INFLUENCE OF SOCIO-ECONOMIC BACKGROUND ON ESL TEXT PROCESSING OF FIRST YEAR STUDENTS IN THE UNIVERSITY IN ENUGU STATE

BY

OBIUKWU, NKECHI ELIZABETH
PG/Ph.D./09/51462

DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH AND LITERARY STUDIES
UNIVERSITY OF NIGERIA, NSUKKA

JULY, 2019

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CERTIFICATION

OBIUKWU, NKECHI ELIZABETH, a Post Graduate Student of the Department of English and Literary Studies, Faculty of Arts, University of Nigeria, Nsukka, with Registration Number PG/Ph.D./09/51462, has satisfactory completed the requirements for the award of the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in English Language Studies. The research work in this thesis is original and to the best of my knowledge has not been submitted in part or full, for the award of any other degree of this university or any other university.

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DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to the Most Holy Trinity who is my solid rock and everything.

APPROVAL PAGE

This thesis has been approved for the Department of English and Literary Studies, Faculty of Arts, University of Nigeria, Nsukka.

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ABSTRACT

High level academic attainment in the University mainly depends on the existing pre-entry attributes including the mastery of some fundamental language skills such as text processing. Text processing is a complex and meaningful socio-cultural, cognitive and linguistic process in which processors simultaneously use their socio-linguistic context to construct meaning with text. An indepth study of English as a second language (ESL) text processing must take into consideration socio-economic background variables that impact on students' academic achievement in the university. This study looked at text processing proficiency from the sociology of language viewpoint. It started by describing the key concepts and sub-concepts of Sociology of Language and Text Processing. Five research questions were stated among them were to ascertain to what extent socio-economic background (SEB) of first year students in the University in Enugu State affect their text processing, to identify the SEB variables that affect their text processing and which of the variables exerts the greatest influence on text processing of these students. The research adopted survey design which is quantitative based. The population for this research consists of all the first year students in the four major universities in Enugu State. The sample size for the study comprised four hundred and ninety eight (498) students from the major universities in the study area. Primary data for the study were collected, using text passages selected from familiar and unfamiliar social contexts, using multiple-choice questions. Questionnaire was also used to obtain more general socio-economic data. The data were analysed using simple percentage and Z-test analysis. The work revealed that the level of parents' education, income, home environment, language of the home, social class and attitudes were prevailing socio-economic variables that exerted very high influence on the first year students' text processing in the selected universities in Enugu State. The study concluded that economic and social background of parents have important influences on students' text processing. Families where the socio-economic background is positive socially, educationally and economically achieve higher level of text processing proficiency. It recommended that parents should equip their children with conducive and stimulating home environments that promote text processing before going into the university and even while in the university. Stakeholders in every university should create avenues to impact general analytical tools, discipline-specific values and strategies that help disciplinary text processing to help the students.

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CHAPTER ONE

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

The domain of the English Language as an international language is a legion in most former British Anglophone colonies such as Nigeria. The English language has continued to dominate more sections of the economy. It has become the linguistic hub of the educational system where it functions as the mirror or the indexical marker of learner's performance in the society. The four distinctive skills of the language namely, listening, speaking, reading (text processing) and writing which bifurcate into different productive and receptive groups present different levels of challenges to different generation of learners. Present and practical classroom experiences have helped to show that text processing as a receptive skill is a difficult task for most English as second language (ESL) learners and some of their teachers. This important skill is lacking in many students of secondary schools and universities in Nigeria and this deficiency makes it impossible for academic purposes to be accomplished. In order to achieve most of these purposes, mastery of high level text processing is important. These purposes, according to Ukwuije are ‘‘to identify students' growth or lack of growth in acquiring desirable knowledge skills, attitudes and social values to help motivate students to learn as they discover their progress in given tasks and to encourage students to develop a sense of discipline and systematic study habits’’(22). Hogan et. al. opine that rapid and thorough assimilation of information from text is fundamental to success in all aspects of modern life, especially education, productivity in society and the employment world’’(1). The importance of text processing is highlighted by Adetunju and Taiwo who state that the ‘‘decline in the performance of senior school students in English Language Examination has been

linked to ineffective text processing skills and poor understanding of texts''(42). Also, the reports of West African Examination Council (WAEC) show that there is mass failure by candidates in these examinations. WAEC attributes the high failure rates to many factors. This was pointed out at the Federal Ministry of Education's National Stakeholders Consultative Meeting on Improving Performance in Public Examinations. Eguridu, the Head of National Office, uses WAEC 2015 to buttress this. According to him:

> Over two million candidates who took the examination failed. He attributes this to many factors of which the major one is lack of strong text processing spirit by candidates who prepare for the examination. A total of 529,425 candidates, representing 31.28%, obtained credits in five (5) subjects and above, including English Language and Mathematics. 1,148,262 candidates, representing 67.84 %, obtained credits and above in 4 subjects, while 1,293,389 candidates, representing 76.42%, obtained credits and above in 3 subjects. When compared to the 2012 and 2013 May/June WASSCE diets, there was marginal decline in the performance of candidates as 38: 81 per cent was recorded in 2012 and 36.57 per cent in 2013. (WAEC 2015)

