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DEPARTMENT OF FOREIGN LANGUAGE

AND LITERATURE

**PRACTICES AND CHALLENGES OF TEACHING
READING COMPREHENSION SKILLS IN GRADE FIVE:
SELECTED SCHOOL IN SEMIEN WASGEBETA**

BY

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ABSTRACT

The main objective of this study was to investigate the practices and challenges of teaching English reading comprehension skills at primary level with particular focus to grade five. From grade one up to four there were no phases of reading practices because of these students face challenges in grade 5. To gather data on the above main objective various instruments have been used. Total population of this study was 41 from this population 35 student and six teachers. The researcher used descriptive survey date design method and mixed sampling techniques. These were: classroom observation, students' questionnaire and students' interviews. The data were categorized and descriptively analyzed. Teachers were observed using the traditional way of teaching reading which is dominated by reading aloud. The techniques of reading such as pre- and post- reading were not used at all. To that end, this research paper provided recommendation that could bring about a change in the practice of teaching and learning reading for comprehension in this grade level .

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

Ever since the teaching and learning of languages started, scholars in the field have been striving to come up with appropriate and effective ways of teaching and learning both first and second as well as foreign languages .English is one of these foreign languages that are widely taught in schools around the world Brewster (1992).According to this scholar, English has now an official status in sixty countries and has paramount position in twenty more countries

1.1 Background of the study

Language is a system of communication which consists of a set of sounds and written symbols which are used by people of a particular country or region for talking and writing. According to www.vocabulary.com dictionary written material with personalized learning that focuses on teaching the words you need to now.

Reading is one of the most important skills. That means, reading is one way of getting information from a written or printed source .Sometimes, reading without understanding has no meaning. Because of the fact that, reading comprehension is important to grasping information and answer the question from written text .Reading comprehension is intentional,

Active, interactive process that occurs before, during and after reading (Higgins Raskind, b2004) .This means ,in case students could not comprehend the reading those students might be low achiever than those understand the reading. Teachers are expected to facilitate for students to develop reading strategies by teaching different techniques of reading and mechanism of doing reading comprehension. Comprehension is enhanced when qualified teachers use a combination of strategies to help readers relate and connect what they are reading to their own experiences and knowledge. Developing reading activities involves more than identifying a text that is <<at the right level.>> writing a set of comprehension questions for students to answer after reading, handing out the assignment and sending students away to do it. A fully developed reading activity supports students as readers through pre reading, while reading, and post-reading activities. When we design reading tasks, we should keep in mind that complete recall of all the information in a text is an unrealistic expectation even for native speakers. Reading activities that are meant to increase communicative competence should be success oriented and build up

students' confidence in their reading ability. In order to test comprehension appropriately, these questions need to be coordinated with the purpose for reading. If the purpose is to find specific information, comprehension questions should focus on that information. If the purpose is to understand an opinion and the arguments that support it, comprehension questions should ask about those points. The scholar Sesnan (2003) refers to the importance of reading by saying <<Reading is one of the basic skills which everyone accepts is essential for survival in the modern world.>> In N' Namid (2005) says skills in reading are most important so as to enable students to understand the social and economic situation of the world and their environment.

According to scholars in every day reading situations, readers have a purpose for reading before they start. That is, they know what comprehension questions they are going to need to answer before they begin reading. To make reading assessment in the language class room more like reading outside of the classroom, therefore, allow students to review the comprehension questions before they begin to read the test passage. <<use existing, or add own, pre-reading activities and reading strategy practice as appropriate for students. Don't make students do exercises simply because they are in the book; this tear down motivation. >> Another problem with text book reading selections is that they have been adapted to a pre-determined reading level through adjustment of vocabulary, grammar, and sentence length. This makes them more immediately approachable, but it also means that they are less authentic and do not encourage students to apply the reading strategies they will need to use outside of class. Given the fact that language learning is mainly mastery of the four language skills, it calls for well-designed teaching procedures and techniques to enable students at different levels to make use of the target language appropriately. In other words, reading provides effective and adequate ways of learning language. Therefore, teaching reading, like other skills, needs carefully selected activities, methods and procedures at both higher and lower grades. More importantly, the teaching of reading at the primary level is where the base is laid and the foundation is established. to that effect, this particular study focused on investigating the practices and challenges of teaching reading comprehension skill at primary level with special focus on grade 5 students' reading comprehension skill in primary school in Hadiya Zone in Misha wereda Wasgebeta secondary school.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

The role of language in learning and teaching is not only as a tool for receiving and giving the existing information on the text but also for learning and dealing with new concepts and meanings with the text (Marland, 1977). To learn a concept means to gather data about it, to organize that data in a way its nature allows, to question the concept, and finally to be able to understand and transmit to others (Cain & Oakhill, 2007). On the other hand different studies show that Ethiopian EFL learners come across problems and difficulties in all language skills. The readers did not comprehend while the main purpose of reading is for comprehension. The case in point is the national learning assessment (NLA) which is conducted every two years by the Ministry of education (MOE) under the technical and financial support of BESO/USAID Ethiopia with the help of the National Organization for Examination (NOE) accordingly, in three of the NLA conducted in the years, 2001, 2004, and 2007, it has been found that the English

Language scores of students both at grade eight (8) and grade four (4) have been below the standards set by the government. Recently in 2015e.c in grade eight, students who scored 50% and above were 11.32% in English. The problem is teachers haven't used different techniques of teaching reading skill. Also, the learner have no awareness about how to use different strategies to answer the question in strategies of reading for comprehension however, reading is viewed as students study in the classroom and extracurricular environment (Grade and Stoller 2002) although educators now know a great deal about the significance of providing explicit instruction in reading comprehension and how to teach various comprehension strategies, little is known about how English language teachers currently teach reading for comprehension generally speaking a systematic reader uses strategies, such as previewing a text, scanning, skimming, predicting the upcoming information, summarizing, guessing the meaning of new words, generating questions about the text, recognizing text organization, etc (Grade Stoller, 2001)

Reading has different techniques and methods that both teachers and students use to guess new words, references and comprehension question before reading, while reading and post reading. Teachers may have no awareness to use teaching of reading for comprehension. In grade five students face the challenges of understanding what they read because the teachers can't give the direction before they start to teach in pre reading activities. Also in the while reading activities students face to participate on practice in activities what they read unless teachers encourage the

students comprehend about passage they read. At last, students were frustrated in post activities answering the question what they read In this grade level students will have no idea how answer reading comprehension question because there is no comprehension question in lower grade from one up to four this worse the challenge face in reading comprehension question because there is no comprehension question in lower grade from one up to four. This worse the challenges face in reading comprehension.

1.3 objectives of the study

1.3.1 General objectives

The general objectives of this study was to investigate the practises and challenges of teaching reading comprehension skills at primary level with particular focus on grade 5 students in misha wereda.

1.3.2 Specific objectives

The specific objectives of these studies are to:

- find out the practice of teaching and learning reading skill for comprehension.
- identify the difficulties teacher face in teaching reading comprehension skills in grade 5.
- identify the challenges students face in learning reading comprehension skill in grade 5.

1.3.3 Questions of this research

- What are the practice of teachers and students in teaching reading skills for comprehension?
- What difficulties do teachers face in learning reading comprehension skills in grade 5?
- What challenges do student of grade 5 faces in learning to read for comprehension?

1.3.4 Significance of the study

The study is significant in clearly showing the practice of teaching and learning reading in English at grade (5) first cycle primary levels. The beneficiaries of this study were students, teachers and other researcher on this area. First, for the students in grade five who have low reading ability so that if they perform badly the reasons for their low performance investigated and solutions required. Second, for teachers who have taught English in lower grade in primary

school? More importantly, the study serves as a stepping stone for future researcher's interest in the study of teaching reading English in primary levels.

1.5. Delimitations of the study

This study was limited to first cycle primary school in Hadiya Zone in Misha Woreda. The target grade level was grade 5 which is the terminal grade for first cycle primary school. Because of time constraint, it was difficult to use more sample schools. Two sections will be randomly selected from the school and continuous observations were carried out during the teaching practice of the English reading lesson and a reading comprehension for students. The researcher purpose fully selected the school because of low standard score in grade 8 Ministry in English subject.

