



**THE EFFECTS OF TOP-LEVEL STRUCTURE INSTRUCTION
ON GRADE EIGHT BHUTANESE STUDENTS'
READING COMPREHENSION AND
WRITTEN SYNTHESIS**

**BY
PEMA**

**A THESIS SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT
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Thesis entitled

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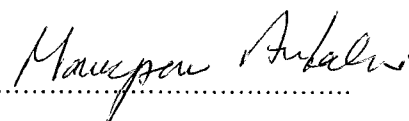
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The three aims of the present investigation were; 1) to examine which top-level structure was the most difficult for grade eight Bhutanese ESL students to comprehend, 2) to identify the effects of the top-level structure instruction on grade eight Bhutanese ESL readers' reading comprehension and 3) to examine whether the awareness of the top-level structure in the source texts enable the grade eight Bhutanese ESL readers as writers while they are composing their written synthesis. The general reading comprehension test consisted of three top-level structures: description, cause and effects, and compare and contrast. The test was given to 80 grade eight ESL Bhutanese students at Samtse Lower Secondary School in Southern Bhutan. From the test scores, the population was screened to include only the top-20 and bottom-20 scoring students as the research participants. From the test, it was found that the texts with cause and effect top-level structure was the most difficult to understand by the readers. As a result, an English test consisting of six expository texts with cause and effect top-level structure was developed to measure the participants' reading comprehension before the experiment. After the pre-test, the participants were taught to read expository texts with cause and

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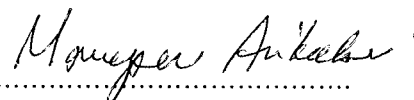
effect top-level structure. At the end of each lesson, the participants were asked to write a reflective journal about their lesson. The participants were then asked to compose a written synthesis by synthesizing information from 3 source texts with the cause and effect top-level structure and approximately of the same length. 2-able- and 2 less-able participants were asked to volunteer to do the think-aloud while they composed their written synthesis. They were afterwards asked to sit for a semi-structured interview which was carried out to support the data gathered from the think-aloud protocol. A post-test, which was identical to the pre-test, was administered to all the participants two weeks later to measure the improvement of their reading ability.

The arithmetic mean (\bar{x}), standard deviation (SD) and sample t-test were used to compare the able- and less-able readers' pre-test and the post-test scores and there was a significant statistical difference between the mean scores of the less-able- and able-readers ($p < 0.05$). It indicated that the able-readers performed better than the less-able readers in comprehending the cause and effect expository texts. The participants were also asked to compose their own text by synthesizing the information from 3 expository source texts which had the same top-level structure, cause and effect and approximately the same lengths. It was found that the able readers included more ideas from the 3 source texts than the less-able readers. The participants' reflective journals were analyzed into themes using the coding system on the basis of grounded theory. The 2-able- and 2 less-able participants' think-aloud protocol and the semi-structured interview results were also analyzed using the coding system on the basis of grounded theory. From the analysis of the qualitative data it was found out that the instruction of the cause and effect top-level structure enhanced the grade eight Bhutanese ESL readers' reading comprehension and their written synthesis from multiple expository texts.

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CONTENT

	Page
ACKNOWLEDGEMENT	i
ABSTRACT	ii
CONTENT	iv
LIST OF TABLES	ix
LIST OF FIGURES	x
LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS	xi
 CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION	
1.1 Rationale	1
1.2 Purpose of the study	4
1.3 Research Objectives	5
1.4 Research Questions	6
1.5 Research Hypotheses	6
1.6 Scope of the study	7
1.7 Limitations of the study	8
1.8 Variables	9
1.9 Definition of terms	9

CONTENT (Cont.)

	Page
CHAPTER 2 LITERATURE REVIEW	
2.1 Reading process models	10
2.2 Standards for reading and literature in Bhutan	11
2.3 Standards for writing in Bhutan	14
2.4 Top-level structures	16
2.5 Composing from multiple source texts	17
2.6 Think-aloud protocol	18
2.7 Learning theories	19
2.8 Related research	21
CHAPTER 3 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY	
3.1 Research design	25
3.2 Population and sample	27
3.3 Research instruments	27
3.4 Validity	34
3.5 Data collection	35

CONTENT (Cont.)

	Page
3.6 Research procedure	35
3.7 Data analysis	37
CHAPTER 4 RESULTS OF DATA ANALYSIS	
4.1 Analysis of the general reading comprehension test	40
4.2 Analysis of pre- and post-test scores	41
4.3 Analysis of the written synthesis	45
4.4 Analysis of think-aloud protocol	46
4.5 Analysis of semi-structured interview	49
4.6 Analysis of the reflective journals	52
CHAPTER 5 CONCLUSION, DISCUSSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS	
5.1 Conclusion	55
5.2 Discussion	57
5.3 Recommendations	61
REFERENCES	63

CONTENT (Cont.)

	Page
APPENDIX	72
Appendix A: Letter of approval	73
Appendix B: Confirmation letter from the reading experts	75
Appendix C: Average mean of general reading comprehension test item	78
Appendix D: General reading comprehension test items	81
Appendix E: Table of specification for general reading comprehension test	95
Appendix F: Average mean of pre-test items	97
Appendix G: Pre-test and post-test items	100
Appendix H: Average mean of the lesson plans	112
Appendix I: Lesson plans	115
Appendix J: Passages with cause and effect top-level structure which were used as the source texts	120
Appendix K: Semi-structured interview questions	123
Appendix L: Summary of the semi-structured interview	126

CONTENT (Cont.)

	Page
Appendix M: Number of ideas for written synthesis from multiple source texts	129
Appendix N: Summary of think-aloud protocol	132
Appendix O: Summary of reflective journals	136
BIOGRAPHY	139

LIST OF TABLES

Table	Page
3.1 Research objectives, questions, hypotheses and instruments	28
3.2 Summary of the general reading comprehension test	31
3.3 Summary of the activities	32
4.1 The most difficult top-level structure	41
4.2 Means and Standard Deviations of pre-test and post-test of able and less-able readers	42
4.3 Comparison of able- and less-able readers' pre-test scores	44
4.4 Comparison of able- and less-able readers' post-test scores	44
4.5 Percentage of the number of ideas included in the written synthesis	46

LIST OF FIGURES

	Page
Figure	
3.1 Illustration of the research procedure	26
4.1 Pre-test and post-test comparisons of able- and less-able reader	43
4.2 Comparison of the pre-test of able- and less-able readers	44
4.3 Comparison of the post-test of able- and less-able readers	45

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ESL	: English as a Second Language
DCRD	: Department of Curriculum Research and Development
CAPSD	: Curriculum and Professional Support Division
CERD	: Centre for Educational Research and Development
TSI	: Text Structure Instruction
PWS	: Plan and Write for Summarization
SRSD	: Self-Regulated Strategy Development
LSS	: Lower Secondary School
SD	: Standard Deviation

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

This chapter contains the rationale and purposes of the study, research objectives, questions and hypothesis, the scope and limitations of the study and the definition of the terms.

1.1 RATIONALE

Literacy is a person's ability to read and write. In the fast developing world of today where education has been given the top most priority, the abilities to read and write are the basic survival tools for all mankind. How developed, integrated and focused a nation is has always been indicated by her level of literacy. Hence, every nation desires full literacy that involves the two skills of reading and writing (Armbruster, 2009). Reading and writing opens the door to learning about math, history, science, literature, geography and much more.

Ray (2011) also stated that reading and writing are the integral parts of learning any language. Myles (2002) argued that to handle any academic tasks, ESL students need to do their best to read and write proficiently. However, it is one of the most difficult tasks to teach reading and writing in an ESL program because learners are expected to read texts and produce written texts on their own in a foreign language. Panahi (2013) stated that reading and writing in English can be a challenging task for ESL students because they experience difficulties with form,

morphology, vocabulary and syntax that are different in English from their native language. Amiri, Fatemeh, Zainal, & Samad (2012) claimed that ESL students complain about learning and focusing on the English word order or word forms. As stated by Spivey and King (1989) the act of reading carried out by student readers can be categorized into two purposes; reading to understand and reading to write. As readers read they don't want to remember or need all the information from the texts so they select the information that they need from the available content (Grabe & Stoller, 2002). Therefore, the readers select the information they need and organize them to construct their own representation of the text.

After the students have read any texts, the process does not end with the comprehension of the texts read because most of the time students have to write as a part of their daily school activities. For example, they are asked to write a recall or a summary of the texts they have read in order that the teachers check their comprehension. When reading to learn or to integrate, readers as writers have to compose their own written text using the texts they have read as a model which demands them to select information from the source text, evaluate it, and use it for writing purposes (Jiang & Grabe, 2007). In other words, readers as writers construct new meaning from the source texts on the paper. The meaning construction occurs by means of three key textual operations: selecting, organizing and connecting (Segev-Miller, 2004). Writing can either be product-based or process-based. In the product-based writing related information is gathered and written in an argumentative, compare and contrast or problem and solution manner and generally evaluated in terms of formal criteria such as grammar, vocabulary or punctuation. What is important in such an approach in which writing and evaluation works mechanically is the correct use of writing technique (Daiute, 2013). In a process approach, of course the product and accuracy and grammar are important but more attention is given to the stage in the process of writing (Reither, 2002). While writing the readers keeping in mind what they have comprehended from their reading of the texts and follow a process of writing in order to compose their own written texts which mainly incorporates the four basic writing stages- planning, drafting or writing, revising or re-drafting and editing (Pennington, 2013). Composing from multiple sources or

discourse synthesis is a term coined by Nancy Spivey (1991: 702; Spivey & King, 1989) to describe the act in which writers engage;

When they read more than one text... and draw from those texts in producing their own texts... [it is] a hybrid act of literacy that entails both literate processes, reading and writing: a person is not only in the role of the writer, composing a new, unique text, but also in the role of reader, comprehending texts written by other writers. The writer constructs meaning from the texts that are read in order to construct meaning for the text that is being written.

Composing from multiple sources is a complex task at the core of many academic writing assignments which can be defined as synthesizing information from two or more source texts (Spivey & King, 1989). In composing from multiple sources readers as writers select, organize, and connect to the content from source texts as they compose their own new texts. Bodycott (2007) mentioned that in order to assist themselves in understanding the text the readers use their knowledge of the top-level structure to recall and comprehend content of the text. Meyer & Ray (2011) states that use of top-level structure to understand how the important ideas of a text are inter-related increases readers' meaning making. Readers who use top-level structure can mentally examine how ideas in a text are interrelated through the use of such relationships as sequence, comparison, causation, or problem and solution. Over the past few decades a number of researchers have argued that the knowledge of top-level structure promotes reading comprehension of the students. Amiri, Zainal & Samad (2012) carried out a research to find out the effects of text structure instruction on the Iranian students' reading comprehension in Malaysia with 33 intermediate and 33 advanced levels students. It was found out that the cause and effect text structure was the most difficult for the Iranian students. They also found out that the advanced group outperformed the intermediate group when it came to comprehending the different passages of the text structures. Meyer & Ray (2011) carried out a similar research in the United States and found out that the readers of all ages benefit from explicit instruction in text structure. Another study on text structure was carried out by St-Jacques, Claude, & Lisa (2005) in Canada and suggested that the instruction on

text structure helps the students in their writing and that it should be an integral part of teaching reading and writing expository texts.

The Bhutanese curriculum demands the ESL students to read and write as a part of their daily school activity. Students are asked to read various texts such as expository, narrative, descriptive and argumentative. After reading the students are asked to write short summaries of the texts they have read. Till date there has been no report of any research conducted on composing from multiple source texts being carried out in Bhutan. But, a study carried out by the DCRD (Department of Curriculum and Research Development) in 2003 in grades 7-12 found that the students were not taught to practice speaking and reading nor were they being taught how to write. In writing, though the curriculum guidelines demands the teachers to use different strategies to let students practice their writing skills, it had been found that the teachers usually gave students a number of topics and let them choose the one that they liked and were made to write on it. The students are taught briefly on the different top-level structures and what expository texts are composed of before they are asked to write. Composing from multiple sources can be a strategy that the English teachers of Bhutan can use as a strategy to teach writing to the students and for researchers to find out its impact on the Bhutanese ESL students reading comprehension and writing ability.

1.2 PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The purposes of the study were as follows;

1.2.1 To examine which top-level structure was the most difficult for grade eight Bhutanese ESL students to comprehend,

1.2.2 To identify the effects of the top-level structure instruction on grade eight Bhutanese ESL readers' reading comprehension

1.2.3 To examine whether the awareness of the top-level structure in the source texts enable the grade eight Bhutanese ESL readers as writers while they are composing their written synthesis and

1.2.4 To introduce composing from sources or discourse synthesis as a strategy for the Bhutanese students to write expository texts.

1.3 RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

The objectives of this research study are;

1.3.1 To investigate which top-level structure is the most difficult to understand by the grade eight Bhutanese ESL readers.

1.3.2 To develop material with the most difficult top-level structure in order to improve grade eight Bhutanese ESL readers ability in reading English expository texts.

1.3.3 To examine whether the instruction of the top-level structure can enhance grade eight Bhutanese ESL readers' reading comprehension.

1.3.4 To investigate whether there is any difference between grade eight Bhutanese ESL able- and less-able readers' reading achievement after the treatment.

1.3.5 To examine whether the instructions of the top-level structure have any effect on the grade eight Bhutanese ESL readers as writers while composing their written synthesis.

1.3.6 To investigate the difference between grade eight Bhutanese ESL able- and less-able readers as writers' composing process while they are synthesizing the information from multiple English expository texts.

1.4 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The findings of study were to answer the following research questions

1.4.1 Which top-level structure of English expository texts is the most difficult to understand by the grade eight Bhutanese ESL readers?

1.4.2 Does the instruction by using reading materials with the target top-level structure improve grade eight Bhutanese ESL readers' reading comprehension of English expository texts?

1.4.3 What is the difference between grade eight Bhutanese ESL able- and less-able readers in comprehending English expository texts with the target top-level structure after the treatment?

1.4.4 Do the grade eight Bhutanese ESL readers use the knowledge of top-level structure of the expository text they read in their synthesis?

1.4.5 What is the difference between grade eight Bhutanese ESL able- and less-able readers' composing process while they are synthesizing the information from multiple English expository texts?

1.5 RESEARCH HYPOTHESES

From the research questions, the following hypothesis was formed for the quantitative part of the research.

H1. There is a significant difference between grade eight Bhutanese ESL readers' pre and post-test scores in comprehending the reading material with the target top-level structure.

H2.There is a significant difference between the able- and less able-readers' pre and post-test scores in comprehending the reading material with the target top-level structure.

1.6 SCOPE OF THE STUDY

1.6.1 Population and Sample

The population in this study was 80 grade eight Bhutanese ESL students of Samtse Lower Secondary School in Samtse District which is located in the southern region of Bhutan. The school has grade level starting from grade Pre-primary till grade 10 with the student population of 400 and 22 teachers. Forty grade eight students were selected as the subjects in this study using purposive sampling method. A reading comprehension test was administered to select the top 20 and the bottom 20 as the research participants.

1.6.2 Text

For the study, only expository texts were used. They were selected from different websites. Minor adaptations were made on the texts in order to make them appropriate to grade eight Bhutanese ESL students' readability level and to ensure approximately the same length of the passages.

1.7 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

The study had the following limitations.

1.7.1 The study focused on the grade eight Bhutanese ESL students of only one school in Bhutan therefore; the findings cannot be generalized to the performance of the grade eight ESL students of other schools in Bhutan.

1.7.2 Although the source texts were selected from various published materials, only three passages whose top-level structure were found to be difficult to understand by the grade eight students were used. Therefore, the findings cannot be generalized to the other top-level structures.

1.7.3 Since the reading passages in the study were expository texts only, the findings cannot be generalized to the other genres of texts.

1.8 VARIABLES

In the quantitative part of the study there are 2 types of variables; independent and dependent variable. The instruction on the most difficult top-level structure, cause and effect, is the independent variable. The participants' achievement score is the dependent variable in the study.

1.8 DEFINITION OF TERMS

1.9.1 Top-level Structure means the overall organizing principle of the text or how the ideas in the text are organized and interrelated to each other in order to convey the intended message to the readers.

1.9.2 Able ESL readers are the 20 grade eight Bhutanese ESL learners whose scores in the reading comprehension test developed by the researcher were in the top group of the class.

1.9.3 Less-able ESL readers are the 20 grade eight Bhutanese ESL learners whose scores in the reading comprehension test developed by the researcher were in the bottom group of the class.

1.9.4 Reading Comprehension means the comprehension of the cause and effect top-level structure by the grade eight Bhutanese ESL readers.

1.9.5 Think-aloud Protocol is the act of speaking out their thoughts while the participants are composing their written synthesis using the multiple expository texts, cause and effect, as the source texts.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE OVERVIEW

In this chapter the literature provides the theoretical background to understand the concept of reading and writing in English in the Bhutanese curriculum, composing from multiple source texts and top-level structures. The literature also includes the learning theories which support composing from multiple source texts. The reviews of some related research conducted which support the instruction on top-level structure and its effects on reading comprehension and written synthesis are also presented.

2.1 READING PROCESS MODELS

Reading is a complex cognitive activity. Comprehending the texts read and fluent reading is the product of long-term efforts and improvement (Lee, 2007). To make ESL reading more efficient and effective, proper teaching materials, reading strategies and teaching approaches need to be adopted. There are 3 models of reading process that are widely used to teach reading comprehension; bottom-up model, top-down model and the interactive model. The bottom-up model of reading is a part-to-whole processing of the text. It focuses on the text as the convergence of encoded messages to be deciphered and on how learners extract information from the printed page, and on whether or not learners deal with letters and words in a systematic fashion (Lee, 2007). In other words, in the bottom-up model, the reader constructs meaning from letters, words, phrases and sentences (Puangmaliwan, 2005). There are

two processes in the bottom-up model; decoding where the readers go from printed words to some phonological representation of word recognition and comprehension where the reader derives meaning from the decoded message. Explicit instruction on phonics and spellings is crucial in the bottom-up model.

