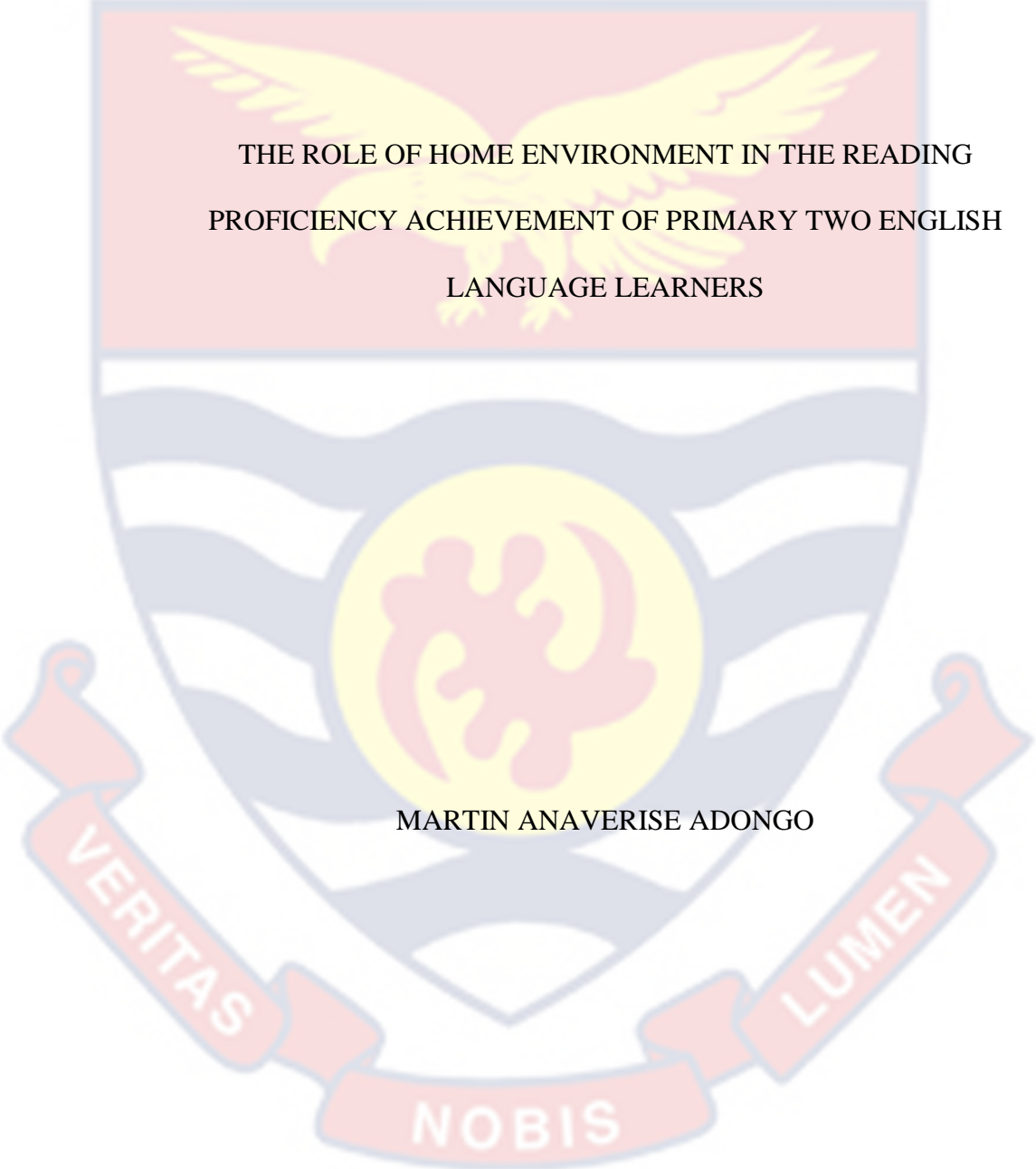


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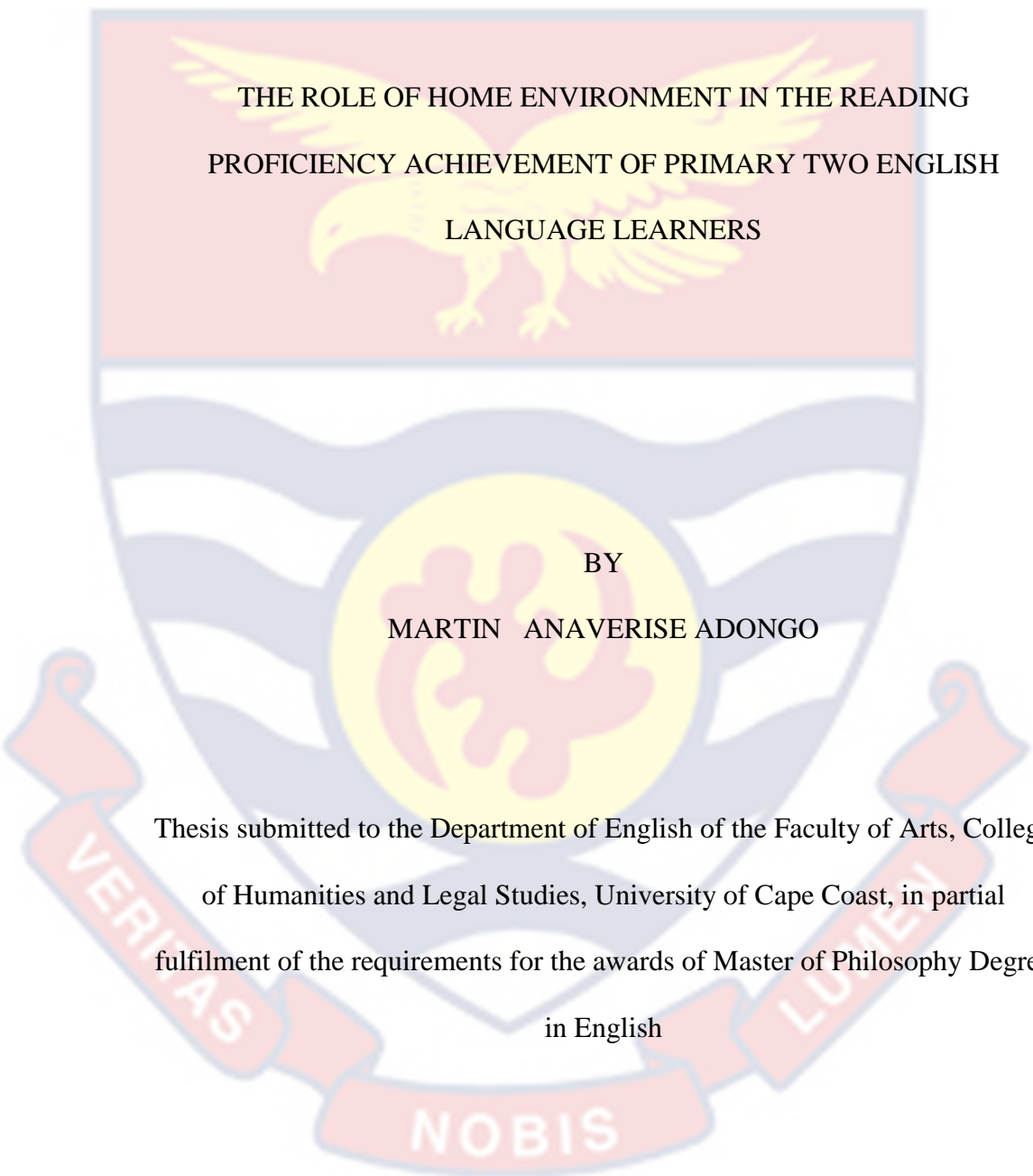


THE ROLE OF HOME ENVIRONMENT IN THE READING
PROFICIENCY ACHIEVEMENT OF PRIMARY TWO ENGLISH
LANGUAGE LEARNERS

MARTIN ANAVERISE ADONGO

2023

UNIVERSITY OF CAPE COAST



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BY
MARTIN ANAVERISE ADONGO

Thesis submitted to the Department of English of the Faculty of Arts, College
of Humanities and Legal Studies, University of Cape Coast, in partial
fulfilment of the requirements for the awards of Master of Philosophy Degree
in English

SEPTEMBER, 2023

DECLARATION

Candidate's Declaration

I hereby declare that this thesis is the result of my own original research and that no part of it has been presented for another degree in this university or elsewhere.

Candidate's Signature Date

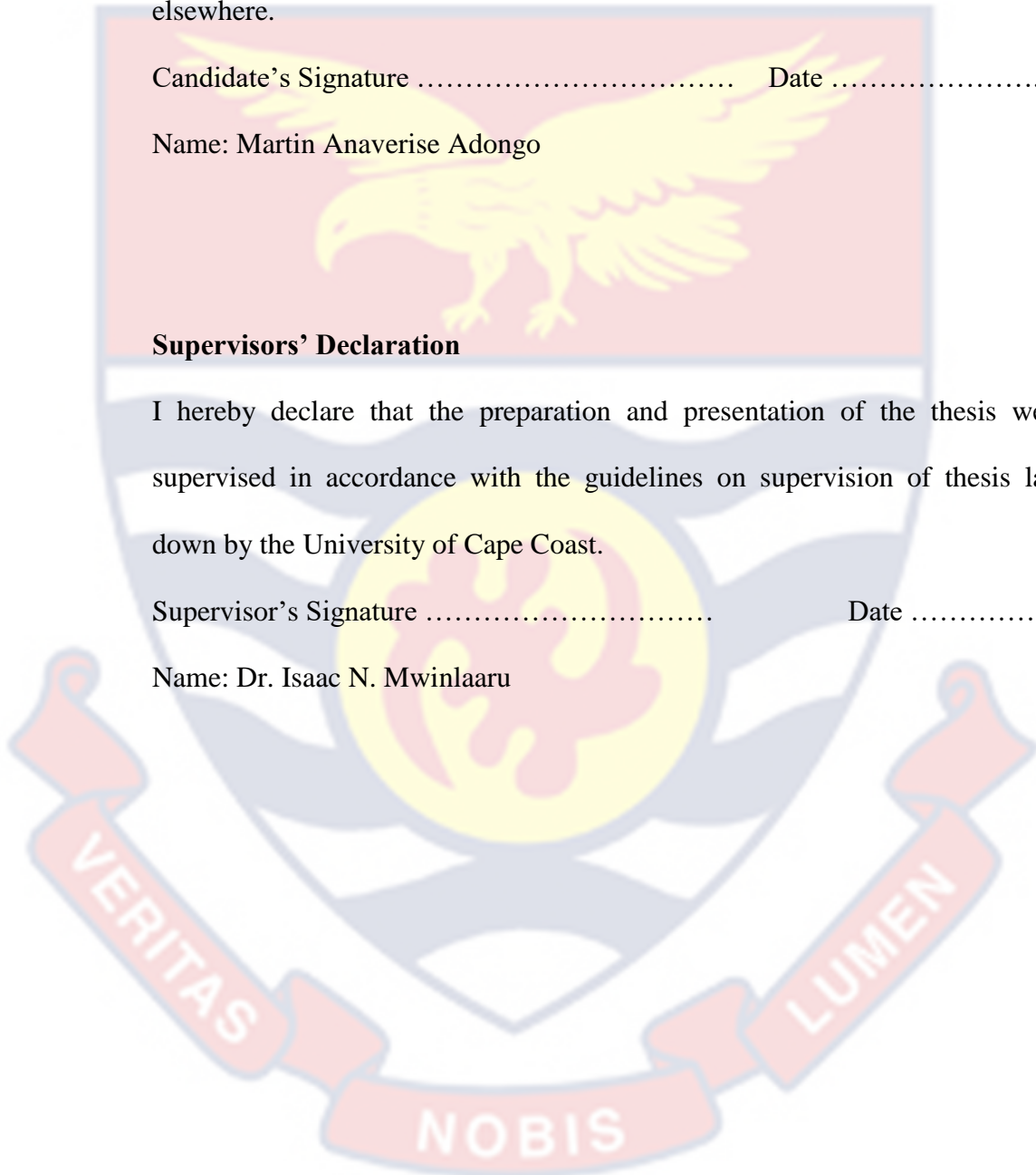
Name: Martin Anaverise Adongo

Supervisors' Declaration

I hereby declare that the preparation and presentation of the thesis were supervised in accordance with the guidelines on supervision of thesis laid down by the University of Cape Coast.

Supervisor's Signature Date

Name: Dr. Isaac N. Mwinlaaru



ABSTRACT

Learning to read and write seems to be the focal point of educating individuals and children. According to Vygotsky's (1978) Sociocultural Theory, children's learning begins at home and what takes place at school reflects children's home living and literacy environmental factors. This reason sparked the need to investigate the home literacy environment and its effects on the English reading outcome of grade 2 pupils such as the relationship between parental socio-economic status and pupils' reading achievement. Through purposive sampling, the research selected 112 grade 2 pupils and their respective parents to produce quantitative and qualitative information for the study. The study organised the analyses into contextual factors (parental education level, occupation, electricity, and television), home reading materials, and home literacy activities (parental teaching, reading to child, and singing, rhyming, telling stories, and visiting the library). The findings revealed that most grade 2 pupils lived in poor home literacy environments due to the low level of education of their parents and parental occupation. However, the findings show that high or middle level of parental education is a positive predictor of children reading outcome, as well as electricity presence in the home. Although a marginal majority of homes had reading materials, they did not have any positive significant effect on children reading competencies but the number of books available in the home did. In terms of the home literacy activities, the study revealed that only a few parents engaged their children in literacy activities. Also, the frequency of engaging the children in reading, parental teaching, and storytelling at home proved to be significant positive predictors of early reading competencies. The study has implication for pedagogy, policy making, and further research.

KEY WORDS

Academic literacy

Home living environment

Contextual factors

Literacy activities

Family possession

Home literacy environment



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DEDICATION

To my family



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CHAPTER ONE INTRODUCTION

Background to the Study

Language is not only a unique feature of human beings but it also plays an important role in human life. People use language as a tool to transfer knowledge and skills from their generations to the next. Language, serving as a communicative medium, allows people to express ideas, concepts as well as their moods, feelings and attitudes. For instance, there is the interactional function of language in which people are able to communicate and express their feelings, thus invoking friendly ties with, and gaining the cooperation of, other human beings (Yule, 1996). In the classroom, the use of language ensures success in teaching and learning (Rivers, 1968). Language is, therefore, a vital tool for human progress in every facet of life.

Language exists in two forms-the spoken and written. The dynamics involved in the acquisition process of each of these forms differ (Rivers, 1968). For example, spoken language largely consists of a naturally occurring process. On the other hand, as Rivers (1968) noted, the acquisition process of the written form of language is a complicated one. Thus, acquiring this written form requires a multifaceted approach regarding its acquisition process. Either the written or spoken aspect, language development in children needs a strong foundation and support.

There are four language skills, which children are taught and are required to master as they learn the English language. The Listening and speaking skills together with reading and writing skills are aspects of the English language that children are taught in school. These language skills are acquired mainly from direct instruction or learning (Rivers, 1968). The

mastery of these skills is not only a necessity but also indispensable if the need to develop the ability to read and write (literacy) is important.

Literacy is one of the main goals of every education system including that of the Ghanaian education curriculum (Anderson, Hiebert, Scott, & Wilkinson, 1985; Grabe, 2000; Akrofi, 2003). Because of its influence in acquiring knowledge and skills in other academic subject areas, the ability to read and write, particularly reading skills is considered one of the most important academic skills (Grabe, 2009; Stanovich, 1986). In other words, in education the overall performance of learners is largely dependent on their academic language proficiency level.

Since colonial times, English has played an important role in Ghana (Ahulu, 1995). For example, it is a language of the media, government and administration, commerce as well as the medium of instruction in the education system. English is the medium of instruction from Primary four, according to the English language syllabus. This, perhaps, implies that success in education at all levels largely depends on the learner's level of academic language proficiency, including the ability to read successfully.

It is for these and other reasons that English is a major subject of study in Ghanaian schools (Stoffelsma & De Jong, 2015). As they pointed out, the learning of the English language in basic schools in Ghana is aimed at developing in pupils all the basic language skills of listening, speaking, reading and writing. Consequently, learners' attainment of the appropriate proficiency in English helps them in their study of other subjects (e.g., science and social studies) as well as in the study of English as a subject at the higher levels (Ozowuba, 2018).

In general, writing and reading skills are needed for one to succeed in any academic work (Grabe, 2009; Stanovich, 1986; Ngorosho, 2010). Ozowuba (2018) founded that there is a significant relationship between English language proficiency and the academic achievement of students. He, therefore, concluded that mastery of the language is important for students overall academic performance. Thus, language proficiency in general, and reading literacy in particular, is the foundation of good academic learning outcome. In addition to its role in the acquisition of languages and literature, it is necessary in the study of other subject areas.

Despite this important role of language proficiency in academic performance, there is a host of factors that affect the effective teaching and learning of English as a second language in school, particularly the acquisition of the language skills by learners of the language (Akrofi, 2003; Ngwaru & Opoku-Amankwa, 2010). Like in any other education system, these impact negatively on the language proficiency level of children in Ghanaian schools.

There are factors related to the traditional school setting and classrooms (Heyneman, 2009) including lack of teaching and learning materials, (Akrofi, 2003; Heyneman, 2009), teacher selective or discriminating attitude towards pupils (Ngwaru & Opoku-Amankwa, 2010), teacher competence (Leherr, 2009) poor salaries of teachers (Akrofi, 2003; Heyneman, 2009) as well as sociocultural conditions (Grabe 2000; Ellis, 2000; Akrofi, 2003; Ngwar & Opoku-Amankwa, 2010; Opoku-Amankwa, 2009). Of these, problems related to the social context such as poor home-language environment tend to affect most language proficiency acquisition processes including the L2 reading development of children (Ellis, 2000; Grabe, 2009).

According to Snow et al. (2007, as cited in Grabe, 2009), the home is one of the most significant contexts that set the foundations for the development of emergent literacy in children. Thus, it is very crucial for learning to read and write. The development of these early literacy skills comes as a result of “the interaction between growing cognitive development and a supportive environment that encourages exploration and engagement.” (Snow et al., 2007; as cited in Grabe, 2009, p.156).

However, key to the creation of these early literacy skills among young children is the provision of adequate exposure to the target language. In a language-rich home environment, children experience not only adequate interaction with parents but they encounter a context full of interactive reading and reading materials, essential for L2 language proficiency achievement. A key characteristic of the home language environment, as (Geske & Ozola, 2008) pointed out, is family factors such as parental education, income, family size as well as general attitude to the L2 language learning. These include level of parental care and family stress. These are largely non-behavioural or non-linguistic factors of child language development but can have a considerable impact on proficiency development outcomes (Snow et al., 2007).

The importance of such a rich context for learning to acquire language proficiency ability, particularly reading literacy can be numerous but key among them is the development of the foundations of early literacy skills like L2 reading. The principal and most important thing achieved when children are exposed to a supportive environment is that, it promotes their oral language skills and phonological awareness development, their interest in print

as well as their letter and print knowledge (Hart & Riskey, 1995; Grabe & Stoller, 2011).

Clearly, the role of the home language environment in promoting the love for reading early among children is crucial. It is not clear whether, in the home, Ghanaian parents engage their children in various English literacy interactions and activities such as shared reading, library visits and storybook reading.

Because of some variations in the home literate environment children enter school with different levels of preparedness to benefit from the experience at school (Whitehurst & Lonigan, 1998). It is what accounts for a great difference ‘across different individual’s reading abilities’ in the classroom (Grabe, 2009, p. 152). It is maintained that the quality of the home environment with interactions by parents together with parents’ overall body of skills, habits and parenting style plays a key role in children’s literacy skills development (Ngorosho, 2010). This, including the noticeable difference in reading materials or otherwise together, determines the child’s achievement in language learning (Neuman, 2006). It would therefore be interesting to find out how and the extent to which parents provide opportunities to promote children’s - L2 English reading proficiency achievement by either modelling or directly interacting with their children at home.

Statement of the Problem

Although home environment (HE) is recognized as a key factor in the successful learning of English as a second language (L2), limitations in the home setting appear to hinder greatly L2 English education in the Ghanaian education system, such as poor home environment greatly affecting children’s L2 reading skills development (Ngwaru & Opoku-Amankwa, 2010). Scholars

have examined the influence of social factors in L2 English learning, with a focus on the HE and reading abilities outcomes (e.g., Han, 2007; Park, 2008; Hui et al, 2017). These studies, which looked at the home environment including socioeconomic status related factors, have paid little attention to uncovering the nature of interactions between parents and children and the effect of this interaction on children's reading proficiency achievement. Moreover, the subjects studied were limited to the Western countries.

In Africa, the study of social factors and their influence on L2 English reading and reading acquisition is a recent one and has attracted the attention of few scholars in the field of L2 English reading (e.g., Ngorosho, 2011; Grabe, 2000; Chansa-Kabali, 2014), especially in relation to L2 academic English reading proficiency achievement. For instance, Ngwaru and Opoku-Amankwa (2010) dealt with the impact of social factors outside the classroom on children's learning including literacy learning using interviews with parents and children while Ngorosho (2011) examined the influence of home environment on literacy skills, particularly phonological awareness and reading and writing ability in a rural area of Tanzania. Many of these studies dealt with a broader focus analysis of literacy learning in general as a result giving very little attention to the specific factor of interaction between parents and children aimed at promoting children's academic English reading proficiency achievement. The major concern of these studies of the home environment has been to examine the ways in which the home environment supports children's L2 (and in very few cases the L1) reading abilities development and to determine the relationship between the home literacy environment (HLE) and L2 reading abilities development.

These efforts are motivated by the assumption that the home is one of the most significant contexts that set the foundations for the development of emergent literacy in children and thus very crucial for learning to read effectively. The development of these early literacy skills or reading abilities comes as a result of “the interaction between growing cognitive development and a supportive environment that encourages exploration and engagement.” (Snow et al., 2007; as cited in Grabe, 2009, p.156).

In Ghana a number of studies aimed at uncovering the influence of the home environment in L2 reading and reading development have been undertaken (e.g., Owusu-Acheaw, 2014; Akrofi, 2003; Ngwaru & Opoku-Amankwa, 2010). These studies have attempted to examine the role of the home environment in literacy learning. These studies have paid little attention to uncovering the specific factor of parent-child interactions such as library visits and shared reading.

This current study employs Vygotsky’s (1978) Sociocultural Theory to explore the patterns of interactions put in place in the home between parents and children to help promote the academic L2 English reading proficiency achievement of the children. It is argued that, with a supportive home literacy environment, the development of early reading abilities becomes quite successful because it results from exploration and engagement (Snow et al., 2007). Also, previous studies examining the home environment and reading proficiency development have so far focused a great deal on southern Ghana such as Akrofi (2003). Thus, the study specifically seeks to describe the home literacy/language environment of young primary English language learners

and to see the extent to which homes in the Kassena-Nankana East Municipality of Ghana support learning to read English as a second language.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to examine the patterns of interactions especially via the L2 English between parents and children in the home aimed at promoting the L2 English reading proficiency achievement of Primary two English language learners in rural public schools in the Kassena-Nankana East Municipality in Ghana. The study describes the different home environments of these pupils identifying the types of home reading activities and access to reading materials as learning opportunities, including the extent to which these English literacy activities influence children's English reading proficiency outcome. Specifically, it investigates how the various types of homes contribute to the inequalities "across different individual's reading abilities" in the classroom (Grabe, 2000, p.152).

The home setting plays a dominant role in the successful development of reading abilities in children. As some researchers have noted, the home provides a variety of unique interactional activities as indicators of a favourable reading climate at home in order to provide a scaffold for children reading proficiency development, such as reading books to the child, child reading to parents, intentional teaching by parents and library visits. A major notion of the sociocultural theory is that children learn to speak or acquire language through social interaction necessary for language proficiency growth (Ngorosho, 2011; Chansa-Kabali 2014; Park, 2008; Akrofi, 2003; Kanyongo, Certo & Launcelot, 2006).

The study examines interactions between parents and their children in the home that support second language learners of English reading

development. To measure the home-based variables, data are analysed based on themes as they emerge from interviews, structured questionnaire containing home environment indices and demographics of parents and children. I also used home visits in order to obtain data about the actual home literacy setting particularly the day-to-day experiences with reading related activities and interaction with reading materials.

Objectives of the Study

1. To determine the relationship between parents' demographic features (i.e., education and occupation) and the nature of the home reading environment.
2. To determine the relative influence of reading materials at home environment on the L2 English reading proficiency achievement of Basic 2 pupils.
3. To describe the interactional strategies used by parents at home to promote their children's (L2) English reading proficiency achievement.

Research Questions

The following research questions guided the study:

1. What relationship exists between parental socio-economic status and reading competencies of grade 2 pupils in the Kassena-Nankana East Municipality?
2. How do available home reading materials impact the reading achievement of grade 2 school children in the Kassena-Nankana East Municipality?
3. What interactional strategies are used by parents to promote the L2 English reading proficiency achievement of grade 2 school children in the Kassena-Nankana East Municipality?

Hypotheses

The following alternative hypotheses were set to test the statistical significant effects of home environmental factors on grade 2 pupils' reading abilities:

H₁ There is a statistically significant influence of parental socio-economic status on grade 2 reading achievement.

