CHAPTER –ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 General Background

Language is most widely used means of communication among people. It is especially human possession. Language is the medium of communication by the help of which human beings are able to communicate, interact, share and interchange their ideas, opinions, thoughts and emotion to each other. So it can be compare with a bridge. As a bridge connects one side of the river with another, language does with people.

Richards at al. (1985:P68) define, "The system of human communication which consists of the structured arrangement of sounds (or their written representation) into larger units, e.g. morphemes, words, sentences, utterances. In common usage it can also refer to nonhuman system of communication such as the "language" of bees, the "language" of dolphins".

Jespersen (1904:4) defines, " Language is not an end in itself, just a little as railway tracks, it is a way of connection between souls, a means of communication …….. Language is the most complete, the richest, the best means of communication; it bridges the physical chasm between individuals……."

Sthapit (2000) has maintained the view that Nepalese learners learn English for practical and instrumental purposes, i.e. for international communication and communication across communities.

There are a number of languages in the world. Of them, English is one of the most dominant languages in the universe. It is internationally marketable and broadly speaking; it is learnt and taught almost all over the world for the purpose of general communication. So, English serves as a link language that links between the people of the world.

Language learning or teaching requires the development of four skills viz. listening, speaking, reading and writing. It is valuable to know that to get mastery over language, equal emphasis should be given to all the four skills. On the lack of one skill other skills are handicapped. Traditionally, language skills are divided into two groups: receptive and productive skills. According to this division listening and reading are grouped under receptive skills and speaking and writing come under productive skills. Although listening and reading are considered receptive and sometimes passive skills, in reality a listener or a reader during this period, does not stay passive but s/he receives something and it leads him/her towards productive skills. Without receiving anything production is not possible. Knowledge can be gained either by listening or by reading any materials. Thus, we can say that receptive skills are the pre-requisite of the productive skills. So they are interrelated to each other.

Among the four skills, reading is the third in order. It is regarded as the most important skill for gaining more knowledge. The more we read the more we gain it (Knowledge). People can enjoy reading any text they like. Reading is the cheapest and best way of getting information. None can minimize its importance. It is necessary for increasing one's professional knowledge and keeps oneself update with the things happen around him. Reading interprets the written symbols into spoken words. Meaningful reading involves the association of the written word with meaning. Reading is a psycholinguistic process since it starts with linguistic surface representation and ends with meaning which the reader reconstructs (Goodman, 1998). It involves the interaction between language and thought. Reading competence presupposes the mastery of two related skills: first, a group of specific relationships between the written symbols and the meaningful units which they represent; second an understanding of and/or fluency in the basic grammatical structures of language (Murphy, 1987).

1.1.2 Importance of English

The English language has special importance as the world language during the 1990s. The possibility that English might have a global role had been recognized as early as the eighteenth century. In 1780, John Adams said (as quoted in Crystal 2004: P.91). English is destined to be in the next and the succeeding centuries more generally the language of the world than Latin was in the last or French is in the president age. It was only in 1990s that the issue really came to the fore with surveys, books, and conferences trying to explain how it is that a language can become truly global. Over 100 countries treatment of English was as a foreign language and in most of these it is now recognized as the chief foreign language to be taught in schools. The prospect that a lingua franca might be needed for the whole world is something which had emerged strongly in the twentieth century and since the 1950s in particular. The establishment of UN (the chief international forum for political communication) is the key feature for the massive increment of the demand of English language. The search for a single lingua franca is a consequence. There is nothing so much intrinsically wonderful about the English language but it is the power of the people who speak it that made English the world language. All of these contributed to the English language so that it became the one ' on which the sun never sets'. Because of its richness and world wide use, the advanced academic studies have been run in the English language. Most of the advanced reading materials are available in English, so one without the knowledge of the English language seems to be handicapped.

1.1.3 English Language Teaching in Nepal

It can not be said exactly when English entered Nepal. However, we can say English language teaching formally started when Janga Bahadur Rana established a school at Thapathali after returning from a visit to Europe. This school named Durbar High school was established in 1910 B.S. and this is also the first educational institution in Nepal. So we can say that ELT and

development of formal education in Nepal took place simultaneously. The history of ELT is as long as the history of formal education. After crossing various ups and downs, i.e., political and other types of barriers, ELT came to the public access. The democratic movements contributed a lot to it. At the very outset, English was taught and learnt as the library language and it was also used as the reference language. Nowadays, English language has grown as an essential thing to everybody. It has been the world language and in Nepal also its popularity and use has been expanded. It is taught as a compulsory subject from pre-primary /primary to the Bachelor level. English language teaching has grown as a professional and a challenge in Nepal. Therefore, the horizon of English in Nepal is widening every next day.

1.1.4 Reading Skill and its Importance

Reading is also process of communication. The writer communicates with the reader and the reader interacts with the writer's assumptions or intentions. Reading is one of the basic skills of language development. It is the amalgamation of visual and non- visual experience, or behavior. Reading is decoding print, or understanding, interpreting and making sense of a given text. It is the process of understanding the message which is not merely lying in the text waiting to be passively observed. It is receiving the information from a text. The information refers to the content which is cognitive (intellectual), referential (or factual) or affective (emotional). It leads to the development of intellectual skills, so that we can more effectively manipulate ideas with the outcome of a series of operations. We read for emotional gratification of spiritual enlightenment, that is, for pleasure of self improvement.