He went on to disclose that "the results of 145,795 candidates, representing 8.61%, are being withheld in connection with various types of examination malpractice and the cases are being investigated and the reports of the investigations will be presented to the Nigeria Examinations Committee" (WAEC 2015). The outcome of 2016 diet was not encouraging and paints the same ugly picture. Due to examination malpractice, a lot of results were withheld by the examination body. The 2016 May/June results of the West African Senior School Certificate Examination

(WASSCE) reveal this. According to Adenipekun, the Head Nigeria National Office, ‘‘the examination body withheld the results of 137,295 candidates, representing 8.89 per cent of those who took the examinations due to examination malpractice. The cases are being investigated and reports of the investigations will be presented to the appropriate committee of the Council in due course for consideration’’ (WAEC 2016). Moving further, he gives analyses of the result:

> 1,552,758 students sat for the May/June examinations. 878,040 candidates, representing 52.97 per cent, obtained credits in five (5) subjects and above including English Language and Mathematics. A total of 1,014,573 candidates, representing 65.70 per cent obtained six credits and above; 1,167,484 candidates, representing 75.60 per cent obtained five credits and above while 1,282,204 candidates, representing 83.03 per cent obtained credit and above in four subjects. 1,370,049 candidates, representing 88.72 per cent obtained credit and above in three subjects. 1,438,679 candidates, representing 93.16 per cent obtained credit and above in two subjects (WAEC 2016).

This is of great concern to well-meaning citizens because this anomaly if not corrected will affect Nigeria university system negatively and will reflect the state of the nation in general.

Stressing on this issue further, Adenipekun presents a slight hope by saying that there is a marginal increase for the year 2017. According to him:

> 2017 WASSCE for School Candidates results’ statistics show a marginal increase. About 59.22 per cent of the participants had credits in 5 subjects and above, including English and Mathematics. The

> performance shows a significant improvement compared to 2016, which was 52.97% and 2015, which was 38.68%. 1,567,016 candidates registered for the examination out of which 1,559,162 candidates sat the examination. 1,490,356 candidates, representing 95.59% obtained credits and above in two (2) subjects; 1,436,024 candidates, representing 92.44% obtained credits and above in three (3) subjects; 1,357,193 candidates, representing 87.05% obtained credits and above in four (4) subjects.1,243,772 candidates, representing 79.77% obtained credits and above in five (5) subjects. 1,084,214 candidates, representing 69.54% obtained credits and above in six (6) subjects and 923,486 candidates, representing 59.22%, obtained minimum of credits in 5 subjects and above, including English Language and Mathematics. 214,952 candidates' results, representing 13.79% are being withheld in connection with various reported cases of examination malpractice (WAEC 2017).

From the foregoing, it becomes obvious that secondary school students who are non-proficient text processors are unable to assimilate the core curriculum and this interferes with content knowledge acquisition. This weakness is carried into the university education since high level academic attainment mainly depends on the existing pre-entry attributes including the mastering of some basic language skills such as text processing. Text processing is the process of making meaning from text. It is the ability to extract meaning from a text and at the same time relates the idea in the text with the prior knowledge processors bring to the task. An indepth study of English as a second language (ESL) text processing must take into consideration socio-economic background (SEB) of students that impact on their text processing

performance and overall academic achievements in the university. Walker opines that there is ‘‘a cumulative effect of socio-cultural context of home, community and school to be linked to the… factors in academic achievement levels in language’’ (qtd in Gonzales: 17). When the impact is negative, it results to lack of content knowledge which affects university students’ text processing negatively and, therefore, impacts on standardised tests scores of both internal and degree examinations. It is, therefore, clear that a vast number of students have completely lost interest in text processing both in and out of the universities. This unhealthy development is of great concern to language experts. Language experts have asked questions on what might have gone wrong but there seems to be no satisfactory answer to the puzzle. Adesulu et. al. say that students are expected to study and keep abreast of what is happening around them but that obviously does not happen anymore; no thanks to the advent of the social media. Many students now spend quality time surfing the internet on gossips and other immaterial issues. In most universities, majority of the students do not engage in serious text processing exercise. Even the few that engage in it once in a while merely do so as a means of passing their tests and examinations. The libraries’ primary functions are defeated instead, it is now converted into browsing centres, places of reference and copying of notes. Students prefer the electronic-library to going to the shelf to get books because most students like easy things and don’t want to stress themselves looking for books and/or processing them. They no longer work hard for a long time like before and as a result, the future may not have qualified people in different fields (2017:par.3). This has made many specialists in the field to see the need to engage in research in order to find out the root of the problem. As a result of this, factors that affect students’ text processing which impact on their academic achievement and educational attainment have been studied by many language experts.