H₁ There is a statistically significant effect of available reading materials at home on early reading competencies.

H₁ There is a statistically significant impact of home literacy activities on grade 2 pupils' reading achievement

Significance of the Study

The findings of this study would be important in the following ways: First, it is expected that this study will prove useful to L2 researchers (on social context of reading), thus making a significant contribution to the literature on home environment and L2 English reading proficiency achievement among school children the home literate environment. For instance, deepening understanding of the home environment of L2 English learners can pave way for further research. The field of social context of L2 English reading, particularly the home literacy environment, has witnessed very few studies within the African context, with most of the available studies undertaken in the developed societies. Thus, by filling a gap where research possibilities have been overlooked in the literature up to date, this study hopes to expand researchers' understanding with useful insights into L2 English learners reading abilities, with focus on the role of the home environment.

Second, the study will also prove worthwhile in terms of pedagogy. The findings have implications for teachers; a proper understanding of students' reading problems in the target language classroom requires

knowledge of their language experiences at home. Every L2 student has a prior history that includes various sociocultural influences from L2 home background experiences. Finding out children's level of motivation, interest and, especially, exposure to the L2 at home is part of the teacher's core mandate in language teaching and learning.

Third, the study can motivate further research to widen the scope of investigations in the area of the home factor in L2 English reading and reading development, an area largely considered as an addendum in the field (Ngororsho, 2010).

Fourth, and theoretically, the study will provide some insights into descriptive analyses on the manner and extent to which the Ghanaian parent of primary two L2 English children support these learners' efforts and propel their intellectual knowledge and literacy skills development, providing the needed scaffolding for the learner; the study adopts a most applied social theory in L2 learning/acquisition. Even debates on the use of strategies such as discourse, modelling, collaborative learning and scaffolding used to do so and facilitate intentional learning under help and the all-important social interaction could be illuminated (Lantolf & Thorne, 2007).

Finally, the findings of the study will, in many significant ways, help facilitate decision making and policy formulation in an informed and principled manner, especially in L2 English countries such as Ghana. If such considerations as the idea that good policies are a consequence of the quality of implications revealed from various studies, new insights from this study will be quite essential and useful. Therefore, an evidence-based understanding of the actual nature of the home language environment of learners, especially

how the home mediates our educational outcomes can help policy makers including researchers in our society to develop programmes and policies capable of reducing educational inequality among learners, which tend to result from differences in learners' home backgrounds.

Delimitations of the Study

A number of issues are considered in this study in order to keep in check the focus as well as the scope of the study. These factors include mainly the educational level of the children involved in the study and the major focus of the study. First of all, even though the study explores the general home activities related to children's reading development, it does not involve other grade levels, apart from primary two children sampled from the Kassena-Nankanna East Municipality where the study takes place. The purpose is to enable an in-depth description of the home literacy environment of the child participant as well as answer the research questions. Another motivation for this choice of level lies in the need to reach only learners who are at the early stage of learning to read where in home impact on language acquisition of children is most felt (Grabe, 2009).

Again, the study limited its focus to only three key specific factors given its limited time frame; there is the need to collect appropriate data to address the research objectives. First, the study focuses mainly on exploring the nature of interactions between parents and their children who were attending public primary schools in the Kassena-Nankana Municipality that support children's L2 English reading proficiency development. Notably, emphasis is on the number of interactions provided for engaging in various reading activities. As such, it aims at finding out whether children experience adequate exposure to the L2 reading at home through literacy activities such as

shared reading, visits to the library, watching literacy related TV programs, playing games, and intentional teaching. The second area is access to children's reading materials in the home. Finally, it concerns the influence of parental socio-economic status on the L2 reading proficiency achievement of grade 2 pupils. The study therefore does not examine income level of parents, nor the school setting, nor family size as well as other specific areas also very key in social context of L2 reading development.

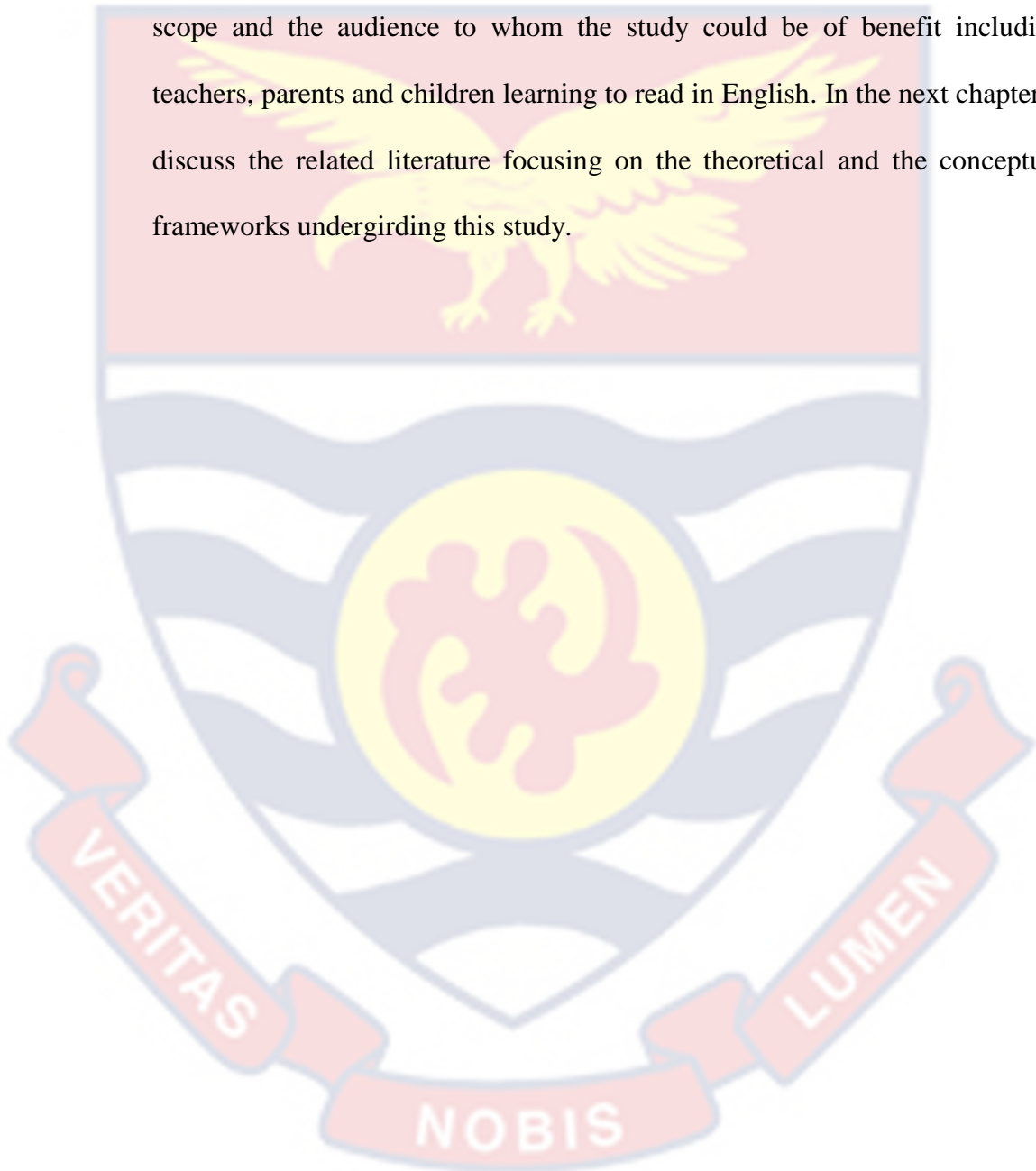
Organization of the Thesis

The thesis is structured into five chapters. Chapter One is made up of the background to the study, the research problem, research questions, research objectives, the purpose of the study, significance of the study, delimitations of the study, and the structure of the thesis. Chapter Two presents the theoretical framework that underpins the study in addition to reviews of studies related to the present study. Chapter Three explains the research methodology I employed in data collection and the research methods. Chapter Four presents the analysis of results and some discussion. Specifically, this presents the patterns of interactions, pointing out the home reading related activities and reading proficiency levels of children. The views of parents and children are analysed to reveal the relations between home language environment and reading abilities outcome which the researcher set out to investigate. In Chapter Five, conclusions and recommendations for further studies and summary for each of the research questions are presented.

Chapter Summary

Chapter One placed this study under its proper context of social context of L2 English reading development. That is, it looked at the role of the home setting in the reading skill development of second language learners of

English in Ghana. It also discussed the aim of the study which examined the various strategies parents used at home to promote children's reading proficiency development and their effects on the children's reading abilities outcome. The chapter further threw light on the significance of the study, its scope and the audience to whom the study could be of benefit including teachers, parents and children learning to read in English. In the next chapter, I discuss the related literature focusing on the theoretical and the conceptual frameworks undergirding this study.



CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Introduction

This chapter reviews empirical literature related to the study. Focusing on Vygotsky's (1978) Sociocultural Theory, it describes the complex nature of parent-child interaction at home. It also provides the theoretical concepts guiding the study and other key notions. Finally, the chapter reviews some empirical literature on the home environment and children's reading proficiency achievement and shows why the objectives of the current study are relevant.

Theoretical Framework

The study employs Vygotsky (1978) sociocultural theory as its theoretical framework. As a key or deep-rooted notion of the sociocultural theory, "children's learning begins long before they attend school. Any learning a child encounters in school always has a previous history" (Vygotsky, 1978, p.84). This is particularly so concerning learning through interaction within the family. To this theory, the process of learning by humans is basically social and their intelligence finds its source in human society or in culture. To the Vygotskians, social interaction is crucial for effective cognitive growth and this is regarded as a major thematic consideration (Han, 2007). To Vygotsky, speech is used primarily for communication and it first develops naturally through a social process, as indicated earlier.

By imitating these more knowledgeable persons especially parents and directed on the right way to do things, the child eventually acquires a whole lot of skills (Vygotsky, 1978, p.84). Moreover, by the act of both simply

posing questions and answering them, the child acquires knowledge of various forms.

As Han (2007) explained, knowledge acquisition and the process of developing are both ways that are related very early in a child's life. Vygotsky asserted that the learning of everything occurs at two levels. The first is learning through interaction with others before what is learned is integrated into the individual's mental structure. More emphasis is placed on interaction that occurs between people "inter-psychological" than on what manifests on the individual level "intra-psychological."

A key component regarding the sociocultural theory of learning is the zone of proximal development (ZPD). That is, the level of potential development where the child is ready mentally to learn except that he or she needs some help in problem solving through social interaction to be able to develop the knowledge fully. As said earlier, the foundation of intellectual growth is social interactions, within the family for instance, and where productive support in terms of interaction can be tailored is the concern of this ZPD.

Children go through this help and social interaction either, for instance, with assistance from adults or by collaborating with those referred to as the more knowledgeable individuals (Vygotsky 1978, p.86). That is to say, as Lantolf and Poehner (2008) contend, learners are mentally prepared; however, to develop the zone of proximal development, these students need some assistance and the opportunity to interact with others, which is the basis of intellectual growth. To support a learner's efforts and propel his or her intellectual knowledge and skills development, more experienced peers and

teachers, for example, provide the needed scaffolding for the learner. Strategies such as discourse, modelling, collaborative learning and scaffolding are used to do so and facilitate intentional learning (Lantolf & Thorne, 2007). This is key to intellectual growth as has been indicated.

In this study, I investigate the home factor, especially the role the home environment plays as scaffolding provider that promotes reading proficiency achievement among children, with particular focus on how parents interact with their children in primary two at home.

Vygotsky's theory, therefore, provides a strong motivation for conducting this study, positioning me to assume how involvement in some English literacy interactions in the home environment centred on various home reading activities was needed between parents and their children to help these children excel as proficient readers, which might not be common among Ghanaian parents. This goal may not be far-fetched as according to Lantolf and Thorne (2007), SCT of learning is recognised to be the most known SCT that has made greater achievement than any other SCT in the field of L2 learning or acquisition. They further explained that it is, in fact, the only social theory of L2 learning/acquisition fully accepted with the status of a second language theory of learning.

Assumptions of Sociocultural Theory on Interaction and Learning

The sociocultural theory of learning as propounded by Vygotsky (1978) is characterized by a number of key assumptions. They include the zone of proximal development, mediation, scaffolding, as well as what is termed the redefinition of cognition as basically social. As one central assumption of the theory, social interaction is considered the basis of knowledge acquisition. This is a major assumption. Assisted by people,

especially relating with adults and the more capable peers, children grow intellectually through these interactions (Vygotsky, 1978). As a key tenet, the assumption is that people develop socially, cognitively and physically chiefly through complex interrelations among them within their social world. In the families is a process of interaction which is found in the daily routine of life activities alongside its ideological system depicted in the beliefs (Wozniak, 1993). Notably, Vygotsky (1978) posits that the acquisition of knowledge is deeply rooted in these social interactions. In other words, the process of knowledge attainment is basically a social one.

It is essential for cognitive development. The notion of interaction, which is considered an important strategy in ensuring the provision of comprehensive input to the learner, is critical to a learner's mental growth and effective development (Clark & Clark, 2008). The SCT argues that although human neurobiology is important for higher order mental growth development processes, interaction within social and material environments accounts for the most important forms of human intellectual growth (Vygotsky, 1994).

However, the potential for this growth according to Vygotsky, that is, the development of cognition, is limited to what is referred to as the ZPD, as I pointed out earlier.

According to Vygotsky (1978, p.86), ZPD refers to the difference between the real level of development attained which is determined through what the child can do independently or without assistance and the level of potential development determined by solving problems with assistance of adults or by collaborating with the more knowledgeable individuals. It is the zone the child is ready mentally as it is the level of potential development

except that he or she needs some help in problem solving through social interaction to be able to develop fully.

Children go through this help and social interaction with adult assistance or by collaborating with peers more advance or more capable (Vygotsky, 1978). With help from adults, initially partially mastered skills are later perfected by the child ((Vygotsky, 1978). It is this help or assistance that guides learners to obtain better performance than what they could have obtained without help. According to Lantolf and Poehner (2008), this ZPD is limited to child development.

This growth embedded in a successful literacy acquisition or intellectual growth is limited to this zone. It is where the intellectual ability of the child can be fully realized (Vygostky, 1978). That means the learner is ready cognitively and only needs some support to interact with others to that effect.

Strategies that promote cognitive growth and skill development in learners and encourage intentional learning can be scaffolding, modelling, discourse and collaborative learning.

Scaffolding and modelling are two key strategies parents can use to support their children to acquire English literacy. Thus, parents' own reading attitude and deliberate involvement in various home reading activities are important in facilitating intentional learning among young learners/children.

What it means is that what the learner is capable of becoming then becomes the actual next level of development following the learner's interaction with other individuals and resultant expansion of complex skills and knowledge. This implies the significant role of collaborative work in

groups and in pairs. More importantly, this input from others is crucial because it helps create varied and meaningful opportunities important for second language learning thus promoting effective learning. Specifically, peer-peer as well as parent-child interactions are a good factor that enhances successful or effective learning of the language.

For example, research points out that, as Vygotsky's most important finding, collaborative learning with other individuals is a key since it both determines or precedes and shapes development (Lantolf & Thorne, 2007). It is based on these assumptions that this study seeks to explore the nature of support parents provide English language learners by looking at how interactions are enacted as a form of the important concept of parent-child interaction central to this work.

The study investigates the unique role of parents who provide scaffolding to aid literacy building among their children; it focuses mainly on the interactional strategies employed by parents at home and their effect on the children's English literacy learning.

Providing, therefore, scaffolds as well as monitoring the child current knowledge and skill level for him to extend it beyond the current actual level of development and to arrive at the next higher competence stage as far as this adult assistance in the ZPD is concerned is fundamental (Wood, Bruner & Ross, 1976). The term scaffolding refers to the situation in which a more knowledgeable person provides assistance for the less knowledgeable such as that between the adult and the child or an expert and a novice kind of help performance. That is, an expert-novice or adult and a child supported activity. As its major aim, scaffolding usually focuses on completing the given task or

activity rather than contributing to the child's development; this task is often done through self-regulation (Lantolf & Thorne, 2007). Scaffolding emphasizes the quantity of task the novice receives from the expert or from the more capable person instead of quality—a key characteristic of the ZPD.

And key to scaffolding is the idea that it is the amount of the assistance the more knowledgeable person provides to the child that matters, not the quality in interaction or mediation processes enacted as noted by Lantolf, Thorne and Poehner (2015).

However, as the child gains more knowledge, this assistance and any direct engagement from the adult gradually gets reduced. Therefore, in this study the focus is on the extent and how parents model parental reading habits and interact with their younger children at home by directly engaging in some forms of parent-child literacy related activities, particularly reading of story book, library visits, reciting rhymes and poems and singing songs as important scaffolds.

Moreover, the sociocultural theory is deep rooted in the notion that a child begins learning long before coming to the school setting to experience formal learning; before then, their learning had already begun. And that there is always a previous history to any learning that a child experiences in the school setting (Vygotsky, 1978, p. 84). This is particularly so concerning learning through interaction within the family. Importantly, to the sociocultural theory of human learning, learning is basically a social process. What is more, it also posits strongly that human intelligence finds its source in culture or society.

According to Vygotsky's sociocultural theory of human learning, learning is a social process and the origins of human intelligence are in society or culture.

In this regard, he further discovered that the child begins learning long before coming to the school setting to experience formal learning and that there is always a previous history to any learning that a child experiences in the school setting. Thus, it is maintained that parent-child interaction is critical for child learning. And it involves a way of language learning using tools or artefacts such as literacy, language, concepts, as well as technologies (Vygotsky, 1978). These are ways in which parents intentionally provide the needed scaffolds to promote their children's reading and language proficiency achievement--It is shown that when efforts are intentionally directed to sensitize interactions towards the emergent needs of learners, development may be guided optimally (Lantolf, Thorne & Poehner, 2015). Thus, SCT emphasizes some goal directed and intentional, meaningful activity which is needed to achieve this optimization and to intentionally provoke second language development, confirming how imperative it is for parents to involve in their children's efforts in learning the L2 English, especially learning to read properly. Parent-child interaction at home is a major means of promoting children's English (L2) proficiency achievement.

This study examines how the daily life routines around literacy learning in the families are constructed to provide ample opportunities for children to learn to read English. We therefore ask: how do parents interact with their children at home to assist them acquire literacy successfully? This theory will, therefore, be an appropriate guide as to what aspect of the social

process should be the focus of the study; the major thematic line of the SCT remains clear--in terms of intellectual development, social interaction performs a most critical part. And to this end also critical for the proper foregrounding of the theoretical context of the topic should be the notion of mediation.

Mediation

Mediation which concerns basically how the mind of human beings does not operate independently is critical to sociocultural theory. That is, the mind of human beings is mediated. The term mediation also means the act of representing tools the adoption and use of which enable children to solve problems and achieve the needed outcome (Vygotsky, 1978). Mediation simply means the use of tools in which language is regarded the most important of them all.

There is the complex interaction between the individual involving what is termed the socio-cultural context and mediational tools (Lantolf & Thorne, 2007).

Studying Vygotsky and his writing closely, two main kinds of mediation are identified (Van, Compernelle & Williams, 2013). There is the psychological tool, as one form of mediation, and human mediation. The psychological tool as one form of mediation involves knowledge construction using culturally created artefacts. It is an important part of our human cognitive functioning. These psychological tools are artefacts that human cultures produce, keep modifying them as time passes and are succeeded by the younger generations. Culturally constructed tools help people to have an indirect relationship not only with them but also with the world; according to the SCT, they don't act directly on the physical world but indirectly. Humans

make use of tools—symbolic tools or signs. Examples of symbolic tools include numbers, art, music, arithmetic systems and language which is the greatest symbol tool of them. A plan drawn, for instance, on a piece of paper for a building can be an example of a sign that mediates both the building process and the physical building in the physical world. The computer is an example of the physical tools and both the symbolic and physical tools are referred to as artefacts (Lantolf & Thorne, 2007). The second type of mediation is human mediation. Vygostkians regard cognition as basically social. Human mental activities are organized through social relationships (Lantolf, 2006). And this means developing cognition, an individual must interact with others—the basis of mental growth; it doesn't result directly from activities carried out by people but from interactions. Learning is social according to Vygotskians who emphasise how the basis of development is actually the environment. Thus, there is the psychological tools and the human (social) tools as the two meditational tools, whereby the human mediation helps us to internalise the psychological tools such as music and language.

And, as said earlier, language as the most powerful cultural artefact in humans, as recognized, is an integral part of mediating their link not only to the world in which they exist as humans, but also to one another and even to each other (Lantolf & Thorne, 2007). Language is a meditational tool, an intellectual tool but constructed socially. In fact, language, as an important meditational tool, is a meditational tool that people use when participating in an array of social activities (Toohey, 2000). Notably, it is recognized that the individual's development is always mediated by others (Lantolf, 2007).

According to Lantolf and Thorne (2007), regulation is an example of mediation in addition to mediation through symbolic artefacts. They identify three different kinds of regulation. In stage one, the use of objects by children to think is a common characteristic and is a way of controlling them while the second stage called other regulation involves parents, peers, siblings and educators providing both implicit and explicit mediation. Technically, this is called scaffolding with different kinds of assistance. The third stage, self-regulation as called, is the ability to perform activities using little or no external assistance. Internalization makes the achievement of self-regulation possible. It involves taking in knowledge from the social context thus covering a once external support to assistance or a useful resource accessible to the individual internally. However, achieving proficiency or self-regulation is important but it is never a stable trait.

Altogether, sociocultural theory maintains that social mediation is a major means of language learning. Social mediated activities are thus important in L2 learning. That is why exposure to input is crucial in second language learning, for in SCT every form of learning requires social interaction enacted in the social aspect of the world. Participating in activities using cultural tools can be an important way to ensure learning occurs. In achieving this, apart from interactions among people, the use of artefacts created by other people such as written texts is crucial. In addition, vicarious experiences and participation that enable children to observe the linguistic behaviour of others as well as trying to imitate it by private speech has to be ensured (Ohta, 2001).

The SCT will be useful as it will help the researcher understand, classify and measure the early reading abilities of the young Grade 2 pupils. That means, it serves as a pedagogical tool in the study to help understand the developing reading abilities of these pupils given their early level of skills development using the theory as a guide (Lantolf, Thorne & Poehner, 2015). The use of this theory will also help greatly as the SCT can thus be utilized in terms of methodology. It can also be applied in terms of improving processes of education including that of the environments (Lantolf & Poehner, 2011). Similarly, the socio-cultural perspective is applied both as a descriptive tool and as a tool for analysis in the study and thus will be appropriate in this research in describing the state of the home environments of the families of primary 2 children as subjects in the study.

Critique of Sociocultural Theory

SCT is used as a descriptive and analytical research framework, making it appropriate for describing the state of the homes of the families of the primary 2 pupils chosen as study subjects. Since it basically maintains that social interaction as well as parent-child interaction is critical for child learning, it will guide the focus of the study and the outcome: the extent to which Parents model good parental reading habits and interact with their children at home by directly engaging in book reading, library visits, rhymes recitals and singing songs as key L2 English literacy activities, which involves a way of language learning using tools or artefacts such as literacy, language, concepts, as well as technologies (Vygotsky, 1978).

Although this framework is appropriate in shaping the overall direction and outcome of the study, several criticisms have been levelled against it.

In the first instance, the zone of proximal development (ZPD) is vague. For this reason, in practice, applying the ZPD place is not without problems. For example, its effective application in the learning classroom remains unknown; that is, Vygotsky failed to provide any clue about its application in the classroom (Lantolf & Poehner, 2008).

There is also little description of the process involved in language development. Again, it is not easy to study the cultural-historical contexts. Although the zone of proximal development is a key component of Vygotsky's theory, some researchers consider this ZPD description of the process of learning by Vygotsky quite restricted, making the learner's role to be too passive and too dependent on the more knowledgeable other or the adult (Lambert & Clyde, 2000). This explanation, however, seems indefensible since Vygotsky (1978) points out that in the ZPD, the adult's role is limited to shaping and constructing the social environment of the learners; as a result, the adult here cannot directly affect the child's cognitive development.

Home Environment

There are many different definitions provided and studies undertaken on the home environment as a critical agent of language development. Peeters et al. (2009) describes home environment as the home literacy materials and experiences which children are exposed to such as parental literacy activities, reading of books opportunities, child verbal interaction and the reading habits of parents. It is a setting which is noted to have an important role in laying the ground work. By frequently reading as parents themselves, their children will be passionate about reading themselves and develop positive attitudes towards reading; they will be exposed to lots of reading materials, a successful second language (L2) learning environment index (Barnett & Casper, 2001). For

example, it is one of the settings keys to learning. Those parents reading frequently themselves will more like provide children adequate print exposure in the early home environment. They will ensure children are introduced to libraries in the larger community early in life, carrying them to these facilities, among others ways. Parental reading attitude as a key feature of the home literate setting not only shows the level of children's exposure to the second language being acquired; it also shows the level of parents' involvement by performing their roles indirectly such as modelling good literacy behaviours important for L2 learning success. While insisting on this, Saracho (1997) notes that parental literacy level as well as print exposure represents an important component of children's early reading home climate that parents usually provide .and are thus critical for learning to read and write properly.

