

**COMMUNICATIVE AND COGNITIVE FACTORS AS DETERMINANTS OF
LEARNING OUTCOMES IN ENGLISH READING COMPREHENSION
AMONG SENIOR SECONDARY STUDENTS IN OYO STATE, NIGERIA**

BY

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CERTIFICATION

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DEDICATION

To my Redeemer. He caused it to happen at His own time.

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Blessed be the name of the Lord for his love and protection and for the successful completion of this study. There is none like my God.

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ABSTRACT

Reading Comprehension (RC) is indispensable to academic success. Reports have shown that learning outcomes (LO) - (achievement and attitude) of many public Senior Secondary students in English RC are not satisfactory in Nigeria, including Oyo State. Past studies focused more on intervention to improve learning outcomes in English RC than on communicative and cognitive factors. This research, therefore, was carried out to investigate communicative (Topic Familiarity- TF, Language Anxiety- LA and Syntactic Ability- SA) and cognitive (Text Structure Knowledge- TSK and Cognitive Style- CS) factors as determinants of LO in English Reading Comprehension (ERC) among the Senior Secondary School students in Oyo State, Nigeria

The Foreign Language Anxiety, Multiple Intelligences and Schema theories provided the framework while the study adopted survey design of the correlational type. Ten Local Government Areas (LGAs) were randomly selected from the existing 33 in Oyo State, Nigeria. The simple random sampling technique was used to select 50 public Senior Secondary Schools (five from each LGA). Two thousand five hundred Senior Secondary two students (50 from each school) were randomly selected. The instruments used were Attitude to English Reading Comprehension ($r = 0.74$), Syntactic Ability ($r = 0.80$), Language Anxiety ($r = 0.78$), Cognitive Style ($r = 0.79$) questionnaires; Topic Familiarity Scale ($r = 0.87$), English Reading Comprehension Achievement ($r = 0.81$) and Text Structure Knowledge ($r = 0.81$) tests. Data were analysed using descriptive statistics, Pearson product moment correlation and Multiple regression at 0.05 level of significance.

The respondents' age was 16.90 ± 2.06 years and 52.3% were female. Students' TF ($\bar{x} = 2.26$), LA ($\bar{x} = 3.14$) and SA ($\bar{x} = 3.96$) were high at threshold of 2.00, 2.50 and 3.00, respectively. Students' SA ($r = 0.08$) had a positive relationship with achievement in ERC, but TF, LA and CS did not, while TSK ($r = -0.22$) had a negative relationship with students' achievement in ERC. This means that TF, LA and CS, were inversely related with students' achievement in ERC. Students' TF ($r = 0.01$) had a positive relationship with students' attitude to ERC, but LA, SA, CS and TSK did not. The composite contribution of the independent variables to achievement was significant ($F_{(5; 2,354)} = 27.17$; Adj. $R^2 = 0.53$), accounting for 53.0% of the variance. There was no significant composite contribution of SA, LA, CS and TSK to students' attitude. Students' SA ($\beta = 0.08$) and TSK ($\beta = -0.22$) made significant relative contributions to achievement in English RC, while only TF ($\beta = 0.05$) made significant relative contribution to attitude.

Syntactic ability and text structure knowledge influenced achievement in English reading comprehension, while topic familiarity influenced attitude to English reading comprehension among Senior Secondary students in Oyo State, Nigeria. Teachers of English Language should focus on these factors to improve learning outcomes in English reading comprehension.

Keywords: English reading comprehension, Syntactic ability, Topic familiarity,
Text structure knowledge, Attitude to English reading comprehension

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ERC	English Reading Comprehension
RC	Reading Comprehension
LO	Learning Outcomes
TF	Topic Familiarity
SA	Syntactic Ability
LA	Language Anxiety
CS	Cognitive Style
TSK	Text Structure Knowledge
FLA	Foreign Language Anxiety
JC	Joint Contributions
QTFERC	Questionnaire on Topic Familiarity and English Reading Comprehension
QSAERC	Questionnaire on Syntactic Ability and English Reading Comprehension
QLAERC	Questionnaire on Language Anxiety and English Reading Comprehension
TSKT	Text Structure Knowledge Test
CSQ	Cognitive Style Questionnaire
PPMC	Pearson Product Moment Correlation
WASSCE	West African Senior School Certificate Examination
WAEC	West African Examinations Council

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background to the Study

In this present modern digital world where information is thrown around, the importance of reading cannot be undermined. Reading is a critical language skill that serves as a medium to academic attainment and educational success. According to studies, reading frequently not only improves one's abilities but also gives one the exhilaration of being transported into a separate world with a whole unrelated set of events while being unaware of the real one.. Reading is a process which requires full attention and if done properly, triggers a series of mental reactions on encountering desperate events in the book. It provides first-hand information as well as gives one the advantage of experiencing them in different modes. It is an integral part of one's life which requires one to think to understand the thoughts of others.

Kim, Nam, Lee, Nam and Kwon (2013) remark that life is being sustained through deep reading at different ways of assessing signs, symbols and letterings as well as making useful interpretations for it. Reading is also known to be recognition of words and symbols in which students are meant to make meaningful inferences. According to Fakeye and Fakeye (2016), reading is a means by which the writer and the reader interact, and this involves the recognition of words, phrases as well as sentences. Kolawole and Bateye (2017) opine that reading is a need for success in formal education and that literacy and education are defined by reading. Likewise, Adeyinka (2020) sees reading as an indispensable language skill that is long lasting and is required for acquisition of literacy. Therefore, reading though a receptive skill is a mental activity that exposes and helps the reader to unlock an infinite world of knowledge in any field of human endeavour. Ability to read guarantees success in examinations, engenders correct application of instruction, and gives the reader access to information and knowledge that are coded in books.

Comprehension, according to Mabekoje (2011), is the basic and goal of reading and it simply means laying hold on the meaning of a text. Falayi (2015) also attests to the fact that comprehension is a degree of structural knowledge and understanding a text where reader interacts, responds or reacts to what has been read in a meaningful

way. No doubt, ability to read is especially measured through quantitative and qualitative dimensions of comprehension (Kolawole and Jire-Alao, 2014). Reading is primarily linguistic or language-based in nature while comprehension is the cognitive aspect of reading (Norman, 2015). Comprehension is basically integrated into the teaching of reading in English language classroom (Mba and Iduma, 2016). Thus, reading comprehension is known to be constructing a mental representation of textual information and its interpretation. It is very important to individual because reading comprehension helps to discover new things by enabling the students to educate themselves in any area of life not necessarily in English language alone but in other subjects they read too.

Reading comprehension (RC) encourages genuine reader's engagement with the text and the growth of the mind, imagination, and creative side. It acts as a link between critical reading and casual reading, between morphemes, lexicons, characters, and context. With this, their self-image is built and as such, reading comprehension is very necessary in this generation. Similarly, National Reading Panel (NRP, 2000) avers that attaining comprehension of a text comprises two basic skills which are word knowledge and reasoning in reading. Again, Zhu (2016) has suggested that there is a relationship between students' ability to comprehend text, their reading skills and their ability to process information. In other words, when learners are not able to recognise words, they will be unable to progress to the processing and reading of the words which aids the comprehension of the gist in the text. Adeyinka (2020) says reading comprehension involves a writer or an encoder, the meaning which is the contents to be communicated and a reader who is also known to be a decoder. In other words, it helps to discover new things by enabling the students to educate themselves in any area of life.

According to Tompkins (2011), there are several strategies for reading, text analysis, vocabulary and the practice of deep reading. Reading comprehension could be a very challenging aspect of English language instruction especially for second language learners. Success in reading comprehension requires that learners should acquire or develop a set of important skills. In West African Secondary School Certificate Examinations (WASSCE), English language is very important to students, especially comprehension and summary aspect. These skills help students not only to pass but for sound academic competence. The examination is meant to test different skills of communication; students' abilities are tested in reading, comprehension,

summary, vocabulary and other aspects of English language. Despite the crucial importance of English language and the reading comprehension skills in particular, attainment of learners is low.

To corroborate this, the chief examiners' reports between the year 2010 and 2020 on the weaknesses of candidates in their examinations is an indication that students did not achieve as expected in the reading comprehension aspects of the discipline. According to the reports, despite the two comprehension passages' use of a vocabulary adequate for candidates at their level and known subject matter, many candidates did not perform well. For the most part, this was due to the fact that many of them used portions of the passages as responses. While certain questions called for implied responses, many candidates blindly grabbed words out of the material without any consideration. This could be a result of bad reading habits or a lack of interest in reading due to language anxiety. In other words, the dearth of sufficient communicative and cognitive items on the part of candidates hampered their capacity to meaningfully express themselves in good English.

Also, the analysis of the available data on students' performance in English language in WASSCE May/June from 2010 to 2015 shows that less than 30% passed at credit level though there was an improvement in 2016 and 2017 where 40% and 60.9% of the candidates scored between A1 and C6 respectively. However, there was a reversed case in 2018 where Oyo State came 26th in the West African Examinations Council (WAEC) ranking having 21.03%. This shows that the performance in English in Oyo State within the stated periods has not only been very poor but also inconsistent. The implication of this is that there seems to be an improvement in the trend of students' performance in the latter years; this may be due to series of workshops organised by Oyo state government. Not only that, it was gathered that many teachers sensitise the students on the examiners' reports during these years, many coaching centres also sprang up to complement the school activities and for some time there was not any incessant change in the teachers' posting. Nevertheless, looking at the performance in year 2018, there was a reverse in the performance as Oyo State came 26th in the WAEC ranking of the states, which makes the percentage of students' success in the examination to be 21.03%. There were no statistical analyses of students' performance in 2019 and 2020. This is due to some corrections which WAEC claimed were going on as at the time of gathering these reports.

Nonetheless, the performance was still low nationwide in English Language examinations

Meanwhile, students' attitude to a particular discipline could be a factor for low interest in that subject. Ness (2016) asserts that students dislike the English language due to its ever-changing rules, foreign in nature compared to mother tongue and several other reasons. The concept of attitude referred to students' feelings, opinions, beliefs and interest exhibited towards person, place or object. According to Afolabi (2010), students' attitude towards a subject refers to their perception about learning the subject. Several researchers Fakeye 2010; Adebisi 2012 for instance, have found attitude to be potent factor of improving learning instruction. Attitudes have been found to either propel or repel students' interest in learning. Attitude deals with the processes of thought, action and behaviour because it represents a person's disposition to issues and situations.

Several research efforts have focused on improving the level of English instructions and language skills in various schools. For example, Kolawole (2014), researched on how to improve comprehension skills as a language teacher, Amirian (2019) worked on topic familiarity and vocabulary knowledge as an implication for instruction, Ogunyemi (2014) worked on composition writing. Also, Ojedokun (2010) and Olagbaju (2014) researched on how to improve summary writing while Fakeye (2008), and Adebisi (2012) worked on the need for teachers to help students achieve success in reading comprehension. The quest to improve learning outcomes in comprehension reading requires several factors in and outside the passage. Although reading comprehension (RC) requires a deeper processing of text, the language teachers' choice of instructional strategy is equally important. Fakeye (2008) and Adebisi (2012) submit that the achievement of students in RC has not improved significantly for it is not properly explained by teachers who rely solely on teacher-centred approach.

Also, scholars like Aniga and Ellah (2010) identify several processes that contribute to efficiency in reading and the comprehension of any text. These processes include the identification of the topic sentence(s), understanding paragraph development and efficiency in writing as some of the skills required to succeed in English reading comprehension (ERC). Although reports from several studies carried out on how to improve students' performance in English language have contributed to the pool of knowledge and shown improvements in students' achievement in reading

comprehension after teaching interventions, students' performance in English examinations has remained generally low. However, apart from text-related, students-related and instructional strategies-related factors in the teaching of reading comprehension, if a student is to develop RC skills, he must possess and activate a number of linguistics skills and cognitive skills. Norman (2015), see RC as both linguistics and cognitive based. Therefore, this study examines the relationship between communicative and cognitive factors and students learning outcomes in RC.

Communicative factors in this study comprise topic familiarity, language anxiety and syntactic ability while text structure knowledge and cognitive styles have been categorised as cognitive variables that can affect positively the performance of students in English RC. The choice of the identified variables was based on the reports of WAEC chief examiners from 2010 to 2020. The reports stated that students have poor use of mechanics of the language; there was inappropriate use of spellings, syntax and vocabulary expressions. There was also lack of familiarity with the written words, poor expression as a result of lack of appropriate vocabulary to convey ideas, wrong use of tenses as well as inability to construct simple and meaningful sentences. Above all, the chief examiner gave the concerned teachers some suggestions, urging them to use functional and communicative methods when teaching English. In order to determine students' achievement and attitude toward RC in Secondary Schools in Oyo State, this study considers communicative and cognitive factors with the following variables: topic familiarity, language anxiety, syntactic ability, text structure knowledge, and cognitive style.

Topic Familiarity (TF) can be defined as degree of knowledge of a certain topic which is of paramount importance to decode, comprehend and understand accurately and correctly (Oribabor, 2014). It is the magnitude of prior information at students' disposal about themes, concepts, and topics in given passage, comprehension, or text. Grabe (2011) says that the more one engages with a topic, the more likely it is that vocabulary of that topic will be mastered. This can be done through word association test. With this gesture, reader undergoes a particular mental exercise from passive to active and mechanical process. TF is the fundamental basis for mental operation which is instrumental in comprehension of text, recall production and the protocol that follows summarisation. Studies have shown that topic familiarity has effects on students' ability to comprehend beyond the procedural level to construction of logical text as well as other high degree processes. TF reflects the familiarity of a reader's

specific background or knowledge in a topic or a written word. For instance, Pearson (2013) asserts that when learners are assigned to read texts or topics that they are culturally familiar with, they are likely to be able to participate actively and relate with the learning material better than when dealing with an unfamiliar topic.

Language anxiety (LA) is a communicative factor which affects instruction in RC. Anxiety is a phenomenon that is common to human beings and it cuts across different topic issues. It is a state of worrying when faced with certain conditions that threaten personal and communal peace. LA can be conceived as manifestation of general worry or anxiety such as test anxiety or as worries and other negative emotional reactions developed or exhibited when learning or using English language. Donkaewbua (2016) views LA as two forms of responses: first is as a transfer of other general worries, and the second is as a response to something unique to language experience

Language Anxiety depicts a sense of uneasiness, apprehension and tension developed by an individual in the process of language utilisation, more importantly in the use and context of second language which could include learning, speaking, and listening. It can also be referred to as communication apprehension. It can be explained as the fundamentals of self-concepts, behaviour, feelings, and belief system which is associated with acquisition of language within the classroom context which erupt from the distinct process of language acquisition. It usually emanates from individual's perception of self, regulation of cognitions, difficulties in learning language, as well as the difference in learners' background, cultural inclination, social status, as well as the implication of loss of self-respect and identity.

It is of a fact that the sole purpose of language is not to be perfect or to impress people but to communicate successfully (Abdelhalim, 2017). It is also sacrosanct to state that understanding spoken and written English are not the same (Agbo, 2019). Alice (2011) affirms that about 99% of conversations including native speakers contain mistakes by written standards. For spoken English, the guides are informality, short-sentences, frequent feedback, and fluency (Biggs, 2003). A real-life conversation is about communication and not about perfect structures, perfect word choices and perfect accents. It is about getting one's point across as best as one can. The phenomenon of LA is caused by lack of language practice, preparation, poor breathing, and posture. Empirical studies have revealed that several strategies can be deployed in coping with LA among students. It has been classified into five distinct features among which are preparation, that is ability to study well and decode summaries of a passage;

good relaxation which entails taking a deep breath before expressing self as well as building positive thinking, that is, conceiving the idea that one is great irrespective of the circumstance. Studies by Zhu and Li (2014) and Tata (2014) affirm that LA is real among students learning it as second language. It is a potent factor that can affect an individual's ability to acquire new or second language.

Language Anxiety has adverse effects on students who are foreign learners to a language. It is established that students' language anxiety has significant influence on their medium through which they acquire language as well as achievement in reading comprehension (Jones, 2004; DeBruin-Parecki, Van Kleeck and Gear, 2015). Literature has revealed that high level of apprehension has negative impact on the way that language is acquired (Huang, 2005). It has also revealed the features of students suffering from language anxiety are prominent with. However, the correlation between LA and the students' learning outcomes in the reading comprehension needs to be examined critically as it has established to negatively impact students' second language learning.

Another factor which is of interest in this study is syntactic ability (SA). It can be explained as the capacity to study, understand and apply the language rules effortlessly (Spörer, Brunstein and Kieschke, 2009). It is the strength demonstrated in the organisation and utilisation of words, phrases, and clauses that make up a sentence. It is the ability to understand the rules in terms of word-order grammatically and morphologically. Bock and Ferreira (2014) and Zhang (2011) see it as the ability to track the relationship that exists in word formulation, sentence construction, reading comprehension passages. It is the capacity to know and understand the various sentence levels and making meaning out of it. It is the ordering of words, phrases, clauses, and other indicators of sentence construction. It is the mastering of the agreement in text formulation (Bîlici, Ugen and Weth 2020). Literature has shown that SA is a potent factor of ability to comprehend text.

Thus, effective reader could identify and utilise English grammar rules in the structuring of phrases, sentence organisation and the pattern of its workability (Funke, and Sieger, 2012). It has direct relationship with students' language ability. It is an element of academic achievement in English reading comprehension. The ordering of words requires syntactic ability which is the adoption of appropriate words and phrases usage in oral and written forms. In other words, the combination of sentence rules and grammar competence could be adjudged as syntactic ability (Al-Seghayer, 2015). In

the same vain syntactic ability is a measure of language regulations and structural arrangement which are used in identifying correct sentences. Lexical items are part of the core areas of language learning and activities in second language classrooms which are largely centred on vocabulary acquisition. According to Abdelhalim (2017), words are the basic components of language and in that wise, having syntactic ability by an individual or learners aids syntactic knowledge as an essential aspect of language learning. From the earlier studies on the effect of SA on achievement in second language learning, it is established that they are not from Secondary Schools and mostly they are from outside Nigeria.

Text Structure Knowledge (TSK) is a cognitive factor in the teaching and learning of reading comprehension in English language classroom. It can be explained as the way writers arrange information in a text (Xu, Si and Zhang, 2011). Thus, ability to understand and recognise the manner of text arrangement gives students edge in identifying major concepts, themes, topic, the connections, the next events as well as monitor the pattern of writing and the idea the text is passing across. Text structure is a crucial characteristic of an academic writing as it allows reader to assume the dimension of argument and find his or way through the text. It is of paramount importance to know that a well-articulated and structured text is expected to have fluidity in terms of logic and arrangement of events for cohesion and understanding of thematic ideas (Adeyinka, 2020b). A good and well-structured text is easier to read and derive meaning from because it helps to signal the upcoming events as well as drag the reader into the nitty-gritty of the text without necessarily going through the rigour of word identification and projection. It helps the reader to move sequentially from known to unknown, simple to complex (Alenizi, 2019).

Text structure knowledge in a comprehension text is the internal organisation or pattern of the institutionalisation of ideas (Alfallaj, 2017). The gains of the knowledge of text structure have empirical evidence and support in the scheme of comprehension reading. It helps to build the description, understanding, sequence, problem identification, solution, ordering, chronology, proposition, cause, and effect tracking as well as the ability to compare, and contrast (Williams, 2011). It significantly improves their comprehension and retention of information (Alice, 2011).

Cognitive Style (CS) is the knowledge control loaded in an individual and it is distinct from person to person. It is an individual's pattern of creative thinking and logically processing information for use. It is explained as dimension of individual's

personality which is borne out of value identification, clarification, attitudinal belief system, social interaction, and several others (Garcia and Kennison, 2013). It is bound to be different from the most preferred indicators such as individual tasking to team spirit building or even visual versus non-visual related activities. It is a form of personality measurement that influences attitudes, values, and social interaction

Various individuals are imbued with several styles of cognition as emphasised by Howard Gardner's multiple intelligence theory. CS is of paramount importance as it helps students to process their experiences, knowledge and information gathered in an organised, logical, sequential manner for the purpose of retention and usability (Tawalbeh, 2015). It is an individual's habitual, common, preferred, known, workable and prevalent modicum of thinking. It is also seen as the thinking, decision-making, learning modes, mind mapping, perpetual, and conceptual mechanism as well as problem-solving styles of reasoning (Bilici, Ugen and Weth, 2020). Several models which explained cognitive style categorised students into two distinct arrangements. This implies that if learners can understand their peculiarities and the capacity to think, they can fashion out how to optimise their schedule in and out of classroom.

Reading comprehension is of paramount importance in students' achievement in the English language both at internal and public examinations and at all levels. The five independent variables identified in the study are likely to be determinants of students' low achievement and poor attitude to reading comprehension. Therefore, this research work examined the correlation between communicative and cognitive factors and students' achievement in and attitude to English reading comprehension.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Reading Comprehension (RC) is very important across curriculum but despite the importance of the reading skills in and out of school, the teaching of RC in schools has not been given adequate attention. Instruction in reading comprehension has been limited to reading, explanation and answering of the questions after the passage. Low attainment in RC has been attributed to low quality of instruction by the English language teachers who rely heavily on mechanical strategy to the teaching of RC. Studies have emphasised issues such as methods and skills used in teaching reading, influence of vocabulary development on reading comprehension of Secondary School students, qualitative evaluation of reading instruction and effectiveness of different techniques of teaching RC. Despite the contributions of these studies to teaching and

learning of reading comprehension especially around techniques and strategies to teaching and learning reading skills and reading comprehension, the findings have not been significant enough to improve students' performance in external examinations. Also, there was little emphasis on communicative and cognitive elements that influence secondary school students' attitudes to and their performance in English RC. Therefore, this study seeks to investigate communicative and cognitive factors as determinants of LO in ERC among SS students in Oyo State, Nigeria.

