics showed that there was no significant difference in the writing scores of students in any of the groups. Also, Lai (1993) reported that four out of eight groups of 345 Hong Kong secondary students who did not read extensively for one year had poor word recognition, listening comprehension, and reading speed. Over a two lesson period the experimental groups were taught intensive reading for one lesson, and the second was spent reading on their own in a low-filtered environment, whereas those in the control groups were taught intensive reading for both lessons. Measures of sentence writings showed that two of the extensive reading (ER) groups significantly outperformed the control groups but two did worse.

Beach (2000) studied the effect of reading ability on 60 seventh-grade students' narrative writing quality. The findings of the study indicated that poor reading had negative effect on the quality of personal incident writing. Schneider (2001) examined how reading functions in the composition process of six college students – three skilled writers and three unskilled ones. In fact, he tried to describe how reading and writing processes interact during composition. It was found that reading has an important function in helping writers shape the meaning of their written pieces. Janopoulous (1986) studied the relationship between pleasure reading and second language writing proficiency. The findings of the study revealed a significant difference between pleasure reading students and students who often do not read. The findings showed correlation between pleasure reading and students' proficiency in written English.

Murdoch (1986) investigated the effect of integrating writing with reading on developing and improving students' writing achievement. The findings showed that if writing with its mechanics were integrated into activities or exercises based on

reading texts, students would no longer view writing as an unpleasant task, but as a natural part of language learning. Moreover, it was found that students' writing performance substantially improved.

Shahan and Lomax (1986) proposed three models that explain the reading-writing relationship. The results proved that the reading-to-write was superior to the other two models. The study further revealed that students who exhibit poor reading habits their writing skills is poor.

Hafiz and Tudor (1990) investigated the effects of an extensive reading programme and accuracy of using lexical items on Pakistani primary school pupils' second language learning. They found that the students had statistically significant gains in their vocabulary base and writing and the influence of extensive reading programme supported the idea that students learn to write through reading. Through their investigation, Hafiz and Tudor also found that poor reading pupils have low writing skills and unable to build good vocabulary. This is supported by Zaher (1990). Zaher investigated the effect of a proposed unit based on the integration of the writing skill with other language skills, mainly with reading. It was found that pupils whose reading ability is poor faced difficulty in improving on their writing skills. Zaher also found that, there was a tangible increase in the students' use of varied types of structures while writing after the treatment as compared to their writing performance before the implementation of the proposed unit. In other words, it was found that the students confined themselves mainly to simple structures and a limited number of compound and complex structures on the pre-test, while after the treatment, the students' use of compound and complex structures in writing increased significantly. Thus the findings of the study supported the hypothesis that teaching writing through integrating language skills would help students improve their writing performance.



Grabe and Kaplan (1996) suggested that reading activities will be of a great assistance to improve and promote too many writing activities at the beginning and advanced levels. They stated that the outcome of a reading activity serves as input for writing, and writing helps students to further reading sources and references. They also indicated that students who are unable to read texts and analyze them logically, their academic writings are poor.

Mason and Krashen (1997) investigated the effectiveness of a one-semester reading programme on Japanese students' linguistic competence, reading and writing skills. The findings of the study revealed statistically significant gains and positive attitudes in the students' reading ability and writing skill. Bell (1998) stressed that reading extensively offers teacher worldwide engagement in a focused and motivating reading program to lead students along a passage to be independent and resourceful in their reading and language learning, and furthermore to be well-improved and naturally-respondent to form texts, thoughts and ideas in writing.

Bakir (2004) studied the effectiveness of using extensive reading in improving the attitudes towards learning English and writing performance of Palestinian tenth grade students. Students in the experimental group practice reading extensively as a pre-writing activity, while students in the control group were exposed to the regular textbooks. The findings of the study ensured the effectiveness of using extensive reading in improving students' writing performance and their attitudes towards learning English.

Alkhaldeh (2011) examined the awareness among Jordanian Eight grade students of the relationship between EFL reading comprehension and writing and the associated impact on writing ability improvement. The descriptive findings of the study demonstrated that the effect of reading on writing was revealed in the provision

with vocabulary needed for writing, general ideas and background knowledge to write compositions together with the connecting words and using the reading text to check spelling. The findings of the study also showed that high achieving students scantily referred to the reading text while low achieving counterparts excessively relied on it. It was also found that there was a positive influence relating to paragraph promotion and the structure of the topic as well as start and end of the composition. Moreover, analysis of covariance revealed significant differences between the above two groups in writing skill achievement ascribed to the effect of reading comprehension. The study finally encouraged using the reading text as a model by students to benefit from in their writing.

De Rycker and Ponnudurai (2011) examined which of these two presentation modes, viz., interactive online reading or print-based reading, support current ICT-iterate generation of Malaysian students write better argumentative essays. They found that 61% of all essays are good, while 39% assayed as “average” to “poor”. They also found that the interactive online reading context generates superior task performance and that it also produces respectively more essays with a “good” thesis statement. Both findings are statistically meaningful.

Erhan (2011) analyzed the impacts of the supportive integrated reading and composition technique and the traditional reading and writing pedagogical methods for primary school students. It was found that a statistically meaningful difference exists between the writing and reading abilities of the experimental and control groups in terms of academic achievement and retention. This difference was uncovered in favour of the supportive integrated reading and composition technique.

Zainal and Husin (2011) studied the impacts of reading on writing performance among faculty of civil engineering students. The results indicated the

positive impacts of reading on students' writing. Generally the results of this study indicated that reading and writing are connected to each other. It is effectively help students in writing in several ways. Based on the literature, the researcher found out that numerous studies were conducted and several extensive reading texts were introduced in the Western countries, while very few ones were carried out in Iran to investigate the role of extensive reading in developing the students' achievement in writing. All of the reviewed studies showed a strong relationship between reading and writing. The present study is similar to the reviewed studies in the general aim to investigate the impacts of extensive reading on the writing performance of Iranian EFL pre- university high school students. However, the impacts of extensive reading on Iranian EFL Pre-university students have not received much attention in the literature. Therefore, this fact empowered the researcher to focus the impact of poor reading on the writings of students.

### **2.11 Strategies to Improve Students Writing**

Writing has always been seen as an important skill in English language acquisition. This importance is due to the fact that it reinforces grammatical structures and vocabulary that educators strive to teach their students. It is the area in which learners need to be offered adequate time to develop their writing skill, therefore more time should be devoted to it in classrooms so that they will be prepared to effectively communicate in real life as well as academic situations (Ismail, 2007).

Exposing students to the writing process itself through various venues is an excellent way to improve the writing skills of students. Additionally, writing skills can be developed when the learners' interests are acknowledged and when they are given frequent opportunities to actually practice writing (Ismail, 2007). One of the main goals of ESL students is to learn to produce a well-thought-out piece of writing,

a specific writing programme must be in place in order to meet the needs of these learners. Students to be exposed to a variety of genres, strategies, and methods in order to succeed in the writing of English.

### **2.11.1 Creating an Environment Conducive for Students**

According to Thomas (1993) students on all levels score lower in writing than any other domain. It is the last domain of second language learning to fully develop. Researchers have discovered many reasons for this problem, and a key part of it is how they feel about themselves as writers. Becoming a proficient writer of English is a problem for many ESL students as they believe that they simply cannot write English. This becomes more prominent in the upper grade levels of elementary school and beyond. This feeling of incompetency leads to self-doubt and anxiety in writing and can hinder the process of achieving writing proficiency. Kasper and Petrello (1998) believes that it is not the task of writing that is deemed so intimidating, but more so the feedback and assessment of that writing by instructors and/or peers.

Pour-Mohammadi, Zainol Abidin and Cheong Lai (2012) purported that it is more important to create an environment that encourages students to take risks in their writing which means less concentration on conventional rules of writing and more on expression of ideas. Shaughnessy (2013) the point raised by Pour-Mohammadi *et al.* (2012). According to Shaughnessy, to do so, means being less critical at the beginning of the writing process in terms of errors, be it grammatical or otherwise. By not being focused on the errors of a writing piece, a student feels permitted to express his thoughts more freely. Overlooking the grammatical errors and focusing on the ideas is a skill to be acquired for certain, but a skill that is essential if educators desire a decrease in student frustration and an increased level of actual writing. Furthermore,

when creative ideas are not hindered by concerns of using correct form, ESL students are more likely to progress. This shift of focus is what MacGowan-Gilhooly (1991) calls a *Fluency First Approach*. She believes that only after students have learned to express themselves can they then move toward correction of grammatical errors. With this approach, MacGowan-Gilhooly (1991) saw improvement in the writings among her students.

In addition to the Fluency First Approach, Kasper and Petrello (2000) also suggest that the type of feedback teachers provide plays a very significant role in decreasing writing anxiety of ESL students. Beaven (2000) found that teachers who used shared experiences, discussed students' thoughts, and requested additional information as feedback were most successful in decreasing students' frustration thus making them feel more confident. Examples of such feedback would be task oriented questions like: Could you give more information? Could you start your writing in a way that relates to your main purpose of the paper? This type of feedback is meant to encourage and provoke more thought regarding ideas rather than correcting conventional errors. This type of student/teacher conferencing should also include opportunities for students to ask questions regarding the writing process or the product itself (Hyland, 2000).

### **2.11.2 Preparing Students to Write**

Activating prior knowledge is one method in which teachers can assist ESL students before they even begin writing. Making sure students have the opportunity to think about what they already know before the task begins helps ESL students incorporate new information into existing structures of knowledge which activates long-term memory (Watt-Taffe & Truscott, 2000). According to Watt-Taffe and Truscott (2000) several strategies can be used to accomplish this including graphic

organizers, cooperative learning, read-aloud, and group discussions. Graphic organizers can be used as visual tools for students to write or draw what they already know about a subject, for example in the genre of informational or persuasive writing. From this activity, teachers can then evaluate whether further instruction is needed. This is where read-aloud, cooperative learning, and group discussions come in to play. If needed, a hand-selected text can be utilized in order to provide additional background information, which can lead to group discussions. Cooperative learning is also a great strategy to help students gain more background knowledge. This strategy requires students to collect information from books, the internet, or each other as they work together with another student or group of students, preferably students who are native to the English language. Through this strategy, students not only gain additional information needed to complete the writing assignment, but it is also a great opportunity for them to develop language skills through peer led conversations.

The next step in preparing ELLs to write is a vocabulary pre-view. Pre-viewing vocabulary is an effective tool when asking an ESL student to attempt any genre of writing. Second language writers have a vastly different linguistic base than native English speakers who can instinctively manipulate the language (Pour-Mohammadi, Zainol Abidin, & Cheong Lai, 2012). Therefore, vocabulary is an enormous obstacle for English learners creating the need for teachers to provide both definitional and contextual information about keywords. Instructors should also allow students to actively elaborate on word meanings (i.e. physically acting out a word), as well as teacher led explanations (Hyland, 2000). Without this preview, most students will not be able to move past the instructions of the writing task.

Ur (2002) assure that the writing process is the starting point for developing students' writing abilities, teachers must recognise that students need a range of

writing experiences to develop as writers. In addition, in order to become good at writing, learners need concentration, instruction, practice, and patience. The teacher's task is to assist her learners to gain control over the written word. Brown as cited in Al-gomoul (2011) provides guidelines for developing learners' writing techniques. The teacher, when giving the learners a writing task, should always consider various techniques for maintaining efficient writing practice. These include: Balance process and product, take account of the learner's cultural/literacy background, connect reading and writing, provide as much authentic writing as possible, frame lesson plans in terms of including prewriting, drafting and revising stages, offer techniques that are as interactive as possible and sensitively apply methods of responding to, and correcting the students' writing. Besides, the teacher should encourage the students to focus on a goal or main idea when writing. They should also encourage them to utilise feedback on their writing, revise their work willingly, efficiently and patiently make as many revisions as needed.

According to Shin (2006) one of the focuses should be on teachers to explore ways to progressively move students towards less dependence on the help of them by teaching them to learn to recognize and correct their own errors. One way in which the teachers can help their students find errors on their own writing is by using self-editing checklist, bearing in mind that not students can correct their own grammatical errors. He indicated that sometimes learners may have internalized an incorrect version of a grammar rule or they simply have not learned the rule in question. In this case a teacher's intervention will be required.

Browne (1999) suggests that extending children's knowledge about how to write may also be helpful. Contrary to Donald and Williams-James (1997) problems with structure, organisation and sequence in children's writing can be helpful. This

can only be done when they are taught about the characteristics and forms of different types of writing and when they are given clear structural guidelines to follow. Planning using sequence of pictures, individual words or captions helps to order children's writing. Brainstorming for ideas and recording these provides a support for children when they are thinking about what to include in their writing. He further mentioned that giving children opportunities to rehearse orally what they are going to write helps them to organise and order their thoughts. This can be done with a peer partner or with an adult who can make suggestions about alterations that will result in better writing. However, decisions about the strategies that are used will depend on the child's needs, and the support that is given will be differentiated to suit the child's interests.

### **2.11.3 Scaffolding Instruction**

Scaffolding is a means to which teachers can build upon a student's strengths. They should be contextual, social, and temporary frameworks used to support successful learning with a specific academic domain such as writing (Vygotsky, 1987). Scaffolding is thought of as using steps in a process, modelling the steps, and then giving students the opportunity to try it themselves. This strategy should be prepared with the mind-set of gradual release after a student has reached a predetermined point in his writing which is, of course, controlled by the instructor. Baradaran and Sarfarazi, (2011) found that students who had the opportunity to receive scaffolding principles outperformed the ones who did not experience scaffolding thus having a significant impact on the ESL students' academic writing.