Otagburuagu et. al. opine that it is important that you know the profile of students acquiring text processing strategies in:

> Terms of his age and maturational level: Age and maturation are important variables in language learning and indeed, in every type of learning. These variables help to shape and determine the cognitive development of the learner. Where the learner comes from: Does he come from a monolingual community, a bilingual region or a multilingual community? What kind of social, economic, educational environment does he come from? (24-25).

Some of the studies centre on Socio-economic Status (SES). According to Ahmed and Najeemah, socio-economic status is ‘‘an economic and sociological combined total measure of a person’s work experience and of an individual’s or family economic and social position in relation to others’’ (1). Farid and Ghaemi conceptualise socio-economic status as the social standing or class of an individual or group often measured as a combination of education, income and occupation’’(50). Socio-economic Status are broken into high SES, middle SES and low SES and this is used to describe the three areas a family or a student may belong to. Colman predicts that the ‘‘child’s background is very important if text processing is to be mastered … three components in the family background of the child are financial capital, human capital and social capital’’(109). The difference in socio-economic status (SES) of students reflects in their text processing achievements. The linguistic environment of low, middle and high SES students differs substantially. This affects many aspects of language and literacy development (such as semantics, syntax, morphology and phonology) which impact heavily on text processing. Hence, a gap exists in text processing growth between low socio-economic status and high socio-economic

status students which widens as the students move into the university. The disparities in experience based on contact with socio-economic status constructs affect text processing performances either positively or negatively since, according to Linders, ‘‘text processing is intricately entwined with our mental life… our attempts to make sense of our experience in the world’’(8). For students from low socio-economic status, their problem in text processing started even before they realise it. Milena clearly states that ‘‘children from families of lower socio-economic status enter school with significant deficits in broad range of preprocessing skills and have weaker vocabularies, less experience with complicated syntax and less general background knowledge’’(64). Since text processing is very important for students’ advancement in this age of information and technological explosions, it is therefore necessary. Milena says it is important to ‘‘master each of the skills involved in text processing (phonological awareness, fluency, vocabulary, phonetics and comprehension) as well as the metacognitive strategies since it is impossible to think of society and advancement without proficiency in text processing. According to Willms, text processing is important ‘‘beyond its role in the labour market but being included in a culture and for expanding social relations and networking which facilitates access to positions of influence and power in society’’(22). It is one of the major instruments of economic development through modern socialisation, that is, the means of interactions in the social, educational, political and economic power structures of the modern society. Meier describes economic development as a ‘‘process of long term per capita growth that leads to qualitative improvements throughout the social system’’(7).

Societies understand and utilise key text processing drivers such as language variation and change, especially, social factors- age, gender, ethnicity, socio-

economic background (SEB) etc. The society controls text processing by giving preferences to the types and meaning giving to texts because people's perception or point of view is rooted in their society. Social changes produce changes in the level and quality of text processing output tremendously. This is because social values are closely knit to linguistic values found in texts where the society is a stable and unchanging one. Once the societal values start changing, then language use in texts in the society changes and output is affected either positively or negatively. This change affects students through formal and informal learning. Text as the most powerful emblem of social interaction is used to send crucial social messages about who we are, where we come from and who we associate with. It is possible to judge a person's social and economic background (SEB) through his or her encoded and decoded text. Socio-economic background (SEB) is a way of looking at how individuals or families fit into society using economic and social parameters that have been shown to affect individual's wellbeing.

Many research studies have shown that a higher level of proficiency in second language (L2), especially in text processing, is a powerful indicator of access to economic and educational opportunities. The difference in the variation in L2 proficiency attainment and/or text processing may contribute to the difference in access and utilisation of educational opportunities among different social groups. Among such wide measurement of achievement, socio-economic background (SEB) has been found to have particularly large effects within the relatively specific domain of language learning. Learning occurs when experience causes a relatively permanent change in an individual's knowledge or behavior. To qualify as learning, this change must be brought about by experience, that is, by the interaction of the person with his or her environment. In language learning, especially second language learning, socio-

economic forces play unique roles in the students' attainment of proficiency in the language, especially, text processing. The socio-economic background a student finds himself/herself promotes or hinders his/her advancement in life. Santrock opines that ''the child has no choice of social class, religion, ethnic group or race. The child's world starts and ends in his socio-economic background. The child learns what ambitions he should nurture and what patterns are important to cultivate''(81). Students operate in different socio-economic environments/ backgrounds (SEB) which depend on the socio-economic forces they find themselves as they come into the world. In learning text processing, socio-economic background is crucial to parents, teachers and more especially to students. It affects learning tremendously and plays a big role in the educational opportunities available to the students as well as the motivation and/or desire to learn. Igbo and Anugwom sum up the attributes of the student' achievement in life that depends on socio-economic background by saying that ''the intelligence of the individual, the quality of education he gets and his desire for education are all affected by his SEB''(120).The student has no option but to operate within the environment available to him or her. Experiences, attitudes and materials that is related to text processing that learners' encounter and interact within their environment constitute their learning environment. Students acquire patterns of language use and interactions when they regularly engage in different oral communication, written and visual texts. This interaction puts into motion the students' text processing acquisition journey because it not only consolidates their social bonds but also develops, especially, students' oral and written language.

