

CHAPTER-ONE

INTRODUCTION

This topic includes general background, listening skill, speaking skill, reading skill, writing skill, reading comprehension, types of reading, testing of reading comprehension, review of related literature, objectives of the study and significance of the study.

1.1 General Background

People generally use language as a means of communication though it is not the only way to communicate. There are also other means of communication. We can communicate something by touching, by using gestures, by the use of road signals, traffic lights and so on. But I am not concerned with the other means of communication except language. Language has been the most widely used means to transmit the message since the beginning of human civilization.

We need different skills to use language effectively and appropriately. Listening, speaking, reading and writing are the four basic skills of language. Every normal children naturally acquire language followed by sufficient amount of exposure. It means that they can learn to speak and understand the spoken message naturally without any formal teaching. It happens so naturally that they themselves are unaware about their learning. This is how every normal people can communicate with each other. Listening and speaking, therefore, are called the primary skills.

Reading and writing are a bit higher level of skills since no one can learn to read or write without any conscious effort. People cannot learn these skills as naturally and as unconsciously as they learn listening and speaking. Illiterate people do not have access to these two skills of language though they can easily communicate by oral means. Generally, formal teaching and conscious effort of learning on the part of the learner is necessary to learn these skills.

These two skills are called the secondary skills of language. These skills have very prominent role to develop the intellect of human beings.

1.1.1 Listening Skill

Listening skill is a receptive skill, for a listener receives something through ears. The sounds produced orally are received by the ears. Listening skill refers to the skill to listen and understand the message. Underwood (1989, cited in Sharma and Phyak, 2008 p. 198) defined listening as an "activity of paying attention to and trying to get meaning from something we hear." It means trying to understand the oral message people are conveying. Listening skills could be acquired through exposure but not really taught. Every human being starts learning language first by listening to it from the very early days of his/her childhood. So, the amount of exposure plays a great role to develop listening skill. No one can speak until s/he listens. Listening is not so easy process as it seems to be. It involves an active cognitive processing i.e. the construction of message in mind on the basis of what has been spoken. Therefore, it is a creative and active process.

1.1.2 Speaking Skill

Speaking skill is an ability to express the message verbally. It is a productive skill since a speaker produces something verbally. Generally, we come in contact with many people. These may be friends, relatives, seniors, juniors, foreigners etc. We do not need to be able to read or write to communicate with these people in our daily life. We cannot find out the reading and writing abilities of all those who are in contact with us. We exchange greetings when we meet someone on the way, interact with each other, communicate message and bid a bye. We do it all by means of speaking. We maintain a cordial relationship, friendship and improve solidarity or earn enemies, insult other, be rude to them

and create hostility all by means of speaking. Whatever, speaking is widely used and very important means of interaction in daily life.

1.1.3 Writing Skill

Writing skill is also one of the means to communicate or transfer message by using written symbols. Francis Bacon (cited in Sharma and Phyak 2006, p. 254.) states that "reading makes the full man, conference a ready man and writing an exact man." It is the writing system which enables us to read the materials of thousands of years ago and enables us to know something about it. Widdowson (1978, cited in Khaniya, 2005, p. 147) defines it as "Writing is the act of making up correct sentences and transmitting them through the visual medium as marks on paper". It is the process of recording information to be read later. Writing is the productive skill which involves manipulating, structuring and communicating.

1.1.4 Reading Skill

Reading skill is a complex cognitive process of decoding symbols for the intension of deriving meaning and/ or constructing meaning. Written information is received by the retina, processed by the primary visual cortex and interpreted in wernicke's area. Reading is a means of language acquisition, of communication and of sharing information and ideas.

Although reading printed text is now an important way for the general population to access information, this has not always been the case. With some exceptions, only a small percentage of the population in many countries was considered literate before the industrial revolution. It is often said that 'reading opens the gate of knowledge'. The people who cannot identify graphic symbols and read them are called illiterate. Literacy is the ability to read and write, illiteracy is usually caused by not having had the opportunity to learn these concepts. Dyslexia refers to a difficulty with reading and writing. This term refers to two types of disorders: developmental dyslexia is a learning disability,

alexia or acquired dyslexia refers to reading difficulties that occur following brain damage. Among the normal people reading works as an evidence of their intellect.

Often the text relates to the object, such as an address on an envelope, product info on packaging, or text on a traffic or street sign. A slogan may be printed on a wall. A text may also be produced by arranging stones of different colour in a wall or road. Short texts like these are sometimes referred to as environmental print. We are confronted with various types of texts in different forms in our real life and if we are unable to read and understand them, then it may even, sometimes, cause great loss or some kind of incidents. So, the people who lack the reading comprehension ability are left far behind the sight in the modern world. Those people find it difficult to survive and they feel that reading is, in fact, an evidence of intellect.

Reading is an intensive process in which the eyes quickly move to assimilate text. Very little is actually seen accurately. It is necessary to understand visual perception and eye movement in order to understand the reading process. Doff (2005, p. 104) states that "Reading involves looking at sentences and words recognizing them and understanding them- it is a process of making sense of written language." The first step to read is to be able to recognize the graphic symbols in isolation and then in the context. Comprehension of the text is the main aim of reading skill. It is therefore, that reading encompasses varieties of skills.

Munby (1979, cited in Grellet 1981, p. 4) in the communicative syllabus design, lists some of the main skills of reading as follows:

-) Recognizing the script of a language.
-) Deducing the meaning and use of unfamiliar textual items.
-) Understanding explicitly stated information.
-) Understanding information when not explicitly stated
-) Understanding conceptual meaning.

-) Understanding communicative value (function of sentences and utterances).
-) Understanding relations within the sentence.
-) Understanding relations between the parts of a text through lexical cohesion devices.
-) Understanding cohesion between parts of a text through grammatical cohesion devices.
-) Interpreting text by going outside it.
-) Recognizing indicators in discourse.
-) Identifying the main point or important information in a piece of discourse.
-) Distinguishing the main idea from supporting details.
-) Extracting salient points to summarize (the text, and idea etc.)
-) Selective extraction of relevant points from a text.
-) Basic reference skills.
-) Skimming
-) Scanning to locate specifically required information.
-) Transcoding information to diagrammatic display.

Harmer (2001, p. 201) also gives the following reading skills:

-) Identifying the topic
-) Predicting and guessing
-) Reading for general understanding
-) Reading for specific information
-) Reading for detail information
-) Interpreting text

Similarly, Heaton (1988, p. 105/6) gives the following reading skills:

-) Recognize words and word groups, associating sounds with the corresponding graphic symbols.

-) Deduce the meaning of words by:
 - a) Understanding word formation (roots, affixation, deviation and compounding).
 - b) Contextual clues
-) Understand explicitly stated information
-) Understand relations within the sentence especially:
 - a) Elements of sentence structure
 - b) Fronting and theme
 - c) Negation
 - d) complex embedding;
-) Understand relations between parts of a text through both lexical devices (e.g. repetition, synonyms antithesis) and grammatical cohesive devices especially anaphoric and cataphoric reference and connectives;
-) Perceive temporal and spatial relationships and also sequences of ideas;
-) Understand conceptual meaning, especially:
 - a) Quantity and amount
 - b) Definiteness and indefiniteness
 - c) Comparison and degree
 - d) Means and instrument
 - e) Cause, result, purpose, reason, condition, addition, contrast, concession;
 - f) Anticipate and predict what will come next in the text;
 - g) Identify the main idea and other salient features in a text;
 - h) Generalize and draw conclusions;
-) Understand information not explicitly stated by:
 - i. Making inferences (i.e. reading between the lines)
 - ii. Understanding figurative language
-) Skim and scan (looking for general meaning and reading for specific information)

-) Read critically
-) Adopt a flexible approach and vary reading strategies according to the type of the material being read and purpose for which it is being read.

1.1.5 Reading Comprehension

The simple way of defining reading is understanding a text. Understanding a text means comprehending a text. "In a usual way, reading is handled as reading comprehension. Then instead of defining reading, it is useful to deal with reading comprehension" (Khaniya, 2005, p. 139). Reading comprehension refers to extracting required information from printed text as effectively as possible. It is an activity that we normally do while reading newspapers, books, posters, road signs, telephone directories etc. The purpose here is not to correct the pronunciation or recognize the different shapes of letters or words but to extract the required information as effectively as possible by looking at the printed text. For Grellet (1981, p. 3) reading comprehension is interpreted as "extracting the required information from a written text as efficiently as possible". The implication is that reading varies according to the purpose of reading and the type of the text. For example:, the way we read an advertisements on the notice board differs from the way we read an academic article. In the first case a competent reader will reject the irrelevant information and find what he is looking for. In the second case, it is not enough to understand the gist of the text; more detailed comprehension is necessary.

According to Richards et al. (199, p. 306) reading means "perceiving a written text in order to understand its contents". And 'comprehension means the process by which a person understands the meaning of written or spoken language'.

We can amalgamate these separate definitions of reading and comprehension and say that reading comprehension means the complete understanding of the written text. We are not concerned only with the mere understanding of written

words and sentences individually because the words and sentences may have different meanings in context. That is why understanding of the whole text is very much important.