The top-down model suggests that the processing of the text begins in the mind of the readers. It is a meaning-driven process where the readers make assumptions about the meaning of the text (Restrepo & Erika, M. B, 2013). The readers use their knowledge, expectations, assumptions and questions related to the text while understanding the vocabulary. The readers employ both general and specific knowledge to predict what might come next in the text and then confirm or reject their predictions (Puangmaliwan, 2005). Therefore, the learner's prior knowledge is activated. The readers identify letters and words only to confirm their assumptions about the meaning of the text. The interactive model is one of the most promising approaches to reading today. It attempts to combine the valid insights of bottom-up and top-down models by taking into consideration the strong points while avoiding the criticisms of the top-down and bottom-up models (Rumelhart, 1994). In the interactive model reading involves interaction between the readers and the text. Readers use knowledge, assumptions, expectations and questions while still being dependent on what is in the text to decode and comprehend as they read (Puangmaliwan, 2005).

2.2 STANDARDS FOR READING AND LITERATURE IN BHUTAN

The new English curriculum of the Bhutanese education system which was implemented in 2007 was based on the theories presented by James Moffit (1983) in, "Teaching; the universe of discourse" and it consists of the four modes of discourse namely reading and literature, writing, listening and speaking, language and grammar. The standards for reading and literature and writing were developed by the CERD,

Centre for Educational Research and Development, Bhutan in response to a request from the director of education to examine the standards for high school English in the public schools in Bhutan.

The standards for reading and literature in the Bhutanese classroom demands that the classroom must be an active place where students learn to read independently by engaging with real literature in a community of readers. The students should be taught how to use reading strategies as they study some great literature, strategies which will enable them to go beyond the simple retrieval of information, to an analysis of what is said in the text. They were to learn to connect their reading and their writing, discovering that writing is a powerful way to find out what they are thinking about a text and a powerful way of saying it. They were also to learn that the readings which have been selected for them show them models of good writing which can help them in their own compositions.

According to the curriculum guidebook published by CAPSD, Curriculum and Professional Support Division, the following are the standards of writing;

1. Graduates are able to read a wide range of texts – fiction and non-fiction - independently.
2. Graduates know the different forms of literature and the purposes they serve.
3. Graduates know and use appropriate reading strategies for making meaning with a variety of texts – fiction and non-fiction.
4. Graduates have read relevant major literary works from Bhutan and other countries.
5. Graduates have an interest in books and continue to read for enjoyment and learning.
6. Through their reading, graduates have studied and reflected on the different ways in which people discover meaning in their lives; different expressions of fundamental values like Truth, Goodness, and Beauty; the possibilities of human achievement; and have found directions and models for their own aspirations.

7. Through their reading, graduates have developed a heightened sense of beauty and harmony which informs their lives.

The curriculum also has learning objectives for different discourse set and the learning objectives for grade eight students in reading are as mentioned below;

Grade eight students will demonstrate that they can:

1. Use the reading strategies developed in earlier classes.
2. Identify the features of a variety of texts and use them to support their reading.
3. Recognize the denotative and connotative effects of words in the texts they read.
4. Recognize the emotive effect of words in the texts they read.
5. Appreciate the beauty of language by identifying the apt uses of symbolism, imagery, allusion, and cadence.
6. Identify and discuss the use of free verse in different kinds of modern poetry.
7. Read texts and make personal connections.
8. Appreciate 'big' ideas expressed in literature – for example, forgiveness, loyalty, and love.
9. Use the dictionary to understand phonetic transcriptions and the syllabic structure of words to help with reading and pronunciation.
10. Build their vocabulary and use pronunciation skills to pronounce new words clearly.
11. Employ the features of biography of worthy personalities to make meaning in their reading.
12. Read at least 40 pieces of fiction and non-fiction texts.
13. Enjoy reading as a learning activity.

2.3 STANDARDS FOR WRITING IN BHUTAN

Written words have the power to withstand the passage of time and can immortalize the mindscapes and the dreamscapes of those who commit their ideas to writing. They connect people directly regardless of time and place (Centre for Educational Research and Development, 2007). The English curriculum presents a programme which will give students the opportunities to write in a variety of forms. To learn to do it well, students need to become members of a writing community in classrooms where they are regularly able to share their essays, poems and letters with other writers. According to the curriculum guidebook published by Centre for Educational Research and Development (2007), the following are the standards of writing;

1. Graduates communicate in coherent and grammatically correct writing in a wide range of forms - personal, transactional, poetic.
2. Graduates use writing as a way of learning, taking time to explore, clarify and reflect on their thoughts, feelings, experiences and relationships.
3. Graduates use writing to develop critical thinking skills - review, analysis, hypothesis, recollection, summary, and evaluation.
4. Graduates use the writing process to plan, draft, redraft, edit and publish their own work.
5. Graduates have studied examples of excellent writing both from the literature that they are studying and other sources to use them as models for their own writing.
6. Graduates are able to take notes from meetings, their reading, and other sources and use their notes to construct an accurate report of proceedings or research findings.
7. Graduates respond clearly in writing to test items on school and national examinations.

8. Graduates have produced a portfolio of their Graduates have produced a portfolio of their own writing containing samples of their best work:
 - a. Personal (letters to friends, diaries, autobiography, wishes, dreams....)
 - b. Transactional (information, explanation, argument, narration, report, descriptions, persuasion, biographies...)
 - c. Poetic (plays, skits, short stories, novels, poems....)

The curriculum also has learning objectives for different discourse set and the learning objectives for grade eight students in writing are as mentioned below;

1. Use the writing strategies developed in earlier classes.
2. Use the thesaurus and dictionary for vocabulary development.
3. Spell correctly the words they are using.
4. Use punctuation and paragraphing to organize ideas.
5. Write compositions using a range of sentence structures to achieve different effects.
6. Use figurative language effectively.
7. Write for a variety of purposes and audiences using wider variety of forms encountered in their reading to include narrative essays.
8. Use criteria of good writing to evaluate their writing and the writing of others.
9. Distinguish best pieces of their writing and add at least 5 pieces to their portfolio.
10. Enjoy writing by participating in a community of writers.

2.4 TOP-LEVEL STRUCTURES

Text structure refers to the ways that authors organize information in text. For example, some texts are organized as a chronological sequence of events, while others compare two or more things (Bolton, 2007). According to Ghaith & Harkouss (2003), the most common text structures are;

1. Description texts: the author describes a topic by listing characteristics, features and examples.
2. Sequence/process texts: the author describes items or events in order or tells the steps to follow to do something or make something.
3. Compare-contrast texts: the author explains how two or more things are alike and/or how they are different.
4. Cause-effect texts: the author lists one or more causes and the resulting effect or effects.
5. Problem-solution texts: the author states a problem and lists one or more solutions for the problem.

Teaching students to recognize the underlying structure of content-rich texts can help them focus attention on key concepts and relationships, anticipate what is to come, and monitor their comprehension as they read. Students can learn to identify a text's structure by paying attention to signal words (Bodycott, 1997). Signal words link ideas together, show relationships, and indicate transitions from one idea to the next. Each text structure is associated with different signal words. Given below are some of the signal words used in different texts structures according to Bolton (2007).

1. cause–effect texts: therefore, as a result, leads to, so, because of, thus, in order to, if...then
2. problem–solution texts : fortunately, unfortunately, therefore, trouble, problem, issue, challenge, answer, solution, conclusion
3. compare–contrast texts: different from, the same as, similar to, as well as, but, compared to, in contrast, however, like, unlike, more, less

4. Sequence/process texts: first, next, then, last, finally, meanwhile, following, before, after, second, third, last.
5. description texts: for example, for instance, in addition, also, too, some, most, all, other

As readers interact with the text to construct meaning, their comprehension is facilitated when they organize their thinking in a manner similar to that used by the author. Readers who struggle with text comprehension often do so because they fail to recognize the organizational structure of what they are reading, and they are not aware of cues that alert them to particular text structures. The reader's awareness of text features such as the overall organizational pattern, transitional markers, topic sentences, and the hierarchy of content ideas also influences comprehension. A study by Ghaith & Harkouss (2003) in text structure awareness showed that students were most aware of compare-contrast text and least aware of the cause-effect text structure. In another study, Zhang (2009) found out that the Chinese students found difficulty in comprehending description texts than compare-contrast and problem-solution texts. Nodoushan (2003) carried out a study among Iranian Turkish students and found out that they found cause-effect texts difficult than compare-contrast texts.

2.5 COMPOSING FROM MULTIPLE SOURCE TEXTS

The term “synthesis” means to combine separate elements to form a whole. Teachers around the world who teach writing often use this term when they assign students to write a literature review or other paper that requires the use of a variety of sources. Teachers use this strategy often hoping that students will write papers that make a variety of connections among source material so that their papers are more organized and a whole text is created. Writing from sources, a complex task at the core of many academic writing assignments is defined as synthesizing information from two or more source texts (Reynolds & Perin, 2009). Writing from sources is also known as discourse synthesis, a term coined by Nancy Spivey in 1989 (Segev-Miller,

2004) which requires the students to select, organize and connect content from source texts as they compose their own new texts. It is a hybrid task of reading and writing, or of comprehension and production. So, it can be said that composing from multiple source texts is similar to writing a summary but it is cognitively more demanding because while summarizing a text the students frequently replicate its structure, thus producing a miniature isomorphic version of the text (Spivey, 1997). When synthesizing, however, students are required to create their own macro-proposition, from different – sometimes even contradictory – macro-propositions of several source texts, and to organize these in a previously non-existent conceptual structure. Composing from multiple source texts, therefore, requires conceptual transforming and the production of personal and creative perspectives on the part of students (Boscolo, Pietro, & Lucia M., 2001).

2.6 THINK-ALOUD PROTOCOL

Jacobson, Michael J., & Anthi A. (2000) stated that one way for teachers to know what reading and writing strategies students are using and help them use effective strategies in their reading and writing is to engage them in think-aloud protocols. With think-aloud protocols, students verbalize, in an interview context, how they are processing the text they are reading or writing. Therefore, modeling strategic behaviors for struggling readers by thinking aloud for them while they read or write and hence, allowing students to think along, is the first step in raising their awareness of what it means to be a strategic reader or writer. Smith, L. A. (2006) refers to the think-aloud as a technique in which students verbalize their thoughts as they read and thus bring into the open the strategies they are using to understand a text. By getting students to reflect on the process of thinking aloud as they read or write, students are encouraged to recognize the difference between reading the words, comprehending and writing their own texts. By talking about their strategy, students

gain insights into the complexities of reading, and hence expand their understanding of what it means to be a good reader and later become a good writer.

The think-aloud protocol method was introduced as a method to gather data in usability testing in product design and development, in psychology and a range of social sciences, such as reading, writing, translation research, decision making, and process tracing (Jaaskelainen, 2010). Think-aloud protocols involve participants thinking aloud as they are performing a set of specified tasks. Users are asked to say whatever they are looking at, thinking, doing, and feeling as they go about their task. This enables observers to see first-hand the process of task completion rather than only its final product. Observers at such a test are asked to objectively take notes of everything that user's say, without attempting to interpret their actions and words. Test sessions are often audio and video-recorded so that developers can go back and refer to what participants did and how they reacted (Tirkkonen, 1990). The purpose of this method is to make explicit what is implicitly present in subjects who are able to perform a specific task.

2.7 LEARNING THEORIES

2.7.1 Constructivism

Constructivist theory is one of the major learning theories that support writing from multiple source texts. Constructivist learning theory provides a situation in which the learners construct their own knowledge based on previous experiences, skills and interaction with the environment. When individuals deal with the physical world, their minds construct, through certain mental mechanisms, collections of cognitive structures that enable them to conceptualize reason and coordinate their engagements (Rahim, & Issa, M, 2011). The constructivist view involves two principles. The first principle is that knowledge is actively constructed by the learners, not submissively received from the environment. The second principle is that learning is a means of adaptation based on and frequently modified by the

learner's experience of the real world. The constructivists view the role of the teacher as a facilitator to learning by providing the context and arranging the environment in which learning is to take place. In writing from multiple source texts readers are making meaning by integrating content from source texts with previously acquired knowledge in a process that involves the operations of selecting, organizing, and connecting. Readers select content on the basis of some relevance principle, organize the content by applying their knowledge of discourse structures, and connect related ideas by discovering and generating links (Spivey, 1989). In the act of writing by synthesizing information from multiple source texts the readers become writers since it becomes a highly constructive act where they need to select, organize and connect content from the source texts as they compose their own text.

2.7.2 Cognitivism

According to cognitivism, learning is a result of a child's cognitive process. Cognitivism has been defined as a learning theory of psychology that attempts to explain human behavior by understanding the thought processes (Ertmer, Peggy A., & Timothy J. N, 1993). Cognitive learning theories explain learning by focusing on the changes in mental processes and structures that occur as a result of people's efforts to make sense of the world (Kauchak & Eggen, 1993). The cognitivist learning theory is also known as cognitive development based on the development of the human brain and the learning ability related to it. Feldman, M. (1981) mentioned that the underlying concepts of cognitivism involve how to think and gain knowledge. The key advocates of the cognitivist learning theory are Gesalt, Willhelm Wundt, Jean Piaget and Lev Vygotsky who believed that the cognitive performance of a child was directly associated with the cognitive development stage he or she is in. Knowledge was not merely transmitted verbally but must be constructed and reconstructed by the learner. Piaget asserted that for a child to know and construct knowledge of the world the child must act on objects and it was this action that provided knowledge of those objects. The role of the teacher in a Cognitivist classroom was to provide a rich environment for spontaneous exploration of the child so that they become active

constructors of their own knowledge through experiences that encourage assimilation and accommodation. In writing from multiple source texts the teacher acts as the facilitator and supporter who provide the students with the different source texts and instruction to the students on how to read and write their own synthesized text. The learners are using the source texts to construct meaning and knowledge in their own text.

2.8 RELATED RESEARCH

Many researchers have studied the effects of top-level structure instruction on reading comprehension and readers as writer's ability to compose the written synthesis from multiple source texts. The research studies on top-level structures have been conducted all over the world using different kind of research instruments with research participants at different educational levels. All the studies had similar findings which emphasized that the instruction on the top-level structure affected the reading comprehension and the composing of written synthesis from multiple source texts. Some of the most recent research studies have been discussed below.

Amiri, Zainal & Samad (2012) carried out a research on the effects of text structure on the Iranian students' reading comprehension performance in Malaysia with 33 intermediate and 33 advanced levels students. The researchers investigated the 2 groups of students' performance after reading 2 types of text structures; compare & contrast and cause & effect. The results of the study indicated that both groups performed differently after reading the different text structures. The researchers found out that the Iranian students' performance and their level of understanding of the text vary depending on the type of text structure. It was found out that the Iranian students performed better in compare/contrast than cause/effect text structure. They also found out that the advanced group outperformed the intermediate group when it came to comprehending the different passages of the text structures.

Meyer (2011) carried out a research in the United States on the title; individual differences in children's knowledge of expository text structures in order to examine the individual differences in young elementary school readers' knowledge and use of expository text structures. The type of text structure used were; collection, comparison and problem & solution. The researchers found that the readers of all ages benefit from explicit instruction in text structure, particularly for the less-skilled readers. The researcher also suggested that text structure instruction should focus on the top-level structures like comparison, causation, and problem-and-solution.

De La Paz, Susan, & Mark K. F. (2010) carried out a study on reading and writing from multiple source documents in history. This study examined the effects of historical reasoning strategy instruction on grade 11 students in the US. Students learned historical inquiry strategies using 20th century American history topics ranging from the Spanish-American war to the Gulf of Tonkin incident. In addition, students learned a pre-writing strategy for composing argumentative essays related to each historical event. The design of the current study was pre and post-test quasi-experimental design. A total of 160 grade 11 students received instruction from four US history teachers at two schools, in intact classrooms in a total of 10 different sections. One teacher at each school agreed to have his students serve as the experimental group and another teacher at each school agreed to have his or her students serve as the comparison group. The experimental group received instruction in analyzing sources and planning argumentative essays. Students in the control group read the same primary and secondary source document sets, and received feedback on written essays on the same topics but they were not given specific instructions on how to use the source texts to write their own text. It was found that in comparison to a control group, essays written by students who received instruction were longer, were rated as having significantly greater historical accuracy, were significantly more persuasive, and claims and rebuttals within each argument became more elaborated.

Mateos, Martin, Villalon & Luna (2008) carried out a study on reading and writing to learn in secondary education: online processing activity and written products in summarizing and synthesizing tasks in Spain. They employed a multiple-case methodology to assess the online cognitive and meta-cognitive activities of 15-

year-old secondary students as they read informational texts and wrote a new text. To investigate the influence of the summarizing and synthesizing task, students were required to perform two different tasks which differed in complexity and familiarity. The first task was reading a single text and making a written summary of it, while the second consisted in reading two texts and making a written synthesis of them. To gather information about how students construct meaning from informational texts, the students were asked to think aloud as they read and wrote in order to provide information about their comprehension and composition processes. The reading and writing activities during the tasks were also examined. The results showed that to a large extent secondary school students lack the cognitive and meta-cognitive processes that would enable them to make strategic use of reading and writing. It was also found that, although there are no major differences in the way secondary school students tackle these different tasks, those who create the most elaborate products evidence a more recursive and flexible use of reading and writing. The most obvious conclusion as far as the repercussions of these findings are concerned is that there is an urgent need for work on summarizing and synthesizing tasks in the classroom.

Similar study was carried out by Reynolds, G. A. & Perin, D. (2009) in Canada. The researchers compared text structure and self-regulated writing strategies used by middle school students in their composing from multiple expository sources texts. The two different writing strategies used were text structure instruction (TSI) which focused on the text characteristics using graphic organizers and plan and write for summarization (PWS), a self-regulated strategy development (SRSD) which focused on note-taking, composing, editing and revision and self-monitoring. The research participants were 121 sixth and seventh grade social studies classrooms in western Canada. Fifteen different reading passages were used. All the passages which were used as source texts were taken from their social studies and science texts. Minor adaptations were made on the passages in order to maintain sixth and seventh grade readability levels and ensure comparable word length. It was found that compared to a traditional instruction control, each technique had unique impact, plan and write for summarization on writing quality and content knowledge, and plan and write for summarization on inclusion of main ideas in the written summary. Three

variables, main ideas, writing quality, and content knowledge, were used to compare the effectiveness of text structure instruction and plan and write for summarization. Main ideas and writing quality were measured at pre, post, and on near and far transfer tasks, and content knowledge was measured pre and post. Both of the treatments were associated with better performance on the three outcome measures at all testing points, compared to a control group that received conventional instruction. These findings added to previous demonstrations of the efficacy of explicit instruction in strategies for expository writing and extended work showing effective instruction in writing skills contextualized in classroom content.