Read (2010) suggests the IMSCI (Inquiry, Modeling, Shared, Collaborative, Independent) model for scaffolding and finds it extremely effective for second language learners. The first stage is inquiry, which facilitates background knowledge;



the significance of which is as aforementioned. After activating prior knowledge, the instructor then models drafting the type of writing expected. Students and teacher then participate in shared writing where the students have significant input in the topic, sentence usage, etc. They are then given the opportunity to write collaboratively with one or more other students to produce one piece of writing. Having completed the above steps the students are then ready for independent writing, which is the ultimate goal of the scaffolding process.

This scaffolding technique can also be used in a different manner involving students scaffolding amongst themselves leaving the teacher as a less active participant (Gagné, & Parks, 2013). Students are consequently completing writing tasks that are collaborative in nature and facilitate the opportunity for pair or group work. Research has shown that in small groups, learners have more opportunities to use the second language for a range of functions than in teacher-led classroom activities (Storch, 2007). Furthermore, Storch (2007) suggests that pair work allows learners to combine their linguistic resources in order to collaboratively create new knowledge about language, which leads them to more successful writing experiences. Gagne and Parks (2013) found that using this method of small group scaffolding was, in fact, a successful strategy to produce the language needed to complete a writing task. English language learners as individuals often do not possess the vocabulary base needed to create writing pieces in the mainstream classroom so by scaffolding amongst themselves, students learned how to use one another's strengths, rely less on the instructor, and feel more confident about writing tasks.

#### **2.11.4 Technology**

According to Wallace, Stariha and Walberg (2004) it appears that computers can be both harmful and helpful in writing and learning to write. They stated that the

neat appearance of words in the computer screen may suggest to students that all is well even in the presence of logical, grammatical and stylistic errors. Despite that, computers can make the rearrangement of words, sentences and paragraphs and other revisions far easier. Similarly, some more recent programmes can spot spelling, grammatical mistakes and suggest corrections.

One important point highlighted by Lankshear and Snyder (2000) is that writing, in the sense of making language visible always involves the application of technology of some kind, whether quill, pencil, typewriter and each innovation involves new skills applied in new ways. Though this can only be accessible to few schools because having computer laboratories can be costly and would further require more time on teachers as well as learners. On the other hand, Richards (2003) feels that it is important to recognize, however, that computers are no more likely to bring about learning improvements by themselves than other teaching tools such as blackboards and overhead projectors. Warschauer as cited in Richards (2003) further says that technology is not a method but a resource which can support a variety of approaches. Like all tools and methodologies, to him it is the ways they are used that can change student writing behaviours.

The rise of technology integration has significantly contributed to the change in teaching reading and writing in a second language. Such integration in second language learning teaching demonstrates a shift in educational models from a behavioural to a constructivist learning approach (Kasapaglu-akyol, 2010). These recent developments reveal that rapid changes in literacy have taken place as a result of the arrival of the computer and the development of other new technologies. Consequently, the pressure on teachers to keep up with such developments and to raise standards in their classrooms is ever present (Feiler & Logan, 2007). Not only

does it motivate and encourage ESL students to engage in reading and writing, but the various ways it is used proves beneficial in cultivating writing skills among this population of students (Lee, 2012).

Using e-journals, much like a composition notebook, gives students a safe venue for expressing their ideas without having to worry about handwriting or spelling mistakes. This technique hones their vocabulary skills and gives them an opportunity to receive written feedback from an instructor, which in turn aids in reading proficiency. Another method, among many, is using online discussion boards. With this approach, students can communicate with one another as well as the teacher, receive peer feedback and practice conversational skills, all the while putting complete thoughts together in the form of typed sentences. Peer feedback is one of the most influential methods of becoming a proficient writer of English. Studies show that school age children are more conscious of their peers' reaction and perception than their instructor's, therefore, more apt to learn from their constructivism (Bitchener, Cameron, & Young, 2005).

Using these technological tools can provide that much needed opportunity. By interviewing students, Ghandoura (2012) found that students thought computers made the acquisition of writing skills easier and faster. The possible downfall of these tools is that writing on computers gives an immediate alert to grammatical and spelling errors, which could become a lesson learned or a crutch. However, in a rich-technology, ELLs can become better readers and writers of English (Ismail, Al-Awidi, & Almekhlafi, 2012).

### **2.11.5 Journal Writing**

The method of journal writing has been suggested as an unthreatening means of practice in writing for ESL students. Often referred to as interactive journals, this

approach allows for student and teacher communication via a designated notebook designed for written dialogue between student and instructor (Wong Mei Ha & Storey, 2006). According to Lee (2012), research along with classroom practices has shown how the implementation of an interactive journal greatly benefits English language learners as it motivates them to write more in length and richer in content. Not only does it provide consistent practice, as the journal is meant to be used daily, but it allows the teacher to have an easier and more holistic access to students' writing, which in turn gives way to more individualized instruction opportunities.

Various ways in which to use journal writing in the classroom include reading response journals, correspondence journals, and e-journals. Reading response journals are a means for which students can create meaning from their experience with a text. This type of journal also allows the teacher to observe how a student is developing as both a reader and a writer. For example, Fagan (2008) used journal writing as a self-reflection activity on previously taught reading strategies to monitor their understanding of using sticky notes to track comprehension. She found it gave them a chance to think about how they learn, and what they do to help themselves while giving her valuable information about their understanding of the strategy as well as inspiration for future writing instruction segments. Students respond to a text through teacher led inquiries such as predicting plot, personal reactions to characters, synthesizing text, and more. It can be used as a scaffolding step as well before launching into a more formal writing task (Evans, 2008). Using this reading-to-write process can gradually prepare ESL students with appropriate skills for future academic writing tasks.

Correspondence journals are quite simply as they imply. Children need time to talk both orally and in written form, especially English learners. More often than not,

talk is what leads us to understand and process what we are learning (Bloem, 2004). Unfortunately, oral talk is often discouraged in a classroom setting; therefore, using a correspondence journal as a means to facilitate written talk proves to be both an effective and valuable tool. Such correspondence provides a vehicle for questions otherwise unanswered due to anxiety or lack of confidence, expression of feelings of frustration or folly, celebration of accomplishments; the possibilities are unending. Not only is this a safe place for ESL students to write, but it also gives them an opportunity to practice conventions such as punctuation, capitalization, grammar and so forth without penalty. Furthermore, according to Bloem (2004) it is a place for powerful reflection free of peer criticism and rich with freedom of expression.

## **2.12 Theoretical Framework**

This study was guided by the theoretical model of reading and writing relationship of Shanahan and Lomax (1986). The theory proposes that reading and writing are reciprocal processes. According to them reading and writing depend on identical or similar knowledge representations, cognitive processes and context and contextual restraints. They purported that reading and writing are quite similar, their development should parallel each other closely.

The model of reading and writing relationship (interactive model) postulates that reading can influence writing development and writing can influence reading development. The writing portion of the interactive model includes four latent variables: spelling, vocabulary, syntax, and story structure. Spelling refers to the ability to produce words that are spelled accurately through the use of sound-symbol relationships and complex orthographic rules. Vocabulary is the ability to use a wide range of different words in writing. Syntax includes the ability to structure meaning in

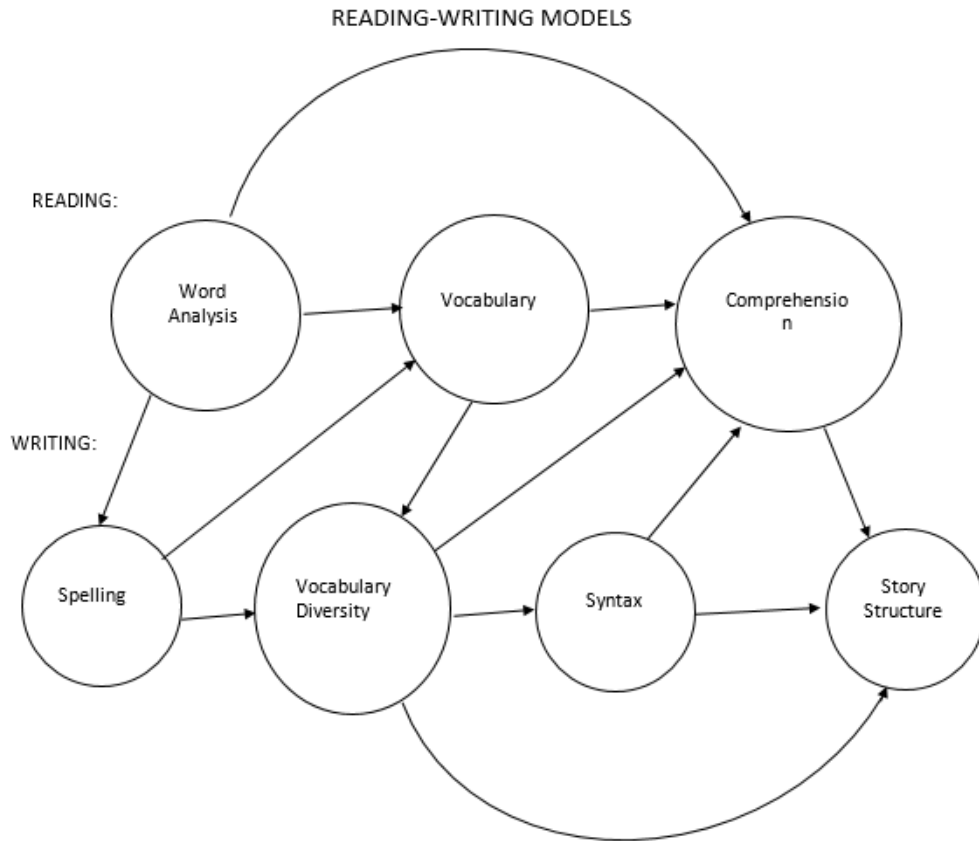
a complex manner within sentences, and story structure refers to the ability to relate events using a diversity of organizational (i.e., story grammar) components.

In the reading portion of this model, development is hypothesized to proceed across discourse levels in a forward manner only: roughly, from letters to words to sentences to extended texts. The forward approach was adopted because children develop the ability to analyse or decode print prior to developing the higher level comprehension processes (Chall, 1983). Although under at least some conditions, the use of higher level discourse knowledge can precede or replace the use of lower level knowledge, the more typical sequence of events in children's reading seems to be that lower level processes serve as enabling devices for higher level ones (Baumann, 1983).

Writing processing also occurs in a forward direction in the interactive model. However, this is based less on extant knowledge of the writing process than it is on an attempt to describe writing in a way analogous to that used for reading. The most important aspect of the interactive model is the nature of the relationships across the reading and writing dimensions. Within a level of discourse, the influence proceeds from reading to writing. For example, word analysis could influence spelling, but spelling knowledge would not be expected to exert much influence on word recognition; that is, students should be able to interpret word meanings before being able to represent these meanings in written text. On the other hand, writing influences the reading process across discourse levels.

According to this model, lower level writing knowledge influences higher level reading knowledge. A component of writing directly influences the component of reading that is immediately above it, and it influences higher reading components through this immediate relation. Knowledge of spelling, for instance, could influence

vocabulary knowledge in reading, and through this relation spelling knowledge could be used in the interpretive processes of reading comprehension. According to Freedman and Calfee (1984) and Goodman and Goodman (1983) no one has previously proposed the combination of these variables in this order, the sequence is consistent with those descriptions of the relationship in which reading ability precedes writing ability but writing is able to inform reading. This view departs from the traditional belief that children should learn to read before they learn to write. Although not all processes of reading and writing are related, research has shown a positive relationship between spelling and reading, reading, vocabulary and writing, reading comprehension and complexity of writing, and reading comprehension and writing structure or organization (Jordan, 2009; Shanahan, 1984). Not only do reading and writing bear a reciprocal relationship to each other in terms of the processes employed but by integrating reading and writing instruction enable children to examine literacy from different cognitive perspectives, thereby deepening their learning (Shanahan & Lomax, 1986).



**Figure 1: Interactive Model (Shanahan and Lomax, 1986)**

## 2.12 Summary

The literature report both positive and negative relationships depending on the quantity of reading and length of exposure to the language. Nevertheless, inconsistent results taken from just a part of the empirical evidence on what is known about the relationship between reading comprehensible texts and writing competency seem to suggest that there is no systematic correlation between the two variables.



## CHAPTER THREE

### METHODOLOGY

#### 3.0 Introduction

This chapter deals with the technique and procedures used in the process of data gathering. The areas considered include the research design, population, sample and sampling procedure, data collection instrument, validity and reliability of the instrument, data collection procedure, pilot-testing of instrument and data analysis plan.

#### 3.1 Research Design

Research design may be explained as a general strategy or plan for conducting a research. It includes exploration of detailed presentation of the research steps to be followed in collecting, choosing and analysing data (Gay & Airasian, 2003). A research design helps the researcher to plan and implement the study in a way that helps the researcher to obtain intended results, thus increasing the chances of obtaining information that could be associated with the real situation (Burns & Grove, 2001). This study design was descriptive survey design. This is a method of collecting information by interviewing or administering a questionnaire to a sample of individuals, (Kombo & Tromp, 2006). This type of design was also useful when collecting information about people's attitudes, opinions, and habits (Kombo *et al.*, 2006). This therefore was within the focus of this study.