The written text is full of meaning like a jug full of water. The reader has only to open his/ her mind and let the meaning pour in. But it is not as easy as we pour water from the jug. Readers have to strive hard a lot to get the meaning. Meaning in the text is not waiting to be absorbed passively in the readers' mind. It depends upon the ability of the reader to actively activate his/ her mind to grasp the meaning. "The fact that meaning is in the text is unfortunately no guarantee that the reader will get it out, for we know from experience that a text that seems easy to one person may be difficult to another." (Nuttall 1996, p. 5)

Reading is not a simple and easy activity as we generally perceive that we do different things to get the message from the text and the role of schema is also equally important. Schema refers to the assumption that a reader has in his/her mind. If the readers' and the writers' assumption matches then the text turns to be easy to understand. The degree of shared assumption between the readers and the writer makes the text easy or difficult to understand. This is the reason why a text difficult for one to understand becomes easy for another. The kind of assumption we make about the world depends on what we have experienced and how our mind have organized the knowledge we have got from our experiences. This type of organized mental structure of knowledge is called schema. It does not relate to any particular experience, although it derives from all the particular experiences we have had. "The way we interpret depends on the schemata activated by the text; and whether we interpret successfully depends on whether our schemata are sufficiently similar to the writer's". (Nuttall 1996, p. 7)

The experience and cultures of the writer make it difficult to see the text through the eyes of a foreign student and the readers may find difficult in the

text that writers may not have noticed. Sapir- Whorf hypothesis deals with such issue. Everybody is wearing different looking glasses and they can only view the reality through their own glasses. This is why readers and the writers should have certain things in common if communication is to take place. If a Nepali reader reads a text written by an English writer and another text on the same topic written by a Nepali writer, he finds the later text a bit easier. This is because of the shared culture, shared background and shared schema. There are other things as well which should be shared by both readers and writers. The minimum requirement is that they share a code: that they write and understand the same language. Another requirement is that readers and writers should share certain assumptions about the world and the way it works. If the writer expects the reader to have a basic understanding of medical sciences, the text will not be readily understood by anyone who lacks it. "Naturally there is always a mismatch of some kind. No two people have identical experiences, so the writer is always likely to leave unsaid something that s/he takes for granted." (Nuttall 1996, p. 6)

In reading process, the reader receives information encoded in the graphic symbols by the writer. It is a psycholinguistic process because it starts with linguistic surface representation and ends with meaning, which the reader reconstructs. There is an interaction between language and thought. The reader constructs meaning with some level of agreement with the original meaning of writer. Reader tries to seek the most direct path to meaning and always using the strategies to reduce uncertainty. Efficient readers minimize dependence on visual details.

If we are having a conversation, we can stop the other person and ask for explanations, clarifications and illustrations whenever we need them. The writer, however, is seldom available for consultation. Therefore, when we have difficulties in reading or in understanding, the only we can ask is to interrogate the text itself. This is exactly what efficient readers do in the way of reading, has indeed been described as 'active interrogation of a text'. Readers strive to

get the intended meaning from the text. Thus, comprehending a text is an interactive process between the readers' background knowledge and the text.

While we are speaking, generally, we know who are the interlocutors or who are listening but writers do not know who will be the readers of the text. It causes problem in interactive process. But writers have an advantage over the speaker. They have time to help the reader by making the text as straightforward as possible. The reader also has time at his disposal: s/he can stop and think, go back to check an earlier passage, reread the difficult parts etc. Readers draw inferences and check it later whether their inference proved to be true or false and they can verify their inference as they move forward.

The readers' sense and experience help them to predict that the writer is likely to say this rather than that. A reader who shares many of the writers presuppositions will be able to think along with the writer and use his/ her own experience to resolve difficulties. S/he may even find the text so predictable that s/he hardly needs to read it at all. But sometimes readers presuppositions may lead to the wrong direction which the writer did not intend. However, prediction is important for it activates schema: i.e. it calls into mind any experiences and associated knowledge that we already have about the topic of the text. We make use of schemata to interpret the text. If the relevant schemata are activated, ready for use, we can understand the text more easily. Activated schemata are also more readily available to be modified by new ideas from the text.

1.1.6 Reading as a Receptive Skill

It is generally agreed that reading is one of the receptive skills because we receive information after we read a text. Reading and listening have been described as receptive skills of language throughout the years. Traditionally people believed that these skills do not need any active participation because everything is done by the speakers and the writers. In case of reading everything is there in the text waiting to be perceived by the readers. Writers

have born a great pain in producing the text for the reader and the reader has just to go through the text and get everything found in there. Harmer (2001, p. 199) states "receptive skills are the ways in which people extract meaning from the discourse they see or hear."

Generally we read in order to obtain information which is found in written form. Information means the content or subject matter which may be cognitive that appeals to our intellect or, referential, that is to obtain factual information or affective, that appeals to our emotions.

Reading as a receptive skill can be viewed as a combination of different skills which are as follows:

i) Predictive Skill: Efficient readers can predict what they are going to encounter next. The prediction one reader makes in the same text may be different from the prediction another makes. It means readers make predictions on the basis of the experience and background knowledge they have had. In the beginning, their prediction may be just the replica of their expectation. As they proceed forward their predictions, may be changed as they receive more information from the text. Thus, readers make predictions, verify it as they proceed forward and try to receive the intended information from the text.

ii) Extracting Specific Information: There are varieties of reading texts and if we try to go through every text in detail, we will be lost. We have to find out the relevant text and use it according to our purpose. For instance, we need just the names of five characters of a novel. If we go through this bulky book in detail, it will take a long time but if we quickly move our eyes to find out the names, then some minutes may be enough to fulfil our purpose. Thus, efficient readers should be able to extract the specific information they need from the text.

iii) Getting the General Picture

Sometimes we need to find out the gist of the text. We are not concerned about the specific information rather than the overall picture of the text. We need to have the idea of the main points of the text- an overview without being too concerned with the minute detail. Efficient readers should be able to pick out the main points rapidly relevant to the general picture, disregarding what is not essential.

iv) Extracting Detailed Information

Sometimes readers neither need specific information nor the general overview of the text but the detail information. It means a reader has to be able to access texts for detail information. Questions like How many? Why?, How often?, cannot be answered just by extracting specific information or by getting the general picture but the reader has to have the detail information of the text. Thus, readers should also be able to extract detail information from the text by reading.

v) Recognizing Functions and Discourse Patterns

Readers should be able to find out the functions and discourse patterns of the text. For example, if readers find 'in other words' in the text, they have to know that his phrase is going to be followed by paraphrase of the previous sentences; when they read 'for example', they know that this phrase is likely to be followed by an example; and when they read 'but', they should know that a contrasting view is going to be put forward. Recognizing such discourse markers helps them to understand the text efficiently.

vi) Deducing Meaning from Context

One of the most important skills of a reader is an ability to deduce meaning from context. We cannot use dictionary all the time. While we are reading a novel, we may encounter many difficult words. It would be very difficult to

complete the novel if we use dictionary each time. In such moments we have to deduce the meaning of words from context. Furthermore, some words used in a novel, poem, story etc. may not match with their dictionary meaning. In such situation we have no any other way except deducing meaning from context.

1.1.7 Reading as a Productive Skill

Traditionally, reading has been defined and taken as merely receptive skill that the readers do not do anything except absorbing the printed information in a text. It was taken as a passive skill that everything has been done by the writer and readers just comprehend the written materials.

But recently such a definition of reading has been widely rejected by the researchers. Reading, in fact, is both productive and active skill. It is more than just getting information. Readers do not just read passively but s/ he strives to grasp the intended and exact meaning from the text. Furthermore, based on the experience and knowledge at hand, the readers form hypotheses, makes inferences and predictions, check it against the further information and verify the hypotheses while proceeding through the text. For example; as we read, we may hypothesize about what the writer intends to say. The hypothesis may immediately be modified by what s/he actually says. Thus, reading is an active skill which may be looked at as constant making and remaking of hypothesis- a psycholinguistic guessing game. It constantly involves guessing, predicting, checking and asking oneself questions. Furthermore, when we read a text we do not just understand it and stay passive. The reading text may trigger an activity in readers' mind and they do something based on the text. For example:

-) We read a map and follow the direction;
-) We read a letter and reply to it;
-) We read an order to be present in an office and immediately leave for it;
-) We read an instruction manual and fix a fan;
-) We read a recipe and prepare a burger;

-) We strive to solve the problem only after we have read it;
-) We read passage and produce a summary;
-) E-mail is widely used means of communication of the present world. So, we can get instructions, orders, suggestions in written form and follow them in real life after we read them.
-) Finally, we can write only because we read. Scholars write different books and publish them only after they have undergone wide reading.

This is how reading is not only a receptive and passive skill but active and productive as well.