Segev-Miller (2004) carried out a study on the effect of explicit instruction on college students written products while composing from multiple source texts. The subjects were 24 in-service teachers who were enrolled in the researcher's 1999–2000 courses on "reading and writing to learn." The research participants were assigned the same task of composing a written synthesis using multiple source texts at the beginning and at the end of the course. The participants were required to document their two performances of the task by means of a process log, to assess their pre- and post-instruction processes and products. The findings obtained from a content analysis of the subjects' process log summaries and criterion self-assessments of products indicated significant improvement in the subjects' post instruction discourse synthesis processes and products.

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This chapter consists of the description of the general procedure that was adopted to collect the data for the study. It describes the research design, the population and the participants in the study, the research instruments used to collect the data, the methods to ensure validity of the instruments, data collection procedures and the statistics that were used to analyze the data collected.

3.1 RESEARCH DESIGN

A mixed method approach was used in this study. The quantitative approach was used to find the answer to the research questions 4.1, 4.2, and 4.3 and the qualitative approach was to answer the research questions 4.4 and 4.5. The findings from the qualitative approach also provide the support evidence to the research questions 4.2 and 4.3. In terms of the quantitative approach, the research was a one group pre-test and post-test design. The pre-test was given to the participants before the experiment whereas the post-test was administered after the experiment. The scores from both tests were analyzed statistically by using a commercial statistical analysis program. In terms of qualitative approach, the research participants were asked to write reflective journals, two able- and two less-able participants were chosen on voluntary basis to do the think-aloud protocol verbally while they were composing from multiple source texts. The four volunteer participants were then

asked to answer a semi-structure interview. The data was analyzed into themes by coding. Figure 3.1 illustrates the procedure of the research study.

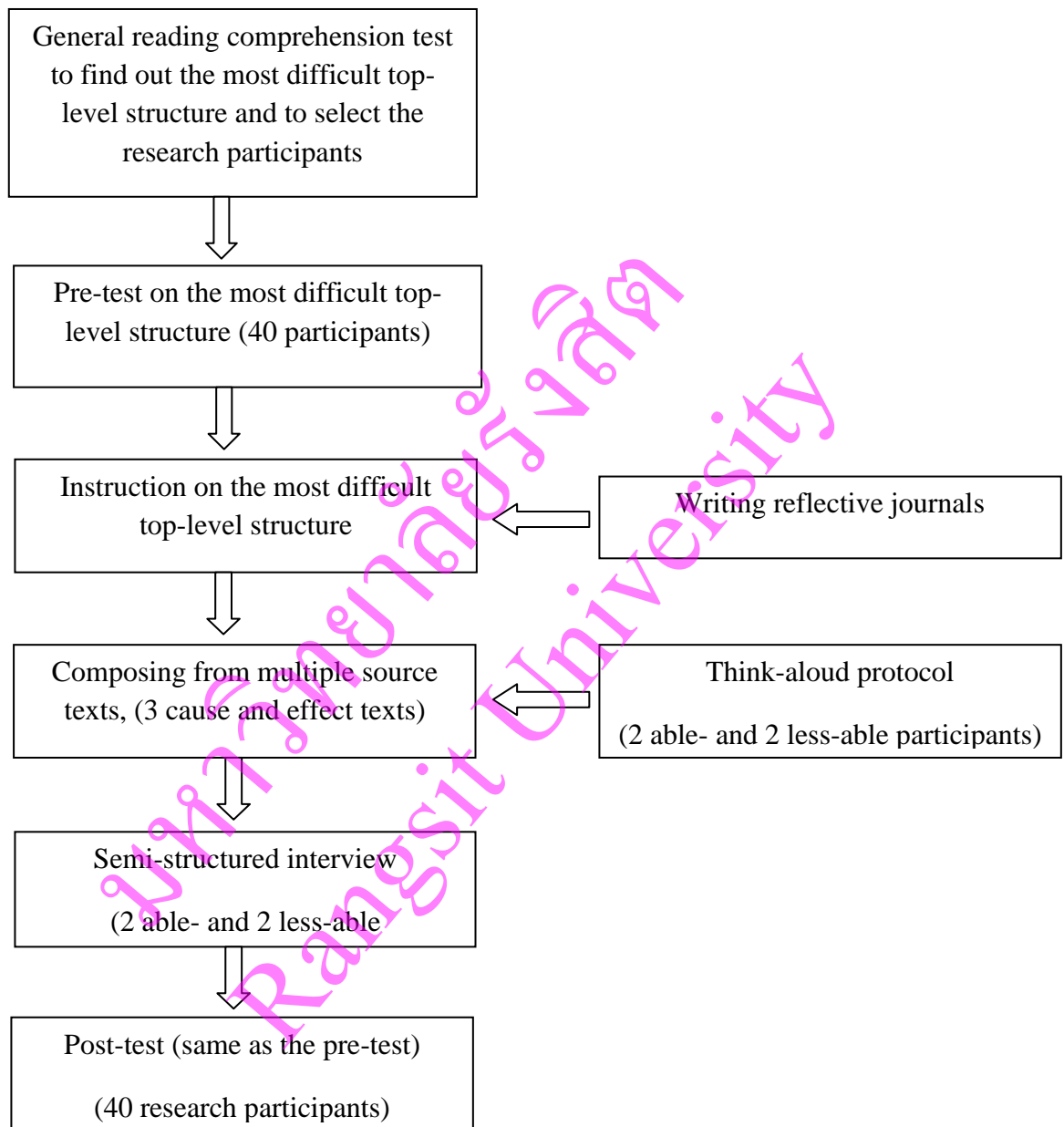


Figure 3.1 Illustration of the research procedure.

3.2 POPULATION AND SAMPLE

3.2.1 Population

The target population of the study was 80 grade eight Bhutanese ESL students of Samtse Lower Secondary School in Samtse District, Bhutan in the academic year 2014.

3.2.2 Sample

Purposive sampling method was used to select the 40 research participants. A general reading comprehension test with 3 top-level structures; description, cause and effect, and compare and contrast were used to conduct a discriminant analysis on the target population. From the test scores, the subject population was screened to include only the top-20 and bottom-20 scoring students, which are herein referred to as “able” and “less-able” readers, respectively.

3.3 RESEARCH INSTRUMENTS

The researcher used mixed method in the study. Quantitative methods were used to collect data to answer research questions 4.1, 4.2, and 4.3. Qualitative methods were used to collect data in order to answer research questions 4.4 and 4.5. The findings provide the support evidence to research questions 4.2 and 4.3 as well. The methods and instruments used in the study have been illustrated in table 3.1.

Table 3.1 Research objectives, questions, hypotheses and instruments

Research Objectives	Research Questions	Research Hypothesis	Quantitative/ Qualitative analyses/ Research Instruments
1. To investigate which top-level structure is the most difficult to understand by the grade eight Bhutanese ESL readers.	1. Which top-level structure of English expository texts is the most difficult to understand by the grade eight Bhutanese ESL readers?	-----	Quantitative General reading comprehension test
2. To develop material with the most difficult top-level structure in order to improve the grade eight Bhutanese ESL readers' ability in reading English expository texts.	-----	-----	-----
3. To examine whether the instruction of the top-level structure can enhance grade eight Bhutanese ESL readers' reading comprehension.	3. Does the instruction by using reading materials with the target top-level structure improve grade eight Bhutanese ESL readers' reading comprehension of English expository texts?	4. There is a significant difference between grade eight Bhutanese ESL readers' pre- and post-test scores in comprehending the reading material with the target top-level structure.	Quantitative 1. Pre-test and Post-test on the target top-level structure. Qualitative 1. Reflective journal

Table 3.1 Research objectives, questions, hypotheses and instruments (Cont.)

Research Objectives	Research Questions	Research Hypothesis	Quantitative/ Qualitative analyses/ Research Instruments
4. To investigate whether there is any difference between grade eight Bhutanese ESL able- and less-able readers' reading achievement after the treatment.	4. What is the difference between grade eight Bhutanese ESL able- and less-able readers' in comprehending English expository texts with the target top-level structure after the treatment?	4. There is a significant difference between the able- and less-able readers' pre- and post-test scores in comprehending the reading material with the target top-level structure.	Quantitative 1. Pre-test and Post-test on the target top-level structure. Qualitative 1. Reflective journals
5. To examine whether the instructions of the top-level structure have any effect on the grade eight Bhutanese ESL readers as writers while composing their written synthesis.	5. Do the grade eight Bhutanese ESL readers use the knowledge of top-level structure of expository text they read in their synthesis?	-----	Qualitative 1. Reflective Journal 2. Written synthesis
6. To investigate the difference between grades eight Bhutanese ESL able- and less-able readers as writers composing process while they are synthesizing the information from multiple English expository texts.	6. What is the difference between grade eight Bhutanese ESL able- and less-able readers' composing processes while they are synthesizing the information from multiple English expository texts?	-----	Qualitative 1. Think-aloud protocol 2. Semi-structured interview

3.3.1 Questionnaires to check the validity of the reading comprehension test, pre- and post-test items and the materials developed

There were 2 questionnaires in this study. The first questionnaire was used to examine the appropriateness of the general reading comprehension test and the pre-test with the most difficult top-level structure, cause and effect. The purpose of this questionnaire was to examine whether the expository texts used as the reading passages have the appropriate level of difficulty for the grade eight Bhutanese ESL students. It was also to check the explicitness of the top-level structures in the reading passages and the test items used to measure the students' reading comprehension ability. Two ESL reading experts and one ESL testing expert were asked to complete the questionnaire. The second questionnaire was used to examine the appropriateness of the teaching material and the learning activities in the 3 lesson plans. Three ESL reading experts were asked to complete the questionnaire.

3.3.2 General reading comprehension test

The general reading comprehension test consisted of 12 short expository texts. Three types of top-level structures considered difficult to ESL students according to literature review: description, compare and contrast, and cause and effects were included in the test. Each text was followed by 5 reading comprehension questions as in Table 3.2 Summary of the reading comprehension test.

Table 3.2 Summary of the general reading comprehension test

Top-level structure	No. of Passages	Number of questions in each passage				Total number of the questions in each passage
		Top-level structure	Signal words	Main idea	Details	
Description	4	1	1	1	2	5
Compare and Contrast	4	1	1	1	2	5
Cause and effect	4	1	1	1	2	5

The scores of the reading comprehension test were used to investigate which top-level structure was the most difficult to understand by the grade eight Bhutanese ESL students. In addition, it was used to put the students into the groups of able- and less- able readers. Only 20 students whose scores were high and 20 students whose scores were low were selected to be the research participants.

3.3.3 Pre-test and post-test

Based on the result of the reading comprehension test which indicated that the most difficult top-level structure was the cause and effect, the pre-test and post-tests was designed. The pre-test contained 6 expository texts with the most difficult top-level structure, cause and effect and 50 comprehension questions were designed and administered to the subjects to measure their ability in recognizing the top-level structure of the text, its signal words, main idea, details, the meaning of the vocabulary, and conclusion in the text. The pre-test items were used as the post-test after the treatment to examine whether the instruction of the most difficult top-level structure, cause and effect for grade eight ESL Bhutanese students had any effect on

their ability in identifying the most difficult top-level structure and use it in comprehending expository texts.

3.3.4 Lesson plan

Three ninety minutes lessons with the purposes to improve the participants' 1) ability in identifying the most difficult top-level structure and 2) reading comprehension of expository texts with the target top-level were planned for the instruction of the research participants. Table 3.3 shows the summary of the activities carried out.

Table 3.3 Summary of the activities

Week	Activities
Week 1	
19/05/15	Pre-test (1 hour)
23/05/14	(90 Minutes) Introduction to top-level structures; description, compare and contrast, cause and effect and problem and solution. Introduction to the most difficult top-level structure, cause and effect Instruction on main idea and signal words Identification of the top-level structure and the signal words by the participants using different passages How to write reflective journal Participants write a reflective journal for the lesson
24/05/14	(90 minutes) Revision of the previous lesson Instruction on looking for details in the passages

Table 3.3 Summary of the activities (Cont.)

Week	Activities
	<p>Participants read the passages and look for details in each cause and effect passage</p> <p>Participants write a reflective journal for the lesson</p>
<p>Week 2</p> <p>28/05/'14</p>	<p>(90 minutes)</p> <p>Revision of the previous lesson</p> <p>Introduction of “composing from multiple sources”</p> <p>Participants compose their own written synthesis using 3 cause and effect passages as the source texts</p> <p>2 able- and 2 less-able readers sit for think-aloud protocol and semi-structured interview on voluntary basis</p> <p>Participants write the reflective journal for the lesson</p>
<p>30/05/'14</p>	<p>Post-test (1 hour)</p>

3.3.5 Reflective journal

The subjects in the study were asked to write a reflective journal at the end of each session on what they learnt, what they did and the difficulties that they faced. This was to investigate whether the instruction of the most difficult top-level structure had any effect on the research participants' reading comprehension of expository texts and what problems the research participants faced in identifying it and using them in understanding the expository texts they read.

3.3.6 Written synthesis

After the 2-week instruction, the participants were asked to compose their own text by synthesizing the information from 3 expository texts with the same top-level structure, cause and effect, and contained approximately the same number of words.

3.3.7 Think-aloud protocol

Think-aloud protocol was used in this study to gain insights into what goes on in the student writer's mind and to study the complex process and strategies that the 2 able- and 2 less-able readers used while composing their own written text from multiple sources. Four research participants were chosen to do the think-aloud protocol purely on voluntary basis.

3.3.8 Semi-structured interview

After the 2 able- readers and 2 less-able readers, who had volunteered to think aloud, finished composing their written synthesis from multiple English expository texts. They were interviewed by the researcher to find out information to support the data that the researcher gained from the think- aloud protocol. In the interview, the semi-structured interview questions were used.

3.4 VALIDITY

In this study, the reading passages and the test items in the reading comprehension test and the pre-test were validated by 2 reading experts from Bhutan and 1 testing expert from Thailand. The experts checked if the test items were

appropriate for the grade eight Bhutanese ESL readers and they also checked if the instructions were clear and appropriate for each test.

In addition, to gather the data by the qualitative approach, two qualitative research instruments, student's reflective journals, think-aloud protocol and semi-structure interview were used to assure the validity of the research.

3.5 DATA COLLECTION

3.5.1 Ethical consideration

Approval

Before carrying out the study in the school chosen for the research experiment, the researcher got an approval letter from the Ministry of Education. Upon reaching Samtse district, the researcher also sought the permission from the Principal of the school and the concerned English subject teacher of grade eight in Samtse LSS.

Anonymity of the participants and confidentiality of their views

Anonymity of the research participants and confidentiality of their views were strictly followed by the researcher. The participants and their views and opinions were strictly kept confidential through the use of coding system instead of the names of the participants.

3.6 RESEARCH PROCEDURE

The research was carried out by following the procedure as mentioned below;

3.6.1 A general reading comprehension test that was administered to 80 grade eight ESL students of Samtse LSS to find out the most difficult top-level

structure for the grade 8 Bhutanese ESL students to comprehend. This would be indicated from the reading passages that most of the students cannot not identify.

3.6.2 The students were selected as the subjects by using a purposive sampling technique. The test scores of all the students were tallied from the highest to the lowest. 20 students whose scores were from the highest and 20 students whose scores were from the lowest were selected as the research participants.

3.6.3 The experimental group was taught by the researcher for 3 sessions over 2 weeks without disturbing the normal class schedule.

3.6.4 The subjects were asked to write a reflective journal at the end of each session to investigate how the instruction of the most difficult top-level structure helped them in identifying it in the expository texts, how it helped with the general reading comprehension, what difficulties the subjects faced while they were learning the lessons.

3.6.5 At the end of the 2 weeks experiment, the experimental group was given the post-test which was the same as the pre-test. They were also asked to compose a 1-page written synthesis using the information from 3 multiple expository texts with the most difficult top-level structure and had approximately the same length.

3.6.6 On the voluntarily basis, two able- and two less-able readers were asked to think aloud verbally about what they were doing while composing their written synthesis.

3.6.7 After they finished composing their written synthesis, both able- and less-able readers who had volunteered to think aloud verbally were interviewed for their composing process and to support the data from the think aloud protocol.

3.7 DATA ANALYSIS

To find out the most difficult top-level structure and its effect on the synthesizing process from multiple English expository texts, the collected data will be analyzed by using a commercial statistical analysis program as mentioned below.

3.7.1 Questionnaires to check the validity of the reading comprehension test

The 2 questionnaires asking for the opinion from ESL experts on the reading comprehension test, pre- and post-test and the appropriateness of the learning activities and the teaching materials in lesson plans were analyzed using mean (\bar{x}) and standard deviation (SD). The mean score of each statement developed in the questionnaire for the experts were calculated on the basis of mean (\bar{x}) is higher than 3.51.

3.7.2 General reading comprehension test

After the administration of the test, the test scores were analyzed to find out the most difficult top-level structure for the grade eight Bhutanese ESL students to comprehend. The scores of the reading comprehension test were analyzed in terms of percentage.

3.7.3 Pre- and post-test

The research participants' scores from the pre- and post-tests were calculated for the mean (\bar{x}) and standard deviation (SD). Then, the t-test of paired

measurement was used to determine the significant difference between the subjects' scores from both tests.

3.7.4 Reflective journals

After collecting all the reflective journals from the subjects at the end of each lesson, the researcher categorized the content of the journals by coding to find similar issues to put them into different themes based on Strauss and Corbin's grounded theory.