A good background is an indispensable asset to a student's future language development and text processing in particular. The question now arises: What is the nature of the socio-economic background of first year students in the four universities

in Enugu States? Is it homogenous, that is, are the students in the universities in this area socially and economically equal in status as to have equal opportunities in text processing achievement? Or does there exist even marked differences in benefits among students due to social and economic background? The above questions bring into view the issue of social stratification. Stratification, according to Onah, means to ‘‘divide something into a hierarchical order or strata such that there is a marked difference between one stratum and the other’’(64). It means the existence of structured inequalities between groups in society in terms of their access to material or symbolic rewards. The most distinct form of stratification in modern societies involves class divisions. It is the division of a population into unequal layers or strata. Georgieva opines that ‘‘the social class to which we belong imposes some norms of behavior on us and reinforces them by the strength of the example of the people with whom we associate most closely’’(9). Hence, there exists hierarchical difference between individuals or groups within the society. This socio-economic difference between groups of individuals creates difference in their life chances and power which Georgieva says results to ‘‘choice of language forms that impacts on text processing’’(9). The ranking or grading of individuals or group into hierarchical layers represents structured inequality in the allocation of rewards, privileges, resources and educational opportunities. Some individuals because of their group membership or roles are advantaged while others are disadvantaged. People in the same social strata share the same social and economic position which impacts positively or negatively on text processing habit. Hence Sarfatu and Ibbu point out one of the negative impact of socio-economic background. According to them “a major phenomenon that has been linked to dwindling text processing ability is low level of computer literacy among students’’ (par.1). Few students are literate in this

area and these few are unfortunately distracted. As good as ICT is, it casts some measure of negative effects on the academic life of students, text processing inclusive. This internet distraction has caused many students to waste valuable time surfing diverse anti-moral and anti-socially inclined websites. Also, the introduction of the Global System of Mobile Communication (GSM) in Nigeria has been viewed as one progress that has come with certain negative tendencies that are detrimental to the culture of text processing in the country. Concluding, they say that ‘‘many people’s general perception is that serious text processing exercise is meant for academic or school work alone rather than for other purposes such as for pleasure, fun and recreation which is considered by some people as not quite essential’’(par.4). This situation is at variance with the current demand since a good mastery of text processing in English became a measure of an individual’s enlightenment, especially when it becomes clear that a Western education Certificate such as O’ Level and Degree certificates are the master key to all forms of economic and social elevations. Since students cannot avoid this all embracing language skill, there is need to find a way of coming out of the huddle and avoid the ugly situation of mass failure in public and degree examinations in Nigeria and Enugu State in particular. This research work, therefore, gears towards studying socio-economic background of first year students in the university in the study area as well as finding out the influence this exerts on these students.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Current text processing research in general shows that several key factors affect students’ personal and cognitive variables at primary and secondary levels which impact on their achievement level of text processing in the University. Text processing during primary and secondary school focuses on decoding and fluency

which require both phonemic awareness and phonics skills. This involves mainly the use of bottom up or top down models of text processing. The use of any or both of these models at the University limits the students from attaining the required level of proficiency needed to process texts. These students struggle to study and process numerous texts before them. Many of these students have low working memory capacities which negatively affect text processing and so are more or less subsumed in the class. These students struggle to process texts and so do not exhibit high level achievement in their university programmes. They avoid processing numerous texts (before them) in their chosen fields of study because some important variables are neglected in their early training. The negative impacts of this situation include high failure rate in examinations, increase in students' dropout rate, and production of half-baked graduates with its attendant negative impact on the country socially, economically and politically. The above negative impacts of poor text processing achievements by first year students in the University calls for urgent need to high light and clarify the nature of socio-economic backgrounds' factors militating against viable text processing performances for first year students in the university in the study area. Therefore, the researcher deems it necessary to look into other factors outside the language skill itself that prevent these students from being competent in this all important language skill. Although some studies have been done on text processing as a language skill, adequate attention has not been given to find out why students still lack deep approach to text processing. This is because these researches focused all the attention on the language skill itself without due attention to other factors outside the language that exert tremendous influence on the mastery of the language skill. This is because despite all the attention given to ESL text processing below the university level, students come into the university without being proficient

in this area. Pessimism due to poor educational background and the need to ascertain the nature of socio-economic variables that brought about students' poor performance in text processing necessitates this research study. Therefore, the researcher deems it necessary to look into other factors outside the language skill itself that prevent these students from being competent in this all important language skill. Although numerous works have been done in this area, attention were mainly on the theoretical aspect of the language skill itself without exposing other practical factors outside the theoretical aspect of the language that will help students develop deep approach to text processing. Also, there is no study known to the present researcher that has focused on the socio-economic background of first year students in the university in the present study area. This study therefore, intends to fill these gaps.