Ngorosho (2010) describes home environment as a setting made up of features of both the living and literacy environments. Specifically, these are the socioeconomic status of the family and book presence within the home literate environment respectively. Wachs (2003) concurs with this explanation; however, he sees the home living environment component to be characterised by physical objects as key descriptors for instance housing variables and by socioeconomic status like parental education level, income and occupation categories. Even some evidence does exist regarding the impact of socioeconomic position on L2 achievement (Ellis, 2003). According to Ellis, social influence in L2 learning has to do mostly with learners' L2 proficiency. The socioeconomic status of parents, as this example shows, has been recognised as key indicator of a favourable early literate home and thus what is also examined in this study. That is, socioeconomic class (defined as

income, education level and occupation) that affect the creation of different home environments and their varied life experiences which can show parental actual level of providing unique opportunities that help promote children's reading proficiency achievement by either modelling or directly interacting with their children at home.

Generally, it is asserted that this home literacy environment component as a major factor in terms of participation in literacy-related activities is limited to both the availability of print material and the frequency of reading (De jong & Leseman, 1998). In this way, although this definition concurs with that of Peeters, they limit the home experience component of the home environment which according to Prefers definition comprises various aspects only to frequency of undertaking home reading practices. What this means is that home literacy environment as a concept refers only to print availability within the home context and the extent to which reading is experienced. Crook (1997) contends that parental reading attitude or behaviour, a necessary factor in successful reading acquisition, is a primary feature of the home environment. He avers that parental reading attitude actually plays a more dominant role in high school achievement than does participation in learning activities. This means parental reading attitude or behaviour as a factor here cannot be underestimated, considering its role in L2 reading success. Thus, being one key home variable, parental reading attitude is noted for scaffolding effectively reading development among L2 learners. It thus plays a critical role in this regard. This suggests that learning to become a good reader or acquire the L2 English in general would not benefit greatly learners within the home

without it in their home learning experience, an aspect to be examined in a principled and empirical manner in this work.

Home literacy activities are divided into two main categories by Senechal and LeFevre (2002). They are formal and informal literacy activities.

Of the two, those considered formal are the activities whereby the parent-child interaction centres on print such as a child reading a book to the parent or the more knowledgeable person who then provides assistance on words and phrases that may be unfamiliar. The other category of activities in which print meaning is the major preoccupation is called informal activities. They state that such activities like parent-child reading activities promote reading comprehension and vocabulary knowledge enrichment,

The reading of bedtime stories is an example of the informal literacy activity category commonly enacted among parents and their children learning the L2 English in which the story meaning and illustrations as indicated above is the centre of attention. Both the formal and informal activities in this regard constitute home experience component in home literacy setting as Peeters et al. (2009) identified. They identify essential experiences in the home to be as follows: easy access to children's reading books, varied adult print within the home literacy context, namely newspapers, books children fiction, parents reading with the child often; children exposed to adults reading on a regular basis as well as enough space provided to encourage young learners to read just for the sake of reading eventually, There must also be what is referred to as the provision of guidance and encouragement for reading. For Sénéchal (2011), these activities are the touchstone of increased vocabulary knowledge of children including their early comprehension skills development. This is so

argued partly because learners who come from homes with poor parental involvement in the child second language education shows an indication of the problem of negative attitudes toward the English language, bringing about poor target language exposure and poor language proficiency achievement thereof. This means that ensuring effective reading proficiency achievement including writing skills among children requires naturally occurring day to day home reading activities/ English literacy interactions or activities purposely initiated/enacted. These literacy interactions in the home around second language learning usually referred to as parent-child interactions is the main focus of this study.

Parent-Child Interaction

Parent-child interaction (PCI) refers to a way of language learning using tools or artefacts such as literacy, language, concepts, as well as technologies (Vygotsky, 1978). Using tools this way is referred to as Mediation, otherwise meaning using tools in learning language, where language is regarded as the most important of them all. According to Swain and Deters (2007), there is the complex interaction between the individual involving what is termed mediational tools and the social and cultural setting (Swain & Deters, 2007). It has been asserted that children learn to speak from adults by imitating these more capable individuals about the proper ways of conduct, acting adults, and directed on ways of acting, which is instrumental in helping children's acquisition of a whole lot of skills (Vygotsky, 1978, p. 84) and that the learning of everything occurs on two levels. Learning first occurs in an interaction enacted with others which is crucial before it is internalised, intrapersonal but more emphasis is placed on interaction that

occurs between people inter-psychological than on that which manifests on the individual level intra-psychological.

Also, interactions between parents and their children at home aimed at promoting successful L2 literacy acquisition are in categories. According to Adams (1990), there are the formal activities and those literacy activities classified as informal. The first is learning through interaction with others before it is integrated into the individual's mental structure. This formal category belong to the literacy activities whereby the parent-child interaction centres on print such as a child reading a book to the parent or a more knowledgeable person who then provides assistance on words and phrases that may be unfamiliar. Also, adults teaching reading or engage in activities aimed to promote print-related skills in the home including the tuition on the alphabet, English sounds including children learning to scribble their own names are related to formal literacy interactions. These formal literacy interactions are relevant for providing code-based literacy activities like decoding competence, especially that of emergent literacy skills.

The other activities in which to convey the meaning of print is the aim are called informal literacy activities. According to Adams, among these activities are daily shared activities such as directing children's attention to print including street names and advertisements in the environment. Sénéchal and LeFevre (2002) concur with Adams' attempts at differentiating between formal literacy related activities and informal activities of interaction within the home environment but point out that the separation between the two is only not clear-cut but also that the balancing of the two may not be permanent. An example can be a parent adjusting how often he or she teaches the young

child words and names of letters because the child has made some progress. This may demand scaling up support when progress is slower than expected.

Again, in the provision of support for English language learning at home, there are a number of facets that are recognized. In this regard, De Jong and Leseman (1998) identified key four facets. First, homes have to provide opportunities for interactions with English literacy through whatever home reading activities or form. This must be done to help promote children's English (L2) proficiency achievement. An example is children observing parents reading and writing, having the opportunity to experience book reading and interacting with varied and appropriate print, digital literacy and lots of technology familiarity as part of daily early literacy life (Heath, 1983). This is fundamental; these opportunities for literacy interactions are emphasized because they create familiarity with literacy and exposure to the target language.

Consequently, these opportunities help promote positive attitude to reading. This study focused on how and how often provide these opportunities as key features of a language-rich environment full of interactive reading and reading materials to promote children's English reading ability development is a major concern. In terms of measures of the ability to provide these opportunities for participation in various interactions in relation to the written language, assessment usually is based on frequency of engagement and exposure to home reading activities and other exposure measures (Heath, 1983).

Second, instruction quality must be provided. If children learning to acquire English skills must benefit scaffolding or guidance that adults or the

more knowledgeable persons make available, parental teaching or instruction is indispensable (also see Heath, 1983). Third, there should be co-operation for effective reading development to occur. This means the existence of some consensus and co-operation between the participating persons during interactions such as joint-book reading regarding what must be achieved in the activity is important. Four, Literacy interactions should ensure that there is socio-emotional quality in addition to the three facets above. This refers to the affective component of the socio-emotional bond that the participants in the interactions construct together. Without the affective element, to Bus, Van Ijzendoorn and Pellegrini (1995) a weak bond among participants produces ineffective interactions with the resultant effect of fewer times of engagement in the interactions. Such interactions where this emotional component lacks among the participants also can result in some poor literacy interactions in the home. This has the danger of creating among learners' negative attitudes instead of positive ones towards the target language and the love for the reading craze in particular.

These facets are critical because if parents in Ghana provide them in the course of parent-child interaction (PCI) provision, they (the facets) become important will go a long way in promoting effective L2 proficiency acquisition by young English language learners.

The question remains, however, on to what extent Ghanaian parent's factor the facets above into the provision of PCI? There is the need for more empirical data to answer this important question. In an attempt to answer this question empirically, this study adopts Vygotsky (1978) Socio-cultural theory to investigate the home environment influence in the reading ability

achievement of children by critically examining specifically how and to what extent unique opportunities in the form of parent-child reading activities at home to promote the reading proficiency achievement of primary two pupils in the Kassena-Nankana Municipality in Ghana by either modelling or directly interacting with their children at home, particularly in the L2 English.

The Effects of Home Language on the Reading Competence of L2 English Learners

A number of studies have been undertaken with inconsistent results of home language impact on young children's language and literacy development (Li & Koda, 2011; Kalia & Reese, 2009; Duursma, Romero-Contreras, Szuber, Proctor, Snow, August & Calderon (2007). For example, Li and Koda (2011) examined the impact of home language and literacy support on the literacy skills development of children, focusing on decoding ability, level of vocabulary and phonological awareness not only in first language Chinese but also in English. They found that exposure to Chinese at home was related to early literacy growth of children in Chinese especially oral vocabulary knowledge of the children. Another key finding was that learning and interacting with children at home in Chinese as a native language did not negatively affect the children's acquisition of English literacy skills. This addressed an aspect my concern in this study regarding whether literacy support such as parental interactional activities around book reading but in the L2 English used by parents influenced literacy skill achievement of the children studied. This particular research outcome seems to suggest that interactions or literacy practices in the L1 at home could have considerable influence in the L2 development (Grabe, 2000).

Kalia and Reese (2009) looked into how the home environment affected Indian children's oral language and literacy development in English with a similar focus in mind. The study showed that English used as language or medium of interaction between parents and children most often within home context predicted children's English vocabulary acquisition, as a language of their schooling. The study also confirmed Li and Koda (2011) finding that home support facilitated Chinese children's English acquisition as it enhanced their L1 acquisition. Duursma, et al. (2007) conducted interviews on demographics, socioeconomic backgrounds, home language exposure and examined reports of parents concerning the kind of language used at home to interact with children including the amount of use of the home language as well as the impact of some literacy activities on the vocabulary skills of the fifth graders taking into consideration English and their L1, The finding showed how learners who experienced some exposure to English and also made more use of English with their mothers scored higher marks in English vocabulary. The finding also suggested that English as home language used by parents did not prove important in achieving proficiency in English language but in order to achieve Spanish proficiency of children; factors such as instruction in the school as well as social support at home were key requirements. Similar to August et al. (2007), my study focused on parent-child joint reading and how it affected the reading proficiency of Grade 2 pupils. This way, similar to Anna et al., how often children are exposed to the L2, here English, in the children's homes, was important but not exposure to the L1. For an effective L2 reading skills development process, the amount of

exposure to the L2 is a crucial element that cannot be undervalued in the development of L2 reading skills (Grabe, 2000; Li & Koda, 2011).

De Jong and Leseman (1998) examined the connection between home literacy and literacy development in a longitudinal study. Using observation to study parental interaction around reading activities and the extent of interactions in various reading related activities computed using frequencies and means, the study found that the linguistic background of the home determined the literacy achievement of school learners. As part of the findings, parental socioeconomic position specifically education, occupation including ethnic origin were found strong predictors of the literacy practices of the parents. Thus, it appears to suggest that parental education is an important ingredient especially home language and how it is used to express the various needs of the family. The study then concluded that home literacy is greatly dependent on ethnic, cultural and parental socioeconomic background. Parental educational class can be deemed important as it is applied as a major guiding tool for grouping the study subjects.

So far in the review in this subsection, two key issues have emerged. In the first place, parents preferred ways of using the home language determines the literacy skills and early language development of children. There is copious evidence to suggest the critical role of language exposure in the home on the reading or early language development children. In this regard, home literacy is considered key to L2 English acquisition and that of L2 literacy ((De Jong & Leseman, 1998; Kalia & Reese, 2009; Grabe, 2000; Li & Koda, 2011). Second, there are conflicting findings concerning the effect of the home language be it the L2 or the L1 in which there is the provision of literacy

related activities for the bilingual learners. Using L1 as home language could influence literacy or language development. Importantly, the use of home language indeed is considered a major facet of literacy support in the home of L2 English learners. Parents' literacy practices are a major factor that shapes the opportunities for young children's literacy learning. Even the linguistic backgrounds of parents themselves may influence the nature of the opportunities offered the child struggling to become better literate or readers in their L2 English.

The Concept of Reading

Although the term reading, according to some scholars (Grabe & Stoller, 2011; Grabe, 2009), defies one most acceptable definition due to its (reading) nebulous nature and the fact that the reading process itself involves several knowledge bases, processes and skills, in the literature scholars have proposed some definitions.

Reading in one sense means "a complex ability to extract, or build, meaning from a text" (Grabe, 2009, p.8). While dismissing this definition as not quite informative, he maintains that the most agreed way in which researchers throw light on this definition is identifying the major reading skills and abilities important for developing efficient reading comprehension. Dadzie (2008) concurs with this general definition about reading being one's understanding of words in for instance a document and using the information to enhance life. Here it means that reading is defined in terms of the act of extracting meaning from text, such as identifying symbols and the meaning with which they are associated. To Koda (2007), in this way, reading requires some identification and comprehension by which means people acquire not only knowledge but also pleasure, leisure, relaxation and information, as the

main purpose for constructing meaning from text, but which must be done by engaging with information encoded visually.

In fact, to the extent reading entails extracting meaning from texts and deriving the meaning of words written down in documents and using the information to propel one's personal growth and development, English language learners capable of processing the necessary reading materials as required in school read being able to do so is the most important foundation builder. Like in all educational systems, in the Ghanaian education system good command of English literacy skills guarantees success in any of the English-medium schools (This involves reading and processing textbooks, and other reading materials in the second language necessary for academic work and for other purposes as well as for accessing information on the Internet. Acquiring this ability is however said to begin long before children go to school and the role of the parent thus become crucial. Reading, like becoming a reader, encompasses complex processes.

Also, Anderson, Hiebert, Scott, and Wilkinson (1985) define reading as a process that entails deriving meaning from written texts in their 1985 report, *Becoming a Nation of Readers: The Report of the Commission on Reading...* It requires the coordination of numerous related information sources because it is a complex skill. Given its complex nature, reading is a combination of several related information sources. They further pointed out that the majority of scholars in the field agreed that reading is fundamentally the process of deriving meaning from written texts.

This generally agreed definition is asserted by Grabe (2009), as mentioned above. Thus, as have indicated so far, reading is basically deriving

meaning but to understand this meaning, readers need what Palani (2012) referred to as comprehension.

Comprehension is needed in deriving meaning from text and identifying words using context or without context. In similar wording, Grabe (2010) explains that: one, reading comprehension involves a number of abilities. These are abilities needed for rapid word identification and developing large vocabulary.

These are the skills readers required for quick and effective recognition words and to build and use a very large recognition vocabulary, to process sentences to increase comprehension and to engage a variety of strategic processes and underpinning cognitive abilities like goal-setting and ongoing comprehension monitoring. There are also abilities needed for interpreting meaning related to background knowledge as well as for interpreting and evaluating texts related to the goals and purposes of readers.

Grabe's conceptualization of reading comprehension skills this way points out a host of abilities and strategies which makes reading comprehension occurrence possible. In other words, these are useful processes and knowledge that help readers in generating text comprehension as much as needed. According to him, the development of comprehension ability required knowledge of these skills and resources and this has been the major concern of both existing and on-going research projects in the field. To construct meaning from text successfully, possessing the needed comprehension abilities is indispensable such as processing sentences to build meaning.

Notably, the ability of the young English language learner to read in English, which is important in the Ghanaian education system, like in any

other educational system, depends on his or her comprehension skills level. Without these comprehension abilities, reading and processing textbooks and other reading materials in the target language for academic and other purpose as well as accessing information on the Internet cannot be realized by the child. English reading proficiency determines greatly children's overall academic achievement (Ozowuba, 2018; Grabe & Stoller, 2011). The question is, to what extent are Ghanaian primary two children are able to read in English as expected of them. This is a concern the study seeks to empirically address. Acquiring this ability is however said to begin long before children go to school and the role of the parent thus become crucial. Reading like becoming a reader encompasses complex processes.

It is important to note that these attempted definitions of reading above have considered reading as a single word on its own; but there is the other way in which it is defined not as a stand-alone-concept.

In contrast to the definition above which considers reading as a stand-alone concept, some scholars define reading in conjunction with other concepts such as reading literacy or effective reading (Stiffelman, 2014). According to Mullis, Martin, Kennedy & Foy (2007), as one of such scholars' reading literacy is defined as being able not only to understand but use some forms of written language that society requires or the individual himself values.

The Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA), a test administered by the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, is also significant in defining reading (OECD).

In actuality, it has concentrated on the critical reading ability, math, and science skills of students around the world who are fifteen years old. According to PISA, reading literacy encompasses the abilities needed to understand and make use of written text together with the ability to reflect on a text, while employing one's personal experience and world knowledge.

Reading literacy is, generally, the capacity of a person to comprehend, apply, and reflect on written texts as they are engaged in order to achieve one's goals as well as other potential and knowledge development and participation in society (OECD, 2009). To help achieve the aim of this study and for other practical considerations, the definition offered by PISA will be used in this study. As learners of the language, students need to become better academic English proficiency readers as they attend schools where English is the school language. Also, reading textbooks, journals in the language and other purposes as well as accessing information on the Internet requires this reading competence of the learners.

As stated earlier, people read for different goals and purposes and this might remind us of some types of reading. People engage in different types of reading when they read a text for different purposes (Grabe, 2010). Even motivation and the social context such the kind of neighbourhood a child is found affect people's efforts and how they acquire the L2 reading skills.

The way people read is largely influenced by factors such as personal aims, motivation and social context. Evidently, one's purpose for reading is a major factor that determines how meaning is effectively extracted by the reader. Not only purpose but also this view of reading seems a pointer to the idea that social factors such as the home environment (e.g., parent-child

interaction) can be important in L2 English learning and literacy development. In this study, I argue that one of the critical agents in language and reading proficiency success is the home environment, Besides, and Comparably, reading for informational purposes in the occupational domain—for instance, during an exam—can be said to be similar to reading for pleasure (within the personal domain, such as a story book, with different skills).

Similarly, it can be said that just as a person engages in reading a text for enjoyment purposes (within the personal, domain such as a story book, requiring different skills), so is a person reading for informational purposes in the occupational domain—for instance, during an exam— with different skills). This study concerns reading undertaken in the domain of education or for academic reading purposes.

There are six main academic purposes for reading that can be distinguished in the literature, considering academic circles: First, read for information (scanning and skimming); second, read for speedy comprehension (skimming); third, read for knowledge; fourth, read for information integration; fifth, read for evaluation, criticism, and use of information; and, finally, read for general comprehension.

It would therefore be interesting, as stated earlier, investigating the extent to which children in Primary 2 in the Kassena-Nankana East Municipality have become better academic English proficient readers to enable them to succeed as learners of the language by reading and processing textbooks, reading journal information and reading for other purposes as well as accessing information on the Internet.

Learning to Read in a Second (L2) Language

Before children even enter school to receive formal instruction in reading and writing, learning how to read and write (or literacy) usually starts long before they begin to do so. Preparing the child to begin such formal activities in school, introducing them not only to books but also to participation in literacy-related interactions with parents early in life is considered necessary (De jong & Leseman, 1998). It is also recognized the moment children enter school each is prepared differently for the formal instruction concerning literacy acquisition (Brisk & Harrington, 2006). This is largely a consequence of differences in the home backgrounds in terms of amount and quality of literacy opportunities provided by each family for their child. A situation such as this is a major challenge, like in all other educational systems, in the Ghanaian educational system which as a result causes disparities in student achievement (Snow et al., 2007).

Since limiting this challenge in the Ghanaian education system is necessary, it is imperative further investigations are conducted into the home backgrounds effect on the reading ability of L2 English learners examining specifically how and to what extent parents create the necessary home literate environment with lots of opportunities. This is mainly to help promote these children's reading proficiency achievement by either modelling or directly interacting with the children at home. Parents provide opportunities in terms of various literacy interactions enacted at home to promote L2 learning.

Also, it is asserted that learning to read basically involves some process. In essence, it is basically metalinguistic (Nagy & Anderson, 1999). For example, Phonological awareness and morphological awareness are good examples of metalinguistic skills. What this means is that metalinguistic skill

growth is essential for acquiring the reading skills early in life. Phonological and morphological awareness are examples of metalinguistic abilities.

Nagy and Anderson (1999) explain that phonological awareness is mainly the awareness of phonemes as well as phonological structure and a phoneme can be explained as the smallest unit of speech like *in-*, *re-* and *-ful*. Morphological awareness, on the other hand, involves insights about morphemes and morphological structure of words; the smallest units of meaning are called morphemes like *un-* in unhappy, or *-ment* in establishment. According to Goswami and Bryant (1990) and Treiman, (1993), phonological awareness is well established as a factor in how to read and spell words but rather contributes loosely to the failure to learn or acquire decoding skills (Lyon, Shaywitz & Shaywitz, 2003).

With regard to morphological awareness, it is seen to have greater effect in predicting literacy skills growth as compared to phonological awareness. For example, children with good morphological awareness have more chance of reading words faster and spelling words better; good morphological awareness also has great impact on reading comprehension. This impact can be expressed either directly or indirectly through some other factors like level of vocabulary knowledge and fluency in word reading (Carlisle, 2003).

There are other factors that affect learning to read well or acquire literacy in addition to metalinguistic awareness, such as morphological awareness and phonological awareness, as well as cognitive factors (O'Brien et al., 2014). An example is the linguistic factors. Specifically, the linguistic skills of the individual are also seen as key to learning literacy skills.

Grammatical and vocabulary knowledge, for instance, are skills that do contribute significantly to listening and reading comprehension.

Anderson, Hiebert, Scott, and Wilkinson pointed out motivation as a key element in reading acquisition in their 1985 report, *Becoming a Nation of Readers: The Report of the Commission on Reading*. Motivation is key to proper reading skill acquisition as becoming literate or able to read may take most children several years. For this and other reasons, parents' role in motivating the child is a great one; motivation serves as a prerequisite for learning to read. It is their duty, therefore, to ensure that they not only model good parental reading habits but also interact with their children at home by directly engaging in English literacy interactions like book reading, visits to libraries, storytelling and rhymes and poems recitals.

In this way, children are provided with the needed help that will significantly promote their ability to read better and widely. This can even be an important contribution to the success of children's education in general. Most importantly, since the world is fast growing into a technologically information age, providing children with the necessary language environments to help in increasing their levels of literacy and reading proficiency level will make them quite versatile (O'Brien et al., 2014). Their participation in education, industry, business, even in the various professions would be joyful and fantastic (Anderson, Hiebert, Scott & Wilkinson, 1985).

Throughout this study we, therefore, seek answers to the question: 'How are Ghanaian children supported adequately in the home to acquire L2 English reading skills and achieve language proficiency in general. These are questions to which answers are to be sought empirically--talking to parents,

children and other family members to obtain their own experiences and viewpoints as they experience children reading development themselves. These appear to be important questions as children need to be exposed to both quality and quantity of interactions including easy access to children's books.

Language and Education in Ghana

Ghana is a multilingual country. It has a nuanced and heterogeneous linguistic base and true figures of the actual number of Ghanaian languages in the country are difficult to estimate. This is due to the lack of a common system for classifying the terms "language" and "dialect", coupled with the difficulty in defining them. Nevertheless, it is estimated that Ghana has about 50 Ghanaian languages (Kropp Dakubu & Kevin, 1988; Owu-Ewie, 2006).

Ghanaian languages such as Akan, Ga and Ewe, Kasem and Dagaare-Wale are used alongside English the official language of Ghana. With such a strong position, English is used as the medium of communication in almost all official functions and formal occasions; it is the main language of formal education with a recognized position in the Ghanaian academic curriculum (Ngula, 2015; Owu-Ewie, 2006). As such English has remained the language of official and government business since Ghana gained independence in 1957. Not only is English, without doubt, a language of the media and of business in Ghana, it is as well used at several other occasions of social function (see Ngula & Nartey, 2014). Clearly, English, a language used during the colonial rule, still plays a crucial role in postcolonial Ghana, which is English as second language (ESL) country (Owu-Ewie, 2006).

English is the language of formal education and thus used as the language of instruction from Primary four and beyond in the academic curriculum in the Ghanaian education system. From Kindergarten 1-2 to

Primary three, a Ghanaian language is used as a medium of instruction (National Council for Curriculum and Assessment: Teacher Resource Pack (2019). For a total of 12 years of pre-tertiary education in Ghana, the educational system consists of 6 years of primary education (beginning at age 6), 3 years of junior high school, and 3 years of senior high school (Perhaps excluding nursery and kindergarten) (Stoffelsma & Spooren, 2013).

As language of education, English is studied as a subject from Primary four through to the tertiary level. It is an official language regarded as an additional second language for most Ghanaians in the country. It is also studied as a compulsory subject from Primary Four to the Junior High School level in Ghana. From Primary four, English serves as the medium of instruction through to the tertiary level. It is, however, used as a compulsory subject for pupils and students right from Primary One up to the end of the Senior High School level (Ngula, 2015).

This means that as learners of the language, students need to become better academic English proficiency readers to succeed in any English-medium schools in the country—reading and processing textbooks, journals in the target language for academic and other purpose as well as accessing information on the Internet.