3.7.5 Written synthesis

After the 2-week instruction the participants were asked to compose their own synthesis by using the information from the 3 source texts. The written synthesis of the research participants were analyzed in terms of the number of ideas or information they used from the 3 source texts and were presented in terms of percentage.

3.7.6 The analysis of the think-aloud protocol

The think-aloud of the 2 able- and 2 less-able readers as they composed their own text from the multiple source texts were recorded in an audio-tape. The recordings from the audio-tape were then transcribed and the data was categorized by coding and put into different themes.

3.7.7 Semi-structured interview

The researcher took notes of the 2 able- and 2 less-able readers' answer to the semi-structured interview questions. The interview was audio-recorded to support the data from note-taking by the researcher. The audio-tape recorded

information was transcribed and checked with the data from the note-taking. After that the data was categorized by coding to put into different themes.

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CHAPTER 4

RESULT OF DATA ANALYSIS

This chapter presents the findings of the research study in order to infer on whether the objectives of the study had been fulfilled. The main purpose of the study was to 1) examine which top-level structure was the most difficult for grade eight Bhutanese ESL students to comprehend, 2) identify the effects of the top-level structure instruction on grade eight Bhutanese ESL readers' reading comprehension and 3) examine whether the awareness of the top-level structure in the source texts enable the grade eight Bhutanese ESL readers as writers while they are composing their written synthesis and 4) investigate the difference between grade eight Bhutanese ESL able- and less-able readers as writers' composing process while they are synthesizing the information from multiple English expository texts. The results are presented based on the general reading comprehension test scores, the pre-test and post-test achievement of the participants, the participants' written synthesis and the findings from the think-aloud protocol, semi-structured interview and the reflective journals of the participants.

4.1 ANALYSIS OF THE GENERAL READING COMPREHENSION TEST

The general reading comprehension test that was administered to the target population of 80 students of Samtse Lower Secondary School was to find out the most difficult top-level structure. The scores of the reading comprehension test consisting

of 60 test items on 3 top-level structures such as description, cause and effect and compare and contrast were analyzed in terms of percentage.

It revealed that the cause and effect was the most difficult top-level structure for the grade eight Bhutanese ESL students in understanding the expository texts. Table 4.1 shows the results of the scores of the reading comprehension test in terms of percentage which reveals the most difficult top-level structure.

Table 4.1 The most difficult top level structure

Top-level structure	Incorrect responses	Correct responses
Description	25.36%	74.64%
Cause and effect	55.07%	44.93%
Compare and contrast	29.71%	70.29%

4. 2. ANALYSIS OF PRE- AND POST-TEST SCORES

The pre-test and post-test scores of the able- and less-able grade eight Bhutanese ESL readers were compared. The comparison was first done by comparing the pre-test and post-test scores of the whole class and then between the able- and less-able grade 8 Bhutanese ESL readers by comparing the able- and less-able readers' pre-test scores and then post-test scores of the able- and less-able readers. The comparison was mainly done in terms of mean (\bar{x}), standard deviation (SD), t-test (t) and significance value (p).

4.2.1 Means and Standard Deviations for the pre-test and post-test of able and less-able readers

Firstly the pre-test and post-test scores of the research participants were compared. Table 4.2 shows the result of paired samples t-test of the pre-test and post-test comparison of both able- and less-able grade eight Bhutanese ESL readers in terms of mean and standard deviation.

Table 4.2 Means and Standard Deviations of pre-test and post-test of able- and less-able readers

Groups	N	Pre-test		Post-test		t-value	p-value
		Mean	SD	Mean	SD		
Able-	20	20.1	1.97	44.8	3.58	56.07	0.00
Less-able	20	15.1	1.65	36.8	4.7	58.82	0.00

$p < 0.05$

The result shows that the mean in the pre-test of the able grade eight Bhutanese ESL readers was 20.1 and the standard deviation was 1.97. In the post-test the mean was 44.8 and the mean has increased by 24.7. The standard deviation was 2.98. In the less-able grade eight Bhutanese ESL readers the mean of pre-test was 15.1 and the standard deviation was 1.65. The mean of the post-test was 36.8 and the standard deviation was 4.7. The mean had increased by 21.7. The t-test value of the able-readers was 56.07 and the less-able reader's t-test value was 58.82.

From the comparison of the pre-test and the post-test scores, there was an increase in the means of the post-test scores of both the able- and less-able readers. The mean of the able readers' post-test scores was significantly higher than that of the pre-test scores. Similarly, the mean of the less-able readers' post-test scores was significantly higher than that of the pre-test scores. It indicated that the instruction of top-level structure, cause and effect, enhanced the reading comprehension of both

able- and less-able readers. Figure 4.1 illustrates the means and standard deviations of pre-test and post-test of able- and less-able readers.

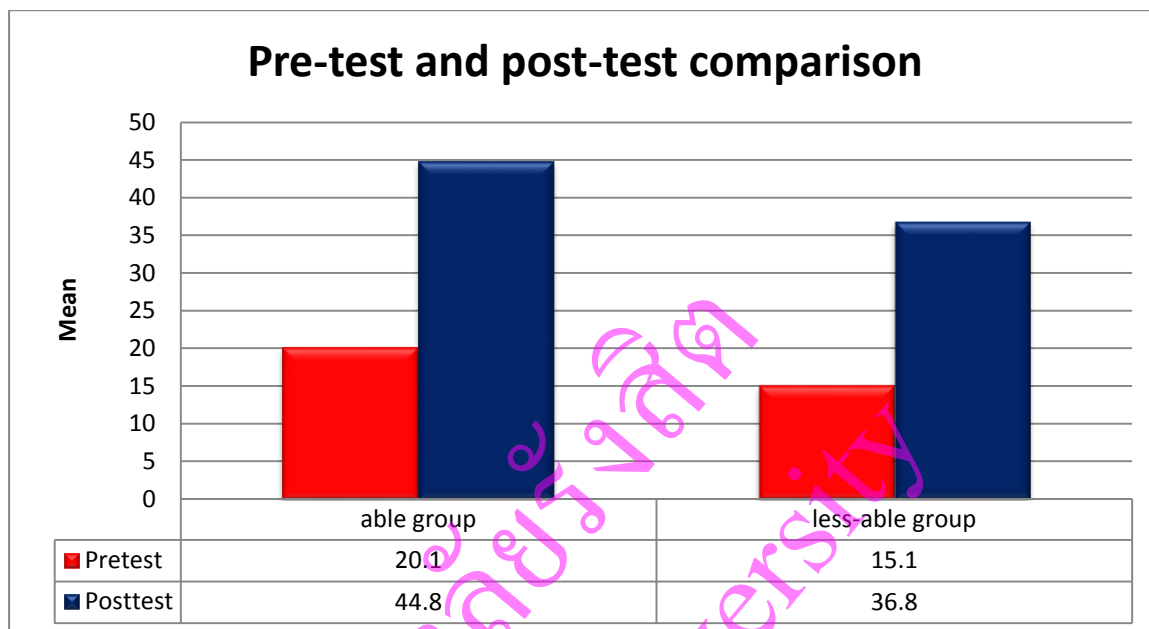


Figure 4.1 Pre-test and post-test comparisons of able- and less-able readers

4.2.2 The comparison of the pre-test scores of able- and less-able readers

Table 4.3 shows the comparisons of the pre-tests scores of the able- and less-able grade eight Bhutanese ESL readers.

Table 4.3 Comparison of able- and less-able readers' pre-test scores.

	N	Mean	SD	t-value	p-value
Able-reader	20	20.1	1.97	8.702	0.00
Less-able reader	20	15.1	1.65		

$p < 0.05$

From the table 4.3 it can be concluded that there is a significant difference between the scores of the able- and the less-able readers during the pre-test with the p-

value of $p < 0.05$. The t-test value showed a difference of 8.702. The scores indicated that the able-readers scored higher than the less-able readers during the pre-test. Figure 4.2 illustrates the comparison of pre-test of able- and less-able readers.

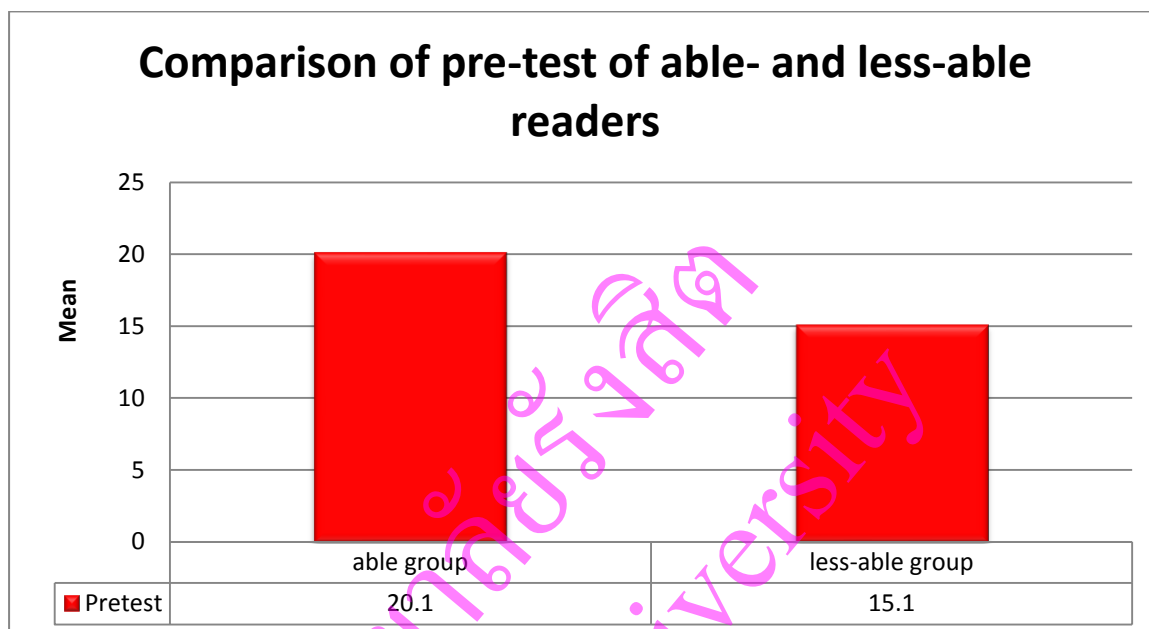


Figure 4.2 Comparison of pre-test of able- and less-able readers

4.2.3 The comparison of the post-test scores of able- and less-able readers

Table 4.4 shows the comparisons of the post-test scores of the able- and less-able grade eight Bhutanese ESL readers.

Table 4.4 Comparison of able- and less-able readers' post-test scores.

	N	Mean	SD	t-value	p-value
Able-reader	20	44.8	3.58	6.056	0.00
Less-able reader	20	36.8	4.70		

$p < 0.05$

A significant difference ($p < 0.05$) can be noticed between the scores of the able- and less-able readers in the post-test as well. The 2-tailed significance value was

$t=6.056$ which indicated that the able-readers were better than the less-able readers in comprehending the cause and effect top-level structure texts. Figure 4.3 further illustrates the comparison of post-test of the able- and less-able readers.

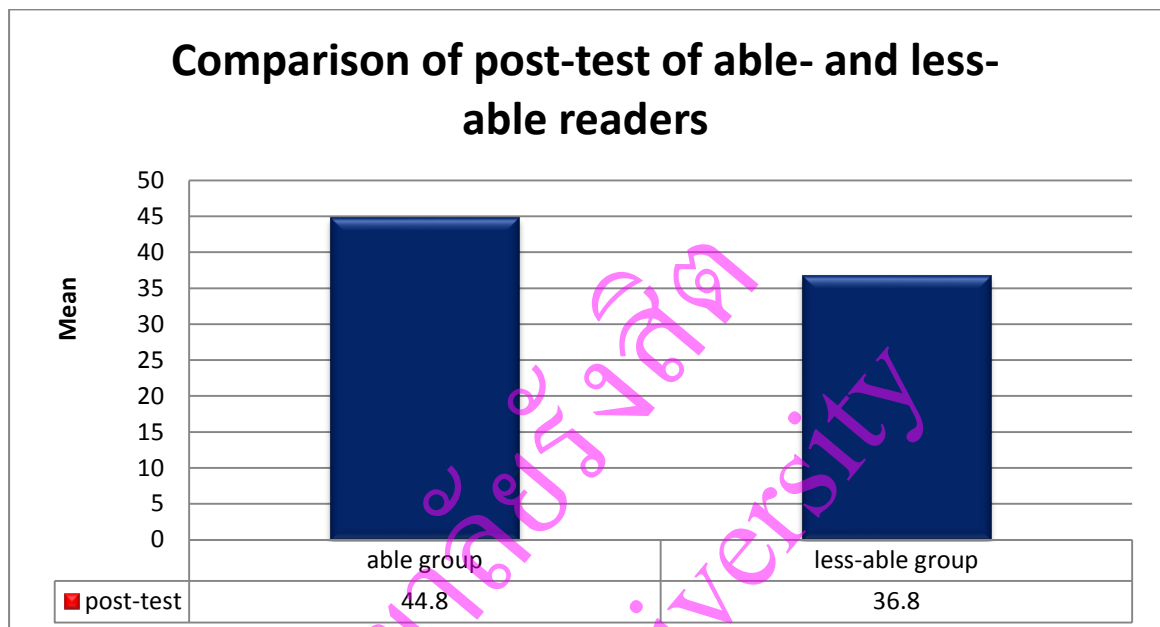


Figure 4.3 Comparison of post-test of able- and less-able readers

4.3 ANALYSIS OF THE WRITTEN SYNTHESIS

After the participants received instruction on the top-level structure, cause and effect and signal words they were provided with 3 expository texts which had the same top-level structure, cause and effect and also were approximately of the same length. The participants had to use the 3 texts as the source texts and compose their own written synthesis. The synthesis of the participant was graded according to the number of ideas they had used from the different source texts. Scores of the able- and less-able readers were then presented in terms of percentage.

The scores of the able- and the less-able Bhutanese ESL readers were compared. Table 4.5 shows the result of the comparison of both able- and less-able Bhutanese ESL readers in terms of percentage.

Table 4.5 Percentage of the number of ideas included in the written synthesis

Items	No. of ideas	Able-readers	Less-able readers
Top-level structure	1	55%	40%
Background information	6	57.5%	46.7%
Causes	15	84.67%	55%
Effects	13	87.3%	56.5%

Table 4.5 shows the percentage of the ideas used by the able- and less-able readers' in their written synthesis. From the table it could be seen that the able-readers could include more ideas in their written synthesis than the less-able readers. The results also showed that the able-readers mentioned the top-level structure of the passage whereas only some of the less-able readers mentioned it in their writing.

4.4 ANALYSIS OF THINK-ALOUD PROTOCOL

After the participants have been given the instruction on the cause and effect top-level structure, 4 participants, 2 able- and 2 less-able Bhutanese ESL readers, were chosen on voluntary basis to compose by synthesizing information from 3 expository texts which had the same cause and effect top-level structure and approximately the same number of words as the source texts. While they were composing their synthesis from the 3 source texts they were asked to think-aloud. The Think-aloud protocol was used in this study to gain insights into what thoughts were on the participants' mind

and to study the complex processes and strategies that the participants used while composing their synthesis from the 3 source texts. The voices of the 4 participants were audio-recorded and were transcribed. Then their think-aloud protocol were categorized by coding and putting into different themes. The findings from the data have been discussed below.

4.4.1 The use of instruction on the top-level structure, cause and effect and its signal words in the participants' synthesis

Instruction on the cause and effect top-level structure and the signal words had been delivered to the participants during the experimental phase of the study. The findings indicated that both the able- and the less-able Bhutanese ESL readers used the knowledge of the top-level structure that they had gained from the instruction in their synthesis writing from the 3 source texts.

"I have 3 passages on the same title as the source texts and I am going to compose my own synthesis. So, I am going to write... compose my own synthesis on the causes and effects of Poverty." (TAPA1: Think-aloud Protocol able-reader 1)

"... I mean the top-level structure of my synthesis is cause and effect... I will now mention the signal words that will show that my synthesis belongs to the cause and effect top-level structure." (TAPL1: Think-aloud protocol less-able reader 1)

4.4.2 The Bhutanese ESL participants' composing process

While the participants composed their written synthesis it was noted that both able- and less able readers followed similar writing process. Both groups read the source texts repeatedly before they started composing their synthesis. They began by first writing down the causes and then they moved on to the effects.

“I have read the 3 passages which were provided to me as the source texts and now I am going to compose my own written synthesis. Firstly, I am going to write the causes of Poverty.... I will now write the effects of Poverty.” (TAPA2)

“I have already read the 3 passages more than once. So, now I am going to start writing my synthesis and I am going to start with the causes of Poverty... Next, I am going to write about how it affects the people and the environment.” (TAPL1)

4.4.3 The strategies used by the participants while composing their synthesis

The able- and the less-able Bhutanese ESL readers used different strategies to write their synthesis. The able readers used more strategies than the less-able readers during their synthesis writing. The able readers selected the information and took notes when they were reading the 3 source texts that were provided to them whereas the less-able readers just read the source texts without selecting the information or taking notes. The able readers also highlighted any new words they found in the source texts and used the dictionary to find the word meaning. They also sought help with the spelling of the words that they could not spell.

“This word is a new word and I think I will look for its meaning in the dictionary once.” (TAPAI)

“Can you please help me with the spelling of....” (TAPA2)

However, both the able- and the less-able readers looked for words and the information that appeared in all the 3 source texts and wrote in their synthesis. They also referred to the 3 source texts whenever they didn't know what to write next. Both able- and less-able readers explained why they were writing a particular idea stating the passage that they had taken the idea from.

“...Now, I will write the effects of poverty. In all the 3 passages it is mentioned that... ah... let me check the passages again...” (TAPA2)

“... I am stuck and don't know what to write next, so, I will refer the source texts again... I also want to take the idea from the first passage and write...” (TAPL2)

4.5 ANALYSIS OF SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEW

After the 4 students, 2 able- and 2 less-able readers, who volunteered to think aloud, finished composing from the 3 source texts, they were asked to sit for a semi-structured interview. The purpose of the semi-structured interview was to find out the information to support the data that were gained from the think- aloud protocol and the results of the reading comprehension test. The data gathered from the semi-structured interview were coded and categorized into themes using Strauss and Corbin's, (1990) coding system. The findings of the semi-structured interview have been discussed below.