1.6 Limitation of the study

It is important to clearly note major limited factors which centrally affected the over all of the study. The major limitation for the study was shortage of available materials and time. Also in teachers side for the period of observation the tried to change style of teaching.in addition to this, in depth interviews conducted for the study were limited to the students side only because they haven't adequate information about practice of teaching reading comprehension skill.

1.8. Organization of the paper

This study is organized into five chapters. The first chapter includes background of the study, statement of the problem, objectives, research questions, significance and delimitation of the study. The second chapter focuses on review of related literature and conceptual frameworks. The chapter focuses mainly on overview of review of related literature, and conceptual and theoretical frameworks of the study. The third chapter emphasizes on the methodology and design of the study. Here, description of the study area, target population, methodology in the study, sampling technique as well as methods of data collection and data analyze were emphasized. The fourth chapter emphasizes on the data presentation, analysis and interpretation. The fifth chapter focused on the conclusions and recommendations of the study.

CHAPTER TWO

2. Review of the Related Literature

This chapter addresses review of the related literature to each of research areas, in turn. Reviewing current literature and research related to the teaching of reading comprehension skills provided with valuable information. The researcher was able to use this information to design research. The researcher used concepts find to be successful in other educator's work and select appropriate reading strategies to teach. It helped the theoretical aspects about definition, importance, process, approach and strategies of reading in English for comprehension, causes of low efficiency reading comprehension, challenges of teaching of reading for comprehension skill.

2.1. Definition of Reading

Scholars define reading in various ways and all the definitions seem to have similar concepts. For instance, Grellet (1981) defines reading as “a process of extracting and understanding the required information from a text.” He further notes that it is an active skill where the guessing, predicting and checking as well as questioning oneself are entailed. According to this definition reading begins as early as the first day of identifying a single letter. Similarly, Williams (1984) states reading as “a process of de-coding symbols: looking at words and understanding what has been written.” Both the definitions stated above indicate that reading begins at the primary level where children to acquaint themselves with letters and combination of letters to form words.

With regard to this level of reading, Davis (1955) states reading as a mental process in which a reader endeavors to interact with the message in a text. Wallace (2003) explicitly deals with the definition of reading as reacting to a written text by which the reader communicates with understanding of the specific and general messages. For Harmer (1983) reading involves both the eyes and the brain where the eyes receive message and the brain performs the interpretation of messages received. According to what is discussed by all the scholars mention above, the practice of reading is not a passive activity even at the primary level since the reader interprets analyses and interacts with the message in the text even though the level of interpretation varies from grade to grade level.

These scholars further elaborate that if someone reads the written text aloud without understanding what it means he or she is not reading. Widdowson (1979) in Hedge (2000) explains reading as a dialogue going on between the reader and the text or between the reader and the author. According to all the definitions stated above, reading is an active process where the child deals with the written material in guessing and predicting in relation to his/her prior knowledge. Reading calls for analyzing and interpreting the message which is beyond mere deciphering.

2.2 The importance of reading

Reading is important skill to develop our mental capacity of getting information from reading materials. According to Brewster and Gail (1992) the reason for the decision of government in many countries and private schools all over the world to introduce English at primary level is the pedagogical belief that young children learn languages better at an early age. In other words, the early years are the best years for language acquisition and learning. In general scholars agree that reading is not only the most important language skill that enables learners to grasp ideas, facts, concepts and thoughts but also it is a skill that plays a role in developing other language skills.

Marie Clay (1991) defined reading, “as a message-getting, problem-solving activity which increases in power and flexibility the more it is practiced” (p.6). Based on the above scholar students in elementary school, it is important that students enhance the skill of reading ability. Louise Rosenblatt’s (1993) theory also described reading as an interactive process. She used the terms aesthetic and non-aesthetic reading. Aesthetic reading refers to the act of reading for enjoyment.

It is important to foster reading for pleasure in elementary school-aged children because it can promote a life-long habit of reading. “Another major goal of literacy instruction is to instill in students an appreciation of the value of reading” (Ontario Ministry of Education, 2006, p. 5) Academic reading is also important, particularly for junior-aged readers who must read for knowledge in the content areas, such as science and social studies. It occurs when the student is reading for a specific purpose; it is employed, for example, when reading non-fiction materials or analyzing a text in English class. “The distinction between aesthetic and no aesthetic reading then derives ultimately from what the reader does, the stance he adopts and the activities he

carries out in the relation to the text” (Rosenblatt, 1994, p.27). Extracting relevant information from a variety of text forms and formats is essential for academic and personal success.

The fact that education cannot be offered without developing the reading ability of children makes this skill the most crucial one. According to Nuttall (1996) the very reason to learn foreign language is to get better jobs, access to literature etc. and reading ability is necessary for these activities. Highlighting the significance of reading at the primary level N’ Namid (2005: 7) says, “At primary level all teachers must be teachers of reading.” Thus, if reading is as important as this, it needs to be practice as early as possible in the primary level in order to develop successful reading ability gradually at the higher levels.

2.3. The Reading Process

There are many theories about how students learn to read. “Reading is a thinking process, is part of everything that happens to you as a person and comprehending a text is intimately related to your life” (Fountas & Pinnell, 2006, p. 7). This definition reinforces Rosenblatt’s theory that reading comprehension requires the reader to interact with the text. The Ministry of Education for Ontario (2004) used a similar definition of the reading process in its latest publications: “Reading in the junior grades is an interactive, problem-solving process, with the primary purpose of making meaning” (p.61). Teaching on the six reading strategies outlined in *Classrooms that Work* (Cunningham & Allington, 2007), using teaching methods suggested in *A Guide to Effective Literacy Instruction* (Ontario Ministry of Education, 2004). Other documents, like *Education for All* (Ontario Ministry of Education, 2005), provided additional practical suggestions for teaching and developing these key reading strategies in all students.

2.4. The Purpose of reading

The purpose of reading and the balance between skills and language affect the teaching of reading in English for Specific Purposes. Two contributions to the approach to reading in English for Specific Purposes (ESP) are of prime importance. One of them is the shift from text as a linguistic object to text as a vehicle of information. The key principles for ESP learners are that extracting information accurately and quickly is more significant than language details; that understanding the macrostructure comes before language study; and that application of the information in the text is extremely important. The reader first processes the language and then links the ideas to prior knowledge. The second significant contribution to teaching reading on

English for specific purpose courses is the recognition that good reading requires language and skills.

According to less successful foreign language learners had a fragmented approach to text, while successful learners went for overall meaning, guessing or skipping language and information. As referred in several hypotheses were tested about the role of language and skills, showing that poor reading in a foreign language is due in part to poor reading in L1, together with an inadequate knowledge of the foreign language. The learners need to reach a threshold level of L2 before they are able to transfer any L1 skills to their L2 reading tasks.

The reading component of English for specific purpose course thus requires a balance between skills and language development. Some of the crucial skills to be learnt or transferred into the new language are: selecting what is relevant for the current purpose; using all the features of the text such as headings, layout; skimming for content and meaning; scanning for specifics; identifying organizational patterns; understanding relations within a sentence and between sentences; using cohesive and discourse markers; predicting, inferring and guessing; identifying main ideas, supporting ideas and examples; processing and evaluating the information during reading; transferring or using the information while or after reading.

Reading purpose is a central concern of English for Specific Purposes, and purpose resides in the language learner's relationship to the learning task. The purpose is assumed to be comprehension of the message. Comprehension in instructional settings is translated into some product, such as completion of comprehension questions, a written summary, or an oral report. Many research findings suggest that one of the best ways to help students increase their ability in other language skills is through giving them appropriate practice in reading. Reading enhances language proficiency of students at all levels. On this point McDonough and Shaw, (1993: 89) note the following “As a skill reading is clearly one of the most important; in fact in many instances around the world we may argue that reading is the most important foreign language skill.”

2.5. Reading Strategies

Students need to use many complex reading strategies to develop into proficient readers in the junior grades. Farstrup(2006) indicated that many students who were good readers in the primary grades will nonetheless struggle to read in the junior grades if they don't learn the comprehension skills to deal with the more complex text formats, text features and genres they

experience. To improve reading comprehension, students must learn to apply a variety of reading strategies. Cunningham and Allington (2007) summarized six strategies, based on Duke and Pearson's (2002) research.