1.3 Aim and Objectives of the Study

The aim of this study is to investigate the influence of socio-economic background on ESL text processing on first year students in the University in Enugu State.

The objectives of this research work, therefore, are:

1. to determine how many of socio-economic background constructs have influence on the students' text processing in this study area.
2. to determine the degree of impact of socio-economic background on text processing among first year students in the university in Enugu State.
3. to determine which of the socio-economic background constructs has the greatest influence on the students' text processing ability, and.
4. to assess whether there exist inverse or positive relationship between the students' socio-economic background and text processing achievement in the study area.

1.5 Research Questions

The following research questions therefore, guided this study.

1. What are the socio-economic background variables that affect text processing?
2. To what extent does socio-economic background of the first year students in the university in Enugu state affect text processing?
3. Which of the variables exerts the greatest influence on text processing on these students?
4. What is the relationship between the student's socio-economic background and text processing achievement?
5. To what extent does text processing proficiency acquired below the university affect high level text processing at the university level?

1.6 Significance of the Study

Findings from this work will generally help language experts as Nigeria is striving to achieve growth and development in economic, social and political sectors of the economy. By having a paradigm shift in the approach in handling text processing, undergraduates who are the future leaders are prepared to take over the burden of continuous national development. The government will benefit because high text processing proficiency will lead to success in the students' training programmes. Economically, this will lead to the production of qualified manpower that will contribute positively towards the development of the country. The standard of living of the various students also would increase. Politically, the country would have vibrant electorates who will participate fully in the governance of the country. Socially, the students would not be social nuisance rather they will contribute

positively to the growth of the nation. Good text processing skill would make the students to achieve more and thereby boost their self-esteem. The misplaced priorities of cultism, prostitution and other criminal acts would be curtailed. The students would be more law abiding. The tertiary institutions would have peaceful and orderly environment that would be conducive to effective teaching and learning. The tertiary institutions' authorities would be happy to turn out citizens who would be found worthy in character and in learning.

Findings from this research are specifically essential to the field of text processing for various reasons:

1. Language experts will bring to the knowledge of students and general public the impact socio-economic background variables bear on the second language text processing.
2. It will help language experts overcome frustration they encounter due to students' inability to automatically transfer text processing strategies they use while studying in their native language (L_1) to second language (L_2) and so move up to the level where they will be able to stop using bottom-up strategy and move over to level of metacognition strategies during text processing.
3. It will help students to develop good processing experience and develop confidence in their ability to peruse and process texts in their fields of endeavour.
4. This research will enlighten parents on the impact of home environment on text processing and the impact on educational advancement of their children.
5. Mastery of text processing will enhance academic success in the university for students with various socio-economic backgrounds in their chosen fields.

6. It will help the students to understand the importance of intrinsic text processing motivation especially those from disadvantaged socio-economic background.

7. It will provide the students with an increased sensitivity towards the process of acquiring text processing skills and increases the students learning potentials and success in the university and society at large.

8. It will draw the attention of scholars/researchers to the need to review the critical text processing strategies in use in senior secondary school level.

9. It will motivate experts to draw the attention of National University Commission (NUC) to see the need to include text processing as one of the major topics to be treated in the ‘‘Use of English’’ programmes.

1.7 Scope of the Study

The scope of this study is limited to the investigation of the influence of socio-economic background on the ELS text processing potentials of first year students in four selected universities in Enugu State, Nigeria. The universities were University of Nigeria, Nsukka (UNN), Enugu State University of Science and Technology, Enugu (ESUT), Caritas University, Amorji-Nike and Godfrey Okoye University, Ugwuomu-Nike (GO). This study also focused on investigating the impact of socio-economic background on only the written aspect of the students’ text processing proficiency and performance.

1.8 Research Hypotheses

The following null hypotheses were used for the study:

$H0_1$ The student's socio-economic background (SEB) does not have any effect on text processing achievement.

$H0_2$ There is no variable that exerts the greatest influence on student's text Processing.

$H0_3$ There is no relationship between students' socio-economic backgroundand text processing achievement.

$H0_4$ The relative influence of the school on the student does not affect text processing ability.

$H0_5$ The income and educational background of the parents does not have any effect on students' text processing achievement.

$H0_6$ Student's motivation and interest does not affect text processing ability.

1.9 Limitations of the Study

. The research could have been more representative of the university population in Nigeria. This was, however, as a result of the time, cost and access restrictions. It is believed that despite these, the insight gained from the research is still highly valuable and shows the new directions for further research.