#### 3.2 Research Approach

A pragmatic research approach was used for the study. It is a procedure for collecting, analyzing, and "mixing" both quantitative and qualitative research and methods in a single study to understand a research problem. A pragmatic approach is

one in which the researcher tends to base knowledge claims on pragmatic grounds (e.g., consequence-oriented, problem-centered, and pluralistic). It employs strategies of inquiry that involve collecting data either simultaneously or sequentially to best understand research problems. The data collection also involves gathering both numeric information (e.g., on instruments) as well as text information (e.g., on interviews) and collecting data through observation so that the final database represents both quantitative and qualitative information. Johnson and Onwuegbuzie (2004) hoped that the pragmatic approach to research provided researchers with an alternative to believing that the quantitative and qualitative research approaches are incompatible and, in turn, their associated methods “cannot and should not be mixed” with the mixed methods approach to research, researchers incorporate methods of collecting or analyzing data from the quantitative and qualitative research approaches in a single research study.

### **3.3 Population**

Population can be defined as the entire aggregation of cases that meet a designated set of criteria. The population always comprises the aggregation of elements in which the researcher is interested. The population for the study was the headteachers, assistant headteachers, teachers and selected students of eight public Junior High Schools in the Abuakwa North Municipality. At the time of conducting the study, the schools together had sixteen (16) head and assistant headteachers and one hundred and twenty (120) teachers and forty-eight (48) students who were selected from the schools. Thus, the population for the study consisted of one hundred and eighty-four (184) heads, teachers and students.

### **3.4 Sample and Sampling Technique**

The sample for the study was one hundred and thirty-six (136) respondents. This sample was arrived at by using the purposive sampling technique to select the sixteen (16) headteachers and the assistant headteachers for the study. The forty-eight (48) students were also purposively selected for the study. Six students were selected from each of the eight schools selected for the study. The purposive sampling technique was used because the researcher believed all the headteachers and assistant headteachers and the students were in a good position to contribute credible data for the study to draw useful conclusion. In addition, the researcher used the simple random sampling technique to select seventy two (72) teachers for the study. The researcher used the simple random sampling technique because it gave each teacher an equal opportunity of being sampled for the study. Thus, the sample size of one hundred and thirty-six (136) respondents represented 74% of the population of the study. The sample size was appropriate because the 74% is more than the 5% Amedehe and Asamoah-Gyimah (2012) proposed.

### **3.5 Research Instruments**

#### **3.5.1 Reading text and writing a short essay**

To test the students reading ability, they were made to read a text from their English textbook. For the purpose of the study, the individual students were made to read the text silently in order to have a fair view of the reading ability and skill level of the students. The researcher sought permission from the management of Ofori Panin Senior High School and their Assembly Hall was used for the exercise. The text used in the study was chosen because of its suitability for the subjects of the study.

The suitability of the text refers to its level of difficulty and the length of the text. The students were asked to write an essay on the same text that they read. The essays were marked to check the writing skills of the students.

### **3.5.2 Questionnaire**

A self-administered closed ended questionnaire was used for the headteachers and teachers selected for the study. This was so because it had the ability to limit inconsistency and also save time as suggested by Amin (2004). The likert scale measurement of Strongly-agree, Agree, Disagree and Strongly-disagree was used so as to have quantities results easier for statistical results. Questionnaires were developed to test the respondents' responses on the impact of poor reading on the writings of selected Junior High Schools in the Abuakwa North Municipality. These comprised closed-ended statements. The questionnaire had three main sections. The first section sought to gather data on the habits that poor reading students exhibit. The second section gathered data on the effects of poor reading on students writing. The third section gathered data on the ways reading help students to improve on their writing performance.

#### **3.5.2.1 Validity and Reliability of the Questionnaire**

Validity is the degree by which the sample of test items represents the content the test is designed to measure (Kombo & Tromp, 2006). Tools were constructed by the researcher as per the requirements of the study. Reliability refers to the consistency of measurement and frequently assessed using the test - retest reliability method (Shanghverzy, 1997). It is a measure of how consistent the result of a test should be. The researcher used test - retest method in which case, same instrument(s)

were administered twice to the same group of sampled subjects with a time lapse between the first test and the second test of 3 weeks (Mugenda & Mugenda 2003).

The validity and reliability of the instrument for the study was established by making the instrument available to the supervisor and experienced lecturers both within and outside the department. Suggestions received from the experts and the supervisor was incorporated to refine the contents of the instrument making it more relevant and valid for the purpose of this study. The instrument was also pilot-tested to further ensure its validity and reliability. Pilot-testing is a critical step in constructing a questionnaire. It can help the designer of the questionnaire identify inadequacies that may not be immediately noticeable. Borg and Gall (1983) strongly recommend preliminary trial of the research instrument for the less experienced research student. Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2005) regard pilot testing as a small-scale version or trial done in preparation for the major study.

The questionnaire was pilot-tested in selected schools in the Abuakwa South Municipality. Fifteen teachers were selected for the pilot testing. The selection of the teachers for the pilot testing was due to the common challenges teachers face relating to poor reading on the writing skills of students at the junior high school level.

The pilot-testing helped in the fine-tuning of the instrument. Items which were inappropriate were removed and those that needed re-arrangement were taken care of. For example, free-answer questions were included in the questionnaire but were removed after the pilot-testing because the respondents did not answer them. After the pilot-testing, the responses from the respondents were coded and loaded into the Statistics Products and Service Solutions (SPSS 16) for analysis. The Cronbach's alpha for the pilot-testing was found to be .800. According to De Vellis (1991), a

reliability coefficient of .800 is considered suitable for determining the reliability of instrument.

### **3.5.3 Interview**

Interview was also used by the researcher to collect data for the study. As a research method, the interview is a conversation carried out with the definite aim of obtaining certain information. It is designed to gather valid and reliable information through the responses of the interviewee to the planned sequence of questions (Sarantakos, 2005). In obtaining the data the interviewees were asked questions which were in line with the research questions formulated to guide the study. The interviews were recorded and written down by the interviewer in order to avoid errors. In order to ensure validity of the interview, the researcher confined her entire attention to one task at a time.

According to Cohen, Manion & Morrison (2005) an interview is a widely used data-gathering technique. It has the advantage of being direct, personal, and flexible. It allows interviewers to gather subjective data on values and attitudes because it is possible to probe and ask interviewees to clarify statements. As long as questions are not intimate and repulsive, an interview can be a very promising means for obtaining useful information. However, an interview is time-consuming and maintaining the individual's anonymity may be an issue. It is also difficult to quantify results of interviews. Interviews can also be costly due to the required effort interviewers must commit and the demographic diversity of the interview locations. Interviews may be used in conjunction with questionnaires or used as a secondary means to clarify unclear information found in the questionnaires (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2005).

The researcher audio-recorded students' responses and notes were taken during the interview process. The interviews were conducted in the school. The

researcher used one week in conducting the interview. Notes were then transferred to index cards, and a matrix was developed to summarize the responses. Each research question was addressed by investigating common themes and students direct responses that pertained to a particular question.

#### **3.5.4 Observation**

Observational data are attractive as they afford the researcher the opportunity to gather 'live' data from 'live' situations. The researcher is given the opportunity to look at what is taking place in situ rather than at second hand (Patton, 1990:203-205). This enables researchers to understand the context of programmes, to be open-ended and inductive, to see things that might otherwise be unconsciously missed, to discover things that participants might not freely talk about in interview situations, to move beyond perception-based data (e.g. opinions in interviews), and to access personal knowledge. Because observed incidents are less predictable, there is a certain freshness to this form of data collection that is often denied in other forms, e.g. a questionnaire or a test. Patton (1990) suggests that observational data enable the researcher to enter and understand the situation that is being described. The researcher observed students as they read the passage given to them.

#### **3.6 Data Collection Procedure**

This section gave a description of how the research instruments were used to obtain the needed data for the study. The questionnaire was used to gather data from the headteachers and teachers. The researcher sought permission from the headteachers of the schools sampled for the study and booked appointments as to the day and time to meet the head teachers and teachers for the data collection exercise. On the day of the appointments, the questionnaire was administered. The head

teachers and teachers completed and returned the questionnaire the following day. In addition, the head teachers who indicated they were too busy were given ample time to answer the questionnaire. The interviews were conducted by the researcher herself. It took the researcher one week to complete interviewing the respondents. The researcher made follow ups for clarifications where previous interviews were not clear. The whole data collection exercise lasted for twenty days.

### **3.7 Ethical considerations**

It is very important to abide by the research ethics (McMillan & Schumacher, 2010; Wallen & Fraenkel, 2011; Opie, 2004). Credible research is done with permission of all relevant participants, protects the participants, adheres to the privacy and confidentiality of the participants and also takes care of the wellbeing of participants (McMillan & Schumacher, 2010; Wallen & Fraenkel, 2011). Ethical consideration was ensured by obtaining permission from the Headteachers. After receiving permission, the participants were made aware of the research that was going to be conducted. The participants were ensured that they were going to be kept anonymous and that the research was not going to disturb their normal duties. For this study, the respondents were informed beforehand about the potential impact of the investigation and the researcher offered the subjects opportunity to withdraw from the investigation if they wished to do so. The opportunity for debriefing was provided to each respondent immediately after the data collection period. This was done to address the emotional distress that might have arisen as a result of their participation in an exercise about which strong emotions were expressed. Individual respondents who required long term support were assisted in securing this support.



### **3.8 Data Analysis Procedure**

The completed questionnaires were checked for completeness and consistency before processing the responses. Questionnaires were sorted out from cloze tests for coding purpose. The codes on the questionnaire were categorized on the basis of similarities of information provided by the respondents and those on cloze tests were according to the scores. Those with average scores (50 %) and above average (more than 50 %) scores were coded together and those with below average scores together. The organization of data was done according to research questions from which the conclusions were drawn. The information was tabulated and analyzed using descriptive statistics, namely; means and standard deviation. The statistics were generated using Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS). The information was later presented using tables and figures for ease of understanding and analysis. Descriptive statistics consists of tools and issues involved in describing collections of statistical observations (Loether & McTavish, 1993). It is a measure of a characteristic or property of a sample of statistical observations.

The researcher audio-recorded students' responses and notes were taken during the interview process. The interviews were conducted in the school. The researcher used one weeks in conducting the interview. Notes were then transferred to index cards, and a matrix was developed to summarize the responses. Each research question was addressed by investigating common themes and students direct responses that pertained to particular question.

### **3.9 Summary**

This chapter described the research and explained why it was chosen, sampling methods used in the study were also discussed in detail. The chapter further described the data collection instrument and the rationale behind their selection. The researcher also described the procedure for gathering and analysing data. The chapter also clarified how validity and reliability was ensured and also explained how the ethical considerations were adhered to during the collection of the data.



## CHAPTER FOUR

### RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

#### 4.0 Overview

This chapter presented the results and discussion of the data gathered for the study. The data for the study was gathered from the headteachers and teachers of eight public basic schools in the Abuakwa North Municipality on the impact of poor reading on the writings of junior high school students.

#### 4.1 Habits that students with poor reading exhibit

This research question sought to gather data on the habits that poor reading students of Abuakwa North Municipal Junior High Schools exhibits.

**Table 1: Slow reading habits of students**

Statement	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Students cannot interpret words appropriately	88	2.95	0.79
Students are unable to identify individual words.	88	3.45	0.86
Students are unable to make graphical processing	88	2.91	0.80
Students pronounce individual words instead of reading according to sense group	88	3.06	0.81
Students are unable to remember what they have read in the previous paragraph	88	3.27	0.99
<b>Total Mean/Std. Dev.</b>		<b>15.6</b>	<b>4.25</b>
<b>Mean of Means/Std. Dev.</b>		<b>3.13</b>	<b>0.85</b>

Results, as shown on Table 2 indicated most respondents' view that one major habit that slow reading students exhibit, was inability to interpret words appropriately. Analysis of the data revealed numerous habits exhibited by slow reading students. A

large percentage of respondents agreed that students' inability to interpret words appropriately is a habit exhibited by slow reading students. Mann, Cowin and Schoenheimer (1989) and Runo (2010) confirms this by saying that students are unable to interpret words appropriately because they do not have the requisite skills necessary to segment words into sounds and map those sounds onto the appropriate letters. The data indicated a mean of 2.95 for respondents agreed that students could not interpret words and that was an indication of slow reading.

Another exhibit of slow reading identified was that students were not able to identify individual words. Respondents agreed on this with a mean of 3.45 indicating the majority of the respondents agreed on the habit of slow reading. Studies by Samuels (1988), Santos, (1989), Smith, and Luckasson (1995) clearly stated indicate that a major portion of the difficulty students have in reading comprehension is related to inaccurate identification of the individual words encountered which is in turn, strongly related to decoding skills.

Slow readers exhibit the habit of pronouncing words one after the other during reading. Students pronouncing individual words instead of reading according to sense group was agreed upon with a mean of 3.06. This means that students fix their eyes on one word at a time during reading and this habit retards their progress in reading. According to Miedema (2009) reading a text one word at a time decreases a person's reading speed and understanding of the material.

Students not being able to remember what they had read in the previous paragraph was purported to be another habit exhibited by slow reading students. With a mean of 3.27 the respondents agreed that most of the slow readers in the class had to reread the paragraphs often because they could not remember what they had already read. This supports Newkirk (2011) who opined that children who think that reading

is boring will not be able to remember what they have read. Richardson and Spivey (2000) were on the view that average slow reader will re-read as much as one-quarter of a page again. A mean of 3.13 indicated that majority of the respondents agreed that slow reading is a habit exhibited by students in class.