The following subsections describe each of Duke and Pearson's six strategies—prediction, think-aloud, using text structure, using visual cues, summarization, and answering and questioning. There is evidence to suggest that these skills are important and necessary reading comprehension skills (Duke & Pearson, 2002). Fountas and Pinnell describe the same reading strategies in their 2006 publication.

A. Prediction

Readers need to ask questions about what they are about to read, and to relate what they read to their prior knowledge. Using prediction skills, such as looking at the illustrated cover or discussing the title of a work, can help readers to make a link to related works. This is important, as prior knowledge helps readers to make sense of new readings. By activating prior knowledge, students can make connections about the new information as they read it. This also helps readers to organize the content into a logical framework for learning.

B. Think-aloud

Think-aloud help readers to understand the thought processes of a competent reader. Proficient readers think aloud as they read to show how they make meaning of a text. For example, a teacher might say, "I think the author wanted me to see a picture in my mind when I read that paragraph." This is an excellent way to teach students to make inferences as they read. Thinking about how one reads is an example of using Meta cognition skills to improve one's learning. Think-aloud provides examples of an effective reader using meta cognition strategies to solve problems. It also helps the struggling reader see that proficient readers are actively engaged in the text and are not simply reading the words.

C. Using text structure

Most readers understand the components of fiction better than the elements of a non-fictional text only because they have more experience reading fictional texts (Cunningham & Allington, 2007, p.126). Readers must be familiar with a variety of text forms and features to aid their comprehension of that genre of text. Understanding the components of a narrative form provides

the framework for global understanding. For example, a student knows what to expect when reading a fairytale. There will be a clash between good and evil, and the plot will have a happy conclusion. Providing students with opportunities to work with adventures, mysteries, science fiction and other genres help readers recognize the components of various genres, which aids in comprehension.

Students must also know how the features of a variety of text forms can be utilized to improve their understanding of the material. For example, students who can effectively use the index and glossary of a non-fiction text will complete a more thorough research project; students who know how to notice headings and skim read for pertinent information, are better able to focus on specific questions. Being familiar with the structure of a text helps the readers to organize the information and improves their level of comprehension.

D. Using visual cues

Using a visual to facilitate understanding is another reading strategy that improves the reader's understanding of a text. Graphic organizers such as a Venn diagram (used for comparing and contrasting) or story webs (where ideas are placed in boxes or bubbles), all help a reader to "see" what he/she has learned.

It helps a reader to relate to the text and improve comprehension levels. Visualization cues may also be used to self-monitor for understanding. For example, a fluent reader should see a "movie" running through his or her mind when reading. If the movie or mind pictures stop, then the text is too difficult or the reader is not engaged. Seeing an image when reading is a useful self-check for readers to gauge the speed with which they read. Fluent readers are able to visualize as they read. Fluency and comprehension are positively correlated (Fountas & Pinnell, 2006, p 62).

E. Summarization

The capacity to repeat the important points of a text in a logical sequence and hold these details in memory is an important comprehension strategy called summarization. Often these key points are needed later in the text to make sense of what is read. For example, a small but important detail may help a reader to solve the mystery in the novel (Fountas & Pinnell, 2006, p. 48). Being able to summarize information effectively is an invaluable skill for readers of all ages.

F. Questioning

Good readers ask questions about what they read, as they self-monitor for understanding. They ask questions of themselves, of their peers and of their teachers. Pausing to ask questions is part of the reading process. The ability to make inferences about what one reads requires higher order thinking skills.

Asking questions that start with how or why engage the reader. By asking questions of the text, a reader is actively responding with the material to incorporate the new material into his or her schema. Students in the junior grades must be able to use and apply these reading strategies across a variety of texts to be proficient. Successful readers employ all six of these reading strategies to comprehend fully the world around them. We need to provide the evidence that teacher-librarians make a difference (Todd, 2003). Recently, Judi Moreillon reported that teacher-librarians can be co-teachers of reading strategies. In her work, she outlined how reading strategies are closely related to the research skills we teach in the library (Moreillon, 2008). Her case studies demonstrated how effective team teaching in literacy improved the students' achievement and also captured classroom teachers' and the administrator's attention. I believe that a successful teacher-librarian is an agent of change. This "means having the language and knowledge to move beyond the library and into the wider school community.

It requires familiarity with current research on teaching and learning to effectively facilitate the change process" (Harada & Hughes-Hassell, 2007, p.12). As an agent of change I must keep current with new ways to teach effectively and encourage others to improve their literacy development. Reading is an interactive problem-solving process to make meaning of the text. Balanced literacy is an effective approach to literacy development involving a gradual transfer of responsibility from the teacher to the student using modeling, sharing, and guided and independent activities. The six reading strategies—prediction, think-alouds, using text structure, using visual cues, summarization, and answering and questioning—identified by Cunningham and Allington (2007) provide readers with skills to improve comprehension.

2.6. Phases in Teaching and Learning Reading

According to different scholars, there are three main stages in teaching reading: pre-reading, while reading and post reading (Abot and Wingrade, 1981; Thompson, 2001; Williams, 1984; Nuttall, 1986).

2.6.1. The Pre-reading phase

The objective of this stage is to arouse the interest of the readers and to activate their prior knowledge on the topic. In this stage students will be made to think and discuss the topic to be read so that their background knowledge of the message in the text can be recalled.

According to Thompson (2001), the possible activities of this stage could be predicting the of the story by simply looking at the title or the pictures if a picture is offered with in the text.

The major objectives of this phase according to Williams (1984) are the following:

- To introduce and arouse interest in the topic
- To motivate learners by giving a reason for reading
- To provide some language preparation for the text

This stage as discussed above is a stage where prior knowledge of the students *visa-visa* the text they are reading is made to be activated. It is a stage where what is called schemata knowledge could be made use of.

One of the major responses to increasing insights about the role of schematic knowledge in reading has been the focus in current reading methodology on a pre-reading stage ...

(Hedge 2000:192) Therefore, pre-reading is very important to carry out in every reading lesson.

2.6.2. The While-Reading phase

The while- reading stage is a stage in which students are made to read silently in order to answer questions already set. It is an intensive reading practice where they try to grasp main points and answer questions. During this stage activities that could be carried out for the primary level children as mentioned by in Hedge (2000) can be the following:

Read and match: This is an activity in which information given in a written language is matched with pictorial representations. These kinds of activities can be done at all grade levels with reasonable complexity.

Read and label: In this activity children first read the text and then label a diagram or a chart accordingly. The reading text should contain detailed information so that children will be clear in the labeling procedure.

Read and complete: in this type of activity a part of a diagram or map is provided so that children would complete the other part based on the information given in the reading text.

Read and draw: As it can be guessed from the name of the activity, this is an activity in which information in a reading text can be transferred into pictorial form.

These are what are called information transfer activities in reading lesson .I feel and believe that these activities are very important and appropriate in the teaching and learning of reading in primary grade levels.

2.6.3. The Post - reading Phase

In the post reading stage students will be asked whether they have understood the general information of the text in relation to their prior knowledge. In the post reading stage there are three levels of comprehension questions. These are:

- Questions for exact meaning
- Questions for inferred meanings
- Questions related to the students' own experience

This stage can be carried out by arranging small group discussion that could be followed by whole class discussion (Williams 1984). It can also serve as a stage in which the teacher checks whether children have understood the text or not Thompson (2001). There are levels of questions for this stage of reading for comprehension activities according to the above writer:

Questions for exact meanings: These are the easiest, since answers could be guessed from the passage.

Questions for inferred meaning: This is an activity that entails thinking about the text and understanding the relations between ideas.

Questions related to the students' own experience: Post reading activities should always involve this kind of questions where children relate what they read with their own experience or environment. More importantly in primary grades the following activities are worth carrying out:

- A word puzzle based on the passage;
- A discussion about the main topic of the passage; and
- A dramatization of the story. Thompson (2001)

In general, throughout the three phases during reading practices two major areas of knowledge play a decisive role. These are what are called schematic knowledge and language knowledge. Schematic knowledge refers to the prior knowledge the children. It could be what they have already known about their environment locally or the knowledge they have about the world as a whole. Prior knowledge can be gained from both informal sources such as family and the environment as well as from previous reading and education. “Comprehension is the use of prior knowledge to create new knowledge” Adams and Bruce (1982:25). Thus, readers should bring their prior knowledge to the text they read and writers of texts should consider students’ prior knowledge in preparing reading texts.