Reading is a psycholinguistic process since it starts with linguistic surface representation and ends with meaning which the leader reconstructs (Goodman, 1998). It involves the interaction between language and thought. Reading is a complex process. It involves both physical and mental process. The physical process involves looking at the text (visuals) and going through it as fast as it

allows the eyes to see it for the mind to process. The mental process, on the other hand, involved interaction of the visual input with the available knowledge and ability to produce an interpretation. It is not just going through the printed pages and making sounds of the graphics, but rather it is the process of receiving the meaning of it. This maintains that reading is not always a passive skill but an active one. Reading competence presupposes the mastery of two related skills: first, a grasp of specific relationships between the written symbols and the meaningful units which they represent, second an understanding of and or fluency in the basic grammatical structures of language (Murphy, 1987). Reading is highly correlated with others skills. The written script is to be recognized while reading. It is necessary for the learners from the beginning stages. In the early modes a good reading requires an implicit mastery of the grapheme phoneme. Correspondence rules, Heaton (1988) points out "Attempts at dealing with the many complex reading skills frequently come too late, at the tertiary level (i.e. at university, technical college), when students suddenly find themselves confronted with professional and technical literature in the foreign language." Grabe (1991) points out that the ability to read develops in due course of time through constant practice and improvement so the value of reading in an EFL course has long been recognized (Howatt, 1984). There has always been a significant amount of interest in comprehension exercises on text requiring careful reading in fact, in most EFL programmes, learning English is equivalent to learning to read, and write on the basis of it. It has also become an essential academic skill. It helps to develop both fluency and academic skill. It helps to develop both fluency and accuracy in language. It is necessary for one's professional development and for keeping oneself updated with the worldly affairs in Nepalese context, reading plays very vital role because most of the information people get by reading scientific/ technical journals and other literary / non scientific texts. (Journals, newspapers, magazines, etc).

1.1.5 Reading Comprehension

Reading comprehension means to understand a written material extracting the required information from it as efficiently as possible. So, reading becomes meaningful only if the leader gets through the meaning behind the graphic symbols. It is meaningless to race through graphic symbols without understanding the text. The understanding that results is called reading comprehension. One might assume that once children have learnt to decode the words in text reasonably efficiently, comprehension will follow automatically. However, this does not always seem to be the case. Understanding the text is comprehension. Oakhill (1988) points out that the development of children' ability to make inferences from text is considered later and also a number of more specific skills that are necessary for comprehension.

Richards et al. 1999: P.29) define reading comprehension:

a) Literal comprehension: reading in order to understand, remember, or recall the information explicitly contained in a passage.

b) Inferential comprehension: reading in order to find information which is not explicitly stated in a passage, using the reader's experience and intuition, and by inferring (INFERENCING).

c) Critical or evaluation comprehension: reading in order to compare information in a passage with the reader's own knowledge and values.

d) Appreciative comprehension: reading in order gain an emotional or other kind of valued response from a passage.

1.1.6 Proficiency Tests

Proficiency test is a test which measures the overall knowledge and competence of the testers. It is not linked to a particular course of instruction, but measures the teacher's general level of language mastery. Although this may be a result of previous instruction and learning, the latter are not the focus

of attention (Richards et al. 1999). Proficiency tests are no way related to any syllabus or teaching programme; indeed any proficiency tests are intended for students from several different schools, countries and even language background. The proficiency test is concerned simply with measuring a student control of language in the light of what he /she will be expected to do with it in the future performance of a particular task (Heaton, 1975). He further points out that the proficiency test is connected, with measuring not general attainment but specific skills in light of the language demands made later in the students by a future course of study of job.

These tests are intended to gauge the degree of an individual's mastery of a language. The results of such a test may be used to determine whether or not a person has the background necessary to be successful in a course, to place a prospective student in a class at the proper level, or simply as a diagnostic device to assess a person's strength and weaknesses in various areas. (Murphy, 1987).

Davies (1968: 6-7) states that 'proficiency test' tests the students present ability for future learning. They are concerned both with the past and the future. The present levels of test score will succinctly predict the candidate's abilities that people become beneficial for the prospective learning. Harrison, (1991:7-8) writes the definition of proficiency as "The aim of proficiency test is to assess the student's ability to apply in actual situations what he has learnt. It seeks to answer the question. Having learnt this much, what can the student do with it……..? "

1.1.7 The IELTS

IELTS stands for International English Language Testing System. The IELTS is an internationally owned and globally recognized direct English Language assessment of the highest quality and integrity readily available through out the world. It is owned, developed and delivered through the partnership of the

British Council, IDP Education Australia: IELTS Australia and University of Cambridge ESOL examination.

British council has wide experience and knowledge of test administration with a network of examination offices in over 100 countries. It administers 5, 00, 000 examination overseas on behalf of British examination boards.

University of Cambridge ESOL examination is an internationally recognized body in the provision of academic and vocational examination. In the field of the English language alone, Cambridge ESOL, examines more than one million candidates alone, Cambridge ESOL examines more than one million candidates each yea. (www.ielts.org).

IELTS is a proficiency test administered at the authorized centers throughout the world. It has two modules: Academic Module Vs General Training Module. Academic module means candidates who wish to study in the universities in the U.K., Australia, Canada, New Zealand and the U.S.A. and general training module is meant for those who wish to complete their secondary education, to undertake work experience or training programmes and /or for immigration purposes in those countries. IELTS covers the four language skills –listening, reading, speaking and writing. It is designed to assess the language ability and writing. It is designed to assess the language ability of candidates needing to study or work in the countries where English is used as the first language both to communication and medium of instruction.

IELTS, the International English Language Testing System, is a test for students who must demonstrate English language proficiency to gain entry to universities or training programs in English-speaking countries. For overseas candidates wishing to study in tertiary institution in the United Kingdom or Australia, in particular, IELTS is the most widely recognized assessment of English language proficiency.

1.1.8 Use of Statistical Tools in Research

Statistics plays a very important role in answering the research question. One of the most important objectives of statistical objectives analysis is to get one single value that describes the characteristics of the entire mass of huge data. Simple statistical tools like measurement of central tendency, measurement of dispersion and measurement of correlation coefficient are used in research. The tendency of the items or values of the items to cluster in the central part of the distribution is known as measure of central tendency. The measure of central tendency is also known as the measurement of location since they enable us to locate the position or place of the distribution. Mean, Median and Mode are the measurements of central tendency. Mean is an arithmetic average which is calculated by dividing the sum of all the values of all the items by the sum of the frequency of the items. Median refers to the size of the middle item when the items are arranged in an ascending or descending order of magnitude. Mode is the most frequent item (score) of the total data. The measurement of correlation coefficient is used to find out the relation between two variables. These measurements are very important in the analysis of the data.

1.2 Review of Related Literature

Many different research workers have been carried out research on the proficiency of courses based reading comprehension test.