1.1.8 Types of Reading

We do not read any text unless we have some purpose in our mind. For instance, sometimes we may read text to locate specific information in a text or to know the gist of the text, some other times we may read to get the detail information about the text or we read to improve our pronunciation or to develop our reading habit. Based on the purpose of reading and the level of the readers, we can identify different types of reading:

- | | |
|----------------------|----------------------|
| a) Loud reading | b) Silent reading |
| c) Rapid reading | d) Slow reading |
| e) Skimming | f) Scanning |
| g) Intensive reading | h) Extensive reading |

a) Loud Reading

It refers to the reading loudly i.e. producing sounds. Learning to read a foreign language, at first, is largely a matter of learning and practicing a new set of sound-symbol correlation. Loud reading is an effective method to learn the sound-symbol correlation of foreign language. It is also known as oral reading, and sometimes referred to as barking at print. Usually, this kind of reading is

carried out to enable students to read with correct pronunciation, articulation, intonation, rhythm, develop fluency in speech and so on. Moreover, it is aimed at to enable students to read with the expressions and to understand meaning of the read words and sentences.

Loud reading also helps us to discover how writing is associated with the spoken form. English turns to be very difficult for the beginners because of its arbitrary sound-symbol correlation. The same [k] sound can be realized by the letters k, ck, q, c and so on as in words kills, check, cheque, cat respectively. Similarly, same letter [c] can be used sometimes to realize as [k] and some other time as [] and [s] in words cat [kæt], cheap [ip] and cement [sim nt], respectively. That is why reading aloud is prominent for the beginners to learn sound symbol correlation. But reading aloud for ever and for advanced level of students is not recommended. Abboat, and Winard (1981,p. 81) mention that "Asking your learners to read aloud is of little value in helping them to develop into efficient readers".

Reading aloud is a complex activity because our attention is divided between reading and speaking. It appeals to various sense organs together, eye, ear and mouth. Until and unless students learn their proper coordination they cannot read properly. Thus loud reading is suitable for the beginners since it helps them to learn correct pronunciation and method of reading. As Doff (2005, p. 58) states, "Reading aloud is useful at the earliest stages of reading, it can help students to make the connection between sound and spelling." It is useful for lower level students and for those who are blind or illiterate.

Relevance of loud reading is also determined by the purpose of reading and type of the text. "There are indeed some written texts which are meant to be read aloud and listened to, such as news bulletins on television and radio". (Abboat and Winard 1981, p.81). Reading aloud has also got a prominent role as a practice to be a good news reader.

Finally, we should be aware that the supreme objective of loud reading is to develop in students a desire for silent reading. It helps students to build up confidence to read the text accurately.

b) Silent Reading

When one has built confidence in reading accurately or when readers have developed the correct pronunciation, articulation, intonation and rhythm of language, then they can start silent reading. Reading aloud for a long period throughout life is not recommended. Reading aloud for a long result in physical tiredness and least understanding. Furthermore, it disturbs other when we are reading loudly in a library. That is why advanced students follow silent reading Abboat and Winard (1985, p. 81) states, "Normally reading is a silent and individual activity, since the writer's expectation was that the text would be read, not heard."

Silent reading is higher faculty in the art of reading. Loud reading does not help to develop thought content and sometimes hinders the process of understanding, silent reading is considered to be the best kind of reading as the mind is fully engaged in this act. Richards et al. (1999, p. 306) state silent reading as "perceiving a written text in order to understand its content". Silent reading is useful for self study, library reading and sometimes even for classroom reading purpose.

One of the most important objectives of silent reading is to develop in students the way to enjoy and recreate themselves, thus cultivating interest in varieties of reading. The aims of silent reading, thus, are pleasures, to arouse interest in wide reading habit, to get variety of information and so on.

c) Rapid Reading

It is also known as faster or speed reading. Efficient readers do not stumble and use dictionary in each word but they deduce the meaning from context and move quickly. Rapid reading refers to the reading quickly and to achieve

greater degree of understanding of what has been read. This sort of reading develops students' reading speed and the readers can accumulate a lot of information within a short period of time.

Rapid reading is always silent because reading aloud checks speed of reading. In order to improve speed of reading, readers should have quick, unhindered movements of eyes, unrepeated jump block by block or sentence by sentence without regression and with the view of understanding the theme or content. Text, for speed reading, should be interesting for the students. Skimming and scanning can be taken as the forms of rapid reading. Readers may read rapidly when they are trying to get the gist of the text or when they are trying to locate specific piece of information in a text.

d) Slow Reading

Whether we read rapidly or slowly depends on our purpose of reading. If we want the detail understanding of text, then we may follow slow reading but if we want to have just the general overview of the text then rapid reading may be suitable. Similarly the type of text also determines the speed of reading. We read rapidly if it is a novel but we have to read slowly and in detail if it is an insurance claim, or a contract paper.

Slow or rapid reading is measured on the basis of word per minute (WPM). When we read for memorization we may read fewer than 100 WPM but we can read above 500 WPM as in proof reading. Slow reading refers to the reading in relatively slow rate. A very appropriate and good reading rate include reading flexibly, slowing when concepts are closely presented and when the material is new; and increasing when the material is familiar and of thin concept. For instance, we may be reading an essay about 'Nepal' rapidly because everything is familiar to us but when we find something new, never known before, we slow down our speed and try to understand in detail.

e) Skimming

Skimming is a type of speed reading in which readers make a rapid survey of text to grasp the general theme or central idea of the text being read. As Nuttall (1996, p. 49) "By skimming we mean glancing rapidly through a text to determine its gist." For instance, much newspaper reading is skimming, business and travel brochures reading are also skimming. Heaton (1988, p. 133) says as, "The term skimming is used to denote the method of glancing through a text in order to become familiar with the gist of the content."

Skimming is for superficially processing large quantities of text at low level of comprehension (below 50%) and the rates of speed include 400-700 WPM (wikipedia.com). It makes it clear that if our purpose of reading is general understanding of text without going through the minute detail, then skimming is an appropriate technique. "when skimming, readers go through the reading material quickly in order to get the gist of it, to know how it is organized or to get an idea of the tone or intention of the writer." (Grellet, 1981, p. 19).

Skimming, therefore, requires an overall view of the text. This types of reading is done when someone wants to proofread the text, to review a book or when someone wants to know whether the writer approves or disapproves something. For this readers have to move their eyes quickly. Grellet (1981, p. 4) defines skimming as "quickly running one's eyes over a text to get the gist of it."

Skimming requires mastering different skills like predicting, previewing, anticipating, and so on. Readers should be alert, active and attentive while skimming the text. For Nuttall (1996, p. 49), "Skimming requires closer attention to the text than scanning does."

There are different methods and activities for skimming. Cross (1992, p. 261) suggests following:

-) Comparing values
-) Finding and comparing events
-) Selecting a title
-) Drawing inferences
-) Deciding the question
-) Creating a title

f) Scanning

Like skimming, scanning is also a type of speed reading. But they differ in terms of the objectives of the reader. Readers skim the text in order to grasp the general theme or gist of the text but readers scan the text to locate specific information. For example: readers may go through a chapter of book quickly to find out the date when someone was born or to find out the main characters in a novel. Often readers do not even follow the linearity of the text. They are only concerned about the certain information. They only let their eyes wander over the text until they find what they are looking for. Heaton (1988, p. 133) states that "Scanning refers to the skills used when reading in order to locate specific information". Scanning, therefore, is mainly carried out when a reader wants to locate a particular piece of information without necessarily understanding the rest of the text or passage.

Whereas skimming is concerned with general information or gist of the text, scanning is concerned with the specific information in the text. Grellet (1981, p. 4) defines scanning as "quickly going through a text to find particular piece of information." Scanning, in contrast to skimming, is far more limited since it only means retrieving what information is relevant to the purpose of the readers, rejecting irrelevant information. According to Nuttall (1996)

By scanning we mean glancing rapidly through a text either to search for a specific piece of information (eg. a name, a date) or get an initial impression of whether the text is suitable for a given

purpose (eg. whether a book on gardening deals with a particular plant disease). (p. 49)

Other examples of scanning are: we go through a airplane schedule to find out some information only about the flight we are concerned, we may quickly go through a newspaper 'what's on TV' section to find out only about the programs in 'Sony Channel'. There are different activities used for scanning. Cross (1992, p. 260) suggests the following activities for scanning:

-) Finding new words for old
-) Locating grammar features
-) Finding a specified advertisement
-) Comparing details
-) Checking dates
-) Shopping list
-) Making word sets
-) Newspaper headlines

g) Intensive Reading

Intensive reading refers to the detail study of the text. In such reading activity readers are expected to understand everything they read and be able to answer detailed vocabulary and comprehension questions. As readers are expected to understand everything, they have to read slowly and with minute detail. They may have to consult dictionary in each words. Grellet (1981, p. 4) defines intensive reading as "reading shorter texts to extract specific information. This is more an accuracy activity involving reading for detail." Readers should not leave even a single word unidentified. They need to know the correct pronunciation of each word, their derivation, sense relation etc. They need to identify and analyze the structures of the text. Intensive reading, therefore, is also called reading for accuracy. Intensive reading encourages the students to comprehend the text, its sense and meaning in detail. Nuttall (1996) states

The aim of intensive reading is to arrive at the understanding, not only of what the text means, but of how the meaning is produced. The 'how' is as important as the 'what', for the intensive lesson is intended primarily to train strategies which the student can go on to use with other texts. (p. 38)

Nuttall (ibid, p. 38) also mentions that "intensive reading involves approaching the text under the guidance of a teacher."