2.7. Approaches of teaching reading skill

2.7.1 Bottom-up Model

A bottom-up reading model is a reading model that emphasizes the written or printed text, it says that reading is driven by a process that results in meaning (or, in other words, reading is driven by text) and that reading proceeds from part to whole. To elaborate, Gough (1972) proposes a phonics-based or bottom-up model of the reading process which portrays processing in reading as proceeding in serial fashion, from letter to sound, to words, to meaning, in the progression. Stated in Gough's terms the reading system, from a bottom-up perspective, functions in sequences as follows.

First, the graphitic information enters through the visual system and is transformed at the first level from a letter character to a sound, that is, from a graphitic representation to a phonemic representation. Second, the phonemic representation is converted; at level two, into a word. The meaning units or words then pass on to the third level and meaning is assimilated into the knowledge system. Input is thus transformed from low-level sensory information to meaning through a series of successively higher-level encodings, with information flow that is entirely bottom-up, no higher level processing having influence on any lower level processing. This process is also referred to as data-driven. However, some researchers (e.g. Rumelhart, 1977) have already noticed the weaknesses of the bottom-up model in which processing is seen as proceeding only in one direction, so this implies that no higher level information ever modifies or changes lower level analysis. In some cases, readers are able to identify a word correctly only by employing higher level semantic and syntactic processing.

2.7.2 Top-down Model

A top-down reading model is a reading approach that emphasizes what the reader brings to the text, it contends that reading is driven by meaning and proceeds from whole to part. It is also known as concept-driven model. To these theorists (e.g. Goodman, 1967; Smith, 1971), efficient reading doesn't result from the precise perception and identification of all the elements in a word, but from skills in selecting the fewest, most productive cues necessary. They contend that readers have a prior sense of what could be meaningful in the text, based upon their previous experiences and their knowledge about language.

Readers are not, in their view, confined only to one source of information—the letters before their eyes, but have at their disposal two other important kinds of information which are available at the same time: semantic cues (meaning), and syntactic cues (grammatical or sentence sense). Thus, what readers bring to the text separately in terms of both their prior knowledge of the topic and their knowledge about the language assists them in predicting what the upcoming words will be. Readers sample the print, assign a tentative hypothesis about the identity of the upcoming word and use meaning to confirm their prediction. If meaning is constructed, readers resample the text and form a new hypothesis. Thus, readers need to only briefly sample the marks on the page in order to confirm word identity.

In this model it is evident that the flow of information proceeds from the top downward so that the process of word identification is dependent upon meaning first. Thus the higher level processes embodied in past experiences and the reader's knowledge of the language pattern interact with and direct the flow of information, just as listeners may anticipate what the upcoming words of speakers might be. This view identifies reading as a kind of “psycholinguistic guessing game”(Goodman, 1967).

The top-down model centers upon the assumption that good readers bypass the letter sound correspondence when they read because they read so quickly. That is, because good readers read at a faster speed, they do not depend upon the phonemic code. However, this view is also challenged. Recent evidence presented by Stanovich (1980) discredits this assumption. A lot of research suggests that instead of depending on meaning only, good readers may well markedly attend to graphic information, especially when they are uncertain about a word. Contrary to the view of the top-down theorists, good readers do rely on graphic information, which may be more

efficient than endeavoring to predict words based only upon context and language structure. Moreover, the fact that good readers make better use of contextual clues than poor readers is not evidence that they actually do so in reading. Good readers use context only when orthographic and phonemic cues are minimal. Despite the view of top-down theorists then, it would appear that even as readers become more accomplished they still employ data-driven strategies to unlock words.

2.8. Reading Comprehension

Reading is not merely a process of exact identification of letters, words, and ultimately sentences leading to comprehension built from letter to word to phrase to sentence. Readers make use of their existing background knowledge (schemata) to make predictions about what is coming next in the text and about how some new, unfamiliar piece of information relates to what is already known. It is clear that basic decoding processes are important for comprehension and are used by readers in interaction with the more complex processes of meaning generation. However, it is equally clear that readers engage in reading in order to gain information.

Reading comprehension requires motivation, mental frameworks for holding ideas, concentration and good study techniques. Broaden your background knowledge by reading newspapers, magazines and books. Become interested in world events. Good writers construct paragraphs that have a beginning, middle and end. Often, the first sentence will give an overview that helps provide a framework for adding details. Also, look for transitional words, phrases or paragraphs that change the topic. Does the author use cause and effect reasoning, hypothesis, model building, induction or deduction, systems thinking? Really smart readers try to anticipate the author and predict future ideas and questions. If you're right, this reinforces your understanding. If you're wrong, you make adjustments quicker. Is the material organized chronologically, serially, logically, functionally, spatially or hierarchical? Preview material, ask questions, and discuss ideas with classmates. The stronger your have interest the greater your comprehension. Study pictures, graphs and headings. Read the first and last paragraph in a chapter, or the first sentence in each section.

2.9. Challenges of reading comprehension

The challenges that face in both student learning and teacher teaching reading are not similar. But students have no idea how overcome the problem unless the teacher shows the direction how

to read. On other hand the teachers may have no awareness on how to teach in modern approaches of teaching. Nation (2004) reviews what is known about reading comprehension difficulties in children and the results show that not all children who have comprehension difficulties have morbid in basic decoding. In a more recent study, Hartney (2011) investigated reading difficulties in English as a second language of grade 5 learners in one primary school in the Khomas education region of Namibia.

Hartney used mixed-methods approach in the case study which reveals that many children lack proper reading skills and they cannot read properly. Raihan and Nezami (2012) conducted a study on comprehension strategies and general problems in reading faced by Arab EFL learners at Najran University in Saudi Arabia. The study aimed to find the reasons behind the low level performance of university students in reading comprehension. A survey was conducted through the teachers' questionnaire, and students were observed during several reading sessions. The results show that students face spelling and pronunciation problems to a great extent.

Even though one may have reading difficulties in his or her mother tongue, the problems get worse when reading is applied to a second language, as students might be lagging behind in a number of reading components, including accuracy, comprehension, and speed. Lagging behind is a cognitive difficulty associated with the process of reading in another language (Alsamadani, 2008). In other words, these difficulties are more likely to be associated with the nature of the language pregame linguistic or even socio cultural aspects. Most researchers agree that reading comprehension is not simply recognizing individual words, or even understanding each individual word as our eyes pass over it. All models of comprehension recognize the need for readers to build up a mental representation of text, a process that requires integration across a range of sources of information, from lexical features to knowledge concerning events in the world (e.g., Garnham, 2001; Gernsbacher, 1990; Kintsch,1998). For this reason, the Simple View of Reading, which could be seen as the first endeavor to describe the “balanced literacy”, suggests that reading comprehension results from developing skills in the areas of decoding and linguistic comprehension (Kirby & Savage, 2008).

2.10. The role of the teacher

The teacher's ability to teach reading comprehension skill plays a decisive role in student's acquisition of language skills and ultimately for the successes of the learners. The role of the

teacher is to be responsive to the varied needs of each child (N’Namida, 2005). To this effect, the teacher has to present appropriate topics and activities according to the level of the students involved. Ruddel and Unrau: (1997) cited in N’Namida (2005:) According to the above scholars, children are more interested to read about what they know instead of unknown events. McDonough and Shaw (1993) also insist on the use of authentic materials as opposed to traditional types of text used in most cases.

Thus, the teacher should bear in mind whether or not the reading text interests the children they teach. Similarly in Nuttall (1996) the following roles and responsibilities of the teacher in teaching a reading lesson are stated:

- Language teachers have to enjoy and value reading themselves by showing that they read a lot.
- They need to help students enjoy and value reading by offering them attractive texts.
- Teachers should let students understand what reading involves and how language conveys meaning and how texts are put together.
- They should identify what skills students lack and work out ways to develop these skills.
- They should choose suitable texts on the basis of students’ educational level and age.
- They should choose and devise effective tasks and practices.
- They should make sure that every student work productively by encouraging students promotes text focused discussion and enable them interpreted the text themselves.