Giri (1981) carried out a comparative study on the 'English Language Proficiency of the Students Studying in Grade Ten in the Secondary Schools of Doti and Kathmandu'. He found out that the students of Kathmandu valley had better performance than the students of Doti district.

Shrestha (1988) carried out a study on Reading Comprehension in English had better performance in seen text than unseen text. She also added that the performance on seen and unseen text had positive correlation.

Subedi (2000) carried out a study on 'Reading Comprehension of the Grade Nine Students of Kathmandu and Jhapa'. He found out that the students of Kathmandu at urban area had a better performance in higher reading comprehension level in magazines than in newspapers; where as rural students of Jhapa were better in the same.

Gaulee (2001) carried out a study on 'English Reading Speed of Nepalese Students'. He found out that average reading speed of the students of lower secondary, secondary and higher secondary level is 89.10 words per minute. He also found out that there is a vast difference between the reading speed of students studying in the public schools and private schools. The students of private school had better performance than students of public school.

G.C. (2002) carried out a study on Reading Comprehension Ability of PCL 1st year Students and found out that average reading comprehension ability of PCL 1st year student was 64.11 percent, and girls and Indo-Aryan native speakers could comprehend better than boys and Tibneto- Burman respectively.

Bhattarai (2004) carried out a study on the Reading Comprehensive and Speed of PCL 1st year and Grade Eleven Students and found out that the students of Grade Eleven had comparatively better reading comprehension on ability and speed than those of PCL 1st year students.

Kandel (2004) carried out a study on the English language proficiency of the B.Ed. students on the basis of the IELTS. He found out that the total proficiency is less that the expectation, i.e. 4.3 band score out of 9 which makes 50.33%.

Poudel (2005) carried out a research on 'TOEFL Based Reading Comprehension Ability of Bachelor Level Students'. He found out that the students of TU were very poor in reading comprehensive ability in terms of the TOEFL standard. He also found out that the students of institute of Medicine

were in the highest rank and the students of faculty of Management were in the lowest rank in reading comprehensive of English Texts.

The review above shows that none of the researches have been carried out using the standard test (IELTS) to assess the reading comprehension ability of public and private schools of Grade Twelve in Kaski District.

1.2.1 Objectives of the Study

This study had the following objectives:

(i)   To find out the reading comprehension ability based on IELTS of Grade Twelve (XII) students of Kaski District.

(ii)   To compare comprehension ability of the students on the basis of following variables.

  - Public Vs Private schools

  - Intra-stream

  - Inter-stream

(iii)   To suggest some pedagogical implications.

1.2.2 Significance of the Study

This study will be valuable for the language teachers, subject experts, testing experts, students, teachers and proficiency testing institution. It will help to get the information about proficiency level of reading comprehension of public and private schools of grade XII.

1.2.3 Definition of the Specific Terms

Proficiency: Person's skill/ ability in using a language such as the ability to read, write, speak or understand the language

Reading comprehension ability: The ability to understand or grasp the meaning of the written text by reading it.

Stream: Faculty; Faculty of Education, Faculty of Humanities, Faculty of Management and Faculty of Science.

IELTS: It stands for International English Language Testing system. It is an English Language Proficiency Text.

Language Proficiency: Language proficiency is a person's skill in using a language for a specific purpose proficiency refers to the degree of skill with which a person can use a language, such as how well a person can read, write, speak of understand language. Language proficiency is the overall knowledge of language and the capacity to use in appropriate situations.

CHAPTER–TWO

METHODOLOGY

In this study, the researcher was interested in identifying the proficiency of the grade XII students of Kaski District based on IELTS in reading comprehension. The researcher adopted the following methodology.

2.1 Sources of Data

The study was entirely field based mainly two types of sources of data were utilized

2.1.1 Primary Sources of Data

The primary sources of data were the students of Grade XII of Kaski district.

2.1.2 Secondary Sources of Data

Different books related to IELTS, IELTS preparation book 6, websites, journals, articles, magazines, and theses approved in the department of English Education, T. U. were consulted as secondary sources.

2.2 Population of the Study

The Population of the study was the students of Grade XII of Kaski district. All the students for this study were from public and private schools. Four different streams of public and private schools were selected. They were faculty of Education, faculty of Humanities, faculty of Management and faculty of Science.

2.3 Sampling Procedures

Four different faculties (Science, Management, Humanities and Education) of both public and private schools were selected after a survey of availability of the informants. The random sampling procedure was used for the selection of

the population. Twenty students were selected from each faculty. Forty students were taken from private schools and same number of students were selected from public schools. So the total population of the study was 80. The researcher included these students and worked out with average and percentage calculation.

2.4 Tools for Data Collection

The researcher used the standardized test item for the study. So he chose one of the model tests from IELTS preparation course. The test which was computer-based was converted into a paper-based format. The test (cf appendix) contained four different passages of almost equal length. The test item contained 22 questions and there was limitation of time. The time was of 30 minutes.

2.5 Process of Data Collection

Since the research is field based and of practical type, the researcher involved himself in the process of data collection. Firstly, the researcher selected four different faculties of both public and private schools from Grade XII. The researcher visited each faculty personally and explained the objectives of the study. Getting permission from the authority, he consulted the admission register and copied the name of the students corresponding to the required number of the strata. The researcher arranged the time according to their suitability. The researcher administered the test after providing the necessary instruction. While administering the test the informants were provided five minutes time after completion of one passage. The researcher himself participated as an invigilator.

2.6 Limitations of the Study

The study had the following limitations.

    a. This study included only the Grade XII students of Kaski District.

b. It included four different faculties of both public and private schools. They were faculty of Education, faculty of Humanities, faculty of Management and faculty of Science.

c. 20 students were selected from each faculty. Forty students were selected from private schools and same number of students were selected from public schools. In total, 80 students were selected from Kaski district studying both in public and private schools.

CHAPTER –THREE

ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

While analyzing the data, responses were assigned marks for one correct response, one mark each. The researcher determined the students' responses correct /incorrect on the basis of answer sheets.

After arranging the marks, they were tabulated under various headings. After growing and adding the marks, the average marks were calculated from the total marks by the number of students who participated in the test. From the total marks, the average marks, the percentage of average marks secured by each stream were carefully calculated.