This type of reading encourages faster reading which in turn develops students' reading habits. Students do not only get the literal meaning of text but also extract the contextual meaning. Intensive reading is useful for deep understanding of the text concerned. It is reading in quality. Readers are better acquainted with the power of questioning and answering. They become interested in looking into details of the text they come across as they find newer meanings attributed to the other ordinary looking passage. Different tasks can be performed under intensive reading.

Cross (1992, p. 262) suggests the following reading tasks for intensive reading:

-) Matching nouns and verbs
-) Splitting sentences
-) Combing sentences
-) Making summaries
-) Reordering sentences
-) Reordering paragraphs
-) Filling the gaps
-) Completing tables and graphs
-) Taking sides
-) Reading and choosing
-) Selecting a summary

-) Comparing versions
-) Identifying facts
-) Focusing on form and style

h) Extensive Reading

In real life, we are confronted with varieties of texts. Efficient readers often do not stumble and use dictionary in each word rather they deduce the meanings of difficult words from context. They may have to escape the irrelevant information. For example: a reader reading a novel before going to bed or reading newspaper early in the morning or reading articles, magazines, etc. This type of reading is known as extensive reading. In such types of reading, readers do not waste their time by going through the text in minute detail rather the purpose may be to go through the longer texts in a short time. The individual words and phrases are considered part of a wider plan of the whole text and they are not much attended to as individually. Grellet (1981, p. 4) defines extensive reading as "Reading longer texts, usually for one's own pleasure. This is a fluency activity, mainly involving global understanding."

Extensive reading is reading in quantity and in order to gain a general understanding of what is read. Extensive reading is very useful to develop good reading habits, to build up confidence in language, to develop knowledge of vocabulary, structure, and to encourage a habit of reading. This is why extensive reading means to read silently and quickly in order to understand the subject matter and derive the meaning as a whole without necessarily understanding each word and their structure and without the help of the teacher. It is, therefore, also known as independent reading.

Only some texts prescribed in a certain course are not sufficient for extensive reading purpose. Readers go through varieties of text like daily newspaper articles, novels, dramas, stories, essays, poems and so on. Rivers (1968, p. 230) mentions that "The material for extensive reading will consist of authentic short stories and plays with certain adaptations of vocabulary and structure to bring

them within the level of difficulty required or of short stories and plays specially written for the purpose."

Zhenyu (ELT Forum, Volume 35, 1997, p. 40) terms intensive reading and extensive reading as 'IR' and 'ER' respectively and he makes distinction between them as the former requires student to read a passage very carefully, and in general detail. In an IR class, the teacher usually guides his/her students through a text slowly, explaining new words and phrases as s/he goes and analyzing the grammatical structure if necessary, always making sure that the students understand every sentence in the text. ER, on the other hand, aims at improving students' reading skill and communicative competency. An ER teacher often encourages students to read as much and as fast as they can so long as they are able to grasp the main idea of what they are reading.' Different tasks can be performed in extensive reading.

Cross (1999, p. 263) suggests the following extensive reading activities:

-) Keeping records of what has been read
-) Wall chart
-) Making summaries
-) Indicating the difficulty

All the above mentioned different types of reading are not mutually exclusive to each other. These types are not distinctive rather they are overlapping. When we talk about skimming, we are also dealing with speed reading. Skimming may also be dealt under extensive reading. We may read silently or loudly in intensive or extensive reading or skimming etc. Whether one reads loudly or silently depends on his/ her habit as well. Grellet (1981, p. 4) describes that "These different ways of reading are not mutually exclusive. For instance, one often skims through a passage to see what it is about before deciding whether it is worth scanning a particular paragraph for the information one is looking for."

1.1.9 Testing of Reading Comprehension

Testing, in a broad sense has always been an inherent part of teaching. We cannot evaluate the effectiveness of our teaching without any forms of assessment. Teaching and testing are so inextricably interwoven that it is virtually impossible to work in either field without constantly being involved in another. Testing is a device to reinforce, motivate and assess the students and their performance. It gives the teacher a measure of progress and helps him or her to supplement effective feedback. The assessment of learning is as old as education itself. In order to ensure that the teaching is effective, and if not, put more efforts to make it effective, testing is used in the classroom or after the teaching.

Despite testing being so nicely interwoven in teaching ever since teaching began, it was only after the Second World War, the idea of language testing appeared as a distinct activity. Before the period there was no distinction between teaching and testing.

Testing of reading starts right from recognizing the script of language to complex reading like understanding conceptual meaning, understanding the communicative value of sentences or utterances, understanding relations within the sentences, understanding relations between the parts of a text through lexical cohesive and and grammatical cohesive devices etc. Reading aloud can itself be a kind of test if we wanted to test the beginners whether they can read the foreign text appropriately or not. Reading varies according to the purpose of the readers, their level and the type of the text. For Cross (1992, p. 255).

"The purpose of reading are for pleasure (novel), information (railway schedule, a newspaper), knowledge (a scholarly journal or a book), curiosity (a guide book) to satisfy a need (instruction for a new machine) and so on."

Testing of reading, therefore, varies according to the purpose of reading, level of the readers and the type of the text.

Reading comprehension is so pervasive and complex that it is difficult to pin down what reading is composed of and what is necessary to develop this ability in a learner. The same type of difficulty lies in determining what, and how to test reading comprehension. According to Khaniya (2005)

It should be accepted that unless we agree on what reading comprehension consists of, what its nature is, what its major elements are, it is difficult to determine what to test when testing reading. Without knowing what reading comprehension is composed of, we do not know how to test it. (p. 149)

Therefore, different techniques can be suggested for testing reading. The testees may be required to read a text or a diagram or a picture and do the exercise that follows. It is important that a considerable attention is given to the selection of the text to be included in the test. The quality of the test depends on the quality of the text. "Successful choice of texts depends ultimately on experience, judgment and a certain amount of common sense." (Hughes, 1989, p. 119). The text should be suitable and appropriate according to the level of the testees. "Techniques of testing reading can take different forms. For example: true-false items, multiple choice questions, close procedures, c-test, short-answer questions, completion items, rearrangements etc." (Khaniya 2005, p. 135)

Generally testing reading involves objective items. But sometimes, it happens that students are required to give long answer to the questions after reading a text. In such situation we cannot determine, in case of testees' inability to answer, whether the inappropriate answer is due to their reading problem or writing problem. Efforts should be made, therefore, to avoid such kind of situation. The implication is that tester should be aware about whether or not the items that are intended to test reading sub-skills really test those sub-skills.

There was a time when it was taken for granted, at least in some circles, that it was more difficult to construct reliable and valid tests of writing and speaking than of reading and listening. It means reading and listening were considered easy to test. In large part this was because the writing and speaking seemed to depend on notoriously unreliable subjective scoring, while in the case of receptive skills, objective scoring was both possible and appropriate. But this view of the relative difficulty could be quite mistaken. The exercising of receptive skill does not necessarily, or usually, manifest itself directly in overt behaviour. When people write or speak, they can see and hear but when they listen or read, there will often be nothing to observe. Testing of reading, therefore is difficult and challenging job. Different techniques have been suggested for listening reading by different scholars.

Hughes (1995, p. 120-124) suggests following techniques for testing reading:

-) Multiple choice
-) Unique answer
-) guided short answers
-) Summary cloze
-) Information transfer
-) Identifying order of events
-) Identifying referents
-) Guessing meaning of unfamiliar words from context

Hughes (ibid, p. 119) gives some advices for selecting appropriate text for testing reading: they are described below:

- i. Keep specifications constantly in mind and try to select as representative a sample as possible. Do not repeatedly select text of a particular kind simply because they are readily available.
- ii. Choose texts of appropriate length- scanning may call for passage of upto 2,000 words or more. Detailed reading can be tested using passages of just a few sentences.

- iii. In order to obtain acceptable reliability, include as many passages as possible in a test, thereby giving candidates a good number of fresh starts. Considerations of practicality will inevitably impose constraints on this, especially where skimming or scanning is to be tested.
- iv. In order to test scanning, look for passage which contain plenty of discrete pieces of information.
- v. Choose texts which will interest candidates but which will not overexcite or disturb them.
- vi. Avoid texts made up of information which may be part of candidates' general knowledge. It may be difficult not to write items to which correct responses are available to some candidates without reading the passage.
- vii. Assuming that it is only reading ability which is being tested, do not choose texts which are too culturally laden.
- viii. Do not use texts which students have already read (or even close approximation of them)

Heaton (1988, p. 110-133) has suggested the following techniques of testing reading:

- i. True/ false reading test
- ii. Multiple choice items
 - a. short text
 - b. longer text
- iii. Completion items
- iv. Rearrange items
- v. Cloze procedure
- vi. Open ended and miscellaneous items
- vii. Cursory reading

Cross (1992, p. 193) also has given following techniques of testing reading:

- i. Multiple choice
- ii. Short factual answer

- iii. Banked cloze
- iv. Multiple choice cloze
- v. Question and answer
- vi. Split sentences
- vii. Scrambled texts
- viii. Pure cloze
- ix. Short factual answers

1.2 Review of Related Literature

Since reading comprehension is a broad area of study, many researches have been carried out in this field in the Department of English Education.