In general, review of the related literature presented in this paper began by defining reading which is followed by the importance of reading. Then the reading process was discussed thoroughly. Next, reading strategies and the phases in teaching and learning reading were explained. The reading purpose, reading comprehension, challenges of teaching reading comprehension skills and he roles of teachers in the teaching of reading have also been presented in detail. In all the discussions an attempt has been made to relate it with reading comprehension practices and challenges at primary level.

CHAPTER THREE

3. Research and Method

This chapter looked at mainly the description of the methodologies in the research tools that the researcher used during research data collection. The objective of the study was to investigate the practices and challenge of teaching reading comprehension skills in grade five. To reveal the situation, questionnaire, interview and observation were used within the framework of the available methods. A detail description was provided on the research design, how the data collection instruments were developed and presented along the study location, selection of sites and sample population, data collection and data analyses included.

3.1. Research Design

In order to achieve the objectives and answer the research questions, the following methodological procedures were applied for the research. As Newma et al., (2003) quoted in On wuegbuzie and Leech, 2004) argued that mixed methods study is used to address much more comprehensive research purposes than do quantitative or qualitative research alone. The researcher used descriptive survey research design to gather information about the practices and challenges of teaching reading comprehension skills. As Creswell (2003) states, the concurrent triangulation approach is probably the most familiar of the mixed methods available and then it is selected as a model when a researcher uses two different methods in an attempt to confirm cross-validated findings within a single study.

This model generally uses separate quantitative and qualitative methods as a means to balance the weakness natural within one method with the strength of the other method. The researcher attempted to triangulate different data sources by examining the evidences from the sources and using them to build a coherent justification for themes. Quantitative method of data design was used for questionnaire of student's responses in number and in percentage while qualitative was used for interview during students and teachers and observation took place in classroom in actual class activities on teacher side.

3.2. Site of the study

The main study has been conducted in primary school in Hadiya Zone in Semien Wasgebeta Primary School which is located to the northern part of the Hossana town. This school is selected because there are teachers with short years of experience in these school and material provision and physical set up of the school have been conducive to the teaching and learning process. Moreover, the researcher lives in this area.

3.2. Subjects of the study

The subjects of the study were both students and teachers of grade 5. The total population was 35 student and 6 teachers. Accordingly, two sections in school were selected randomly and were observed for three days. Teachers of English in grade 5 were not only to observation but also to participate in interview. Individual interviews were carried out for both teachers and students. In fact, the number of subjects was different according to different instruments of data gathering.

3.3. Sample Size and Sampling Technique and Procedure

The sampling technique which the researcher carried out is stratified purposive sampling technique. As Kemper et al.,(2003) stated, this method is one of the basic techniques for the mixed sampling method. The stratified nature of this sampling procedure is the characteristic of probability sampling whereas the small number of cases typically generated through the characteristic of purposive sampling (Teddlie & Fen, 2007). The purposive random sampling technique involves selecting a random sample of small number of units from a larger population.

Study was carried out by selecting two primary sections at Samein Wasgebeta School from Misha Wereda in Hadiya zone. This was due to the researcher lives in misha wereda. The total participant of this study was 35 students. “In stratified sampling technique, the technique frame can be divided into sub-sections comprising groups that are relatively homogenous with respect to one or more characteristics and a random sample from each stratum are selected” (J.Onwuegbuzie, & T. Collins, 2007). The researcher divided the group of people into section and selected randomly a small number of people to study intensively within each section.

The researcher considered the teacher’s status informants’ experience, education level, job position, age, and sex these contribute to the quality of the work. The participants of the study were selected through the proportional sampling method to attain its representativeness. As Gay

(1987:101) suggests, 10% of large populations and 20% of small populations is recommended to be taken in a study. Accordingly, 10% (35) research participants were selected from a total 350 students from four sections by using stratified sampling method. Moreover, two department head selected for interview and four students selected from each class, a total 6 participants were selected for interview in purposive sampling technique. Also two teachers selected for continues observation from each section.

3.4. Data Gathering Tools

3.4.1 Questionnaires

The questionnaires prepared for students to gather information about challenges that face during learning reading comprehension in terminal grade level grade 5. In this grade level students have no enough vocabulary to write in English and have difficult in reading. As a result, questionnaires for students were developed in Hadiyisa language because the students had difficult in understanding the questions presented in English language. Questionnaires were conducted before the main study. The survey and descriptive questionnaires were tools to collect quantitative data from the sample population.

The questionnaires provide information about challenges of learning reading comprehension skills. The questionnaires included both close-ended and open-ended questions. Both close-ended and open-ended questionnaires were distributed for (35) respondents. During the time of data collection, the researcher allocated two school coordinators. The employment of school coordinators were based on their understanding of the issues and fluency of the local languages Hadiyasa as well as translation skill of English version to the local languages. They were trained in various elements of the questionnaires, specific research issues and objectives of the study. The researcher went with school coordinating assistance in order to organize and cross check their works as well as maintain the quality of data collected.

3.4.2. Interview

Interview was one of the second tools to gather information about the study. Based on the accepted procedure, the researcher used in-depth interview. Mytton (1999:128) stated, in most cases, the term “in-depth interview” is used as substitute for “individual interviews”. The word “in-depth” is added to deliberately imply that the researcher got the benefit of using this

approach, which is a means of creating a better understanding on the issue under investigation. The researcher carried out in-depth interview in a very suitable setting in order to allow informants feel free and assume that they were in the natural course of interaction rather than serious jobs. The researcher interviewed two department heads of the school and four students from each section. As a reason, department heads have information about the practices of teaching reading comprehension and challenges of face to teach reading comprehension skill. Students have information how face the challenges in learning reading comprehension skill.

3.4.3 Observation

Classroom observation was one of the first major tools for this study in practice of activities in different phases of reading comprehension skill. As a result, check list was used to observe the teaching learning practices in the reading comprehension lessons. For this reason, grade 5 class has been selected and two teachers were observed three time they in while they were teaching reading comprehension skill. The researcher observed the actual class room activities that the teacher did in class room. It was designed based on interest of both the class teachers and observer. According to scholars such as (Harmer, 2003; Nuttall, 1996; Thompson, 2001; Williams, 1984) the practice of teaching and learning reading in classroom includes three phases of activities. These are pre reading phase, the while reading phase and the post reading phase.

Thus, continuous observations were conducted mainly to check whether or not these phases were carried out and appropriately managed during practice actually in the classroom. Before entering into the class the observer used commonly accepted techniques of observation. That means, the observer and the teacher decide on time observation, place of observer sit in class and about the participation of the activities with two teachers from each section,

3.7. Procedures of Data collection and method of Analysis

As commonly known, the process of data collection is not an end by itself and thus, the concluding activities are data presentation, analysis and interpretation. The data analyzed and interpreted the concepts of a particular theoretical orientation and empirical evidences. The quantitative data from the questionnaires were analyzed by using SPSS software mainly using descriptive statistical method. On the other hand, the qualitative data from observation and In-depth interviews were analyzed by using description as well as narration in order to triangulate its validity and reliability with the quantitative data.

CHAPTER FOUR

4. presentations and Analysis of Data

This chapter deals with the presentation and analysis as well as interpretation of the data gathered from the sample school through various instruments. As mentioned at the opening of this paper, the objective of this study was: to investigate the practices and challenges of teaching reading comprehension in grade five; to see what the reading ability for comprehension of grade five students is like and if they perform badly, to identify the reasons for grade five students poor achievement in reading comprehension. To this end, a descriptive study was employed where study is qualitative and quantitative. The data collected through the above indicated instruments are presented below, some with tables and others in a narrative form.