Despite this, there are problems with children's language proficiency in the primary and secondary school level in the country (Akrofi, 2003). The available information suggests that children's performance in English language proficiency is low. And this may have some diverse repercussions for children's overall outcome in education. It would be interesting and insightful finding out the extent to which Primary two children in the Kassena-

Nankana Municipality are proficient readers in English, particularly with the appropriate home support.

Language of Education in the Ghanaian Primary School

Under language and education in the current Ghanaian primary school, two points are worth noting. The first is that a Ghanaian language (L1) is used as medium of instruction for the first five years of schooling (National Council for Curriculum and Assessment, Ministry of Education, 2019). That is, from Kindergarten1--2 through to Primary three (Basic three). This is captured under the broad area of language and literacy in the primary school Teacher Resource Pack. At the same time, emphasis is placed on introducing children to spoken English until Primary Two (Basic Two) by which time written English is also introduced. Based on this bilingual education policy, contrary to the English-only (as the only medium of instruction) language policy of education earlier, for example around 2002 (Owu-Ewie, 2006), children are encouraged and taught to become literate in their mother tongue, early, especially in the first five years of schooling.

The second point is that from Primary four (Basic four) upwards, English becomes the medium of instruction, replacing a Ghanaian language—defined as the language of the locality (Owu-Ewie, 2006). This mother tongue, which is used alongside with English has to be one of the selected eleven Ghanaian languages. They are Kasem, Asante Twi, Akuapem Twi, Fante, Dagaare, Dagbani, Ewe, Ga, Gonja, Dangme and Nzema (Owu-Ewie,2006; also see Opoku-Amankwa, 2009).

It is, however, worth noting that from the period 1882 to independence and even up to date the bilingual policy of education in Ghana has not been

systematic with English dominantly used as the medium of instruction right from primary one up to the tertiary level (Owu-Ewie, 2006).

Contexts of ESL Learning

Learning a second language involves more than just picking up language structures (Ellis, 2000). There are complex processes involved. Embedded in those complexities is context concerning L2 learning well recognized as an important factor that cannot be underestimated. English is in effect learned in variety contexts as an additional language (ESL) (Richards, 1970).

According to Watson-Gegeo (1992), context is the entire set of interactions or relationships that surround a phenomenon. This includes both the macro levels of institutional, social, political, and cultural aspects as well as the micro levels, which refer to the immediate context of a situation. In essence, the immediate context of a situation (micro level) is made up of family and friends and the interactions among them while large scale matters comprising social class, culture as well as institutional, political and cultural aspects in nature are considered under the macro level--Both contexts are crucial considerations in second language learning success (Ellis, 2000).

In fact, as indicated earlier, the idea of context (or setting) being a central factor in L2 acquisition is critical for key choices that have to be made by second language learners. And these two critical contexts types affect how young children in the Ghanaian education system, like any other education system, acquire the ability to read in English. And most important is the family support for L2 leaning because Parent-child interaction at home is a major means of promoting children's English (L2) proficiency achievement (Han, 2007).

According to Ellis (2000), a general distinction can be made between natural and educational settings. The natural context is invoked where learners get into contact with other speakers of the target language arising from other situations particularly the work place, at home, through the media or at international conferences, as well as in business meetings. He notes that while many of the learners will experience the target language in both the educational and natural settings, some will learn the L2 entirely within a natural setting.

With regard to this, two contexts important in the second language classroom, including that of English as a second language (L2), are also identified (Gardner & Clement, 1990). First is the learning situation that learners experience in the language classroom; this is a learning environment that the child will encounter in the target language classroom. Characteristic of this learning environment is the important and delicate role relationships of various kinds between teacher and student, which may tend to affect the language and literacy level achieved by learners. Significantly, within this setting, English is also taught as a subject. Taking Ghana or Nigeria as some good examples, it is also here where L2 English children are mainly introduced to formal learning of the language.

Second and the most important context for L2 learning success here is parental involvement level shown in the L2 English programme (also see Ellis, 2000; Ngorosho, 2010). In some generality, this is based on the premise that children's learning begins long before they attend school. Thus, any learning a child has gone through at school always has a previous history (Vygotsky, 1978).

What this fact means is that children learn by imitating adults and the more capable peers. Vygotsky believed that when children learn to speak from adults by imitating them and acting based on their instructions, they acquire a whole set of skills. Given this importance of the home backgrounds of L2 English learners, parents have a useful part that can facilitate children's language learning. They monitor the child's language learning and more indirectly model attitudes suitable for a successful language learning (Gardner & Clement, 1990). This, by implication, would mean that L2 English learners need to be provided with a language-rich environment, full of interactive reading materials, essential for L2 reading development. Parent-child interaction at home is for instance a major means of promoting children's English (L2) proficiency achievement.

As far as parental support for the L2 learning programme is concerned, there is variation in the nature and quality of the input to which each L2 learner is exposed in the home. Learners, for example, come to school from diverse socio-economic classes and home backgrounds in terms of financial and material resources (Saracho, 1997), the number of children living with parents (Coleman, 1990), parental literacy background (Saracho, 1997), age of mother (Grissmer et al., 1994), as well as age-appropriate cognitive stimulation and investment of the family (De Jong & Leseman, 1998).

Basically these differences in L2 English learners home backgrounds cannot be overemphasized in accounting for the differential achievement in learners efforts in the language classroom despite the level of formal L2 acquisition targeting all beginning students (Ngorosho, 2010). As Whitehurst and Lonigan (1998) have noted, the home offers varying degrees

of preparation for the child to benefit from the experiences in the classroom, which affects the type and quantity of input that students are exposed to (Ellis, 2000). In fact, researchers suggest that the best readers in school are those who can read at home. As the foregoing discussion has demonstrated, the home background of L2 English learners plays a dominant role in their L2 language, and reading, proficiency achievement.

The Target (L2 English) Language Classroom and the School Context

In the formal school context, as indicated earlier, in Ghana for example, the medium of instruction is English from grade four upwards. It is considered as an L2 (or sometimes a third language) in most learners' language situations which they learn to read and strive to achieve reading proficiency. Reading and writing proficiency of second language learners in developing countries like Ghana has become a major challenge, which is especially the case among primary children (Akrofi, 2003; Ngwaru & Opoku-Amankwa, 2010). Notably, in the language classroom, diverse as it may be, there are homes where other languages, and not English, are used as home languages. These classrooms are under English medium school systems and English within the school where learners are learning English as content but language in and through English as well.

To facilitate children's success in developing reading proficiency, children need exposure to varied text to make learning in the target language classroom more successful (Grabe, 2000; Ellis, 2000; Snow, 1991). Apart from reading materials, certain physical resources as part of the formal school learning environment must be available. An example is ensuring the provision of library resources and appropriate classroom materials because they are keys to children's efforts in becoming proficient readers. In addition to adequate

text exposure and library and suitable classroom materials, an enabling pedagogical environment is as critical to children's success in developing good reading abilities as the target language programme itself. These factors as indicated above constitute the physical resources embedded in the formal school learning environment.

Equally worth noting, and in complementary terms, there is also what can be described as the "soft" dimensions aspect of the school context. Key consideration, here; include the role of teachers and the all-important relationship between teachers and learners (Gardner & Clement, 1990), the school culture as well as leadership (O'Brien, Yin, Li, Zhang, Chin, Zhao & Vaish, 2014). By implication, teachers, like parents, are critical agents in promoting English language learners' access to ample and quality English proficiency related activities.

In a review of peer reviewed papers, O'Brien, Yin, Li, Zhang, Chin, Zhao and Vaish (2014) point out some best practices for the teaching of reading in the target language classroom. In other words, for a successful reading proficiency acquisition programme, the school environment must be complemented by a pedagogy that is properly designed. That is, pedagogical environments that are critical to children's success in becoming proficient readers. This involves mainly instruction in the various code-based skills. And these include phonics, comprehension strategies skills, predicting, questioning and summarizing skills, emphasizing that each of these must be designed based on the learner's level of development, that is, how sophisticated the learner is. In short, the target language classroom together with the school environment must be properly designed to provide a

pedagogical environment conducive to children's success in becoming proficient readers.

Parent-Child Interaction through Language Socialisation

Key to language socialization is context referred to as the whole set of relationships in which a phenomenon is situated (Watson-Gegeo, 1992). As previously pointed out, context is divided into two categories. These are macro levels, which are made up of various institutional, social, political and cultural aspects, and micro levels, which refer to the immediate context of a given situation. That is, the micro level comprising family and friends and the interactions among them while large scale matters of social class, culture as well as institutional, political and cultural aspects in nature are considered under the macro level--both are crucial considerations in second language learning success (Ellis, 2000).

The question of how parents create the necessary interactions and these interrelationships as part of intentional involvement in various home literacy activities aimed at supporting reading literacy development of the child at home is thus crucial. It is maintained that all processes of cognitive development are shaped by sociocultural contexts: school, community or home context (Watson-Gegeo, 1992). In this study, the concept of socialisation is defined as the parents efforts made to expose their children to friends, relatives, and other people and facilities around them as part of activities to provide opportunities to help promote children's reading proficiency achievement by either modelling or directly interacting with their children at home like visit to the library. There is an approach to language socialization study in English as a second language research.

It is maintained that studies in language socialisation (LS) are begun with careful ethnographic documentation of the process of learning a language as well as culture in the learner's daily life and/or classroom settings. LS studies are longitudinal in nature where researchers have to track the development of language based on socialization process over a long period of a month or even more.

In addition, such studies require that researchers compile records of language development processes in stages or based on school semesters and years in the target language classroom. The use of routine and non-routine interactional events and behaviour for example, either daily or fortnightly, can also be undertaken. Again, the ethnographer carefully takes observational field notes as well as gets audio- and video-taped recordings indexed and transcribed, as needed.

According to Watson-Gegeo and Nelson (2003), participants are also interviewed in the study process. In this study, the concept of socialization is defined as parents' efforts to expose their children to friends, relatives, and other people and facilities around them as part of efforts to provide opportunities to help promote children's reading proficiency achievement by either modelling or directly interacting with their children at home such as visit to the library. Thus, in this study, focus is on examining the kinds of English literacy interactions children are provided with to help them develop their L2 English reading abilities. In other words, the kinds of support parents provide for their children to assist in their L2 English reading development is the aim of this study.

Home Environment and L2 English Reading Development

Home environment can be defined as a specific place where a person lives at a particular time. It can simply be considered as the type of home from which a person or the child comes from and each child's home may vary.

Many perspectives exist about the concept of home environment in second language learning field but there is no single well agreed-upon definition of the concept (Ngorosho, 2010). That is, many definitions of home environment do exist.

It is one of the factors outside the formal school context that is recognized to play a critical role in promoting successful second language learning. In many ways, home environment provides children at least a conducive atmosphere and an opportunity for engaging in reading to help foster leisure reading spirit and promote reading performance. In student motivation for reading, in addition to students' own efforts, teachers and parents also have a crucial role to play. Research shows a positive relationship between parents' attitudes towards reading and their children's achievement in reading (Mullis et al., 2007, p.3; as cited in Stoffelsma & Spooren, 2013; O'Brien, Yin, Li, Zhang, Chin, Zhao, & Vaish, 2014, p.12; Ngorosho, 2010).

This includes even the community within which the child is subsumed, where accessing reading materials outside the school, especially the provision of reading materials through community library even can be deemed of great importance (O'Brien, Yin, Li, Zhang, Chin, Zhao, & Vanish, 2014, p. 12).

Peeters et al. (2009) for example describes home environment as the home literacy materials and experiences which children are exposed to, namely parental literacy activities, storybook reading exposure, child opportunities for verbal interaction and parental literacy habits, which

provides a good starting point. Along this line, home environment is seen as a setting that encompasses features of both the living and literacy environment.

More specifically, the home living environment component is comprised of descriptors of socioeconomic status like parental education, income and occupation) as well as physical objects such as housing variables (Wachs, 2003). This means that the literacy materials as indicated earlier comes under home living environment while opportunities for literacy practices in L2 English like shared book reading in the home forms part of the home literacy environment component.

Moreover, De Jong and Leseman (1998) made further clarifications maintaining that the home literacy environment division generally refers to participation in literacy related activities which is relegated to both the availability of print material in the home and frequency of reading. There is also a suggestion by some researchers that parental literacy level as well as the availability of reading materials together constitute the primary features of the home environment, which correlate with children's literacy growth (Saracho, 1997; cited in Kanyongo, Certo & Launcelot, 2006).

Importantly, Crook (1997), while maintaining this view of the home factor, categorized cultural capital into “parental highbrow-status taste (attendance at museums, theatres, and art exhibitions) as well as parental verbal and reading abilities (reading behaviour)”. Crook conducted a study into the effects of parental cultural practices in Australia, concluding that it is parental reading habits and a home climate in which reading is valued that should be emphasized. In other words, this echoes De jong and Leseman (1998) description of the home environment mainly in terms of frequency of

reading and print availability in the home. Thus key to the home environment context is parental reading behaviour and the learner's interaction with literacy through the utilization of external facilities such as the community library. This is a conceptualization of the home literacy environment part of the concerns of this study. This means parents attitude towards reading is an important factor in children's reading development.

Parents' reading behaviour and/or their attitude towards reading forms an integral part of the home variables and has a crucial role in scaffolding children's second language reading development and achievement (O'Brien, Yin, Li, Zhang, Chin, Zhao & Vanish, 2014). Research has demonstrated that as compared to the influence of the school context, the home background seems to "contribute more to reading comprehension, while school plays the more dominant role in subjects such as science, mathematics, and foreign languages" (Thorndike, 1973; as cited in Greaney, 1986, p.815). This implies that both the home and the school as contexts are important for the L2 English learners in Ghana but the home becomes more topical in terms of their reading literacy acquisition.

This suggests that without it children will not benefit much from the home support in their L2 learning. In this study, the focus is the extent to which parents involve themselves in their children's efforts in learning to read by ensuring the availability of reading materials and ample opportunities for literacy practices outside the school environments.

In view of the varied views and debates that exists regarding a precise definition of home environment, the stance adopted in this study considers home environment encompassing the home living environment and the home

literacy environment (Ngorosho,2011), where the home living environment division is to be described through parents' socioeconomic status, that is, parents' education level. On the other hand, home literacy environment (HLE) component in the study will be determined through the availability of reading materials in the home, and the number of opportunities for literacy interaction/practices in L2 English parents provide for their children (Crook, 1997; De Graaf, De Graaff, & Kraaykamp, 2000). This constitutes parents' involvement in and support for the child's L2 English reading achievement.

Literacy learning (including the ability to read, for example) consists basically of four facets (De Jong & Leseman, 1998). They note that these facets in a successive order are "literacy opportunity, instruction, cooperation, and social-emotional quality." (p. 298). In this sense, the extent to which the home environment provides opportunities for young children to participate in English literacy is important for their successful second language learning. Interaction with English literacy particularly involving written language is generally linked to "the frequency or exposure measures" such as children observing adults reading, like a shopping list, joint reading of books, interaction with all types of environmental print, storytelling in bed, and so forth. It will therefore be very insightful and interesting to find out the frequency at which parents in the Navrongo community engage their children in various English literacy activities such as joint reading of books, using audio-visual tools and utilizing externalities for learning. Thus co-constructive learning involves both the mere exposure of learners to materials and resources as well as the frequency (De Jong & Leseman, 1998) or how often young children are engaged in these learning resources. The key words are

exposure and frequency of participation in various English literacy activities within the home environment. Thus, in this study the degree to which parents engage their children in English literacy, particularly reading activities as well as the number of books in the home is examined.

Notably, interaction with literacy in whatever kind or form is necessary for the process of co-construction to occur. As stated earlier, co-construction basically means that “the knowledge and skills concerned are first created or represented in an inter-psychological form shared by the participants in a dialogue before being internalized.” (Leseman & Sijsling, 1996; Wertsch, 1985).

Important references that can be noted in this regard are researches that examine shared-book reading, the number of books in the home and so on. The home literacy environment can be measured using either a single question (e.g., the frequency of book reading) or a composite of questionnaire items (e.g., the frequency of book reading, the number of children’s books owned and the frequency of library visits (Bus et al., 1995).

Attention in second language reading research is focused on the availability of print or reading materials because of its important role in children’s learning and language development, for example L2 English, reading acquisition and reading outcome. Reading research underscores the crucial role played by the availability of print in children’s reading development. To promote a successful spontaneous development or print awareness some contact with print is necessary. Observing parents and other significant others reading and writing such as a storybook does not only make literacy familiar but it also fosters positive attitudes towards (English) literacy

learning. Any good chances to experience, for example, shared book reading and similar opportunities are relevant for co-constructive learning. Notably, literacy as a concept in addition to involving shared or joint book reading also concerns “interaction with all kinds of environmental print and literacy technologies that pervade the home (Anderson & Stokes, 1984; Heath, 1983). For this reason, part of the focus of this study has been to find out whether the home environment of primary two children avail to them the opportunity to interact with English literacy through the use of audio-visual tools such as TV watching.

Summary of the Discussion of Key Concepts

In the discussion that looked at some of the concepts in this chapter, key notions concerning the home environment, parent-child interaction and concept of reading, learning to read and language of education in the Ghanaian primary as well as the context of ESL learning are explored and defined.

It has also considered that the concept of parent-child interaction being widely recognised as a way of providing scaffold for children’s ESL learning, has attracted the attention of scholars and researchers in the area, especially within the Western countries. The section further discussed parents’ participation in their children’s L2-reading development and four main key facets are identified, namely literacy opportunity, instruction, cooperation, and social-emotional quality, of which the literacy opportunity component is the focus of this study. Again, in the literature, interaction is also seen to have an indispensable role in language learning as it is the foundation of learning and all knowledge—that is, social interaction cannot be underrated in literacy acquisition among children. The discussion has also, in an important way, reviewed the processes of reading proficiency achievement, guided by the

Socio-cultural Theory of Vygotsky (1978). This theoretical perspective forms the main theoretical framework underpinning the study based upon which most of the key issues are discussed.

The Relationship between English Language Proficiency and Academic Achievement

Several studies have examined the relationship between (English) language proficiency and academic achievement.

In a study conducted at the tertiary level in Ghana, Stoffelsma and Spooren (2018) examined the role of English reading proficiency on academic achievement of a sample of 133 bachelor of education Science and Mathematics students. The results showed a strong effect or relationship found between students' academic achievement (GPA) after first year studies in level 100 and their final year of studies in level 400. They concluded that the academic English reading proficiency of students has a relationship between English reading proficiency and academic achievement.

In a similar setting at the tertiary level involving two Ghanaian universities, using a sample of 454 English L2 students, Stoffelsma, Spooren, Mwinlaaru and Antwi (2020) also investigated the relationship between reading proficiency and academic achievement focusing on vocabulary knowledge and reading comprehension. The study showed a relationship between reading proficiency and academic achievement as they concluded that morphological awareness influences reading comprehension both in English L1 and in English L2 contexts. The study thus supported Stoffelsma and Spooren (2018) finding that academic English reading proficiency affects academic achievement.

Hwang, Martirosyan, and Wanjohi (2015) also examined the relationship between self-perceived English language proficiency and academic performance of international students in a 4-year duration university located in north central Louisiana, the United State of America. In this quantitative survey, students' English language proficiency level and their academic performance were measured using standardized self-reported questionnaire with a 4-point Likert scale and their GPAs respectively. The findings revealed that there were significant differences found in the academic performances of international students with different English language proficiency levels. Not only the highest mean GPA of 3.57 was recorded among students who perceived their English proficiency level was excellent but also it was found that self-rated English proficiency was a predictor for students' GPAs. Two major limitations of this study are obvious. Not only was the study limited to a quantitative survey but it was also conducted in only one institution unlike Stoffelsma et al. (2020) and Stoffelsma and Spooren (2018).

Similar results were reported by Ozowuba (2018), who conducted a study to explore the relationship between English proficiency and academic achievement among final year senior secondary school students (FYSSSS) in the West African Senior Secondary School Certificate Examination at Green Town in Nigeria in English, Biology, Government and Mathematics. A simple regression analysis of the data also showed a significant relationship between English language proficiency and academic achievement of FYSSSS. The different variances of FYSSS scores for biology, government, and mathematics showed in the regression analysis that 75%, 67%, and 69%

respectively were significant. It implied that the total changes in academic achievement of students in the three subject areas were a function of the level of FYSSS proficiency in English language. He, therefore, concluded that mastery of the language is important for students' overall academic performance.

This review shows that reading proficiency contributes strongly to academic performance. When students have good foundation in language proficiency and the ability to read and process academic texts as required, they obtain better academic records. This review is also clear about students' understanding of and productive word knowledge and its relationship to academic achievement in general. Language proficiency level is thus essential to and contributes significantly to learners' overall performance.

Home Environment and Reading Proficiency Development within Non-African Setting

In this section, I review some previous empirical studies undertaken on the home environment and its influence in different aspects of reading proficiency development in children over the years within the non-African setting. I however mainly limit this review to studies directly related to the focus of this study. The contribution of the home environment to the literacy development of children is well documented rather in many developed countries. It is noted that the review considered in this chapter is not to be considered exhaustive, but only representative of these studies in English speaking contexts.

Li (2007) argues that parents' educational level has an influence on children' reading proficiency achievement. Parents with higher levels of education provided a rich literacy environment appropriate for children's

English language acquisition. She stressed that those with limited education experience do not provide books that are useful for their children's immediate language use. Her views are similar to those of Chansa-Kabali (2014). With some variations, he also explored some of the avenues in the home environment that contributed to the achievement of the reading skills exhibited by children immediately after entering into Grade One. He concluded that home literacy activities (HLAs) lay a solid foundation for learning to read and write in formal learning settings of school. He found that parental education level, occupation and family size did not in any way correlate with reading skills. However, he found that children's home literacy environments in Zambia were enriched with activities such as songs, stories, games and exposure to print that promotes children's oral language. His findings that parent educational level, occupation and family size have no direct influence on reading skills acquisition or development does conflict with that of Li (2007) that parental educational level had influence on children's proficiency attainment.

A similar study by Carroll (2013) investigated the role or impact of direct parental teaching of emergent literacy outcomes with samples of pre-school aged children from socio-economic status (SES) background employing a hierarchical regression analyses. He found out that parental quality involvement in children's education is key to smooth child reading proficiency achievement as found by (Li, 2007; Chansa-Kabali, 2014).

Also, investigating the effects of parents involvement in children's reading attainment process in terms of both home reading activities (HRAs) on Grade 4 students reading abilities and early home reading activities (EHRAs)

before children start school, guided by parental education, occupation and income level, Hui, Ng, Tse and Zhu (2017) found that EHRA in particular had a long-term impact on children's later reading achievements in the Hong Kong bilingual context. The study also revealed that a combination of reading books, singing songs, telling stories, playing games, writing letters and words, reading aloud were found to have a positive effect on and are key to English reading attainment among children especially Fourth (4th) Graders. This second finding corroborates that of Chansa-Kabali (2014).

Han (2007) found that interaction between parents and children guarantees optimal successful second language learning. This conclusion springs from the observations and experience of Korean parents about acquiring successfully a second language.

Doornenbal, Leseman, Minnaert and Poolman (2017), for instance, investigated whether parental educational level with the concept of literacy defined in terms of parents' typical way of living can define the way language learning occurs. The data included 128 school pupils comprising 56 girls and 72 boys sampled from Delfziil one of the Dutch towns. Some of the children were in Grade 1. A notable finding of the study was that parents' education level and the level of their language use did correlate. The study underscores the need for the use of literacy by parents for information purposes.

All these past studies reviewed so far underscore the all-important role of home background in second language learning and reading development in children, emphasising reading activities as key to the development of effective reading proficiency achievement of young children.

On the relation between the quality of home literacy environment, or home reading activities on one hand and the achievement of reading proficiency by young learners, studies such as Han (2007) and Chansa-Kabali (2014) are important. Han (2007) found that the manner parents who were found still reading aloud even to their older children in order to help develop and maintain the children's interest in reading showed their belief in the all-important role of parents in the child success in learning to read.

The tendency for those parents to put in place a quality environment that promotes smooth development of the reading proficiency of their children all as a result of their belief systems only underscore the role of parent-child interaction in second language acquisition among children. His findings corroborate with that of Stoffelsma and Spooen (2013). Although there are differences in terms of subjects, they show a link in terms those who read a lot and actual reading attitude people develop. In fact, we learn to read by reading. Both studies, therefore, further underscore the fact that the belief system of the students towards reading, like parents' perceptions regarding the importance of the home environment, influences significantly how they actually read and the quality of time invested in the activity of reading.

Home Environment and Reading Development within the African Setting

Education of children in the rural area in general and their reading proficiency development in particular has been a matter of great importance to many language scholars, educators, reading researchers as well as teachers. In this regard, some works about home backgrounds in the reading proficiency achievement of learners within rural areas has been conducted (Ngorosho, 2010).

Examining the role of home environment on the literacy skills of Kiswahili speaking children in Rural Tanzania, Ngorosho's (2010) study examined how home environment factors influence the reading ability of children in primary two in selected rural areas in Tanzania. The sample comprised 75 grade 2 pupils and their parents from the research site of Bagamoyo District. The study revealed that the home environments of the participant children were poor. First, many of the children studied experienced limited print exposure at home, a situation that reflected lack of parental support for learning to read and write by children at home and the pains of poverty.