Furthermore, numbers of comparative study have also been carried out. Some instances of the latest research works reviewed by me as a researcher are as follows:

Poudel (2002) has carried out a comparative study on "Reading comprehension ability of the students of proficiency certificate and higher secondary levels: a comparative study". Primary sources of data were 160 students. These students for the study were collected from different campuses and higher secondary schools of Morang district. Eighty students were taken from 3 different higher secondary schools, 20 students from each stream of Science, Commerce, Education and Arts (Under HSEB). Random sampling procedure was used to select the students. Different types of tools were used for data collection. Two types of questions: subjective and objective were used based on 4 different reading texts. Matching questions, T/F items, fill in the gaps and multiple choice questions were used as objective test and 4 short answer questions were used as a subjective test. He concluded from his research that the PCL 2nd year students have comparatively better reading comprehension ability than those of XII Graders and the gap between them was remarkable. Similarly, Bhattarai (2004) also carried out a study on "A Study on Reading Comprehension and Speed of PCL First Year and Grade Eleven Students". The students were taken

from different campuses and higher secondary schools of Science, Commerce, Education and Arts streams in Kathmandu valley as primary sources of data collection. A test was administered on one hundred and sixty students for collecting the data. Researcher used random sampling procedure to select students, he has used 2 types of questions i.e. subjective and objective and two types of text i.e. seen and unseen texts. There were four sets of objective questions: multiple choice, true/ false, fill in the gaps and matching items. He concluded that, as a whole, eleven graders have comparatively better reading comprehension ability and speed than those of PCL first year students. Furthermore, he also found that students of PCL first year science had the highest and arts students had the lowest reading comprehension ability. Finally, he found that the reading comprehension and reading speed are positively correlated. But, the degree of correlation was higher in seen texts in comparison to unseen text. Likewise, Paudyal (2005) conducted a research on "A Comparative Study on the Communicative Proficiency of M.A. and M.Ed. First Year Students". He has compared communicative proficiency of Arts and Education students of Master's level. His finding was 'the communicative proficiency of M.Ed. 1st year students was (728 out of 1250 full marks 58.24% or 53.60%). Female students were found better than male counterparts and the students having teaching experience were found better than those without teaching experience. Furthermore, students who graduated from Kathmandu performed better than students out of valley. As a whole, students of M.Ed. and M.A. 1st year were found competent linguistically rather than communicatively. He recommended to improve teaching learning process and activities. Similarly, Neupane (2006) conducted another research on "Reading Proficiency of Grade Ten Students of Kathmandu and Gorkha District". She has taken 100 students studying in grade 10 in Kathmandu and Gorkha for the data collection. Among them 5 government-aided schools were from Kathmandu and 5 government aided schools were from Gorkha district. Multiple choice, true/ false items, completion items and ordering were used as an objective test and short answer questions as subjective test. She concluded

that the reading proficiency of the students of Kathmandu was better than the proficiency of the students of Gorkha district. She suggested that the concerned authorities should pay attention on motivation and interest of the learners for better understanding of the reading materials.

In the same way, Koirala (2008) carried out a study on "Reading Comprehension of Poetry and Short Story" in which students studying at grade 12 in 3 different colleges of Kathmandu were the primary sources of data. Sixty students were used for data collection in which 20 students were selected using simple random sampling procedure from 3 colleges which were selected purposively. Two seen and two unseen texts were used as tools of data collection. Short answer, T/F items, completion items, matching items and multiple choice items were used for testing comprehension. He found the students to have better comprehension ability in poetry than in short story. On this basis, he recommended that more exposure should be given to the long texts, like short story, to improve the students' comprehension. Likewise, Adhikari (2008) also conducted his research on "Reading Proficiency of Bilingual and Multilingual Learners". To find out the reading proficiency of Bilingual and Multilingual learners, he selected 50 students studying at grade 10 from different English medium school in Kaski district and the population selected was of 2 categories: Bilingual (Nepali first language and English learnt at school) and Multilingual (Gurung, Magar, Lama, Hindi, Nepali & English). He used random sampling procedure to find out the expected population. He concluded that the multilingual learners were found less proficient in reading comprehension than the bilingual ones. Furthermore, Bhandari (2008) carried out a study on "Reading Comprehension of poetry and prose by B. Ed. students" He has used 100 students from 5 campuses of Kailali district and 10 English lecture of Bachelor level of that campus. 6 campuses of Kailali district was selected using simple random sampling procedure. Two unseen poems and 2 unseen prose were used as the text for testing comprehension. Two separate sets of questionnaire were also developed. One for English teachers and other

for the students according to their level. The researcher found the students to have better comprehension ability in prose texts than in poetry. He also concluded that poetry was found to be more difficult genre; sentence structure and the vocabularies as the prime factors of difficulty both in poetry and prose. In the same way, Oli (2008) carried out a comparative study on "Reading comprehension of the students of Janabadi Model School and Government Aided School." To compare the reading comprehension of Janabadi Model School and Government Aided school, Grade VI students of the schools of Rukum and Rolpa districts have been the primary sources of data. Forty students from Janabadi schools and 40 students from government aided schools were taken as sample. Similarly, Dahal (2009) conducted a research on "Reading comprehension Ability of Bachelor Level Students" she selected 90 students from B.A. first year from three campuses of kathmandu valley as the primary sources for the data collection. The campuses were selected using judgmental sampling and 90 students were selected using simple random sampling and she found that in general students were found to have better comprehension ability in poetry than in essays. She also concluded that the overall comprehension level (OCL) of the male students in both poetry and essay was found better in comparison to female. On the basis of her finding, she recommended that relatively more exposure should be given to the long text like essay to improve comprehension. She also recommended that females should be motivated to participate in classroom.

But, in fact, no research has been carried out so far in the department to find out the reading comprehension ability of B.Ed. and B.A. first year students for the comparative purpose. Furthermore, my study had no any concern about the story, poems, essays and so on. But the study was based on newspaper reports and articles from magazines to check the students' ability to grasp the daily affairs of the country and also to gather the information useful for them. Since the present world is competitive via the modern science and technology, I had

also checked their comprehension ability to understand the international competitive market.

1.3 Objectives of the Study

The objectives of my study were as follows:

- a) To find out the reading comprehension ability of B.Ed. and B.A first year students.
- b) To compare the reading comprehension ability of the students of both of these faculties.
- c) To suggest some pedagogical implications.

1.4 Significance of the Study

We are confronted by various types of texts in different forms in our day to day life. If we are unable to read and understand them; then it may cause a great loss or, sometimes, even it may be the main cause of the great incidents. So, the people who are unable to read and comprehend the reading texts in their daily life are always at disadvantage and are lagging far behind in the modern world. Those people find it difficult to survive and they feel that reading comprehension ability is, in fact, an evidence of intellect. That is why reading comprehension ability has been gaining a significant momentum in the field of language since ancient time.

The study will be significant firstly for the students of the Faculty of Education and the Faculty of Humanities. Since they will be acquainted with their capabilities and weaknesses. The study will also prove useful to the teachers who are teaching English at Bachelor level in both of these Faculties.

Furthermore, the findings of the study will be useful to improve the curriculum, syllabus or course of study as per the need and level of the students. It will be significant to curriculum experts, syllabus designers, textbook writers and all those who are directly or indirectly involved in teaching and learning of

English language whether in Faculty of Education or Faculty of Humanities. This study will also be a guide for the novice researchers.

This study, being the first to find out the reading comprehension ability of the students majoring in English and studying in Faculty of Education and the Faculty of Humanities for the comparative purpose, will reveal an efficiency and effectiveness of either of the Faculties. Those students who opt for studying English at college level find themselves in dilemma as to whether to join either of the Faculties. English teachers of Nepal also come from either of these Faculties. We cannot universally claim that which Faculty is good to produce good manpower of English. We can not rightly assume that students majoring in English who come from the Faculty of Education are better than students who are from Humanities or vice versa. But we can test them, check their ability to comprehend the text and deduce the conclusion from the obtained data.

This study will be significant to coordinate between the conflicting views that is usually put forward by the students and teachers of one Faculty advocating for their own efficiency to comprehend the text effectively. Usually, The teachers and students of Faculty of Humanities claim that their products are better in comprehending the written texts than the products of the Faculty of Education. Thus, this study will be a great help to come to a conclusion.

CHAPTER-TWO

METHODOLOGY

I adopted the following methodology to fulfill the objectives of my study.

2.1 Sources of Data

I took help from both types of sources to collect the data i.e. primary and secondary sources. But primary sources were the basis for the collection of my data.

2.1.1 Primary Sources of Data

I obtained the first hand data from the students of B.Ed. and B.A. first year. So, these students were the primary sources for the collection of my data.