1.3 Aim and Objectives

This research aimed at examining communicative and cognitive factors as determinants of LO in English RC among Senior Secondary School students in Oyo State, Nigeria. Specifically, the study objectives were to:

- i) assess the students' familiarity with the topics of English reading comprehension
- ii) ascertain the level of students' language anxiety with the subject matter of English reading comprehension;
- iii) establish the students' level of syntactic ability in English reading comprehension;
- iv) examine the relationship between the independent variables (IVs) (topic familiarity, syntactic ability, language anxiety, text structure knowledge and cognitive style) and learning outcomes (achievement and attitude) in English reading comprehension;
- v) establish the joint contributions of the in English reading comprehension;
- vi) ascertain the relative contribution of the IVs in English reading comprehension;
- vii) find out which IVs would determine learning outcomes (achievement and attitude) in English reading comprehension.

1.4 Research Questions

Based on the stated problems, the study seeks to provide answers to the following questions.

1. What is the level of students' familiarity with the topics of English reading comprehension?
2. What is the level of students' language anxiety with the subject matter of English RC?

- 3 How did students fare in syntactic ability?
4. (a) What relationship exists between the IVs (topic familiarity, syntactic ability, language anxiety, text structure knowledge and cognitive style) and students' achievement in English RC?
 - (b) What relationship exists among the IVs (topic familiarity, syntactic ability, language anxiety text structure knowledge and cognitive style) and students' attitude to English RC?
5. (a) What is the joint contribution (JC) of IVs (topic familiarity, syntactic ability, language anxiety, text structure knowledge and cognitive style) to students' achievement in English RC?
 - (b) What is the JC of IVs (topic familiarity, syntactic ability, language anxiety, text structure knowledge and cognitive style) to students' attitude to English RC?
- 6 (a) What is the relative contribution (RC) of IVs (topic familiarity, syntactic ability, language anxiety, text structure knowledge and cognitive style) to students' achievement to English RC?
 - (b) What is the RC of IVs (topic familiarity, syntactic ability, language anxiety, text structure knowledge and cognitive style) to students' attitude to English RC?
- 7 (a) Which of the IVs (topic familiarity, syntactic ability, language anxiety, text structure knowledge and cognitive style) will determine students' achievement in English RC?
 - b) Which of the IVs (topic familiarity, syntactic ability, language anxiety, text structure knowledge and cognitive style) will determine students' attitude to English RC?

1.5 Scope of the Study

The study determined the relationship between communicative factors (topic familiarity, language anxiety, and syntactic ability) and cognitive factors (text structure knowledge and cognitive style) and LO in English RC among Senior Secondary School students in Oyo state, Nigeria. The test contents that were selected for the study included: reading comprehension passages and set of vocabulary items on different topics and registers from New Oxford Secondary English Course for Senior Secondary Schools 2 by Ayo Banjo, Uzoma Onaja and Ayo Akano.

1.6 Significance of the Study

The extent to which communicative factors (topic familiarity, language anxiety and syntactic ability) and cognitive factors (text structure knowledge and cognitive style) correlated with LO in English RC among SSS students in Oyo State was the concern of this study. It provides the curriculum planners with information on the inclusion of the communicative and cognitive factors in the curriculum so as to enhance the communication of the students. Also, findings from this study provide empirical information on the influence of communicative and cognitive factors on LO in reading comprehension in the Secondary Schools. This study will be found useful by RC tutors as they would be able to teach RC with consideration for individual differences in the students they teach for they have their preferred way of learning. Parents would be able to understand their children better and help in identifying their individual peculiarities, governmental organisations and other parties involved in the process of teaching reading in a language school would also have to gain something from this study specifically on the place of topic familiarity, syntactic ability, language anxiety, text structure knowledge and cognitive style in language instruction.

1.7 Operational Definition of Terms

Achievement: The scores obtained in English RC in the study as measured by Achievement Test in English Reading Comprehension (ATERC).

Attitude: An individual's capacity for understanding English text. This is evaluated by Students' Attitude to English Reading Comprehension Questionnaire (SAERCQ)

Cognitive Style: This is the way people process and use information as measured by Cognitive Style Questionnaire (CSQ)

Language Anxiety: It is an affective factor where learners feel worried, nervous and stressed when they read a second language as measured by Language Anxiety Questionnaire (LAQ)

Learning Outcomes: These are students' achievement in and attitude to English RC.

Topic Familiarity: This is the level of awareness that a student has with reference to the content of the learning object or reading comprehension passage as measured by Topic Familiarity Questionnaire (TFQ)

Text Structure Knowledge: This is how the information in a written text is organised. It is measured by students' scores in Text Structure Knowledge Test (TSKT) used in the study.

Syntactic Ability: This is the ability to manipulate and reflect on the grammatical structure of language as measured by Syntactic Ability Questionnaire (SAQ).

CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

The review highlights aspects of research efforts which the researcher considered pertinent to the present study. The related literature were reviewed under the following sub themes:

2.1 Theoretical Framework

2.1.1 Foreign Language Anxiety Theory

Foreign language anxiety theory was propounded by Horwitz, Horwitz, and Cope in the year 1986. It is a peculiar theory of self-belief, understanding, perception and attitude to the acquisition of language which emerges because of classroom language learning engagement. They gathered evidence for their theory from thirty language learners who attended a language class as well as through seeing language learners being taught in classroom settings. According to this theory, this sort of anxiety is distinct from other academic worries since other academic fields of study do not require as much self-conceptualisation and self-expression as do foreign language studies. Students who excel in other courses report feeling anxious when learning a foreign language. Many studies have adopted this notion and offered some supporting data. For instance, nine anxiety scales were utilised by MacIntyre and Gardner (1989) to explore the relationships between anxiety dimensions and several learning metrics. Students with all kinds of anxiety may be more likely to have FLA, although it is not unusual to find students who excel in other courses upset when studying a foreign language. So, there must be something special about learning a language that causes some students anxiety. Chen and Chang (2004) see FLA as a perspective of situation specific anxiety. In their opinion, neither test characteristic nor academic learning history was found to be variables of FLA, which makes it a unique type of anxiety. They equally found that neither academic learning history nor test characteristics were variables predictive of FLA which can be interpreted to mean that it is a form of situation-specific anxiety uniquely related to foreign language learning experience.

In a foreign language classroom, learners tend to experience anxiety which might prevent them acquiring foreign language as expected, that is why Kobayashi (2016) regards anxiety as a negative factor which could interfere with students' learning processes and reading comprehension processes. Meanwhile, Zhao (2008) In his research found a statistically significant negative correlation between reading anxiety performance, indicating that learners with lower reading anxiety tended to get higher reading comprehension scores. This is part of the reason why this study looks at the relationship between language anxiety and ERC among Senior Secondary students in Oyo State.

2.1.2 Multiple Intelligence Theory

The theory of multiple intelligence theory was propounded in 1983 by Howard Gardner. Gardner's work demonstrated multiple capacities for expressing intelligence. There are many ways of knowing, hence, educators and parents alike, were captivated by the possibilities. It is an important and good way to think about people's skill sets and intelligence. Especially in education, classrooms specifically focused on basic language skills (listening, reading, speaking and writing). The male learners were notably at a disadvantage under this revered methodology. The caveats to Gardner's theory were noted when teachers 'over-applied' his model to include all or many of the 'intelligences' into each lesson or unit.

The theory and concept of multiple intelligence affirmed that the educational system today is completely affixed on the importance in several dimensions which is not necessary of memorisation. Howard's work opened critical discourse on the reading and learning paradigm as not everyone grasps information at the same time or in the same way. This means teachers have to start thinking about individuals more and classes of people to educate less. For instance, some people excel in "bodily-kinesthetic" ability which is to say they are good at sports and such and others in different areas of strengths. By implication, the learning experience of the children and he can be made to understand the things easily by using his strength area. This indirectly avails the entire students to learn from various dimensions as it applies to their capacity. There is some level of validity to his categorisation. However, while Gardner's submission was correct that people vary in these qualities, many of them are just correlated with general intelligence, that is, what an intelligent quotient test measure.

Gardner's ideas are those of someone who is trying to deny the significance of general intelligence, rather than someone who is seriously investigating human ability — which certainly includes attributes beyond what an IQ test measures. For the time human beings have existed on earth, they have tried to understand everything around them. Inquisitiveness has led human beings to understand and explore everything in their environment. Ironically, despite having studied and researched it all, they have still not started studying the most intelligent, unique and sophisticated creation of this existence – the human beings themselves. Human behaviour and human nature have not been explored and understood holistically to this date. One of the several theories that attempt to unravel the hidden capacities of human beings is Howard Gardner's multiple intelligence theory.

This theory allows students to show their intelligence in different ways and recognising multiple intelligence help teachers to know how to present information to students. There is one thing to also know about this theory, and that is it connects to multisensory learning, which teaches that children learn better with activities that involve more than one sense (Waterhouse 2006). For instance, if a learner is not good at Mathematics, reading, processing information, thinking on a conceptual level, one knows all the things that define intelligence – then at least one can be “intelligent” on one of Gardner's levels of intelligence.

2.1.3 Schema Theory

The Schema Theory was postulated by Richard Anderson in the year 1977. The author explained the term as a mental framework deployed by human beings in the organisation and recognition of raw information for easy accessibility and retention. Therefore, a scheme has a worldview for the knowledge fabrication. It is seen as a basis for cognition which is based on students' experiences because of the activities they are exposed to. Schema enables learners to make sound recollection of information, behavioural modification, focus attention on necessary attention as well as make solid predictions of a situation or occurrence. The theory explains that schema impacts on learners' ability to stay focus as well as interest in concept formations to acquire new things. It is discovered that students are likely to identify things to suit their schema. The proponents aver that students can organise and deploy the theory principles into making reading comprehension a work-over classroom activity.

The theory states that students can appropriately classify information into schemata without problem. Based on tactical execution of the schema theory, students can have visualise index cards filed in their brain to aid the understanding of concept of an instruction of learning. During class lesson the next day, they are able to link or connect more quickly prior "schema" with the new "schema", as the student now has mental templates stored in the brain on the previous night, so to speak, to match understanding. This is the essence of "schema activation". Also, schemas for specific events are sometimes referred to as scripts.

According to Zhao and Zhu (2012) schema can be grouped into three, they are; linguistic schema which is students' prior linguistic knowledge. The second is content schema which is the background knowledge of students in the area of topic familiarity, cultural knowledge, conventions and previous experience of the domain. The third type is formal schema. This is in the area of various books the students have read or come across before. They serve as rhetorical, organizational structures of different kinds of texts. It can be the knowledge of different text genres and their structural organisations like language structures, vocabulary, grammar and so on.

The theory explains that learning takes place when there is new experience linked with what is as known prior knowledge. A typical example is the constructivism in reading comprehension. The more background information and exposure readers have to a given subject, the easier it is for them to link what they are learning to what they already know. This study then involves communicative and cognitive factors such as topic familiarity, syntactic ability and text structure knowledge) through memory recall as the instruction is tailored around acquisition of new ideas in English reading comprehension.

This study made use of these three theories as a result of the fact that they work together to help teachers understand the students they are teaching. Foreign language anxiety theory shows that in a foreign language classroom there is tendency for some of the students to experience anxiety. Meanwhile, multiple intelligence theory gives teachers the knowledge that all the students are the same but showing their intelligence in different ways because of various intelligence that has been identified. Schema theory shows that students can associate new ideas with their prior knowledge; the likelihood of remembering them is higher. They would be able to link what they have been taught in class to the outside world and then give them the opportunity to

understand any reading comprehension passage they are given and answer the questions excellently.

2.2 Conceptual Review

2.2.1 Concept of Reading

Reading, according to Spörer, Brunstein and Kieschke (2009), can be defined as embarking on an advanced project to build a whole new idea with the raw material of the reader's brain, the writer's brain, and the secret conversation between them by means of deciphering a code that has previously been agreed upon. Reading is a way of life, a talking to history in the future and receiving information from history directly without assuming it is that far. Ezeokoli (2011) asserts that reading is the interpretation based on the ability of the reader to understand the purpose of the author as well as multifaceted processes involving word recognition, comprehension fluency and motivation. It is an interface which enables one get ideas of other people, no matter where the author is, whether dead or alive. Specifically, the purpose of reading is in two folds, namely enjoyment and learning (Abdelhalim, 2017). Generally, it is clearly expressed by Zong (2017) as: to learn something operational or practical (how to operate a new gadgets, time telling, schedule reading); to follow a process such as recipes, sewing or knitting patterns, how to tie a knot; to learn about new ideas or topics, either for personal edification or for professional or academic reasons. For example, what happened during the French Revolution, what the different ethical decision-making frameworks are, causes of world war II and so on; to grow our vocabulary and language skills which exposes one to different writing styles, especially when people read material for educational purposes, gives the new words for personal lexicon and also teach us different ways to express ourselves and For enjoyment, fun, adventure, relaxation among others.

Adedina and Ogunseye (2018), in their opinion, see reading as a process through which an individual or a reader especially a learner goes through a reading material or a text with the intention of bringing out what is inside the text or the message in the text and giving meaning to them. Reading could be taken as done when readers are able to not only pick out words but also make meaning out of such words. To Adedina and Ogunseye (2018), reading is the most important skill out of all the communication skills. This is because reading is the core, the foundation and the necessity for the understanding and practice of speaking and writing skills. If the reader does not have

the knowledge of reading, he may not be able to speak very well. So also if he does not have enough information, he may not be able to write. It should be noted that reading helps to widen peoples' perception and knowledge of the immediate and external environment. Inability to read builds a brick wall around an individual and narrows their vision and perception.

Reading involves several activities which include the ability to scan and understand the central message in a comprehension. Araromi and Olatubosun (2018) opine that although reasons for reading may vary, the primary purpose of reading is to understand the text. It is *one* way of tapping into other people's ideas without them needing to sit or tell the story. Readers have larger vocabularies, understand more about the world (Rastegar, Kermani and Khabir, 2017), They are more empathetic, more able to put themselves in other people's shoes and appreciate viewpoints besides their own (DeBruin-Parecki, Van Kleeck and Gear, 2015). As for the value of reading, several scientific studies have repeatedly shown that reading improves one's comprehension. As to the value of reading, studies have shown that people who read fiction tend to be more empathetic, kind, and creative. It helps people to expand the mind; build one in distress, provide a sense of belonging helps to start conversation as well as builds one's vocabulary. Reading is an act involving the use of imagination, the relationship between words as used in peculiar situations and communities. Reading is done in order to become enlightened, cultured and knowledgeable as well as been aware of self and others.

Reading goes beyond mere decoding and recognition of written or printed symbols, though these are the beginning of reading. Reading should be seen as a process requiring the reader to interpret and mentally process the written symbols to get the writer's intended meaning. Therefore, an effective reader must be psychologically and mentally able to decode, recognise, understand, question, evaluate and make use of the printed symbols before them. To achieve these, the reader needs several reading skills which Mikulecky (2008) says are the cognitive processes that are used to make sense of a text. These skills are: prescriptive reading, creative reading, interpretative reading, inferential reading and study reading. Prescriptive reading is done to gain knowledge about a particular idea. The reader reads only the important portion of the text like paragraphs, chapter headings, subtitles, and so on. This is necessary because while it does not remove the need or careful reading, it enables the reader to select the passage or portion of the text worth spending time on. Creative

reading is done through questions while reading. The reading is done to assess, criticise, evaluate, approve or reject what the writer has written. Interpretative reading is done to interpret a text denotatively or connotatively. Readers need to have knowledge of layers of meaning which the writer puts across. Inferential reading gives readers the opportunity to conclude or judge what the writer is saying. Here the reader must study the pattern of writing, the arrangement of ideas sometimes what is left unsaid in the text.

2.2.2 Concept of Reading Comprehension (RC)

Reading Comprehension entails the capacity to study a book, an essay, or non-fictional article and then be able to answer questions about the topic. That means being able to understand what you have read and retain that information in a manner that gives you a level of understanding of the subject material. RC, in simple words, is the ability to decipher the given text and understand the context of the given passage followed with multiple questions. Referring to the above, the key to RC is vocabulary (Grabe 2009) and background knowledge on the topic which speeds up the comprehension. Mabekoje (2011) describes comprehension as the basic and ultimate objective of reading, and it simply means laying hold on the meaning underlying a text or a passage.

It is also an aspect of English studies that is taught and tested in the Nigerian school system. The purpose of instruction in RC is to improve learners' skills to read (process) and comprehend the meaning or gist of a passage by integrating readers' prior knowledge. Ezeokoli (2011) describes comprehension as the goal of reading because it involves extracting meaning from the text that is read. Although it is mostly taken for granted by accomplished readers, the processes involved in comprehension are complex, interactive and strategic. To achieve comprehension of a text, readers must analyse it, internalise it and make it their own by reading with some proficiency which are all products of explicit instruction in RC strategies. According to Lee (2015), teaching RC is not as simple as it seems because it can be challenging. Efficiency in reading involves the mastery of a few important skills that will help students to understand what they are reading.

To corroborate this definition, Falayi (2015) asserts that reading is a complex process and comprehension is the level of understanding of a text where the reader interacts, responds or reacts to what has been read in a meaningful way.

Comprehension can also be said to be an unconscious cognitive activity which requires a deep processing of the text. It is the capacity to understand what the symbols on a page or on a screen mean. Understanding has degrees. What one understands now is qualitatively different from your comprehension as a child, and it will be so in the future. Adebisi (2012) describes reading as a skill which comprises the ability to identify words in print and construct understanding from them. The focus of efficient reading is to derive meaning and achieve comprehension of any given text.

According to Okwilagwe (2011), there are certain mental abilities that are required in reading comprehension which are usually faced by learners of English language which are recognition, comprehension, retention and recall. Recognition in reading comprehension is regarded as the ability to understand the familiarity or relationship of a word, phrases, as well as an idea to another word. These are essential abilities because they are capable of giving the reader the ability to identify the meaning of the words, phrases or sentences as they appear on the passage being read. Retention is regarded as the act of storing in the memory any information, fact, or other expressions that have been understood. It is after the initial recognition and comprehension of the ideas or information that one has to engage in the mental activity of retaining them. While recall is a measure of what is actually remembered and for all practical purposes, recall is seen from the standpoint of reproduction.

Thus, attempting RC questions is like solving a puzzle, as everything is given in the passage, students just must decode it (Zhu, 2016). The ability to understand what has been written, especially between the lines is of paramount importance. RC tests can often be answered correctly without the student really understanding the topic. In real life, people read for real purposes, and select details from the text according to what they need to know and what they have known. Reading comprehension tests are often designed to be scored quickly and test a superficial response (Abdelhalim, 2017). It is a form of reasoning and therefore reflects individual differences in the same fundamental source of individual differences, namely, as do tests of IQ, whether they are verbal or nonverbal. RC is a highly loaded cognitive activity. As such, it is a reasonable way to estimate intelligence. It is a highly loaded cognitive activity with the sole aim of getting meaning from written text (Alfallaj, 2017).

RC could be a very challenging aspect of English language instruction especially for second language learners. Reading comprehension is a form of reasoning and therefore reflects individual differences in the same fundamental source of

individual differences, namely, as do tests of IQ, whether they are verbal or nonverbal (Glenberg, 2017). Success in RC requires that learners should acquire or develop a set of important skills. For instance, the English language Paper 1 which comprises essay, comprehension and summary can be said to be the most important aspect of the English language examination. It is given that 70 of the 120 marks allotted this paper 1 of SSCE is comprehension based, in the sense that there are two comprehension passages and a summary passage, thus, students need to have the skill to be able to answer the comprehension and summary aspects of the paper.

These skills lead to the goal of reading which is to comprehend or understand what has been read. Scharlach (2008) noted that the problems that learners have with reading comprehension are not mostly text and teaching-related but purely a product of a deficiency in one or more skills. There is no way a teacher will effectively teach reading comprehension without relating it to writing because learners need to be able to successfully write their answers correctly (Ruiz, 2015). English RC is also the level of the English language text or passage. According to Okwilagwe (2011), there have been some scholars and teachers who carried out research to find out the nature of the RC problems and some of their findings pointed at the fact that of truth, Nigerian student do really have the problems because they are studying in a very difficult language situation and so they are studying in pains and tear. Some of their findings include; slow reading comprehension rate, difficulties to distinguish between main ideas and subordinate ideas, difficulties in critical reading and creative reading difficulties with reading to summarise and generalise; and difficulties with study – reading or reading to remember. These problems would not have been but because the English language is not our mother-tongue, it is probably because of the second language situation and other reasons that make many of the students have difficulties in RC (Spörer, Brunstein and Kieschke, 2009).