The researcher analyzed the collected data. After analysis, the data showed that the students did not have the same level of proficiency in the language skills. Some of them were above average; some were average while others were below the average. Finally, the students' reading comprehension was analyzed and compared on the basis of marks they obtained.

3.1 Reading Comprehension Ability of Grade XII Students

This section shows the reading comprehension ability of grade XII students of both public and private schools.

3.1.1 Holistic Comparison of Reading Comprehension

This section marks an overall comparison of the reading comprehension ability of the students of grade XII of public and private schools. Table 1 shows the average reading comprehension ability of the students of public and private schools studying at grade XII.

Table 1

Comparison of the Reading Comprehension Ability of Public and Private Schools as a Whole

S.N.	Types of schools	Numbers of students	Measures	Marks	
				Marks Obtained	F. M.
1	Public School	40	Comprehensibility: Average	12.55	22
			Percentage	57.04%	
2	Private School	40	Comprehensibility: Average	13.27	22
			Percentage	60.34%	

Table 1 makes an overall comparison of the performance of the students of grade XII of public and private schools. The overall comparison of the marks secured by them shows that the students of private schools have better reading comprehension ability than the students of public schools. Statistically in the overall comparison, the students of public schools have obtained 12.55 marks whereas the students of private schools have secured 13.27 marks out of 22 full marks in average. The students of public and private schools have scored 57.04% and 60.34% respectively. So, it has been found that there is insignificant difference in reading comprehension ability between the students of public and private schools.

To sum up, the average reading comprehension ability of grade XII students of public and private schools as a whole is found to be 12.91 marks out of 22 marks, i.e. 58.68%.

3.1.2 Reading Comprehension Ability of Grade XII Students of Public Schools

Table 2

Reading Comprehension Ability of Public Schools

S.N.	Stream	Number of students	Measures	Marks	
				Marks Obtained	F. M.
1	Science	10	Comprehensibility: Average	16.1	22
			Percentage	73.18%	
2	Commerce	10	Comprehensibility: Average	11.2	22
			Percentage	50.9%	
3	Education	10	Comprehensibility: Average	11.1	22
			Percentage	50.45%	
4	Humanities	10	Comprehensibility: Average	11.8	22
			Percentage	53.63%	
Total		40	Comprehensibility: Average	12.55	22
			Percentage	57.04%	

Table 2 shows the RCA of the students of the public schools as a whole. The average reading comprehension ability of the students of public schools is 12.55, i.e. 57.04% out of 22 full marks, the students of science obtained 16.1 marks, the students of commerce obtained 11.2 marks, the students of Education obtained 11.1 marks and the students of Humanities obtained 11.8

marks. This shows that the students of science obtained the highest of all and the students of Education obtained the lowest.

Table 3

Hierarchical Reading Comprehension Ability of Public Schools

Stream	Raw score	Percentage
Science	16.1	73%
Humanities	11.8	53.63%
Commerce	11.2	50.9%
Education	11.1	50.45%

This shows that the reading comprehension ability of the Grade XII students of education is the lowest and not so satisfactory. However, the students of science have the highest reading comprehension ability of all and students of Humanities and commerce are in the second and third positions respectively.

3.1.3 Reading Comprehension Ability of Grade XII Students of Private Schools

Table 4

Reading Comprehension Ability of Private Schools

S.N.	Stream	Number of students	Measures	Marks	
				Marks Obtained	F. M.
1	Science	10	Comprehensibility: Average	16.3	22
			Percentage	74.09%	
2	Commerce	10	Comprehensibility: Average	10.2	22
			Percentage	46.36%	
3	Education	10	Comprehensibility: Average	13.2	22
			Percentage	60%	
4	Humanities	10	Comprehensibility: Average	13.4	22
			Percentage	60.90%	
Total		40	Comprehensibility: Average	13.27	22
			Percentage	60.34%	

Table 4 shows the reading comprehension ability of the students of the private schools as a whole. The average RCA has been found to be 13.27 marks i.e., 60.34% out of 22 marks, the students of science obtained 16.3 marks, the students of commerce obtained 10.2 marks, the students of Education obtained 13.2 marks and the students of Humanities obtained 13.4 marks. The students

of the stream of science have obtained the highest marks and the students of stream of commerce obtained the lowest amongst the streams. The score of the stream can be ordered as:

Table No. 5

Hierarchical Reading Comprehension Ability of Private Schools

Stream	Score	Percentage
Science	16.3	74.09%
Humanities	13.4	60.90%
Education	13.2	60%
Commerce	10.2	46.36%

This shows that the RCA of Grade XII students of the private schools of science is the highest and the stream of commerce is the lowest in position. But the students of the streams of Humanities and Education have stood in the 2nd and 3rd position respectively.

3.2 Intra-stream Comparison of Reading Comprehension Ability of Grade XII Students

This section presents the intra- stream comparison of reading comprehension ability of grade XII students of both public and private schools.

3.2.1 Intra- stream Comparison of Reading Comprehension Ability of Grade XII Students of Public Schools

This section compares the reading comprehension ability of the students of each stream. Table 2 presents the marks obtained by the students of public schools.

Table 2 makes us clear that the students of science stream have performed the best of all. In average, they have secured 16.1 marks, i.e. 73.18% out of 22 marks, the students of commerce have secured 11.2 marks, i.e. 50.9%, the students of Education have obtained 11.1 marks, i.e. 50.45% and the students of Humanities have secured 11.8 marks, i.e. 53.63%. The stream of science, Humanities, commerce and Education has stood in the first, second, third and forth position respectively.

In average the RCA of grade XII students of public schools as a whole has been found to be 12.55 marks, i.e. 57.04% out of 22 marks. The students of science have secured more marks than average marks. That is why the report shows that they have done excellent. However, the students of commerce, Education and Humanities have obtained below marks than average marks, i.e. 11.2, 11.1 and 11.8 respectively.

3.2.2 Intra-stream Comparison of Reading Comprehension Ability of Grade XII Students of Private Schools.

This section shows stream wise total reading comprehension ability of private schools.