2.1.2 Secondary Sources of Data

As secondary sources of data, I consulted different books like Grellet (1981), Brown (1994), Nuttall (1996), Larsen-Freeman (2000), Harmer (2001, 2008), Doff (2005), and Kumar (2006), websites like en.wikipedia.com, ctlibrary.com, encyclopedia.com, etc. Different articles, journals, research reports, newspaper, magazines and other relevant materials were also consulted.

2.2 Population of the Study

Population for the study were altogether 80 students. Forty students were selected from Humanities and the same number of students were selected from the Faculty of Education, first year. These students were taken from different colleges of Biratnagar, Morang like: Gograha College, Edenburg College, Metropolis College and M.M.A.M.C. (Appendix I and II). Twenty students from major English group were taken from each of these colleges as a population of study for my data collection.

2.3 Sampling Procedure

Two colleges of Education and two colleges of Humanities of Biratnagar were selected purposively. Ten girls and 10 boys from each Faculty were selected using fishbowl draw method. Total 40 students were selected from the Faculty of Education and 40 students from the Faculty of Humanities. Among them 50% were girls and 50% were boys.

2.4 Tools for Data Collection

Tools for the collection of my data were the reading comprehension texts. There were 4 texts taken from magazines and newspapers; 'Chinese Car Market Overtakes that of the US' (Himalayan Times, Dec. 15, 2009), 'Perennial Fuel Crisis Chokes Valley' (The Kathmandu Post, Nov. 16, 2009); 'The Cost of College in the United States' (Journal USA, College and University Education in the United States 2005, p. 50/51.) 'Baking Soda Not Helpful for Pimples' (The Himalayan Times, Dec. 15, 2009). The test items mainly consisted of multiple choice, T/F items, fill in the gaps and short answer questions.

2.5 Process of Data Collection

I have followed the following stepwise procedure to collect the required information for my study:

-) I collected the texts and prepared the test items based on the texts to test the students' reading comprehension of those texts.
-) I visited the concerned colleges and sought consent from the school administration.
-) I established harmonious relationship with the students.
-) Then I administered the tests on the students.
-) Students were asked to answer the questions after reading the texts within one and half hour which consisted of 50 full marks.

-) I collected answer sheets from the students at the end of the allotted time.
-) Finally, I thanked all the students for their active participation in the test and I also thanked all the teaching staff, principal and chiefs for providing me their invaluable time to administer my test on their students.

2.6 Limitations of the Study

The study had the following limitations:

- a) The study was limited to the 4 colleges of Biratnagar: 2 from the Faculty of Education and 2 from the Faculty of Humanities.
- b) Only 40 students from the Faculty of Education and 40 from the Faculty of Humanities were selected.
- c) Only the students from Bachelor first year and majoring in English were selected from both Faculties.
- d) Altogether 80 students from both faculties were selected, among whom 50% were girls and 50% boys.
- e) The study was limited to the reading comprehension of the 4 texts taken from English newspapers (The Himalayan Times and The Kathmandu Post) and Magazine (College and University Education in the United States 2005).
- f) Only the following types of tests were used: Multiple choice items, T/F items, fill in gaps and short answer questions.

CHAPTER THREE

ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

This chapter deals with the analysis and interpretation of the data collected for the purpose of comparing the reading comprehension ability of B. Ed. and B.A. first year students. After collecting the data, on the basis of the four texts, the answer sheets were checked and the marks were assigned to each of them. The marks were grouped into two groups: one group was of B. Ed. and another of B.A. There were 40 answer sheets in each group. After grouping their marks, the average marks and the percentage of the average marks were calculated. Finally, the students' reading comprehension ability was analyzed and compared on the basis of the marks they obtained. I am going to analyze the data with the help of the tables along with their descriptions.

3.1 Overall Comparison of the RCA of the Students of Both Faculties

In this section, all my effort has been used to compare the reading comprehension ability of B. Ed. and B.A. first year students. I administered the tests to check their reading comprehension ability through multiple choice items, T/F items, completion items and short answers questions based on the four texts. Their comprehension ability varied from one text to another. Their reading comprehension ability has been presented in the following table in terms of the average marks and the percentage of the average marks.

Table No. 1

Overall Comparison of the RCA of the Students

Faculty	R.C. of all text (F.M. 50)		R.C. of Text 'A' (F.M. 12)		R.C. of Text 'B' (F.M.: 12)		R.C. of Text 'C' (F.M.: 12)		R.C. of Text 'D' (F.M. 14)	
	A.M.	Percent	A.M.	Percent	A.M.	Percent	A.M.	Percent	A.M.	Percent
Education	26	52	5.50	45.83	6.7	55.83	5.525	46.05	8.275	59.107
Humanities	24.5	49	5.45	45.417	6.075	50.625	5.475	45.625	7.525	53.75

The above table shows an overall average marks and percentage of the average marks of B.Ed. and B.A. students. The first column shows the average marks and the percentage of the average marks of the total reading comprehension texts that I had administered on them, which was of the 50 full marks. The overall marks and the percentage show that the students of Education have better reading comprehension ability than the students of Humanities. The students of the Faculty of Education scored 26 average marks (i.e. 52%) out of 50 full marks. But the students of the Faculty of Humanities scored 24.5 average marks only (i.e. 49%).

The students of the Faculty of Education have scored 5.50 average marks (i.e. 45.83%) out of 12 in text 'A' whereas the students of Humanities scored 5.45 average marks (i.e. 45.417%) in the same text. Similarly, students of Education scored 6.70 average marks (i.e. 55.83%) in text 'B' while students of Humanities scored 6.075 average marks (i.e. 50.625%). In text 'C' students of Education scored 5.525 average marks (i.e. 46.05%) whereas average marks of the students of Humanities is 5.475(i.e. 45.625%). Finally, students of Education have scored 8.275 average marks (i.e. 59.107%) out of 14 full marks in text 'D' where students of Humanities have scored 7.525 average marks which is 53.75%.

Students of the Faculty of Education are found to have slightly better reading comprehension ability in each of the four texts than the students of the Faculty of Humanities. In total, there is the 3% of gap in the average marks between the students of Education and Humanities, students of Education, surpassing the students of Humanities by 3% in average marks.

Furthermore, the highest marks in the test was 40 which was scored by a student of the Faculty of Education and the lowest mark in this test was 9 which was scored by a students of the Faculty of Humanities.

To conclude, students of Education of Bachelor First Year have better ability to comprehend the reading texts of the English newspapers and magazines than the students of Humanities of the same level.

3.2 Sex-wise Comparison of RCA of the Students

In this section, I will try to compare the reading comprehension ability of the students of B.Ed. and B.A. in terms of sex variables (i.e. boys Vs girls). The following table shows their ability of reading comprehension in terms of sex.

Table No. 2

Sex-wise Comparison of RCA of Students

Faculty	Variable	F.M.	A.M.	Percentage
Education	Girls	50	27.5	55
	Boys	50	24.5	49
Humanities	Girls	50	27.7	55.4
	Boys	50	21.3	42.6

The above table shows the sex-wise comparison of reading comprehension ability. As shown in the table, girls are better in comprehending the reading texts than the boys in both of the Faculties. The girls of the Faculty of

Humanities have scored 27.7 in average out of 50 full marks and the boys of the same Faculty have scored 21.3 in average in the same test. The highest percent of the test is 55.4% in average scored by girl students of the Faculty of Humanities and the lowest percent of the test is 42.6% scored by the boy students of the same Faculty.

The girls of the Faculty of Education seem to be better at comprehending the reading texts than the boys of that Faculty. The girls of the Faculty of Education have scored 27.5 average marks (i.e. 55%) whereas the boys of the Faculty of Education have scored only 24.5 average marks in the test (i.e. 49%). Furthermore, the boys of the Faculty of Education are better at comprehending the reading texts than the boys of the Faculty of Humanities. The boys of the Faculty of Education have scored 24.5 average marks (i.e. 49%) whereas the boys of the Faculty of Humanities have scored only 21.3 average marks (i.e. 42.6%) in the test.

Girls have surpassed the boys in both of the Faculties. The girls of the Faculty of Humanities have surpassed the girls of the Faculty of Education by 0.4% mark.

This proves that girls have better reading comprehension ability than the boys in general and even the girls of Humanities have slightly better reading comprehension ability than the girls of the Faculty of Education of the same level.

3.2.1 Comparison of RCA of Girls and Boys

This section shows the reading comprehension ability of girls and boys irrespective of their faculty. The following table shows the average marks and the percentage of the average marks scored by the girls and boys.

Table No. 3

Comparison of RCA of Girls and Boys

Variable	F.M.	A.M.	Percentage	Total No. of Students
Girls	50	27.6	55.2	40
Boys	50	22.9	45.8	40

The above table shows the sexwise comparison of reading comprehension ability of the girls and boys irrespective of their Faculty. In total, girls have scored 27.6 average marks (i.e. 55.2%) out of 50 full marks, whereas the boys have scored 22.9 average marks (i.e. 45.8%) out of the same full mark. Girls have surpassed the boys by almost 10% in their average marks.