CHAPTER TWO

2.0 REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

2.1 Introduction

This chapter presents a review of related literature under these broad headings: conceptual matters, related theories, empirical studies and summary of works reviewed. The purpose here is to establish the gap which the present effort will fill in the literature.

2.2 Text and Text Structure

Text is very important in communication because students interact by means of texts instead of single words or fragments of sentences in languages. Karatay sees text as a ‘‘meaningful, logical and related structure composed of all structures based on language. The text is used to express an opinion or experience in writing’’(17). To Werlich, a text is an ‘‘extended structure of syntactic units, that is, text as super-sentence, such as words, groups, and clauses and textual units that is marked by both coherence among the elements and completion ... a non-text consists of random sequences of linguistic units such as sentences, paragraphs, or sections in any temporal and/or spatial extension”(23). Beaugrande and Dressler see it as ‘‘a communicative language event in a context’’(63). They identify two text types. The surface text is the ‘‘set of expressions actually used; these expressions make some knowledge explicit while other deep knowledge remains implicit though still applied during processing"(63). This text types, Halliday, says could be any passage spoken or written of any length that forms a unified and meaningful whole and must show a unit of language in use. It is not a grammatical unit like a clause or a sentence and it is not determined by its size. A text is best regarded as a semantic unit; a unit not of

form but of meaning"(1). The rule guiding text construction is quite different from sentence construction. Fowler states that “a text is made up of sentences but there exist separate principles of text-construction beyond the rules for making sentences"(59). Proper processing of any giving text is not based on the text before the student rather it reflects what is not said or written. Continuing, Halliday says that “there is a text and there is other text that accompanies it that is, the con-text. This notion of what is ‘with the text’, however, goes beyond what is said and written. It includes other non-verbal signs on the total environment in which a text unfolds’’(5). This implies that a text is a sign representation of a socio-cultural event embedded in a context of situation. Context of situation is the semi-socio-cultural environment in which the text unfolds. Text and context are so intimately related that lack of knowledge of one affects the other. There are three features of context of situation. They are field of discourse/experiential meaning, the tenor of discourse/ interpersonal meaning and the mode of discourse/logical meaning. Field of discourse is the meaning derived based on the social actions and the engagements of the students that help in the understanding of the text. Tenor of discourse is the meaning that results based on the roles of and relationships among participants which help in the understanding of the text. These relationships may be permanent or temporary. The mode of discourse is the meaning that the language, written or spoken, gives to the understanding of the text. This is made up of the symbolic organisation of the text, and its intended function within the context. There must be unity and semantic interdependence within text. This unity and semantic interdependence within a text is called texture. Any text that lacks texture would be referred to as a bunch of isolated sentences that have no relationship to each other. Each line in a text is linked to the previous line, that is, it must agree with the seven standards of textuality, cohesion,

coherence, intentionality, acceptability, informatively, situationality and intertextuality. Eggins opines that language contains ‘‘a linear sequence and this linear progression of text creates a context of meaning. This contextual meaning at the paragraph level is referred to as coherence while the internal properties of meaning are referred to as cohesion’’(85). Cohesion is the result of semantic ties or the dependent links between items within a text. These ties come together to create meaning. According to Kavcar and Oğuzkan, texts types are species that take place in literature and writings that have literary value’’(23). The four text types list four general reasons why authors write. Identifying the text type of a passage helps the student set the purpose for text processing and alerts the students to the organisation of the piece. Skidmore and Graber outline four text types. This is presented in the table below.

Table 1: Types of Text

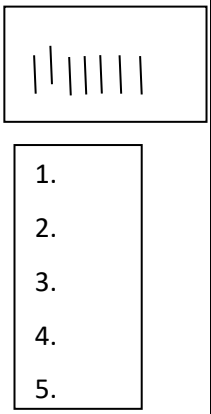
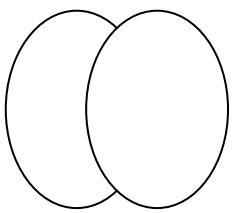
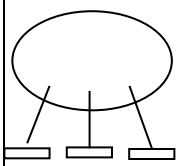
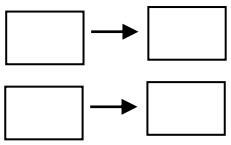
Narrative	**Expository**	**Technical**	**Persuasive**
. Entertains	• Facts /information	• Information to perform a task	Author tries to convince student to take a certain opinion or perform a certain action.
Tells a story	Text features (headings, bold word, charts, graph, captions)	Steps	
characters, setting, problem, resolution			

Skidmore and Grabe Publishing

Knowledge of text types aids students to identify text structures. Text structures are organisational patterns found within the text types. An author often chooses one main text structure for a piece but may incorporate several of the text structures throughout the piece. The structures include sequence, problem and solution, compare and contrast, description, cause and effect etc. According to Williams, identifying text structures is one of the ‘‘specific prior/background knowledge that skilled processors possess’’(20). Good processors can identify important information in a text and be aware of how other textual information relates to important propositions. Moving further, she says that knowledge of text structure helps students to ‘‘understand that a text might present a main idea and details, a cause and then its effect, and/or different views of a topic... to recognise text structures when they are processing any text’’(20).