**Table 2: Poor reading comprehension by students**

<b>Statement</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Std. Deviation</b>
Students interchange sounds in words when reading	88	3.14	0.91
Students ignore more punctuation marks when reading	88	3.31	0.98
Students omits consonants when reading	88	3.16	0.79
Students ignore words endings	88	3.49	0.57
Students do not read with appropriate intonation.	88	3.06	0.81
<b>Total Mean/Std. Dev.</b>		<b>16.2</b>	<b>4.06</b>
<b>Mean of Means/Std. Dev.</b>		<b>3.23</b>	<b>0.81</b>

From the analysis in Table 3 it is clear that a high percentage of the respondents indicated that interchanging sounds in words when reading is one of the poor reading comprehension among students (M=3.14; SD=0.91). Further analysis from Table 3 portrays that poor reading comprehension students ignore more punctuation marks when reading (M=3.31; SD= 0.98). On the issue of poor reading comprehension students omitting consonant when reading, majority of the respondents were in support (M=3.16; SD=0.79). There is evidence from Table 3 that majority of the subjects indicated that poor reading comprehension students ignore words endings (M=3.49; 0.57). Results further reveal that majority of the respondents

agreed that students do not read with appropriate intonation was a poor habit that students exhibit ( $M=3.06$ ;  $SD=0.81$ ).

The analysis depicts clearly that interchanging sounds in words, ignoring more punctuation marks and omitting consonant were found out to be habits exhibited by students. This is in corroboration with Lawrence (2001). He admits that when a reader ignores punctuation marks, comprehension of a text becomes difficult and the essence of the text is lost. If a child's knowledge on punctuation marks is poor the reading skill as well as the writing skill will also be poor (Baker, 2006). According to Newkirk (2011) some students ignore words endings; generally termed inflectional morphemes. Inflectional morphemes generally show the grammaticality of the word. Altman (2014) explained that inflectional morphemes mark plurals, verb tense form and comparisons of adjectives and adverbs. For example the verb "want" becomes wanted in the past. The noun "girl" becomes "girls" as plural whereas the adjective "fast" forms the comparative as "faster". When the inflection "ed", "s" and the "er" are not sounded when reading, it means part of the word is ignored and meaning is altered. This is typical of Junior High School Students of Abuakwa North Municipality.

Interview response from students on the issue of habits exhibited by students with poor reading, they reported that, they are unable to interpret words correctly and read unfamiliar words. A student said "*I read very slowly because I cannot pronounce the words, reading is boring*". This is in corroboration with Baker (2006). According to Baker students who exhibit poor reading are very slow in their reading which also affect their comprehension level.

## 4.2 Effects of poor reading on the writing of students

This section analyses responses on effects that poor reading has on students of Abuakwa North Municipal Junior High Schools. Effects identified in the study include students' inability to put thought to writing; their inability to invent ideas to put into their paragraphs; their inability to practice and produce text; and their poor paragraphing style.

**Table 3: Cohesion in students writing**

<b>Statement</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Std. Deviation</b>
Students find it difficult to put thought in writing.	88	3.18	0.95
Students are not able to invent ideas to put them into statements and paragraphs.	88	3.35	0.81
Students are not able to practice and produce text.	88	3.14	0.87
Poor arrangement of paragraphing.	88	3.30	1.00
<b>Total Mean/Std. Dev.</b>		<b>13.0</b>	<b>3.63</b>
<b>Mean of Means/Std. Dev.</b>		<b>3.25</b>	<b>0.91</b>

From Table 4, it can be seen that on the issue of students finding it difficult to put thought in words most of the respondents supported (M=3.18; SD=0.95). Further analysis revealed that learners were not able to invent ideas to put them into statements and paragraphs (M=3.35; SD=0.81). Another issue was students' inability to practice and produce text. Majority of the respondents, (M=3.14; SD=0.87) agreed that students with poor reading were unable to practice and produce text. On the issue of poor arrangement of paragraphs, most of the respondents (M=3.30; SD= 1.00) agreed that one of the key effects of poor reading on students' writing was poor cohesion.

The data as presented in Table 4 revealed that majority of the respondents were of the view that students found it difficult to put their thoughts in words. This is confirmed by Chiuri (2000). According to him students find it difficult to transfer their thoughts to paper when answering comprehension questions (Chiuri, 2009). It is evident from Table 4 that students were not able to invent ideas to put them into statements and paragraphs. Nunan (2003) states that writing is an intellectual activity of finding the ideas and thinking about the way to express and arrange them into a statement and paragraph that is clear to be understood by people. It indicates that the writers are demanded to show the thoughts and organize them into a good composition. In addition, writing presents the writer's concept in understanding an issue which is shown to the public. It requires the integration of idea systematically written. He concluded that students who are poor readers find it difficult to improve on their writing skills.

Majority of the respondents agreed that poor reading students are not able to practice and produce text. This is in support of research conducted by Esmaili (2002). He pointed out that if reading and writing could be used together, there is a positive impact on students' writing. Yoshimura (2009) purported that students who are poor readers' exhibited problem in their writing skills.

Writing is a very complex cognitive activity in which writers must show control over content, format, sentence, structure, vocabulary, punctuation, spelling and letter formation, that is, control at the sentence level. Besides, writers must be able to structure and integrate information cohesively and coherently within paragraphs and texts (Bell & Burnaby, 1984, as cited in Nunan, 2003, p.23).



**Table 4: Poor writing skills**

<b>Statement</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Std. Deviation</b>
Students exhibit poor construction of sentences in writing.	88	2.93	1.83
Students exhibit grammatical errors in writing.	88	3.35	0.95
Students exhibit poor usage of transitional devices in writing.	88	3.07	1.05
Students are not able to state clearly the topic sentences of a paragraph in writing.	88	3.26	0.92
Students misuse punctuation marks in writing	88	3.25	0.88
<b>Total Mean/Std. Dev.</b>		<b>3.18</b>	<b>1.13</b>
<b>Mean of Means/Std. Dev.</b>			

Table 5 indicates poor writing skills of students of public Junior High Schools in the Abuakwa North Municipality. With regard to students exhibiting poor construction of sentences in writing, it was found that majority (M=2.93; SD=1.83) of the respondents agreed to the statement. Most respondents (M=3.35; SD=0.95) indicated that grammatical errors in writing is one of the key effects of poor reading habits among students. Majority of the participants (M=3.07; SD= 1.05) reported that students exhibited poor usage of transitional devices in writing.

From Table 5, majority (M=3.26; SD= 0.92) of the respondents revealed that students were unable to state clearly the topic sentences of a paragraph in their writing. Further analysis from the study depicted clearly that most subjects (M=3.25; SD=0.88) purported that students misuse punctuation marks in writing.

Majority of the respondents agreed that poor writing students exhibit poor construction of sentences in writing. This is in agreement with Mason, (2004). He purported that lack of proficiency in English results in the learners being unable to

communicate their ideas which also affect their writing proficiency. It is imperative for the learners to understand the medium of instruction because they are expected to read the texts and be able to analyse and come to conclusions. They can only do this if they understand the medium of instruction. Poor writing skills also leads to poor performance because the learners have to understand the concepts in order to apply them in solving problems.

On the issue of grammatical errors in writing as a key on writing by students, majority of the respondents agreed that grammatical errors affect the writing skills of students. This is in corroboration with Leech (2010). He argued that poor writing students showed the habit poor communication which also affect their writing proficiency.

The study further revealed that majority of the respondents indicated that student's exhibited poor usage of transitional devices in writing. Carmine, Silbert and Kameenui (1979) purported that poor reading and writing is the principal cause of failure in school. This is supported by Lerner (2006). He asserted that 80 percent of children with learning disabilities have their primary educational problem in the area of reading and writing. The reading and writing problems of all these students have a substantial impact on their ability to master other subjects in school. A study done by Runo (2010) on identification of reading disabilities and poor writing skills concludes that the learners who scored poorly in the wordlist and reading passage were equally poor performers academically in primary schools.

The study revealed that students misuse punctuation marks in writing. According to Lawrence (2001) when a ready misuse punctuation marks, comprehension of a text becomes difficulty and the essence of the text is lost. Punctuation marks used in a sentence structure may point to series of items or ideas.

Interview response from students on the effects of poor reading on students writing, most students reported that they were not able to write what was in their mind. A student said “I am not able to arrange my points into paragraphs”. This is in line with Churi (2009). Churi purported that students who have limited thoughts have no cohesion in their writings. The students further purported that they find it difficult to read and it was having serious repercussions on their writing. One student indicated that, “*I could not read and therefore I do not understand what the teacher teaches*”. Another mentioned “*I am disinterested in school because I cannot read*”. Pupils felt that their inability to read and understand English made their understanding of other subjects very difficult. Most interviewees said, they were not able to construct good sentences and have problems with the usage of punctuation marks.

#### 4.3 Ways in which reading helps students’ writing performance

The data analysis revealed a number of ways in which reading helps in improving the writing of students. Reading was seen to help improve the grammar and develop the language of the students and this reflects in their writing.

**Table 5: Reading improves writing of students**

<b>Statement</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Std. Deviation</b>
Reading helps students to improve their grammar and develop the language.	88	3.26	0.99
Reading helps students to widen their ideas and accuracy when writing.	88	3.16	0.99
Reading helps students to show proficiency in the language when they write.	88	3.15	1.08
Reading helps students to express the content of thought into a good composition.	88	3.22	0.87
<b>Total Mean/Std. Dev.</b>		<b>16.09</b>	<b>4.75</b>
<b>Mean of Means/Std. Dev.</b>		<b>3.22</b>	<b>0.95</b>

As presented in Table 6, it was found that most of the respondents ( $M=3.26$ ;  $SD=0.99$ ) agreed that reading helps students come in contact with the rules of grammar and develop the language structure. Moreover, majority of the respondents agreed ( $M=3.16$ ;  $SD=0.99$ ) with the issue of reading helping students to widen their ideas and accuracy. It is noticeable from Table 6 that concerning the issue of reading helping students to gain language proficiency in writing, majority of the respondents constituting ( $M=3.15$ ;  $SD=1.08$ ). Also, on the issue of reading improves the writing skills of students ( $M=3.22$ ;  $SD=0.87$ ) of the respondents were in support.

Majority of the respondents agreed that reading make students come in contact with the rules of grammar and develop the language structure. This is in corroboration with the argument put forward by Johnson (2008). He believes that the relationship between these two skills is that reading helps learners become better writers, by making them in contact with the rules of grammar, consequently they develop the language structure.

In response to reading helping students to widen their ideas and accuracy, majority of the respondents admitted to that. This presupposes reading will enable students to understand what they have been taught that will enable them widen their knowledge base on issues. Writing and reading provide a strong relationship that enable students to widen their style, ideas, and accuracy. Thomas (1976) indicated that “a significant relationship existed between writing achievement and the amount and variety of reading experience” (cited in Flippo & Coverly, 2000, p. 15).

When the researcher asked respondents about reading helping students to gain language proficiency in writing, majority agreed to that. This depicts clearly that there is correlation between reading and writing. This is in support of Tudor and Hafiz (1989). They set up a three-month extensive reading programme using ‘graded

reading books' to improve the learners' language competency. Results demonstrated an improvement in the learners' reading and writing skills.

The study revealed that reading improved the writing skills of students. This is supported by Greene (2001). According to him readers can learn new skills, become more knowledgeable about the whole world and can be stimulated to both thoughts and emotions. Good writing skills improve speaking. Gargiulo (2006) also supported reading improving the writing skills of students by saying that strong writing skills are the basis for literacy development.

**Table 6: Building the vocabulary span of students**

<b>Statement</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Std. Deviation</b>
Reading helps students to comprehend text effectively.	88	3.43	0.79
Reading help to expose students to novel words to build their vocabulary.	88	3.18	1.02
Reading helps students to understand and use words appropriately when writing.	88	3.27	0.99
Reading helps students to grasps more words and put it into writing.	88	3.35	0.84
<b>Total Mean/Std. Dev.</b>		<b>16.66</b>	<b>4.54</b>
<b>Mean of Means/Std. Dev.</b>		<b>3.33</b>	<b>0.91</b>

As evident in Table 7, it was found that majority (M=3.43; SD= 0.79) of the respondents agreed that reading helps students to comprehend text effectively. It was also found that most of the subjects (M=3.18; SD=1.02) indicated that reading help to expose students to novel words to build their vocabulary. It can be observed from Table 7 that majority of the participants (M=3.27; SD=0.99) agreed to the statement that reading helps students to understand and use words appropriately when writing.

As shown in Table 7, it was also found that most respondents ( $M=3.35$ ;  $SD=0.84$ ) agreed that reading helps students to grasp ideas and think more logically.

Analysis from Table 7 indicates that, reading help students to comprehend text effectively. This presupposes that students who reads extensively are able to build vocabulary and understand what they read. Beck *et al.* (2002), reported that students who are able to build good vocabulary through extensive reading are able to improve on their writing skills.

Majority of the respondents agreed that reading helped students to understand and use words appropriately when writing. This is in line with a study conducted by Nelson *et al.* (2005). According to them reading provides opportunities for advancement in vocabulary development.

The study further revealed that reading enabled students to understand and use words appropriately when writing. This is supported by Hill (2012). A study conducted by Hill depicted clearly that students who were able to put words together to develop a good piece of writing were those who read extensively.