This proves that girls of Bachelor first year are better than the boys of the same level at comprehending the texts of English newspapers and magazines.

3.3 RCA of the B. Ed. Students

This section shows the reading comprehension ability of B.Ed. students on the basis of the four text which were taken from newspapers and magazines. Two B.Ed. colleges: Edenburg College and Gograha College of Biratnagar, Morang were the sample colleges representing the Faculty of Education. The table below shows the average marks and the percentage of the average marks of the B.Ed. students.

Table No. 4
Reading Comprehension Ability of B.Ed. Students

R.C. of	F.M.	Obtained Marks		Total No. of students
		A.M.	Percentage	
All text 'A', 'B', 'C' and 'D'	50	26	52	40
Text A	12	5.50	45.83	40
Text B	12	6.7	55.83	40
Text C	12	5.525	46.05	40
Text D	14	8.275	59.107	40

The above table shows the reading comprehension ability of the B.Ed. first year students. They have scored 26 average marks (i.e. 52%) out of 50 full marks. Their marks varied from one text to another. In text 'A' their average marks was 5.50 (i.e. 45.83%) out of 12 full marks. Similarly, their average marks and the percentage they scored in text 'B' were 6.7 out of 12 and 55.83% respectively. They have scored 5.525 average marks (i.e. 46.05%) out of 12 full marks in text 'C' and finally they have scored 8.275 (i.e. 59.107%) out of 14 full marks in text 'D'. Comparatively, they have scored better marks in text 'D' than in other texts.

3.3.1 RCA of Gograha College

Gograha College is one of the two colleges I have selected for my data collection representing the Faculty of Education. The table below shows the average marks and the percentage of the average marks of the students of Gograha College.

Table No. 5

RCA of Gograha College

R.C. of	F.M.	Obtained Marks		Total No. of students
		A.M.	Percentage	
All texts 'A', 'B', 'C' and 'D'	50	26.1	52.2	20
Text A	12	6.5	54.17	20
Text B	12	6.9	57.5	20
Text C	12	5.6	46.66	20
Text D	14	7.55	53.92	20

The above table shows the reading comprehension ability of Gograha College.

Out of 50 full marks, they scored 26.1 as an average mark (i.e. 52.20%). Their marks also varied from one text to another. Their average marks were 6.5, 6.9, 5.6, 7.55 and the average percentage were 54.17, 57.5, 46.66 and 53.92% in texts 'A', 'B', 'C' and 'D' respectively. The highest marks was 36 and the lowest marks was 17 out of 50 full marks.

3.3.2 RCA of Edenburg College

The table below shows the average marks and the percentage of the average marks of the students of the Edenburg College.

Table No. 6

RCA of Edenburn College

R.C. of	F.M.	Obtained Marks		Total No. of students
		A.M.	Percentage	
All text 'A', 'B', 'C' and 'D'	50	25.9	51.8	20
Text A	12	4.95	41.25	20
Text B	12	6.5	54.17	20
Text C	12	5.45	45.416	20
Text D	14	9	64.28	20

The above table shows the reading comprehension ability of the students of Edenburg college. The average marks they scored was 25.9 (i.e. 51.8%) out of 50 full marks. Their average marks was 4.95 (i.e. 41.25%) out of 12 in text 'A'. They scored 6.5 in average (i.e. 54.17%) in text 'B'. Similarly, they scored 5.45 average marks (i.e. 45.416%) in text 'C'. Their average marks was 9 (i.e. 64.28%) out of 14 in text 'D'. The highest marks from this college was 40 and the lowest was 15.

3.4 RCA of B.A. Students

This section shows the reading comprehension ability of B.A. students. Two Humanities Colleges i.e. Metropolis and Mahendra Morang Adarsha Multiple Campus of Biratnagar, Morang were the sample colleges representing the Faculty of Humanities. Twenty students from each of these colleges were the sample population. The table below shows the average marks and the percentage of the average marks of the B.A. students.

Table No. 7

Reading Comprehension Ability of B.A. Students

R.C. of	F.M.	Obtained Marks		Total No. of students
		A.M.	Percentage	
All text 'A', 'B', 'C' and 'D'	50	24.5	49	40
Text A	12	5.45	45.417	40
Text B	12	6.075	50.625	40
Text C	12	5.475	45.625	40
Text D	14	7.525	53.75	40

The above table shows that the students have scored 24.5 average marks (i.e. 49%) out of 50. Their marks varied from one text to another. Their average marks in text 'A' was 5.45 (i.e. 45.417%). Similarly, they scored 6.075 in average (i.e. 50.625%) in text 'B'. They scored 5.475 in average (i.e. 45.625%) in text 'C'. Finally, their average marks in text 'D' was 7.525 (i.e. 53.75%).

They seem to have scored better marks in text 'D' in comparison to others. The highest marks from this faculty was 37 and the lowest was 9.

3.4.1 RCA of Metropolis College

Metropolis College is one of the two colleges I had selected to collect the data which represents the Faculty of Humanities. The table below shows the average marks and the percentage of the average marks of the students of Metropolis College.

Table No. 8

RCA of Metropolis College

R.C. of	F.M.	Obtained Marks		Total No. of students
		A.M.	Percentage	
All text 'A', 'B', 'C' and 'D'	50	24.5	49	20
Text A	12	5.45	45.416	20
Text B	12	6.075	50.625	20
Text C	12	5.475	45.625	20
Text D	14	7.525	53.75	20

The above table shows the reading comprehension ability of the students of Metropolis College. Out of 50 full marks, they scored 24.5 average marks i.e. 49%. Their average marks varied from one text to another. In text 'A' they scored 5.45 average marks (i.e. 45.416%). Their average marks in text 'B' was 6.075 (i.e. 50.625%) and in text 'C' it was 5.475(i.e. 45.625%). Finally, their average marks was 7.525 (i.e. 53.75%) in text 'D'. The highest marks from this college was 37 and the lowest mark was 9.

3.4.2 RCA of M.M.A.M.C.

M.M.A.M.C. was another college I had selected for the collection of my data. The table below shows the average marks and the percentage of the average marks of the students of M.M.A.M.C.

Table No. 9

RCA of M.M.A.M.C.

R.C. of	F.M.	Obtained Marks		Total No. of students
		A.M.	Percentage	
All text 'A', 'B', 'C' and 'D'	50	24.5	49	20
Text A	12	5.4	45	20
Text B	12	5.85	45.67	20
Text C	12	5.6	46.67	20
Text D	14	7.7	55	20

The above table shows the reading comprehension ability of the students of M.M.A.M.C. The average marks they scored was 24.5(i.e. 49%) out of 50 full marks. Their average marks in texts 'A', 'B', 'C' and 'D' were 5.4, 5.85, 5.6 and 7.7 out of 12, 12, 12, and 14 full marks, respectively. Their percentage of the average marks were 45%, 45.6%, 46.67% and 55% in texts A, B, C, and D, respectively. Comparatively, they scored better marks in text 'D' than in other texts. The highest mark from this college was 37 and the lowest was 11.

CHAPTER FOUR

FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

4.1 Findings

On the basis of the analyses and interpretations of the data collected, the findings of this study are mentioned as follows:

1. a) The students of the Faculty of Education have scored 26 average marks (i.e. 52%) out of 50 full marks.
- b) The students of the Faculty of Humanities have scored only 24.5 marks in the same test of reading comprehension which is 49%.
- c) The reading comprehension ability of the students of both the faculties is not so satisfactory according to the standard of their level. No one could secure even 60% marks.
- d) The girls and boys of both the faculties can be graded in order according to their reading comprehension ability with their average marks and the percentage of the average marks as follows:
 - A. Girls of the Faculty of Humanities - 27.7 out of 50 (i.e. 55.4%)
 - B. Girls of the Faculty of Education - 27.5 out of 50 (i.e. 55%)
 - C. Boys of the Faculty of Education- 24.5 out of 50 (i.e. 49%)
 - D. Boys of the Faculty of Humanities - 21.3 out of 50 (i.e. 42.6%)

2. a) As a whole, the B.Ed. first year students have better reading comprehension ability of the newspapers and magazines than the students of B.A.
- b) The girls of both the faculties are far better in comprehending the text than the boys of the same level.
- c) The girls of both the faculties have scored 27.6 average marks (i.e. 55.2%) out of 50 full marks whereas the boys scored only 22.9 average marks (i.e. 45.8%) in the same test.
- d) Even, the girls of the Faculty of Humanities are found to be slightly better in comprehending the reading text than the girls of the Faculty of Education.
- e) The girls of Faculty of Humanities have scored 27.7 average marks (i.e. 55.4%) out of 50 full marks whereas the girls of the Faculty of Education have scored 27.5 marks (i.e. 55%) in the same test. It proves the girls of the Faculty of Humanities are better than students of the Faculty of Education and the boys of their own faculty in comprehending the reading text.
- f) The reading comprehension ability of the boys of the Faculty of Education is better than the boys of the Faculty of Humanities.
- g) The boys of the Faculty of Education have scored 24.5 average marks out of 50 full marks while the boys of the Faculty of Humanities have scored only 21.3 average marks in the same test which turns to be 49% and 42.6% respectively.
- h) The boys of the Faculty of Humanities have the least reading comprehension ability among the students of the Faculty of Education (i.e. girls and boys) and the girls of their own Faculty.