4.1. Classroom Observation

To investigate the practice and challenge of teaching reading comprehension in grade five, one of the instruments was classroom observation. Thus, continuous observations were made in the two selected sections where the model point of the observation started from whether the teachers started their reading lesson by providing pre-reading activities, while-reading activities and post-reading activities then proceeded to the following activities for comprehension. To that end, items 1-6 refer to the pre-reading phase in the reading practice for comprehension. Likewise items 7-12 were on while reading and post reading phases. Below are statements of reading lesson practices that refer to the pre, while and post-reading activities with “Yes”, and “No” columns indicating data relating to the three observation days in both sections.

Table 1: Teachers’ performance in the pre, while and post -reading phase

No	Items on reading Practices	The teacher in Semien Wasgebeta primary school teacher A.						The teacher in Semeien Wasgebeta primary school teacher B.					
		Day one		Day two		Day three		Day one		Day two		Day three	
		Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
1	The teacher gave brief introduction about the reading text		✓		✓		✓	X		X			✓
2	Students were made to discuss topic before they read text	X			✓		✓	X		X			✓
3	The teacher encouraged the students to relate the topic with their experience	X		x			✓		✓		✓	X	
4	The teacher gave clear instruction to the students		✓		✓			X			✓		✓
5	Difficult words in the text were sorted out and explained		✓		✓		✓	X			✓		✓
6	Students were asked to predict what the reading passage		✓		✓		✓		✓		✓		✓
7	The questions in while reading were related to passage	X		X		X			✓		✓		✓
8	I read the passage my self to the students before they read	X			✓		✓	X		X			✓
9	I allow them answer questions as they read the text		✓		✓		✓		✓	X			✓
10	Questions are designed for comprehension		✓		✓		✓		✓		✓		✓
11	Teachers gave feedback and correction	X			✓		✓		✓	X			✓
12	The teachers integrate reading with other skills of English		✓		✓		✓		✓		✓		✓

What is obviously seen in the check list above is that both section teachers have different talents in different ways of teaching reading comprehension in pre, while and post reading phase activities at all to draw the attention of students towards the text they were going to read. In other

words students were not made to activate their prior knowledge so as to gain new information. Many writers tell us that the pre-reading activities are significant for the actual reading practices. Harmer (2003:70) says “Teachers should give students hints so that they can predict what is coming too” However, both teachers were unsuccessful to do so in almost some the pre, while and post reading items the two teachers in the two schools performed differently in the while reading phase. Accordingly, the performances and procedures of the two teachers were discussed below.

First observation day- the teachers in Semein wasgebeta primary school

The teacher started his class by greeting the students and asking the date. He then wrote the page number of the text and the topic instruction that says “Read and Do” and ordered a student to read aloud. This is actually a while reading activity. The pre reading phase was skipped. He then let many students read aloud turn by turn and he also read himself in another day. In this case, the eighth item in the check list that reads as: I read the passage myself to the students before they read, has been accomplished partially. According to Williams (1984) a teacher that starts a lesson by simply telling students to open their books and let them start reading, is unlikely to motivate his/her students. As they read students were corrected on the spot for wrong pronunciation and other mistakes they made. More than half of the students read the same text turn by turn.

They were then made to read the questions aloud and answer them in the same manner. He frequently used to give corrections and asked questions while the students were reading aloud. He also praised students on all occasions even when they did not read appropriately. As many as more than half of the class was asked to read one by one the same paragraph. After half of the period had gone, they were made to answer questions by reading. A student was allowed to read the question and another was made to answer the same question. If the student made an error, the whole class was asked the question “Is he/she right?” at which students said “No” in chorus. Here also item number nine that reads as: I let them answer questions as they read the text, has not been observed since they were made to answer questions after they had completed reading aloud. According to Thompson (2001) while reading is done silently and answers for questions are done at the time of reading. This was what the Wasgebeta primary school teacher was practicing to teach reading throughout the three days when he was observed. However the

teachers in Semein Wasgebeta primary school used different methods in the three different periods.

First observation day- The teacher in Semein Wasgebeta primary school

The teacher in Semein Wasgebeta primary School section one as observed on the first day started by writing the topic on the black board in the same way like section two teacher. However, she behaved differently from the section two I teacher in such a way that she read the passage herself before she let students to do so.

After she had finished reading she gave the students the chance of reading aloud one by one. After many of them got the turn, the teacher wrote some of the vocabulary on the black board and explained the meaning with the aid of a picture. The picture was shown to help them give the meaning of the vocabulary item in Haddiyisa. The exercises were discussed orally and the class was over after a while. No written exercise was carried out. As could be observed from what the teachers in both sections performed, it seems that the practice adopted by the second teacher is far better than the first one regarding the while reading stage in spite of its drawbacks. In fact the appropriateness of the while reading activities was also questionable.

Second and Third observation day –The teacher in Wasgebeta primary school

The teacher in Wasgebeta primary school section two used the same procedure in all the three days. He started his class by greeting students and asking the date. He then wrote the topic of the skill to be practiced on the black board i.e. 'Read and Do'. Then he let individual students read the passage one by one. Many of the students read aloud. The students were very careful to correctly pronounce each word in the passage and the teacher gave more significance to the appropriate way of the students pronouncing words. Asking students to read aloud specially unseen texts means is equal to letting them concentrate on pronouncing the words that make them unable to concentrate adequately on the meaning of the message Venkateswaran (1995). The teacher gave correction on the mark for every error students committed. However, Ur: (2002) errors that do not create comprehension problem should not be corrected. Regarding speech practice, he explains explicitly that the errors that should be corrected are those which create uncomfortable situation for the hearer. From the practices observed in all the three days, reading for this teacher was mainly pronouncing words correctly and was to be done aloud at a reasonable speed and appropriate tone.

Second observation Day- the teacher in Wasgebeta primary school

The teacher in Wasgebeta primary school as observed on the second day started by writing the topic on the black board as usual. However, she did differently from the first day in such a way that students were not made to read aloud. Despite not being briefed about the topic, they were made to read silently. The silent reading however, neither lasted long nor was followed by while reading exercise.

It was soon followed by the usual reading aloud where many students took turns to read. However, according to the responses of teachers and students during individual interview, silent reading, though not usually done in a reading period is practiced some times. On the other hand, they said that the use of pictures for guessing meaning of vocabulary has been unusual. Thus, it seems that the teacher knows the appropriateness of silent reading and the importance of teaching aids, but she is not using these methods usually for some unidentified reason. The questions found after each of the reading paragraphs are also treated orally even when there appears writing instruction. The pictures in the text book at the side, below or above the passage were not used during the reading practice. William (1984) states that information given in written language can be matched with pictorial information and these activities can be carried out at all grade levels.

Third observation day- The teacher in WASGEBETA primary school Section two. On the third day the teacher started the lesson as usual. She wrote the topic on the black board and then she read the passage herself aloud after instructing the students to follow her. Then students were made to read silently for a while. The silent reading did not take more than four minutes. Reading aloud followed and many of the students were given the opportunity of reading one by one. After about three-fourth of the class had read paragraph by paragraph, the teacher drew their attention to two vocabularies taken from the passage and wrote them on the blackboard. In line with this was a picture that illustrated the vocabulary items. Students were made to say the meaning in Hadiyisa by looking at the pictures. Having discussed the questions orally with students, the teacher told her students to work on the written exercises as homework and at last she announced that the class for English was over as soon as the bell rang.

Discussion on the result of the three days observation

Three continuous observations were concerned: it seems to me that the teachers were practicing differently the different phases of teaching reading for comprehension. Students were given the opportunity to read by themselves silently and comprehend the message two teachers have different applied. However, the current English syllabus for grade five states that student read the passage independently and silently. It also explains the application of group work and pair work which have been carried out during the observations not in the same ways.

Similarly, the contemporary techniques and procedures of practicing reading for comprehension i.e. pre-reading, while-reading and post- reading procedures were not employed. Even though, reading aloud is important at this level, reading is a silent activity in the real situation, students were not trained for this very nature of reading as it was observed. In Thompson (2001) it has been stated that in everyday life, it is not normal to read aloud. In elaborating this idea the writer says most readings such as reading books, letters, advertisements and the like is done silently. However, pre-reading is a very useful technique in teaching reading comprehension. The main purpose of pre-reading is to create a positive attitude in the minds of students so that they will be initiated to read the text. It is also to activate their prior knowledge so as to gain new information. The while- reading activity is also dominated by reading aloud which is not advisable in the practice of reading comprehension.