Table 4 presents the reading comprehension ability of grade XII students of private schools studying in four different streams namely science, commerce, Education and Humanities. The RCA of overall students is 13.27 marks in average out of 22 full marks, which is 60.34%. In such a way, the average reading comprehension ability of the students of grade XII of private schools is 13.27 marks, i.e. 60.34%.

When we analyze the marks obtained by the students of different streams separately. The students of science have obtained 16.3 marks out of 22 full marks (i.e. 74.09%). This is the highest position among the four streams. Similarly, the students of commerce have obtained the lowest marks (10.2 marks) out of 22 full marks, which is the lowest position in average.

Table 4 shows that the students of science and Humanities have secured 16.3 marks, i.e., 74.09% and 13.4 marks, i.e., 60.90% respectively. This analysis proves that the two streams such as: science and Humanities showed their position above the average. The average mark here is 13.27 out of 22 full marks (i.e. 60.34%). However, the students of commerce and Education have obtained 10.2, i.e. 46.36% and 13.2, i.e. 60% respectively which is below the average marks. It has been found that there is a vast difference in their reading comprehension ability, whose position is above and below average. In overall reading comprehension, the students of science stream have shown the highest and the students of commerce have shown the lowest performance. To sum up, the students of Science stream, Humanities stream, Education stream and Commerce stream have stood in the first, second, third and fourth position respectively in reading comprehension ability.

3.3 Inter-stream Comparison of the Reading Comprehension Ability of Grade XII students of Public and Private Schools

3.3.1 Public School Science Stream Vs Private School Science Stream

Table 6 shows the reading comprehension ability of the grade XII students of science stream of public and private schools.

Table 6

Inter-level Comparison of the Students of Science

S.N.	Types of schools	Stream	Numbers of students	Measures	Marks	
					Marks Obtained	F. M.
1	Public School	Science	10	Comprehensibility: Average	16.1	22
				Percentage	73.18%	
2	Private School	Science	10	Comprehensibility: Average	16.3	22
				Percentage	74.09%	

Table 6 clearly shows that the marks the students obtained. The students of private schools of science stream have better performance in reading comprehension than students of public schools. The students of private schools have obtained 16.3 marks, i.e. 74.09% where as the students of public schools have secured 16.1 marks, i.e. 73.18%. This shows that the reading comprehension ability of the students of private schools is a bit better than public school's students.

3.3.2 Public School Commerce Stream Vs. Private School Commerce Stream

Table 7 compares the reading comprehension ability of the students of grade XII of public and private schools studying commerce. The performance of the students has been analyzed as follows:

Table 7

Inter- level Comparison of the Students of Commerce

S.N.	Types of schools	Stream	Numbers of students	Measures	Marks	
					Marks Obtained	F. M.
1	Public School	Commerce	10	Comprehensibility: Average	11.2	22
				Percentage	50.9%	
2	Private School	Commerce	10	Comprehensibility: Average	10.2	22
				Percentage	46.36%	

Table 7 clearly states that the students of public schools of commerce stream have done better in their reading comprehension than students of private schools. It has been found that the students of commerce studying at public schools have secured 11.2 marks, i.e. 50.9% where as the students of commerce studying at private schools have obtained 10.2 marks, i.e. 46.36% out of 22 marks. It has been found that there is insignificant difference in reading comprehension ability between the students of public and private schools.

3.3.3 Public School Education Stream Vs Private School Education Stream

In the table 8, the students of grade XII of public and private schools studying Education are compared in their reading comprehension ability on the basis of their marks which is secured by them.

Table 8

Inter- level comparison of the students of education

S.N.	Types of schools	Stream	Numbers of students	Measures	Marks	
					Marks Obtained	F. M.
1	Public School	Education	10	Comprehensibility: Average	11.1	22
				Percentage	50.45%	
2	Private School	Education	10	Comprehensibility: Average	13.2	22
				Percentage	60%	

This table shows the reading comprehension ability of the students of public and private schools studying education. The reading comprehension ability of grade XII students of private schools is far better than the students of public schools. The average marks secured by the students of grade XII of private and public schools studying education are 13.2 and 11.1 marks out of 22 marks, respectively. Their percentage scores of public school students and private school students are 60% and 50.45% respectively. It has been found out that there is significant difference in reading comprehension ability between the students of public and private schools.

3.3.4 Public School Humanities Stream Vs Private School Humanities Stream

Table 9 compares the reading comprehension ability of the students of Humanities studying in Public and Private schools.

Table 9

Inter-level Comparison of the Students of Humanities

S.N.	Types of schools	Stream	Numbers of students	Measures	Marks	
					Marks Obtained	F. M.
1	Public School	Humanities	10	Comprehensibility: Average	11.8	22
				Percentage	53.63%	
2	Private School	Humanities	10	Comprehensibility: Average	13.4	22
				Percentage	60.90%	

Table 9 presents the reading comprehension ability of grade XII students of public and private schools studying Humanities. Comparatively, the reading comprehension ability of the students of private schools is better than those of the students of public schools. The students of Humanities studying in Public and private schools have obtained 11.8 marks and 13.4 marks in the average out of 22 full marks, respectively. Their percentage scores are: 53.63% by the students of public schools and 60.09% by the students of private schools. After analyzing the marks the students obtained, it has been found that the students of private schools have performed better performance than the students of public schools.