4.5.1 Knowledge gained from the instruction of cause and effect top-level structure.

It was found out that the instruction of the most difficult top-level structure, cause and effect, and the signal words helped the participants to understand the source texts faster and better for both the able- and less-able Bhutanese ESL students.

“The knowledge of the top-level structure and the signal words really helped me to understand the different texts faster and in a very easy way.” (IL1: Interview less-able reader 1)

“Before, when I read different texts, I could not fully understand the text but now after being taught about the top-level structure and the signal words I can

understand the texts better because just be looking at the top-level structure or the main idea and the signal words used in the passage I can understand what the passage is talking about.” (IA1: Interview able-reader 1)

In addition the knowledge of the top-level structure and the signal words also helped them to compose well.

“The activities carried out in the class on the top-level structure and the signal words helped me when I was composing my own expository text using the three passages given to me.” (IA2)

4.5.2 The procedure participants followed in composing their synthesis

The able- and the less-able readers followed almost similar procedure while composing their own synthesis. However, the able readers followed a more systematic procedure than the less-able readers and they used the knowledge of the top-level structure and the signal ideas in their synthesis.

“When I was provided with the source texts, first of all I read all three of them thoroughly for several times and in a rough paper I took notes of ideas and words which were commonly used. And those notes helped me to complete my synthesis. I kept in mind the things I learnt in the class like the top-level structure, signal words, the main idea and I also looked for details in each passage to guide me through my writing.” (IA1)

“I used the signal words and I also used the details from the source texts.” (IL1)

However there weren't many differences between the able- and less-able readers' procedure after they had finished writing their synthesis. Both the able- and less-able readers re-read and then compared their synthesis with the source texts. They then made changes where ever it was needed.

“After composing my own passage I re-read my passage to see whether I had made any mistakes or not. And then I compared my passage with the source texts to see if the concept was the same.” (IL2)

4.5.3 Methods used by the participants while composing the written synthesis

The able- and less-able Bhutanese ESL readers used different methods while composing their synthesis from the 3 source texts. The able readers used different methods while composing their written synthesis. The able readers used more examples and experiences from their real lives whereas the less-able readers stuck to the information in the 3 source texts. The able readers also used the dictionary when they did not understand the meaning of any words in the source texts whereas the less-able kept on reading even when they did not understand the meaning of the words in the source texts.

“I recollected some ideas from our real life and added to my synthesis.” (IA1)

“When I read the source texts I did not understand some words so, I referred to the dictionary and I also got help from my teacher with the spelling of some words.” (IA2)

4.5.4 Problem faced by the participants while composing the written synthesis

From the interview it was noted that both the able- and the less-able readers faced similar difficulties while composing their written synthesis. The participants stated that they were nervous and could not put all their thought into words since it was their first time to think-aloud and have someone record their thoughts while they were composing their written synthesis. In addition, the participants also had problem with using the correct grammar in their writing.

“As I was doing the think-aloud protocol for the first time I was very nervous and I also had problem in using the correct grammar.” (IL2)

“I could not put all my thoughts into words because I was nervous since it was my first time to have someone recording my voice, my thoughts.” (IA1)

4.6 ANALYSIS OF THE REFLECTIVE JOURNALS

The participants were all taught on how to write a reflective journal and were asked to write a reflective journal at the end of each session for 10 minutes on what they learnt, what they did and the difficulties that they face. The purpose of the reflective journal was to investigate whether the instruction of the most difficult top-level structure had any effect on the participants' reading comprehension of expository texts and how they used the knowledge of the top-level structure while they were writing their synthesis. The contents of the reflective journal were categorized by coding and similar issues were put into different themes. The findings from the reflective journals have been presented below.

4.6.1 The instruction on the top-level structure, cause and effect

In day 1 the participants were taught about the top-level structures and the signal words where the researcher gave them three passages and asked them to identify the top-level structure and the signal words used. In day 2, the researcher revised the previous lesson and talked about the cause and effect top-level structure, the main idea and the details in the passages. The participants were also asked to identify the main idea and answer questions about the details of the passages. In day 3, discourse synthesis was introduced and participants were asked to compose their own written synthesis using the 3 source texts provided by the researcher.

From the reflective journals it was found out that the participants discussed what was taught and the activities that were conducted during the lessons. Based on the participants' reflective journals, it could be concluded that the participants understood what had been taught to them on the top-level structure, cause and effect.

"Today, we were taught about the top-level structure, cause and effect and the signal words. After that we were given 3 passages and were asked to find the signal words. Before I did not know what top-level structure and what signal words were but now I know and I can easily identify the top-level structure of any passage and also identify the signal words that show the top-level structure." (JD1R:Journal day 1 student initial)

"Today, we learned about the top-level structure, main idea and the signal words of the cause and effect top-level structure. It was new and very interesting to all of us. We were taught how to identify the top-level structure and the signal words in different passages." (JD2H)

4.6.2. The participants enjoyed the lesson

From the reflective journal entries of the students it was found that the participants enjoyed and found the lessons informative. The participants mentioned that they have never heard of words top-level structure, signal words and discourse synthesis before and added that the knowledge of the top-level structure, signal words and the discourse synthesis helped them in composing their own synthesis. They also added that the knowledge of the discourse synthesis would be helpful to them in future. They mentioned that it would be helpful to them when they have to write their own expository essays in their English classes.

"It was interesting to learn about discourse synthesis. I really like the idea of using the ideas from different source texts and composing our own synthesis." (JD3P)

“This (discourse synthesis) will help us a lot when we have to write expository essays in our English class because we will be able to write more and better essays than before... ” (JD3K)

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CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSION, DISCUSSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This chapter presents the summary and conclusions to the findings of the present study as mentioned in chapter 4. It is followed by the discussions on the findings and recommendations for practice and further research.

5.1 CONCLUSION

The main objectives of this study were to 1) investigate which top-level structure is the most difficult to understand by the grade eight Bhutanese ESL readers, 2) develop material with the most difficult top-level structure in order to improve grade eight Bhutanese ESL readers ability in reading English expository texts, 3) examine whether the instruction of the top-level structure can enhance grade eight Bhutanese ESL readers' reading comprehension, 4) investigate whether there is any difference between grade eight Bhutanese ESL able- and less-able readers' reading achievement after the treatment, 5) examine whether the instructions of the top-level structure have any effect on the grade eight Bhutanese ESL readers as writers while composing their written synthesis, and to 6) investigate the difference between grade eight Bhutanese ESL able- and less-able readers as writers' composing process while they are synthesizing the information from multiple English expository texts.

5.1.1 Research Procedure

From the population of 80 students, 40 grade eight Bhutanese ESL students were selected to participate in the study on the basis of their scores from the general reading comprehension test developed by the researcher. The top-20 scoring students were referred to as able readers whereas and bottom-20 scoring students were referred to as less-able readers. The general reading comprehension test also determined that the most difficult top-level structure for the grade eight Bhutanese ESL students to comprehend was the cause and effect. After that the researcher developed another test on the most difficult top-level structure and was administered to the research participants as the pre-test. The same test was administered to the research participants as the post-test. Three lessons were planned and taught to the participants for three days after the pre-test. The most difficult to-level structure, cause and effect, was taught to the students. At the end of each session all the participants were asked to write a reflective journal. After the two-week instruction, the post-test was given to the research participants to see their improvement in reading comprehension. Next, the research participants were asked to compose a written synthesis from 3 expository passages provided to them as the source texts. On voluntarily basis, 2 able- and 2 less-able readers were asked to do the think-aloud protocol while they were composing from the source texts. Finally, they were asked to answer the questions in the semi-structured interview.

5.1.2 Findings

Through the analysis of the pre-test and the post-test mean scores of the able- and less-able readers it can be concluded that the able readers performed better than the less-able readers in both the pre- and the post-tests. In the pre-test the mean difference of the able- and less-able readers was 5 and in the post-test were 8 with the t-value of 8.702 and 6.056 respectively. Another conclusion that can be drawn from the mean scores of the pre-test and post-test is that the knowledge of the cause and effect top-level structure improved the reading comprehension in both the able- and the less-able readers. In the pre-test, the mean score of the able readers was

20.1 which had increased to 44.8 in the post-test. The less-able readers' mean score in the pre-test was 15.1 which had increased to 36.8 in the post-test.

The participants' synthesis had also been graded according to the number of ideas they had used in their synthesis from the 3 source texts. The percentage of the ideas used in their written synthesis indicated that the able-readers used more ideas from the 3 source texts than the less-able readers. It could be noted that the less-able readers also included ideas from the source texts even though the frequency was lesser than that of the able-readers. Therefore, it can be concluded that the knowledge the research participants received from the instruction on the cause and effect top-level structure helped them to compose their synthesis well.

5.2 DISCUSSION

The findings of the study revealed that the most difficult top-level structure was the cause and effect. The results also supported Amiri, Zainal & Samads' (2012) findings that the most difficult top-level structure was the cause and effect. The research study also supported the findings of Segev-Miller (2004) that the instruction on the most difficult top-level structure, cause and effect, and the signal words helped the grade eight Bhutanese readers in their reading comprehension and in writing their synthesis of the information from multiple source texts. The findings of the study have been discussed in details below.

5.2.1 The most difficult top-level structure

From the general reading comprehension test that was administered to the target population of 80 grade eight Bhutanese ESL students, it was found out from the test scores that the most difficult top-level structure for the grade eight Bhutanese students was the cause and effect. It was seen that 55.07% of the population could not identify the cause and effect top-level structure whereas 74.64% and 70.29% of the

population could identify the description and compare and contrast top-level structures respectively.

5.2.2 Comparison of able- and less-able readers' reading comprehension ability

The scores obtained by the research participants in the pre-test and the post-test were analyzed to examine the answers to the research questions. The results of the analysis of the pre-test and post-test scores revealed that the mean of the post-test was comparatively higher than the mean of the pre-test as shown in Table 4.1 in chapter 4 and the mean scores of both the pre-test and post-test of the able-readers was higher than the mean scores of the less-able readers as shown in the same table . However, the 2-tailed significant value was 0.00 ($p < 0.05$) in both the pre-test and the post-test. The findings revealed that there was significant difference between the achievement of the able- and the less-able readers in both the pre-test and the post-test.

The significant difference could be due to the sampling of the research participants for the study. Screening top -20 scoring and bottom-20 scoring students from the general reading comprehension test to participate in the study indicated that there was already a significant difference in the reading comprehension ability of the participants before the treatment. But, there was a significant difference in the mean scores of the 2 groups of participants in both the pre-test and the post-test. In the pre-test the mean scores of the able readers was 20.1 and the mean scores of the less-able readers was 15.1 which revealed that the able-readers scored higher than the less-able readers ($20.1 - 15.1 = 5$). Similarly in the post-test the mean score of the able-readers was 44.8 and the mean score of the less-able readers was 36.8 which mean the able-readers again scored higher than the less-able readers ($44.8 - 36.8 = 8$). The ideas included in the research participants' written synthesis was calculated in terms of percentage. Table 4.5 in Chapter 4 revealed that the able-readers could include more ideas in their written synthesis than the less-able readers. It also showed that the able-

readers mentioned the top-level structure of the passage whereas only some of the less-able readers mentioned it in their written synthesis.

5.2.3 The composing process of the readers as writers

The think-aloud protocol was carried out to find out the insights of what thoughts were in the participants' mind and to study the complex processes and strategies that the participants used while composing their written synthesis from the 3 source texts. The findings from the think-aloud protocol showed that the participants with different reading ability levels had different composing process. The able-readers followed a more systematic process by first reading the 3 source texts carefully while selecting the ideas and information that they wanted to use in their synthesis. They also organized the ideas and information they had selected from the source texts before composing their own written synthesis. In the process of composing their written synthesis they also referred to the 3 source texts for more information when they got stuck and could not figure out what to write next. After they had finished composing their synthesis they re-read their composition and compared the ideas and information with the 3 source texts and they eliminated some information that they did not want. In other words, they revised their composition and their revision was recursive. The able readers also made use of the dictionary when they did not understand the meanings of some words and they also asked the researcher to spell the words that they could not spell by themselves. After they finished writing they read and re-read their composition and corrected the mechanics. This means that they edited their composition. On the contrary, the less-able readers just read the 3 source texts and then started composing their written synthesis. They also referred to the source texts from time to time whenever they did not know what to write next. The less-able readers neither took notes on the selection of ideas or information from the 3 source texts nor did they organize the ideas.

From the findings it could be noted that the able-readers used the process of selecting, organizing and connecting (Meyer & Ray, 2011) where they selected the information that they wanted to include in their written synthesis from the source

texts. They, then, organized the information they had selected before making the connections between each idea and putting them into their own written synthesis. The less-able readers also followed the process of selecting, organizing and connecting; however, they did not carry it out as elaborately as the able-readers. They never took notes while reading the source texts and never sequenced and organized their ideas before writing their synthesis. They just read the source texts and went on to write their synthesis. Whenever they didn't know what to write next, they just read the source texts trying to figure out what they were going to write next. During the think-aloud protocol, the participants were too nervous to speak their thoughts because they were sitting for the think-aloud protocol for the first time. Therefore, the participants couldn't speak out all the thoughts that were going on inside their minds while composing their written synthesis. They could not express their thoughts into verbal words which limited the researcher to gain a full insight on the thought process that was going on in the minds of the participants.

From the analysis of the semi-structured interview it was found out that the instruction of the cause and effect top-level structure helped the participants to understand the 3 source texts faster and better. In addition, it also helped them to compose their synthesis well for both the able- and less-able Bhutanese ESL students. To support the findings from the think-aloud protocol, the participants also revealed in their interview that the able readers followed a more systematic procedure than the less-able readers in their synthesis. The findings also supported what the researcher had noticed during the think-aloud protocol that the participants were nervous and could not speak out all the thoughts. The participants mentioned that they were nervous since they were doing it for the first time and that they could not put all their thoughts into words. The participants had problems in grammar and the spellings of words while they were composing their synthesis because they had to think-aloud and write at the same time which made them nervous.

The participants' reflective journals aimed to investigate whether the instruction of the most difficult top-level structure, cause and effect had any effect on the participants' reading comprehension of expository texts. The findings revealed that the instruction on the top-level structure, cause and effect, helped the participants

to comprehend the expository texts better. The instruction on top-level structure helped the research participants in composing their synthesis. The participants enjoyed the lesson since the instruction on the top-level structure, cause and effect and signal words were new to them. The participants also mentioned that the process of composing their own written synthesis with the use of the 3 source texts was useful to them and that they can use this strategy in their English lessons to write expository texts effectively. From the reflective journals it could be seen that the participants had some limitations in expressing their opinion concerning their expectations of the lessons and their learning difficulties in each lesson. It was evident that the participants had never written journals before.

5.3 RECOMMENDATIONS

5.3.1 Recommendations for practice

5.3.1.1 Since study found out that the instruction on the top-level structure and signal words helped the participants in reading comprehension and in writing synthesis, the Ministry of Education, Bhutan and the curriculum and instructional designers can implement the instruction on top-level structure and signal words in designing the instruction.

5.3.1.2 The study also revealed that composing a synthesis from multiple expository source texts helped the research participants in their writing. As a result, the instructors can use it to teach Bhutanese ESL students in writing an expository essay.

5.3.2 Recommendations for future research

Since it was found out that the instruction on the top-level structure assisted the research participants in their reading comprehension and in composing a synthesis, further research could be pursued on the following areas.

5.3.2.1 Other researchers can study the effect of instruction on the other top-level structures like compare and contrast, description, and problem and solution at different grade levels.

5.3.2.2 Endeavoring researchers can also carry out an in-depth study on the process of composing written synthesis from multiple source texts.

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APPENDIX

มหาวิทยาลัยรังสิต
Rangsit University

APPENDIX A

LETTER OF APPROVAL



རྒྱལ་ཁབ་འབྲུག་གཞུང་། བེས་རིག་ལྟན་འགག་།

Royal Government of Bhutan
Ministry of Education
Human Resource Division

Educational
for

GNH



MoE/HRD-HRDs/INSET/22/2014/6142

May 19, 2014

To Whom It May Concern

This is to certify that following teachers are currently pursuing Masters of Curriculum & Instruction at Rangsit University, Thailand starting 1st July 2013 for duration of 18 months under Trongsa Penlop Scholarship. As a partial fulfillment of the above Masters Programme they are required to conduct a research project on a selected topic respectively. The selected research topics are all related to the school curriculum and they wish to collect research data from the schools across the country.

- Mrs. Fema (EID# 200801330), Wolathang PS, Punakha;
- Mrs. Kinley Wangmo (201001603), Gongthung MSS, Trashigang;
- Karma Wangmo (EID# 201001678), Thimleygang PS, Punakha;
- Mr. Sonma Penjor (EID# 201001669), Tsaphel LSS, Haa; &
- Mr. Lobsang Nangyal (EID# 201001607), Tashiding LSS, Dagana.

The concerned authorities are requested to kindly allow them to collect research data from the school and render necessary support to enable them to collect reliable data for successful completion of research project.

For clarification please contact HRD, MoE at +975-2-335402 during office hours

(Kinley Gyeltshen)
Chief HR Officer

มหาวิทยาลัยรังสิต
Rangsit University

APPENDIX B

CONFIRMATION LETTER FROM THE READING EXPERTS

Date: 22nd May, 2014

Dear Pema,

I, Mrs. Sonam Choden, am a Bhutanese ESL English teacher of grade eight students. I have been teaching English to the students for the past 13 years in different schools in Bhutan.

This is to confirm that I have read all the test items that you have developed to evaluate the appropriateness of the general reading comprehension test as a part of your research study. I have also read the achievement tests and the lesson plans for the grade eight Bhutanese ESL readers. Based on my experience and knowledge of teaching English I have evaluated and filled in the questionnaire that you have sent to me with the test items.

I hope my effort put in will be helpful in your research study.

Thank You and Good Luck.