In her study of the homes of five selected Grade 1 children and a Grade 1 classroom setting in Ghana, Akrofi (2003) revealed that apart from storybook reading not found to be a recognized regular English literacy activity both in the homes and at the school studied, there were no storybooks available in the school and in the homes of the five participant children. Assuming the role of observer participant, she observed interactions between five pupils and their family members around literacy learning, held interviews with participant teachers and parents and their children, and collected data. Based on her findings, Akrofi concluded that enhancing efforts at achieving access to storybooks and other print exposure should be a priority to parents. This is a theme, access to reading materials, to be explored as part of this study, thus making her work relevant to this study. A possible limitation of Akrofi's study is its limited focus; it examines only the availability and use of storybooks, both in the home and in the school. It does not look at the use of

other educational materials and general home reading climate or parent-child interaction in English literacy in general which this study seeks to examine.

In a similar study, Ngwaru and Opoku-Amankwa (2010), using observations of homes and interviews with parents and their children at Atomso, a Ghanaian multi-ethnic suburb community in Kumasi, as a case study, recounted their experiences of observing literacy learning in the home and at school. They found, with regard to support for literacy learning in home environment as well as school setting that participants experienced limited access to educational resources. With a poor home environment within which the pupils must learn to acquire literacy in the English language, the results showed how the pupils had difficulties participating actively in class.

The pupils were found to have no access to books not only in the home but also in the school since teachers who are supposed to guide in helping the pupils were themselves found to be unaware about even the official textbook policy of the country. Not only that the children lacked parental engagement of children in various home literacy related activities such as parent reading storybook aloud to the child, visiting the local library with the child, among others but that storybook reading was not also found a regular feature of the daily literacy lives of the children. Found common, on the contrary, was that the father of one pupil preferred the child helping him in his carpentry shop to going to school. This means that parent's roles in providing a home environment that stimulates children's efforts and interest in learning to read by providing a favourable reading climate through unique interactions in English literacy activities in the home contexts were lacking.

These results are similar to Akrofi (2003) whose study revealed that reading of storybooks was not seen as a regular English literacy activity both in the home and at school in an ethnographic study on the use of storybooks in an urban city in Ghana. The implication of this situation of the lack of storybook reading as key part of English literacy interactions in whatever setting seems problematic in the sense that research has demonstrated that the extent to which parents stimulate the child's interest in reading by offering favourable reading climate at home is key to the child's successful L2 academic English reading proficiency growth. This is markedly so in view of the fact that if children need to turn out as confident and skilled readers "to succeed in English-medium schools, to read textbooks and/or journals in the target language for academic and/or professional purposes, to access information on the Internet," then creating opportunities for children to read a lot and often is desirable (Anderson, Grabe, Komiyama & Stoller, 2013, p.3)

Lahtinen and Ngorosho (2010) also found that there were limited literacy facilities in the homes of the primary school children studied in Tanzania. The children's home environments were poor as they were found to be characterized by lack of book exposure and a print-rich environment, for the availability of reading materials such as children's reading books and story books was relatively low. The results also showed that one-third of the families investigated had no reading books in the home. Only a few families (5%) had three or more books for school subjects. They noted that similar findings of lack of books in the homes of Tanzania were earlier reported on a study carried out by Alcock et al. (2000), stressing that even though the homes were found to have poor availability of literacy materials, "more than one-

third (35%) of the parents were involved in helping their children with school homework.”(p. 221), thus suggesting some of the children experienced child-centred literacy oriented homes. The main aim of the authors, Lahtinen and Ngorosho, was to identify specific aspects of the home environment that predicted children’s phonological awareness and reading and writing abilities. They also included in the analysis the relationship between the literacy components in the described context. In total, a sample of 75 primary school Grade two children (40 boys and 35 girls) aged between 8 and 10 years were chosen from four primary schools in a rural area in eastern Tanzania. They concluded that low-income families had the disposition to scaffold their children in the acquisition of the reading skill. He established that children experienced low interactions in home reading activities.

In another study, Chansa-Kabali (2014) noted that in low-income families’ children experience English literacy-oriented activities in Zambia. That is, there were rich literacy home environments with children’s daily lives abuzz with print--rich environment in terms of both “both conventional--text books, children books and non-conventional--food and laundry packages, Bible, Hymns and religious materials’’: singing of both local and foreign songs, plays and games were a key feature of the children’s daily lives. Chansa-Kabali employed the design of the RESUZ project which was experimental with recruited 576 children from 42 schools in Lusaka Urban. Out of this, seventy-two Grade One children were purposefully selected from nine schools from the 42 RESUZ schools. He then assessed the home environments of seventy-two learners using a structured home literacy questionnaire. Thus the study addressed how reading development in families

in a Zambian urban setting is supported in the home contexts. This study seeks to explore a similar thematic issue, focusing on how parents engage their children in various interactions, including parental reading attitude, as indicators of a favourable home reading climate in terms of interactions between parents and their children and the children's reading abilities.

These results are in stark contrast to Akrofi (2003) and Ngwaru and Opoku-Amankwa (2010) who did not find that children experience parent-child interactions as English literacy activities as well as print-rich home literacy environments in their study of the home impact within two Ghanaian urban settings. The result difference may be due to Chansa-Kabali's sample group which comprised of only low-income families, thus the results may not be generalized to people of a different socioeconomic background. Moreover, these results may not also be easily compared in view of the fact that literacy acquisition is sensitive to different cultural contexts and thus peculiar to cultural environments (Lahtinen & Ngorosho, 2010; Ngorosho, 2011).

Regarding the home impact on second language learning, Hui, Ng and Zhu (2017) explored home influence at both the present primary four and during preschool on children's reading performance in Chinese and English in Hong Kong. Their main aim was to examine the impact of parental involvement on the bilingual reading proficiency of Grade 4 students in Hong Kong both prior to children starting school while considering parental socio-economic status (SES) in terms of education, occupation and income. They analysed a sample of one Grade 4 class from each 24 schools and 24 schools out of 150 schools. All students were tested in reading comprehension drawn from PIRLS materials in Chinese and in English.

The measure of early home reading activities (EHRAs) was based on parents' responses to the frequency of a range of activities parents held with their children before the children entered primary school: read books, tell stories, and sing songs, read on computer, play with alphabet toys (e.g., blocks with letters of the alphabet), play word games, watch TV programs about reading, write words, read aloud sign and labels, watch TV programme or video with subtitles, or play with compound character puzzle. An average was computed across all activities on a 3-point scale: never/almost never = 1, sometimes = 2, often = 3.

Also, parent-child interaction was based on the parents' responses to two items: the time the father (or male caregiver) spent with the child in a typical week and the time the mother (or a female caregiver) spent in a typical week. Then an average calculated based on the response to these two items with a 4-point scale, namely Less than 7 hours $1\frac{1}{4}$, 7 to less than 15 hours $2\frac{1}{4}$, 15 to less than 21 hours $3\frac{1}{4}$, and More than 21 hours $4\frac{1}{4}$. This meant that the higher the average score, the more frequency of parent-child interactions.

Hui, Ng and Zhu (2017) found that even though parents studied Hong Kong generally were reported to engage in HRA and HERA, a high number of them were found to have engaged not in EHRA nor HRA. This might be due to the fact that many of the parents were found to have engaged more frequently in many of such activities in Chinese than in the English related activities as Hong Kong is a cosmopolitan city where bilingual competence of its citizens is one of the major criteria for accessing a well-paid job. Similarly, Akrofi (2003), Ngwaru and Opoku-Amankwa (2010) who also found that Ghanaian parents investigated were found to engage very little in English

literacy activities at home. Perhaps, the results of Hui, Ng and Zhu (2017) pointing out few numbers engaging in literacy activities might have been influenced as stated earlier by idea that in Hong Kong bilingual competence of its citizens is a major qualification for accessing a well-paid job.

The above review has examined previous studies investigating home background and how it impacts development of second language reading ability within L2 English context in the African setting. It is clear that both the effect of the home environment and how parents provide various interactional activities are a focus of many researchers with very few studies on the home environment having been documented in African context. The review above indicates that these studies did not explore family social capital in-depth, showing the relationships and interactions between adults and children and community resources such as public libraries.

The review makes it evident that, within the African setting, studies conducted on the role of the home environment in the development of children's reading skills, L2 English reading development, in particular, are very few. This is in line with observation made by Ngorosho (2011), and Lahtinen and Ngorosho (2010, p. 211) that studies that have looked into home influence and reading development in children are very limited. It also indicates that so far knowledge from the African setting about parents' own reading attitudes which are directly related to the reading ability and development of phonological awareness in children has witnessed little research, a niche which this research attempts to examine and contribute to knowledge. The basis for the study is, therefore, the need to advance previous research on L2 reading ability, phonological awareness and the strategies

parents employ to provide various unique home-based interactional activities to support Primary 2 children's L2 efforts to learn to read.

In this section, studies so far reviewed identify three main issues. First, the home literacy environment, or reading activities, plays a crucial part in children's reading proficiency achievement and thus lays a solid foundation, especially EHRAs. Second, there is no unanimity of opinions regarding the impact of the reading proficiency of parents and children reading development (Chansa-Kabali, 2014; Li, 2007). Third, it is also realized that the perspectives /attitudes parents do hold regarding the role of the Home literacy environment as well as their own quality involvement in children's learning and reading activities is an important concern. Fewer studies have looked at parents' perspectives and the effect on the quality of their HLE in the Ghanaian context (Akrofi, 2003; Owusu-Acheaw, 2014; Stoffelsma, 2014; Ngwaru & Opoku-Amankwa, 2010).

Chapter Summary

This chapter discussed the concepts of the home environment, reading, language as defined by language and L2 reading scholars in the field. The researcher has also presented the theoretical framework undergirding the study. The next chapter presents the methodology employed in the study and the analytical strategies of the data.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

Introduction

This chapter describes the methodology employed in this study. It focuses mainly on the research design, research site, type and source of data, data collection procedure, data size, sampling technique, and analytical framework. The chapter further describes the methods and procedures employed to collect and process the data to come out with the conclusions of the study, followed by chapter summary. Then the chapter concludes with a discussion concerning issues of reliability, validity, and ethics.

Research Design

This research employs a mixed-method study approach. This choice of method is motivated by the kind of study undertaken, particularly the kind of questions guiding its focus. As Creswell (2014) noted, no single research approach can adequately address research problems especially complex ones such as those of social and health origins. The mixed method is appropriate in describing the complex nature of interactions between parents and children around second language reading development. An endeavour to recognise also how reading ability develops, its complexities and the specific social contexts that do affect the English as second (L2) reading development of primary children in the Kassena-Nankana East Municipality is expected. This thus needs a strong research method that affords triangulation for credible and robust outcome and data cross validation.

In this study, the specific kinds of mixed methods employed are the case study and sequential explanatory design. Studying a problem that has many cases to be addressed within a given context is desirable in qualitative

research (See Creswell, 2004. Because the study aims to answer a 'how' type of question in qualitative research such as this, the case study type of design is chosen. According to Yin (2003), how and why questions are best answered using a case study. As the qualitative research approach helps to address how parents interact with their children towards learning to read, this design will enable the researcher understand the participants' belief systems, attitudes as well as the way they behave. To this end, the study aimed to unearth the participants' typical day to day interactions and work pattern from their own accounts through questionnaire and interviews (Creswell, 2014).

In this study, the qualitative enquiry as part of the explanatory sequential design preceded quantitative analysis and results outcome presentation. The choice of the design is appropriate as one type of data is built from the other with the data collection spreading out over time (Creswell, 2014). To enable the researcher to obtain adequate data appropriate in addressing the problem of the research, this method thus complements the qualitative research approach. Questionnaires were used in gathering the opinions of parents on the kinds of interactional strategies they employ at home to help their children acquire the ability to read successfully. To make discussions clear, another key component of the study involves inferential as well as some descriptive analysis (Carroll, 2013).

Research Site

The study took place in the two communities of Kologo and Naaga both in Navrongo a town located in the Upper East region of the country, Ghana. The population of the area is around 109,404 (Ghana Statistical Service, 2013) and it has a number of primary and junior high schools, higher learning institutions, including the University for Development Studies,

Navrongo Campus. This community, which serves as the specific physical setting of the study, is a fast-changing town with good opportunities for acquiring knowledge (Kabobah, Nukpezah & Ntiamoah-Baidu, 2018). Yet it still features the problem of low pupils' attendance to school and limited chances for economic empowerment, a situation quite adverse to quality literacy acquisition. The absence of a functioning community library in the town of Navrongo the capital town of the Kassena-Nankana East Municipality should also be a great worry; this situation is a feature of a poor home literate environment (Ghana Statistical Service, 2013; Kabobah, Nukpezah & Ntiamoah-Baidu, 2018).

The literacy level of the parents' remains a combination of high and low ones. There are parents whose attention on their children's education particularly their reading skills development is still quite low. This might be hard to believe given the fast-growing pace of the town in diverse ways. To conclude, the home literacy environment is an integral part of the overall socio-economic and cultural environment of the Navrongo community. The two rural communities that served as the setting of the study are largely well-known subsistence farming communities in the Upper East region. To be expected, a favourable literacy environment may not be coterminous with such communities especially where farming productivity is pretty low and not well-founded. Partly, low agricultural outcome of subsistence farming production does not make the people economically versatile such that adequate support could be provided in ways children could easily access reading and writing materials (Ngorosho, 2011).

Target Population

The target population of the study is grade 2 pupils (averagely 7-9-year-olds) attending public primary schools located within the Kassena-Nankana East Municipality in Ghana and their parents. The study participants are by convenient sampling technique chosen from the public primary schools located in the rural area of the Kassena-Nankana East Municipality. Only primary schools that are in the Kassena-Nankana East Municipality are targeted. Thus, the parent participant category in this study is mainly parents who have pupils enrolled in the public primary schools within Navrongo. The parents have varied socioeconomic statuses (e.g., different educational background, occupation). It would, therefore, be interesting finding out in-depth the unique interactional strategies employed by parents to promote their children's reading proficiency achievement in English.

Sample and Sampling Procedure

For the purpose of the study, 112 grade 2 children aged between 7 and 9 years and their parents were selected, using the convenience sampling technique. The children were attending two public primary schools in two rural communities referred to as Kologo and Naaga both in the Kassena-Nankana East Municipality. They are Naaga Primary School and Kologo Primary School. I chose the young children of 7 and 9 years old because the home environments have the most significant impact on the development of reading abilities in the early years of literacy development (Hart & Risley, 1995).

In fact, research has shown that the development of reading abilities requires that learners first acquire and master certain knowledge base and skills such as orthographic awareness and decoding competence (Whitehurst

& Lonigan, 1998). However, the development of reading skills begins to develop very early in infancy before they are perfected as children grow through exposure to language, literacy materials and engagement and exploration in their social environment (Whitehurst & Lonigan, 1998; Farver, Xu, Eppe, & Lonigan, 2006; Neumann, Hood & Ford, 2013; Calfee, 1997; Neuman, 2006).

The home environment thus builds the foundation for effective literacy development in these pupils very early in life as English beginning readers (Snow et al., 2007; Grabe, 2009). I also chose the parents of the selected children since parents' interactions make a significant difference in the quality of the home environment (Neuman, 2006).

The selection of participants for the study was based on convenient sampling technique. According to Babbie (2010), convenient sampling is appropriate when subject availability is emphasized in terms of ease of obtaining them, and this feature was critical as it enabled the researcher to meet the desire for a representative sample which consists of group typicality that allows some comparisons within it. Thus, the purpose of this procedure is to facilitate ease access to participants with in-depth knowledge about the topic under study who can provide the researcher with rich information; the underlying logic behind an effective sampling procedure—the possibility of selecting participants with rich information suitable for a study (see Patton, 1990).

I selected Kassena-Nankana East Municipality as the site of the study based on my proximity. For the purpose of getting substantial number of pupils to study, I chose two public primary schools in that district, as well as

the parents. A parent was selected if the child was in Primary 2 and if the education background of that parent was found suitable based on the number of parents with similar education level required for the study.

Instruments

Instruments for this study included interview guide, semi-structured questionnaire, observation checklist, and reading test items.

Questionnaire

Semi-structured questionnaire with some home indices was devised to collect information about the home literacy environments of the grade learners. This questionnaire consists of 20 multiple choice questions measuring various home variables as specific social factors that influence reading ability achievements. Of these questions, fifteen centred on the literacy environment in the home. This part of the questionnaire which was used in collecting the data comprised three key variables and three key areas: parental socio-economic status, parental engagement in various home reading-related activities at home, the availability of reading materials in the home (Grabe, 2009). The purpose of the semi-structured questionnaire was to examine in-depth the kinds of home environmental factors and interactional strategies used by parents to promote their children's English reading proficiency achievement. See Appendix V for details.

Interview Guide

An interview guide, focusing on the unique strategies parents employed to promote their children's English reading abilities, was devised to triangulate the quantitative data. The topics were on books and other print materials availability at home for children including home literacy activities. According to Babbie (2010), having some general topics or questions to which

the researcher seeks answers from participants helps in achieving a smoothly naturally flowing of conversation, in an attempt to seek responses from participants on certain concerns of a study.

Semi-structured interviews were undertaken to seek the interactional strategies employed by parents as far as the L2 English reading abilities development of their children is concerned. This occurred after I had administered the home literacy environment questionnaire. Regarding this, parents and their children were interviewed individually for their responses on the interactions between parents and their children on learning to read in English and their influence on the English reading proficiency outcome of Ghanaian learners. I employed this method as in-depth interview is one of the most frequently used qualitative methods for data collection (Hesse-Biber & Leavy, 2004). It was a face-to-face interview conducted within 30 minutes for each participant (parent and child) in a question-and-answer pattern. This interview lasted from 20 to 30 minutes and took a question-and-answer pattern. See Appendix I.

Observation Checklist

An observation checklist is another instrument developed and used in a structured home observation meant to complement the other data collection methods in the study. In this study, I chose home observation in the data collection because visiting the homes created an opportunity to find out the depth of actual state and nature of the home environments constructed to support the child's reading abilities development. Part of the focus of the study was to ascertain how conducive the physical setting of the participants is for children's efforts in acquiring the ability to read in their English L2 context.

An example is book presence and a suitable home climate replete with access to light and space to enable children to enjoy reading and develop possibly a reading craze in time. See Appendix IV for details.

Reading Tests

The early reading abilities of the pupils were assessed using an adapted and modified reading tests procedure used in previous research assessment (Ngorosho, 2010). It comprised syllable, letter, and word reading (Alcock et al., 2000; cited in Ngorosho, 2010). The word identification test is developed to assess children's word reading skills while the letter reading tests dealt with the ability to read letters of the alphabet. Like the test for word recognition, the phonological awareness measures focused on children's letter-sound and word-sound association recognition ability. The orthographic measures focused on pupils' ability to actually read letters in their L2 English. All sampled primary 2 children from each of the two conveniently selected primary schools in the Kassena-Nankana East Municipality took the test.

With the phonological awareness component, the test focused on syllable and phoneme awareness tasks (Ngorosho, 2011). Adams (1990) suggested that tasks for measuring ability to identify syllables and phonemes are also based on those tests analysed like segmenting phonemes and deletion of say words. As a result, the common ways for assessing phonological awareness as seen in the literature include those on the ability to identify initial sounds, blends and deletion of sounds (Adams, 1990). The syllables, letters and simple words measured sound and letter identification ability of the pupils in this study (Chansa-Kabali, 2014). See Appendix V for details.

Data Collection Procedure

To obtain permission to access the study setting, an introductory letter from the Head of the Department of English of University of Cape Coast was sent to the Municipal Director of Education of the Kassena-Nankana East Municipality in the Upper East region.

Then with an introductory letter from the Municipal Director of Education and another from the circuit supervisor, Heads of the two primary schools selected were contacted to gain access to enter the specific schools and study the pupils. Children with parents of varied socioeconomic backgrounds were identified in the schools with assistance from the teachers. The designed tests focused on phonological awareness (syllable, letter and words as symbols) and letter and word identification. All the 112 pupils were supervised to read and were scored on the forty test items.

After selecting the children, their respective parents were contacted at home. Necessary instructions and the aims of the study were explained to the parents. Each parent then signed a form to vouch for his or her own readiness to participate and that of the child. The parents answered questionnaires given to them. Those who could not read were asked in the local language to give their responses, which were affected by the researcher. The same procedure was adopted for the interview. Each parent spent about 30 minutes responding to questions in the interview. Either the mother or father of the child could choose to be interviewed. The rationale was to give room for the one ready to be fully available for participation.

Data Analysis

SPSS was used to run the analysis. Multiple (or hierarchical) regression analysis was adopted in this study to establish the predictive powers of the independent variables on the children's test scores. Hierarchical regression is one of the known several research methods employed in examining the relationship and predictive power of one or more than one independent variable having a dependent variable apart from other methods such as discriminant analysis, linear regression analysis, and factor analysis (Seliger & Shohamy, 1989). According to Creswell (2014), regression analysis is a vital tool for researchers examining relationships between many independent or predictor variables on one hand and a single outcome variable on the hand. Typically, regression analysis describes "how much of the variance in one variable also exists in the other" and is therefore employed for examining the level in which one variable possibly predicts another variable (Creswell, 2014, p.237). This study used the multiple regression analysis to establish the effects of parental socioeconomic status, available reading materials at home, and home literacy activities on the reading achievements of grade 2 pupils.

Chapter Summary

In this chapter, I have presented the research methodology used in the study. In addition to the procedures that were used in collecting the data, I have described the method for the analysis of the data. In the next chapter, the analysis and discussion of the data is presented.

CHAPTER FOUR

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Introduction

In this chapter the results and the discussion of the thesis are presented.

The research sought to mainly examine the role of the home environment in the reading proficiency achievement of 112 grade 2 pupils in conveniently chosen primary schools in the Kassena-Nankana East Municipality in Ghana. To measure this, questionnaires were administered to 112 parents of grade 2 pupils in addition to interviews and reading test. The questionnaires provided quantitative data which were analysed using SPSS. The grade 2 pupils were given reading tests to account for their orthographic awareness skills and decoding competencies. To understand the significant effects of the home environment variables on these scores, we employed multiple regression analysis. Again, triangulating the quantitative component of the data, qualitative data from interviews and home observations were also analysed.

This section, therefore presents both the quantitative and qualitative results to help address the questions as well as the hypotheses that guided the research. The actual analyses are preceded by some relevant background information of the parents, such as their sex and ages to appreciate those involved in the study.

Parental Background Information and Family Possessions

This section of the study presents demographic information of the sample and physical housing features/ family possessions. This information here comprises mainly occupation, education and presence of electricity, water source and TV as key features of the home environment.

Parental background information here refers to their education, occupation, sex and age distributions as well as selected family possessions.

Sex and Age Distribution of Parents

Although the sex and age of parents of the children who were studied did not form the core part of measuring the predictive factors in children reading competencies, this basic information is useful in helping readers appreciate respondents' background; demographic characteristics of participants are important. Tables 1 and 2 provide frequency distributions in percentages on the sex and age of respondents respectively.

Table 1: Sex Distribution of Parents

Sex	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Males	62	55.4
Females	50	44.6
Total	112	100

Table 1 displays the distribution of parents of the children studied according to their sex. We can see that, out of the total population of 112, males constitute more than 55%. The females form 44.6%. As indicated earlier whether father or mother was interviewed depending on who was fully available for participation in the study (Han, 2007). Nevertheless, from the table above, it means that more fathers were engaged in responding to questions about their children's home language environment related factors which were key to reading development in their children.

Also relevant in helping reader fully understand the results and their outcome is knowledge of age distribution of parents in the study. The age range of parents might help readers to understand which categories of age bracket we are dealing with to determine their home reading activities and

qualities in supporting children's efforts in learning to read. Table 2 provides a summary of the age intervals of such parents studied.

Table 2: Age Distribution of Parents

Age	Frequency	Percentage
20 years and below	4	3.6
21-30	35	31.3
31-40	27	24.1
41-50	37	33.0
51-60	7	6.3
Over 60 years	2	1.7
Total	112	100

Table 2 shows that the majority of parents found providing home reading related activities aimed at promoting children learning or reading skills development were between 20 and 50 years. This means that such age bracket may contain people who are active and energetic. We can see that the most parents fall within the age bracket of 41-50 years forming 33.0%, after which those within the age bracket of 21-30 years constituting 31.3% follow. Those within the age interval of 31-40 came as the third highest in number representing 24.1%. We can also see from Table 2 that parents within the age range of 51-60 were made up of 6.3% of 112 parents. The least number of parents were those within the two extreme age brackets: below 20 years and over 60 years. That means that those below 20 years formed 3.6% of the total number of 112 while those over 60 years constituted 1.7%.

Contextual Factors

Contextual Factors refer to specific personalities of parents/ guardians engaged in constructing the home literate environment component to support children learning to read. These factors are the socio-economic status of

parents that are considered to be predictive factors in enhancing child learning. Socio-economic status describes hierarchies of grading social positions which highlight a person's overall social standing (Carroll, 2013; Ellis, 2000). It also has some definable indicators signalled by employment background, educational qualification, status of occupation, wealth, and income (Ellis, 2000). The specific contextual factors examined in this study included mainly parental educational background, as well as occupation, and family possessions--television, electricity, and water. Following past practice as featured in the literature (Chansa-Kabal, 2014, Coleman, 1990, Park, 2008), the socio-economic wealth index as proxy indicators were categorised as low, middle, and high. This classificatory system is used to define different margins of parents' educational achievement and occupation.