The study found that reading helps students to grasp more words and put it into writing. This is supported by Deavers (2000). Deavers is of the view that once a child has been taught how to read and develop the love for books, he can explore for himself the wealth of human experience and knowledge. Also Gallo (2007) posits that once students get accustomed to reading they become better students, they will be able to learn fast, understand better, and acquire new knowledge and skills more rapidly and are better equipped for their chosen careers.

This chapter presented the data, and the analysis of responses from the teacher's and the learner's questionnaires. The findings in this chapter were also compared with research done previously.

Interview response from students on how they can improve their writing through reading? Majority of them were of the view that, there should be highly supportive teachers and parents to help them improve on their reading skills. One student stated that *“I can read better if my parents buy reading material to be used at home”* Another re-echoed by saying *“apart from the textbooks that we use at school getting additional learning materials at home will help”*. The respondents reported that their parents did not have the money to buy the books for them. Majority of the students said that their parents did not have enough money to purchase reading books for them. One of the respondents said *“I am from a single parent home and my mother is the only person taking care of six children. She does not have the money to buy reading books for me”*. Students were questioned whether their parents guided them to read but majority responded that their parents were illiterate. They could neither help them to read nor provide information to help solve their academic problems. Most of them said that their parents were unable to provide informational support when they sought advice or help from them. As most of the parents themselves attained a low educational level or were uneducated, they faced difficulties in helping their children to read. Two respondents shared that their parents were too busy and one said that his father had to work almost 12 hours a day. Tiredness and inadequate knowledge hindered the quality of the knowledge support they were able to give their children. Five respondents complained that their parents were too busy at work and that they always had to stay at home alone after school. Even when their parents were at home, they felt that they were not concerned about their academic performance.

With regard to students being given equal attention in class, one female student recounted, *“I couldn't get attention from the teacher. I would raise my hand and she would not get to me”*. Another male student echoed the sentiment that their

classroom was too small for the class size. Expressing frustration, he continued, “*We do not get the attention we need to do our work*”. A student justified his disengagement because the teacher never interacted with him in the classroom. If he did not get the attention he needed, he would not understand what to do. If he could not understand what to do, then why waste his time doing his work? As a result of this pattern, students always fell farther behind without adequate problem-solving skill.

In answering research question three, observations were also made from essays written by students. The observation shows that most of the students were poor writers because only few students were able to put thought in words. This is supported by Nunan (2003). According to him students who are poor readers find it difficult to remain focus during writing exercise.

I observed that most of the students ignored most punctuation marks when writing the essay. This was because they could not identify the importance of the punctuation marks in the writing of the essay. When a writer overlooks punctuation marks, comprehension of the essay becomes difficult and the essence of the essay is lost. The writers ignored punctuation marks like (.), (,), (?) and (!). This is in agreement with Lawrence (2001). According to Lawrence, punctuation marks indicated a long and a short pulse. It may also mark the end of a phrase. He further purported that comprehension of a text depend on the ability to read according to sense group. When a writer ignore punctuation marks the reader found it difficult in comprehension.

Apart from the aforementioned the following observations were made during the marking of the essays written by the students.

1. Grammatical errors: There was awkward phrasing and inaccurate sentence structure in their essays. This shows that the students have limited information



or knowledge regarding the essay topic. Most of the students started their sentences beginning with pronouns with small letters. For example, Debbie was written Debbie and Sandy was written sandy. Most of them did not complete their sentences with full stop (.) and refused to quote words picked directly from the passage. They also exhibited problems on subject verb agreement.

2. Vocabulary: I observed that most of the students lacked vocabulary skills. There was repetition of word, that is, same words were repeated several times in the essay
3. Inability of students to put thought in writing: it is evident from their writings that, the students found it difficult to transfer their thoughts on paper when writing the essay. This shows that they were not able to invent ideas to put them into statement and paragraphs. Nunan (2003) states that writing is an intellectual activity of finding the ideas and thinking about the way to express and arrange them into statement and paragraph that is clear to be understood by people. According to him, students who are poor readers exhibit the problem of putting thoughts on paper.
4. Poor usage of transitional devices: the observation depicted clearly that the students were very poor in the usage of transitional devices in their writing. Some of these devices were used in the middle of sentences instead of them to generate new paragraphs.

## CHAPTER FIVE

### SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

#### 5.0 Introduction

This study set out to investigate the impact of poor reading on the writings of Junior High School Students in the Abuakwa North Municipality. This chapter presents a summary, conclusions and recommendations of the research. Descriptive survey design was employed for the study. The study sample was made up 72 teachers, 16 headteachers and assistant headteachers and 48 students. Questionnaire, text, interview and observation were used to solicit information from the respondents. Validity and reliability of the instrument was ensured by making the instrument available to the supervisor for scrutiny and the questionnaire pilot tested in Abuakwa South Municipality. Fifteen teachers were selected for the pilot testing of the instrument.

The instrument covered three main aspects: habits that poor reading students exhibit, effects of poor reading on students writing and ways reading helps students in their writing performance. The data collected was analysed using Statistics Products and Service Solutions (SPSS 16). Means and standard deviation were used for all the items on the survey.

#### 5.1 Summary of the Major Findings

The following are the summary of the findings of the impact of poor reading on the writing of junior high school students in the Abuakwa North Municipality.

##### 5.1.1 Habits that student's with poor reading exhibit.

The evidence obtained showed that majority of the respondents were of the view that students are not able to interpret words appropriately was one of the key

habits exhibit by students. Majority of the respondents supported that students pronounce individual words instead of reading according to sense group.

The study also revealed that most of the respondents indicated that students are unable to remember what they have read in the previous paragraph. It was also ascertained that students ignored punctuation marks when writing the essay given to them.

### **5.1.2 Effects of poor reading on students writing**

The evidence obtained from the study demonstrated that majority of the respondents indicated that students found it difficult to put thoughts in words. Again, the evidence obtained showed that majority of the respondents were of the view that students were not able to invent ideas to put them into statement and paragraphs.

It was also revealed that poor arrangement of paragraphing by students affected their writing ( $M=3.30$ ;  $SD= 1.00$ ). It was also revealed that grammatical errors in writing was a key effect of students' poor reading habits. This was supported by Leech (2010) who argued that poor writing students showed the habit of grammatical errors which affected their writing.

Poor usage of transitional devices and poor construction of sentences were found to be key effects on the writings of poor reading students. These findings are in line with Lerner (2006). Lerner asserted that students with poor usage devices and poor construction of sentences have problem in the area of writing.

### **5.1.3 Ways reading help students to improve on their writing performance.**

Majority of the respondents agreed that reading makes students to improve their grammar and develop the language. Again, most respondents agreed that reading helped students to gain language proficiency in writing. It was further revealed from

the study that: reading improves the writing skills of students, helps students to communicate thought and feelings through writing and also improves the academic performance of students.

## **5.2 Conclusions**

From the study findings, the following conclusions are drawn. The conclusions are based on the research objectives set to guide the study. The first objective of the study was to identify the habits that students with poor reading exhibit in the Abuakwa North Municipal Junior High Schools. The findings indicated slow reading habits of students. These habits include: inability of students to interpret words appropriately, students unable to identify individual words and not able to remember what they have read in the previous paragraph. The study further revealed that students exhibit poor reading comprehension. It was found that: students interchange sounds in words when reading, students ignore more punctuation marks when reading and they do not read with the appropriate intonation.

The second objective of the study focused on the effects of poor reading on the writings of students. The study found that students do not have cohesion in their writing. Students found it difficult to put thought in words, unable to invent ideas to put them into statements and paragraphs and also not able to practice and produce text. The research work further indicated poor writing skills of students through poor construction of sentences, grammatical errors, poor usage of transitional devices and misuse of punctuation marks in writing.

The third objective of the study was to ascertain ways in which reading helps students' writing performance. The study divulged that reading improves grammar, language proficiency and helps students to express their content of thought into good composition. All these improved their writing skills. It was further ascertained that

reading helps to build the vocabulary span of students' through grasping more words and putting it into writing and understanding and using words appropriately when writing.

### **5.3 Pedagogical Implication**

1. Students should be encouraged by teachers to read extensively in order to improve on their writing skills.
2. Parents are expected to encourage the learners to read through the provision of adequate and relevant reading materials.
3. Teachers should use varieties of contemporary teaching methods to help students improve on both reading and writing skills.
4. Teachers should intermittently organise reading and writing competition among students to help them improve their reading and writing skills.

### **5.4 Suggestions for Further Studies**

Having seen the result of the study, the following suggestion are offered to be considered:

1. Further research should be conducted on the impact of knowledge of grammar and vocabulary on the writing performance of students.
2. The influence of first language on the reading ability of students.
3. The study can also be replicated in other districts to make it more generalised.

## REFERENCES

- Aaron, R., & Joshi, M. (1992). *Reading problem: Consultation and remediation*. London: Longmans.
- Abu-Rass, R. (1997). Integrating reading and writing for effective language teaching. *Forum*, 39 (1), pp: 30-39.
- Adams, C. (1990). *The English language: The only tool for communication in Ghana*. London: Phonix Press.
- Ahn, B. (2014). A critical reading and text organization-enhanced writing lesson. *Issues in EFL*, 10(1), 75-80.
- Aim, A. (2010). *Literacy and reading in Nigeria*. Calabar: Reading Association of Nigeria.
- Alderson, J. C. (2000). Assessing Reading: Reading in Foreign Language 1(1), *Quarterly* 42: 153-160.
- Al-gomoul, M. D .S .(2011). *Teaching and assessing writing strategies for secondary school students and investigating teachers and students' attitudes towards writing practice*. Tafila: Tafila Technical University
- Alkhalwaldeh, A. (2011). The Effect of EFL Reading Comprehension on Writing Achievement among Jordanian Eighth Grade Students. *European Journal of Scientific Research*, 66 (3), 352-365.
- Altman, J. (2014). Teaching coping skills to adolescents with learning problems. *Curriculum implications* (pp.167-168).
- Al-Rajhi, A. (2004). *Joining the online literacy club: Internet reading among Saudi EFL learners*. Ph.D. dissertation, Indiana University of Pennsylvania, Pennsylvania. Retrieved from Pro Quest Digital Dissertations database. (UMI Publication No. AAT 3149714).
- Amedehe, F. & Asamoah-Gyimah, E. (2016). *Introduction to educational research* (4<sup>th</sup> ed.). Kumasi: Yaci Publications.
- Amin, M. E. (2004). *Foundations of statistical inference for social science research*. Kampala: Makerere University.
- Applebee, A. N. (1984). *Writing and Reasoning, Review of Educational Research* 54, 577 596.

- Babbie, E. (2005). *The Basics of Social Research*. Belmont: Thomson Wadsworth.
- Baidoo, S. (2003). *Effective learning and communication*. (2<sup>nd</sup> ed.). Accra: Infinity Graphic Limited.
- Bailey, S. (2003). *Academic writing: A practical guide for students*. New York: Routledge Falmer.
- Bainbridge, J. & Malicky, G. (2000). *Constructing meaning: balancing elementary language arts*. Toronto, Canada: Harcourt.
- Baker, A. (2004). *The effect of extensive reading on English writing proficiency and attitudes of 10th grade students in Nablus*. Unpublished Ph.D. Dissertation, Ain Shams University, Cairo, Egypt.
- Baker, L. (2006). A current review of learning disabilities. *Journal of paediatric*, 5, 487- 493.
- Baradaran, A., & Sarfarazi, B. (2011). The impact of scaffolding on the Iranian EFL learners' English academic writing. *Australian Journal of Basic & Applied Sciences*, 5(12), 2265-2273.
- Bashir, I., & Mattoo, N. (2012). A study on study habits and academic performance among adolescents. *International journal of social science tomorrow*. 1 (5).1-5.
- Beach, R. (2000). *The effect of reading ability on seventh graders' narrative writing*. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service NO. ED 246401).
- Beavan, M. (1977). Individualized goal setting, self-evaluation, and peer evaluation. In C.R. Cooper & L. Odell. *Evaluating Writing* 135-156. Urbana, IL: National Council of Teachers of English.
- Bell, S. (1987). *Doing your research project: A guide for first-time researchers in education* (3<sup>rd</sup> ed.). London: Open University Press.
- Berninger, J. (2002). Theory and Research into Reading and Writing Connections: A critical Review. *Reading-Canada-Lecture*, 5, 10-18.
- Bhan, K. S., & Gupta, R. (2010). Study Habits and Academic Achievement among the students belonging to scheduled caste and nonscheduled caste group. *Journal of Applied Research in Education* 15(1), 1-9.