(Sonam Choden)

ESL English teacher

Date: 22nd May, 2014

Dear Pema,

I, Mrs. Jangchuk Selden, am a Bhutanese ESL English teacher of grade eight students. I have been teaching English to the students for the past 9 years in different schools in Bhutan.

This is to confirm that I have read all the test items that you have developed to evaluate the appropriateness of the general reading comprehension test as a part of your research study. I have also read the achievement tests and the lesson plans for the grade eight Bhutanese ESL readers. Based on my experience and knowledge of teaching English I have evaluated and filled in the questionnaire that you have sent to me with the test items.

I hope my effort put in will be helpful in your research study.

Thank You and Good Luck.



(Jangchuk Selden)

ESL English teacher

APPENDIX C

AVERAGE MEAN OF GENERAL READING COMPREHENSION TEST ITEMS

Statement		Experts' opinion			Mean	Level of opinion
		1	2	3		
Difficulty level of the reading passages	The passages match the English proficiency of grade eight Bhutanese ESL students.	5	5	5	5	Strongly Agree
	The difficulty level of vocabulary used in the passages is appropriate for the grade eight Bhutanese ESL students.	5	5	4	4.7	Strongly Agree
	The length of the passages is appropriate for the grade eight Bhutanese ESL students.	5	5	5	5	Strongly Agree
	The signaling words in the passages are explicit and appropriate to the text structure of the passage.	4	5	5	4.7	Strongly Agree
	The signaling words in the passages help the students in identifying the types of top-level structures of the reading paragraphs.	4	4	5	4.3	Agree
	The sentences in all the passages are well structured and coherent	5	5	5	5	Strongly Agree
	The text structures chosen for the reading passages are difficult top-level structures for the grade 8 Bhutanese ESL students.	4	5	5	4.7	Strongly Agree

Statement		Experts' opinion			Mean	Level of opinion
		1	2	3		
	The major and minor details in the passages support the top-level structure of the reading passages.	5	5	5	5	Strongly Agree
Difficulty of the test items for the passages	Each test item is aligned to the reading passage.	4	5	5	4.7	Strongly Agree
	The test items are appropriate for the grade 8 Bhutanese ESL students.	4	5	4	4.3	Agree
	The vocabulary used in each test item can be understood by the grade 8 Bhutanese ESL students.	5	5	5	5	Strongly Agree
	The length of the test items is appropriate to the grade 8 Bhutanese ESL students.	4	5	5	4.7	Strongly Agree
	Total Mean	4.75				Strongly Agree

Mean (\bar{x}) is higher than 3.51

APPENDIX D

GENERAL READING COMPREHENSION TEST QUESTIONS

Instruction: Read the passages below carefully. Each passage is followed by five questions. Read the questions and choose the correct answer from the options provided.

Global Warming

Global warming is an increase in global average surface temperature. Both the land and the oceans are increasing in temperature at different rates in different places. This leads to the melting of glaciers and ice sheets, causing sea levels to rise which are increasing intense hurricanes and other storms and extreme weather. Some areas are becoming wetter, while others are becoming drier causing wildfires. As a result some animal species extinctions are caused by rising temperatures because the earth is now becoming too warm for them and they have nowhere else to go but die.

The flooding of the atmosphere with carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gases created as by-products of human activity like the change in land-use such as deforestation and the growth in industries. The emission of harmful gases from the cars and the harmful waste human beings create daily are some of the main reasons for global warming.

- The top-level structure of the above passage is....
 - description
 - compare and contrast
 - cause and effect
 - problem and solution
- The signal words used in the passage above are.....
 - like, both, created by, some, but die, such as
 - the earth, created by, because of, such as
 - this leads to, because, as a result, cause, main reasons
 - human activity, like the, this leads to, because of
- The cause and effect of Global warming can be described as.....
 - carbon dioxide and greenhouse gases lead to increase in cars and industries.
 - melting of glaciers and ice sheets lead to increase in the temperature of the Earth.
 - increase in the number of cars lead to increase in the amount of carbon dioxide.
 - carbon dioxide and greenhouse gases lead to increase in the temperature of the Earth.
- Some of the animal species are becoming extinct because.....
 - there is too much carbon dioxide for them to breathe in.
 - the Earth is becoming too hot for them to live.
 - there are too many cars on the earth.
 - the Earth is not producing enough food for them.

5. The effects of Global Warming are increasing temperature.....
- a) storms, wild fires and extinction of animal species.
 - b) land-use, industries, and extinction of animal species.
 - c) storms and increase in the number of cars.
 - d) hurricanes, increase in the number of cars.

Chimpanzees

It is fun to read about chimpanzees. They belong to the family of apes and looks like monkeys. Chimpanzee faces are pinkish to black, and the apes' bodies are covered with long black hair. Here are some physical characteristics of chimpanzees. To begin with chimps lack a tail. Their opposable thumbs and toes help them grasp objects easily. Chimpanzees are quadrupedal, which means that they walk on all four limbs, although they can also walk upright for short distances. Standing approximately 4 feet high, males weigh between 90 and 120 pounds, while females weigh between 60 and 110 pounds.

All wild chimpanzees live in Africa. They live mostly in thick rain forests and in woodlands. There are two types, or species, of chimpanzees such as the common chimpanzee and the bonobo, also known as the pygmy chimpanzee. The chimpanzees belong to the family of monkeys and they look alike but are two different species.

6. The top-level structure of the above passage is.....
- a) problem and solution
 - b) description
 - c) cause and effect
 - d) compare and contrast
7. The signal words used in the passage above are.....
- a) although, it is, with, different, to begin with
 - b) like, different, alike, characteristics, which means
 - c) two different, such as, to begin with, with
 - d) looks, such as, characteristics, to begin with, here are
8. The passage mainly talks about the.....
- a) food that chimpanzees eat
 - b) habitat of the chimpanzees
 - c) appearance of the chimpanzees
 - d) babies of chimpanzees
9. Chimpanzees belong to the family of.....
- a) humans
 - b) apes
 - c) Bonobo
 - d) monkeys

10. All wild chimpanzees live in....

- a) Africa
- b) America
- c) Asia
- d) Antarctica

The Earth and the Space

Living in space is very different from living on Earth. On Earth we experience gravity, which is the force that pulls things towards Earth. On the other hand gravity is much weaker in the space. On Earth objects stay where they are put, while in space objects float unless they are tied down. If you throw a ball on Earth, gravity will make the ball drop back to the ground. In space, though, the ball would continue to move without falling in the space.

On Earth, water flows out of the faucet and into a glass. However, in space water would flow out a faucet and float in the air. On Earth, you might shake salt and pepper onto your meal, but in space these grains would float away. Astronauts need to use liquid versions of salt and pepper. On Earth we can walk on our feet but in the space we will float in the air. So, living on the earth and in the space is very different.

11. The top-level structure of the above passage is....

- a) description
- b) problem and solution
- c) compare and contrast
- d) cause and effect

12. The main idea discussed in the passage is the....

- a) similarities between the Earth and the space.
- b) difference between the Earth and the space.
- c) similarities of eating on the Earth and the space.
- d) similarities and differences between the earth and the space

13. A ball thrown in the space would....

- a) never drop back to the ground
- b) drop right back on the ground.
- c) spin in circles on the ground.
- d) break and fall on the ground.

14. The signal words used in the passage above are....

- a) living on, like, which is, but, so, you might
- b) but, however, on the other hand, different from, while
- c) though, but, on the other hand, so, which is, you might
- d) so living, living on, like, on the other hand, however

15. Astronauts in the space use liquid pepper and salt because the
- a) taste of the salt and pepper in grains is not good in the space.
 - b) liquid pepper and salt are cheaper than the grain salt and pepper.
 - c) grains of the pepper and salt would float away in the space.
 - d) grains of pepper and salt would turn into ice.

Crocodilians

All crocodilians are reptiles with the same characteristics such as long snouts, long tails, four short legs, tough skin, and sharp teeth. Members of the crocodilian family include alligators, crocodiles and others like the caimans, and gavials. Crocodilians live in warm weather throughout the year and they spend part of their time in the water and part of their time on land. Almost all crocodilians grow to be very large, for instance the largest is more than twenty feet long. There are two kinds of alligators, 14 kinds of crocodiles, eight kinds of caimans, and one kind of gavial.

Crocodiles can live in water as well as on land and eat fish or other smaller animals. Female crocodiles dig into the sand on the banks of rivers and lay eggs. They come back to dig the baby crocodiles out of the sand when the eggs hatch. Baby crocodiles are very small but they grow very big with time. Crocodiles are ugly and dangerous creatures.

16. The top-level structure of the above passage is....
- a) compare and contrast
 - b) description
 - c) problem and solution
 - d) cause and effect
17. The signal words used in the passage above are....
- a) characteristics, for instance, such as
 - b) they come, like, include, there are
 - c) ugly, baby, eight kinds, and
 - d) as well as, very large, creatures
18. What is the passage talking about?
- a) The food that the crocodiles eat.
 - b) The different types of crocodiles.
 - c) The babies of the crocodiles.
 - d) Appearance of crocodiles and their life.
19. Crocodiles are described as...
- a) an ugly and dangerous creature.
 - b) a beautiful and creative creature.
 - c) an ugly and friendly creature.
 - d) a strong and friendly creature.

20. The female crocodiles lay her eggs in the.....
- stones in the river banks.
 - trees on the river banks.
 - sand on the river banks.
 - weeds on the river banks.

Forest Fires in Bhutan

Forest fires are a major cause for forest destruction in Bhutan. While forest fire can start naturally, almost all within the country are caused by people. Natural causes, like lightning and rolling boulders, amount to small percent of forest fires. Out of the 251 fire incidences that occurred between 2007 and 2012, 97 percent were manmade. About 32 incidents occurred from burning of agricultural debris, about 10 from electric short circuit, nine from rolling stones, six each by children playing with fire and from construction sites, five were arson cases. Two incidences were because of lightning.

The loss of forest to fire results in loss of homes and lives of many species of animals, birds and insects apart from the loss of thousands of plant species. It can also lead to loss of human lives and properties. So, for this reason people should be careful and work together to protect the rich forest of Bhutan.

21. The top-level structure of the above passage is....
- description
 - problem and solution
 - cause and effect
 - compare and contrast
22. The signal words used in the passage above are....
- loss of, it can also, while, protect, work together
 - results, lead to, cause, so, because of, for this reason
 - two incidences, cause, while, it can also, work together
 - protect the, natural causes, so, amount to, manmade
23. The passage mainly talks about....
- the cause and effects of forest fires in Bhutan
 - the cause of forest fires in Bhutan.
 - how lightening causes forest fires in Bhutan
 - the importance of forest for Bhutan.
24. The causes of forest fires in Bhutan are....
- lightening, animals, sun and man-made.
 - animals, rolling boulders, lightning.
 - natural, electrical short-circuit and man-made.
 - smokers, children playing and animals.

25. The effect of forest fires can is.....

- a) drying up of water sources and loss of homes of animals and humans.
- b) loss of property, water sources and lives of both humans and animals.
- c) burning of agricultural debris, electric short circuit, water sources.
- d) loss of property, plants and homes and lives of humans and animals.

Cell Phones versus Regular Phones

Although cell phones and regular phones have the same purpose, they have many differences as well. For example a cell phone has to have mobile service in order to talk and the battery needs to be charged. A hard wired phone can be used anywhere in your home. Some of hard wired phones are cordless and can be used in the home and even in the yard but unlike the cell phone you can't take your hard wired phone everywhere you go because service is limited to just a short range. With your cell phone, someone can leave you a message and you can get it right on the phone whereas on a home phone, you have to have an answering machine.

Although they have many differences, they also have some similarities. You can use both to make and receive a call. They also both ring to tell you that you have an incoming call. A cell phone can be programmed for special rings but a hard wired phone has only one ring tone. Cell phones are much smaller in appearance.

26. The top-level structure of the above passage is....

- a) problem and solution
- b) compare and contrast
- c) description
- d) cause and effect

27. The signal words used in the passage above are....

- a) for example, some of, you have, they also, smaller, with
- b) incoming call, only one, although, used anywhere, both
- c) similarities, unlike, differences, whereas, although, both
- d) they also, some of, smaller, both, although, only one

28. The passage above talks about....

- a) purpose of cell phones and regular phones in our lives.
- b) how to use cell phones and regular phones at home.
- c) how cell phones are similar to the regular phones.
- d) similarities and differences of cell phones and regular phones.

29. Cell phones and regular phones are the same in their....

- a) appearance
- b) cost
- c) purpose
- d) size

30. The main difference between cell phones and regular phones is cell phones....
- a) can be taken everywhere you go but the regular phones cannot be.
 - b) do not need batteries whereas the regular phones need batteries.
 - c) are small and beautiful whereas the regular phones are big and heavy.
 - d) more expensive and can't be bought easily like the regular phones.

Hanging Gardens of Babylon

The Hanging Gardens of Babylon was a man-made structure that was one of the Seven Wonders of the Ancient World. It does not exist today and many are not sure if it even existed or not. The Hanging Gardens was built on arches overlooking the city walls. There were about six terraces, so that the topmost terrace was forty meters off the ground. The features of the Hanging Garden are a mystery to the modern world.

The first stage of the building was a series of brick archways that were the same height as the city walls. Underneath them lay a shaded courtyard. On top of these arches, the Babylonians built long brick terraces in rows. These terraces were lined with lead, to hold the water, and then they were covered with thick layers of fertile soil. Many exotic plants and trees such as palm and orchids were planted. Each flower-bed was the size of a tennis court and were filled with all kinds of flowers for example roses and tulips.

31. The top-level structure of the above passage is...
- a) compare and contrast
 - b) description
 - c) problem and solution
 - d) cause and effect
32. The signal words used in the passage above are...
- a) for example, features, such as
 - b) many, these, each flower
 - c) buildings, there were, so
 - d) plants, filled, a mystery
33. The passage above tells us about....
- a) how the Hanging Garden was built.
 - b) what the Hanging Garden looks like.
 - c) what plants and trees grow in it.
 - d) who built the Hanging Garden
34. The passage lets the readers know that the....
- a) existence of the Hanging Garden could be false.
 - b) existence of the Hanging Garden is true.
 - c) Hanging Garden is hanging in the air.
 - d) Hanging Garden exists today in Babylon.

35. The Hanging Garden of Babylon were built using
- wood, fertile soil, iron, trees and plants.
 - cement, bricks, stones, plants and trees.
 - fertile soil, plants, iron, stones and wood.
 - bricks, lead, plants, fertile soil and trees.

Life in the City

The cities in the world are getting more and more crowded. Cities like Tokyo and Shanghai are now considered 'mega-cities', because of their enormous size and huge populations. The first primary cause of cities becoming so crowded is economic. As a country develops, its cities have many jobs are available. Tokyo was the motor for Japan's rapid economic development, as a result, its population increased rapidly. People moved to Tokyo because they could find employment and establish economic security for themselves and their families there.

Another reason is that thousands of people migrate to the cities not only for jobs but also for educational and personal reasons. The better universities are always located in big cities. Thus they attract thousands of students every year, and these students stay on and work in the city after they graduate for they don't like the living styles and the customs of their rural villages.

36. The top-level structure of the above passage is...
- description
 - compare and contrast
 - problem and solution
 - cause and effect
37. The signal words used in the passage are....
- as a, the first, living styles, increased, the most, rapid
 - culture, huge population, the most, as a result
 - thus, because, as a result, another reason, cause
 - people moved, better universities, reason, don't like
38. The passage mainly talks about.....
- economic development leading to the rise in human population.
 - how the people move to cities and leave their rural homes.
 - difference in the lifestyle of people in the cities and the rural areas.
 - how mega-cities in the world solve the problem of rising population.
39. Tokyo and Shanghai are called "mega-cities" due to....
- many universities with educational facilities and industries
 - huge population and enormous size of the city.
 - many cars and lots of educational facilities.
 - huge population and many job opportunities.

40. People around the world move to the big cities because there....
- a) is no need to follow culture and customs in the big cities.
 - b) are good medical and educational facilities in the cities.
 - c) are many cars, shopping malls, luxurious hotel and industries
 - d) is more educational and job opportunities with easier lifestyles.

Our Wild Relatives

Chimpanzees and humans are alike in many ways. A baby chimp laughs when its mother tickles it. After chimpanzees fight, they kiss and make up like humans. Similar to humans when one chimpanzee comforts another, it gives it a hug or pat on the back. Both chimpanzees and human are mammals and babies of both humans and chimpanzees suck milk from their mothers. There are, of course, many ways that chimpanzees and humans are different.

First difference is that chimpanzees cannot talk whereas humans can talk. They are animals who live in the forest and eat leaves and wild fruits. Chimpanzees are smaller and stronger than humans. An adult male chimpanzee stands three or four feet tall and weighs about 100 pounds. But a chimpanzee can lift more weight than a man who is six feet tall. Chimpanzees can climb trees very well and they body is covered in dark and thick hair. Humans also have hair on their bodies but compared to the chimpanzees humans have very less hair.

41. The top-level structure of the above passage is...
- a) cause and effect
 - b) problem and solution
 - c) compare and contrast
 - d) description
42. The signal words used in the passage above are....
- a) unlike, than, compared to, similar to, different, both, difference, like
 - b) make up to, who is, but, unlike, there are, different, mammals.
 - c) less hair, they are, make up, there are, who live, compared, after
 - d) suck milk, there are, four feet tall, but a, who is, different, but
43. In the passage above chimpanzees and....
- a) monkeys are compared.
 - b) apes are compared.
 - c) mammals are compared.
 - d) humans are compared.
44. Humans and chimpanzees are mammals as both...
- a) look exactly the same.
 - b) feed their babies with breast milk.
 - c) can climb trees very fast.
 - d) can walk and run on two legs.

45. The main difference between the chimpanzees and the humans is that humans...
- a) eat food and chimpanzees eat leaves and fruits.
 - b) can talk and chimpanzees can't talk.
 - c) can show their emotions and chimpanzees cannot.
 - d) cannot climb trees and chimpanzees can climb.