In order to improve comprehension skills, Okwilagwe (2011) identifies some techniques which are practical suggestions to learners of English language. The very first technique is reading to get the main ideas. As a learner, it is very important to first determine the reason for doing that reading. This will help in the determinant of the main idea from the start. As the learners read there is tendency that the topic sentence which is also known as the main idea is in the first line of the paragraph, but if it is not so in that particular text, it means the learner has to follow the line of thought of the author. Learners are also advised to read so as select the important details and rejecting

the supporting ideas where necessary. A good reader will have the knowledge to summarise the specific aspect or portion of a passage. Such learners should also be able to think ahead to predict outcomes which is seen in form of identifying the themes and the main ideas of the passage. There is a reading that is done to follow the writers' intent. This is to discover the order of sequence in which the writer developed his argument as well as the writer's organisational procedures used by the writer.

Teaching reading requires emphasising the comprehension of words. However, it is sad to note that English RC is not properly taught in schools. Instructions in reading comprehension in most language classrooms are limited to reading a passage and answering the questions after the passage. Based on the assumption that learning RC is solely about answering pre-set questions by the teacher or writer of the passage, the implications of this is that the performance of students in the subject has consistently remained poor over the years (Brucher, Ugen and Weth, 2020).

Alenizi (2019) stated that apart from text-related, student-related and instructional strategy-related factors in the teaching of reading comprehension. These are; communicative and cognitive related factors. These variables influence students' participation and achievement in reading comprehension. Some of these factors are topic familiarity, language anxiety, syntactic ability, text structure knowledge, and cognitive styles (DeBruin-Parecki, Van Kleeck, and Gear, 2015; Alfallaj, 2017). There is a need for a paradigm shift in the instructional procedure of RC to take these factors into cognizance. From the foregoing, it is established that instruction in reading comprehension in schools have been largely text-centred and without due consideration of some of the communicative and cognitive factors that can affect learning outcomes in reading comprehension.

2.2.3 Problems Associated with Teaching and Learning English Reading Comprehension

English RC is believed to educate the students on how to read and teach them how to write in the English language. The goal of teaching reading is to understand but despite its simplicity there are several problems which the students are facing when it comes to RC class. Adeniyi and Omale (2010) carried out a research on the factors that militate against students' learning of comprehension and found teacher-related factors as potent factor. Kolawole (2014) also carried out a study and found that teachers test reading comprehension in the guise that they teach, this is a big problem, and it is

contributing to students' poor performance in the English language. Another study by the same author revealed that out of 45 teachers of English in 18 secondary schools 11.1% practised teaching, 55.6% practised testing and 33.3% practised a combination of teaching and testing. In another study, Kolawole (2009) observed the state of reading in some secondary schools in Oyo state, he found that reading was not given adequate attention in the school and students were left to their own discretion because teachers did not teach as they ought to.

Ismail, Petras, Mohamed and Eng (2015) remarked that one of the problems of RC is the inability of several students to comprehend passages well. There are instances where the basic problem is the inability of the reader to recognize the words as arranged and the letters as they follow. This can also be seen if the individual mixed up the words rather than orders them. It shows that such a reader is suffering from dyslexia. Such a candidate finds it hard to read and control the language because he cannot read fluently and spell correctly. Protacio (2017) added that students find it difficult to understand or grasp comprehension properly because of language issue. The reading process is controlled through the mind of the reader so if the individual is not able to focus his mind in a way that he arranges the pictures being organised, it means the reader is not effective and such individual lacks the language that is required. Javed, Eng, and Mohamed (2015) stated that failure to check out difficult words in the dictionary is also a factor which makes RC a difficult task for students and teachers. Adeshina and Ogunseye (2018) are of the opinion that the experience of a reader determines the meaning he gives to a word. This will help the reader to know that words and letters are mere symbols and the meaning is always hidden in the mind of the reader. Therefore, the reader is expected to pick words within what he is reading and make meaning out of them. Inability to solve several problems encountered by the reader in the course of reading contributes a great deal to the readers' ineffectiveness when reading.

Scholars like Mousavian and Siahpoosh (2018); Ness, and (2016) have aver that if it is about language issue, students should refer to dictionary and try to understand the context after reading full paragraph or chapter or if it is due to lack of focus, students may also consider making notes while reading and read in small portions instead of consuming too much at the time. Gorsuch, Taguchi and Umehara (2015) suggest that the relationship between the reading and writing skills can be used to bring about cooperation in the teaching of reading comprehension.

In another sense, Opega (2021) says that in Nigeria, learners do have loose grasp of the syntactic structure of English. The problem started from primary school where there are weak foundations. The very weak foundations at the early stages often affect the spoken and the reading forms of the language. Therefore, for educational and pedagogical purposes, grammatical knowledge is vital to reading. The problem in schools today according to Opega (2021) is the fact that the teaching of syntax or grammar in schools is almost out of favour as many teachers feel that the teaching of grammar is difficult and uninteresting. Such negative attitude towards this aspect of language can easily be transferred to the learners.

There is the problem of faulty instructional materials and instructional techniques. Akinbode (2013) is of the opinion that the problem of interlingual and intralingual can be associated with faulty instructional materials and the pedagogical shortcomings of the teachers. It is expected of an English teacher to be conversant with the modern trends in language teaching, any teacher who fails to develop on the teaching of English is bound to be dormant and ineffective. The assumption by some learners that their teacher is “know all” makes the type of challenge quite dangerous to the teaching and learning process. Apart from that little or no preparation by teachers could result in bad teaching and wrong instruction will be passed to the learners as a result of inadequate preparation.

Another problems identified by Banjo, Ayodele, Ndahi and Akano (2018) are the fact that some students are psychologically defective, in a situation where a person is sad, he would not be able to concentrate. If one is also anxious he cannot read to understand. Total absence of determination is also a problem. Determination they said is a ‘push’ factor, if there is no dose of it the teacher cannot achieve any success and the particular students cannot get anything meaningful in whatever they read. Another vital point that can contribute to ineffective teaching and learning in reading comprehension class is lack of interest. It is known that a person learns best when he develops an interest in the subject matter. Also, he learns best when he has interest in the teacher. Apart from these identified problems, there is also a problem of language, when a passage has many difficult words, it can make the students miss the meaning of a whole passage.

Honig, Diamond and Gutlohn (2013) posit that writing can be used for instruction in reading and change the comprehension. The abilities expected from the students include; recognizing, removing unnecessary information and stating the

answers. Another challenge facing RC is a factor that is often neglected which is the quality of the communication and the delivery, lack of knowledge about grammar, phonetics, vocabulary (Roomy, Alhawsawi, 2019). Also, students' inabilities with the use of language, lack of focus and clarity of thoughts (Swan, 2015). As a non-native speaker, RC would require practice and building up a lexicon for the new language. Reading should not be mixed with scanning sentences as the level of comprehension would vary and clarity of thought would ensure that we are reading a sentence and considering the purpose rather than the assumed purpose.

2.2.4 Concept of Topic Familiarity

Several studies have established the significance of Topic familiarity (TF) in the fields of teaching and learning. In the more recent past, efforts in pedagogical research have focused largely on activating students' prior knowledge in classroom instruction (Rouhi and Asghari, 2011). Norman (2019) avers that reading is the key to unlocking TF because when reading, readers will learn whole lots of new information as well as also new words that are related to the topic of the passage. The assertion by Norman (2019) above is in line with the views of Fukaya and Horiba (2015). Grabe et al (2011) submits that. According to Grabe et.al (2011), TF is very important in the improvement of reading abilities. According to Olagbaju, (2015) the remaining percentage can be ascribed to TF. Besides, vocabulary knowledge and TF which serve as parts of the background knowledge in RC, are the skills and factors that affect the success of comprehension (Elwer, 2014). When students are familiar with the sentence formation, when they know that the subject of a sentence can occur anywhere and not always at the beginning, they will not be disturbed when they come across such words in their reading.

Ezeokoli (2011) asserts that reading is the interpretation according to the ability of the reader to comprehend the purpose of the author and multifaceted processes involving word recognition, comprehension, fluency, and motivation. Whitaker, (2009) asserts that one of the reasons why instruction in reading must be thorough with emphasis on achieving comprehension. However, students and language teachers alike often assume in error that reading is a simple process that requires only the recognition of vocabularies or lexical items without any technical input. It is expected that students should have a familiarity with the themes, concepts or topic being taught in school. In general, at the secondary school, College level or as undergraduate, students are

considered to be familiar with a subject topic when they have successfully completed a one or two semester introductory courses in that discipline. Thus, the interpretation of TF is the ability to recognise a central concept and its message in a passage.

2.2.5 Concept of Syntactic Ability (SA)

According to Redcay and Preston (2016), syntax is explained as the rules that define arrangements of the basic elements (tokens) throughout the programme. It is a set of rules that defines a language and makes it acceptable universally. Syntax is the set of rules, principles and processes which govern the construction of phrases, clauses, and sentences. The smallest units of syntax are words; they combine into phrases, phrases into clauses and clauses into sentences. Sentences combine into longer texts, only the structure of phrases and clauses is different from the structure of sentences. SA is another factor that is commonly believed to be essential in successfully learning another language (Richburg-Burgess, 2012). It is evident that deficiency in syntax skills causes learners poor performance in reading comprehension. In the European countries studies have shown. Syntax is the study of how the order of elements in a sentence affects its meaning.

There are certain positions in the (linear) string that add critical information in our interpretation, but this information is not a feature of the individual elements themselves (Javed, Eng and Mohamed, 2015). The field of syntax tries to describe this feature of human language. Therefore it is not accurate to equate syntax with grammar, as the word is normally used. Syntacticians study human language as a natural phenomenon, without trying to add anything to it (such as prescriptive grammar rules), in the same manner that a chemist trying to understand certain properties of a chemical compound would try to work with a pure sample, free of any additives or contamination (Zhou, 2015). It said that language spoken is one dimensional (linearized), this does not mean that the structure of language follows suit. The linearisation step is the last step in the creation/processing of an utterance, when all the depth (hierarchies) between elements is collapsed to produce something that humans can say or understand. Which means, the notion of correctness and wrong usage can only be identified and corrected through a sound knowledge of the language.

Egbe (2000) says that grammar of a language cannot be ignored if it must be spoken correctly so there is no how students will want to read a text without the grammatical ability which is also called syntactic ability. In essence the knowledge of

grammar (conscious or unconscious enables individual to read and write sensibly. It also enables the reader to interpret correctly what they have read. Also, the knowledge of this syntax helps to mobilise the grammatical resources of the language for communication. If well acquired, it promotes education and other spheres of human endeavour.

The evaluation, description, and analysis of syntax within language, how they are formed, what differentiates them, what impact they have on language and communication is what Zhu and Li (2014) called syntactic analysis. Understand that spoken and written English are not the same, 99% of conversations among English speakers contain “mistakes” by written standards. For spoken English, the guides are informality, short-sentences, frequent feedback, and fluency. Accent is much more local than one might imagine. For the syntactic analyst, grammar is the reservoir of information about language from which he can tap the terminology to use, the units, the notions, the organization and everything he needs in order to carry out his tasks. So as students reading English passages or any other subject for that matter, the knowledge of grammar will help understand the structure of that text as well as the meaning it brings. Syntactic ability according to Egbe (2000) is a symbiotic relationship which means it enhances learners’ knowledge on its parts. Thus, syntactic ability is the operational side, the active interpretation of the grammar of a language.

2.2.6 Concept of Language Anxiety

Language Anxiety (LA) is a unique state of anxiety triggered by learning-learning specific situations and fades when the situation disappears. According to Ellis (2008), LA can be specific set of conditions that revolve round the use of language or language-based activities such as public speaking or participating in a second classroom. He refers to the feeling of such pressures as LA. He posits that these feelings may vary from one individual to the other, but it cannot be said that they do not exist. LA can impede language learning and make the experience less enjoyable. Studies have revealed that if not properly handled can lead to poor performance in English reading comprehension. It is certain that if one is anxious, one might not be able to do well. To some extent, one might read with haste and jump over some words, and sentences might convey wrong meanings in one’s mind.

William and Andrade (2008) submit that one of the implications of LA is that it affects students’ achievement in language learning situations (Cui, 2011). LA has been

reported to impede language learning and some of the factors responsible for (Zhang and Zhong, 2012). LA begins when second or foreign learners exhibit unwholesome and unnecessary fears about language learning. Elaldi (2016) avers those learners could possess erroneous beliefs and expectations about language standards. It is possible for language learners to set unrealistic standards or targets for themselves due to the high expectations of their teachers. Such high standards could cause apprehension when they must communicate in the language or speak in public.

LA is a prevalent factor that hinders effective second/foreign language learning or acquisition in the classroom (Adebiyi, 2012). Literature has explained several factors that trigger LA in students such as fear of embarrassment or negative evaluation, communicative apprehension and test anxiety. If one is anxious, there is tendency that one will not be able to do well in the reading process. In fact one can skip some words which are important to the knowledge of the main idea of the passage. It should be noted that English RC involves the coordination of all the organs of the body. The entire human body has to be in a state of harmony for effective reading to take place. Reading involves cognitive processes and psychological malfunctioning resulting in fatigue, sensory defect, nervousness and different kinds of apprehension can adversely affect the rate of comprehension. They can also militate against good judgement, critical, creative, analytical and imaginative reading because they can disturb concentration.

Apart from the above points on LA, it can also be said that far from the emotional state of mind, there is also the factor of interest in the subject matter. Learners learn better if there is interest in what he is reading as well as in the teacher. Banjo and colleagues (2018) feel that if a person is a chronic atheist and there is a passage on the belief in God, he is likely to overlook the topic and close his mind against it. It means he is not going to perform well in that examination because his mind is not in what he is reading. The message here is that students should endeavour to develop an interest in any reading material so as to be able to understand and perform well in the examination.

Some causes of LA are identified by scholars as interpersonal such as fear of speaking, low self-esteem, fear of language proficiency (Mahmood (2013). Besides, teachers' attitude in the way of teaching reading comprehension is another cause of language anxiety. Aydin (2016) says that the manner of correcting the mistakes of learners can make them afraid of reading, teachers personalities can also serve as an

indicator of LA. There are six main reasons of LA identified in this research work which may generally be broken down into three core sources: the learner, the instructor and instructional practice. The first is interpersonal and individual anxiety, and the second is learners' perceptions of learning a foreign language. Language testing in reading comprehension classroom is included in the following categories: language, classroom procedures, using teacher-centered methods, teachers' ideas about language education and more (Young, 1998). The classroom environment, learner characteristics, the target language, and the actual process of learning a foreign language, according to Luo (2012), are the key causes of experiencing language anxiety.

2.2.7 Concept of Text Structure Knowledge (TSK)

Literally, the shape of words allows one to recognize what is represented, since one is unable to know what a word is supposed to mean (ostensible intentional meaning) without knowing how the letters appear (Alenizi, 2019). TSK is the ability to be able to transcribe words the way it should be because reading is usually a visually-based activity, except with other forms like braille that are not so useful to people with working vision, because they usually work more slowly and allow less information to be transcribed (accurately or not) into the brain. Reading is a rational activity and human meta-interpretive ability to understand what is going on (Al-Seghayer, 2015). Poor comprehension results in a reading setting where the reader has limited comprehension ability which is caused by reader's inability to isolate factual information from a body of information that overwhelms him, or inability to read and organise what is read into a logical and meaningful pattern of understanding.

For the best reading experience, readers of all ages need to be aware of text structures (Meyer, 2003). As defined by Armbruster (2004), the arrangement of ideas and their connections constitute the text's structure or organisation. Readers who are not familiar with text structures are at a disadvantage because they don't approach reading with any sort of reading strategy. Readers who are knowledgeable with text structures, however, anticipate the material to develop in specific ways. The organization of the information in a written text is referred to as text structure. It aids students in understanding that a book may present a major idea and supporting facts, a cause and its subsequent repercussions, or various points of view on a subject. A text's structure refers to how its concepts are connected to convey a message to the reader.

Text structural awareness according to Grabe (2009) is a proven reading comprehension and memory, which involves identifying and paying attention to a few discourse-signalling system (Javed, Eng and Mohamed, 2015; Laureate Martinez, 2008). Reading fluency and efficiency are also improved by teaching students how texts are organized rhetorical (Villanueva de Debat, 2012). Text organization is referred to by words that are similar to text structure. According to Grabe (2009) Discourse or text structure can be interpreted as core rhetorical patterns or knowledge frameworks in texts. Many students struggle with reading expository texts since they are not familiar with how the texts are structured, especially in this genre. Given that the majority of academic texts are expository in character, it would seem necessary to introduce students to expository text structure.

To increase comprehension and memory, students should be taught how to recognize and use the hierarchical organisation of texts. Expository text structure awareness should be explicitly taught as a reading comprehension technique. Experience has shown that in some schools, most of the time spent in class is spent explaining grammatical points and giving explaining some difficult and individual words, these are termed to be inefficient reading techniques, and this can take secondary school students' attention from higher order strategies. Learners can benefit using reading techniques that allow them to take a broad view of a text and make use of textual features to aid in-text comprehension. Meanwhile, there are many passages nowadays which deal with happenings around within the society of the readers. In such passages one is made to listen to the thought of philosophers or the thinkers who are observing human society. Quite often, according to Banjo (2015) such thoughts contain specific points to drive home a particular point of view. Arguments for or against may be advanced within the same passage. Students must be very careful to note the various points, where one ends and another begins, and how opposing ideas are advanced against one another. Not only that, there is a kind of comprehension passage where stories are told. A story is usually made up of a series of events, and the purpose of the narrator is usually to make students see a point of view more clearly even though in the process they are entertained or amused. However, students have not acquired this skill in schools and most of them find it difficult to read and understand when they want to write external examinations. Due to the complexity of the reading process, learners, particularly secondary school students must be prepared with a

variety of reading techniques. Komiyama and McMorris (2017) notes that text structuring signals (interactive meta-discourse) are used by writers to create texts that readers find logical and persuasive.

2.2.8 Concept of Cognitive Style (CS)

Cognitive style is the dimension of learning which is peculiar to an individual or group. It is involving the use of brain which entails the ability to think, perceive, remember, and solve problems. CS helps improving humans' ability to focus from individual perspective. It helps in the overall effectiveness of the instructions and learning process. With stories and references together with questions, both direct and indirect, that involved students personally in discussions of interpretation as well as application to their own lives, cognitive style is the wave of the 21st century especially in a modern classroom (Brucher, Ugen and Weth, 2020). The idea of cognitive styles as such is not that helpful in planning lessons. A better approach is to engage students personally by letting them respond both orally and in writing to most academic questions in the lesson.

It is an intellectual or symbolic learning which involves higher brain functioning, verbal and mathematical thinking, critical thinking (Jiang, 2016). Students of the 21st century often learn through interactive sessions like group discussions, brainstorming sessions and webinar-based environments. Considering the current digital age, students are quite adept while using these platforms and are much more comfortable when compared to a traditional classroom method where there is only a one-sided conversation during lessons. Gardner popularised the idea that students have different cognitive styles and in many ways it has helped educators recognise the uniqueness of a learner. It can be distinguished from “body learning” or kinesthetic learning, which is often called enactive learning. This is where much of the learning is activated through the muscle such as the ability to type or ride a bicycle. Another kind of learning is visual “picture” or image learning. This is often called eidetic learning or memory which is activated when one remembers what something looks like (Hong, Ming, Ker and Li, 2012).

Cognitive learning style is a learning process that results from the effective use and application of the brain. It focuses on helping you learn ways to maximize your brain's potential. When an individual masters cognitive learning, he or she inculcates a habit of lifelong continuous learning. It helps one to become an efficient team member,

a resourceful leader and a powerful speaker (Fakeye, 2008). Teachers, curriculum designers, and content developers have been aware about the idea of cognitive style differences between learners for a long time. There has been definitive proof that specifically incorporating a mix of learning content (based on different learning styles) has made a significant improvement in student learning outcomes. With cognitive style, one helps one's organisation achieve its business goals and objectives (Jingblad and Johansson, 2017). Gardner had an interesting theory about multiple intelligences, which has since been subject to some critical reviews.

It goes beyond one-dimensional lecture format of many classroom lessons (Mabekoje, 2011). The ability to identify students' CS makes classroom learning stunning and alive (Meyer and Ray, 2017). When a lesson depends too much on reading, you have a built-in barrier to learning. That barrier can be overcome by rethinking the approach to reading difficulties. This is a particular problem in teaching English where the readings are classic literature, and usually well-deserved selections, but not appropriate, perhaps, without recognising how difficult they are to read. It is certain that their brains are doing visual words recognition. This is to say that, without the ability to recognise words, reading will be meaningless.

Cognitive aspects of reading are the cerebral (mental) and behavioural activities conducted by the learners in the process of reading. Asgaria, Ketabi and Amirian, (2019) submit that to improve students' ability to comprehend a passage, interest-based metacognitive processes that will encourage self-monitoring and self-regulating activities in reading should be employed. Those who had tried to find solutions to the existing problems of reading comprehension in secondary schools had looked at the cognitive aspect of the students and their reading comprehension LO through various interventions. But this study was carried out to say that LO in reading comprehension can be influenced by their communicative and cognitive factors. Such communicative factors as: topic familiarity, language anxiety and syntactic ability, cognitive factors such as: text structure knowledge and cognitive style. One's ability to receive and makes use of information in cognitive dexterity is a measure for progression in academic and career pursuits.

Therefore, it is crucial that each student is skillful in RC, that is, knowing how to read and deriving maximum meaning from a text. The ability to read and comprehend is so crucial in the current world that it is no longer considered an option.