- Bitchener, J., Cameron, D., & Young S. (2005). The effect of different types of corrective feedback on ESL student writing. *Journal of Second Language Writing, 14* (3), 191-205.
- Blanchard, K. & Root, C. (2004). *Ready to write more: From paragraph to essay*. (2<sup>nd</sup> ed.). Essex: Pearson Education Limited.
- Bloem, P. (2004) Correspondence journals: Talk that matters. *The Reading Teacher 58*(1), 54-62.
- Booth, D. C. (2013). Visual and phonological processing of words. A comparison of good and poor readers. *Journal of learning disabilities, 22* (6), 349-355.
- Borg, W. R., & Gall, M. D. (1983). *Educational research: An introduction* (4<sup>th</sup> ed.). New York: Longman.
- Bradburn, N. M., & Sudman, S. (1988). *Polls and surveys: Understanding what they tell us*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
- Brook, M. M. (1989). *Becoming literate: The construction of inner control*. Portsmouth: N.H. Heinemann Educational Books.
- Brooks, A., & Grundy, P. (2009). *Writing for study purposes*. (12<sup>th</sup> ed.). Cambridge: Cambridge University.
- Brown, A. (1999). *Teaching writing*. Cheltenham: Stanley Thornes (Publishers) Ltd.
- Brown, H. D. (2001). *Teaching by principles: An interactive approach to language pedagogy* (2<sup>nd</sup> ed.). NY: Longman.
- Burns, N. & Grove, S.K. (2001). *The practice of nursing research: conduct, critique and utilisation* (4th ed.). Philadelphia: WB Saunders.
- Buzan, T. (2010). *Importance of reading to children*. New Jersey: Hillsdale.
- Byrne, D. (1991). *Teaching writing skills*. (5<sup>th</sup> ed.). London Longman.
- Canale, M., & Swain, M. (1980). Theoretical bases of communicative approaches to second language teaching and testing. *Applied Linguistic, 1*, 1-47.
- Carmine, B. Silbert, J. & Kameenui, E. J. (1997). *Direct instruction reading*. (3<sup>rd</sup> ed.). New Jersey: Merrill/ Prentice Hall.
- Carroll P., Maughan, T., Goodman, F., & Meltzer, Y. (2005). The beginning of decoding, reading and writing. *An international Journal, 5*, 181-192.



- Caruso, J. M. (1994). *The effects of extensive reading on reading comprehension and writing proficiency in foreign language learning*. Unpublished dissertation. UMI AAT 9543412.
- Chiuri, J. W. (2009). *Operation effective 40: A strategy for quality performance*. A paper presented during SMASSES inset in Kiambu District
- Chokwe, M. J. (2013). Factors impacting academic writing skills of English second language students. *Mediterranean Journal of Social Sciences*. University of South Africa: MCSER Publishing.
- Cohen, L., Manion, L. & Morriison, K. (2005). *Research methods in education* (5th ed.). London: Routledge Falmer.
- Conge, T. (1992). Importance of reading to children. *Educational Journal*, 6, 24-29.
- Constantino, R. (1995). Learning to read in a second language doesn't have to hurt: The effect of pleasure reading. *Journal of Adolescent and Adult Literacy*, 39, 68-69.
- Cooper, S., Warnock, J., & Shipman, E (1988). *Whole language and phonics: Can they work together? An introduction* (4<sup>th</sup> ed.). Massachusetts: Allyn and Bacon.
- Cope, T. (1977). *Fundamental considerations in language testing*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Crystal, D. (1999). *The Cambridge Encyclopedia of language*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Cummins J. L. (1988). *Diagnosis and remediation of the disabled reader* (3rd Ed.) Boston: Allyn and Bacon.
- Dadzie, P. S. (2008) Reading for Education: The roles of Libraries. *Ghana Library Journal* Vol. 20. No. 1. pp. 1-14.
- Davies, P., & Eric P. (2000). *Success in English teaching*. United Kingdom: Oxford University Press.
- Day, R. D., & Bamford, J. (1998). *Extensive reading in the second language classroom*. Cambridge: Cambridge.
- Deavers, R. (2000). The Effect of Instruction on Early Non-Word Reading Strategies. *Journal of Research in Reading*, 23, (5) 267-286.

- Debbie, A. D. (2000). Longitudinal relations among preschoolers' symbolic play metalinguistic verbal and emergent literacy. *Play and early literacy development*. New York: Sunny pgs 47-67.
- De Rycker, A., & Ponnudurai, P. (2011). The effect of online reading on argumentative essay writing quality. *Journal of Language Studies*, 11(3), 147- 162.
- De Vellis, R. F. (1991). *Scale development: Theory and applications*. Newbury Park: Carwin Press Inc.
- Dickinson, D., & Neuman, E. (2006). *Understanding and teaching reading: an interactive model*. New Jersey: Hillsdale.
- Dionne, P. (2005). *From process to practice*. London: Routledge and Kegan Paul.
- Doff, A. (1995). *Teach English: Training course for teachers*. (9<sup>th</sup> ed.). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Doff, A. (1989). *Training course for teachers*. Britain: Cambridge University Education (3<sup>rd</sup> ed.). London: Open University Press.
- Dornyei, Z. (2005). *The psychology of the language learners: Mahwah*. New Jersey: Laurence Erlbaum Associates.
- Duke, J. (2016). *Language Development and Learning to Read. The Scientific Studies of How Language Development Affect Reading Skills*. Cambridge: The MIT Press.
- Durukan, E. (2011). Effects of cooperative integrated reading and composition (CIRC) technique on reading-writing skills. *Educational Research and Reviews*, 6(1), 102–109.
- Eisterhold, J. C. (1997). *Reading-writing connection: Towards a description for second language learners*. Cambridge: Cambridge University.
- Elley, W. B. (1991). Acquiring literacy in second language: The effect of book-based programs. *Language Learning*, 41(3), 375-411.
- Ellis, H. (2000). *Direct instruction reading* (3<sup>rd</sup> ed.). New Jersey: Merrill/ Prentice Hall.
- Emenyonu, F. (1993). Repositioning school libraries in Nigeria: The catalyst for promoting reading habits among primary and secondary school students. *Journal of Research in Reading*, 22, (3) 267-286.

- Erhan, D. (2011). Impacts of cooperative integrated reading and composition technique on reading-writing skills. *Educational Research and Reviews*, 6(1), 102-109.
- Eskey, D. E. (2002). Reading and the teaching of L2 reading. *TESOL Journal*, 11(1), 5-9.
- Esmaeili, H. (2000). Integrated reading and writing tasks and ESL students' reading and writing performance in an English Language Test. *Journal of Canadian Modern Language Review*, 58(4), 599-620.
- Evans, S. (2008). Reading reaction journals in EAP courses. *ELT Journal*, 62, 240-247.
- Fagan, B. (2003). Scaffolds to help ELL readers. *Voices from the Middle*, 11(1), 38-42.
- Feiler, A., & Logan, E. (2007). The literacy early action project (LEAP): Exploring factors underpinning progress with literacy for a child in his first year of school. *British Journal of Special Education*, 34(2), 162-169.
- Ferris, D., & Hedgcock, J. S. (1998). *Teaching ESL composition: purpose, process, and practice*. Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, Inc.
- Flippo, T. S., & Coverly, C. (2000). The effect of extensive reading on developing the grammatical accuracy of the EFL freshmen at Al Al-Bayt University. *Journal of Education and Practice*, 4(6), 106-113.
- Freeman, T., & Person, M. (1992). *The reading for real handbook*. London: Routledge
- Friedlander, A. (1997). *Composing in English: Effects of a first language on writing in English as a second language*. Cambridge: Cambridge University.
- Foertsch, M. (1998). *A study of reading practices, instruction, and achievement in District schools*. Oak Brook, IL: North Central Regional Education Laboratory.
- Gagné, N., & Parks, S. (2013). Cooperative learning tasks in a grade 6 intensive ESL class: Role of scaffolding. *Language Teaching Research*, 17(2), 188-209.
- Gallo, D. (2007). Reading Interests and Habits of Connecticut Students in Grades Four through Twelve. *The Reading Matrix*. 2, (3) 1-20.

- Gargiulo, C. (2006). *At the very edge of the forest: The influence on story telling by children*. New York: Cassell.
- Gathumbi, A. W., Vikiro, L. I. & Bwire A.M. (2009). Comprehensive English literacy norms. *The teacher's resource for teaching English language* Vol. 1, Phoenix Pub, Nairobi, Kenya.
- Gay, R. L., & Airasian, P. (2003). *Educational research competencies for analysis and application* (7<sup>th</sup>ed.). Ohio: Prentice Hall.
- Ghandoura, W. A. (2012). A qualitative study of ESL college students' attitudes about computer-assisted writing classes. *English Language Teaching*, 5(4), 57-64.
- Ginnis, P. (2002). *The teacher's classroom achievement with strategies for every learners*. London, United Kingdom: Crown House Publishing Limited.
- Gonzalez, V. (20016). *English-As-A-Second Language [ESL]. Teaching and Learning. Pre-K-12 Classroom Applications for Students' Academic Achievement and Development*. New York: Pearson Education
- Goodman, K. S. (1990). *Language and thinking in school: A whole language curriculum*. New York: R.C. Owen Publishers.
- Grabe, W. (2002). Reading in a second language. In R. B. Kaplan (Ed.), *The Oxford handbook of applied linguistics* (pp. 49-59). New York: Oxford University Press.
- Grabe, W., & Kaplan, B. (1991). Current development in second language reading research. *TESOL Quarterly*, 25(3), 375-406.
- Grabe, W., & Kaplan, B. (1996). *Theory and practice of writing*. London: Longman.
- Graham, S., & Perin, D. (2007). *Writing next: Effective strategies to improve writing of adolescents in middle and high schools*. Washington: Alliance for Excellent Education.
- Greene, B. (2001). Testing Reading Comprehension of Theoretical Discourse with Close. *Journal of Research in Reading*. 24, (1) 32-98.
- Guthrie, J. T. Schafer, L., & Huang, K. (2007). *Concept-oriented reading instruction: An integrated curriculum to develop motivations and strategies for reading* [http://curry.virginia.edu/go/clic/nrrc/corri\\_rlo.html](http://curry.virginia.edu/go/clic/nrrc/corri_rlo.html) Retrieved on November, 28 2017.

- Hafiz, F. M., & Tudor, I. (1990). Graded readers as an input medium in L2 learning. *System, 18*, 31-42.
- Hammad, J. (2013). Investigating Malaysian ESL students' writing problems on conventions, punctuation, and language use at secondary school level. *Journal of Studies in Education, 2(3)*, 130-143.
- Harris, J. (1993). *Introducing writing*. London: Penguin Group.
- Harris, R. (2000). *Rethinking Writing*. London: Athlone Press.
- Harmer, J. (2001). *The practice of English language teaching* (3rd ed.). Essex: Pearson Education Limited.
- Harmer, J. (2006). *The practice of English language teaching*. (8<sup>th</sup> ed.). China: Longman.
- Harmer, J. (2007). *How to teach writing*. (5<sup>th</sup> ed.). Essex: Pearson Education Limited.
- Hartney, G. (2011). *Longitudinal relations among pre schoolers' symbolic play metalinguistic verbal and emergent literacy. Play and early literacy development*. New York: Sunny pgs 47-67.
- Hayashi, K. (1999). Reading strategies and extensive reading in EFL classes. *RELC Journal, 30(2)*, 114-132.
- Heilman, A. W., Blair, T., & Rupley, W. H. (1998). *Principles and practices of teaching reading*. (9<sup>th</sup> ed.). New Jersey: Prentice Hall.
- Holte, J. (1998). Teaching coping skills to adolescents with *learning problems*. In E. L. Meyen, G. A. Vergason, & R. J. Whelan (Eds) *promising practices for exceptional children: curriculum implications (pp.167-168)* Denver: Love.
- Horning, A. S. (2007). Reading across the curriculum as the key to student success. United States of America: Parlor Press and the WAC Clearinghouse
- Horning, A. S., & Kraemer, E. (2013). *Reconnecting reading and writing*. United States of America: Parlor Press and the WAC Clearinghouse.
- Hyland, K. (2003). *Second language writing*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Hyland, F. (2000). Teacher management of writing workshops: Two case studies. *Canadian Modern Language Review, 57(2)*, 272.

- Ibrahim, H. (2006). *The effect of using the reading for writing approach on developing the writing ability of Egyptian EFL learners and their attitudes towards writing*. ERIC (ED498363).
- Iheanacho, J. (1991). Which aspects of processing text mediate genetic effects? Reading and writing. *An Interdisciplinary Journal*, 3, 249-269.
- Ilegogie, S. (2007). *Assessment in special & inclusive education*. (10<sup>th</sup> ed.). Boston: Houghton Mifflin.
- International Reading Association & National Association for the Education of Young Children. (1998). *Learning to read and write: Developmentally appropriate practices for young children*. New Jersey: Prentice Hall.
- Ismail, S. A. A. (2007). Exploring students' perceptions of ESL writing. *English Language Teaching*, 4(2), 73-83.
- Ismail, S., Al-Awidi, H., & Almekhlafi, A. (2012). Employing reading and writing computer-based instruction in English as a second language in elementary schools. *International Journal of Business and Social Science*, 3(12), 265-274.
- Issa, A. O., Aliyu, M. B., Akangbe, R. B. & Adedeji, A. F. (2012). Reading Interest and Habits of the Federal Polytechnic Students. *International Journal of Learning & Development*, 2, (1), 470-486.
- Ito, F. (2011). L2 Reading-writing correlation in Japanese EFL high school students. *The Language Teacher*, 35(5), 23-29
- Janopoulos, M. (1986). The relationship of pleasure reading and second language writing proficiency. *TESOL Quarterly*, 20, 763-768.
- Johnson, J. (2008). Data-driven school improvement. *OSSC Bulletin Services*. Oregon, US: Oregon School Study Council.
- Johnson, R. B., & Onwuegbuzie, A. J. (2004). Mixed methods research: A research paradigm whose time has come. *Educational Researcher*, 33(7), 14-26
- Jolliffe, D. A. (2007). Learning to read as continuing education. *College Composition and Communication*, 58(3), 470-494.
- Junias. J. (2009). *Stages of reading development*. New York: McGraw-Hill.
- Jurecic, A. (2006). *Is Teaching Writing Still Possible?* New Jersey: Writing Alliance

- Kasper, L. F., & Petrello, B. A. (1998). Responding to ESL Student Writing: The Value of a Non-judgmental Approach. *Community Review*, 16178.
- Kate, W., & Guy, J. (2003). *Advanced learners' dictionary*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Kirigia, B. E. (1991). *Read to me: Raising kids who love to read*. New York: Scholastic, Inc.
- Kirk, S. A., Gallager, J. J., & Anastasion, N. J. (2003). *Educating exceptional learners*. (10<sup>th</sup> ed). Boston: Houghton Mifflin.
- Kaplan, J., & Palhinda, E. (1981). Non-native speakers of English and their composition abilities: A review and analysis. In W. Frawley (Ed.), *Linguistics and literacy* (pp. 425-457). NY: Plenum Press.
- Kasapaglu, P. (2010). Using educational technology tools to improve language and communication skills of ESL students. *Novitas-Royal (Research on Youth and Language)* 4 (2), 225-241.
- Kolawole, C.O.O. (2005). *The state of reading in some selected secondary schools in South Nigeria*. Okedara. Ibadan: Constellations Books Limited.
- Kombo, D. K., & Tromp, L. A. (2006). *Proposal and thesis writing: An introduction*. Nairobi: Pauline publications Africa.
- Kos, Y. (1991). Strenglass, M. (1986). Writing Based on Reading. In B. T. Peterson (Ed.), *Convergences. Transactions in Reading and Writing* (151-162). Urbana, IL: NCTE.
- Krashen, S. D. (1996). The case for narrow listening. *System*, 24(1), 97-100.
- Kristy, A. (2000). *The importance of reading*. Massachusetts: Allyn and Bacon.
- Kroll, B. (1997). *Second language writing: Research insights for the classroom* (6<sup>ht</sup> ed.). Cambridge; Cambridge University Press.
- Lai, E. F. K. (1993b). Effect of extensive reading on English learning in Hong Kong. *CUHK Education Journal*, 21(1), 23-36.
- Lankshear, C., and Snyder, I. (2000). *Teachers and techno-literacy*. St. Leonards, Australia: Allen & Unwin.