Tables 3, 4, and 5 explain the social and economic hierarchies about the parents studied.

Parents Educational Background

One factor which guided the study and was considered important for classifying the socio-economic status of learners is parental education level. The education levels of the parents were measured as low, middle, and high. These levels ranged from no education to the highest as diploma, which are displayed in Table 3.

Table 3: Distribution of Parental Education Levels

Education	Level	Frequency	Percentage
No school	Low	35	31.3
Primary school	Low	22	19.6
Junior Sec.	Low	35	31.3
Senior sec.	Middle	14	12.5
Diploma	High	6	5.3
Total		112	100

From the table above most of the parents, as suggested, had low level of education. This is based on the fact that those who had no school or up to the junior high school level constituted about 82%. Those within this bracket are classified as having low level of education. We can see from Table 3 that 31.3% of the parents out of 112 claimed that they did not have any opportunity to attend even primary school. Again, a little above half of the parents who answered the questionnaires had education level which was up to the junior secondary or middle school level. The junior secondary level of education in Ghana seems not to provide better opportunities for people to gain any formal employment because of the value of the certificate. From Table 3, less than 13% of the parents had the chance to continue their education up to the Secondary level. The secondary level could allow people to access formal jobs such as police service, military, etc. The last group constituted 5.3% of the parents who had diploma or degree. The different levels of educational background of the parents indicate that only 20 parents out of 112 had middle level of education or diploma.

Parental Occupation

One's social status can also be determined by the kind of occupation one has. Research has demonstrated that occupation category has the tendency

to define the nature of the child's home reading environment, which at the end can enhance or otherwise the early grade child's reading ability development (Ellis, 2000). Therefore, the study asked various occupations categories of the parents to establish their efforts in constructing pupils' home environments for acquiring reading ability or literacy. For the purpose of classifying different levels of occupation, the parental occupations were organised into unemployed, farmer/labourer, informal trader, secretary/receptionist, teacher/social worker/nurse, and accountant/engineer. Those who were farmers were subsistent farmers and did not engage in any relatively big business. Informal trader in this study also refers to small scale traders whose earnings are not up to the minimum wage in Ghana. That means it did not witness big-time businessmen or women. Occupational categories of parents in frequencies and percentages are illustrated in the table below.

Table 4: Occupation Distribution of Parents

Occupation	Level	Frequency	Percentage
Unemployed	Low	14	12.4
Farmer/Labourer	Low	84	75.0
Informal trader	Low	3	2.7
Secretary/Receptionist	Middle	3	2.7
Teacher/nurse/social worker	High	5	4.5
Accountant/Engineer	High	3	2.7
Total		112	100

Although some of the parents were unemployed, Table 4 suggests that those who were workers ranged from being a farmer, labourer, informal trader, secretary, receptionist, teacher, nurse, social worker, and engineer to accountant. The results from Table 4 show that parents with no or low occupation were more than those with relatively middle or high occupation.

Parents with low earning occupation such as informal trading, farming, labouring, or no employment constituted about 90% of the 112 parents while those with relatively high or middle earning income comprised 10%. In terms of low earning occupation, parents who were engaged in small scale farming or labour work formed the majority with percentage of 75.0. Parents who were unemployed were 12.4%. Only 2.7% of the parents were engaged in petty trading to support their children language learning and reading development. However, parents who indicated working as teachers, nurses, or social workers formed about 7.2% while those working as secretaries or receptionist were only 3. While teachers, nurses, or social workers constituted 4.5% of the parents, accountants or engineers formed 2.7%.

Qualitatively, the interview held, complementarily, revealed that most of the parents were farmers. They engaged in subsistent farming that took most of their time from engaging their children in the various home reading related activities. Few parents were petty traders, especially the women.

Family Possession

Family Possession in this context refers to facilities which were present at the home context of the child, which according to research is a key determinant of the quality of children's HLE; it could facilitate child language learning. These possessions included electricity, television, and water and they were counted as part of the socio-economic status of the parents or the home living environment component explained earlier. The essence of electricity is meant to provide lighting system for the child to be able to learn at home in the evening and to provide source of energy to power television for the child to watch educative programme to facilitate their learning to read. Table 5

reports of the number of homes which had electricity, television, and water facilities.

Table 5: Distribution of Family Possession

Facility	Yes	%	No	%
Electricity	59	57.7	53	42.3
TV	18	16.1	94	83.9
Water	1	0.9	111	99.1

The results from Table 5 are an indication that not all the homes of the children studied had electricity, television, or water facility in their homes. We can see from Table 5 that children who had electricity in their homes were 57.7% as against those without electricity (42.3%). 83.9% of the homes of the children studied did not have television in their homes, which could support their watching of any educative programme to improve upon their reading competencies. Only very insignificant number of 1 (0.9%) homes of the children had water but the majority of 99.1% of the homes had no water supply which demanded pupils to get access to external sources of water supply.

The qualitative aspect confirmed that many of the homes of the children did not have electricity, television, and water contrary to the survey results findings. Some of them explained that they did not have access to electricity, so there was no television in their homes. The parents were asked to indicate whether or not they watched educative TV programmes with the children at home and the following extracts are some of their responses:

Interviewer: Do you watch television (TV) programmes or videos about reading with your child?

Parent 1: No. Because no TV and no light in our community area.

The lack of electricity and for that matter television at their various homes was the commonest response provided by the parents and children participants. It was not the entire community of participants that did have source of electricity to support children's efforts in learning the L2. It was only few other homes that confirmed engagement in watching some educative programmes on TV related to their children's literacy skills acquisition and as home environment-based factor influencing reading development of learners.

Interviewer: Ok. Do you watch educative programmes on TV for example with them?

Parent 6: Yes I do. I used to sit down with them.

Interviewer: How often were you doing that?

Parent 6: Anytime I am in the house and the programme starts I could call them to come.

IV: So do you have specific programmes that you do that

Parent 6: Anytime there is a programme.

These are the views provided by those parents who provided such typically limited opportunities but theoretically desirable and as much as practically possible on the other hand, to support learners' language and reading abilities development.

Preliminary Results of Reading Tests

Before the regression analysis and results, the scores of the grade 2 pupils are presented and discussed. The test scores were derived from the grade 2 pupils' performance in orthographic awareness test and decoding competent test. This was based on the fact that orthographic processing and phonological awareness are very necessary tools in testing children reading development (Chansa-Kabali, 2014; Ngorosho, 2010). The orthographic

awareness test comprised 20 test items of letter and word recognition, while the decoding competent test also comprised 20 test items of syllables, letters and simple word recognition. That means that the two tests gave a total of 40 marks. Table 6 illustrates the summary of the results of the scores by the grade 2 pupils.

Table 6: Mark Distribution of the Reading Performance of Grade 2 Pupils

Scores	Frequency	Percentage
11	2	1.8
12	5	4.5
13	3	2.7
14	3	2.7
15	10	8.9
16	21	18.8
17	14	12.5
18	18	16.1
19	22	19.6
20	8	7.1
21	3	2.7
22	2	1.8
23	1	.9
Total	112	100

Mean score = 17.13

Generally, only a few (14 out of the 112) of the grade 2 pupils scored half and above of the total of 40. This suggests that the general performance was a little average, with most of the pupils scoring half and above this half mark of the overall total mark of 40. From Table 6, we can see that the least score recorded was 11 and the highest score was 23 out of 40 marks. We can also see that the best score was 23 out of 40, which was scored by only one pupil. Pupils who scored 20 and above form 12.5 % (14) of the total

population of 112. That means that those who scored below half of the 40 marks were 98 of the pupils scoring between 11 and 19 marks, representing 87.5%.

In terms of ranking of reading performance, Table 6 shows that 19 marks was the most frequent, constituting 19.6% of the pupils. This was closely followed by those who scored 16 marks representing 18.8%. The third most frequent score was 18, representing 16.1%. The fourth position of score was 17 with a percentage of 12.5%. The rest of the scores recorded percentages less than 10. The highest score represented 0.9% of 112. In all, the overall mean score is 17.13. In view of this, the scores were subjected to multiple regression analysis to assess which home environment variable has predictive effect on the grade 2 pupils' scores.

Multiple Regression Analysis in the Study

This analysis is in relation to research questions one and two. What relationship exists between parental socio-economic status and reading competencies of grade 2 pupils in the Kassena-Nankana East Municipality? And how do available home reading materials impact the reading achievement of grade 2 school children in the Kassena-Nankana East Municipality?

The regression analysis is done in this section to ascertain the predictive HE factors of the grade 2 pupils' reading abilities. This aspect of the research is preceded by a summary or descriptive analysis of the pupils' reading scores involving means, frequencies, and percentages before the multiple regression analysis. The multiple regression analysis was used in the research to account for the statistically significant effect of independent variables on the dependant variable. The independent variables included the contextual factors, available reading materials, and home reading activities

aimed at supporting formal learning in the formal school context. These factors were meant to predict their respective effects on the acquisition of grade 2 pupils' reading skills.

Multiple Regression Analysis of Contextual Factors and Reading

Competence

This section of Chapter 4 provides findings and some interpretation related to research question 1: What relationship exists between parental socio-economic status and reading competencies of grade 2 pupils in the Kassena-Nankana East Municipality? In order to test for significant influence of contextual factors (e.g., demographic features) as predictive factors on the dependent variable, a multiple regression analysis was run. The Multiple regression analysis involved forced entry multiple regression which entered more independent variables at the same time to look at how they become predictors of the pupils' reading scores. The contextual factors which formed the predictive factors or independent variables in this case were parental education, parental occupation, category and family possession against the dependent variable of pupils' average test scores.

The test scores of the pupils were records of orthographic awareness scores and decoding competence. It was hypothesised that contextual factors such as parental education level, their occupation, and family possession will positively predict the reading abilities of grade 2 pupils. Per the nature of the contextual factors involved in this research, two tables are used to report the summaries of the multiple regression analysis. Thus, family possession has categorical factors under it, which is different from the parental educational level and occupation. With regard to whether these contextual factors could influence reading acquisition of grade 2 pupils, the study found that socio-

economic status of parents is a major factor in determining children learning outcome. This finding is generally in line with what has been found already in previous but related studies (e.g., Baffour-Awuah, 2011; Chansa-Kabali, 2014; Li, 2007; Carroll, 2013; Opoku-Amankwa, 2009; Ngwaru and Opoku-Amankwa, 2010). However, the finding of this study suggests that it is not everything about parental personality or demographic features that could positively influence the reading abilities of their children. The specific factors that constituted the personalities or socio-economic status of parents were level of education, parental occupation, and availability of electricity, television, and water.

The factors which were found to be positive predictor factors of the grade 2 reading abilities were parental education and availability of electricity at home. Other studies revealed similar finding that parents' education level contributes significantly to the reading achievement of children because those with higher level of education provide a rich literacy environment for reading (Carroll, 2013; Chansa-Kabali, 2014; Li, 2007).

Chansa-Kabali (2014) explained that family possession significantly contributes to the acquisition of early reading skills of Zambia children. Unlike Chansa-Kabali (2014), the other factors did not have any significant influence on the reading abilities of the learners. The two factors were key in providing better learning environment in assisting the learners to learn at home although parents who had high level of education were less than those with low level of education. The implication is that the majority of the children with parents of higher educational background could perform better than those with lower level of education. However, parental education and occupation

were not found to be positive predictors of reading skills of the children Chansa-Kabali (2014). Other unaccounted factors could also cause better performance of pupils in L2 English (Grabe, 2000; Richards, 1970). Chansa-Kabali (2014) cautions that contextual factors may not be enough to account for positive home environment of early learners and that low-income family have the ability to support the acquisition of reading skills amidst economic challenges.

Table 7 provides the summary of the regression analysis testing the statistically significance influence of parental education level and parental occupation against the pupils' test scores.

Table 7: Significant Influence of Contextual Factors on Pupils' Reading scores

Model	<i>B</i>	<i>T</i>	<i>P</i>	Part
Parental education	.816	13.165	.001	.618
Parental occupation	.081	1.308	.194	.061

$$F(2, 109) = 172.327, p < .001, R^2 = 76\%$$

The overall regression model suggests that the collective impact of the predictors was significant, $F(2, 109) = 172.327, p < .001$. The R^2 value shows that the variance in the scores could be accounted for by 76% of the predictors. From Table 7, we can see that the significant values or p -values for the two predictor factors suggest that only parental educational background had statistically significant influence on the reading abilities of the grade two pupils studied because its significant coefficient is less than the 0.05 threshold. The results reveal that those with middle or high education background positively predicted the reading outcome of grade 2 pupils ($\beta = .816, t = 12.165, p .001$). The part coefficient of .618 suggests that parental education

level has high impact on grade 2 pupils' reading abilities. The results also show that the kind of work parents do is not likely to predict positive outcome of grade 2 pupils' reading ($\beta = .081, t = 1.308, p .061$). Parental occupation is not a predictor here because its significant coefficient is higher than the .05 threshold set.

In brief, the analysis shows that parents with higher educational level seem to provide better home environment for their children to learn how to read or identify letters and simple words than those with lower level or no formal educational background at all. The results also suggest that parental occupation does not generally predict the reading abilities of the grade 2 pupils.

Regression Analysis of Family Possessions and Reading Competence

Part of the first research question sought to determine the relationship between family possession as component of parental SES and reading competencies of grade 2 pupils in the Kassena-Nankana East Municipality. Family possessions were defined as key components of the contextual factors comprising parental education, parental occupation and selected housing facilities of electricity, water and TV.

Multiple regression analysis was used to calculate how family possession could impact positively the performance of grade two pupils' reading skills. Statistical significant figures are reported in Table 8.

Table 8: Significant Influence of Family Possession on Pupils' Reading Scores

Model	<i>B</i>	<i>T</i>	<i>P</i>	Part
Electricity	-.536	-6.837	.001	-.528
Television	-.122	-1.522	.131	-.117
Water	-.118	-1.491	.139	-.115

$$F(3, 108) = 19.954, p < .001, R^2 = 36\%$$

The results of the analysis show that 36% of the variance in the grade 2 pupils' reading scores could be accounted by the three predictors under family possession collectively, $F(3, 108) = 19.954, p < .001, R^2 = 36\%$. In terms of individual contributions, the results from Table 8 show that only one independent variable or predictive factor of family possession out of the three facilities indicated statistically significant influence on the reading performance of the grade 2 learners. This claim is based on the fact that the significant value or p-value for electricity is lower than the threshold of 0.05 ($\beta = -.536, t = -6.837, p .001$). With *p*-value of .001, electricity provides better home environment for learning how to read. However, the two other independent variables had *p*-values of more than the .05 threshold. That means the presence or the absence of television at home did not have any positive impact on the grade 2 pupils' reading at home ($\beta = -.122, t = -1.522, p .131$). Similarly, the availability of water facility at home did not also predict the grade 2 pupils' performance in reading ($\beta = -.118, t = -1.491, p .139$). The *p*-values for television and water mean that their presence in the homes was not a major factor in predicting the reading abilities of pupils in grade.

In short, the results suggest that the availability of electricity at home can serve as a positive predictor for the reading outcome of grade 2 pupils.

Preliminary Results of Presence of Reading Materials

This section is related to the research question 2: How do available home reading materials impact the reading achievement of grade 2 school children in the Kassena-Nankana East Municipality? To help develop in young children text awareness concept and the idea that the ability to read is a valuable task in society, the importance of the availability of reading materials to children at home cannot be overemphasised. Reading Materials which are printed and are of various types can thus serve to provide good environmental support for children learning to read. The research was also interested in finding out the presence and frequency of use of children's reading material at home. Basic reading materials include textbooks, story books, magazines, newspapers, books for beginning readers, even books which contain letters identification and simple reading tasks to facilitate children reading at home. These materials are to be made accessible by the parents to the grade 2 pupils irrespective of how they acquire them to effectively support children reading performances by ensuring a favourable reading climate at home.

Parents/guardians were expected to indicate on their questionnaires whether they had such reading and other materials in their homes for their children to access them. The responses are tabulated as in Table 9.

Table 9: Presence of Reading Materials

Reading Material	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	59	52.7
No	53	47.3
Total	112	100

The results from Table 9 reveal that the parents who indicated having some reading materials at home for their children were slightly more than those who indicated no. Table 9 suggests that 52.7% of the 112 parents affirmed that they had reading materials at home for their children to learn how to read. Those who did not have any reading material for their children to improve their reading competencies at home were 47.3%.

Out of the 112 respondents, 59 parents who indicated their affirmative response to the availability of reading material at home (Table 9) were further probed to indicate the number of such reading materials actually provided. This was to ascertain the actual number of the available reading materials in the home to support their children's efforts in acquiring reading skills. Table 10 provides the overview of available reading materials at home.

Table 10: Number of Reading Books at Home

Number	Frequency	Percentage
1	51	86.4
2	5	8.5
3/more	3	5.1
Total	59	100

Table 10 shows that the majority of homes had only one reading material for children to use to aid their reading acquisition process. This is shown by the large percentage of respondents who indicated having acquired one reading material for their children. Out of the 59 parents, 86.4% confirmed that they had only one reading material for their child at home. Those who indicated two or three books were less than 14%. Those with two reading materials at home were only 5, representing 8.5% of the total of 59.

The highest number of books available to a home was three and only three homes or parents revealed that such books were available in their homes.

Qualitatively, the interview reflected the quantitative aspect of this variable presence and number of reading materials at home. Some of the reading materials mentioned and showed to the interviewer were English worksheet for children, ABC books for children, rhyming and English grammar for children. These were the types of titles of the available printed materials for the children in the homes visited. The interview also revealed different sources of the materials. Some of the parents indicated that they bought the reading materials themselves, while the majority indicated getting them from the schools the children attended (government supplied books). Others revealed relatives and friends as main providers of the one or two books they could boast of. Here are some of the common responses of the parents from the interviews:

Parent 14: The teachers distributed the books to the children

Parent 63: Two books.

Parent 35: Here we don't have the resources to be able to buy the books.

Those who pointed out that they did not have the books at home revealed that there was no money to purchase them. Their only hope was to always rely on the occasional government supply or borrowing for their children to read. And this attitude though partly attributable to poverty can have diverse negative consequences for the presence of reading materials at home which is a key aspect of the home literate environment (Greaney,1986).

This, therefore, emphasises the claim that parents need support to play their role as scaffold providers towards successful learning of the L2 English (Chansa-Kabali, 2014).

Regression Analysis of Reading Materials

How available home reading materials impacted the reading achievement of the school children studied was a major part of the analyses and interpretation carried out concerning the research question 2.

Getting reading material available to grade 2 pupils was hypothesised to be a predictor of their L2 academic reading competences. It was, therefore, hypothesised that available reading materials and the number of reading materials at home could significantly predict the reading competencies of grade 2 pupils. To test this hypothesis, multiple regression analysis was conducted. Table 11 provides the coefficients and other important information about the statistical analysis.

Table 11: Regression Results of Available Reading Materials at Home

Model	<i>B</i>	<i>T</i>	<i>P</i>	Part
Reading materials	-.194	-1.494	.138	-.112
Number of books	.450	3.465	.001	-.261

$$F(2, 109) = 33.796, p < .001, R^2 = 38\%$$

Results from Table 11 reveal that 38% of the variance of the available reading materials could be accounted by the reading materials and the number of reading materials available, $F(2, 109) = 33.796, p < .001, R^2 = 38\%$. Looking at individual contribution of the predictors, the results from Table 11 show that the number of books at home could positively predict the reading outcome of grade 2 pupils ($\beta = .450, t = 3.465, p .001$). We can see that the significant coefficient of the number of books at home is far less than the

threshold of .05. However, available reading materials at home could not predict the reading success of grade 2 pupils ($\beta = -.194$, $t = -1.494$, $p = .0138$). Here, we can see that the significant coefficient or the p-value is higher than .05, which makes us reject that available reading materials at home is a positive predictor of grade 2 pupils.

Literacy Activities

This literacy activities section of the analysis is related to research question 3: What interactional strategies are used by parents to promote the L2 English reading proficiency achievement of grade 2 school children in the Kassena-Nankanna East Municipality? It should be noted that the impact of these activities as independent variables on the dependent variable of the pupils' reading competencies was also determined, thus addressing Question 2. A key notion of the sociocultural theory is that children learn to speak or acquire language through social interaction which is necessary for language proficiency growth (Vygotsky, 1978). So, this question seems worthwhile and deserved the researcher's attention since the early home environment and reading materials availability is a major determinant of reading skill development in children including the extent to which children can enjoy stay in school. Besides parents involvement particularly during the early age when the child is developing the ability to read and write is proven to be critical for success in school (Dearing, Simpkins, Krieder, & Weiss, 2006).

This section focused on assessing parental involvement in home reading or literacy related activities which could positively enhance child reading skills development. This was because home literacy activities lay a solid foundation for learning to read and write (Li, 2007). This objective was carried out through various reading/literacy activities. These are Literacy

Activities that pave way for English literacy practices such as reading books to children at home, asking children to read themselves, employing additional teaching about reading for the children at home, visiting community libraries, reciting rhymes, telling stories, and watching educative programmes related to reading. Their frequencies of engagement in these activities were also highlighted because children who are engaged in more English literacy interactions at home are said to perform better than their peers with fewer family interactions (Chansa-Kabali, 2014).

So far, from the analysis, the study has revealed that most of the 112 pupils studied came from poor home environments; a limited literate home environment is experienced by the pupils from varied education backgrounds. The daily lives of the pupils lacked adequate exposure to the target language in terms of interaction with parents, book reading and with reading materials essential for L2 reading attainment. In a language rich environment, the daily lives of children appears to be full of varied literacy and reading experiences. They enjoy the company of rich print material both conventional (textbooks, children's books,) as well as non-conventional materials (bible, hymns, laundry and food packages and religious materials). That means that from the finding most of the parents belonged to low level of education and low level of occupation, which was substantiated by high levels of percentages in each case presented and highlighted earlier.

This finding that the grade two pupils came from poor literate home environment is well noted in similar related studies (Lahtinen & Ngorosho, 2010; Ngorosho, 2011; Ngwaru & Opoku-Amankwa, 2010). The finding, in some significant way, supported other studies that parents within the middle-

class bracket of socio-economic status formed the majority of positive performance of learners in English (Chansa-kabali, 2014; Han 2007). This is because in this study, the middle or high education background brackets positively predicted the reading outcome of grade 2 pupils. Regarding occupation, the majority of the parents were found to be subsistent farmers, labourers and petty traders. This affected negatively the children's academic English reading attainment process, for with poor returns, farmers; traders and labourers couldn't support their children English learning as expected.

In fact, the Sociocultural Theory of Vygotsky (1978) espouses that any learning a child encounters in school always has a previous history from home. This explains the need for parents and guardians to organise different home literacy activities to support the child learning to read L2 English. However, one major result of the study also suggests that many homes did not organise extra activities that could support the reading proficiencies of their children. This finding supports other findings that parents who engage their children in English reading activities were few (Tse et al., 2017; Lahtinen & Ngorosho, 2010; Ngwaru & Opoku-Amankwa, 2010). At the same time, this finding is in contrast with other related studies because many parents were found to engage their children in various home reading activities (Chansa-Kabali, 2014; Han, 2007). In the case of Tse et al. (2017), it is local languages that many parents engaged their children in varied activities such as singing songs, telling stories, and playing games. However, the present study revealed that the few who engaged their children in various literacy activities at home yielded positive results by improving the reading competencies of learners.

Generally, some empirical studies support the finding that home literacy activities indeed are positive predictive factors of reading outcomes of learners (Chansa-Kabali, 2014; Han, 2007; Tse et al., 2017; Akrofi, 2003; Ngorosho, 2011). After a thorough assessment of the various literacy activities carried out after school, teaching children at home was the only home activity that was found to be a significant predictor of early reading abilities of grade 2 pupils. This might explain the claim by Ngorosho (2010) that some children experience child-centred literacy-oriented homes and that children experience low reading at home. The finding of this study conducted is focused on other home activities such as reading to child after school, telling stories to child, singing songs or rhymes to child, watching educative programme on television with child, and library visits. These activities were considered to be key features of a language-rich environment for learners to acquire prerequisite skills to support reading. This finding did not also support that of Han (2007) because the latter found reading with child the most effective activity in helping the child to read well in her study conducted.

The qualitative information revealed that many parents sometimes relied on some children or relatives within their social milieu to help engage or teach their children. Nevertheless, the teachers' knowledge and competence in supporting children learning in the formal context of ESL is very relevant (Ellis, 2000; Park, 2008). Just like Lahtinen and Ngorosho (2010), the inquiry found that only few parents supported their children's homework or reading. It is claimed, as said earlier, that parental serious involvement either directly or indirectly in children's English acquisition is very key in promoting good performance of learners (Greaney, 1986; Richards, 1970; Grabe, 2000).

According to Tse et al. (2017), a combination of activities such as reading books, singing songs, telling stories, playing games have positive effect on reading performance of children

Book Reading

One of the literacy-related activities with which parents engage their children at home is book reading, especially reading-aloud. In addition to developing the love for reading, book reading gives children extensive print exposure which is important in recognizing letters as well as the phonemic structure of language; beginning reading success requires phonological awareness (Adams, 1990). As a result, the different reading experiences children gain at home matters a lot when it comes to children's academic achievements (Farver, et. al., 2013; Raver & Knitzer, 2002). In view of this, book-reading was one of the sub themes this study explored in early grade reading competencies development as part of research Question 3. According to Sonnenschein et al. (2002), reading with children early in their literacy experience is important; they become avid, willing and responsive readers early in their lives through early association with printed text.