4.2 Recommendations

On the basis of the above mentioned findings, I would like to propose the following recommendations:

1. a) The reading comprehension ability of the students of bachelor first year was not found to be so satisfactory. So, some portion of the course of study of this level should be entirely allotted for the development of reading comprehension.
 - b) The English course of Bachelor first year does not seem to be practical or it does not seem to be useful in students' day to day life. It needs to endow all the English students with the ability at least to gain a lot of information via English newspapers and magazines. Having such objectives in mind the course should be designed.
 - c) The colleges running these programs should provide a wide variety of reading materials, like English newspapers, magazines, journals, authentic books etc. into the library for the English students.
 - d) The teachers have to encourage the students to read a wide variety of English texts not only the texts prescribed in the course.
 - e) Certain percentage of the total marks should be separated for the students' ability to comprehend the texts related to their practical life.
2. a) Students majoring English at the Faculty of Humanities should not only be able to understand the story, poems, essays or the complex jargons found in literary works, but they should also be able to grasp the pieces of information useful for their daily life, which may be found in English newspapers and magazines or in any other English sources. That is why, they should be given practice in comprehending the wide variety of reading texts.

b) Students majoring English at the Faculty of Education also should not only be able to understand the text about linguistics, phonetics and other technical jargons of English language but they should also be able to gain a lot of information from the simple and useful texts found in their day to day life. They should be given a lot of practice in comprehending the simple looking English texts found in their daily life.

c) Boy students of both the faculties seem to be weak in comprehending the reading text. They should be psychologically encouraged and motivated to read the English newspapers, magazines, articles, books and so on.

d) Relatively more exposure should be given to unseen texts to improve the reading comprehension ability of the bachelor first year students of both the Faculties.

e) The teacher should involve the English students of the Faculty of Humanities in various group works and pair works and encourage them to read and understand the wide variety of English newspapers, magazines, articles, journals and so on.

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Appendix I

Marks obtained by Bachelor first year students

a) Marks obtained by individual students of the Faculty of Education of English group

i) Gograha College

S.N.	Name of Students	Sex	All the text F.M. 50	Text A (F.M. 12)	Text B (F.M. 12)	Text C (F.M. 12)	Text D (F.M. 14)
1	Ashok Kumari	F	36	8	9	8	11
2	Abina Karna	F	35	6	11	7	11
3	Sujata Subba	F	34	7	9	7	11
4	Sukumari Yadav	F	33	9	9	7	8
5	Sony Bhattarai	F	31	8	7	6	10
6	Ashok Mehta	M	31	8	7	6	10
7	Prava Dahal	F	28	6	6	6	10
8	Gokul Mishra	M	28	7	8	4	9
9	Angel Tajpuriya	M	27	6	8	4	9
10	Jasmina Thapa	F	25	6	7	4	8
11	Sushma Dahal	F	25	7	7	4	7
12	Anil Kumar Rajbanshi	M	24	6	8	6	4
13	Pramod Pokhrel	M	23	6	6	4	7
14	Nirmal Thapa	M	22	4	7	6	5
15	Dewesh Kumar Sardar	M	21	4	5	8	4
16	Pradip Mandal	M	21	6	3	7	5
17	Sharmila Luitel	F	21	4	6	4	7
18	Ranjit Rajbanshi	M	20	5	7	4	4
19	Lina Yadav	F	20	5	4	5	6
20	Bhisma Pd. Dhamala	M	17	3	4	5	5

M: Male students

F: Female students

F.M.: Full Marks

ii) Edenburg College

S.N.	Name of Students	Sex	All the text F.M. 50	Text A (F.M. 12)	Text B (F.M. 12)	Text C (F.M. 12)	Text D (F.M. 14)
1	Sanjita Siwakoti	F	40	9	10	10	11
2	Bhub Nath Jaipuriya	M	36	5	11	8	12
3	Krish Mohan Rajbanshi	M	33	6	9	5	13
4	Simpal Sharma	F	33	6	7	8	12
5	Pallavi Karna	F	32	7	9	69	10
6	Om Prakash Shah	M	32	5	8	8	11
7	Kamal Thakur	M	31	6	7	6	12
8	Suman Dahal	M	30	4	8	6	12
9	Nanu Kumari Chaudhary	F	27	5	3	8	11
10	Ashmita Paudel	F	26	4	7	6	9
11	Priya Dahal	F	24	3	6	5	10
12	Yogendra Pd. Luitel	M	22	5	6	5	6
13	Naba Raj Niroula	M	21	2	5	6	8
14	Sunita Parajuli	F	21	3	6	5	7
15	Ranjana Kumari Chaudhary	F	21	5	5	4	7
16	Ranjita Mandal	F	20	5	4	3	8
17	Sudhir Kumar Das	M	19	3	5	5	6
18	Purna Kumari Gautam	F	18	6	4	2	6
19	Binod Rai	M	17	4	5	2	6
20	Rupesh Kumar Mandal	M	15	6	5	1	3

M: Male students

F: Female students

F.M.: Full Marks

Appendix II

b) Marks obtained by individual students of the Faculty of Humanities of English group

i) Metropolis College

S.N.	Name of Students	Sex	All the text F.M. 50	Text A (F.M. 12)	Text B (F.M. 12)	Text C (F.M. 12)	Text D (F.M. 14)
1	Shobha Bhattarai	F	37	10	8	8	11
2	Elina Regmi	F	36	7	9	8	12
3	Manisha Ghimire	F	34	7	8	9	10
4	Sanota Adhikari	F	34	5	10	6	13
5	Rakshya Thapa	F	33	5	10	8	10
6	Kalpana Bhandari	F	30	5	9	5	11
7	Rekha Yadav	F	30	7	5	7	11
8	Sharmila Jorchhaki	F	28	5	8	5	10
9	Manish Chalise	M	27	5	7	9	6
10	Dinesh Dahal	M	27	5	6	8	8
11	Milan K.C.	M	25	5	5	7	8
12	Dhiraj Acharya	M	25	7	6	6	6
13	Kiran Neupane	M	22	6	4	7	5
14	Umesh Bhattarai	M	20	7	7	-	6
15	Sarmila Dahal	F	19	4	6	4	5
16	Puspa Raj Dahal	M	15	5	5	1	4
17	Vijay Soren	M	14	2	3	5	4
18	Ritesh Guragain	M	13	4	2	2	5
19	Naina Sharma	F	12	5	7	-	-
20	Satish Rajbanshi	M	9	4	1	2	2

M: Male students

F: Female students

F.M.: Full Marks

ii) M.M.A.M.C.

S.N.	Name of Students	Sex	All the text F.M. 50	Text A (F.M. 12)	Text B (F.M. 12)	Text C (F.M. 12)	Text D (F.M. 14)
1	Usha Poudel	F	37	9	8	8	12
2	Mukesh Roka	M	37	10	9	7	11
3	Ahisha Sharma	F	35	7	11	8	9
4	Isha Khadka	F	33	6	8	10	9
5	Yudhisthir Adhikari	M	33	7	9	7	10
6	Saajan Sapkota	M	30	5	6	9	10
7	Wilam Bharati	F	27	7	5	6	9
8	Rajeev Thapa	M	24	4	5	7	8
9	Sailesh Yadav	M	24	5	7	6	6
10	Sushmita Adhikari	F	23	4	7	5	7
11	Junu Thapa	F	23	6	6	4	7
12	Ajay Rana	M	23	3	5	7	8
13	Rojina Chuhan	F	22	6	4	7	5
14	Sujita Shrestha	F	21	3	7	5	6
15	Sanu Rijal	F	20	5	5	3	7
16	Shrijana Gurung	F	20	5	6	-	9
17	Ajay Kshetri	M	19	6	4	4	5
18	Gaban Bastola	M	16	4	3	3	6
19	Ujwal Khadka	M	12	2	-	4	6
20	Manoj Koiral	M	11	3	2	2	4

M: Male Students

F: Female Students

F.M. : Full Marks

Appendix III

Sources of the selected reading texts

S.N.	Texts sources	Date of Publication	Selected topics
1	'A' The Himalayan Times	Dec 15, 2009	Chinese Car Market Overtakes that of the US
2	'B' The Kathmandu Post	Dec 16, 2009	Pernnial Fuel Crisis Cohen Valley
3	'C' Journal USA, College and University Education in the United States	2005	The cost of College in the United States
4	'D' The Himalayan Times	Dec 15, 2009	Banking soda not helpful for pimples

Types of tests and marks allocation

Types of tests	Text A	Text B	Text C	Text D	Total Marks	Total No. of items
a) Objective						
i) Multiple choice	4	4	2	4	14	14
ii) Fill in the blanks	2	2	2	3	9	9
iii) True-false items	3	3	2	3	11	11
b) Subjective						
i) Short answer question	3 (2 items)	3 (2 items)	6 (3 items)	4 (2 items)	16	19
Total marks	12	12	12	14	50	43