- Lawrence (2001). *Multiple Intelligences in the Classroom*. USA: Association for Supervision and curriculum Development.
- Lee, H. (2012). The reading response e-journal: An alternative way to engage low-achieving EFL students. *Language Teaching Research*, 17 (1), 111-131.
- Lerner, J. (2000). *Learning disabilities: Theories diagnosis and teaching strategies* (8<sup>th</sup> ed). Boston: Houghton Mifflin.
- Lerner, E. (2006). *Understanding and teaching reading: an interactive model*. (10<sup>th</sup> ed) New Jersey: Hillsdale
- Loether, H. J., & McTavish, D. G. (1993). *Descriptive and inferential statistics: An introduction* (4<sup>th</sup> ed.). Massachusetts: Allyn and Bacon.
- MacGowan-Gilhooly, A. (1991) Fluency before correctness: a whole-language experiment in College ESL. *College ESL*, 1, 37-47.
- Machando, J. L. (1980). *Early childhood experience in language*. U.S.A.: International Thomson Limited.
- Mahmoud, M. M. A. (2014). The effectiveness of using the cooperative language learning approach to enhance EFL writing skills among Saudi university students. *Journal of Language Teaching and Research*, 5(3), 616-625
- Mann, V. A. Cowin, E. & Schoenheimer, J. (1989). Phonological processing, language comprehension and reading ability. *Journal of learning disabilities*, 22(2) 76-89.
- Manzo, A.V., & Manzo, U. C. (1993). *Teaching children to be literate*. Texas: Harcourt Brace College Publication.
- Manzo, A. V., & Manzo, U. C. (1995). *Teaching children to be literate*. Texas: Harcourt Brace College Publication.
- Malatesha, R. N. & Aaron, P. G. (2007). *Reading disorders: Varieties and treatments*. New York: Academics Press.
- Mansouri, M. (2006). *An attempt to identify and analyze some causes behind students' lack of reading*. Batna: Alhadji Lakhdar University.
- Mason, B. (2004). The effect of adding supplementary writing to an extensive reading program. *International Journal of Foreign Language Teaching*, 1(1), 2-16.



- McDonald, C. R., & McDonald, R. L. (2002). *Teaching Writing*. Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press
- Miller, D. (2001). *Materials and methods in ELT*. Oxford: Blackwell.
- Mitchell, M. L., & Jolley, M. (2004). *Research design explained* (5<sup>th</sup> ed.). Ontario: Thomson Wadworth.
- Mugenda, O. M., & Mugenda, A.G. (2003). *Research methods: Quantitative approaches*. Nairobi: ACTS Press.
- Muogilim, N. (2002) A study on study habits and academic performance among adolescents (14-15) years. *International journal of social science tomorrow*, 1 (5). 1-5.
- Murdoch, G. (1986). A more integrated approach to the teaching of reading. *English Language Forum*, 5(1), 13-20.
- Nkiko, C., & Yusuf, F.O. (2006). Bibliotherapy and aging among Covenant University Staff, Ife. *Psychologia* 14 (1) 133-147.
- Nelson, N. (1998). The Reading-Writing Connection Viewed Historically. In N. Nelson (Ed.), *The Reading-Writing Connection (1-45)*. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press.
- Nunan, D. (2003). *Practical English Language Teaching*. Singapore: McGraw Hill Company
- Nuttall, C. (1996). *Teaching reading skills in a foreign language*. Oxford: Heinemann.
- Ogbonna, I. M. (2014). *Books, libraries and reading in the digital age*. Enugu: Eminent Publishers.
- Olsen, C. B. (2003). *The reading/writing connection: Strategies for teaching and learning in the secondary classroom*. Pearson Education: Boston.
- Palani, K. K. (2012) Promising Reading Habits and Creating Literate Social. *International Reference Research Journal* Vol. III Issue 2(1) pp 91.
- Pang, M. M., & Rokin. N. (2003). *Becoming literate: The construction of inner control*. Portsmouth: N. H. Heinemann Educational Books.
- Pincas, A. (1992). *Teaching English Writing: Essential language teaching series*. The Macmillan Press Limited

- Polak, J., & Krashen, S. (1988). Do we need to teach spelling? The relationship between spelling and vocabulary reading among community college ESL students. *TESOL Quarterly*, 22, 141-146.
- Pour-Mohammadi, M., Zainol Abidin, M., & Cheong Lai, F. (2012). The effect of process writing practice on the writing quality of form one students: A Case Study. *Asian Social Science*, 8(3), 88-99.
- Richards, J. (2003). *Second Language Writing*. United States of America: Cambridge University Press.
- Sadek, M. F. (2007). *Towards a new approach for teaching English language*. Ohio: Dar Al-Faker.
- Shanghverzy, J. (1997). *An introduction on operant (instrumental) conditioning: educational psychology interactive*. Valdosta, G. A.: Valdosta State University.
- Shaughnessy, M.P. (1988). Diving in: An introduction to basic writing. In G. Tate & E.P.J. Corbett. *The Writing Teacher's Sourcebook* 297-302. New York: Oxford.
- Raimes, A. (1994). *Techniques in teaching writing*. (3<sup>rd</sup> ed.). Oxford: O.U.P.
- Read, S. (2010). A model for scaffolding writing instruction: IMSCI. *Reading Teacher*, 64(1), 47-52.
- Richards, J. C. (1990). *From meaning into words: Writing in a second or foreign language, the language teaching matrix*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Richards, J. C., & Renandya, W. A. (2003). *Methodology in language teaching: An anthology of current practice*. (3<sup>rd</sup> ed.). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Richards, J. C., & Schmidt, R. (2002). *Language teaching and applied linguistics*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Richardson, M., & Spivey, H. (2000). *104 Activities that build: self-esteem, teamwork, communication, anger management, self-discovery and coping skills*. United States: Rec Room Publishing, Inc.
- Rose, D. (2004). Sequencing and pacing of the hidden curriculum: How indigenous children are left out of the chain? In J. Muller, A. Morais & B. Davies (Eds.) *Reading Bernstein, Researching Bernstein*. London: Routledge Falmer.

- Ross A. E. (2002). Where does knowledge come from? Specific associations between print exposure and information acquisition. *Journal of Educational Psychology* 85 (2).
- Runo, M. N. (2010). *Identification of reading disabilities & teacher-oriented challenges in teaching reading to standard five learners in Nyeri and Nairobi Districts*. A Ph.D Thesis. Kenyatta University.
- Saka, K. A, (2012). Promoting reading culture in Nigerian children. *Nigerian School Library Journal*.
- Salyer, M. (1987). A comparison of the learning characteristics of good and poor ESL writers. *Applied Linguistics Interest Section Newsletter, TESOL*, 8, 2-3.
- Samuels, L. M. (1988). Promoting voluntary reading. *Handbook of research on teaching the English Language arts*. New York: Macmillian.
- Santos, O. B. (1989). Language skills and cognitive process related to poor reading comprehension performance. *Journal of Learning Disabilities*, 22, 131-133.
- Sarantakos, S. (1997). *Social research* (2<sup>nd</sup> ed.). New York: Palgrave Publishers Limited.
- Schneider, A. (2001). *Shaping thought and utterance: The function of re-reading in the writing process*. Unpublished EDD project, State of New York at Albany, New York, USA.
- Shanahan, T., & Lomax, R. G. (1986). An analysis and comparison of theoretical models of the reading-writing relationship. *Journal of Educational Psychology*, 78, 116-123.
- Shin, S. J. (2006). *Learning to teach writing through tutoring and journal writing*. Baltimore: Taylor and Francis.
- Short, A. E., & Pierce, K. E. (1990). Tracking the unique effects of print exposure in children: association with vocabulary general knowledge and spelling. *Journal of education psychology*, 83 (2) 264-274.
- Silva, T., & Matsuda, P. K. (2002). Writing. In N. Schmitt (Ed.), *An introduction to applied linguistics* (pp. 251-266). London: Oxford University Press.
- Singh, Y. G. (2011) Academic Achievement and Study Habits of Higher Secondary Students. *International Referred Research Journal* 3 (27) pp. 2

- Smith, D. D., & Luckasson, R. (1995). *Introduction to special education teaching in an age of challenge*. (2<sup>nd</sup> ed.). Boston: Allyn and Bacon.
- Smith, T. E. C (2013). *Introduction to education*. (2<sup>nd</sup> ed.). St. Paul: West Publishing.
- Snow, E.C., Burns, S. M., & Griffin, P. (1998). *Prevent Reading Difficulties in Young Children*. Washington: National Academy Press.
- Spear-Swerling, L., & Sternberg, L. (2004). A road map for understanding reading disability and other reading problems: Origins, intervention, and prevention. *Theoretical models and processes of reading*, 5, 517-573.
- Spratt, D. E., & Mary, J. M. (2005). *The TKT Course*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press
- Stanovich, K. E. (1986). Where does knowledge come from? Specific associations between print exposure and information acquisition. *Journal of Educational Psychology* 85 (2).
- Stark, r. (2005). *Writing skills: Success in twenty minutes a day*. (3<sup>rd</sup> ed.). New York: Learning Express, LLC.
- Storch, N. (2007). Investigating the merits of pair work on a text editing task in ESL classes. *Language Teaching Research*, 11(2), 143-159.
- Stotsky, S. (1983). Research on reading and writing relationship: A synthesis and suggested direction. *Language Arts*, 66(50), 627-642.
- Taylor, B. P. Frye, G., & Maruyama, G. (1990). Time spent reading and reading growth. *American Educational Research Journal*.
- Taylor, B. P., Hulme, G. E., & Welsh, K. (2004). *Literacy for the 21st century: Teaching reading and writing in grades 4 through 8*. Columbus, Ohio: Pearson Prentice Hall.
- Thomas, J. (1993). Countering the 'I can't write English' syndrome. *TESOL Journal*, 2 12-15.
- Tribble, C. (1997). *Writing*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Tuan, L. (2012). Teaching writing through reading integration. *Journal of Language Teaching and Research*, 3(3), 489-499
- Tudor, I. & Hafiz, F. (1989). Extensive reading as a means of input to L2 Learning. *Journal of Research in Reading*, 12, 164-78.

- Polak, J., & Krashen, S. (1988). Do we need to teach spelling? The relationship between spelling and vocabulary reading among community college ESL students. *TESOL Quarterly*, 22, 141-146.
- Unoh, S. (1995). Children Reading habits and availability of books in Bostwana Primary Schools: Implication for achieving quality education. *The Reading Matrix* 7 (2): 12-16
- Utami, D. (2013). *How to Write*. Medan: La-Tansa Press.
- Ur, P. (2002). *A course in language teaching*. (9<sup>th</sup> ed.). Cambridge: C.U.P.
- Vogt, D. (2000). *The reading for real handbook*. London: Routledge.
- Vygotsky, L. S. (1987). *The collected works of L.S. Vygotsky: Volume I. Problems of general psychology*. R.W. Rieber & A.S. Carton, Eds. New York: Plenum.
- Wallace, T. Stariha, W. E., & Walberg, H. J. (2004). *Teaching speaking, listening and writing*. Switzeland: IAE.
- Wang J. U. (2012). *Identification of Reading Difficulties amongst Grade 4 learners of the Arandis Primary School in the Erongo Region, Namibia*. Namebia: University of Namebia.
- Watts-Taffe, S., & Truscott, D. (2000). Using what we know about language and literacy development for ESL students in the mainstream classroom. *Language Arts* 77(3) 258-264.
- White, R., & Arndt, V. (1991). *Process writing*. London: Longman
- Widdowson, H. G. (2001). *Teaching a language as communication*. (12<sup>th</sup> ed.). Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Wigfield, A. (1997). Children's motivations for reading engagement. In J. T. Guthrie and A. Wig and eld. (Ed) *Reading engagement: motivating Readers through skilled reading across languages: a psycholinguistic grain size theory*". *Psychol Bull* 131 (1): 3-29.
- Willie, E. (2009). *Reading Culture and Value Reorientation*. In *Readership promotion and National Development: A collection of papers presented at the 7th Nigeria International Book Fair and National Book Fairs Lagos*: The Nigeria Book Fair Trust.