Skidmore and Graber present five text structures. The table below illustrates different types of text structures**.**

Table 2 Types of Text Structures

Sequence	Problem and solution	Compare and contrast	Description	Cause and Effect
steps specific order 	Problem which is solved 	Comparing how things are the same/different 	Details 	Something causes something else to happen 

Skidmore and Graber Kagan Publishing

Medina concludes that this knowledge will ‘‘stimulate text processing by arousing interest in texts or novels, increases background knowledge on literature and on different kinds of publications. Processing skills can be improved by familiarising and duplicating specific text structures and the use of specialised vocabulary’’(149).

2.3 Text Processing

Text processing is the process of making meaning from texts. It is the ability to engage in the complex exercise of going through a text to assimilate, analyse and interpret it in order to bring out the meaning and the relevant information it contains. Text processing is a flexible and ongoing cognitive and constructive process. Kintsch opines that:

> It is a two-way process that integrates information from the text-based model with information from prior knowledge using inferential processing. This inherently involves a negotiation between the student and the text. This negotiation involves top-down and bottom-up processes that consider a whole range of students’ and texts’ attributes. (810)

For Otagburuagu et. al, it is a ‘‘process of reconstructing the writer’s intended meaning. Text processing involves an interaction between three parties: the processor, the writer and the text’’(74). The ability to process text with understanding is a skill that is essential in modern society as there is a lot of materials that need to be perused and understood. Yet, a large number of students never master it completely. In the modern technological and advanced society, skill in text processing is very important since so much of what one needs to know is communicated through oral and written texts. This indicates that it is not possible to function in the modern society without

mastering text processing techniques. Most students rely on their ability in this area in order to gain information or expand their knowledge. Students' proficiency in text processing is essential since most of the content materials in all areas of study are available to them in written texts. Thus, text processing is interactive in nature. It is an interaction between the processor, the author and the text. This interaction is explained in terms of the relationship between the processor, the text and the context in which the exercise is being preferred. The processor is considered to be a language user and the text is considered to be an instance of language in use. The implication is that if students are proficient in the language, they will be capable of ascribing meaning to, and interpreting meaning from the text. When a student goes through the text, the response is not only to the meaning expressed in the linguistic elements but also takes into account the socio-cultural context which is reconstituted through the language patterns. Thus, it can be concluded that the ability to understand depends on a variety of factors. These factors, according to Kintsch are:

> Within the student which have been shown to have an effect on text processing and the product of the exercise. There are also aspects of texts to be handled and which could contribute to the whole process. The interaction aspects within the student and that of the text give an overall picture on the act of what is obtainable. (80)

Thiede and Anderson see these aspects of the text that may facilitate, or make difficult the process as ''text content, text organisation, sentence structure, layout and the medium in which it is conveyed''(134). To get text information, students need to develop mental models or representations of meaning of the text ideas during the processing exercise. There are two classes of mental models: a text-based model, which is a mental representation of the propositions of the text and a situation model

consisting of what the text is perceived to be about. During the task, skilled processors normally develop a text-based model which is a mental representation of the actual text discourse. The text-based model incorporates propositions taken from the processing of successive sentences that are sometimes supplemented by inferences that are necessary to make the text more coherent. At the lower level, understanding of written text involves the processing of the symbolic representations of parts of words, phrases and sentences. At the higher level, a student must link ideas across sentences and form a mental model that incorporates complex themes and story plots. Explaining further, Mc Namara posits that ‘‘situation models involve elaborative inferences that integrate prior knowledge with text-based information. Unlike the text-based models, situation models do not normally retain all text information but support a more flexible knowledge structure that can enable the integration of both visual and verbal representation’’ (23). Thus, Grabe sees the construction of a situation model as a:

> Dynamic constructive process that is determined by the interaction of the student, the text structures and the semantic content. It is a cohesive representation of the meaning of the text ideas. In constructing a situation model, the student is required to search for coherence at the lower and higher levels and to infer meanings that are often implied by drawing from their existing background knowledge. While doing this, the student actively constructs the situation model by using information within the text and also information from stored prior knowledge.(382)