2.3 Review of past research

2.3.1 Research on Reading Comprehension

Smith, Snow, Serry and Hammond (2021) carried out a critical study to know the influence of background knowledge on primary school-aged children's comprehension reading capacity. Based on the criteria and specific interest in RC and background knowledge, twenty-three past studies were analysed. The result revealed that higher level of background knowledge has various ranges of effects which influenced the text characteristics, situational model required as well as the availability of the misconceptions built by readers about text. It is also found that background knowledge differentially affects lower and higher achievers in reading. It was also discovered that readers with lower background features like knowledge gained from text cohesion, while those weaker readers found a means of measuring up with their low reading skills within the context of higher readers. Various recommendations were made.

Srisang and Everatt (2020) did a study to investigate the relationship that exist between indicators of lower-level comprehension skills which comprised the process of words, vocabulary, and grammar as well as high order comprehension skills which make students to be able to make inferences, as these two categories would influence students' level of RC. The result revealed a regression analysis which explained that grammar is factor which can explain degree of variation among those in the low variation group while the capacity to make inferences among those in the higher comprehension level played the role of the largest predictor for high English vocabulary. The author affirmed that the finding shows a level of predictor of the two classified groups in EFL reading instructions.

Sajid et al. (2020) did a research proposal to evaluate the students' crises around text level and other associated issues in English RC among the science students of King Faisal University English language center. It is also aimed at improving the capacity as well as the reading text challenges. In accordance to the challenges students are facing at a multiple level in reading comprehension. The literature review done was in line with the text level structure which explored students' capacity in RC.

Almutairi (2018) worked on effective RC strategies as teaching techniques clarified by special education teachers as viable for promoting students' capacity in English RC. The study identified some of the challenges pervading 3rd graders learning challenges. It is discovered that some strategies might be workable due to

teacher's experience but have no place in literature. The research was carried out in five government schools in suburban axis due to the following criteria which are; availability of resource room, 30 miles radius of the sponsoring university, at least 5% of the students must have learning disabilities and must be in Southwest region of Michigan. The special education teacher participants were five in number with an average of three years working experience with students who have challenges, a license as well as three working experience with special learners in a resource room. Information in form of data was collected from the respondents using an interview and an analysis of documents. The identified five special education teachers remarked that some of the reading challenges affecting reading comprehension of 3rd graders with learning challenges are fluency issue, informational text problem, background knowledge crises, inability to draw inferences, vocabulary crises, low reading level among others. However, several strategies have been found to be effective for special education students among which are questioning, telling stories, peer-assisted, think aloud, different grouping, graphic organisers. It was concluded that several strategies should be varied in teaching reading comprehension for students with disabilities.

Anggrainai (2017) researched into the correlation between RC and academic achievement of English education study programme of Uin Raden Fatah Palembang. The aim of the study was to examine whether RC will enhance students' academic performance in reading English comprehension. The study adopted descriptive research method of the correlational type. The quantitative data was collected using TOEFL reading test as well as documented activities on English education programme of students' Uin Raden Fatah Palembang. The study comprised of seventy-nine students and it was reported that students had low RC based on the TOEFL benchmark. It also revealed that 15.8% of the respondent who participated in the study has cum laude academic achievement. About 74.7% has a very good and 10.12% has good academic achievement. The study revealed reported a connection between' academic achievement and RC achievement since the correlation co-efficient was higher than the table values, while students' RC contributed 5.6% and p-value = .037 was lower than 0.05 level of significance. This implies that the better students' academic performance in RC, the better for their academic achievement in the English education programme.

Sari (2017) investigated the effects of some strategies to find solution to the dwindling students' academic performance in RC while also deploying new strategy to

ameliorate the deficiencies. The participants are 8th grade students from Negeri 17 Medan who were of the 2016/2027 academic session. The study was done using action research within classroom. The study adopted achievement test designed, while qualitative data was done through observation sheet, interview, and documentation process. The achievements were in three phases; pre-test, post-test 1 and post-test II. The findings of the study revealed that there was a significant improvement in students' academic achievement in reading comprehension progressively. This was revealed by the mean score after the new strategy- Directed Reading Thinking Activity (DRTA) had been applied. The Mean score for each test are 46.60, 64.12 and 77.29 respectively. It was also revealed that in the pre-test, the pass rate was 16.67% (only 6 out of 36 participants) go above 75%, while the post-test I were 27.77% (10 out of 36 students) score about 75% and in the post-test II were 55.55% (20 out of 36 students) score above 75%. In all the total percentage of the improvement move progressively from pre-test to post-test II stood at 55.55%.

Sibarani (2016) did a study on classroom analysis which was aimed at finding if the achievement in text structure can be profitable for teachers' use as well as students' improvement in written texts comprehension. It affirmed that the knowledge of text-structure become critical to be analysed. It is affirmed that English language teachers have competence in the knowledge of text structure and would have taught students at secondary school levels. Literature has revealed that the knowledge of text-structure is a yardstick to measure the teacher's competence in giving instructions in RC. The findings revealed that teachers' classroom practice for enhancing TSK is not adequate. It was discovered that teachers are not fully equipped with the requisite knowledge to foster students' understanding of text structure and its application to promoting their RC. The cause of this may be due to the misunderstanding of the nature of RC, poor perception of objective of RC and teacher's poor knowledge of the influence of text-structure on RC process. These findings provided some level of justification for the study and that, teachers are potent factors to effective classroom practice including fostering text structure knowledge and its application in reading comprehension passages. It is advised that the teachers should be imbued with the knowledge and application of the text structure strategy for promoting students' academic performance in English RC.

2.3.2 Language Anxiety and Students' Achievement in English Reading Comprehension

Valizadeh (2021) did an investigation on the effects of RC strategies instruction on EFL learners' reading anxiety level. The objective of the study was to test if the new strategies will cause a change in the anxiety level of EFL students in English RC. The study adopted 3 by 3 full experimental research design which entails the pre-test, treatment, and post-test design. It was aimed to finding out if there would be a decrease in the anxiety level of foreign students learning language if comprehensive strategies are deployed. The respondents of the study comprised 55 EFL students who were from Turkey. The criterion for this is that they must be on the lower rung of the Oxford Quick Placement Test. The data gathered was through Saito, Garza and Horwitz's (1999) foreign language anxiety scale (FLRAS). The experiments lasted about 11 weeks during the reading exercise. Those in the experimental group received their instruction through previewing, details scanning, skimming, topic identification, central ideas, providing supporting evidence, drawing conclusions, knowing the mind of the author, summarising, using context clues, dealing with unfamiliar words, and so on). Those in the control groups were taught with the traditional methods of paraphrasing, reading aloud, translating, answering the exercises etc. The findings of the study through the deployment of Mann-Whitney U test indicated that using English RC strategies had a positive effect on EFL learner's terms of ameliorating anxiety level in English RC.

Sabri et al (2021) researched on causes of LA in an ESL Classroom towards a mentally healthier learning environment. The author remarked that in a well set-out English language classroom, students are expected to make grammatically correct sentences as well as demonstrate a level of native English-speakers pronunciation mechanism. It was discovered that such are usually affected by some level of anxiety, and it could be cog in the wheel of language development among students. The objective was to examine undergraduates' language learning anxiety as well as their presumed success in an ESL classroom with a view to creating a healthy environment devoid of intimidation to speak or make clear expressions. The study used a quantitative approach to gather data which was analysed. The report shows that the main causes of anxiety in English language classroom is the fear of comprehension, tests, and mate's judgement of the way they express themselves. The study revealed that when lecturers douse the tension of the classroom, students are likely to learn the

more unlike an autocratic situation. The authors concluded that learning style and teaching strategies are trigger students' level of anxiety. One of the recommendations made was that lecturers show make friends with the students as this will create a psychological support for students.

Nazarinasab, Nemati and Mortahan (2014) did a study on the impact of foreign LA and awareness of text feature on university students' RC in English as second language (ESL) texts. The objective of the study was to provide solution to three critical research questions bordering students' anxiety and awareness of text characteristics. The questions are 1) Of what effect is reading anxiety on reading comprehension of ESL students, 2) Is there any effects of text feature on reading comprehension of ESL students and thirdly, what is the interaction effects between reading anxiety and text characteristics on RC of ESL students. The participants for study were 120 students from four programmes namely; chemistry engineering, civil engineering, electronic engineering and management courses from foreign students' sciences and university research. Among those involved in the study, only 93 students, (46 male and 47 female) were eventually used for the study. The designed instruments namely Foreign Language Reading Anxiety Scale (FLRAS) by Saito, Garza and Horwitz in the year 1999 and the questionnaire by Mehrpoor in the year 2004 were administered on the participants, revealing a connection between RC and reading anxiety. The correlation was negative. By implications, it implies that the ability to RC by students decreased, so also language anxiety of the foreign study decreased also but the awareness of text features and RC have a strong favourable correlation. The implication is that the foreign language students are likely to do well in RC supposing they are aware of the features of text in any reading comprehension. The Multiple regression analysis revealed that there was a significant relationship between the interaction effect of the two independent variables (text features awareness and language anxiety) and reading comprehension. However, the findings revealed that the foreign language anxiety had stronger effects on the RC than text feature awareness FL learners.

2.3.3 Language Anxiety and Disposition to English Reading Comprehension

Mardianti, Wijayati and Murtadho (2021) researched into the relationship between students' reading anxiety and RC. The first phase of study revolved around fifty participants who were in their year one in Governmental science, participated in

the intensive reading. The research made use of the descriptive survey of the correlational type. An instrument which is called English Foreign Language Reading Anxiety Inventory (EFLRAI) questionnaire was adopted to test the degree and effects of anxiety of students in RC. The author designed a reading comprehension achievement test for participants. It was discovered that non-English department were at the moderate level. It was also discovered that anxiety can be categorised into three parts; top-down reading anxiety, bottom-up reading anxiety and classroom reading anxiety. The findings of the study also show that bottom-up anxiety was the most potent factor while ESP students have low academic achievement in RC score. This implies that the higher the level of anxiety displayed by ESP students the lower the academic achievement in RC will be.

Ali and Anwar (2021) carried out research on the role played by the variable of anxiety on how students learn foreign language. The author remarked that education is a veritable vehicle in students' attitudinal changes specifically in accordance with the stipulated rules and regulations in the society. Two critical components of learning language as a second learner are the variables of attitude and anxiety. What the study aims at was to investigate the function of anxiety in Erbil's private universities students' language learning. The learners' anxiety was measured using quantitative dimension which comprised assessment of some unfavourable or dreadful passages, communication apprehension and phobia for examination. The authors used past designed instruments which have validated and found effective in data collection. Nine hundred and two students were able to fill in the instrument and inferential statistics of multiple regressions was adopted. It was found at the end of the study that students' fear of negative comments in anxiety was related with a higher degree of anxiety when it comes to learning of the language while students' test anxiety was related with a lower value among the other variables. LA refers to the degree of language competency where having high levels of foreign language anxiety results in low academic accomplishment. According to studies, there is a negative relationship between LA and academic accomplishment (Horwitz, 2001).

As one of the emotional elements in language learning, anxiety may have a negative impact on other affective components like motivation and attitude. According to Horwitz et al. (2010), a student's attitude toward the subject may be impacted by their concern over learning a foreign language. According to Liu and Huang (2011), anxiety has a negative impact on students' motivation to learn English. Personal

symptoms of students who struggle with language learning anxiety include feeling miserable, concerned, forgetful, hot, and other similar sensations.

2.3.4 Topic Familiarity and attainment in English Reading Comprehension

Ovilia (2011) carried out a study on the relationship of TF and listening comprehension. The aim of the study is to assess the relationship between students' TF and their capacity for listening comprehension. The author remarked that topic familiarity is known as the knowledge of certain topics is considered as vital to listening comprehension. It has also been found to be crucial to the students' capacity to decode and the ability to comprehend the central message in appropriately. This sole aim makes listening, comprehension, and dynamism ever-changing from being passive to active. Several studies have been carried out to unravel the effects of various identified variables on students, listening comprehension. Several undergraduate students were sampled, and two tests were administered on them namely familiarity and listening comprehension test. The results gathered from the research revealed the significant relationship between students' TF and the students' capacity for listening comprehension. By implications, it means the more students are familiar with a particular topic, the more they are likely to increase their chance of doing well in listening comprehension. The variable of topic familiarity to listening comprehension is about 33.6%.

Othman and Vanathas (2015) carried out a study on TF and its influence on listening comprehension. The article aimed at investigating the effects of topic familiarity and its indicators on listening comprehension. Two research questions were raised and answered in the study. Data were collected from thirty students from the intermediate classes who are offering business study at the private owned tertiary institution. The analysis of the data in pre-test and post-test showed that students score higher grade in listening comprehension. This study aimed to investigate how language proficiency and topic familiarity impacted reading comprehension in relation to one another. Overall comprehension performance of the students was found to have been considerably impacted by topic familiarity. In comparison to individuals performed better on the known passage, with which they tended to score higher. The reading schema theory and studies on second language reading appeared to be supported by these findings. The schema theory of reading postulates that knowledge of subject matter can aid comprehension during the encoding and decoding process by giving

readers a framework against which to compare and fit bits of incoming information. This allows readers to assimilate reading comprehension without having to think about all the words and phrases in the text.

2.3.5 Topic Familiarity and Students' Attitude to English Reading Comprehension

Several studies have been carried out on the impact of TF on students' attitude to RC. Fukaya and Horiba (2015) carried out their studies on the influence of reading goal and topic familiarity, on the text comprehension and learning of 145 Japanese EFL college students having high and low TF when they read and recalled a passage. There were three research questions that were raised and answered in the course of the study. The first was on the effects of the goal of reading on second learners' ability to recall content information. This implies that whether students' goal will affect their ability to recall information of the text. The number two research question was on the effects of TF on the ability of second language learners read text, learning and the interaction effects between the variables. The research question three was to assess the relationship between topic familiarity and the proficiency of students in language as well as the effects on students' content recall of text and effects differential. From these findings it showed that the two variables of proficiency in language and TF are of paramount importance to second language learners' content recall. Also, Yousif (2006) is of the opinion that the influence of language ability and knowledge of vocabulary had a statistically controlled impact. It is also discovered that proficiency in language and general knowledge promote the processing of information in text. Also, the low-ability students' performance in the familiar section may have been aided by their familiarity with the material, which helped them close the achievement gap with the high-ability students. Yousif (2006) says in his findings that the topic familiarity is demonstrated by the disparity between the low ability and the differences in how well students performed on both familiar and unfamiliar passages, which was found to be highly significant.

Al-Shumaimeri (2005) found that familiarity with content has effects in students' reading comprehension irrespective of gender. It was also discovered that familiarity with content has effects on male and female's achievement on English RC but it was found out that there was no correlation between familiarity content and gender in the achievement of students in foreign language reading comprehension. The

same author did another research in the year 2006, where he carried out a research on the effects of language ability and content familiarity on foreign language RC. 132 undergraduate students took part in the study, it was found that content familiarity significantly affected students' overall comprehension performance.

2.3.6 Syntactic Ability and attainment in English Reading

Comprehension

Al-damiree and Bataineh (2016) did a study on vocabulary knowledge and syntactic awareness as potential catalysts for reading comprehensions among young Jordanian EFL students. The interest of the research was to investigate the effects of knowledge of vocabulary and the awareness of syntax on 9th grade in Jordan on students' RC. Data were collected using pre-post-test reading comprehension, vocabulary, and tests in grammar. Also, interviews were carried out. The findings of the study show that students' RC scores on the post-test in favour of those in experimental group. The author affirmed that students with knowledge of vocabulary and syntactic ability are likely to do well in reading comprehension if properly handled.

Mokhtari and Niederhauser (2012) carried out a study on syntactic and vocabulary factors in 5th grade students' RC. The authors examined the level of students in 5th grade and the awareness of syntax while reading comprehension passages. The study aimed at revealing the contributions of different two identified variables on the students' academic performance in RC while also exposing the difficulties posed to readers. It was discovered that both students' knowledge and awareness of syntax are likely to improve their proficiency in English RC performance. Vice versa, students who had low syntax recognition and poor knowledge of vocabulary performed very low in English RC. It was also discovered that students' awareness of syntax potentially contributed to RC more than knowledge of vocabulary development. It is recommended that readers should be imbued with the knowledge and understanding of vocabulary as well as syntax in RC. With this, they would be able to increase their understanding of any passage because they have all it takes to analyse the passage as far as syntactic ability is concerned.

2.3.7 Syntactic Ability and Students' Attitude to English Reading

Comprehension

Abatyihun (2018) did a study on predictive power of vocabulary knowledge, syntactic awareness and meta-cognitive awareness reading strategies in reading comprehension of EFL learners (Jiga 11th Grade students in focus). The study made use of descriptive survey of the correlational type. The population of the study comprised all 11th graders in Jiga preparatory schools out of which 100 participants were employed for the study through a random sampling technique. The students were asked to respond to MARSQ developed by Taraban, Kerr and Ryneason (2004) while the researcher developed an achievement test on vocabulary, RC and awareness of syntax. The data collected was subjected to correlational analysis using Pearson product moment correction (PPMC) and stepwise multiple regressions analysis. Findings revealed that the three identified variables correlated well with reading comprehension.

Banjo et al (2018) in their analysis of test of comprehension say that external examination on reading comprehension requires the students' knowledge of some element of grammar and their ability to understand the passage. This is because questions requiring the students to extract facts from the passage are asked, questions on inferences where they would be asked to infer implied meaning since the answer is not clearly stated in the passage are also asked. Not only that, questions that require the students to identify grammatical name and function of given words or group of words are asked while questions on word substitution where they would be asked to replace some words in context. So it is very important for learners to be adequately prepared with their ability of syntactic knowledge so as to perform well in their reading comprehension examination

In the same vein, Bernhardt (2000) found that students' reading capacity lies on the ability to understand and apply grand rules in the English language exercises. This can be related to the fact that a passage is made up of many sentences and if a reader is not able to identify a sentence then there is a problem. That is why Opega (2021) says that the structure of the language is important for it is the foundation upon which the teaching of other aspect of English is built and it must be in relation to other aspects and not to be seen as an end in itself.

2.3.8 Text Structure and Students' Achievement to English Reading

Comprehension

Chalak and Esfahani (2012) carried out a study with the objective of determining the potency of text-structure strategy in respect of the conventional instruction on Iranian students' RC. A total of forty Iranian students in which 23 were male while 17 were female participated in the research work. The participants having been categorized into two groups namely the control group and experimental group were made to work in their own capacity to ascertain efficacy of the intervention. The author came up with a criterion name Oxford Placement Test (OPT), TSK test as well as TOEFL, a reading section in the exam. This was categorized into advanced language students with not reading skills and absence of text structure knowledge. The training took four weeks in which students were taught RC through the use of four different passages. Comparative group went on with normal instruction, while the students in the experimental classroom were taught using the text-structure awareness instruction. After the experiments, the students were given post-test to find out the veracity of the strategy introduced. The findings showed that both RC level of the two groups (experimental and control) improved significantly. However, the students who were taught with text structure awareness instruction performed well more than the control group where conventional strategy was deployed.

Kendeou and Broek (2007) worked on the effects of prior knowledge and text structure on comprehension processes during reading of scientific texts. The major objective of the study was to ascertain the effects of text structure and entry knowledge on students' cognitive processes in reading comprehension of scientific texts. The study adopted a think-aloud methodology which cater for online mechanism in experimental group one while experimental group to witness a real time reading strategy. From the two groups, offline comprehension mechanism was adopted as well as measures which cater for individual differences in working memory and need for cognition. From the two groups, findings revealed readers find a means of adjusting their procession level due to the connectivity between previous cognition and text structure. It was also discovered that readers' text memory was influenced by the variation in their prior knowledge independently of the text structure.

The impact of teaching reading through a discussion of text structures on students' reading comprehension was examined by Piyanukool (2001). 126 English For

Language students who were randomly assigned to the experimental and control groups were the study's subjects. The experimental set of students received instruction on how to apply their understanding of text structure to the stories. Both narrative and informative text forms were employed in the training process. At the conclusion of each story, the control group was asked to respond to questions. A t-test was conducted following the post-test. The outcomes did not show any changes in performance between the two groups, but it was shown that participants preferred discussing text structures while reading to reading independently, which made a big difference in their comprehension of expository texts.

Newman (2007) looked into how reading comprehension was affected by the explicit teaching of expository text structure. Third-grade EFL students served as the subjects, and they were split into a control group and three experimental groups. Using graphic organisers, the experimental groups received instruction on text organisation. Regular education without any special tactics was given to the kids in the control classroom. During the reading lessons for the experimental groups, the trainer employed a variety of reading techniques, including visual organisers, thinking aloud, and modeling. After the post-test, there was a significant difference in the participants' comprehension of expository texts between the control and experimental groups.

2.3.9 Text Structure knowledge and Students' Attitude to English Reading Comprehension

Duke et al., (2011) and Shanahan et al., (2010) found that teaching the young one's structure of text is likely to improve their informational text comprehensions as well as encourage them to have positive attitude to English reading comprehension.

In text structure knowledge a paragraph is used to explain the structure of a text according to Adedina and Ogunseye (2018). It means that a paragraph is used to describe, narrate, compare and contrast, show cause and effect, persuade, analyse, classify and argue. Once a student is able to identify the paragraphs according to the author's intention, such a learner will not have any problem understanding the structure of the passage and their attitude will always be positive because there is the knowledge of how to answer the questions accurately.