- Wixon, P., Peters, O., Weber, C., & Roeber, H. (1987). *The reading for real handbook*. London: Routledge.
- Wong Mei Ha, H., & Storey, P. (2006). Knowing and doing in the ESL writing class. *Language Awareness* 15(4) 283-300.
- Yan, G. (2005). *A process genre model for teaching writing*. China: English Teaching Forum.
- Yin, R. K. (2003). *Case study research: Design and methods*. London: sage.
- Yoshimura, F. (2009). Impacts of connecting reading and writing and a checklist to guide the reading process of EFL learners' learning about English writing. *Procedia-Social and Behavioral Sciences*, 1(1), 1871-1883.
- Yusuf, H. O. (2015). Assessment of teachers' attitude towards the teaching of reading in primary schools in Kaduna metropolis. *International journal of humanities and social science*. 10 (1), 14-109.
- Zaher, A. (1990). *Teaching composition via listening, speaking, and writing at the secondary stage: An experimental study*. *Proceedings of the tenth national symposium on English language teaching in Egypt*. Teaching English: The decade ahead. Ain Shams University, Cairo, Egypt. 129-141.
- Zainal, Z., & Husin, S.H.B.M. (2011). *A study on the impacts of reading on writing performance among faculty of civil engineering students*. [Online] Available: <http://eprints.utm.my/11872/1/>.
- Zamel, V. (1992). Writing one's way into reading. *TESOL Quarterly*, 20, 45-55.

## APPENDIX A

### UNIVERSITY OF EDUCATION, WINNEBA

#### QUESTIONNAIRE FOR TEACHERS

#### IMPACT OF POOR READING ON THE WRITINGS OF JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL

#### STUDENTS: THE CASE OF SELECTED SCHOOLS IN THE ABUAKWA

#### NORTH MUNICIPALITY

This questionnaire seeks to gather data on the impact of poor reading on the writings of junior high school students. The information you provide will be kept confidential and be used solely for the purpose for this study.

**Instruction:** Please respond by ticking the appropriate box. For example, []

**S.A** = Strongly Agree      **A** = Agree      **D** = Disagree      **S.D** = Strongly Disagree

#### **PART I: Habits that students with poor reading exhibit**

##### **Section A: Slow reading habits of students**

Statement	S.A	A	D	S.D
1. Students cannot interpret words appropriately				
2. Students are unable to identify individual words				
3. Students are unable to make graphical processing				
4. Students pronounce individual words instead of reading according to sense group				
5. Students are unable to remember what they have read in the previous paragraph				

##### **Section B: Poor reading comprehension by students**

Statement	S.A	A	D	S.D
1. Students interchange sounds in words when reading				
2. Students ignore more punctuation marks when reading				
3. Students omits consonant when reading				
4. Students ignoring words endings				
5. Students do not read with appropriate intonation				

**PART 2: Effects of poor reading on students writing**

**Section A: Cohesion in students writing**

Statement	S.A	A	D	S.D
1. Students find it difficult to put thought in words				
2. Students are not able to invent ideas to put them into statements and paragraphs				
3. Students are not able to practice and produce text				
4. Poor arrangement of paragraphs				

**Section B: Poor writing skills**

Statement	S.A	A	D	S.D
1. Students exhibits poor construction of sentences in writing				
2. Students exhibits grammatical errors in writing				
3. Students exhibits poor usage of transitional devices in writing				
4. Students are not able to state clearly the topic sentences of a paragraph in writing				
5. Students misuse punctuation marks in writing				

**PART 3: Ways reading help students to improve on their writing performance**

**Section A: Reading improves grammatical knowledge of students**

Statement	S.A	A	D	S.D
1. Reading makes students to improve their grammar and develop the language through writing				
2. Reading helps students to widen their ideas and accuracy in writing				
3. Reading help students to show proficiency in the language when they write				
4. Reading improves the writing skills of students				



**Section B: Building the vocabulary span of students**

<b>Statement</b>	<b>S.A</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>S.D</b>
1. Reading helps students to communicate thought and feelings through writing				
2. Reading helps students to understand what they write				
3. Reading improves the academic performance of students				
4. Reading helps students to grasp more words and put it into writing				

*Thank you*



## **APPENDIX B**

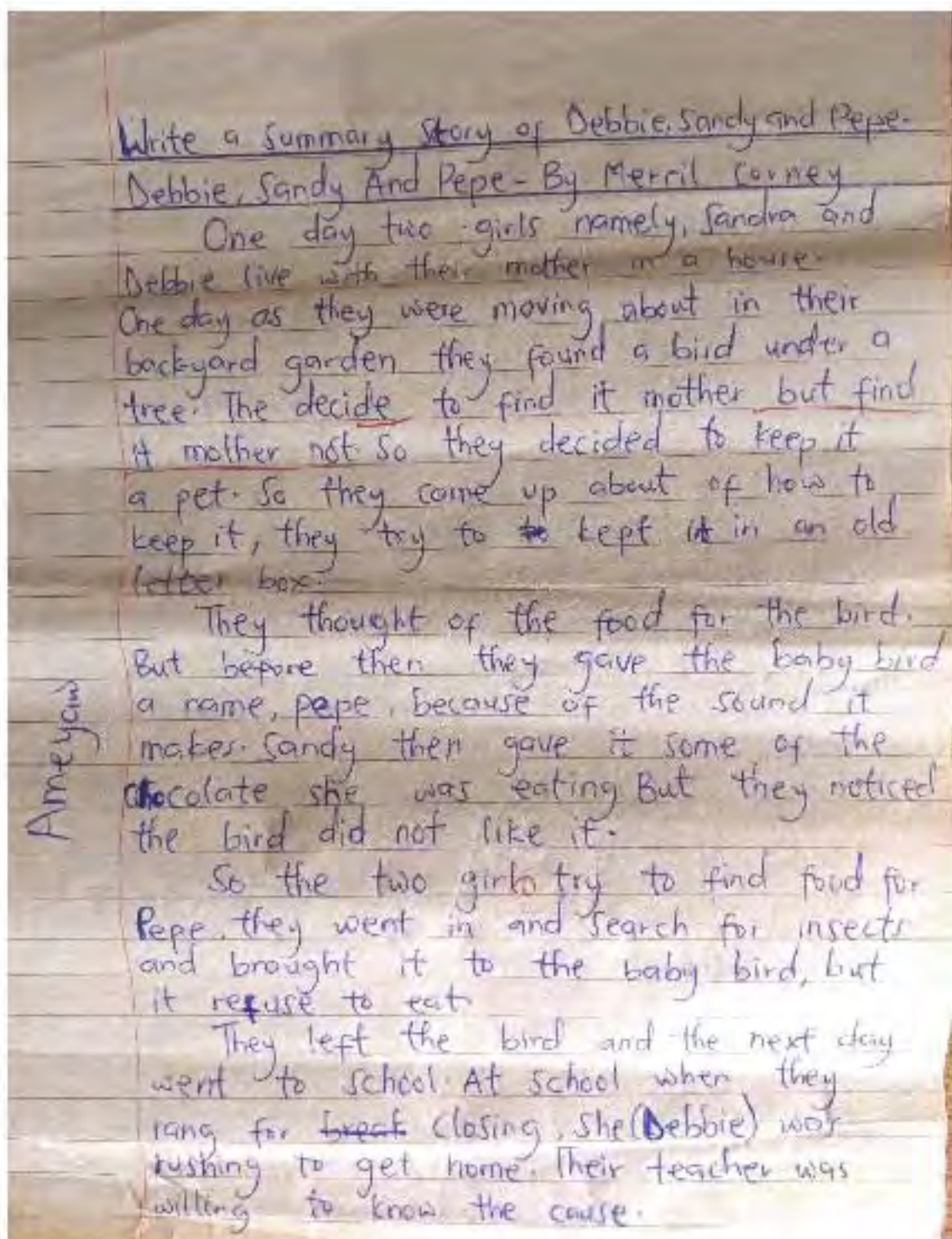
### **INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR STUDENTS**

This interview guide is to obtain information on the impact of poor reading on the writing of junior high school students in the Abuakwa South Municipality.

1. How does your reading skills affect your writing skills?
2. How does your reading skills affect your academic performance?
3. How do you use your free time?
4. Do your parents provide you with all the reading materials you need?
5. Do your parents' guide you on what to read and how to read it?
6. Do you like the reading and writing methods used by your teacher?
7. Does your teacher use reading as a bait to improve your writing skills?
8. Does your teacher give pupils equal attention in class during reading?
9. How does the class size affect the attention given to you by your teacher?

## Appendix C

### Writing a short essay



Ntiriwa Marka 1st July, 2020  
Debbie.

The story of Debbie Sandy and Pepe.

~~Debbie go out and she find~~

Debbie go out and she find

Debbie went out and find some <sup>bird</sup> bird on the tree and when she gone home she call her sisters Sandy and Pepe to come and see something sandy talks bird into they are houses Debbie go out the bird was deat die Debbie is crying her bird is die and they ask Sandy and Pepe.

1<sup>st</sup> July, 2020.

A story about Debbie, Sandy and Pepe

On day Debbie and Sandy find a baby bird in their Garden and they decided to make a cage for the bird and give a name to the bird Pepe.

Again, they decided to put the bird on top of a tree and like the mother. they started to feed the bird, Debbie decided to give the bird warm and Sandy gave the bird chocolate.

On another day Debbie and Sandy return from school and find the bird died, so Sandy started to cry, Debbie told Sandy to stop crying. She ~~told~~<sup>said</sup> every thing she will cry even when we pour hot water on ants she will cry.

They ask their mother did bird go to heaven and their mother said no know.

Debbie said to Sandy she was the one who gave the bird chocolate to eat. After that they decided to bury the died bird.

Kurti David  
A STORY OF DEBBIE, SANDY AND PEPE

Once upon a time, there were a two girls named Debbie and Sandy.

Debbie and Sandy were the only daughters of their parent.

One day Debbie and Sandy went to the back of their yard and saw some baby bird crying. They plan to take the baby bird and help him.

They took the baby bird to their home and gave him a name pepe. They place the baby bird in a box and gave him a few chocolate but the baby bird didn't eat.

One day they try to search for baby the baby bird mother but they didn't find her.

They treat the baby bird well and gave him a better place.  
~~This is my story of Debbie, Sandy and pepe.~~

Debbie and Sandy think the bird don't know God whiles people know God. Thank You.

Grace Athena Sangty 1<sup>st</sup> July 2020

Debbi Sandy and Pepe

One morning debbi and Sandy went at their back of their house and saw some poor baby bird and they decided to make cage for her this girl give the name pepe because of the sound he was making they decided to put the bird on top of a tree. they decide to feed the bird so Sandy went for worm of the bird but the bird ~~wasn't~~ couldn't eat the worm they tried to give her chocolate but still

On another day debbi and Sandy return from school and find the bird crying died so Sandy started crying debbi told Sandy to stop crying

They ask their mother & so mom did bird go to heaven because they no this bird was after that they decided to bury the died bird.

Debbi & breast Sandy that she give the bird chocolate to eat that is way the bird died.

~~Once~~ Once

Once upon a time there was three people in one village. Live in one village, their names is Sandy, Pepe and Dabbie. Sandy was the sister to Dabbie and Pepe was a bird.

One day they go to their garden and they find a little bird at the garden and they take the bird home. The bird was laven no mother or father in the garden. So Sandy was the mother to the bird and Dabbie was the father to the bird.

So they found some small box and put the bird in. And they give the bird food every day and they stay night. When they go to school, they bring the bird food. So every day they pamper the bird. The bird was happy every day both Sandy and Dabbie was also happy about the bird.

So one day they see the bird and they go to school. When they came back the bird was died. So the cry down.



1st July, 2020

The story of debi Sandy and  
Pepe

Debi was a babi bird. They sister  
Sandy and pepe go and take  
babi bird for the home back  
and brot the babi bird to them  
room. It bed fly and was die.  
pepe and sandy state cry and cry.

## Story 13

Story About Debe, Sandy and Pepe

1st July 2022

Once upon a time, there live two sisters called Debe and Sandy. One day they went to their backyard and find a bird near their house. They was surprised to see the bird.

The two sisters took the bird into a cage to put and they gave milk to the bird. They were thinking the bird was have eat worms. So Debe and Sandy went to school. And when they close from school, Debe brought worms to the bird. The bird was crying and they had the bird sounding like pepe and then Debe and Sandy gave a name pepe to the bird because the bird was sounding pepe.

In the afternoon, Debe was thinking the bird would eat worms. So Debe gave worms to the bird the bird wouldn't eat the worms. Sandy gave some of his chocolate to the bird pepe was becoming weaker.

The next day they went to school when they close from school the pepe was dead. Then Debe started crying Sandy said every little things you cry. The Sandy pumped Debe. They went to their mother to ask that do birds go to heaven? The mother was not know that there is a place for a bird and birds to heaven.

After that they decided to bury the dead bird at the back of their house.