Parents or guardians were asked whether they involved their children in any reading tasks either by themselves or employed someone to do that. Parents were first asked to affirm yes or otherwise on the questionnaire. Table 12 gives quantitative response of the parents. Parents were then asked to indicate frequency of engagements in the selected reading activities. Again, Table 12 therefore provides a summary of those frequencies of engagement as well as percentage distributions of such responses concerning interaction around book reading activity.

Table 12: Distribution of Information about Engagement in Book Reading

Reading	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	49	43.7
No	63	56.3
Total	112	100

Table 12 shows that parents who engaged their children in book reading at home either directly or indirectly constituted less than half of the total of 112, thus 43.7%. That also means that more than 56% of the children were not engaged in any intentional book reading at home. From the table above, it can be seen that more parents were not involved in any way in reading with the child as about 56% of the children's homes lacked any opportunity to engage in such an important literacy interaction. This suggests no chance to support efforts in L2 literacy acquisition, especially among young learners. Interactions around book reading is greatly in line with the belief that a rich home literate environment is characterised by book reading as its essential feature (Sonnenschein et al., 2002). The surprising revelation is that though it is linked to reading skills development, homes of the children studied did not factor it as essential component of their literacy interactions in the home. Thus this finding supports studies that children in the rural area lacked opportunities to enjoy the pleasure of engaging with reading and interacting with print (Ngorosho, 2010). Similarly, Akrofi (2003), Ngwaru and Opoku-Amankwa (2010), for instance, did not find homes with English literacy related interactions in which children experienced the joy of reading books with others, especially the more knowledgeable adult and others.

Engaging in book reading is thus an important way of supporting literacy growth and learning to read in the second language home environment. Unfortunately, it was not found a regular feature of the homes of the children studied in this study. The possible explanation of this findings may be a factor of the context of the study as the education level of the parents was found to be low (See also Li, 2007). The education level of parents is a major determinant of the extent of their involvement in children's efforts in learning to read and even write (Grabe, 2009). Another reason is that as a rural area as said earlier opportunities for learning the L2 English is very limited, making L2 English learners in that context quite disadvantaged a finding similar to the findings of Ngorosho (2010). That implies that the children's effort to develop their reading craze or love for reading was left unsupported.

In relation to book reading frequency, Table 13 shows that most of the parents who indicated engaging their children reading at home did not do that on daily basis. The affirmation that parents did engage in various reading related activities was therefore not enough. Almost the same number of parents, the majority, responded that they seldom involved their children in book-reading for the engagement was just once or twice a week or a month.

Table 13: Distribution of Frequency of Engagement in Book Reading

Reading	Frequency	Percentage
Daily	4	8.2
Once/twice a week	22	44.9
Once/twice a month	23	46.9
Total	49	100

Table 13 shows that parents who engaged their children in book reading at home either directly or indirectly constituted less than half of the total of 112, thus 43.7%. From the table, 20.5% of the parents showed that their children received book reading once or twice a month. Similarly, 19.6% pointed out that they engaged their children in home reading once or twice a week. However, parents who supervised their children reading daily were only 3.6%. The extent of undertaking these literacy activities is as important as the activities themselves (De Jong & Leseman, 1998). That is, how often or the extent to which the home environment provides opportunities for young children to participate in English literacy is important for the children's successful second language learning. Interaction with English literacy particularly involving written language for instance is generally linked to measures of frequency or the extent of exposure such as children observing adults reading, like a shopping list, joint reading of books, interaction with all types of environmental print, storytelling in bed, and so forth (De Jong & Leseman, 1998).

This finding indicates that the homes of the primary two pupils showed little attention to book reading as a way of encouraging children's efforts in learning to read in the L2 English. De Jong and Leseman (1998) pointed out that reading with children is important in building good attitudes towards reading .As stated earlier, reading books with children also gives children extensive print exposure which is important for learning names of letters and for acquiring the phonemic structure of the language (Adams,1990). This lends emphasis to the need for literacy practices to be an activity occurring regularly as much as possible as a feature of the home environment. About

thirty (30) minute each night spent reading aloud to the child gives the child at least 1,000 hours of print exposure at the time children begin to enter Kindergarten and especially when they are beginning to learn to read (Adams (1990).

The qualitative information gathered from the interview showed that some parents engaged in book reading with their children while most of the respondents actually did not undertake that activity.

Only few of the parents reported that they directly made attempts to read books with their children. The general observation from the interview suggests that the number of parents who actually engaged their children in book reading was smaller than what the quantitative results indicated. Some parents justified the lack of book reading in their HE as they were either illiterate or too busy themselves to do so. So, they involved other people such as relatives or friends of the children to read with the children at their free time. Some parents reported that they did not read with their children because they were uneducated and did not employ anyone else to do that on their behalf. Some of the responses of the parents are given below:

Parent 3: Every day when their brother comes back from JSS, I always tell them to go to him so that he helps them.

Parent 19: Yes. It is her elder siblings who read with her. If she doesn't know then they will help her.

Parent 96: I would open a book to them telling them that, like this. And if they don't say it well, I tell them they haven't said it well.

Parent 101: Yeah. We read together. If I'm going to teach them in the house here I will ask them and we all sit together we do the reading. I will read and they will follow after my reading and I will ask one of them to also read after me.

The extracts from the interview indicate that most parents were not directly involved in reading to their children or asking their children to read at home to develop their reading competencies. For example, the use of older relations and other family members as indicated above in helping children L2 learning is essential here which might be the case of shared responsibility in promoting literacy acquisition in Ghana. As Adams (1990) pointed out, book reading with children gives children extensive print exposure which is important for recognizing letters as well as the phonemic structure of language when children begin to learn to read. This means it thus provides some valuable opportunities for optimal literacy development through reading practice in the homes. This is especially so for the few of the children blessed to have children's books provided for them in the home.

Home Teaching

Home teaching or parental teaching describes parents' engagement with their children by providing extra teaching for the child to support reading attainment. This aspect comprises out-of-school instructional tuition given to a child with the intention of helping the child to acquire or improve his or her reading abilities. The engagement could be either the parents doing the teaching themselves or engaging another person to do it on their behalf, since for example, some parents are often too busy or lack the requisite skill to

fulfill that. Parents were demanded to indicate either yes or no and to provide the frequency. Table 14 summarises their responses in quantitative terms.

Table 14: Distribution of Information about Engagement in Home Teaching

Home Teaching	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	20	17.9
No	92	82.1
Total	112	100

The report from Table 14 reveals that few of the parents did organise extra teaching for their children at home. Out of the 112 parents, 17.9% engaged their children in home teaching to improve their reading skills. However, 82.1% of them did not undertake any home teaching for their children. It is surprising that the results showed very low engagement of parents in parental teaching with their primary two children reading. There were limited opportunities for parent-child interaction around direct or indirect instruction as scaffold for the children as more than 90 homes out of the total of 112 parents never undertook any extra teaching to help their children in the home in learning to become competent readers. With parental teaching, certain attitudes and behaviours are passed on and are able to be developed in the children (Vygotsky, 1978). The revelation that the activity of parental teaching a key aspect of the home literate environment was not a regular occurrence which children experienced was different from the finding of Chansa-Kabali (2014) who found that parental teaching occurred frequently to support formal learning in the school. The difference in the findings could be as a result of the different nature of the population. The population in this study was dominated

by parents of low education level even though education had influence on the reading attainment of the children.

In relation to how often they taught their children per week, month or year, Table 15 shows that most parents indicated that it was not on regular basis. This suggests home literate environments devoid of regular interactions around parental teaching in the home. Limited engagement in extra teaching at home is characteristic of a poor language home environment that may not promote successful development of the necessary reading skills among young learners. This reinforces the claim that opportunities for L2 English learning in the rural area are limited (Ngorosho, 2010).

Table 15: Frequency Distribution of Home Teaching

Home Teaching	Frequency	Percentage
Daily	4	20.0
Once/twice a week	7	35.0
Once/twice a month	9	45.0
Total	20	100

From a careful study of the distribution, some of the parents who were specific about the frequency of teaching their children indicated daily, weekly, monthly or yearly as reported in quantitative terms. But the results suggest that providing parental teaching at home seemed not to be a common occurrence in the children's literacy environments considering how most of the engagements were once or two times per week or month. Only 20% of the few 20 homes experienced this activity as a daily occurrence. The extra teaching that occurred once or twice a week and once or twice a month was 35% and 45 % respectively. It was alluded to earlier that involvement in the activities is as

important as their frequency. It was also emphasised that home teaching to support reading development among young learners is well noticed in the L2 literacy context. Children learn to speak from adults by imitating these adults and being instructed on how to act, which is instrumental in helping “Children develop an entire repository of skills” (Vygotsky, 1978, p.84; Grabe, 2009). The indication from the entire frequency showed that parental teaching that was undertaken once or twice a week or month was less than that held as part of the daily life of the learners.

Regarding the qualitative inquiry, interviews with the children and their parents even showed that no parent taught them every day after school. The majority of the children indicated that they were taught just once in a while and, to some, no extra teaching for them at all. Illiteracy and busy schedules were the two main reasons parents gave to account for their inability to engage their children in extra teaching that will support reading skills development among young children.

What it means appears that the qualitative report confirmed that most parents did not engage their children in any extra teaching at home to promote their reading ability development. The interview revealed that parents who engaged their children in home teaching were less than what the quantitative information reported. There was no parental teaching for children in the home. Only few of the parents who were educated seldom inspected assignments given to their children and used such opportunities to teach them. According to the parents, there were therefore no specified periods for engaging the children in extra teaching. Here are some common excerpts from the interview:

Interviewer: Do you involve in teaching your child to read by providing him or her with private teaching?

Parent 5: Yes. Once a week

Interviewer: By who?

Parent 5: The elder brother.

Parent 8: Truly, when they return from school and their brother doesn't have any home work, and is sitting idle, I tell them to go to him for help. I open a book to my children, teaching them sometimes.

Parent 13: It's his brother's wife that sometimes engages the child, XXXX, in some reading activities.

Parent 56: Yes. We teach the child but you know our education is not advanced but we can take a book and recite say A, B, C, D.

Parent 71: No. It's when one child of my sister comes here that they do such things together. Apart from that, no. We don't do that.

Most of the responses from the parents suggest that they were not sure of the academic abilities of siblings or relatives who were involved in teaching their children but they had no option. Once the helpers were older than the children, they assumed that the helpers knew how to read and pronounce words to their children for instance. This means that no professional or expert was employed to give extra tuition to the children at home where parents were unable to do it themselves. Parent 13 is a good example in that regard. Some of them also blamed their own limitations for their inability to undertake any private teaching as an activity at home, as can be seen in the case of Parent 56.

Rhyme

Reciting rhymes or singing songs with children at home was one of the activities the study sought to find out whether it was a feature of the children's HLE. It is maintained that reciting rhymes is key to the development of children's listening, speaking, and reading skills. It was one of the activities this study was interested in finding out whether and how parents engaged their children in at home to promote the children's academic literacy skills development. The study found out how many parents engaged their children in this activity and the frequency of engagement at home.

The results from Table 16 show that the majority of parents did not involve in reciting rhymes or singing songs to their children at home.

Table 16: Distribution of Rhyme Recitation at Home

Reciting Rhymes	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	46	41.1
No	66	58.9
Total	112	100

Table 16 gives some pattern in the distribution concerning the presence of rhymes recitation in the home. We can see that, while 41.1% of 112 parents did that, 58.9% did not. This implies that it was not all the homes that did not provide English literacy practices that give children involvement with the target language through the use of singing of rhymes and songs, which is critical for optimal literacy development. This can be attributed to the few of the parents' positive belief in the need to providing the needed scaffolding to boost the efforts of the child in acquiring the L2 English reading skills. Homes where children experienced the joy in singing songs and reading rhymes with parents were fewer than those where such an opportunity never existed,

suggesting that they were less exposed to what is referred to as a stimulating home reading culture or environment (Ellis,2000).

With regard to the number of times, Table 17 reveals that 41.1% of the parents sung songs with their children, but in terms of frequency, the majority of them, out of the 46 parents, did that once or twice a month.

Table 17: Frequency Distribution of Rhyme Recitation at Home

Reciting Rhymes	Frequency	Percentage
Daily	7	15.2
Once/twice a week	13	28.3
Once/twice a month	26	56.5
Total	46	100

From the table above, we can see that from the total of 46 parents who indicated yes or sang songs or rhymes to their children, 56.5 % did that once or twice a week or month and only 15.2% on daily basis. With the entire group of respondents of a total of 112, involvement in the singing of rhymes as often as on a daily basis recorded less than 7%. This shows very limited rhymes recitations opportunities provided and how such opportunities were commonly experienced as part of parent-child interaction amidst learning to read by the young children, the benefits of which are thus denied to those children. Or what it means is that they experienced them but only sometimes or in low frequencies. Emphasis is placed on the provision of ample opportunities such as singing songs and rhymes recitation in the home because partly they help parents monitor the child's language learning and more indirectly model attitudes suitable for a successful language learning (Gardner and Clement, 1990).

The qualitative report confirmed the quantitative report of most parents indicating that they did not recite rhymes or sing any songs to their children. The parents were too busy to engage their children in such activity as some of them claimed. Some of their common responses are displayed below:

Interviewer: Ok. What about playing games or singing songs with your child?

Parent 15: No.

Parent 18: Yes. Once a week

Interviewer: Why do you not engage in the singing of songs and playing of games?

Parent 36: Because of the lack of time; you have to sleep as result of tiredness from work most often.

The responses of the parents in the extracts above in relation to rhyme recitation mean that they did not actually consider this activity as part of efforts in helping to improve the reading abilities of their children. Singing of songs and rhyme recitation was not a regular literacy experience in the HLE of the children studied in the study. The response from Parent 36, for example, suggests that the parents were too busy to sing songs or recite any poems to their children with the intention of developing the prerequisite skills of reading in them.

Visiting the Library

Library visit, as a literacy activity, was one of the concerns of the questionnaires to which parents responded. Like the book reading activity, rhymes and parental teaching discussed earlier, the activity of library visit is also related to research question 3: What interactional strategies are used by parents to promote the L2 English reading proficiency achievement of grade 2

school children in the Kassena-Nankana East Municipality? It should also be noted that the impact of these activities, as independent variables, on the dependent variable of pupils reading competencies was also determined, thus addressing research Question 2.

It is one of the major interactional strategies usually employed by parents to help in the development of their children reading abilities (Grabe, 2000). Possessing the appropriate reading attitude is important but building good reading attitudes may be challenging. The point is that the goal of any second language learning programme should not be to train children only with the ability to read but to have children who actually do read, learners that have a strong sense of liking for reading for its own sake (Harris & Sipay, 1985, as cited in Grabe, 2000, p.562). This appears to be the critical aspect of learning any second language

The study aimed at finding out whether or not parents took their children to the library to read books. This was to also reveal how parents were building good reading attitudes in children to help improve upon their reading abilities and orthographic awareness levels. After the inquiry, the results are organised in Tables 18 and 19.

Table 18: Distribution of General Information about Library Visit

Reciting Rhymes	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	1	0.9
No	111	99.1
Total	112	100

The results from Table 18 suggest that almost all parents did not include visiting library as one of the interactional strategies for enhancing reading acquisition of their children. It is clear from Table 18 that 99.1% did not

consider taking their children to library for them to learn how to read among others. It is, however, not surprising that children in the homes studied had little literacy building experiences embedded in parent-child interaction strategies. It is less offered by the parents as most rural areas like the context of this study lack library facilities (Ngorosho, 2010). By visiting libraries with children, they grow to like to read and actually do read for its own sake which appears to be a critical aspect of any successful second language learning.

The analysis here also focuses on the frequency of interactions in the various reading related activities parents said they provided in the homes. Table 19 presents this finding and that only one parent out of the 112 responses indicated taking the child to the library to read which is even once in a month.

Table 19: Frequency Distribution of Visiting the Library

Reciting Rhymes	Frequency	Percentage
Daily	0	0.0
Once/twice a week	0	0.0
Once/twice a month	1	100
Total	1	100

From the table, a clear pattern of the report on this activity is presented; it is 1% of the respondents that took the child to the library as part of L2 literacy building in the home. The parent indicated that that was not consistent in a month. This outcome points to the idea that English literacy practices provided in the homes lacked the opportunity to build the appropriate reading attitudes in the children, attitudes that play a key role in motivating readers to learn to enjoy engaging in reading activities very early in life.

The qualitative inquiry confirmed the quantitative report that the grade 2 pupils were not experiencing library visit as a key feature of the home reading environments. According to the parents, a total of 112, there was no community library for their children to undertake such activities. Some common examples of their responses are illustrated below:

Interviewer: What about taking your children to visit the library

Parent 16: No. We have no library here.

Parent 33: No. In our community here there is no library so the child does not go anywhere.

Joseph: No. We don't have a library.

Clearly, all the responses above show that visiting the library was not part of one of the activities parents engaged their children in due to inaccessibility factor. It may be a factor that hinders L2 learning and reading outcomes, particularly children learning to acquire literacy in their early years. Children in the rural area face some difficulties as they attempt to learn the L2, particularly acquiring literacy (Ngorosho, 2010). They are disadvantaged and the opportunity to utilize externalities such as this library visit may be inaccessible in a way.

Resources in the larger community apart from the home and the school contexts that promote learning, such as a library, are also instrumental in developing reading abilities among L2 children. In the homes of the children studied according to the qualitative inquiry reported, encouraging reading and writing among young L2 English learners through library visits was not found.

Watching TV with Children

The research also used the questionnaire to find out the number of parents who intentionally watch educative programmes related to reading at

home with their children. This was to ascertain whether parents were involved in using such important means to help improve reading or inculcate in their children the love for reading in their early years.

Frequency of engagement in such activity was measured--the number of times on daily, weekly, monthly or yearly basis. Tables 20 and Table 21 present the summary of the information collected from parents about interactions around TV watching.

Table 20: Distribution of Information about Watching TV with Children

Watching TV with Child	Frequency	Percentage
Ye	13	11.6
No	99	88.4
Total	112	100

The results from Table 20 show that parents who engaged their grade 2 pupils in watching TV educative programmes were fewer than those who did not undertake that activity. We can see that 11.6% of 112 parents answered in affirmation that they watched educative programmes with their children at home with the intention of helping them to learn to read. This means that 88.4% of the parents did not engage in such TV programmes with their children at home. This revelation is similar to Ngwaru and Opoku-Aamankwa (2010) and Akrofi (2003) who found that children had to struggle learning to acquire literacy in the English language in poor home literate environments characterised by no access to books including the lack of some of these opportunities of watching educative TV programmes. This similarity, however, is a bit surprising given that the two studies took place in urban areas. The research site of this study as indicated earlier is a rural setting with

some difficulty in accessing source of lights and TVs to enable homes to undertake certain activities such as this and partly for which reason this finding was expected. Another possible explanation for the unexpected similarity between my findings and that of Ngwaru and Opoku-Aamankwa and Akrofi could also be attributed to attitudinal matters of the parents (Bus, van Ijzendoorn & Pellegrini, 1995).

This analysis on the concept of parent-child interaction in relation to reading ability building is less common in the daily lives of the primary children studied, as presented in Table 21.

Table 21: Watching TV with Children

Watching TV with Child	Frequency	Percentage
Daily	0	0.0
Once/twice a week	4	30.7
Once/twice a month	3	23.1
Once/twice a year	6	46.2
Total	13	100

With frequency of engagement in watching educative programmes, Table 21 reports that 46.2% of the 13 parents who affirmed their involvement in TV watching in the home engaged their children but only once or twice a year.

As we can see, those parents who engaged their children once or twice a week recorded 30.7% while 23.1% did that once or twice a month. That means that there was no interaction around TV watching that occurred daily as part of the everyday literacy life of the children. These are basically low frequencies of engagement. Unlike other commonly familiar literacy activities undertaken by the parents such as reading with the child, singing of songs and rhymes and playing of games by comparison, watching educative programmes

was less preferred. Table 21 shows, as we can see, that 30.7% of the parents engaged their children once or twice a week while 23.1% did that once or twice a month, with no daily interaction..

The qualitative inquiry also suggests that only few parents actually watched educative TV programmes with their children at home, which they attributed to the lack of access to electricity. Most of the parents who did not watch such educative programmes with their children attributed that to lack of access to electricity. Some common responses in that regard from the interview are displayed below:

Parent 6: Yes. I do. I used to sit down with them.

Interviewer. How often were you doing that?

Parent 6: Anytime, I am in the house and the programme starts I could call them to come.

Parent 4: No. We are not aware of any of such programmes and their times of TV to be able to utilize them.

As for news, we listen together and discuss but we do not have access to the educative programmes.

Parent 72: No. Because no TV and no light in our community area. No. There is no light here.

Because there is no light, we don't have a TV.

According to some parents, they were not aware of such educative programmes showed on television, especially those who had access to source of light and TVs. A typical example is the case of Parent 4. This lack of

awareness of any educative programmes on the TV was a challenge to these parents who instead listened to news with their children.

Regression Report of Home Literacy Activities

The findings of the chapter also focused on the research question 2 that investigated how the available home reading materials/activities impacted the reading achievement of the grade 2 school children studied.

Addressing this question, the various home literacy activities were subjected to multiple regression analysis because it was hypothesised that these activities would be positive predictors of grade 2 pupil's academic English reading proficiency achievement. These independent activities are book reading, parental teaching, telling stories to child at home, singing songs/rhymes recitation, visit the library, and watching educative TV programmes related to reading with children. A summary of the results of the multiple regression report on these activities are presented in Table 22.

Table 22: Regression Report on Home Literacy Activities

Model	<i>B</i>	<i>T</i>	<i>P</i>	Part
Reading to child	-.163	-1.807	.074	-.151
Teaching child	-.370	-4.166	.001	-.348
Telling stories to child	-.096	-1.088	.279	-.091
Singing rhymes to child	-.005	-.053	.958	-.004
Visiting library	-.011	-.121	.904	-.010
Watching TV with child	-.142	-1.523	.131	-.127

$F(6, 105) = 6.399, p < .001, R^2 = 27\%$

Generally, the statistical figures from Table 22 show that 27% of the variance in grade 2 pupils' scores is accounted for by the six independent predictors, $F(6, 105) = 6.399, p < .001, R^2 = 27\%$. What this means is that

there was a collective positive influence of the six predictors on the reading performance of the grade 2 pupils. The results report that only teaching a child at home positively predicted the reading competencies of grade 2 pupils ($\beta = -.370$, $t = -4.116$, $p .001$). This is based on the fact that it is the only independent variable that had statistically significant coefficient of .001, which is less than the threshold of .05. We can see from Table 18 that reading to child, telling stories to child, singing rhymes to child, visiting library, and watching TV with child at home did not have any positive impact on the reading performance of the grade 2 pupils. Their respective p-values are higher than the .05 threshold.

Regression Report on Frequency of Engagement in Literacy Activities

This aspect of the study is related to the research question 3 as I probed further to find out the extent to which parents actually engaged their children in the various literacy interactions identified as part of the children's HE.

In that regard, multiple regressions were also used to test for statistically significant effect on the frequency of engaging the children in the various activities that could help the grade 2 pupils to develop their reading competencies. Such activities were specific home activities and how these could predict the reading abilities of children because the study hypothesised that the frequency of engaging children in home reading activities would predict the reading competencies of the grade 2 child. Table 23 illustrates the summary of the results of the multiple regression analysis.

Table 23: Regression Results of Reading Activity Frequency

Model	<i>B</i>	<i>T</i>	<i>P</i>	Part
Reading to child	.292	2.860	.005	.227
Teaching child	.339	3.675	.001	.291
Telling stories to child	.181	2.078	.040	.165
Singing rhymes to child	-.028	-.343	.732	-.027
Watching TV with child	-.170	-1.808	.073	-.143

$$F(5, 106) = 10.660, p < .001, R^2 = 34\%$$

The summary results from Table 23 demonstrate that 34% of the variance of the grade 2 pupils' reading scores could be accounted by the frequency of the five predictors collectively, $F(5, 106) = 10.660, p < .001, R^2 = 34\%$. Individually, not all the five predictors could have positive influence on child reading competencies. The results indicate that the frequency of reading to child, teaching child at home, and telling stories to child at home positively predicted the reading outcome of grade 2 pupils due to the fact that their individual p-values are less than the .05 threshold. The frequency of home reading to a child was a positive predictor of the reading outcome of grade 2 pupils ($\beta = .292, t = 2.860, p .005$). Table 19 also suggests that the frequency of home teaching was a positive predictor of child's reading proficiency ($\beta = .339, t = 3.675, p .001$). Again, the results showed that the frequency of interacting around story telling children stories at home was a positive predictor of the reading outcome of grade 2 pupils ($\beta = .181, t = 2.078, p .040$). However, the frequency of reciting rhymes or singing songs to a child ($\beta = .450, t = 3.465, p .001$) and watching educative TV programmes with a child ($\beta = .450, t = 3.465, p .001$) did not predict their reading outcomes positively due to the fact that their coefficient for the p-values were higher than the threshold of .05.