Volcanoes

Have you ever thought about what makes a volcano erupt or what happens afterward? Volcanoes explode because the temperature rises deep under the Earth's crust. It becomes so hot enough to melt rock and turn it into magma. Sometimes this melted rock blasts through the Earth's surface, which causes rock, ash, and deadly gases to fly into the air. The lava is much hotter than fire. As a result after the lava cools, it turns into rock.

The lava that flows out of the volcano is very hot and can knock down trees and destroy houses and even bury whole towns. It can kill people and if there's heavy rain on the ash it creates a thick mud that can trap people and animals. Although volcanoes can cause lots of death and destruction, the volcano's eruption also creates new land. Many times this new land forms an island in the ocean. You might even live on land created by a volcano!

46. The top-level structure of the above passage is...
- a) cause and effect
 - b) problem and solution
 - c) compare and contrast
 - d) description
47. The signal words used in the passage above are....
- a) many, you might, it can
 - b) cause, as a result, because
 - c) ocean, animals, although it
 - d) that can, because, many times
48. The main idea discussed in the passage is....
- a) how volcanoes erupt.
 - b) The colour of volcanoes.
 - c) the cause and effect of volcanoes.
 - d) what happens to the lava.
49. The melted rocks are called....
- a) volcanoes
 - b) lava
 - c) explode
 - d) erupt

50. Volcanoes can....
- a) build towns.
 - b) ring rain.
 - c) bring heat
 - d) kill people

The toy clown

I have a toy clown-- a gift I received from a close friend. Here are some characteristics of the clown, it has short yellow hair, made of yarn, covers its ears but is parted above the eyes. The blue eyes are outlined in black with thin, dark lashes flowing from the brows. It has cherry-red cheeks, nose, and lips, and its broad grin disappears into the wide, white ruffle around its neck. The clown wears a fluffy, two-tone nylon costume. The left side of the outfit is light blue, and the right side is red.

The two colors merge in a dark line that runs down the center of the small outfit. The white spokes on the wheels of the unicycle gather in the center and expand to the black tire so that the wheel somewhat resembles the inner half of a grapefruit. The clown and unicycle together stand about a foot high. This is how I would describe my clown toy.

51. The top-level structure of the above passage is...
- a) cause and effect
 - b) problem and solution
 - c) compare and contrast
 - d) description
52. The signal words used in the passage above are....
- a) describe, characteristics
 - b) the clown, inner half
 - c) a gift, gather in the
 - d) together, resembles
53. The passage is a...
- a) how the toy was made.
 - b) where the toy was kept.
 - c) description of the toy.
 - d) how beautiful the toy is.
54. The wheel looks like the inner half of a ...
- a) cherry
 - b) grapefruit.
 - c) apple.
 - d) peach.

55. The clown toy was given to the writer by....

- a) mother.
- b) father.
- c) teacher.
- d) friend.

Eating healthy food

Eating is an activity that we as humans do at least three times a day. We live in a world where we can get variety of food, either fresh or canned. Both help us to help us overcome hunger and give us energy however there are many differences between the two. The most notable difference between these two kinds of foods is their flavor. Fresh foods have great flavor. Canned foods however, lack a lot of its flavor. Canned foods lose some of the original fresh food nutrients when stored as many conservatives and chemicals are used to store it for longer period of time.

Another difference between these two types of foods is the cost. Canned foods are much more expensive than fresh foods. Fresh food is much nutritious and has a lot of original flavor than the canned food. Therefore it is important that you consider your possibilities and choose the best type of foods for your life and wellbeing.

56. The top-level structure of the above passage is...

- a) cause and effect
- b) compare and contrast
- c) problem and solution
- d) description

57. The signal words used in the passage above are....

- a) types, food, wellbeing, between
- b) because, these, canned, fresh food.
- c) difference, either-or, both, however, than.
- d) nutritious, lot of, possibilities, fresh

58. The passage talks about...

- a) difference between canned food and fresh food.
- b) difference and similarities of canned and fresh food.
- c) how canned foods are processed and packed.
- d) similarities between canned food and fresh food.

59. Canned foods are....

- a) expensive.
- b) nutritious.
- c) sweet.
- d) delicious.

60. Both canned and fresh foods give us....

- a) Chemicals.
- b) Nutrition.
- c) Flavors.
- d) Energy.

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APPENDIX E

TABLE OF SPECIFICATION FOR READING COMPREHENSION TEST

	Global Warming	Chimpanzees	The Earth and the Space	Crocodilians	Forest Fires in Bhutan	Cell Phones and Regular Phones	Hanging Gardens of Babylon	Life in the City	Our Wild Relatives	Volcanoes	The toy clown	Eating healthy food
Top-level structure	Q 1	Q 6	Q 11	Q 16	Q 21	Q 26	Q 31	Q 36	Q 41	Q 46	Q 51	Q 56
Signal words	Q 2	Q 7	Q 12	Q 17	Q 22	Q 27	Q 32	Q 37	Q 42	Q 47	Q 52	Q 57
Main idea	Q 3	Q 8	Q 13	Q 18	Q 23	Q 28	Q 33	Q 38	Q 43	Q 48	Q 53	Q 58
Details	Q 4 Q 5	Q 9 Q 10	Q 14 Q 15	Q 19 Q 20	Q 24 Q 25	Q 29 Q 30	Q 34 Q 35	Q 39 Q 40	Q 44 Q 45	Q 49 Q 50	Q 54 Q 55	Q 59 Q 60

APPENDIX F

AVERAGE MEAN OF PRE-TEST ITEMS

Statement		Experts' opinion			Mean	Level of opinion
		1	2	3		
Difficulty level of the reading passages	The passages match the English proficiency of grade eight Bhutanese ESL students.	5	4	5	4.7	Strongly Agree
	The difficulty level of vocabulary used in the passages is appropriate for the grade eight Bhutanese ESL students.	5	4	4	4.3	Agree
	The length of the passages is appropriate for the grade eight Bhutanese ESL students.	5	5	4	4.7	Strongly Agree
	The signaling words in the passages are explicit and appropriate to the text structure of the passage.	5	5	5	5	Strongly Agree
	The signaling words in the passages help the students in identifying the types of top-level structures of the reading paragraphs.	5	4	4	4.3	Agree
	The sentences in all the passages are well structured and coherent	5	5	5	5	Strongly Agree
	The text structures chosen for the reading passages are difficult top-level structures for the grade 8 Bhutanese ESL students.	5	5	4	4.7	Strongly Agree

Statement		Experts' opinion			Mean	Level of opinion
		1	2	3		
	The major and minor details in the passages support the top-level structure of the reading passages.	4	5	5	4.7	Strongly Agree
Difficulty of the test items for the passages	Each test item is aligned to the reading passage.	5	4	5	4.7	Strongly Agree
	The test items are appropriate for the grade 8 Bhutanese ESL students.	4	5	4	4.3	Agree
	The vocabulary used in each test item can be understood by the grade 8 Bhutanese ESL students.	5	5	4	4.7	Strongly Agree
	The length of the test items is appropriate to the grade 8 Bhutanese ESL students.	5	5	4	4.7	Strongly Agree
	Total Mean				4.65	Strongly Agree

Mean (\bar{x}) is higher than 3.51

APPENDIX G

PRE-TEST AND POST-TEST ITEMS

Instruction: Read the passages below carefully. Each passage is followed by a few questions. Read the questions and choose the correct answer from the four options and shade in the answer sheet provided to you.

Divorce

Men and women get married and depend on each other for living. However, some *couples* are unable to maintain their relationship and choose to divorce.

The first cause of divorce is due to the change in the role of women. In the past, men earned money and women depended on their husband. But now the women earn money to support themselves. Women have become independent which leads to more divorces. Another cause is stress. People are pressured to earn money to meet their expenses. When families do not earn enough money or are unemployed they also result in divorces. The final cause of divorce is due to the lack of communication. Everyone is busy and don't have time to talk about their problems with their partners.

The divorce of the parents' affects the children. Children from divorced parents are more likely to get pregnant as teenagers, drop out school, abuse drugs and have emotional and behavioral problems.

In conclusion, family is important, thus people have to be aware of the significance of marriage and should think about their children before they get divorced.

1. The top-level structure of the above passage is....
 - a) description
 - b) compare and contrast
 - c) cause and effect
 - d) problem and solution
2. The passage mainly talks about the cause and effect of....
 - a) marriage
 - b) children
 - c) communication
 - d) divorce
3. The signal words used in the passage above are.....
 - a) affects, cause, result in, leads to, due to
 - b) teenagers, expenses, final, result in, cause
 - c) divorce, communication, children, affects
 - d) final, enough, pressured, independent

4. The first cause of divorce is
 - a) lack of communication
 - b) change in the role of women
 - c) stress and pressure at work
 - d) many number of children
5. In a divorce the person who is affected the most is the
 - a) children
 - b) wives
 - c) husbands
 - d) friends
6. The word **couples** in the passage means,
 - a) children and parents
 - b) parents and friends
 - c) friends and wives
 - d) husbands and wives
7. The word in the passage which means “importance” is
 - a) divorce
 - b) stress
 - c) significance
 - d) teenagers
8. According to the passage before divorce couples should
 - a) never get married again
 - b) think about their children
 - c) communicate well
 - d) find a new partner

Smoking Cigarettes

Smoking of cigarette is considered as a fashion by the youth today and everyone wants to smoke to be able to impress their friends.

The habit of smoking cigarettes is caused due to **peer pressure**. People get influenced by their friends who smoke. Children who grow up in an environment where people regularly smoke also develop the habit of smoking as they grow up.

The effects of smoking are very dangerous. The blood pressure and the heart rate of a smoker will increase. Smoking also leads to loss of appetite and dizziness. The sense of taste and smell will be affected and the eyes will start watering. Smoking also causes coughing and breathing problems.

Yellow stains on the fingers and teeth and black stains on the lips are caused due to smoking. The immune system and the overall fitness and stamina will be weakened. The person will look older due to more wrinkles and lines on the face.

Therefore, it is best that people who do not smoke should never smoke and people who smoke should quit smoking for a longer and healthier life.

9. The top-level structure of the above passage is....
 - a) cause and effect
 - b) problem and solution
 - c) compare and contrast
 - d) description
10. The passage mainly talks about the cause and effect of....
 - a) teeth and finger stains.
 - b) watery eyes
 - c) loss of appetite
 - d) smoking cigarettes
11. The signal words used in the passage are
 - a) overall, should not, on the, will be
 - b) leads to, effects, affected, due to
 - c) stamina, will look, smoking, never
 - d) it is, grow old, due to, will be
12. People develop the habit of smoking due to
 - a) peer pressure and the environment
 - b) the need to smoke and show off
 - c) environment and to show off
 - d) love for yellow teeth and fingers

13. The fingers and the teeth of the smokers get
- a) blue stains
 - b) black stains
 - c) yellow stains
 - d) red stains
14. The word **peer pressure** means influence by
- a) parents
 - b) friends
 - c) teachers
 - d) brothers
15. The word in the passage that means “to stop” is
- a) stamina
 - b) stains
 - c) appetite
 - d) quit
16. Smokers should stop smoking to
- a) run faster and eat more food
 - b) look beautiful and stay young
 - c) live a long and happy life
 - d) get rid of yellow and black stains

Obesity

Obesity is the condition where a person gains a lot of weight. Obesity is caused due to the eating habits and the living styles.

The main cause of obesity is due to **sedentary lifestyles**. When your life lacks physical activity, you are at risk of gaining weight and becoming obese. Common sedentary activities like watching television, playing video games leads to increase in your weight. Unhealthy eating habits also results in obesity. People today prefer to eat junk food because they are easier and take very less time to prepare.

If you are obese, you may struggle with backaches and joint pains. Obesity also causes higher risks of serious health conditions, such as heart attack, high blood pressure, cancer, diabetes, and many others. Obese people also struggle with low self-esteem, depression and anxiety.

Obesity can cause major physical and mental health problems. If a child is struggling with obesity, the social and mental effects can haunt him for his entire lifetime. Therefore, it is best that we should exercise daily and eat healthy food only to keep our body fit and avoid obesity.

17. The top-level structure of the above passage is....
- a) problem and solution
 - b) description
 - c) compare and contrast
 - d) cause and effect
18. The passage mainly talks about
- a) how people become obese
 - b) the cause and effect of obesity
 - c) how obesity effect our lives
 - d) what food will lead to obesity
19. The signal words used in the passage are
- a) obesity, haunt, you may, junk food, with
 - b) major physical, many others, they are, if
 - c) therefore, results in, leads to, cause, due to
 - d) condition, lifetime, less time, social, also
20. Examples of sedentary lifestyle are
- a) watching TV and playing lot of games
 - b) eating junk and having health problems
 - c) playing games and eating junk food
 - d) watching TV and playing video games
21. Unhealthy eating habits means eating
- a) junk food
 - b) fruits
 - c) vegetables
 - d) biscuits
22. Some results of obesity are heart attacks,
- a) low blood pressure and low self-esteem
 - b) high blood pressure and low self-esteem
 - c) high blood pressure and high self-esteem
 - d) low blood pressure and low self-esteem
23. The word ***sedentary lifestyles*** means
- a) without exercise
 - b) with lot of exercise
 - c) eating junk food
 - d) watching TV
24. The word which describes a person with obesity is
- a) self-esteem
 - b) anxiety
 - c) obese
 - d) sedentary

25. The best way to avoid obesity is to
- a) exercise and eat healthy food
 - b) watch TV and eat junk food
 - c) exercise and eat junk food
 - d) eat junk food and sleep

Bullying

Bullying is an act where a person hurts or frightens someone who is smaller or less powerful. Some people bully to get power; they think if you bully people you will get noticed by others. They think that makes them feel cool and become popular. But some bullies do it just because they like to hurt people and see others cry. Another cause of bullying is when kids don't have enough adult supervision; they think they can get away with anything. Some people just have an aggressive personality which leads to bullying. They also have problems at home and need to take out their feelings on others. Some people also bully because they are jealous or want to take revenge on you.

People who get bullied lack self-confidence and will be depressed. Continuous bullying can also lead to *suicide attempts* by the victims. Children who are bullied at schools will fear and will not want to go to school.

Therefore, it becomes the duty of the parents and the teachers to watch out for bullies and victims and take action before anyone gets hurt.

26. The top-level structure of the above passage is
- a) problem and solution
 - b) cause and effect
 - c) description
 - d) compare and contrast
27. The passage mainly talks about
- a) how stronger people bully others
 - b) what happens to people when bullied
 - c) what teachers can do to avoid bullying
 - d) the cause and effect of bullying
28. The signal words used in the passage are
- a) duty of, watch, action
 - b) another, will be, who are
 - c) leads to, cause, because
 - d) therefore, at school, go to

29. Some causes of bullying are
- a) jealousy, lack of self-esteem and strength
 - b) jealousy, revenge and lack of adult supervision
 - c) weakness, problems at home and jealousy
 - d) lack of self-esteem, weakness and strength
30. Children will not want to go to school because
- a) they are bullied at school
 - b) teachers are very strict
 - c) there is no play at school
 - d) they don't have friends
31. The word *suicide attempts* means
- a) playing games with bullies
 - b) bullying the weaker ones
 - c) trying to kill oneself
 - d) fighting with the bullies
32. The word in the passage which means "violent and wanting to fight all the time" is
- a) confidence
 - b) aggressive
 - c) jealous
 - d) victims
33. The people who can help to stop bullying are
- a) parents and teachers
 - b) teachers and friends
 - c) parents and friends
 - d) teachers and police

Water Pollution by dumping waste

Water pollution is an act of making water dirty and undrinkable. In the cities, water pollution is usually caused by the dumping of waste.

The cities today are becoming overcrowded and there are no proper places to dump their waste. So, people **dump** their waste in the drains and into streams. Soap and detergents used in the bathrooms also results in the pollution of water as they flow into the streams and rivers through the drains. Another cause of water pollution is also due to the dumping of agricultural and industrial waste from the farms and the industries.

Due to the pollution of the water by waste settlement the water becomes dirty and undrinkable. Many streams are becoming poisonous because of the agricultural waste dumped in it. The insects and the other animals that live in the water are also dying because of the poisonous water.

Water is very important for the survival of all living beings. Therefore, water of all kinds should be protected and kept clean. People should take care of their waste and should not dump it in the streams and rivers.

34. The top-level structure of the above passage is
- a) compare and contrast
 - b) description
 - c) problem and solution
 - d) cause and effect
35. The passage mainly talks about the cause and effect of
- a) water pollution
 - b) waste disposal
 - c) agricultural waste
 - d) soap and detergent
36. The signal words used in the passage are
- a) due to, waste disposal, pollution, take care
 - b) because, due to, cause, results in, caused by
 - c) therefore, water, agricultural, very, should be
 - d) from, living beings, because, dumping, their

37. The waste that pollutes the water from the bathrooms are
- a) plastic and bottles
 - b) toothbrush and paste
 - c) soap and detergent
 - d) shampoo and conditioner
38. The results of water pollution are death of
- a) insects and animals and undrinkable water
 - b) insects and worms and drinkable water
 - c) domestic animals and undrinkable water
 - d) human beings and undrinkable water
39. The word ***dump*** means
- a) throw
 - b) jump
 - c) swing
 - d) pick
40. The collection of huge amount of waste in the streams and rivers are called
- a) throwing waste
 - b) waste settlement
 - c) dumping waste
 - d) waste disposal
41. Water should be protected and kept clean because
- a) everyone loves water
 - b) plants need water to grow
 - c) it is the source of all lives
 - d) all water will disappear

Alcoholism

Alcoholism is a condition where a person drinks alcohol all the time. The causes of alcoholism are due to social and physical reasons. For example, social peer pressure is one factor in underage drinking. Among adults, social gatherings with alcohol lead to drinking habits and addiction to alcohol. Some people face problems in their lives and believe that drinking alcohol will let them forget their problems and become *addicted*.

Alcoholism results in the damage of liver, heart, stomach, and also may lead to stroke, cancer, poor nutrition and birth defects. Other problems that are caused by alcoholism are lack of sound judgment and coordination, memory loss and increase in risky behaviors. Alcoholism also leads to family problems like fighting, divorce, illness and stress on the expenses of the family.