It should be noted that descriptive text structure describes a place, a person or location. In this type of structure, what is being described is painted in a way that one who has not come across the person, object or place before knows and recognises it.

Narrative structure tells a story. Such a story is told in a sequence and there is a point of view of the telling. This means that the person that is telling the story is a participant. Persuasive structure is used to convince a person or persuade somebody to carry out an action or believe in one thing. A persuasive structure is usually written with the intension of winning people to a point of view or side of an argument. Argumentative structure requires one to decide on which step to take. The learners need to pick between two options. Each choice has its peculiarities, advantages and disadvantages while cause-and-effect structure indicates events with its cause. When things happen there are usually things that cause them, such events will also have effects either on the individual or other people or situations.

Williams (2018) researched on the progress of text structure knowledge in schools. The findings of the intervention revealed that students performed well than those who did not receive the intervention on both researcher-developed measures and a standardized test of RC. This is because in schools, the passages in the comprehension texts and the passage used are of different types. This is referring to the content and the subject matter and not the length or the difficulty level of the passage. as there are different types of essay and specific approaches to each type so also the types of text and each type demands a different approach.

Latawiec (2010) examined the effects of text structure awareness as a metacognitive approach on 115 Polish EFL learners' academic progress over the course of three years of tertiary education at an English Teacher's Training College. The study's justification rests on the theory of strategic text processing and the paradigm for teaching text structure, which, when explicitly taught, promotes improved understanding and memory of previously learned material. The association between students' awareness and use of text structure technique was examined using pre-test and post-test procedures. The outcomes of statistical computations indicated that, along with other indicators, knowledge of text structure is a significant predictor of academic achievement and students' positive attitude.

The learners' capacity to read and memorise English and Spanish texts was taken into consideration in a study on the effectiveness of employing text structure as a strategy education technique. It is true that, the students' understanding of using text structure teaching as a tool, according to Schwartz et al. (2017) helps to foster the recollection of the target texts and reading comprehension skills. The researchers discovered that

there were specific signal words that students should pay attention to in order to speed up the comprehension process and help them understand the main ideas of the text. Researchers firmly thought that making it possible for students to understand the text's structure helps them become skilled readers who could have major difficulties understanding the text's meaning.

2.3.10 Cognitive Style and Students' Achievement in English Reading

Comprehension

Aydin-Ceran and Ates (2020) carried out an evaluation in terms of different measurement techniques vis-à-vis a students' level of conceptual understanding, with different cognitive styles. The interest of the research was to investigate 7th graders' conceptual understanding levels with different cognitive style as well the effects it has on conceptual understanding. The study adopted a causal comparative study which comprised of eight 7th graders in government schools in Ankara. A group embedded figure test was deployed to ascertain the dependence and independence cognitive styles while to determine the level of students' conceptual understanding with two different measurements. The first deployed was the Life-Based Concept Test which comprised of multiple-choice questions using real-life contexts that they are familiar with in their daily life. A force-concept map was used to assess student' conceptual understanding using MANOVA and one-way ANOVA. The results revealed that there is a significant difference between conceptual understanding measured by the two identified instruments in favour with students with the field independence CS. It also implies there is a significant different based on students' cognitive style.

In a study by Tinajero et al (2012) whose interest was to investigate the impacts of cognitive style which is sometimes referred to dependence-independence research on Brazilian University students' academic achievement. The moderator variable of learning strategies was considered. The study employed 313 year one students out of which are 189 female and 124 Male. The mean response is 20.85 and standard deviation of 3.86 of the learning strategies from various fields. The three levels of lower, medium, and upper scores on the dependence and independence was assessed through a self-designed instrument. The total cumulative score of the students were recorded. The findings of the multiple regression analysis revealed that cognitive style and learning strategies are potent factors which contributed significantly to students'

academic performance. A path analysis conducted showed planned strategies mediated the impacts of cognitive style on students' achievement.

2.3.11 Cognitive style and students' attitude to English reading comprehension

Olagbaju (2020) studied the effects of CS and gender on the English summary writing within the massive failure being recorded in English language occasioned by this aspect. It was discovered that the teaching and learning process are not students' personality-centred. This implies that student's ability to do well in this aspect was not taken care of based on the instructional procedure being deployed. The author remarked that students' cognitive style is the personalized process to which they receive, store and process information into meaningful use. Gender as another variable of interest in the research work and could determine the performance of students in English language summary writing. The study put into consideration global and analytic perspectives of cognitive style. The result shows that the two variables are potent factors for students' high achievement in English summary writing. It was recommended that teachers should consider the way students learn while teaching summary writing in English language.

Kozhevnikov (2014) did a study to investigate the efficacy of CS to the modern theories in the field of education, psychology, and neuroscience. Also, to ventilate the findings for various field usage, the author provided conceptual clarification for cognitive style as the mechanism for the adaptation to external control which formed the basis for internal characteristics and the interactions which are molded by the dynamics of environment unconsciously. The study also revealed the implications of cognitive style across various field of endeavour namely education, psychology, decision-making styles in management and business world, cross-cultural context in neuroscience, learning styles. These are addressing the same phenomenon of CS and its possible manifestation. The findings of the study revealed that the construct of CS of paramount importance and can address the inadequacies in human development in their various professions.

2.4 Appraisal of literature

Literature is replete with RC as one of the aspects of English Studies is erroneously believed to be very simple to teach and learn in schools. Reading is pivotal to academic success and comprehension of the text is the goal of reading and that it has the potential of improving students' academic performance in school and becoming an important survival skill later in life. Some of the studies examined have revealed the dominance of teacher-centred conventional strategies that disregard student-related variables such as psycholinguistic and cognitive factors in the learning process. Besides, the literature reviewed and research evidence available indicate that in an attempt to influence the teaching and learning experience in RC and improve students' learning outcomes have led to different studies on instructional strategies, learner-related variables such as gender, language interest, age, socio-linguistic background, verbal ability, vocabulary knowledge, topic familiarity and so on.

These interventions were aimed at improving teaching and learning experience and students' achievement in RC within the senior secondary schools. In spite of empirical findings by scholars, students are still under performing in English language examination. This is perhaps because most of the studies consider the salient Communicative Factors (Topic Familiarity and Language Anxiety, Syntactic ability) and Cognitive Factors (Text structure knowledge and Cognitive Style) that are peculiar to each learner which could encourage or inhibit the teaching and learning process. In addition, the empirical literature evaluation revealed a dearth of studies on how much certain of these cognitive and communicative traits may influence students' learning results in RC. The work thereby closes a research gap.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

3.0 Preamble

Third chapter contains specifically the research design, population of the study, sample and sampling techniques, instrumentation, research procedure of data collection as well as methods of data analysis.

3.1 Research Design

The research employed the survey design of the correlational type which was deemed fit for the study of this nature. The design made provisions for the correlation of communicative and cognitive factors with attainment and disposition to ERC.

3.2 Variables in the Study

The study comprised independent and dependent variables. They are classified as follows:

Independent Variables (IVs):

- (i) Topic Familiarity (ii) Language Anxiety (iii) Syntactic Ability (iv) Text Structure Knowledge v) Cognitive Styles

Dependent Variables:

- (i) Students' Achievement in reading comprehension
- (ii) Students' Attitude to reading comprehension

3.3 Population of the Study

The population of the study comprised all Senior Secondary School two (SSII) students in Oyo State, Nigeria.

3.4. Sample and Sampling Technique

There are 324 public SS in Oyo State, and there are 33 LGAs out of which 10 Local Government Areas were randomly selected. Five (5) public Senior Secondary Schools were selected in each Local Government using simple random sampling technique. Also, 50 students from SS2 of each school were randomly selected, making two thousand five hundred (2500) students. In all, a total number of 2500 students participated in the study.

3.5 Research Instruments

The following instruments were used for data collections.

- i. Questionnaire on Topic Familiarity and English Reading Comprehension (QTFERC)
- ii. Questionnaire on Syntactic Ability and English Reading Comprehension (QSAERC)
- iii. Questionnaire on Language Anxiety and English Reading Comprehension (QLAERC)
- iv. Text Structure Knowledge Test (TSKT)
- v. Cognitive Style Questionnaire (CSI)
- vi. Students' Attitude to English RC Questionnaire (SATERCQ)
- vii. Achievement Test in English RC (ATERC)

3.5.1 Questionnaire on Topic Familiarity and English Reading Comprehension (QTFERC)

This 20-item instrument was self-structured so as to measure the level of students' familiarity with topics in English RC. The instrument has two parts (A and B). The significant number of items that form the questionnaire was obtained through interaction with English language teachers and the students' English text books. Part A is on demographic information of the participants like; class, age, sex, ethnic group /first language and so on. Part B comprises 20 items on topic familiarity with a 3-point scale comprising: *I am familiar with the concepts; Very well; Well; Not at all*. The instrument was content and face validated by language lecturers and scholars in the Arts and Social Sciences Education Department as well as in English Department, University of Ibadan. The rubrics used for the validation cut across sentence construction, appropriateness of language used, avoidance of ambiguity, variable applicability and other-related indicators. The reliability index of the instrument was also done having trial-tested it among some students using Cronbach Alpha on their responses which showed a reliability coefficient of 0.87.

3.5.2 Questionnaire on Syntactic Ability and English Reading Comprehension (QSAERC)

This instrument was self-designed to assess the influence of Syntactic Ability on English RC. The 20-item instrument has two parts (A and B) and significant number of items that form the questionnaire was obtained through interaction with English language teachers and some students. Part A deals with the respondents' demographic data, including their age, class, sex, and first language and other categories. Part B comprises 20 items on SA. The instrument has a four point likert scale showing different degrees and levels of the influence of syntactic ability on students' reading. The scale ranges from 4 – 1 with the items as Frequently- (4), Occasionally (3), Rarely (2) and Never (1). The instrument was content and face-validated by language lecturers and scholars from English department and experts from the Department of Arts and Social Sciences Education, University of Ibadan. The rubrics used for the validation cut across sentence construction, appropriateness of language used, avoidance of ambiguity, variable applicability and other-related indicators. The instrument's reliability index was also done on different set of students using Cronbach Alpha on their responses which yielded a reliability coefficient of 0.80.

3.5.3 Questionnaire on Language Anxiety and English Reading Comprehension (QLAERC)

The 20-item instrument was self-designed to assess the influence of Language Anxiety on English RC. The instrument has two parts (A and B) and significant number of items that form the questionnaire was obtained through interaction with English language teachers. Part A deals with demographic information, including age, class, sex, first language, and other categories. This aspect of the instrument covers the four factors that contribute to anxiety in a language classroom which include communication apprehension anxiety (items 1-3), test anxiety (items 4-5), fear of negative evaluation (items 6-7) and anxiety during instruction in English language classroom (items 8-10). The instrument was content and face-validated by language lecturers and scholars from Arts and Social Sciences Education Departments as well as in English Department. The rubrics used for the validation cut across sentence construction, appropriateness of language used, avoidance of ambiguity, variable applicability and other-related indicators. The reliability of the instrument was also

done with few selected students using Cronbach Alpha on their responses which resulted in a reliability coefficient of 0.78.

3.5.4 Text Structure Knowledge Test and English Reading Comprehension (TSKTERC)

This instrument was self-designed to test students' text structure knowledge. The 20-item test covers chronological, descriptive, problem solution and cause-and-effect questions chosen from words which are fairly common and in regular usage. TSKT assesses ability to understand the structural properties of: chronological structure which means the events in the text are arranged in the order of their occurrence, spatial text structure is also known to be descriptive text structure. Here, the text is arranged with the description of the object in a definite pattern either from top to down or right to left depending on the author's decision. Problem-solution is the type where the author raises or asks the main question that contains the main idea and logically develops the answer to the question. The fourth is the cause-and-effect which shows the topic sentence in the first line of the sentence in a paragraph and supported with supporting ideas. The 20 items from TSKT cover three topics which include a minimum of five questions per topic. The three topics in the test are types of passages, knowledge of text structure and meaning of each type of text structure. The instrument is a multiple choice test with four options lettered A to D. Students were tasked to pick the option that they consider to be the most appropriate. The instrument was content and face validated by language lecturers and scholars in the Departments of Arts and Social Sciences Education as well as in the Department of English, Faculty of Arts, University of Ibadan. The rubrics used for the validation cut across sentence construction, appropriateness of language used, avoidance of ambiguity, variable applicability and other-related indicators. The reliability of the instrument was also done using few participants from different schools and their responses were subjected to Cronbach Alpha and a reliability coefficient of 0.81 was produced.

3.5.5 Cognitive Style Questionnaire and English Reading Comprehension (CSIERC)

The researcher adopted Lorna Martin 1998 Cognitive Style Inventory (CSI). The inventory contains 36 items arranged from letter A-J, patterned on a 5 point scale (1-5). It was modified to suit the current study on a 4 point modified Likert scale

Strongly Agree (**SA**), Agree (**A**), Disagree (**D**) and Strongly Disagree (**SD**). The 20 items were positively worded while those in odd groups captured field dependent cognitive style dimension while those in even numbers covers field independent cognitive style dimension. The two sectors in the study captured the demographic (A) and items response column (B). The instrument was content and face validated by language lecturers and scholars from the Arts and Social Sciences Education department as well as in department of English, Faculty of Arts, University of Ibadan. The rubrics used for the validation cut across sentence construction, appropriateness of language used, avoidance of ambiguity, variable applicability and other-related indicators. The reliability of the instrument was also done using few students as participants and 0.79 was reported.

3.5.6 Students' Attitude to English Reading Comprehension Questionnaire (SAERCQ)

SAERCQ was prepared to collect data on students' attitude to English RC. It comprised 20 set of items on students' attitude to RC and the questionnaire items were structured along four-point Likert scale response options of Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Disagree (D), and Strongly Disagree (SD). The researcher employed the services of some experts in language education and psychology on the items of questionnaire on SAERCQ. Through their constructive criticism, the initial 25-item questionnaire was reduced to 20-item questionnaire. The questionnaire was revalidated in content, suitability, and language of presentation. The SAERCQ was trial-tested on 50 SSII students from two schools that were not considered to be part of the selected schools for the research work. The participants' responses were analysed using Cronbach alpha and the reliability coefficient of 0.74 was obtained.

3.5.7 Attainment Test in ERC (ATERC)

ATERC was self-prepared using sets of items from New Oxford English Course for SSII to assess students' ability to read and understand English comprehension passage. The instrument was designed as a parallel WAEC-type comprehension passage and it was divided into sections A and B. Section A consists of general information about the students. Section B comprises a 15-item question which the students were expected to answer. The questions were on the passage, grammatical names and functions, figures of speech and meanings and words that can replace the underlined words as used in the

passage. Structured parallel questions were used to ensure uniformity and validity of the questions. The parallel questions were structured based on the curriculum of the students in the English language. Experts in Language Education and test construction assisted in the validation of the structured parallel questions. Following some major corrections on the test items, the final drafts were produced. To ascertain their reliability, the test was administered on 50 SSII students who were not part of the sampled population for the main study. The test was administered twice at two weeks interval. The reliability of the test was ascertained using Test-re-test, and a reliability coefficient of 0.81 was obtained.

3.6 Procedure for Data Collection

A visit tour was done to various schools used for the study before the commencement of the research, six research assistants were taught how to administer the questionnaire. Data were collected using the instruments in this order: Achievement Test in English Reading Comprehension (ATERC), Students' Attitude to English Reading Comprehension Questionnaire (SATERCQ), Topic Familiarity Scale (TFS), Questionnaire on Syntactic Ability (QSA), and Questionnaire on Language Anxiety (QLA), Cognitive Style Inventory (CSI), as well as Text Structure Knowledge Test (TSKT). Data gathering took eight weeks.

3.7 Methods of Data Analysis

Data garnered were evaluated with descriptive and inferential statistics. The descriptive statistics entails frequency count, percentage, mean, standard deviation while the inferential statistics include the use of piercing product moment correlation (PPMC) and multiple regression analysis. These statistical tools helped to ascertain relationship between the independent variables in the study and students' Learning Outcomes (LO) in reading comprehension. It also helped to investigate the contribution of communicative factors (TF, LA and SA) and cognitive factors (TSK and CS) on attainment in and attitude to RC in the SSS in Oyo State.

3.8 Statistical Tools for analysing Data

Research Questions	Themes	Analytical Tools
Research Question 1	Topic Familiarity	Frequency Count, Mean and Standard Deviation
Research Question 2	Language Anxiety	Frequency Count, Mean and Standard Deviation
Research Question 3	Syntactic ability	Frequency Count, Mean and Standard Deviation
Research Questions 4a&b	Relationship between Independent Variables and Dependent Variables	Pearson Product Moment Correlation (PPMC) at 0.05 level of significance
Research Questions 5a&b	Relative Contribution of Independent Variables and Dependent Variables	Multiple Regression at 0.05 level of significance
Research Questions 6a&b	Joint Contribution of Independent Variables and Dependent Variables	Multiple Regression at 0.05 level of significance
Research Question 7	Which of the Independent Variables best predict students' Achievement and Attitude	Multiple Regression at 0.05 level of significance

CHAPTER FOUR
RESULTS AND DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

4.0 Preamble

The chapter captured the findings and the discussion of the results obtained.

Table 4.1: Demographic information of respondents

Demographic Information		Frequency	Percentage (%)
Age range of respondents (in years)	10 to 12 years	-	-
	13 to 15 years	429	18.2
	16 to 18 years	1673	70.9
	19 years and above	258	10.9
	Total	2360	100.0
Gender of Respondents	Male	1125	47.7
	Female	1235	52.3
	Total	2360	100.0

Table 4.1 shows the gender distribution of the respondents that were involved in this study. The table shows that 1125 (47.7%) of the respondents were male while the larger percent of 1235 (52.3%) were female. It implies that many of the respondents surveyed were female. However, there is an element of gender balance among respondents used for the study. Also, the table shows the age distribution of the respondents that were involved in this study. It reveals that 1673 participants fell between the ages of 16 and 18 years, by implication, many of the respondents were aged and matured for the study.

4.1 Answering of Research Questions

Research Question 1: Are students familiar with the subject matter of English reading comprehension?

Table 4.2: Mean Response of Students on Topic Familiarity

S/ N	Items I am familiar with;	VF	F	NFA	\bar{x}	St. d	Remark
1	Theme/subject matter/topic discussed in the passage	2012 85.6	310 13.2	28 1.2	2.84	.39	Agreed
2	The main gist of the passage	730 31.1	1508 64.2	112 4.8	2.26	.54	Agreed
3	Understanding of the passage	726 30.9	968 41.2	656 27.9	2.03	.77	Agreed
4	Vocabulary/registers in the passage	1214 51.7	988 42.0	148 6.3	2.45	.61	Agreed
5	The grammatical names in the passage	788 33.5	1440 61.3	122 5.2	2.28	.55	Agreed
6	The functions of the grammatical structures in the passage	520 22.1	1164 49.5	666 28.3	1.94	.71	Agreed
7	Figurative expressions used in the passage	740 31.5	1344 57.2	266 11.3	2.20	.62	Agreed
8	Meaning of the figurative expression as used in the passage	1410 60.0	808 34.4	132 5.6	2.54	.60	Agreed
9	The underlined words in the passage	600 25.5	1600 68.3	144 6.1	2.19	.53	Agreed
10	Words to replace the underlined words as used in the passage	1052 44.8	722 30.7	576 24.5	2.20	.81	Agreed
11	Grammatical expressions as used in the passage	1048 44.6	1166 49.6	136 5.8	2.39	.59	Agreed
12	Parts of speech in the passage	950 40.0	1190 50.0	210 8.9	2.31	.63	Agreed
13	Topic sentence in the passage because they are familiar with my environment	720 30.6	990 42.1	640 27.2	2.03	.76	Agreed
14	How to put a title to the passage because the story line is simple	1290 54.9	916 39.0	144 6.1	2.49	.61	Agreed
15	Identification of supporting ideas	612 26.0	1486 63.2	252 10.7	2.15	.59	Agreed
16	Functions of figurative expression used in the passage	890 37.9	866 36.9	594 25.3	2.13	.79	Agreed
17	Images in the passage since they are related to what I see around me	1120 47.7	1044 44.4	186 7.9	2.40	.63	Agreed
18	Signs and symbols in the passage	756 32.2	1430 60.0	164 7.0	2.25	.57	Agreed
19	Main ideas of each of the paragraphs in the passage	602 25.6	992 42.2	756 32.2	1.93	.76	Agreed
20	Irrelevant points used in the passage	972 41.1	968 41.2	410 17.4	2.24	.73	Agreed
Weighted Average: 2.26 Threshold: 2.0							

Table 4.2 shows the responses of students' topic familiarity scale. It reveals a weighted average of 2.26 which is higher than threshold of 2.0. This implies that students are familiar with the topics in reading comprehension.

Research Question 2: What is the level of students' language anxiety with the subject matter of the English reading comprehension?