Figure 1

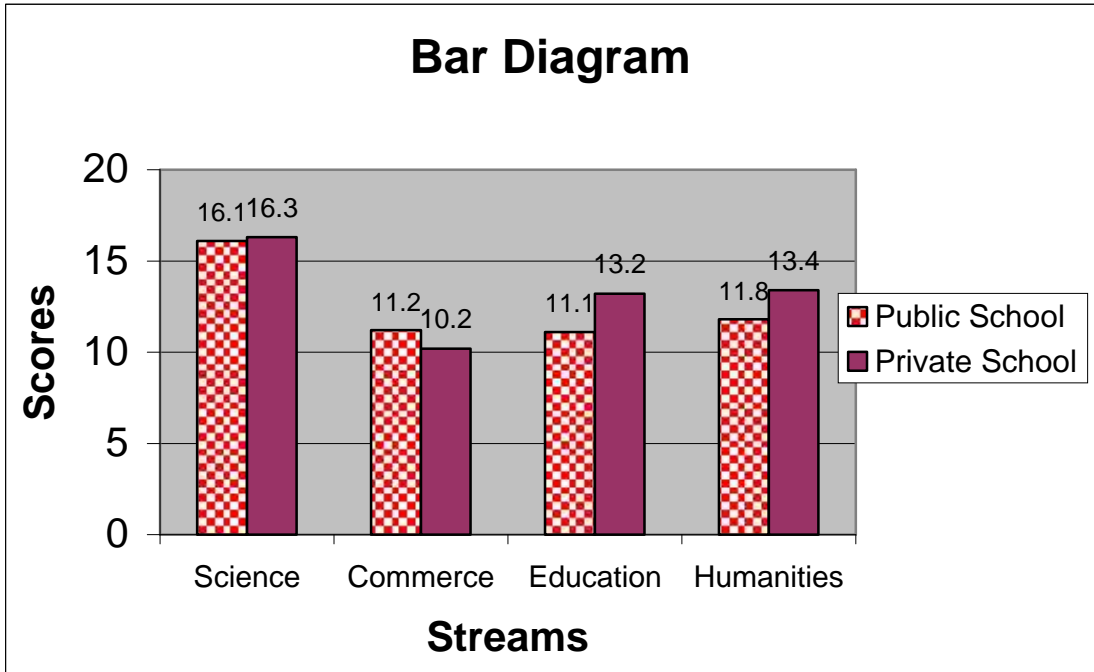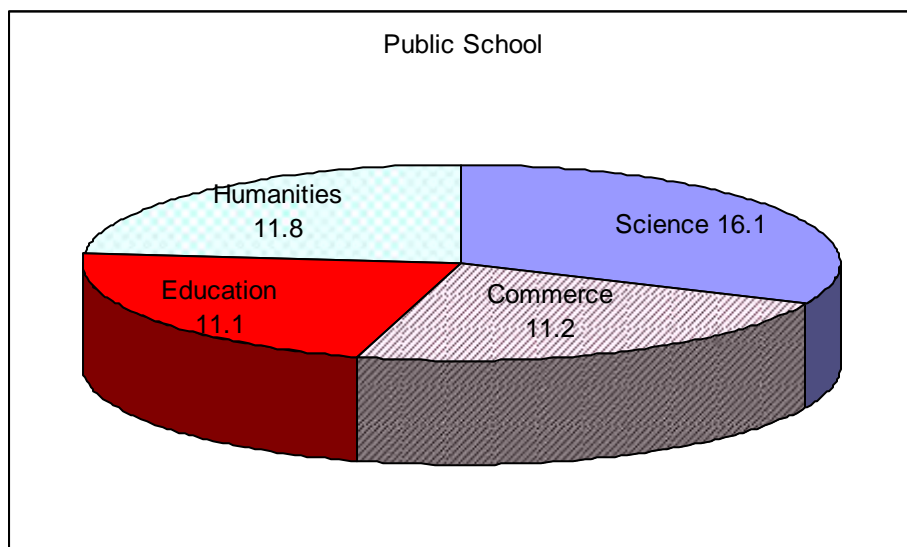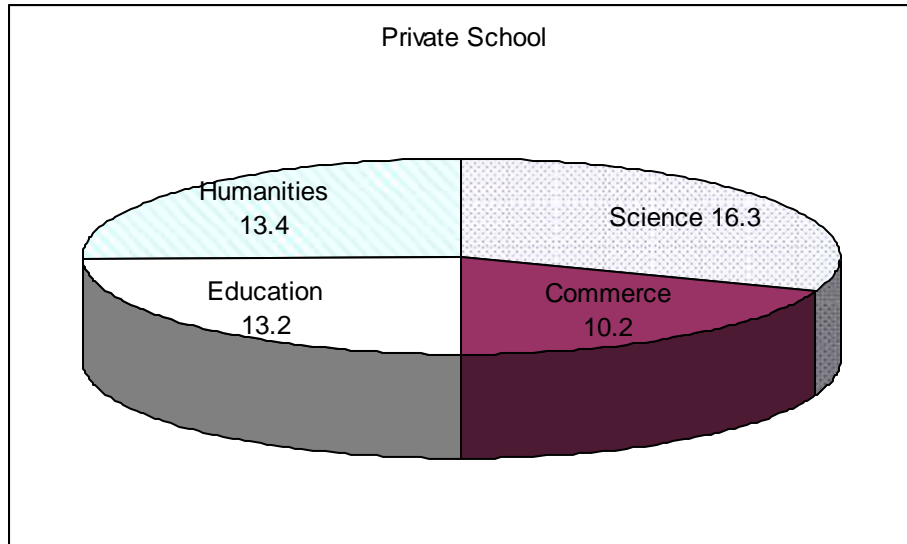**Total Reading Comprehension Ability of the Students can be Shown in the Chart as Follows**

Bar Diagram

Figure 2

RCA can be Presented in the Pie Chart as Follows

Private School

- Humanities 13.4
- Science 16.3
- Education 13.2
- Commerce 10.2

3.5   Analysis of Marks on the Basis of Other Statistical Tools

3.5.1 Measurement of Central Tendency

i) Mean:

It can be calculated by using the following formula.

$$\overline{X} = \frac{\sum fx}{\sum f}$$

Where, $\overline{X}$ = arithmetic mean

$\sum$ = The sum of

F = Frequency

X = the score

Score (x)	Frequency(f)	Fx	Cf
3	1	3	1
8	1	8	2
9	11	99	13
10	7	70	20
11	6	66	26
12	9	108	35
13	10	130	45
14	12	168	57
15	7	105	64
16	3	48	67
17	8	136	75
18	3	54	78
19	2	38	80
$\sum$ x	$\sum$ f = 80	$\sum$ fx 1033	80

Now, using the formula,

$$\overline{X} = \frac{\sum fx}{\sum f}$$

$$= \frac{1033}{80}$$

$$= 12.91$$

Hence, the mean is 12.91.