Regarding individual unique contribution to the effect of the number of times home reading activities were conducted at home, there were variations in the predictors (see Table 23). The p-values and the part coefficients of the three positive predictors suggest that the number of times children were taught at home on how to read had the greatest contribution than the other two predictors. The frequency of teaching children at home has the least p-value of .001 and the highest part coefficient of .291 showing its unique contribution to the general positive performance in children reading. Reading to child at home was the second highest contributor or predictor of positive performance of children in terms of reading based on the fact that its p-value .005 was less than the threshold of .05 but higher than the p-value of frequency of home teaching. Additional evidence is that its part coefficient of .227 is the second highest. Although the number of times stories were told to children at home has been revealed as one of the reading predictors of children, its p-value of .040 is the highest amongst the three predictors and also close to the threshold of .05. Also, it has the least Part coefficient (.165) among the three predictors. This makes its contribution the least.

Chapter Summary

This chapter has reported the results and discussion of the study. The chapter has revealed the findings of both qualitative and quantitative assessment of home-based factors which contribute positively to the acquisition of early reading skills. The findings have pointed out that most children come from poor home environments. Many of them were not involved in certain important and varied home literacy activities and facilities relevant for the development of reading skills. However, parental educational level, electricity, number of reading materials, home teaching and the

frequency of book reading, and storytelling were the positive predictors of reading achievement of the grade 2 pupils.



CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Introduction

Chapter Five presents the summary of the entire study and the conclusion, recommendations and implications. It begins with the summary of the overview of the purpose of the study, research questions, and the methodology. The conclusion, recommendations, and the implications are drawn from the findings of the research.

Overview of the Purpose, Research Questions and Methods

The main purpose of the study was to explore the nature of the home literacy environment of primary school English language learners and the impact on the children's academic English reading proficiency achievement using a mixed research approach. The research studied this phenomenon from Vygotsky's (1978) Sociocultural Theory. The research was guided by both research questions and hypotheses;

A number of research questions guided the study. These research questions that guided the study focused on finding out the possible relationship that existed between parental socio-economic status and the reading competencies of grade two pupils in the Kassena-Nankana East Municipality, the impact of available reading materials and activities in the homes on the reading achievement of the pupils studied and the interactional strategies if any employed by parents to help children acquire the ability to read in their L2 English.

The following null hypotheses were set to test the statistical significant effects of home environmental factors on grade 2 pupils' reading abilities:

H0 There is no statistically significant influence of parental socio-economic status on grade 2 reading achievement.

To answer the research questions, the mixed methods approach was employed to explore the nature of the children's home environments and the significant impact on their reading outcome. Purposive sampling was used to select 112 grade 2 pupils and their respective parents to provide both forms of information for the study. The results of the study were presented through both quantitative and qualitative perspectives to obtain in-depth knowledge and conclusions.

Summary of Key Findings

The key findings of this study were derived from the analysis of both quantitative and qualitative inquiries undertaken on grade 2 pupils and their respective parents. The findings are presented according to the research questions set with their corresponding hypotheses. Only the research questions of the study are repeated but the summary of the findings emerged from both questions and the hypothesis analysis.

Research question 1: What relationship exists between parental socio-economic status and grade 2 pupils' reading competencies?

Research question 1 intended to explore the socio-economic status background component of the grade 2 pupils' home environment and how this impacted their reading abilities. The contextual factors as defined in the study were the parental socioeconomic status which included their educational level, their occupation, and the availability of electricity, television, and water. Thus, contextual factors here cover water, television. The key findings here include the following: That the home environments of the grade 2 pupils were poor because majority of the parents had low level of education, and low earning

jobs. Also, a marginal majority of the children's homes had electricity to support their evening reading achievement. In addition, that only a small number of homes had televisions. Moreover, the statistical report indicated that only parental level of education and the presence of electricity had positive influence on children's reading. Quite apart from these, parents with higher levels of education provided better child-centred home environments to support their children to learn reading than those with lower levels of education.

Research question 2: How do available home reading activities and materials impact children reading achievement?

This research question sought to find out the available printed reading materials at the homes to help promote the acquisition of the early grade 2 children's reading abilities. It also explored the number of the materials and their impact on the reading abilities of the children. It was found that a marginal majority of homes had some reading materials according to the self-administered questionnaires report. However, the interview conducted and the observations suggested otherwise. Also, that the majority of the homes had only one reading book for the children, which were supplied mainly by government and that the presence of reading book at home did not positively predict the reading outcome of the grade 2 pupils. Again, the number of reading books at home had some significant positive effect on the reading abilities of the child.

Research Question 3: What interactional strategies are used by parents to promote their children's L2 English reading proficiency achievement?

This question sought to identify the various literacy activities parents employed at home to promote the development of the grade 2 pupils reading abilities. It also included the frequency of occurrence of such activities. The key findings are given as follows: The study found that only a small number of parents (17.9%) engaged their children in various home literacy activities, and which was even seldom done. The parents' reasons were that they were either illiterate or too busy to engage the child. Again, the common home literacy activities with which parents engaged their children at home to promote their reading abilities development were mainly reading to child, teaching the child, singing songs or reciting rhymes to child, narrating story to child, and watching TV with the child. In addition, the statistical report showed that teaching child at home was the only positive predictor of the grade 2 pupils' reading achievement. This activity was mostly not done by the parents themselves but by older children, other family members or neighbourhood friends; that is where it was done. And the last but not the least, the statistical report also showed that the frequency of engaging a child in home reading, frequency of teaching a child, and frequency of telling stories to a child at home had positive influence on child reading.

Implications

The first implication of this study is on pedagogy. Based on this research outcome, teachers in particular may obtain new and deeper understanding of the home literacy environment, a concept with burgeoning research attention in Africa, and its implications on literacy growth of their L2 English learners. As pointed out earlier, a proper understanding of students'

reading problems in the target language classroom requires knowledge of their language experiences at home. Every L2 student has a prior history that includes various sociocultural influences from L2 home background experiences. Finding out children's level of motivation, interest and, especially, exposure to the L2 at home is part of the teacher's core mandate in language teaching and learning.

There is another important implication of these results for the implementation of national policy in the education sector. The study has revealed a number of factors--home based--that can have the tendency of affecting the reading outcomes of children. English literacy interaction around book reading is not a regular feature of the children's home reading climate, an important revelation for future government policy planning and implementation in education. Parents of the L2 English language learners need help to broaden awareness of how the home is a critical provider of literacy learning opportunities.

Finally, this research has implication for further research. It serves as empirical evidence for L2 English contextual research. The findings can spark off more and similar research in the area of home background and L2 reading development. Generally, research begins with a problem and may end with another problem. Although this study has expanded the horizon of the relatively little research conducted in the field of social factors and second language reading development or academic literacies, more studies are needed to understand the nature and quality of the home environments of English as second language learners in Ghana and Africa as a whole.

Recommendations

The first recommendation is that the study should be extended to cover larger subjects than what this research could afford. This can confirm the findings of the study. What needs to be ascertained is confirming how other communities are actually supporting their children's efforts in learning to develop their abilities to read English. Supporting factors such as parental occupation, and availability of reading materials at home were not positive predictors of early child reading.

Another study can be conducted on only specific home literacy activities that are proven empirically to have strong positive effect on reading attainment. Out of about five home literacy activities, this study found only home teaching to be the only strategy that positively predicted the reading outcome of young children. More and specific attention to the various activities may reveal more important findings.

Finally, a comparative study between rural and urban communities can be conducted to see how the home living environments of these different groups and contexts affect their reading literacies to support policy implementation and child learning.

Conclusion

The main aim of this research was to describe the nature of the HLEs of Grade 2 children and the influence on their English reading abilities. The research, therefore, studied 112 grade 2 pupils and their respective parents from the perspectives of parental socio-economic status, available reading materials at home, and home literacy activities parents engage their children in to promote their reading skills development. These home literacy environment factors are explained by Vygotsky's (1978) sociocultural theory that the

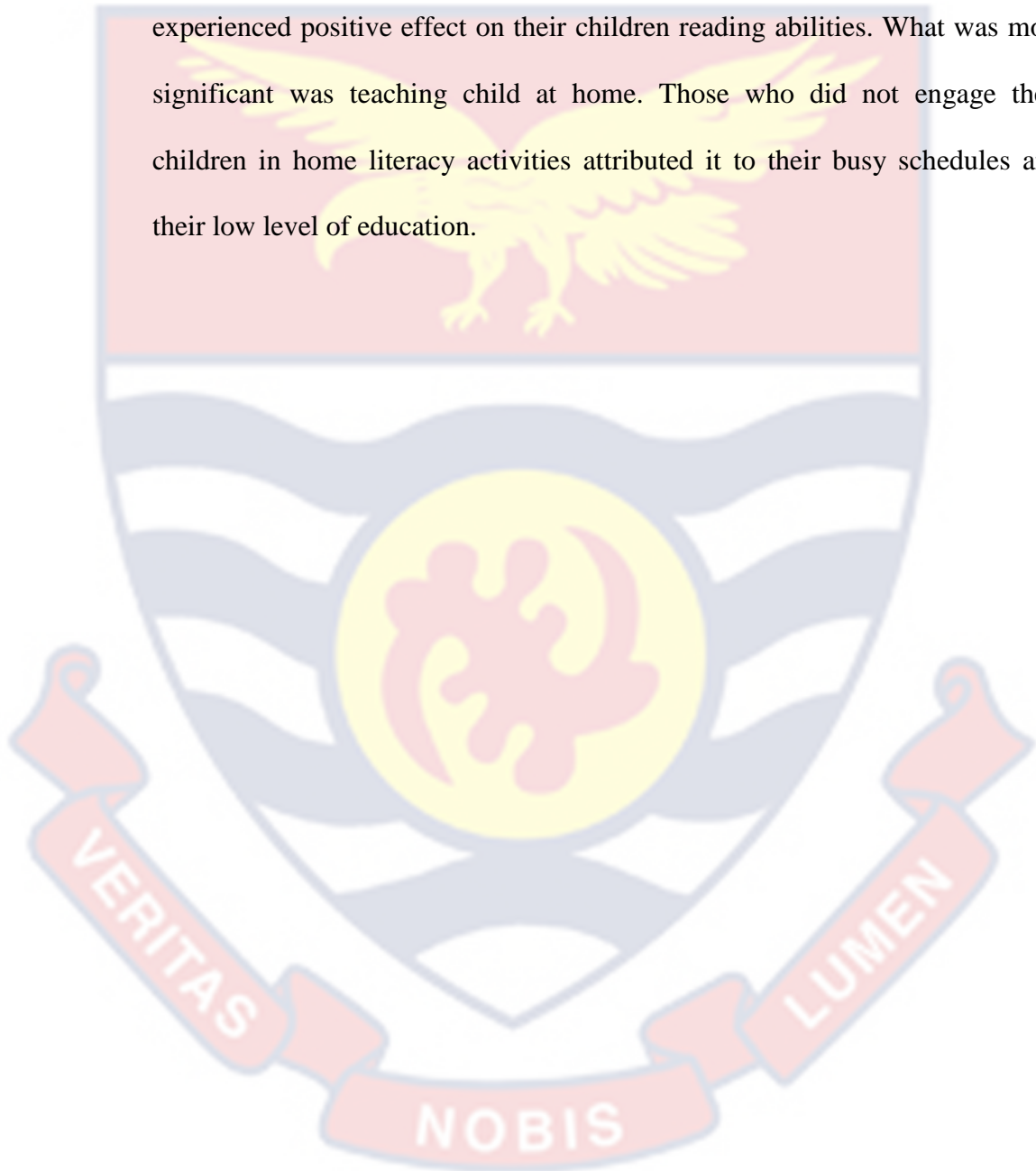
development of child intelligence and language proficiency is a function of the society and the environment in which he or she lives.

The study revealed that the grade 2 pupils studied were from a poor home environment, with limited English literacy experiences. This was due to the low level of education and economic earnings of the parents. This finding tallied with other similar studies (Akrofi, 2003; Opoku-Amankwa, 2010) but at the same time contrasted with some other findings (Ngorosho, 2011; Tse et al., 2017). It was also shown inferential statistics that only educational level of parents positively influenced child reading abilities. Just like other studies (Alcock et al., 2010; Tse et al., 2017), the study, therefore, concludes that parents with high education background appear to provide better home literacy environments than those with low educational levels. This behoves other parents to also find effective means to support their children to learn how to read properly through organising a variety of reading activities at home for them.

The research has also shown that most parents did not provide reading materials at home to help improve the children reading skills. It was revealed that only few homes had reading materials to support child reading development. Although the available reading materials did not have any statistically significant effect on the reading competency of the child, the number of books available at home did. This implies that homes that provide ample and appropriate reading materials for children can contribute effectively towards supporting learning in the home.

This study has also supported previous research finding that parents engaging their children in different home literacy activities are generally

useful in enhancing their children's early reading skills development. Although many parents were not found engaging their children in home enhancing reading activities such as teaching child, reading to child, telling stories to child, and singing songs or rhyming to child, the few who did that experienced positive effect on their children reading abilities. What was most significant was teaching child at home. Those who did not engage their children in home literacy activities attributed it to their busy schedules and their low level of education.



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APPENDICES**APPENDIX I: QUESTIONNAIRE**

Topic: The role of home literate environment in the reading proficiency achievement of primary English language learners.

INTRODUCTION: Please we are interested in what YOU do or SOMEONE ELSE does with your child in the home to help him or her learn to read in English properly. Be assured that your identity shall not be made public and that this questionnaire is strictly confidential. Please be HONEST as much as possible

INSTRUCTION: Please tick (✓) the box beside the appropriate answer to show whether you do the following activities with your child and HOW OFTEN in the home or write in your own answer when asked to do so.

SECTION A: The availability of children's reading materials/books in the home

In this part, we would like to know the number of reading books, if any, parents have at home for their children.

1. Do you have reading materials/books in the home for your child?

1[] Yes 0[] No

2. If yes, how many books do you have in the home for the child?

1[] 1-10 books

2[] 11-25 books

3[] 26-100 books

4[] 101-200 books

5[] more than 200 books (5)

[] Other (Please Specify :)_____

SECTION B**Parental involvement in home reading-related activities**

3. Do you read an English book or a story to your child or ask the child to read to you in English?

1[] Yes

0[] No

4. If yes: How often do you read together?

0[] 1-2 times a year

1[] 1-2 times a month (2)

2[] 1-2 times a week (3)

3[] Every day or almost every day (4)

5. Do you take your child to visit a library?

1[] Yes

0[] No

6. Do you watch an educational television (TV) programmes or video about reading with your child?

1[] Yes

0[] No

7. If yes, how often do you watch such programmes together?

0[] 1-2 times a year

1[] 1-2 times a month (2)

2[] 1-2 times a week (3)

3[] every day or almost every day (4)

8. Do you involve in teaching your child to read at home in addition to what is taught in school?

1[] Yes

0[] No

9. If yes, how often do you do so?

0[] 1-2 times a year

1[] 1-2 times a month (2)

2[] 1-2 times a week (3)

3[] every day or almost every day (4)

10. Do you play games such as word games with your child?

1[] Yes 0[] No

11. If yes: How often do you play games with your child(ren)?

0[] 1-2 times a year

1[] 1-2 times a month (2)

2[] 1-2 times a week (3)

3[] Every day or almost every day (4)

12. Do you read or tell stories to your child? 1 [] Yes 0[] No

If yes: How often do you read or tell stories to your child (ren)?

0[] 1-2 times a year

1[] 1-2 times a month (2)

2[] 1-2 times a week (3)

3[] Every day or almost every day (4)

13. Do you sing songs or recite rhymes with your child? 1[] Yes 0 [] No

14. If yes, how often do you sing songs or recite rhymes with your child?

0[] 1-2 times a year

1[] 1-2 times a month (2)

2[] 1-2 times a week (3)

3[] Every day or almost every day (4)

APPENDIX II:**INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR INDIVIDUAL PARENTS AND PUPILS**

Title: Parental role in promoting primary English language learners' reading proficiency achievement.

Date

Place

Interviewer

Interviewee

Position of interviewee

[Describe here the project, telling the interviewee about (a). purpose (b).the individuals and sources of data being collected,(c).what will be done with the data to protect the confidentiality of the interviewee, and (d)how long the interview will take.]

INTRODUCTION: We appreciate your willingness/acceptance to be interviewed today. As said earlier, the purpose of this project is to interview parents/guardians who are considered special with rich experience in helping their children at home to be able to acquire the ability to read in English, and to find out especially the specific ways in which they promote the reading proficiency achievement of children in their homes. This project is purely academic research and the information will be used to prepare a thesis as part of a study. Your identity and your views will not be made public. The interview is strictly confidential. This interview should last from 20 to 30 minutes and will take a question and answer pattern.

PART I: DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION OF PARENT SAMPLE

In this section, we would first like to know just a little about you to help us see how different types of parents handle the issues we have been examining. This information will thus help us to make meaning out of all the answers to our questions.

QUESTIONS

1. Sex:
2. Education level:
Father:
Mother:
3. Age:
 - a. Mother: _____ years old
 - b. Father: _____ Years old
4. Occupation:
 - a. Mother:
 - b. Father:
5. The number of children you have in the home.
6. What is your relationship to this child in this study?
7. The name of your residential location.

17. What is your highest education level / qualification?

- 1 [] Never attended school
- 2 [] Less than Primary
- 3 [] JSS/JHS/Middle School
- 4 [] SSS/SHS
- 5 [] Post middle/Sec. Cert/Diploma
- 6 [] Tertiary with undergraduate
- 7 [] Tertiary with postgraduate or higher
- [] Other (Please specify :) _____

18. What is your occupation?

- 1 [] Unemployed
- 2 [] Housekeeper/gardener/ farmer /labourer/cleaner
(Businessman/businesswoman)
- 3 [] Self-employed/Vendor/informal trader
- 4 [] Secretary/clerk/receptionist/typist/sales
- 5 [] Security officer/police/traffic officer
- 6 [] Teacher/nurse/social worker
- 7 [] Doctor/engineer/accountant/computer programmer
- 8 [] Businessman/businesswoman

19. What is your relationship to this child in the study?

- 1 [] Mother 2 [] Father 3 [] Grandmother
- 4 [] Grandfather 5 [] Aunt or Uncle 6 [] Guardian/Adopted

Parent

**APPENDIX III:
INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR PUPILS**

Personal Data

School:

Class:

Sex:

Age:

Parents' occupation:

Parents' education levels:

a. Mother _____

Mother _____ -

b. father _____

Father _____

Home reading related activities

1. Do you have reading materials/books provided for you in the home? [Yes]

[No]

If yes: give the Number of reading materials/books available in the home for you.

2. What types of reading materials/ books are provided in the home for you as a child?

3. Do your parents or guardians read a book to you or ask you to read to them in English? If yes: How often do you read together?

4. Do you watch television (TV) programmes or videos about reading with your parents at home? If yes: How often do you watch such programmes?

5. Do your parents take you to the library? If yes, how often?

6. Do your parents involve in teaching you to read in addition to what is taught in school?

7. Do your parents tell stories to you? If yes: How often do they tell stories to you?

8. Do your parents play games such as word games with you?

If yes: How often do they play games with you?

9. Do they sing songs with you or encourage you to sing songs?

If yes: how often do they sing songs with you?

10. Others: Tell us any other thing your parents do in the home to help you learn to read well.

THANK YOU VERY MUCH FOR YOUR COOPEARTION.

MAY GOD BLESS YOU!



1. Do you have reading materials/books for the child in the home? [Yes]

[No]

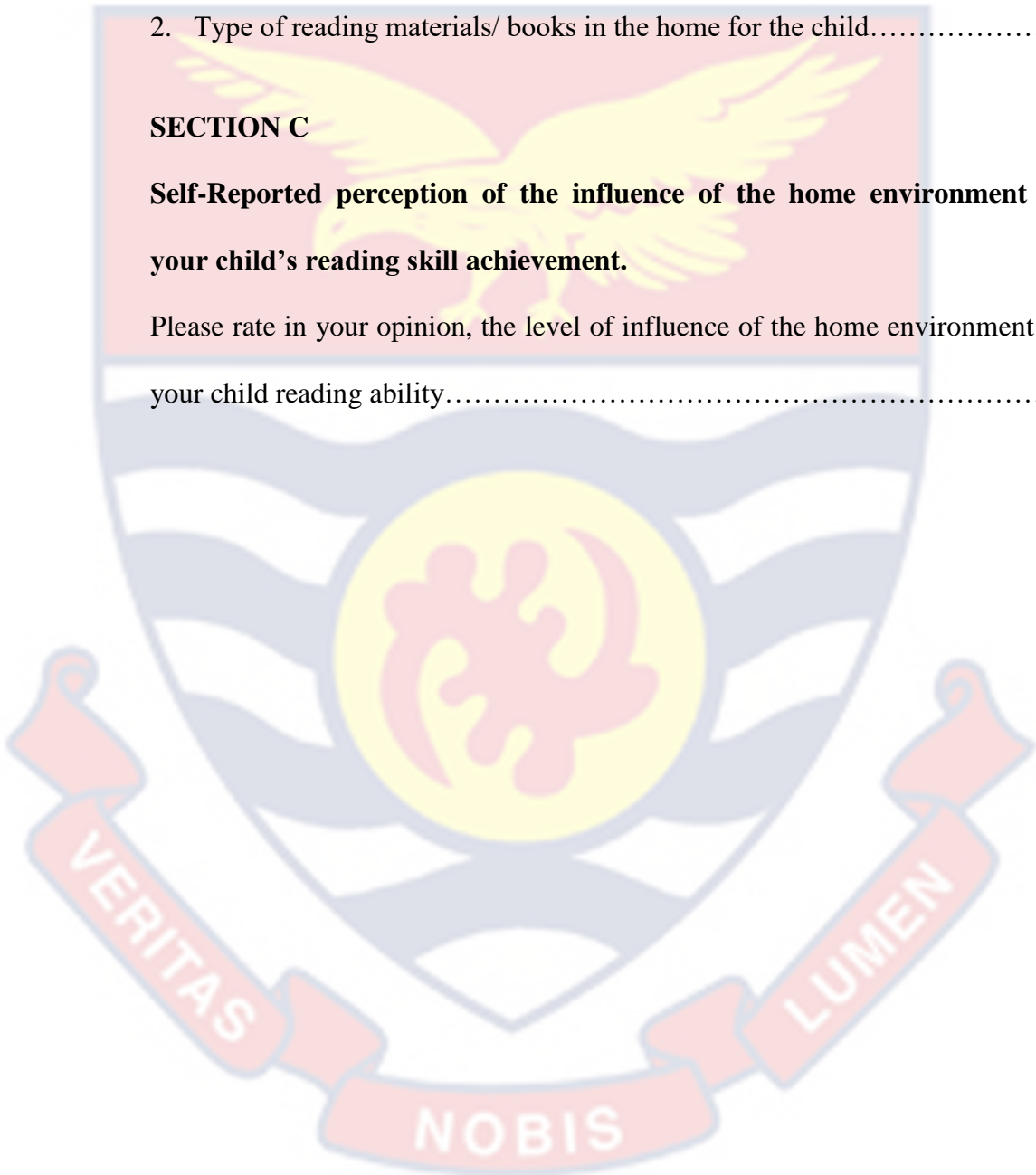
If yes: Estimate the Number of reading materials /books available in the home for the child.....

2. Type of reading materials/ books in the home for the child.....

SECTION C

Self-Reported perception of the influence of the home environment in your child's reading skill achievement.

Please rate in your opinion, the level of influence of the home environment in your child reading ability.....



APPENDIX V: TEST

ORTHOGRAPHIC AWARENESS TEST

LETTER IDENTIFICATION

1. D M T C 2. a b d s 3. s c k u 4. s o b y 5. M A O T

SIMPLE WORD IDENTIFICATION

6. cat pot dog sat 7. bet god pack fell 8. ten cup top toy 9. pen man hat sin
 10. wall fox van fan 11. run pat hat lamp 12. cap fan boot Tom 13. head mat
 pan pot 14. fast cat mat rat 15. boy ball fat pen

SYLLABLE IDENTIFICATION (CVC)

16. Dada gari papa baba

17. Panda paper zipper tiger

18. Basin river mimic water

19. Kobo drama robot mana 20. mama potter hotdog papa

DECODING COMPETENCE

Identification of letters as symbols

1. /p/ / b/ /m/ /s/ 2. /b/ /m/ /r/ /s/ 3. /f/ /k/ /v/ /t/ 4. /s/ /m/ /f/ /p/ 5. /k/ /g/ /t/
 /m/

6. /z/ /b/ /m/ /t/ 7. /b/ /k/ /m/ /g/ 8. /p/ /u/ /k/ /d/ 9. /s/ /t/ /d/ /n/ 10. /k/ /b/ /r/ /p/

SIMPLE WORD (CVC) PRONUNCIATION

11. Cat pat sat fat

12. Bet bit fell pack

13. Sam big bell pan

14. Pan ten bet man

15. Sin pick wall fox van

16. Man ham pat Sam

17. Tom pat ban mat

18. Head ham pan pot

19. Mat late Kate cat

20. Boy girl ball pen