4.2. Students' Questionnaire

The research questionnaires that investigate the practices and challenges of reading comprehension in grade five looked into through students' questionnaire. To that end, the students' questionnaire was distributed to a total of 35 students who are learning at present English in grade five in both section. The questionnaires those presented in English translated into their local language Hadiyissa. This helped students easily response what they know in local language.

Table 2: Questions Items related to learning reading comprehension

Variables		Frequency	Percent	
1.	Do you learn reading comprehension	Yes	27	77.1
		No	8	22.9
		Total	35	100.0
2.	If your answer is “Yes” how often do you learn	Usually	17	48.6
		Sometimes	17	48.6
		Rarely	1	2.9
		Total	35	100.0
3.	If you are learning reading comprehension how many of the reading passages in the text do you learn	More than half	32	91.4
		Less than half	3	8.6
		Total	35	100.0
4.	Do you learn passage other than the one in the textbook	Yes	2	5.7
		No	33	94.3
		Total	35	100.0
5.	If your answer to the above item is “Yes” how often do you learn	Usually	2	5.7
		Rarely	33	94.3
		Total	35	100.0
6.	How many of you like reading comprehension questions in the passage	some of them	23	65.7
		none of them	12	34.3
		Total	35	100.0
7.	To what extents understand what you read	some extent	35	100.0
		Total	35	100.0
8.	Do you think that your ability of reading comprehension now at grade 5 enable to use English in grade six as a language of communication after one years of study	Yes	11	31.4
		No	24	68.6
		Total	35	100.0

From the above questions can be observed that even though they learn reading comprehension 27 of them responded that they learn reading comprehension. The other item is the one that inquired how often do they learn reading comprehension in the text, 5 respondent said usually, 7 said always, 15 said some times, 4 said rarely and 2 said never.

This is also confirmed by the responses given during the interview and observation in actual class room. The other item is the one that inquired whether they learn all the passage in the text, or not and the respondents answer contradicts with what has been said in the previous answer in that they 32 responded a few 3 responded few t. About the item that deals with the learning of reading passages other than in the text, 33 students responded 'they did not'. To the question that deals with how many students like reading, 23 of the respondents said 'some' and 12 respondents said "none of them"

With reference to student ability to comprehend reading texts; as a result, out of 35 respondents responses 35 selected for to some extent' and none said' fully.'" Item that deals with the students' expectation about his or her future ability. Accordingly 11 of the respondents said "yes" and also the other 24 of the respondents said "no". This means, most of students do not expect hi or her future ability improved based on current ability of reading comprehension.

Discussion on the responses to the questionnaire

The responses to the questionnaire indicate that all students learn the reading passage in the text book. However, the frequency of learning reading differed from respondent to respondent. However, reading is certainly an important activity not only to expand knowledge but also to learners' advantage if given frequently Wilgam (1981). Regarding whether or not they learn texts other than those in the book, Almost all respondents except one said no. This item deals with extensive reading programmed which many scholars emphasize for its importance in learning reading but it seems that the primary learners have not thought of it. Students at these levels need texts such as stories and puzzles. As students focus on pronunciation and form in reading aloud instead of meaning and message, comprehension can't be achieved.

Table 3: Questionnaire Items related to challenges and learning methodology

Variables			Frequency	Percent
1.	Your teacher explain difficult words before you read	Always	2	5.7
		Usually	13	37.1
		Sometimes	20	57.1
		Total	35	100.0
2.	How often do you face challenge to learn reading comprehension	Always	11	25.5
		Usually	3	8.6
		some times	9	31.6
		Not at all	12	34.3
		Total	35	100.0
3.	How many times do you learn reading comprehension	Usually	17	48.6
		some times	18	51.4
		Total	35	100.0
4.	My teacher let me discuss the topic before you read	Always	2	5.7
		Usually	11	31.4
		some times	3	8.6
		Not at all	19	54.3
		Total	35	100.0
5.	My teacher let me discuss the topic in relation to your own experience	Always	2	5.7
		Usually	3	8.6
		some times	15	42.9
		Not at all	15	42.9
		Total	35	100.0
6.	My teacher encourage me to read English at home or in the library	Always	2	5.7
		Usually	12	51.7
		some times	20	34.3
		Not at all	1	32.9

		Total	35	100.0
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Relating to the item that related to challenges and teaching methodology, the item “Your teacher explain difficult words before you read ”, 2 said always, 5 said rarely 5 others said never and 10 of them said of the respondents replied they usually do it and two others said always and 20 of them said sometimes.

As far as item 2 how often do face challenge to learning reading comprehension is uncomfortable, 9 of the respondents replied always, 4 of them not never,, 5 of them usually, 10 of the rarely and 6 of them replied sometime. With reference to the item how many times do you learn reading comprehension, 17 of them responded by saying they ‘usually’ and 18 others said ‘sometime’.

Concerning item, “Your teacher let you discuss the topic before you read.” In response to this, 3 of them said ‘never’, 11 said ‘sometimes’ 8 said ‘usually’ 5 said “always” and 8 said rarely The item on the subject of “Your teacher encourages you to read English at home or in the library” has been replied as 10 said ‘sometime’ 5 said ‘usually’, 2 of the respondents said ‘never’ and 4 said ‘always and 4 said rarely This is what was exactly seen during the observation of the three days in both schools.

Discussion of the responses of students’ questionnaire challenges and learning methodology

According to what has been provided as responses by the 35 students involved, many of the responses directly match with the practices observed during class room observation. In this manner, the responses in the questionnaire match with what was observed in class room where no pre reading activities were performed. However, these activities are important not only to introduce and arouse students’ interest in the topic but also to motivate learners by giving a reason for reading and to provide some language preparation as well Williams (1984).

On the topic of the idea of making they understand the instruction though it is not known to what extent they could make them understand, many of the respondents have said that they do it. However, giving clear instructions is more than simply telling the instruction orally or by reading it out. The activity of explaining words that are new to the students should be done most of the time as students at this level might not often be capable of guessing meanings. According to Thompson (2001), during the post-reading phase varieties of activities such as writing

assignments on the passage, an oral discussion about the main topic of the passage and a dramatization of the story could be employed. Thus, relying only on oral responses may not be sufficient practice. Pertaining to the practice of reading aloud what the respondents replied proved the actual practice was carried out in classroom.

4.3. Teachers' and Students' Individual Interviews

The other instrument used for data collection as mentioned in the methodology of the study was interview for both teachers and students. Accordingly, a total of four students and two teachers were interviewed separately. Below are the responses and discussions of the interviews.

Teachers' Interview

The six teachers i.e. two teachers from each section were made to react on the following questions turn by turn.

Teacher's interview

1. Do you like teaching reading comprehension in English?
2. What are your major challenges in teaching reading for comprehension?
3. What should be done to improve students reading ability for comprehension?
4. What techniques do you use to teach reading comprehension?

Teaching learning English is based on different procedures and techniques that most accepted by scholars in accordance with the talents they have towards the subject.

Concerning the major challenges they have in teaching reading comprehension, two of the teachers said that not only in teaching English reading but also in all subjects the ability of students is declining from time to time. Their behavior is also getting worse. Thus, the teachers told that they encountered many challenges in teaching children nowadays.

In talking about reading English in particular the teachers confirmed that a few of the students are good at reading aloud but the majority neither could read nor understand the message. They said that it has hindered students to work hard on their lesson including reading comprehension.

A few of them who had passed through kindergarten work better than those who came directly from home. According to the teachers about the interview “what should be done to improve students reading ability for comprehension they said the following:”

- Schools and parents should try to make students read at home.
- Teachers should be given sustainable training.

For the last interview the teachers have no awareness about the techniques of teaching reading for comprehension. I said this because they said nothing about techniques of teaching reading.

Students Interview

As it has been indicated above a total of four students were randomly selected and interviewed turn by turn. The fact that they need some sort of elaboration and treatment, care was taken to extract real responses. Accordingly, the following questions were forwarded to each of them:

1. Do you like learning reading comprehension in English?
2. What is your major problem in learning reading comprehension?
3. What should be done to improve your reading ability for comprehension?
4. How do you learn reading for comprehension in classroom?