Table 4.3: Mean Response of Students on Language Anxiety

S/N	Items	F	S	R	N	\bar{x}	Std	Remark
1	I feel uncomfortable around speakers of English language.	1868 79.2	362 15.3	72 3.1	58 2.5	3.71	.64	Agreed
2	I get nervous and confused when I am asked to read/speak during English language lessons.	1008 42.7	1278 54.2	54 2.3	20 .8	3.39	.58	Agreed
3	I am always nervous when I don't understand a word in the passage.	622 26.4	1138 48.2	394 16.7	206 8.7	2.92	.88	Agreed
4	I am afraid that my language teacher is ready to correct everything I say (read) or write.	812 34.4	986 41.8	166 7.0	396 16.8	2.94	1.0 4	Agreed
5	I worry about the consequences of failing English language tests or examination	946 40.1	1114 47.2	156 6.6	144 6.1	3.21	.82	Agreed
6	I see some other students are better than me in English language expression	488 20.7	1308 55.4	288 12.2	276 11.7	2.85	.88	Agreed
7	My classmates are likely to make jest of me when I speak	1472 62.4	732 31.0	80 3.4	76 3.2	3.53	.72	Agreed
8	During English language lessons, I tend to get nervous and forget the things I know.	616 26.1	1542 65.3	126 5.3	76 3.2	3.14	.65	Agreed
9	I feel more tense and nervous in the English language class than in any other subject.	842 35.7	820 34.7	418 17.7	280 11.9	2.94	1.0 0	Agreed
10	I often feel like not going to my language class.	724 30.7	1098 46.5	102 4.3	436 18.5	2.89	1.0 4	Agreed
11	I am more willing to read in class when we discuss current events in the passage	1186 50.3	930 39.4	134 5.7	110 4.7	3.35	.79	Agreed
12	I feel less conscious about reading in class in front of others if I know them better	730 30.9	1358 57.5	172 7.3	100 4.2	3.15	.73	Agreed
13	I am less anxious in class when I am not the only person reading a passage	924 39.2	902 38.2	386 16.4	148 6.3	3.10	.89	Agreed
14	I enjoy reading comprehension class when we work in pairs	684 29.0	1180 50.0	138 5.8	358 15.2	2.93	.98	Agreed
15	I feel more comfortable in reading when I don't have to get in front of the class	1212 51.4	846 35.8	170 7.2	132 5.6	3.33	.84	Agreed
16	I enjoy class if I am not corrected at all in reading comprehension class	616 26.1	1490 63.1	150 6.4	104 4.4	3.11	.69	Agreed
17	I feel better about reading in reading comprehension class if the class is smaller	1020 43.2	796 33.7	470 19.9	74 3.1	3.17	.85	Agreed
18	I like going to class when we don't have to read any passage	478 20.3	1286 54.5	166 7.0	430 18.2	2.77	.97	Agreed
19	I enjoy class when I can work with other students	1322 56.0	736 31.2	188 8.0	114 4.8	3.38	.83	Agreed
20	I feel uneasy when fellow students are asked to correct my mistakes in class	730 30.9	1052 44.6	201 8.9	368 15.6	2.91	1.0 1	Agreed
Weighted Average: 3.14 Threshold: 2.5								

Table 4.3 shows the responses of students' response of Students on Language Anxiety. It reveals a weighted average of 3.14 which is more than the threshold of 2.5. This implies that students have language anxiety in reading comprehension classes

RQ 3: What is syntactic ability of students?

Table 4.4: Mean Response of Students on Syntactic Ability

S/ N	Items	E	VG	F	G	P	\bar{x}	std	Remark
1	I have the knowledge of some grammatical words in sentences	2052 88.4	128 5.5	80 3.4	56 2.4	6 0.3	4.79	.64	Agreed
2	I can differentiate between grammatical words and their functions	908 39.1	1272 54.8	68 2.9	68 2.9	8 0.3	4.29	.69	Agreed
3	I understand the meaning of noun and its functions	652 28.1	876 37.7	540 23.3	56 2.4	198 8.5	3.74	1.15	Agreed
4	I can differentiate between nouns and pronouns	724 31.2	918 39.5	130 5.6	482 20.0	68 2.9	3.75	1.18	Agreed
5	I understand what active and passive voices are	790 34.0	842 36.3	192 8.3	128 5.5	370 15.9	3.67	1.40	Agreed
6	I can differentiate between transitive and intransitive verbs	944 40.7	1010 43.5	214 9.2	122 5.3	32 1.4	4.17	.89	Agreed
7	I can identify the progressive and perfective aspects in sentences	822 35.4	1122 48.3	248 10.7	90 3.9	40 1.7	4.12	.87	Agreed
8	I recognise countable and uncountable nouns	472 20.3	1226 52.8	490 21.1	104 4.5	30 1.3	3.86	.83	Agreed
9	I can analyse the affixes and roots of words in a sentences	706 30.4	868 37.4	284 12.2	390 16.8	74 3.2	3.75	1.15	Agreed
10	I ask my friend to help identify the prepositions in a sentence	334 14.4	974 41.9	316 13.6	172 7.4	526 22.7	3.18	1.39	Agreed
11	The idiomatic expressions used in a passage are always clear to me	1536 66.1	578 24.9	138 5.9	48 2.1	22 0.9	4.53	.78	Agreed
12	I decide whether the pronouns in any sentence is reflexive or intensive	462 19.9	1696 73.0	86 3.7	48 2.1	30 1.3	4.08	.66	Agreed
13	I can choose whether an article is definite or indefinite in sentences.	852 36.7	730 31.4	484 20.8	30 1.3	226 9.7	3.84	1.22	Agreed
14	I understand the syntactic features of adverbs	494 21.3	1208 52.0	162 7.0	384 16.5	74 3.2	3.72	1.07	Agreed
15	I can identify the types of conjunctions in a sentence	1022 44.0	738 31.8	134 5.8	40 1.7	388 16.7	3.85	1.43	Agreed
16	I listen to discussions on grammatical features of sentences	896 38.5	1178 50.7	132 5.7	68 2.9	48 2.1	4.21	.84	Agreed
17	I can differentiate between simple sentence and complex sentence	1020 43.9	1056 45.5	150 6.5	50 2.2	46 2.0	4.27	.83	Agreed
18	I make a guess to get the functions of some syntactic words	494 21.3	1230 53.0	466 20.1	78 3.4	54 2.3	3.88	.86	Agreed
19	I have some ideas of the basic meanings of attributive and predicative adjectives	1028 44.3	726 31.3	156 6.7	330 14.2	82 3.5	3.99	1.18	Agreed
20	I can use the familiar parts of speech to form sentences	824 35.5	724 31.2	174 7.5	62 2.7	538 23.2	3.53	1.55	Agreed
Weighted Average: 3.96		Threshold: 2.5							

Table 4.4 shows the students responses to syntactic ability scale. The obtained mean (3.96) is greater than 2.50, implying that student have high syntactic ability.

RQ 4 (a): What is the connection between Topic Familiarity, Language Anxiety, Syntactic Ability, Cognitive Style and Text Structure Knowledge) and Students' Achievement in Reading Comprehension?

Table 4.5a: Correlation Matrix Table on the five IVs and Students' Achievement in Reading Comprehension

Variables	Students' Achievement in Reading Comprehension	Students' Topic Familiarity	Students' Language Anxiety	Students' Syntactic Ability	Students' Cognitive Style	Students' Text Structure
Students' Achievement in Reading Comprehension	1.00					
Students' Topic Familiarity	-.008 (.685)	1.00				
Students' Language Anxiety	.022 (.282)	-.007 (.727)	1.00			
Students' Syntactic Ability	.083** (.000)	.003 (.872)	.039 (.058)	1.00		
Students' Cognitive Style	.029 (.154)	-.025 (.228)	.039 (.057)	.115** (.000)	1.00	
Students' Text Structure	-.216** (.000)	-.029 (.160)	-.045* (.028)	.010 (.644)	-.017 (.403)	1.00

** . Correlation is significant at 0.01 level (2-tailed).

* . Correlation is significant at 0.05 level (2-tailed).

It is seen in table 4.5a that there is the positive significant relationships between the achievement of students in reading comprehension and students' syntactic ability ($r = .083^{**}$). The significant correlation between students' reading comprehension proficiency and their overall academic performance is negative towards their text structure ($r = -.216^{**}$). Topic familiarity ($r = -.008$), language anxiety ($r = .022$) and cognitive ability ($r = .029$, $p (.154) > .05$) were not significant on students' achievement in reading comprehension.

RQ 4 (b): What relationship exists among the IVs (topic familiarity, syntactic ability, language anxiety text structure knowledge and cognitive style) and students' attitude to English RC?

Table 4.5b: PPMC of IVs and Attitude to Reading Comprehension

Variables	Students' Attitude to Reaching Comprehension	Students' Topic Familiarity	Students' Language Anxiety	Students' Syntactic Ability	Students' Cognitive Style	Students' Text Structure
Students' Attitude to Reading Comprehension	1.00					
Students' Topic Familiarity	.054** (.009)	1.00				
Students' Language Anxiety	-.004 (.851)	-.007 (.727)	1.00			
Students' Syntactic Ability	.004 (.851)	.003 (.872)	.039 (.058)	1.00		
Students' Cognitive Style	-.009 (.662)	-.025 (.228)	.039 (.057)	.115* (.000)	1.00	
Students' Text Structure	-.015 (.452)	-.029 (.150)	-.045* (.028)	.010 (.644)	-.017 (.403)	1.00

** . Correlation is significant at 0.01 level (2-tailed).

* . Correlation is significant at 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Table 4.5a shows a positive connection between attitude to reading comprehension and students' syntactic ability ($r = .083^{**}$, $p (.000) < .05$). There is no relationship between students' attitude to reading comprehension and the independent variables of Language Anxiety ($r = -.004$, $p (.851) > .05$), Syntactic Ability ($r = .004$, $p (.851) > .05$), Cognitive Style ($r = -.009$, $p (.662) > .05$), and Text Structure Knowledge ($r = -.015$, $p (.452) > .05$).

RQ 5 (a): What is the joint contribution (JC) of IVs (topic familiarity, syntactic ability, language anxiety, text structure knowledge and cognitive style) to students' achievement in English RC?

Table 4.6a: Summary of Regression analysis showing the Joint Contribution of all the IVs on Students' Achievement in Reading Comprehension

R	R²	Adj.R²	Std. Error of the Estimate			
.234 ^a	.055	.053	19.024			
A N O V A						
Model	SS	DF	MS	F	Sig.	Remark
Regression	49162.937	5	9832.587	27.169	.000 ^b	Significant.
Residual	851934.439	2354	361.909			
Total	901097.377	2359				

In Table 4.6a, collective impacts of communicative and cognitive factors (Students' Topic Familiarity, Language Anxiety, Syntactic Ability, Cognitive Style and Text Structure Knowledge) to students' achievement were significant ($F_{(5; 2,354)} = 27.169$; $\text{Adj. } R^2 = .053$; $p < .05$), which accounts for 55.0% of the variance. This means that the joint contributions of the independent variables and the dependent variable were significant and that other factors not included in this study may have resulted in the remaining variance.

RQ 5 (b): What is the collective impact of IVs (students' topic familiarity, syntactic ability, language anxiety, cognitive style and text structure knowledge) to students' attitude to reading comprehension?

Table 4.6b: Summary of Regression analysis showing the Joint Contribution of all the IVs on Students' Attitude to Reading Comprehension

R	R Square		Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate		
.056 ^a	.003		.001	9.371		
A N O V A						
Model	Sum of Squares	DF	Mean Square	F	Sig.	Remark
Regression	656.910	5	131.382	1.496	.188 ^b	Not Significant.
Residual	206719.903	2354	87.816			
Total	207376.813	2359				

In Table 4.6b, collective impact of students' topic familiarity, syntactic ability, language anxiety, cognitive style and text structure knowledge on students' attitude were not significant ($F_{(5; 2354)} = 1.468$; Adj. $R^2 = .001$), which accounts for 0.3% of the variance. It can then be said that the remaining variance could have been explained by other variables that were not examined in this study.

RQ 6 (a): What is the relative contribution (RC) of IVs (topic familiarity, syntactic ability, language anxiety, text structure knowledge and cognitive style) to students' achievement to English RC?

Table 4.7a: Relative Contributions of the IVs to Students' Achievement in English Reading Comprehension

Variables	Unstandardised Coefficients		Standardised Coefficients	Ranking	T	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	beta			
(constant)	38.042	5.686			6.691	.000
Students' Topic Familiarity	-.056	.078	-.014	4 th	-.721	.471
Students' Language Anxiety	.019	.046	.008	3 rd	.471	.677
Students' Syntactic Ability	.117	.268	.083	1 st	4.135	.000
Students' Cognitive Style	.032	.043	.015	2 nd	.757	.449
Students' Knowledge of Text Structure	-.149	.014	-.217	5 th	-10.795	.000

Table 4.7a reveals the relative contributions of students' topic familiarity, syntactic ability, language anxiety, cognitive style and text structure knowledge on students' achievement in reading comprehension, expressed as beta weights in order of magnitude, viz-a-viz., students' syntactic ability ($\beta = .083$), language anxiety ($\beta = .008$), cognitive style ($\beta = .015$), topic familiarity ($\beta = -.014$) and text structure knowledge cognitive style ($\beta = -.217$).

RQ 6 (b): What is the relative contribution of Topic Familiarity, Syntactic Ability, Language Anxiety, Cognitive Style and Text Structure Knowledge) and Students' Attitude to Reading Comprehension?

Table 4.7b: Relative Contributions of the IVs on Attitude to Reading Comprehension

Variables	Unstandardised Coefficients		Standardised Coefficients	Ranking	T	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	βeta			
(constant)	57.445	2.801			0.510	.000
Students' Topic Familiarity	.098	.038	.053	1 st	2.570	.010
Students' Language Anxiety	-.004	.023	-.004	3 rd	-.194	.846
Students' Syntactic Ability	-.003	.014	.005	2 nd	.239	.811
Students' Cognitive Style	-.009	.021	-.008	4 th	-.403	.687
Students' Knowledge of Text Structure	-.005	.007	-.014	5 th	-.695	.487

Table 4.7a reveals the relative contributions of students' topic familiarity, syntactic ability, language anxiety, cognitive style and text structure knowledge to students' attitude to reading comprehension, expressed as beta weights in order of magnitude, viz-a-viz:, students' topic familiarity ($\beta = .053$), syntactic ability ($\beta = .005$), language anxiety ($\beta = -.004$), cognitive style ($\beta = -.008$) and text structure knowledge ($\beta = -.014$). Therefore, it could be said that the IVs have made their own individual contribution to students' attitude to reading comprehension.

Research Question 7 (a): Which of the factors would predict students' achievement in reading comprehension?

Table 6a indicates the joint contributions of the IVs to the prediction of the students' achievement in reading comprehension at different levels and ranks as expressed by the t-values. According to table 6a, students syntactic ability ($\beta = .083$; $t = 4.135$; $p (.000) < 0.05$) and students' text structure knowledge ($\beta = -.217$; $t = -10.795$; $p (.000) < 0.05$) predicted students' achievement in reading comprehension. Therefore, it is only the IVs (syntactic ability and text structure knowledge) that predicted students' achievement in reading comprehension. The prediction equation is given as:

Where Y denotes Students' Achievement in Reading Comprehension (SARC)

SSA denotes Students' Syntactic Ability

STSK denotes Students' Text Structure Knowledge and are the coefficients of.

Consequently the equation for predicting is, $SARC = 38.042 + .117 SSA + -.149 STSK$.

Research Question 7 (b): Which of the factors would predict students' attitude to reading comprehension?

Table 6b shows the degree of significance of the IVs to the determinants of the attitude of students to reading comprehension at varying degrees as indicated by the t-values. Looking at table 6b, only students' topic familiarity ($\beta = .053$; $t = 2.570$; $p (.010) < 0.05$) predicted students' attitude to reading comprehension. Therefore, it is

only the independent variable of topic familiarity that predicted students' attitude to reading comprehension. The prediction equation is given as:

Where Y denotes SARC

STF denotes Students Topic familiarity and is the coefficients of.

Therefore the prediction equation is, $SARC = 57.445 + .098 STF$

4.2 Discussion of findings

4.2.1 Students' topic familiarity

From the study, it was revealed that students are familiar with the topics in reading comprehension. This could be that the topics are based on the experiences within the environment of the learners. This means that background knowledge is very important in interpreting meaning because it will form a basis for every reader to relate their new information to the existing knowledge. It means if the reader knows something about the intention of the writer, comprehension is much easier. This result is in line with Abdelhalim (2017), which states that topic familiarity is of paramount importance to reading comprehension at primary and secondary levels. Al-Shumaimeri (2006) argues that test familiarity is necessary to promote reading comprehension. Annisa (2019) opines that text familiarity is of paramount importance to the students' achievement in English language especially, reading comprehension. It is a known fact that to understand a passage, effective reading must take place. The way it has to be done is by searching for the thought that was in the mind of the author in that passage and it must be processed and distilled so as to extract from the words the thought which are expressed.

A study by Fukaya and Horiba (2015) avers that without the elements of students being able to identify the key messages in reading comprehension, they may not be able to do well in reading comprehension in any language. While the findings of Lesser (2004) was at variance with the result of this study. He found that topic familiarity is not a potent factor of language acquisition and even reading comprehension in English language. The study of McCrudden, Stenseth, Braten, and Stromso, (2015) added that topic familiarity has significant effect on students' level of mastery of what they have read. This shows that it is good for learners to use context clues in any given passage this will help in the understanding of the visual, structural and phonemic elements of the words. Tendency to over-analyse words, that is,

breaking words into letters for understanding how words are formed, will surely result in a waste of time.

Rouhi and Asghari (2011) found topic familiarity as potential factor which can influence students' academic performance in several disciplines especially language-oriented ones. RC requires students to possess adequate and relevant vocabulary which is an essential ingredient for a high rate of understanding a text. Learners need to have a good store of functional word power to be able to understand the thoughts and ideas expressed in a passage and if they are not familiar with these words it would be difficult to understand the text and to perform well in any examination.

The study of Adeniyi and Omole (2010) acknowledge the importance of identification of concepts, themes and topics by students in any discipline as this will provide them with a measure of edge over others who are not familiar with prior classroom experience. It was discovered that topic familiarity even promotes interest in learning language and science-based school subjects like Chemistry, Physics, Biology and other related subjects. Reading about an experience contributes a lot to knowledge since recognition is the ability to understand the familiarity and the relationship of a word or an idea to another word or an idea previously known but might have been forgotten. So for a passage to be read efficiently with understanding, topic familiarity is essential. This implies that familiarity with the content and context of text is a leveller to knowing and scoring good grades in it.

4.2.2 Level of Students' Language Anxiety

From the results, a measure of language anxiety in reading comprehension classes was found. It is certain that since English language is a second language, there is tendency for individual to get nervous due to their incompetence in the language. This could be as a result of the students being worried that they would get corrected by their classmates or that they could not pronounce some words correctly. This implies that students get nervous whenever they are called upon to read passages in classroom. Also a great number of students are not able to coordinate the rate of their eye movement and the rate of their pronunciation. This is because they lack the ability to read phrase by phrase or because of their emotional problems such as tension or examination fever. It is better to let the students know that they should avoid any emotional stress while reading as well as train their eye movement so as not to read word by word but to capture a significant portion of the text at a glance.

Chen and Chang (2004) affirm that language anxiety usually occurs when there is poor background knowledge of English language; students are likely to develop a degree of anxiety in reading and speaking of the language. The finding of the study is in line with the Cui (2011) and Jones (2004) which indicate that several factors are responsible for learners' high level of language anxiety among which are emotional trauma, poor social interaction, mother tongue influence, fear of making mistake, peer queries and others. Most readers forget what they read because they were unable to properly register the messages in their memories this can make such students deficient in their performance. In RC, students should engage in the mental activity of retaining what they have read and by this there would not be need to be afraid of what to say or how to answer questions on a particular text.

Also, students develop language anxiety especially if such language is not their mother tongue. This was obvious in the findings of Hewitt and Stephenson (2012); Glenberg, (2017) as well as Gorsuch, Taguchi and Umehara, (2015). All the researchers admit that language anxiety is common among non-native speakers irrespective of age, and gender. The study of Fakeye (2010) corroborates the finding of the study. In his research, he found that language anxiety has stronger influence on students' expression especially during the language teaching and learning exercise. However, the study is at variance with works of Fukaya and Horiba (2015) which found that language anxiety could be a determinant but other factors aid its manifestations like low confidence level, poor prior social interaction, weak upbringing, and several others.