Alcoholism can be prevented because the habit of drinking alcohol is not hereditary but people learn to drink and become addicted to it. However, once you become addicted it becomes very difficult to stop which leads to many other social and health problems. Therefore, it is very important that people should all refrain from drinking alcohol.

42. The top-level structure of the above passage is
- a) description
 - b) problem and solution
 - c) cause and effect
 - d) compare and contrast
43. The passage mainly talks about the cause and effect of
- a) addiction
 - b) fighting
 - c) divorce
 - d) alcoholism
44. The signal words used in the passage are
- a) illness, risky, leads to, let them, very
 - b) causes, caused by, results in, leads to
 - c) however, therefore, very important
 - d) family, therefore, results in, many
45. The cause of drinking habits in the youth is due to
- a) alcoholic parents
 - b) social gatherings
 - c) problems in life
 - d) peer pressure

46. Family problems that are caused by alcoholism are
- a) fighting, divorce and financial problems
 - b) birth defects, stroke and social problems
 - c) cancer, divorce and health problems
 - d) stress, fighting and memory problems
47. The adults usually drink because of
- a) hereditary and peer pressure
 - b) false beliefs and peer pressure
 - c) hereditary and false beliefs
 - d) social gatherings and false beliefs
48. The word **addicted** can be described as
- a) love to drink alcohol
 - b) prepare alcohol
 - c) cannot stop alcohol
 - d) hate to drink alcohol
49. The word “sound judgment” means
- a) shout out your judgment
 - b) make proper judgment
 - c) whisper your judgment
 - d) make false judgment
50. People should refrain from alcohol because it is very
- a) difficult to quit once you get addicted
 - b) easy to quit once you get addicted
 - c) easy to start once you get addicted
 - d) difficult to start once you get addicted

APPENDIX H

AVERAGE MEAN (\bar{x}) OF THE LESSON PLANS

Statement		Experts' opinion 1			Mean	Level of opinion
		1	2	3		
Appropriateness of the learning activities	There are enough activities for the students to help them understand the top-level structure.	5	4	5	4.7	Strongly Agree
	There are clear instructions and adequate time assigned for each activity designed to the learners.	4	5	5	4.7	Strongly Agree
	The learning activities designed are appropriate to the objectives of the lesson.	5	5	4	4.7	Strongly Agree
	The designed learning activities encourage student's active participation.	4	4	5	4.3	Agree
	The designed learning activities provide an opportunity to learn about the cause and effect top-level structure.	5	5	5	5	Strongly Agree
Appropriateness of the instruction materials used in the lesson plans	The teaching learning material selected for the lesson plans are appropriate.	5	4	5	4.7	Strongly Agree
	There is enough teaching learning material used for learning to take place.	4	5	4	4.3	Agree

Statement		Experts' opinion 1			Mean	Level of opinion
		1	2	3		
	The teaching learning material used in teaching the lessons is accessible and motivating to the learners.	4	4	5	4.3	Agree
	The teaching learning material facilitates the content of the lesson.	5	5	5	5	Strongly Agree
	The teaching learning material enables students reading comprehension on the most difficult top-level structure.	5	4	4	4.3	Agree
	Total Mean				4.6	Strongly Agree

Mean (\bar{x}) is higher than 3.51

APPENDIX I

LESSON PLANS

Lesson Plan 1**Subject: English****Grade: Eight****Topic: Top-level structure and signal words****Time: 90 minutes****Date: 23/05/2014****Lesson Objectives:** Students will be able to;

1. tell what top-level structure means
2. identify top-level structure (cause and effect) of the passages
3. tell what signal words are
4. identify the signal words in the different passages

Time	Activities	Teaching/Learning Materials
20 mins	Lesson Introduction Ask a few questions to gather information about what students know about types of top-level structure <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Have you learnt about the types of essays? (top-level structure) 2. What types of essays do you know? 3. How are they different from each other? 4. Have you ever heard about “top-level structure”? Teacher will introduce the word “Top-level structure” and explain what it is with examples like compare-contrast, description, cause and effect, problem-solution.	Chalk Chalkboard
45 mins	Lesson Development	
10 mins	Teacher will explain the different top-level structures and the most difficult top-level structure i.e. cause and effect with examples. Teacher will also teach the signal words (what they mean and the signal words used in cause and effect passages). Teacher will hand out three passages on the cause and effect to the students and let the students read them carefully.	Chart papers Marker pens Chalk Chalkboard Passages

Time	Activities	Teaching/Learning Materials
20 mins	<p>Activities</p> <p>Teacher will instruct the students read the passages carefully and carry out the activities as per the instructions.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Identify the top-level structure of the passages. 2. Identify the signal words that indicate the top-level structure of the passages. 	Chalk Chalkboard
15 mins	<p>After the students have finished the activities teacher will discuss with the whole class.</p> <p>Teacher will write down all the responses on the board and discuss on both questions with the class.</p>	
15 mins	<p>Lesson Closure</p>	
5 mins	<p>To end the lesson teacher will again ask some questions to the student to make sure that they have understood the lesson</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What does top-level structure mean? 2. Can you tell me some examples of top-level structures? 3. What top-level structure did we discuss about today? 4. What are signal words? 5. Tell me some signal words used in the top-level structure, cause and effect? 	
10 mins	<p>Journal Writing</p> <p>Teacher will orient the students on;</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What is reflective journal 2. The purpose of writing reflective journals 3. How to write a reflective journal. <p>After that teacher will hand out a plain sheet of paper to each student and ask the students to write a reflective journal for the whole lesson.</p>	Plain sheets of paper Chalk Chalkboard

Lesson Plan 2**Subject: English****Grade: eight****Topic: Details in cause and effect passages****Time: 90 minutes****Date: 24/05/2014****Lesson Objectives:** Students will be able to;

1. identify and tell the details in the passages

Time	Activities	Teaching/Learning Materials
25 mins	Lesson Introduction Revise the last lesson by asking some questions <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What does top-level structure mean? 2. What top-level structure did we talk about yesterday? 3. What are signal words? 4. Give some examples of signal words used in cause and effect passages. Teacher will introduce the new topic; "Today, we will learn how to look for the details in the cause and effect passages."	Chalk Chalkboard
50 mins	Lesson Development Teacher will explain about details in the passages and how they help to support the main idea of the passage. Teacher will once again hand out the passages (cause and effect) to the students.	Chart papers Marker pens Passages Chalk Chalkboard
10 mins		
25 mins	Activities Teacher will instruct the students read the passages	

Time	Activities	Teaching/Learning Materials
15 mins	carefully and carry out the activities as per the instructions.	Chalk Chalkboard
15 mins	1. Answer the questions after each passage (to practice students skills to look for details in the passages)	
5 mins	After the students have finished the activities teacher will discuss with the whole class.	
	Teacher will write down all the responses on the board and discuss on both questions with the class.	
10 mins	<p>Lesson Closure</p> <p>To end the lesson teacher will ask some questions to the student to make sure that they have understood the lesson</p> <p>1. Why do we look for details in the passages?</p> <p>Journal Writing</p> <p>The teacher will hand out a plain sheet of paper to each student and ask the students to write a reflective journal for the whole lesson.</p>	

APPENDIX J

**PASSAGES WITH CAUSE AND EFFECT TOP-LEVEL
STRUCTURE WHICH WERE USED AS THE SOURCE TEXTS**

Instructions:

Read the three passages given below on Poverty carefully and using the information given in each passage, compose an essay in your own words.

Definitions of Poverty

The lack of food and shelter necessary for maintaining life is called poverty. Today it is estimated that more than 35 million Americans, approximately 14 percent of the population, live in poverty.

Poverty is defined by the dictionary as “The state or condition of having little or no money, goods, or means of support”.

Poverty means a shortage for man's basic needs of clothing, shelter and food. Today, poverty haunts many people across the world. Believe it or not, most people live on just \$1 a day.

Poverty

Poverty is a complicated social phenomenon, and trying to discover its causes is equally complicated. However, experts state that the main reason for poverty is to do with minimum wages and lack of access to the education necessary for obtaining a better-paying job. Poverty is mainly dominant in the low and middle class families in the US and it was due to inadequate jobs in the cities. The results of poverty are serious. Children who grow up in poverty suffer from severe health problems. Many infants born into poverty have a low birth weight, which is associated with many mental and physical disabilities and they are also more likely to die before their first birthday. Children raised in poverty tend to miss school more often because of illness. Climbing out of poverty is difficult for anyone, because poverty can become a cycle. Children born in poverty are at an extreme disadvantage in the job market; the lack of good jobs leads to continued poverty. The cycle ends up repeating itself until the pattern is somehow broken.

Poverty

There are many reasons why poverty would occur, the most prevalent reason is due to corruption, and lack of resources in the region. The governments do not use money responsibly and instead use it for themselves. The lack of resources in the region is another main factor of poverty. Even if there are abundant natural resources, the people living there lack the infrastructure and knowledge to obtain the resources. Unemployment or having a low paid job also results in poverty. The size and type of family, large families and lone parent families, tend to be at greater risk of poverty because they have higher costs and lower incomes. Poverty can have a devastating impact. The lack of food leads to health problems. Children born in poverty do not receive proper care and nutrition. Education also becomes inaccessible to the children living in poverty. Poverty also exposes people to various diseases. It may also lead to political instability and lead to increased risk of war and terrorism. Therefore, the government should work towards lifting poverty for the wellbeing of its people and for the progress of the nation.

Poverty

Today, poverty haunts many people across the world. Believe it or not, most people live on just \$1 a day. Poverty can

Low levels of education and skills among the poor families lead to poverty since this limits people's ability to access decent jobs to earn and sustain their livelihoods. Women are generally at higher risk of poverty than men as they have to take care of the family and children and do not have paid jobs. Disability or ill-health also leads to poverty because this limits ability to access employment. Living in a remote or very disadvantaged community where there is no access to services is another cause of poverty. The effects of poverty are the same as the consequences of not gratifying one's needs satisfactorily. Poverty takes a toll on poor children's development. It causes malnutrition which would affect the development of a child's mental thinking and healthy body. Poverty can lead to many other problems like lack of opportunity, mental and physical ailments, drug abuse and addiction, increase in crimes, child and woman abuse, homelessness, debt pressures and educational deprivation. Therefore, the people responsible should take major steps towards helping those living in poverty.

APPENDIX K

SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

Objective: The objective of the interview is to find out the processes and strategies that the participants used while composing their own written text from multiple source texts.

Name of the student: **Date of the interview:**

.....

Time of the interview: **Venue:**

1. Could you briefly describe what you did during the last few classes with me?

.....

2. Can you tell me the steps that you followed while composing your own written synthesis from the multiple source texts? (Probe)

.....

3. Did you use any kind of strategy while composing your own text using the multiple source texts? If yes, what strategies did you use? (Probe)

.....

4. Did you face any kind of difficulties while composing your own text using the multiple source texts? Could you give me some examples of the difficulties that you faced? (Probe)

.....

5. What did you do to overcome the difficulties you faced?

.....
.....
.....
.....

6. What did you do when you finished composing your own written synthesis using the information from multiple source texts? Why? (Probe)

.....
.....
.....
.....

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APPENDIX L

SUMMARY OF THE SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEW

Codes used for student quotation from the semi-structured interview.

IA1 (Semi-structured Interview Able reader 1)

IA2 (Semi-structured Interview Able reader 2)

IL1 (Semi-structured Interview less-able reader 1)

IL2 (Semi-structured Interview less-able reader 2)

Theme	Able Readers		Less-able Readers	
	01	02	01	02
Knowledge	Activities, top-level structure, signal words, discourse synthesis, compose my own essay, multiple source texts	Top-level structure, identifying top-level – level structure, signal words, discourse synthesis, main sources, compose our own essay	Top-level structure, identify the top-level structure, signal words, discourse synthesis, compose a new essay, source texts.	Top-level structure, signal words, discourse synthesis, some activities
Procedure	Went through the source text thoroughly, took notes, ideas and words commonly used, definition, strategies I learnt, top level structures, signal words, main idea.	Read the source text repeatedly, started writing, signal words, main idea of the essay	Definition, the main idea, signal words, conclusion	Signal words, idea from passages, main idea, conclusion

Theme	Able Readers		Less-able Readers	
	01	02	01	02
Strategies	Took some ideas, my own language, real life, environment	Referred the dictionary, help from friends and teacher	No, I did not use any strategies	No, I did not use any strategies
Challenges	Grammar, nervous and could not put thoughts into words	Nervous-first time doing think aloud protocol, difficult to put the information into my own words, grammar	Grammar problem, combine the main ideas (information)	First time doing think-aloud protocol, nervous, grammar

APPENDIX M

**NUMBER OF IDEAS FOR WRITTEN SYNTHESIS FROM
MULTIPLE SOURCE TEXTS**

Theme	Key Ideas
Top-level structure: cause and effect	
Top-level structure 1	Causes and effects
Background information 6	<p>More than 35 million Americans #P1 Approx. 14% live in poverty #P1 Poverty is mainly dominant in the low class families Poverty is mainly dominant in middle class families #P1 Most people live on just \$ 1 a day #P3 Women are at higher risk than men #P3</p>
Causes/reasons 15	<p>Minimum wages #P1 / Having low paid jobs #P2 Lack of access to education #P1 Low level of education #P3 No jobs in the cities #P1/Unemployment #P2 Ability to access decent jobs #P3 Lack of resources #P2 Lack of infrastructure #P2 Living in remote community with no access to services #P3 Living in disadvantaged community with no access to services #P3 Lack of knowledge #P2 Low level of skills #P3 Corrupt government #P2 (government uses money for themselves) Size of families #P2 Type of families #P2 (lower income and higher costs) Disability or ill-health #P3</p>

Theme	Key Ideas
Top-level structure: cause and effect	
Effects/results 14	Children suffer from severe health problems #P1/Health problems #P2/Exposes to various diseases #P2 Mental and physical disabilities #P1/Affects child's mental thinking and body #P3 Extreme disadvantage in the job market #P1/Lack of job opportunity #P3 Children do not receive proper nutrition #P2/Malnutrition in children #P3 Political instability #P2 Increased risk of war and terrorism #P2
	Drug abuse and addiction #P3 Increase in crimes #P3 Education is inaccessible #P2/Educational deprivation #P3 Infants have low birth weight #P2 Infants are likely to die before their first birthday #P2 Children miss school due to illness #P2 Child and women abuse #P3 Homelessness and debt pressures #P3

APPENDIX N

SUMMARY OF THINK-ALOUD PROTOCOL

Codes used for student quotation from Think-aloud protocol.

TAP (Think-aloud Protocol)

TAPA1 (Think-aloud Protocol Able reader 1)

TAPA2 (Think-aloud Protocol Able reader 2)

TAPL1 (Think-aloud Protocol less-able reader 1)

TAPL2 (Think-aloud Protocol less-able reader 2)

	Able- readers		Less-able readers	
	01	02	01	02
Instruction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Source-texts - Cause and effect 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 3 passages as the source-texts - Have to compose my own cause and effect essay - I have to use the signal words 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 3 source-texts - Compose my own essay 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - I am going to compose my own essay - I have been given 3 passages on the same topic
Procedures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Read the 3 passages - Create, compose my own essay - Definition - Factual information - Causes of poverty - The effects 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Read the 3 source texts - Composed my own essay on poverty - Top-level structure - Definition - Causes of poverty - Effects of 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Write a new essay on poverty - Definition - Causes of poverty - Write about how poverty is caused and what 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Compose my own essay - Definition - Write the cause of poverty - Write the effects of poverty

	Able- readers		Less-able readers	
	01	02	01	02
	- of poverty	poverty - I will mention the signal words	are the effects	-
Strategies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Mentioned in all 3 source texts - Mentioned in the 1st passage - Appears again and again - Common cause of poverty - Size of family is mentioned in the 2nd passage - Here I think lone parents means 1 parent like in divorce cases - About the Americans - Beggars in India/ millions in Africa. It is just an example 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Mentioned in all 3 passages - Look at the passages again - From the 2nd passage, I think I will.. - Let me check the passages again - As mentioned in the 2nd and 3rd passage - Can you help me with the spelling of.. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - From the 2nd passage - I don't have any idea so, I am thinking ... - Refer the source texts again - Written some causes from the passages - I have also mentioned the lack of food and migration of people - I will look at the passages again - Take ideas from this passage 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Mentioned in all 3 passages - I am stuck, so I will refer the passages again - As mentioned in 1 of the passages - I am using some ideas from the 2nd and 3rd passage - I will take this line from the 1st passage

	Able- readers		Less-able readers	
	01	02	01	02
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - I am not sure about the spelling of... - I want to use some ideas from this passage 	

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APPENDIX O

SUMMARY OF REFLECTIVE JOURNALS

Codes used for student quotation from Reflective journals

RJ (Reflective Journal)

JD1_ (Journal Day 1 Initial of the participant)

JD2_ (Journal Day 2 Initial of the participant)

JD3_ (Journal Day 3 Initial of the participant)

Theme	Day 1	Day 2	Day 3
Content	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Top-level structure - Cause and effect, description, compare and contrast, problem and solution - Signal words - Introduction to writing reflective journals 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Revised the last lesson - Top-level structure, cause and effect and main idea - Details in the passage 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Revised previous lesson - Composing from multiple sources
Activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 3 passages - Find the signal words - Identify the top-level structure of the passage - Discussed our answers with our friends 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 3 passages, cause and effect - Find the top-level structure/main idea - Answered questions on the details of the passages 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 3 passages, cause and effect - Compose our own written synthesis using the 3 passages

Theme	Day 1	Day 2	Day 3
Opinion of participants	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Liked the activities as it gave us opportunity to practice what was taught - Interesting and exciting - New experience/idea - Very helpful - We understand more - Enjoyed a lot - Learnt new words - Different experience on the type of essays - New idea on understanding and writing essays 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Learned new words - Learned new things that we never learnt before 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Interesting and fun - New experience - Helped us, who were weak in writing essays - How to create our own essay without copying - Good and easier to write expository essays well - Will not get stuck while writing our own essay - Like the style of writing

BIOGRAPHY

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