Thus, the mean score of this study is 12.91.

ii)	Median

Median is calculated by using the following formula in the discrete series.

$$Md = \left(\frac{n+1}{2}\right)^{th} term$$

$$= \left(\frac{80+1}{2}\right)^{th} term$$

$$= \left(\frac{81}{2}\right)^{th} term$$

$$= 40.5^{th} term$$

Now, the item 40.5^{th} lies in the cumulative frequency 45 where corresponding value is 13. So, the median score of the students is 13.

The median score of the students = 13

The calculation of the mean score and the median score shows that the score deviation is very low. That means the students scores have not seen so irregular. They have the score which are sequential. The proficiency level of the students is very much symmetrical since the mean is 12.91 and the median is 13.

iii) Mode

In the score table (Appendix- 8) the most frequent score is 14 which is obtained 12 students.

So, the mode score of the students = 14

$\therefore$ Mode = 14

The analysis of the scores on the basis of these statistical methods shows that most of the students are above the mean score. Out of 80 students, 35 students scored below the mean. That means, it constitutes 43.57% of the total number of students, the students who scored above the mean constitutes 56.25% of the total number of the students.

CHAPTER – FOUR

FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

4.1 Findings

The major concern of this study was to identify the proficiency in reading comprehension of the students. The students were taken from four different streams of public and private schools studying at grade XII.

4.1.1 Major Findings of the Study

a. The +2 students of grade 12 of Higher Education Board have good reading comprehension ability in terms of higher secondary Education Board's standard because they have secured good second division marks but their reading comprehension ability is not adequate in terms of IELTS standard. Their total RCA is 12.91, i.e. 58.68% out of 22 marks and the IELTS score is 5 bands out of 9 bands. This shows that they are at the fifth level (individual cases reviewed) for the admission policies in the US and UK Universities.

b. The students of private schools have obtained better marks in reading comprehension ability compared to the students of public schools except commerce stream. The average reading comprehension ability of students of private schools is 60.34% and that of public schools is 57.04%. The students of public schools studying four in streams, i.e. Science, Humanities, Commerce and Education have obtained 16.1, 11.8, 11.2 and 11.1 out of 22 full marks respectively whereas the students of private schools have obtained 16.3, 13.4, 10.2 and 13.2 studying Science, Humanities, Commerce and Education respectively.

4.1.2 Variable Specific Findings

Findings related to the reading comprehension ability of grade XII students of public and private schools.

a. The average RCA of grade XII students of public and private schools as a whole is found to be 12.91 out of 22, i.e. 58.68% and converted to IELTS score, it has 5 bands score. This shows that their RCA is not so satisfactory. That means, it is not adequate for the expected English Language reading proficiency regarding IELTS standard, but it is regarded good reading proficiency in terms of Higher Secondary Board's evaluation scheme.

b. The average RCA of grade XII students of private schools as a whole is found to be 13.27, i.e., 60.34% and converted to IELTS score, it is 5 bands score. This shows that their RCA is not so satisfactory. That means, it is not adequate for the expected English language reading proficiency regarding IELTS standard, but it is regarded good reading proficiency in terms of Higher Secondary Board's evaluation Scheme.

c. The average RCA of grade XII students of public schools as a whole is found to be 12.55, i.e. 57.04% and converted to IELTS score, it has 5 bands score. This score is low in terms of IELTS standard, but it is regarded good reading comprehension ability in terms of Higher Secondary Education Board's evaluation Scheme. It has been found that there is insignificant difference in reading comprehension ability between the students of public and private schools.

d. The RCA of the science stream students of private and public schools is found to be 16.3, i.e. 74.09% and 16.1, i.e. 73.18% respectively. Their reading comprehension is very good in terms of Higher Secondary Board as well as IELTS standard because they have scored 6.5 bands and 6 bands respectively.

e. The RCA of the commerce stream students of both private and public schools is found to be 10.2, i.e. 46.36% and 11.2, i.e. 50.9% respectively. This score is very low in terms of the expected proficiency of the grade XII students in IELTS standard because they have obtained just 4 bands and 4.5 bands respectively. However their RCA is satisfactory in terms of +2 standards.

f. The RCA of the Education stream students of both private and public schools is found to be 13.2, i.e. 60% and 11.1, i.e. 50.45% respectively. Their reading comprehension is good and satisfactory respectively in terms of +2 standards. However, their reading comprehension is not adequate for the expected English language reading proficiency regarding IELTS standard because they have obtained just 5 bands and 4.5 bands respectively.

g. The RCA of the Humanities stream students of both private and public schools is found to be 13.4, i.e. 60.90% and 11.8, i.e. 53.63% respectively. Their reading comprehension is good in terms of + 2 standard. However, their reading comprehension ability is inadequate in terms of IELTS standard because the scores are 5.0 and 4.5 bands respectively.

Regarding the inter stream comparison of the RCA of the students, the RCA of the students of science faculty is the highest in rank, with 73.63% and the RCA of the students of commerce is the lowest in rank, with 48.63%.

4.2 Recommendations

The study found out the reading comprehension ability of the +2 students (grade twelve students) of higher secondary Board in four different faculties. It also found out that there is insignificant difference between the proficiency of the students of private and public schools. Most of the students have obtained

the score below the mean value. Regarding the above findings the researcher makers some recommendations.

a. The syllabus designers, testing experts, the teachers and the students themselves should be aware of the academic standards at the international level.

b. The reading proficiency of the students of grade XII should be improved to reach the international standard in reading comprehension in English.

c. The students should be exposed to varieties of texts because proficiency in reading comprehension does not include any reading the course based materials. It also includes the general knowledge of the affairs of the world.

d. The students of management stream should labour more in reading comprehension. They are very poor in reading comprehension ability in English text compared to the students of other streams.

e. If the present status is not improved, the students may lose the better opportunities at the international level.

f. The students themselves should try to comprehend the text as far as possible. The teacher should pay attention only to provide the guideline to develop their reading comprehension ability.

g. It is necessary to have well managed libraries having plenty of simplified and interesting books in any educational institution.

h. Further researchers are to be carried out in this field. That will contribute to the improvement of the present situation in reading comprehension ability of the students.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX – 1

Interpretation of IELTS Scores

There is no passing or failing score on the IELTS. Each agency or university will evaluate the scores according to its own requirements. Even at the same university, the requirements may vary for different programes of study. Levels of study (graduate of under graduate) and degrees or responsibility. (Student of teaching assistant).