4.2.3 Level of Students' Syntactic Ability

The result of this study showed that students had high syntactic ability. This implies that students were able to identify and comprehend the rules guiding the language learning. This could be that students were able to understand the grammatical structures of a language in a text and are also able to reflect on the syntactic structure of the language of the text. This finding may be connected to the fact that syntax is one of the rudiments to be taught at the elementary stage of language acquisition. Al-Shumaimeri (2006) affirms that students' syntax ability is sacrosanct to language learning and higher achievement in the discipline. Annisa (2019) and Brucher, Ugen, and Weth (2020) remark that the capacity to excel in language acquisition require the knowledge of grammar and other associated rules as this will make learners function

well in expression and writing. The finding also agrees with that of Bock and Ferreira (2014); it explained that inability of students to play around rules in English language may spell doom for their knowledge and efficiency in reading comprehension, summary, and easy writing. Brucher, Ugen and Weth (2020) stated that goal of reading is to make connections between the writer's expression and the world-over, thus, this gesture requires syntactic ability as supported by Bîlici, Ugen, and Weth (2020) and Yusuf (2015) which explained the potency of the variable in reading in English language and literature. Syntactic ability

4.2.4 Relationship between IVs and Students' Achievement in Reading Comprehension

The finding of this study is in three parts. The first part revealed that there was a positive significant relationship between students' achievement in reading comprehension and students' syntactic ability. This could be as a result of the students' knowledge of the grammatical structure that makes up a sentence. If a learner wants to understand reading text, he/she has to integrate a variety of grammatical and word meaning information. This is because the ways authors express their ideas through sentences which include the syntax that they use will immensely affect the way a reader understands their ideas. The finding of this study is in line with that of Abdelhalim (2017) which states that no students can do well in English language without due knowledge of rule application. Adebisi (2012) adds that students' understanding of rule mechanics in reading comprehension makes its teaching and learning experience successfully for both the teacher and students. Reading comprehension, no doubt, requires the ability of both the teachers and the students to align with modern trend and usage of the discipline. English language rules change on a daily basis; its important to be acquainted with the dynamics of sound expression, efficient speaking, and fluent reading. Scholars like Alenizi (2019), Brucher, Ugen and Weth (2020) have affirmed that syntactic ability on the part of teachers can motivate students in reading comprehensions classes. Araromi and Olatubosun (2018) state that knowledge of syntax aid reading comprehension. Students are able to observe where necessary, the rules of the language and read well.

The second part of the findings revealed that there was a negative significant relationship between students' achievement in reading comprehension and students' knowledge of text structure. By implication text structure had an inverse relationship

with attainment in reading comprehension. Indeed, there was a relationship but the higher students' knowledge of text structure, the lower their achievement in reading comprehension. This finding corroborates that of (DeBruin-Parecki, Van Kleeck and Gear, 2015).

The third part of the results revealed no connection between students' topic familiarity, language anxiety, and cognitive style and the achievement of students in the English reading comprehension. It means that the students might be familiar with the topic of the text but do not have the boldness to write the correct answers. Moreover, it could be that the students cannot cope with multiple tasks. The result agrees with Dochy, De Ridjt and Dyck (2002) on the assertion that language anxiety and cognitive style are not directly related to students' academic achievement in RC. This could be so, as some students may not be able to read well but are able to identify lines to write which can increase their chances of good grade in English reading comprehension. It is a well-known fact that the answers to questions in reading comprehension are carefully knitted in the passages. Hence, some students may be able to trace out answers and score points but weak in reading out loud within the context of classroom tasks. The findings of the study are in line with that of Ezeokoli (2011) which states that knowledge of text structure is a weak variable when considering reading comprehension in any language discipline.

The findings are also supported by Zhu and Li (2014), which state that the knowledge of text structure requires higher order thinking which could be beyond the capacity of the study. In other words, teachers may not have exposed them thoroughly to the mechanics of how language texts are structured. Thus, students may not have to bother themselves about text structure in RC and they are likely to do well based on their written responses while attempting the questions associated with the passage. The finding is at variance with that of (Walsh, 2001; Usman and Umar, 2014), which revealed that phobia for the personality of teacher; peer gesticulation could work against students' ability to do well in RC. Tata (2014) and Spielberg and Vagg (1995) admit that language anxiety is common among foreign learners and has been a factor in their overall academic performance.

4.2.5 Relationship between IVs and students' Attitude to Reading Comprehension

The result with respect to the relationship between IVs and students' attitude to RC is in two parts. The first part revealed a positive relationship was found between students' attitude to reading comprehension RC and students' syntactic ability. It is a known fact that the level of a text's grammatical structure is one predictor of RC. It could be that the students have the knowledge of phrase structure, parts of sentences and how they work. The outcome of the study is in line with the work of (Van Kleeck and Gear, 2015), which remarked that word recognition development skills are promoted through students' cognitive style, while its usages are encouraged by the ability to identify syntax and its features in a sentence. These gestures are likely to help students exhibit positive disposition to reading comprehension. RC is the ability to decipher the given text and understand the context of the given passage followed by multiple questions (DeBruin-Parecki, Van Kleeck and Gear, 2015). Fakeye (2014) argues that understanding a text is a product of syntactic ability and students' positive disposition to understanding the basis. This submission is in line with Hewitt and Stephenson (2012) who affirm the importance of the variable not only in English language reading but also, other subjects which students have to read and understand.

The second part showed that RC had no correlation with IVs of language anxiety, cognitive style, and text structure knowledge. This is so because attitude as a variable takes time to manifest in a child. Attitude is the predisposition of an individual to certain objects, events or situation. The finding of Hong, Ming, Ker and Li (2012) is at variance with the result of the research as language anxiety could directly hinder students' attitude to reading comprehension. The finding is also not in line with scholars like Huang (2005) who submit that syntax knowledge can promote students' interest in English language. It can also be source of internal motivation to excel in that aspect of language especially reading comprehension in English language. Meanwhile, Jiang (2016) affirms that ensuring students' knowledge of text structure may not make his or her attitude to the language positive. This is because attitude requires interest and interest is a production of both internal and external motivation. Attitude to reading comprehension is borne out of teachers' characteristics and strategies deployed to teach that section of English language learning.

4.2.6 Collective impact of the Five IVs on Students' Achievement in English

Reading Comprehension

The findings of the study indicated that the five identified independent variables (students' topic familiarity, language anxiety, syntactic ability, cognitive style, and text structure knowledge) made composite contribution to the achievement of students in reading comprehension significantly. The finding of the study equally agrees with Agbo (2019) when he explains that achievement is a product of understanding, reading, comprehension and application of certain rules and these elements can be attested to by the variables identified in the study. No doubt, reading is an action-based activity which involves learning new words and sentence construction in comprehension. It involves students' ability to recognise, construct and make meaning of the knitted words. Thus, it requires ability in cognition, styles of learning, knowledge of the text design and lots of other variables. Bock and Ferreira (2014) state that two critical factors are responsible for motivation and for reading which are: information provided and the artwork in the text. The writers' ability to use these two key components is likely to influence students' attitude to reading comprehension. Having the knowledge of the structure of the passage will enable the reader to understand the different subject matters being discussed in the comprehension passage. Text structure has direct link with the two identified components as it helps students' understanding of the arrangement of a text. Ezike (2007) agrees with the finding of the study, when he revealed that a carefully structured text can have multiplier effects on attainment in RC in the English language.

4.2.7 Collective impact of the Five IVs on Attitude to ERC

The results of this study showed that the five identified independent variables (students' topic familiarity, language anxiety, syntactic ability, cognitive style, and text structure knowledge) did not make significant composite contribution to attitude to RC. The finding of the study was at variance with that Brucher, Ugen and Weth (2020) which found that teacher and students' home background factors are responsible for students' attitude to reading comprehension. Annisa (2019) affirmed that a child from a reading home is likely to exhibit right attitude to reading in general which could affect his or her reading comprehension. Also, DeBruin-Parecki, Van Kleeck and Gear, (2015) found the need to explain that the composite contribution of other variables could be responsible for students' attitude to reading comprehension.

However, the findings of Abdelhalim (2017) disagree with the result of the current study as he explained that all the factors are indicators of attitudinal development and interest in field of study. Studies like Agbo (2019) and Al-Seghayer (2015) have shown that people (adults and children) who read fiction tend to be more empathetic. So reading can make someone a better person; it can as well foster creativity and imagination. Thus, with interest in creativity, critical thinking can lure several students into functioning in reading comprehension classes.

4.2.8 Individual impacts of the Five IVs on attainment in English Reading

Comprehension

The result showed that students' topic familiarity, syntactic ability, language anxiety, cognitive style and text structure knowledge made relative contributions to the attitude of students to the English RC. This showed that the five identified variables are potential factors when considering students' achievement in English language. Ness (2016) agrees with this study as he explains that the cognitive variables (CS and TSK) are indicators of students' achievement in several fields of study. More importantly, the finding of McCrudden, Stenseth, Bråten and Strømsø (2015) agrees with that of Lesser (2004) which stated that knowledge is a product of cognition and very necessary for academic performance in language-related fields. The finding corroborates the current study which affirmed that topic familiarity, syntactic ability, language anxiety, cognitive style and text structure knowledge when taken cognizance of, can aid students' retention in rules and language acquisition engagement. Knowledge of text structure and syntactic ability are cognitive elements and need to be critically handled in order to boost students' higher changes in reading comprehension.

On text structure knowledge also, Jingblad and Johansson (2017) found that reading is an interface which enable readers understand ideas of other people, no matter where the author is and whether alive or otherwise. Thus, the knowledge of arrangement of text is necessary to be understood by both the teachers and students so that teaching and learning process could be said to have taken place in reading comprehension class.

4.2.9 Individual impacts of the Five IVs on attitude to English Reading Comprehension

The result showed that students' topic familiarity, syntactic ability, language anxiety, cognitive style and text structure knowledge made relative contributions to

students' attitude to reading comprehension. This implies that five identified variables were potential factors when considering the students and their attitude to English RC. Komiyama and McMorris (2017) explain that cognitive and communicative variables are indicators of students' attitude to English reading comprehension. According to Sporer, Brunstein and Kieschke (2009), reading is embarking on an advanced project to build a whole new idea with the raw material of the reader's brain, the writer's brain, and the secret conversation between them by means of deciphering a code that has previously been agreed upon. This simply implies that the functionality of the teacher, writer and reader variables are instrumental to helping students gain mastery of reading comprehension as well as achievement in it. Mba and Iduma (2016) aver that students' academic performance can be enhanced if the teacher can take the students through the rudiments of understanding reading comprehension beyond the classroom tasks of responding to questions.

The work of Meyer and Ray (2017) is not at variance with these submissions. Ness (2016) also shows that reading comprehension as taught in English lessons often has little relation to reading comprehension in real life. The finding of the study was at variance with the submission of Nicolaou and Xistouri (2011) remark that reading comprehension tests can often be answered correctly without the students really understanding the topic. In real life, human being read for real purposes, and select details from the text according to what they need to know and already known. Reading comprehension tests are often designed to be scored quickly and test a superficial response, thus, some of these factors may not hold water in explaining their contribution to students' attitude to reading.

4.2.10 IV's on Prediction of ERC

The result showed students' syntactic ability and text structure knowledge predicted the achievement of students in RC. By implication it means that students' syntactic ability and text structure are very important factors that can encourage the achievement of students in RC. The works of Abdelhalim (2017) and Annisa (2019) are not at variance with these submissions. Reading is faster than listening but lacks the information that can be relayed in voice intonations. Reading has its pluses and minuses compared to visual media. For instance, one may not experience a person's thoughts and feelings in visual media the way one can by reading, but with the fundamental basis of grammar in students, they may be able to learn discretionally and

do well in RC. The result of this study therefore agrees with the research of Chen and Chang (2004) which stated that reading encompasses six primary components. This includes phonics (letter sounds), phonemic awareness (blend sounds), word recognition (sight words), word meaning (vocabulary), fluency (word-calling or reading cadence) and comprehension (understanding of any combination of words, phrases, or sentences).

Also, the results of this study is in line with the submission of Ezike (2007) and Funke and Sieger (2012) explained that the components of syntax may include rules and exceptions of learning to read in any language in which all components are important, each is learned by virtue of explicit knowledge (Tawalbeh, 2015). This implies that the students' achievement in reading comprehension can be better done via direct practice of the rules and exceptions within the given language. This agrees with the findings of the study. Conversely, fluency which is the relative reading cadence to one's own pattern of speech or processing speed is relied upon mostly with traditional attempts to improve comprehension. This may as well be concluded that it is rather consciousness while reading for information, which is largely dependent of tacit knowledge (Hewitt and Stephenson, 2012). Jiang's (2016) submission is at variance with the outcome of this study that rather than an exorbitant focus being placed on all the components, rules and exceptions, an effective approach may also be realised using real-world application or the association between the existing stimuli or prior knowledge, while attempting to learn about new topics or ideas. The submission of Kolawole (2009) reveals that this approach teaches learners to oddly as it may seem use their comprehension to understand.

Moreover, difference from the widely used approach by virtue of the components, and rules and exception which eventually lead to comprehension. Such an alternative to bolstering comprehension may be beneficial to both predominant explicit learner who may be better keen to the rules, as well as the tacit learner who may at times struggle with one or more of the primary components.

4.2.11 Predictors of Attitude to RC

The result of this study made it clear that topic familiarity is a potential factor that can encourage students' attitude to English RC. The studies of scholars such as Shanahan et al. (2010) and Rutzler (2020) are not at variance with the submission of this study. They agree that students' topic familiarity goes a long way in helping them

have positive attitude to reading comprehension. A strange topic is likely to trigger strange reactions as well as breed weak motivation. Phakiti (2003) had earlier categorised the purpose of reading into two; one for enjoyment and the other for learning purpose. The two purposes could overlap but most people enjoy learning in either way. Thus, students may not realise that if the material of learning is woolly, unclear, and not fascinating there will not be positive attitude to learning. The ability to get familiar with the material of instruction is the beginning of demonstrating interest or positive attitude to reading comprehension. It is the understanding of what has been written between the lines that encourages students' attention to reading comprehension (Oribabor, 2014).

4.2.12i Findings of the study in relation to Multiple Intelligence Theory

The outcome of this study revealed the significant relationship between cognitive style and students' achievement in reading comprehension. The findings advanced the multiple intelligences theory that takes into consideration the fact that a learner can have more intelligence to be able to perform well in the understanding of any reading passage. Multiple intelligence allows learners to show their intelligence in different ways and being connected to multisensory learning, it teaches that students learn better with activities that involve more than one sense.

4.2.12ii Findings of the study in relation to Foreign Language Anxiety Theory

The findings of the study revealed that for students with poor background knowledge of the English language they are likely to develop a degree of anxiety in reading and other related learning activities. Foreign language anxiety as described by scholars is a situation specific which emerged from the uniqueness of foreign language learning. Learners demonstrated anxiety as they encounter foreign language which in this case is the English language reading comprehension. It has revealed that students with high level of foreign language anxiety have high English reading comprehension anxiety. That is what is responsible for students' negative attitude to English RC and poor achievement in English RC.

4.2.12iii Findings of the study in relation to Schema Theory

Topic familiarity, syntactic ability cognitive style and the achievement of students in and their attitude to English RC were related. The findings advanced the

Schema theory that takes into consideration all mental frameworks. It has shown that schemata is a building block of cognition which is derived from learners' experiences that enable them to recall, concentrate their attention on the new information and help to predict the possible outcomes of events.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Summary

This study examined communicative cum cognitive determinants of LO in English RC among Senior Secondary School students in Oyo State, Nigeria. The study adopted three theories of Horwitz, Horwitz and Cope's Foreign Language Anxiety Theory (1986), Howard Gardner's Multiple Intelligence Theory (1983) and Richard Anderson's Schema Theory (1977). The research instruments used for the collection of data were administered on 2500 respondents. The researcher ensured that all the instruments were retrieved same day after they had been filled. Seven research questions were raised to guide the study. The data collected for the study was subsequently analysed with the use of descriptive statistics of (frequency count, percentage mean and standard deviation) as well as the inferential statistical tools. Findings revealed that:

1. Students have high level of topic familiarity in English RC.
2. Students exhibit high degree of language anxiety in English RC.
3. Students have high syntactic ability.
4. There was a positive significant relationship between students' achievement in RC and students' syntactic ability.
5. There was a negative significant relationship between students' achievement in RC and students' knowledge of text structure.
6. There was no significant relationship with students' topic familiarity, language anxiety, and cognitive ability and students' achievement in RC.
7. There was a positive significant relationship between students' attitude to reading comprehension and students' syntactic ability.
8. There was no relationship between students' attitude to English RC and the independent variables of language anxiety, cognitive style, and text structure knowledge.
9. The five identified independent variables (students' topic familiarity, language anxiety, syntactic ability, cognitive style, and text structure knowledge) did not make significant composite contribution to students' attitude to English RC.

10. Students' topic familiarity, syntactic ability, language anxiety, cognitive style and text structure knowledge made relative contributions to students' attitude to RC
11. Students' syntactic ability and text structure knowledge predicted the achievement of students in English RC.
12. Topic familiarity is an important factor that can encourage students' attitude to English RC.

5.2 Conclusion

The study viewed reading comprehension as a viable part of the English language and as well very important to students in all fields. Reading should be regarded as the interpretation of reading materials which is based on an individual ability to understand the purpose of the author as well as what the author is trying to bring out. It was gathered that for comprehension to take place students must be familiar with the topic because background knowledge has effect on the learning of students. Also, knowledge of syntax has a lot of impact in learning reading comprehension, this is so in order to allow students to relate the knowledge of set of rules of English language with the passages they have to read which is going to facilitate positive attitude to learning. There is also an evidence of language anxiety among the students which makes them to have negative attitude to learning because being emotionally unstable will not allow learners to concentrate as well as being able to read and to understand.

Therefore, it is concluded that teachers should make a distinction between teaching content, methodologies, and approaches because what may be effective for one student may not be effective for another. It is important to love and treat all of the students equally, and to recognise and appreciate their efforts. Due to the fact that no two individuals are the same and hence cannot think similarly, teachers and parents should avoid making comparisons. Creating a welcoming and inclusive learning atmosphere is something that instructors should do again and above all, emphasis should be placed on communicative and cognitive factors by teachers and other stakeholders in education to influence the achievement of Senior Secondary School students in and their attitude to English RC in Oyo State, Nigeria.

5.3 Implications of the Findings

- 1). Topic familiarity is a potential factor for the achievement of students in English reading comprehension. It also implies that topic familiarity is a very important factor that can influence the attitude of students to English reading comprehension
- 2) Syntactic ability is related to attainment in and attitude to English reading comprehension. It implies that there is the need for the understanding grammar and verbal tenses as it will help them understand the meaning of the text.
- 3) Language anxiety is a potential factor for the determination of the achievement of students in and their attitude to English reading comprehension. By implication, students should be motivated not to exhibit high degree of language anxiety in English reading comprehension.
- 4) Cognitive style is a potential factor for the achievement of Senior Secondary School students in and attitude to English RC. Every student has their own way of processing information. This should be taken care of in the reading class.
- 5) Text structure knowledge is also a very important factor for students' high achievement in reading comprehension as well as their positive disposition to reading comprehension. This implies that there should not be a negative significant relationship between students' achievement in reading comprehension and students' knowledge of text structure.
- 6) The five identified independent variables (students' topic familiarity, language anxiety, syntactic ability, cognitive style, and text structure knowledge) contribute to students' achievement in reading comprehension.

5.4 Limitations to the study

The study met some measure of constraints. The poor attitude of some schools, especially students' responses to the instruments were not really positive. There was the complaint of too much tasks given especially during the administration of achievement test and text structure knowledge test, until the researcher appealed to the school authority and teachers who helped to control the students. Negligibly few students either did not submit the questionnaire or failed to attempt the questions hence, that affected the total number that was eventually analysed. However, the subject mortality is low and does not have significant effect on the findings of the study

5.5 Recommendations

1. Teachers teaching English language should familiarise their students with the topic in their comprehension passages in order to build their background knowledge, vocabulary and ability to ask and answer questions.
2. Teachers should equip students with the techniques of identifying subject, main idea, and tone of the author of the comprehension. Thus, as soon as this is done, students will be able to familiarize with the general idea, structural arrangement as well as being able to build thematic composition and logical sequence of the passage.
3. Teachers should fashion out methods to allay students' fear about the English language by helping them to have interest in the language. This can be done by building students' language skills through the development of grammar, logic, and rhetoric.
4. Schools, through the principals, should establish reading clubs in schools so as to make reading fun activity rather than a constant academic chore.
5. The English language teacher should cultivate in the students the habit of constant reading of different educational articles, reading newspapers, magazines, novels, periodicals, as it is likely to aid reading comprehension in English language classes.
6. English language teachers should endeavour to encourage learners in the area of relevant instructional materials during English reading comprehension lessons. This will motivate their students to want to read without any form of fear or anxiety.
7. English language teachers should focus on individual strengths as this can help the students feel confident and motivated in the learning process. This will take care of individual differences as the students cannot learn at the same rate.
8. Students can also be taught "pre-reading" material, such that they are looking at the index first, the section titles, reading the summaries and conclusion before the whole book. This will not only enhance their reading skills but also promote their text structure knowledge.
9. Students' reading skills need to be built using reading comprehension skills assessment test as this will give them benchmark for comparison.

10. Teachers should promote the fundamentals of reading comprehension in their respective classrooms. They should activate communicative and cognitive variables as identified in the study due to their importance in building quality readership in students.

5.6 Contribution of the Study to Knowledge

1. It has revealed that cognitive and communicative variables (syntactic ability, knowledge of text-structure, language anxiety, cognitive style and topic familiarity) are contributory factors to LO of students in English RC.
2. This study has also provided information that syntactic ability and text structure knowledge predicted the achievement of students in English RC.
3. This study showed that communicative and cognitive factors contributed significantly to attainment in RC.
4. Topic familiarity, syntactic ability, language anxiety, cognitive style and text structure knowledge made contributions to students' LO in English RC.
5. Syntactic ability is connected with RC.
6. It has also shown that there was no relationship between students' attitude to reading comprehension and language anxiety, cognitive style and text structure knowledge.
7. The study serves as feedback to teachers, parents, Ministry of Education and every stakeholder in the education sector on some factors that need to be reviewed in solving students' poor performance in English RC.