All the four students said that they like reading English. All of them didn't join KG and directly started grade one.

Despite, the question when you read aloud what is your priority was not clear to some of them, two students understood it at the expense of elaboration given and said they think of their appropriate pronunciation so that they can finish their reading without being corrected. None of them said that understanding the message is their priority. Two students said that their difficulty in reading is pronouncing a new word and understanding its meaning. However, they confirmed that their teacher explains the meaning for them in Haddiyisa. With regards interview to what should be done to improve your reading ability for comprehension. They said nothing. This means, they read for doing class work, homework and answer the question from their teacher but they don't read for reading comprehension. They said:

We don't have any other English reading materials except our English text and we read it whenever home work is given.

According to students interview how to learn reading comprehension in classroom, they haven't any information about the techniques and procedures of learning reading comprehension. But they give information reading aloud turn by turn they read in class room.

Discussion on the Teachers' and students' individual interview

As can be seen from the interview responses above, the problems that hindered the students reading progress were multi faced. There were administrative problems such as free promotions which has made the students to be reluctant and careless towards their lessons. Lack of teachers' awareness on the current teaching methodology was also reflected as most of them emphasized reading aloud and ignored silent reading. Moreover, according to the teachers' response lack of early child hood education has resulted in a negative impact in the students' language performance in general and in their reading ability in particular. On top of this; as far as students' response was concerned the practice of reading aloud hindered them to think of grasping the message of the text as they were more concerned with pronunciation and form. It has also been confirmed that some teachers don't like teaching nowadays as the behavior of students is getting worse over time. This seems to be a harmful practice for the teaching and learning process. If teachers are not encouraged to teach, they may not put the best of their efforts teaching reading comprehension by using different techniques and procedures.

CHAPTER FIVE

5. Summary, Conclusions and Recommendations

This chapter is predestined to summarize the steps followed to conduct the study and to state the result found in brief. It also deals with what should be done to solve the problem indicated.

5.1. Summary

As it has been mentioned in this paper this study focused on the practice and challenges of teaching reading comprehension skills at primary school with a special focus on grade 5 students in two selected sections in Semein Wasgebeta primary school. The major objective of the study was to investigate the practices and challenges of teaching English reading comprehension skills at primary level in particular focus in grade five students in Semein Wasgebeta Misha Wereda. To this end, conducting the study was designed in which different instruments were employed. Classroom observation was the instrument in actual practice teachers in classroom during teaching. Interviews for both teachers and students were also conducted. Interview was presented to check challenges that face during teaching learning.

Accordingly, it has been observed that the practice of teaching-learning reading comprehension skills in grade 5 was dominated by reading aloud where pre, while and post reading activities were not implemented. On top of this, silent reading was never practiced and the teachers' knowledge about the importance of practicing silent reading has been minimal. As it was intensely explained by the teachers during the individual interview the reason for the bad achievement of students reading comprehension ability were many-sided ranging from lack of interest on the part of students to follow their lessons seriously because of free promotion which made them unwilling because of background education before coming to the regular class. In general, the study has come up with finding that show that the practices of teaching reading comprehension English in grade five of Semein Wasgebeta government school is traditional where current techniques and procedures of teaching and learning English as a foreign language have not been used. As a consequence, the reading comprehension ability of the students is low.

5.2 Conclusion

Based on what has been found out as result of the research study and the summary stated above, the following conclusions were drawn.

- The teachers' assumption of teaching reading seems to be wrong since they assume that students learn reading better when they read aloud.
- Teachers' methods of teaching reading comprehension seems to be traditional where no current methods such as briefing on the topic and activating prior knowledge of the students are being carried out.
- Students' interest in reading comprehension seems minimal as they have been made to practice silent reading ignoring the use of authentic materials and other texts according to their level so as to build up interest in reading.
- Students didn't have opportunities for silent reading as in school there are no supplementary reading materials.

5.3 Recommendations

Based on the research findings of this study the following recommendations were made:

The practice and challenges of teaching reading comprehension in grade five in Semein Wasgebeta primary school have turned out to be a traditional one. Therefore:

- Teachers should be acquainted with the current foreign language teaching and learning practices through sustainable training.
- Supplementary reading texts should be developed and made available so that students will not rely only on their text books for their reading practices.
- Students reading ability was observed to be low. Therefore:
- Students should be taught to read and comprehend the meaning and message of the text and teachers have to take care of this fact while teaching fact.
- The method of group work and pair work in teaching reading should be emphasized as students learn from each other and language is better learnt in groups than individually.

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APPENDEX: 1

Teachers' performance in the pre, while and post -reading phase

Observation check list

No	Items on reading Practices	The teacher in section 1						The teacher in section 2					
		Day one		Day two		Day three		Day one		Day two		Day three	
		Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
1	The teacher gave brief introduction about the reading text												
2	Students were made to discuss topic before they read text												
3	The teacher encouraged the students to relate the topic with their experience												
4	The teacher gave clear instruction to the students												
5	Difficult words in the text were sorted out and explained												
6	Students were asked to predict what the reading passage was about												

7	The questions in while reading is related to passage												
8	I read the passage my self to the students before they read												
9	I allow them answer questions as they read the text												
10	Questions are design for comprehension												
11	Teachers gave feedback and correction												
12	The teachers integrate reading with other skills of English												

Appendix: 2. Students' Questionnaire

Xa'michcha

Ku Xa'michchi gudukkoki onti (5) baxxanchi hindiyyaxxi xanato la'immina gudakkohane. Ka xa'michchuwwa dabatakeena ijaajantakko'I bikkina gaasa galaaxxoommo.

Summa kitaabimmi xansisooyyo

Losa'n min _____ Baxxanchi _____

Umur _____ Albachchi _____

Hindiyyaxxi qananaato xanima moo'akko'isanne gudakko xa'michcha.

1. Hindiyyaxxi qananaaxxi xanato losakkamonihe? Ooyya/a,e

2. Ki dabachcha ooyya yitilas hinkaan ammane hindiyyaxxi xanaxxi qananaato losaakkamo?

3. Hindiyyaxxi qananaato losakkamaan ihulas hinkani qananaato losaakkamo?

4. Kitaphphi qananaatiinse biiranne mull hindiyyaxxi qananaato qananallakka'a xantakamo? Ooyya/a'e

5. Ki dabachcha ooyya yitilas hinkan hindiyyaxxi qananaato qananaallo?

6. Ki kitaabanne yookki hindiyyaxxi qananaato qananaalleena hinkaan hasan yoo?

7. Qananaalitaaninse hinkaana hind yito?

8. Ka onti baxxanchanne qananallakko'I hindiyyaxxi qananaat loh (6) baxxanchina hindiyyaxxi qananaato qananaallakkona harammohonnihe?

Xa'michchi hagar qananaato losimmina qolat ihoo hawwo qananaato losimmi googo moo'akko'isanne gudu xa'michchuwwa

1. Qananaato qananaalleena illage ki losisaanch koyyinch sagara(new word) caakkisohonnihe?

2. Hindiyyaxxi qananaato qananaallakkuuyyi hinkido'I hawwi gamba yaa hee'ukko?

3. Hinkaan ammane hindiyyaxxi qananaato qananaallakkamo?

4. Uwwamu qananaato qananaallakkeen illage gaalchchannem ihukko mulla qananaallakkona gadaa uwwaa laa'oo?

5. Hindiyyaaxxi qananaato qananaalleena illage garu lachcha awwaaxxitona ki losisaanchchi gadaa uwwo?

6. Mineene kitaaphphi mineene hindiyyaaxxi qananaato qananaallo'isina gaafasohonnihe

Appendix:3

Teachers and students interview

Teachers' interview

1. Do you like teaching reading comprehension in English?
2. What are your major challenges in teaching reading for comprehension?
3. What should be done to improve students reading ability for comprehension?
4. How to teach reading comprehension?

Students' interview

1. Hindiyaaxi qananaato Ingliisisine iititakamonihe?
2. Hindiyaaxxi qananaatina mah qolat ihoo ?
3. Hindiyaaxxi qananaato qoxisimmina mah ihmimi hasisoo?
4. Hindiyaaxxi qananaato hinkid qananaa' akkamo?