The following summary of admission policies is typical of U.S. Universities, assuming of course, that the applicant's documents other than English proficiency are acceptable.

Typical admission policies of American Universities.

Paper - based IELTS Score	Policy
7.0 or above	Admission assured for graduate students.
6.0 to 6.9	Admission assured for undergraduate students.
5.5 to 5.9	Admission probable for graduate students.
5.0 to 5.4	Admission probable for undergraduate students.
4.9 Or less	Referral to English Language Programme

APPENDIX – 2

Raw scores of the Science stream students.							
Private Schools				Public schools			
S.N. of students	Full Marks	Mark obtained	Percentage	S.N. of students	Full Marks	Mark obtained	Percentage
1	22	14	63.63%	1	22	14	63.63%
2	22	15	68.18%	2	22	17	77.27%
3	22	17	77.27%	3	22	19	86.36%
4	22	17	77.27%	4	22	13	59.09%
5	22	18	81.81%	5	22	15	68.18%
6	22	18	81.81%	6	22	17	77.27%
7	22	14	63.63%	7	22	17	77.27%
8	22	17	77.27%	8	22	18	81.81%
9	22	17	77.27%	9	22	16	72.72%
10	22	16	72.72%	10	22	15	68.18%
Average RCA = 16.3 Marks Average RCA = 74.09%				Average RCA = 16.1 Marks Average RCA = 73.18%			

APPENDIX -3

Raw scores of the Education stream students.							
Private Schools				Public schools			
S.N. of students	Full Marks	Mark obtained	Percentage	S.N. of students	Full Marks	Mark obtained	Percentage
1	22	16	72.72 %	1	22	14	63.63 %
2	22	11	50 %	2	22	10	45.45 %
3	22	15	68.18 %	3	22	9	40.9 %
4	22	13	59.09 %	4	22	12	54.54 %
5	22	10	45.45 %	5	22	11	50 %
6	22	10	45.45 %	6	22	11	50 %
7	22	15	68.18 %	7	22	11	50 %
8	22	19	86.36 %	8	22	9	40.9%
Average RCA = 13.2 Marks Average RCA = 60%				Average RCA = 11.1 Marks Average RCA = 50.45%			

APPENDIX -4

Raw scores of the Commerce stream students.							
Private Schools				Public schools			
S.N. of students	Full Marks	Mark obtained	Percentage	S.N. of students	Full Marks	Mark obtained	Percentage
1	22	14	63.63 %	1	22	14	63.63 %
2	22	3	13.63 %	2	22	14	63.63 %
3	22	12	54.54 %	3	22	12	54.54 %
4	22	9	40.90 %	4	22	12	54.54 %
5	22	9	40.90 %	5	22	10	45.45 %
6	22	10	45.45 %	6	22	9	40.90 %
7	22	10	45.45 %	7	22	9	40.90 %
8	22	14	63.63 %	8	22	9	40.90 %
Average RCA = 10.2 Marks Average RCA = 46.36 %				Average RCA = 11.2 Marks Average RCA = 50.90 %			

APPENDIX - 5

Raw scores of the Humanities stream students.							
Private Schools				Public schools			
S.N. of students	Full Marks	Mark obtained	Percentage	S.N. of students	Full Marks	Mark obtained	Percentage
1	22	13	59.09 %	1	22	9	40.90 %
2	22	13	59.09 %	2	22	13	59.09%
3	22	13	59.09 %	3	22	14	63.63%
4	22	14	63.63 %	4	22	14	63.63 %
5	22	15	68.18 %	5	22	11	50 %
6	22	13	59.09 %	6	22	12	54.54 %
7	22	17	77.27 %	7	22	12	54.54 %
8	22	9	40.90 %	8	22	13	59.09 %
Average RCA = 13.4 Marks Average RCA = 60.90 %				Average RCA = 11.8 Marks Average RCA = 53.63%			

APPENDIX - 6

Reading comprehension ability of the Grade XII Students of Private Schools

S.N.	Stream	Average	Percentage
i)	Science	16.3	74.09 %
ii)	Commerce	10.2	46.36 %
iii)	Education	13.2	60 %
iv)	Humanities	13.4	60.90 %
Average RCA = 13.27 Marks			
Average RCA = 60.34%			

APPENDIX - 7

Reading comprehension ability of the Grade XII Students of Public Schools

S.N.	Stream	Average	Percentage
i)	Science	16.1	73.18 %
ii)	Commerce	11.2	50.90 %
iii)	Education	11.1	50.45 %
iv)	Humanities	11.8	53.63 %
	Average RCA = 12.55 Marks		
	Average RCA = 57.04 %		

APPENDIX - 8

The Scores and Frequency of the Total Data

Score (X)	Frequency (f)								Total
	Science		Commerce		Education		Humanities		
	Private	Public	Private	Public	Private	Public	Private	Public	
3			1						1
4									
5									
6									
7									
8				1					1
9			3	3		2	1	2	11
10			2	1	3	1			7
11					1	3		2	6
12			2	2		3		2	9
13		1			2		5	2	10
14	2	1	2	2		1	2	2	12
15	1	2		1	2		1		7
16	1	1			1				3
17	4	3					1		8
18	2	1							3
Total									80

APPENDIX - 11

Questionnaire

General Information

Name (optional)   :-

District   :-

City (if any)   :-

Nationality   :-

Native Language   :-

Second Language   :-

Other Language (if any)   :-

Educational Information

Please tick (√) on the corresponding box.

Level	Country	School		Medium of instruction			Opt/ Specialization
		Government	Private	Nepali	English	Others	
Primary							
Lower Secondary							
Secondary							
Higher Secondary							
Higher Education							

                                                        Yes   No

- Have you heard about IELTS?   ☐   ☐

- If yes, have you taken this test?   ☐   ☐
                                                        ☐   ☐

- If you have taken IELTS, for what purpose?

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