5.7 Suggestions for further studies

Students with reading comprehension difficulties process information differently. Thus, several experimental studies can be carried out on strategies that aid reading comprehension. Also, the variable of text-structure can be analysed using path analysis as there are several indicators of the variable which can be tested or analysed. Survey studies can also be carried out to focus on other cognitive and communicative variables to reading comprehension in the geopolitical zones, thus, this will help to establish students' current level of reading comprehension.

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APPENDIX I

ATTITUDE TO ENGLISH READING COMPREHENSION QUESTIONNAIRE (SAERCQ)

Section A

School: Gender: Indicate
your age:

Section B

Please tick (✓) the option that is most applicable to you. (SA) means Strongly Agree, (A) is Agree, (D) is Disagree and (SD) stands for Strongly Disagree.

S/N	Items	SA	A	D	SD
1	Reading comprehension classes are my favourite				
2	I love to read comprehension passages during English classes.				
3	Reading comprehension classes are usually boring.				
4	Reading makes me feel happy				
5	I prefer essay writing to reading comprehension.				
6	I read passages in my English textbook on my own even after the class.				
7	There should be an improvement in my reading skills so as to succeed in reading comprehension tasks.				
8	My parents encourage me to read some passages at home.				
9	English reading comprehension passage is an easy aspect of any examination.				
10	Reading passages or texts are often too boring or abstract.				
11	Reading comprehension passages should not be made compulsory in any external examinations like WAEC or NECO examinations				
12	I do not like reading comprehension classes.				
13	Comprehension passages are often too long.				
14	I do not need any instruction to succeed in reading comprehension.				
15	If I am made to choose, I would rather not answer questions on comprehension passages.				
16	Reading comprehension is not as important as the other aspects of English examinations.				
17	Learning how to answer questions on comprehension passages is a total waste of time.				
18	Questions on grammatical names/functions put me off in reading comprehension questions.				
19	I will rather buy other textbooks than spend my money on a reading comprehension text.				
20	I consider asking me to read in class very tasking and embarrassing.				

APPENDIX II

ACHIEVEMENT TEST IN ENGLISH READING COMPREHENSION (ATERC)

Section A

School: Gender:
Indicate your Age:

Section B - Comprehension (15 Marks)

Read the passage carefully and answer the questions on it.

‘Gentlemen!’ the Chairman called the meeting to order. ‘I welcome you all to this important emergency meeting of the Provisional Council of this university...’ He touched on some of the major setbacks which the university had encountered in recent times, mentioning particularly the students and the lecturers’ strike and the dastardly acts of the cultists in which *lethal* weapons were freely used. The Administration did not sit back and watch these unfortunate developments with folded arms. Although the Council had not met, the able Vice-Chancellor had been in intermittent consultation with him in an attempt to diagnose the problems and prescribe the most effective remedies. The Administration had now come up with a series of proposals which would come before an ordinary meeting of the Council at a later date. **The present emergency meeting** was to consider one proposal only-the most crucial. Because of its highly delicate and confidential nature the proposal had not been circulated in writing to members before the meeting, as was the usual **practice**. He called on the Vice-Chancellor to **table** his proposal. The Vice-Chancellor then cleared his throat and **commenced** his speech.

‘Respected Ladies and Gentlemen,’ said the Vice-Chancellor, ‘we have a serious situation on our hands. A few cultists are out to destroy the good work which you and I have been doing in this noble university. That the cultists have killed and maimed several persons on campus is no longer news. The activities of the cultists have become **a frightful monster** staring all of us in the face. To avoid a situation of **anarchy** on campus therefore we are proposing that any cultist- be he a student or a member of staff - caught should not only be dismissed but also be made to face the full wrath of the law. In this case there will be no sacred cow. Even if the child of the Vice-Chancellor or the Vice-Chancellor himself is **apprehended** as a cultist he should be dealt with, in fact, more severely than others. Nobody, no matter how highly placed, should be allowed to disturb the peace, the tranquility and the serenity for which this university is noted and of which we are all proud. Thank you.’

Adapted from NOSEC for SS2

Questions

- (a) What was the purpose of the emergency meeting of the University Council?
- (b) With whom had the Vice-Chancellor been in constant consultation?
- (c) What had the Administration done about the problems in the university before the meeting?
- (d) What was the proposal put forward by the Vice-Chancellor?
- (e) Why was the proposal not communicated to the members of the Council?
- (f) '... a frightful monster.' What figure of speech is this?
- (g) 'The present emergency meeting ...'
 - (i) What is the grammatical name of the expression?
 - (ii) What is its function?
- (h) For each of the following words, find another word or phrase that means the same and can replace it as it is used in the passage.
 - (i) lethal
 - (ii) practice
 - (iii) table
 - (iv) commenced
 - (v) anarchy
 - (vi) apprehended

APPENDIX III

QUESTIONNAIRE ON LANGUAGE ANXIETY (QLA)

This instrument is designed to assess the communicative and cognitive determinants of attainment and attitude to reading comprehension. It is purely for the purpose of research. Therefore, kindly indicate the response that mostly applies to you in part B.

Part A

Participants' Demographic Information

School:.....

Class:.....

Indicate your age:.....

Gender:.....

Part B

Pick the most applicable response to you in each of the items.

S/N	Item	Frequently	Occasionally	Rarely	Never
1	I feel uncomfortable when I am with native speakers of English language.				
2	I am always nervous and confused when I am asked to read/speak during English language lessons.				
3	I feel worried when I don't understand a word in the passage.				
5	I am worried about the consequences of failing English language test or examination				
6	I keep thinking that the other students are better at languages than I am in English language.				
7	I am afraid that my classmates will laugh at me when I speak English language.				
8	During English language lessons, I tend to get nervous and forget the things I know.				
10	I often feel like not going to my language class.				
11	I am more willing to read in class when we discuss current events in the passage				
12	I feel less conscious about reading in class in front of others if I know them				

	better				
13	I am less anxious in reading comprehension class when I am not the only person reading a passage				
14	I enjoy reading comprehension class when we work in pairs				
15	I feel more comfortable in reading when I don't have to get in front of the class				
16	I enjoy reading comprehension class if I am not corrected at all in class				
17	I feel better about reading in class if the English language class is smaller				
18	I like going to English language class when we don't have to read any passage				
19	I enjoy Reading Comprehension class when I can work with another students				
20	I feel unease when fellow students are asked to correct my mistakes in class				

APPENDIX IV

TOPIC FAMILIARITY SCALE (TFS)

The instrument is designed to assess the influence of topic familiarity on your achievement in and attitude to reading comprehension. This is purely for the purpose of research. Therefore, kindly indicate the response that mostly applies to you in parts B.

Part A

Participants' Demographic Information

School:.....

Class:..... Indicate your age:.....

Gender:.....

Part B

Pick the most applicable response to you in each of the items.

S/N	Items I am familiar with:	Very Familiar	Familiar	Not Familiar at all
1.	Theme/subject matter/topic discussed in the passage			
2.	The main gist of the passage			
3	Understanding of the passage			
4	Vocabulary/registers in the passage			
5	The grammatical name in the passage			
6	The function of the grammatical structure in the passage			
7	Figurative expression used in the passage			
8	Meaning of the figurative expression as used in the passage			
9	The underlined words in the passage			
10	Words or phrases in place of the underlined words as used in the comprehension passage			
11	Grammatical or figurative expressions as used in the passage			
12	Parts of speech in the passage			
13	Topic sentence in the passage because they			

	are familiar with my environment			
14	How to put a title to the passage because the story line is simple			
15	Identification of supporting ideas			
16	Function of figurative expression used in the passage			
17	Images in the passage since they are related to what I see around me			
18	Signs and symbols in the passage			
19	Main ideas of each of the paragraphs in the passage			
20	Irrelevant points used within the passage			

APPENDIX V

QUESTIONNAIRE ON SYNTACTIC ABILITY (QSA)

This instrument is designed to assess the influence of Syntactic Ability on your achievement and attitude to reading comprehension. It is purely for the purpose of research. Therefore, kindly indicate the response that mostly applies to you in part B.

Part A

Participants' Demographic Information

School:.....
Indicate your age:.....

Class:.....
Gender:.....

Part B

Pick the option that best describes you in the table below

S/N	Item	Excellent	Very good	Fair	Good	Poor
1	I have the knowledge of some grammatical words in sentences					
2	I can differentiate between grammatical words and their functions					
3	I understand the meaning of noun and its functions					
4	I can differentiate between nouns and pronouns					
5	I understand what active and passive voices are					
6	I can differentiate between transitive and intransitive verbs					
7	I can identify the progressive and perfective aspects in sentences					
8	I recognize countable and uncountable nouns					
9	I can analyse the affixes and roots of words in a sentence					
10	I ask my friend to help identify the prepositions in a sentence					

11	The idiomatic expression used in a passage is always clear to me					
12	I decide whether the pronouns in any sentence is reflexive or intensive					
13	I can choose whether an article is definite or indefinite in sentences.					
14	I understand the syntactic features of adverbs					
15	I can identify the types of conjunctions in a sentence					
16	I listen to discussions on grammatical features of sentences					
17	I can differentiate between simple sentence and complex sentence					
18	I make a guess to get the functions of some syntactic words					
19	I have some ideas of the basic meaning of attributive and predicative adjectives					
20	I can use the familiar parts of speech to form sentences					

APPENDIX VI

TEXT STRUCTURE KNOWLEDGE TEST (TSKT)

This test is designed to ascertain students' Text structure knowledge and it is purely for the purpose of research. Therefore, kindly answer the questions below.

Section A

Participants' Demographic Information

School:.....

Class:.....

Indicate your age:.....

Gender:.....

Section B

Text Structure Knowledge Test

Time: 25mins

Instruction: The test comprises your knowledge of expository passage and narrative passage where you will be exposed to how the passages are organised. You are to attempt all the questions provided in this section. Pick the most applicable response from the options lettered A to D below:

Section A

Identify the type of passages the paragraphs below are and pick from the options lettered A- D the correct answers

1). At length Wale turned his attention to the lovely woman who was sitting there like a statue, thinking of other faraway complicated things and merely waiting for the balloon to shoot up. Wale asked her what answer she had prepared. Ronke told them that she could not be certain because she knew so little about them and they knew so little about her.

(a) Expository (b) Narrative (c) Descriptive (d) argumentative.

2). One of the oldest and most often used methods of assessing candidates is the unstructured interview. It is called unstructured primarily because the interviewer scores purely on impression rather than by carefully analyse points to be watched out for. Thus the candidate is asked a series of questions and the interviewer awards an overall mark according to his impression of the candidate.

a) Expository b) descriptive c) Narrative d) Argumentative

3). A round table discussion is one in which participants, a group of about 12 exchange views (not necessarily around a table) under the guidance of a leader and often without an audience. There is a feeling of equality among the participants and thus no formality. a) Argumentative b) Expository c) Descriptive d) Narrative.

4). Her first evening at the College of Education was eventful, not so much for what she did but for her reminiscences. She had travelled all day long, from Iroko, her

village, to Lagos in a luxury bus. Most of the time the roaring engine had robbed her a much needed sleep. Throughout the journey, she reflected on her recent experience with male boss who got her sacked for refusing his advances. a) Descriptive b) Expository c) Narrative d) Argumentative

5). Carefree students skip lessons at will, turn in poorly written assignment and rarely make notes. As a result, their continuous assessment scores are usually far below average. Such students continue to put in an appearance in school until examinations come knocking at the door. It is then that they resort to burning the candle at both ends. They engage in negative activities such as stealing the textbooks and notebooks of their mates, which they read in hiding with a view to making up for lost ground. a) Expository b) Narrative c) Descriptive d) Argumentative.

Section B

Match the definition of the following text structure and pick from the options the appropriate answer.

- 1) A difficulty is described and an answer is provided a) problem and solution b) descriptive c) cause and effect d) chronological
- 2) Differences and similarities of two or more things are discussed a) cause and effect b) chronological c) sequence d) problem and solution
- 3) Events are arranged in the order of their occurrence a) problem and solution b) cause and effect c) chronological d) sequence

Section C

Pick from the optioned lettered A-D

11. A passage that has a chronological pattern of arrangement is----- to follow.
a) easy b) abstract c) easier d) not easy.
12. If the passage has a definite and clear plan, it ----- comprehension.
a) discourages b) helps c) allows d) makes
13. You do not have to be mindful of the time arrangement of event before you understand the -----in a passage. a) supporting b) topic c) main idea d) difficult
14. In a spatial text structure, objects are described in a -----pattern a) definite b) indefinite c) sure d) main
15. There is no need to read from top to bottom or right to left in a -----text structure (a) spatial b) non-spatial c) direct d) indirect
16. The main characteristics of cause and effect ----- is the topic sentence is given first (a) chronological b) text-structure c) spatial d) sequence

17. You have to look for a direct statement from the author before you can understand the message in a ----- passage a) reading b) comprehension c) summary d) discussion
18. It is difficult to locate a ----- in a reading comprehension passage a) task b) figure (c)problem d)assignment
19. You should not list any point given as information on any problem before you can -----a passage a) gain b) search c) understand d) decide
20. In a ----- text structure, the author raises a question that leads to the main idea first a) sequence b) spatial c) chronological d) problem and solution

APPENDIX VII

COGNITIVE STYLE QUESTIONNAIRE (CSQ)

This instrument is designed to assess students' cognitive style. It is purely for the purpose of research. Therefore, kindly answer the question below.

Section A

Participants' Demographic Information

School:.....

Class:.....

Indicate your age:.....

Gender:.....

Section B

Read the statements and tick the option that is most applicable to you from the following: Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Disagree (D) and Strongly Disagree (SD).

S/N	Items	SA	A	D	SD
1.	Solving a problem with approaches seems like a waste of time in arriving at a solution				
2.	I source for many pieces of information in finding a solution to a question.				
3	Working on a question involving a serious task involves breaking it into different parts.				
5	In order to deal with a problem effectively I have to follow my mind.				
6	When answering a question, I do not need to follow the arrangement from one step to another.				
7	I solve a problem by examining carefully the whole before I look at its parts.				
8	I gather information systematically and in a logical order.				
9	I prefer answering a question by first focusing on the difficult aspects.				
10	I do not have to see the question before I attempt a solution.				
11	The most effective way to answer difficult questions is in a logical and rational way.				
12	I find solution to a problem by not first considering all the angles or scopes to it.				
13	I solve a question carefully by ordering its parts in order to find a solution for the whole problem.				
14	I rather prefer to consider the size of a question to produce the entire picture.				
15	I face a problem in a systematic, sequential, and orderly manner.				
16	Every problem has pre-determined, correct answers in a given set of situation.				

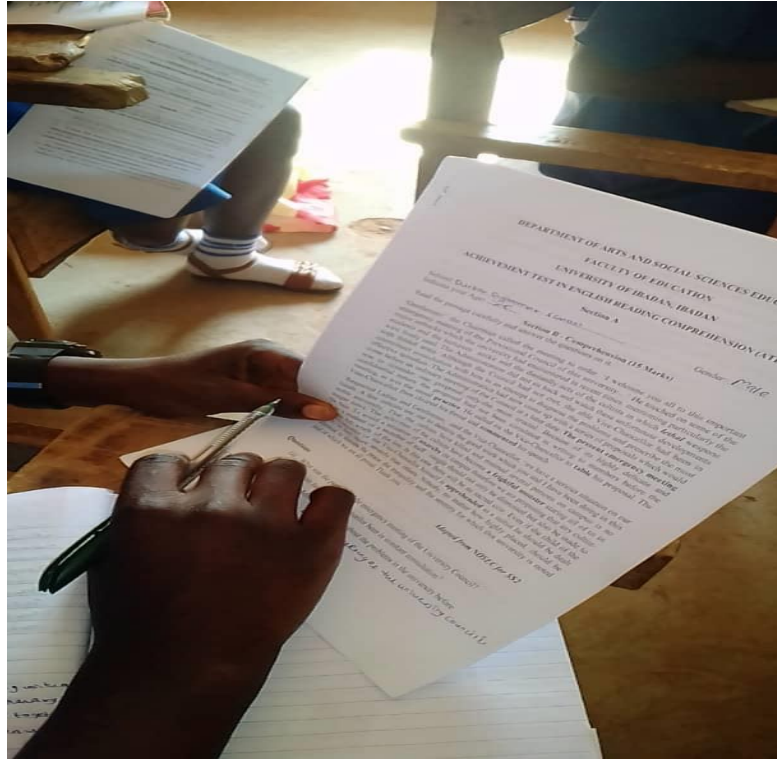
17	I consider a problem carefully by checking the whole of it in relationship with others, before I provide solution.				
18	Every problem is open-ended by nature which allows many possible solutions.				
19	I do not have to solve a problem to determine whether or not the facts are genuine.				
20	I find solution to a problem quickly and effectively to show why I do not need to spend a lot of time in the problem-solving process.				

APPENDIX VIII
SENIOR SECONDARY STUDENTS OF SOME OF THE SCHOOLS VISITED
FOR DATA COLLECTION IN OYO STATE.





Cross section of Secondary School students in Oyo State filling the questionnaire



Secondary School students attempting the Achievement Test



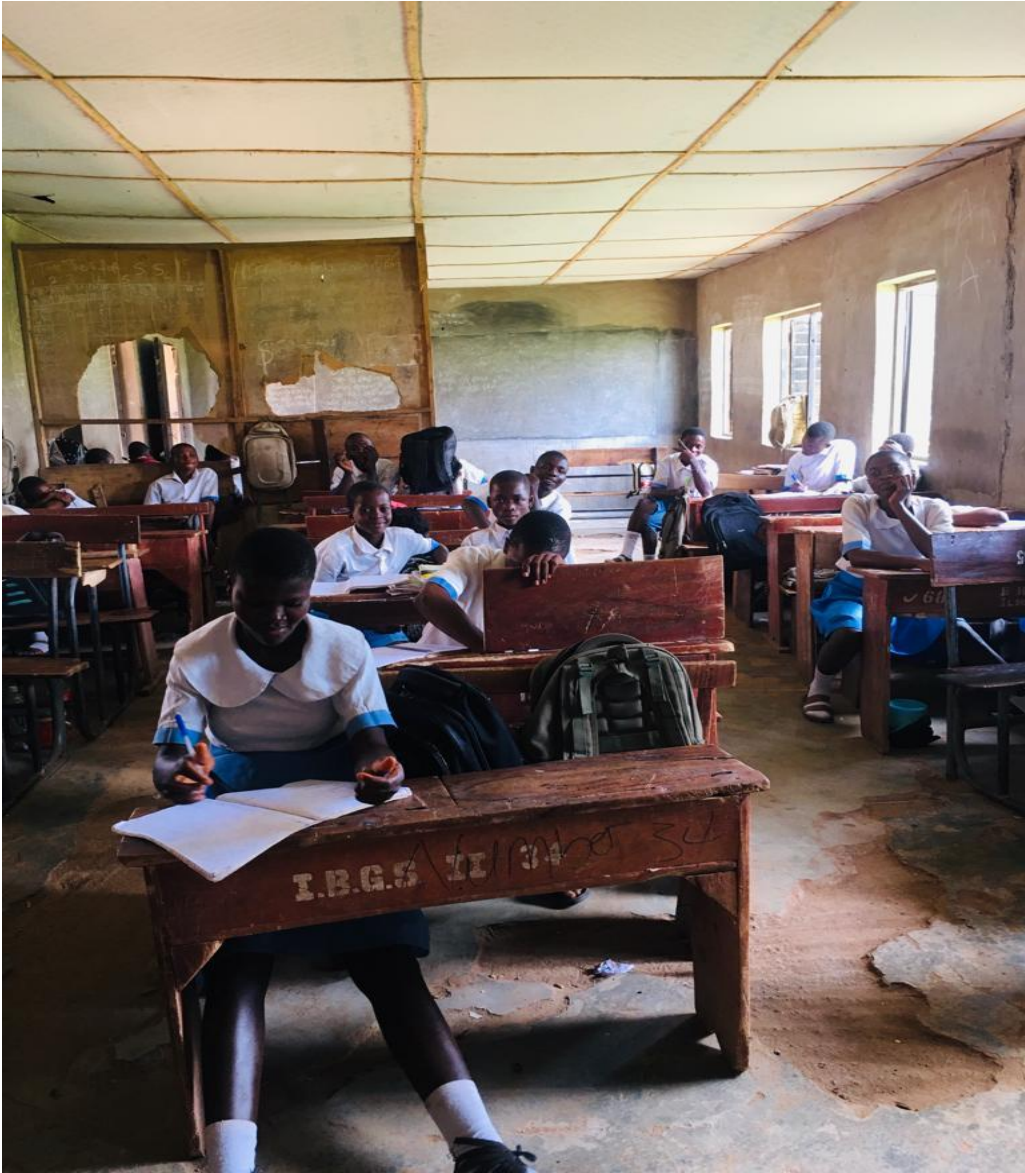
Senior Secondary School students attempting Text Structure Knowledge Tests



Cross Section of Senior Secondary School students in Oyo state filling the Questionnaire



Activity of Senior Secondary School Students in Oyo State during the field work





Some of the Senior Secondary School students filling the questionnaire

















Respondents



Some of the Senior Secondary School students that were selected for collection of Data







One of Senior Secondary School students in Oyo State



Field work activities

Senior Secondary School students' activities during the field work