Thus, the main difference between text-based and the situation model is assumed to be one of inference making. The text-based model is inferentially light, that is, drawing inferences is easy and direct from the text while the situation model is

inferentially dense the inferences are true representation of the state of affairs in real world. In building clear cut mental representations, students must also process meaning at literal, inferential, and problem solving levels of thinking. For these operations to be effective, the student must set task goals, monitor meaning and reflect upon their own understanding. Hence, Cain and Oakhill agree that it is a ‘‘complex interactive set of operations requiring complex cognitive functioning at a number of levels simultaneously’’ (439). As understanding involves the interaction of a wide range of cognitive skills and processes, there are many occasions where difficulties arise that may lead to processing failure. In the course of the task, the ability to derive meaning is normally improved when there is a reduction in the cognitive load of a student’s working memory and the student can decode the words and phrases fluently and bring meaning to the unfamiliar vocabulary encountered. The indications are that successful students are more efficient at gaining unfamiliar word meanings from texts because they have a greater existing vocabulary, more experience using context clues and a greater background knowledge. In contrast, less skilled students are considered to have more difficulties in integrating given text information. Also due to the fact that strong contextual cues are not always found in many texts, less skilled students may have more difficulty considering the writer’s massages and forming appropriate inferences from unfamiliar events or relationships. Hence the ability to process text, understands, gaining meaning and interpreting the text, according to Anderson, depends a lot on:

> Student related, text related and situational factors. Meaning is formed in the student’s head, that is, a person’s prior knowledge affects the kind of meanings derived from text information and therefore, an individual’s existing knowledge is a major determinant in acquiring

> new information. The student's processing of the text is considered to be linked to the student's ability to construct hypotheses, rules, schemas, and mental models.(124)

Greater meta-linguistic awareness helps students to effectively utilise strategies and reflect on how the discourse provides support for a specific interpretation of the text information. The propositions such as transitional words, topic sentences, sentence-initial phrases, anaphoric linkages, and various grammatical structures link ideas together, show relationships, indicate transitions from one idea to the next and build coherence in the texts. The knowledge of this discourse information assists students to identify specific organisational patterns in texts and construct a coherent understanding of the information allowing them to build a text model of understanding. Text structure refers to the ways that the author organises information in the text either narrative or expository. The narrative text typically has a general structural pattern whereas the expository text has several patterns such as description, sequence, listing, compare and contrast, cause-effect, and problem-solution, and analysis. Text structure helps the student understand the writer's purposes such as whether to inform the student or persuade the student. Therefore, students rely on the rhetorical structures of the text to form a text model and background knowledge of text structures to form a situational model. Grabe says that in order ''to understand main ideas, students need knowledge of a large receptive vocabulary, basic grammar, effective processing strategies, strategic processing abilities to maintain a high level of understanding and an awareness of discourse structure. These skills support the fluent students in establishing the gist of the texts''(251). Understanding the main idea in the text helps the students draw summaries, evaluate and critically interpret the content of the text. Understanding a text fully is identifying all supporting

information to the main idea of the text. Understanding of supporting information or specific detailed information to the main idea involves knowledge of vocabulary, grammar, discourse and text structure, effective text processing strategies, and effective strategic processing abilities. Muramoto sums up text processing as a ‘‘central element of literacy since it activates an individual capacity to process a text, refine the content and understand the meaning’’(45). This important language skill is lacking among students in the lower and higher levels of educational institutions. There is urgent need to enlighten the students on the strategies that will help them to master this important language skill.

Text Processing Strategies

Text processing strategies are conscious plans and sets of steps that good students use to make sense of text. These strategies help students become purposeful and active processors who are in control of their own studies. Highlight from Phakiti reveals that ‘‘text processing strategies are the student’s deliberate, planned, intentional, goal-directed and future driven plans aim to improve understanding of text’’(656). This strategy helps students to be aware of what they understand, identify what they do not understand and use appropriate strategies to resolve problems while studying. According to Grabe, ‘‘students who are good at monitoring their understanding use it to know when they understand what they go through and when they do not. They have strategies to "fix" problems in their understanding as the problems arise’’(384). Instruction helps students become better at monitoring their understanding. Another strategy identified by Grabe is metacognition. Grabe posits that ‘‘metacognitive strategy is recognising organisational patterns of the task or given information, actively monitoring cognitive processes and having strategic regulation and developing of mental processes to achieve particular objectives such as understanding

texts, identifying specific information, and remembering propositions''(384). This helps students to use metacognitive strategy to think about and have control over their studies. Before engaging in any exercise, they have to clarify their purpose for engagement in the task and preview the text. During the actual processing, they monitor their understanding by adjusting their fluency speed to fit the difficulty of the text and solve any text processing problems they have. After the task, they check their understanding of what they have done. Adler moves on to identify graphic and semantic organisers as processing strategy. According to him, it is use to illustrate concepts and relationships between concepts in a text using diagrams. Graphic organisers are known by different names, such as maps, webs, graphs, charts, frames, or clusters. Regardless of the label, Adler opines that graphic organisers can help students to:

> Focus on concepts and how they are related to other concepts. Graphic organisers can help students to process textbooks in their field of studies. It helps students focus on text structure differences between fictions and non -fiction as they go through the texts; provides students with tools they can use to examine and show relationships in a text and help students write well-organised summaries of a text. (50)

Adler moves on to explain that proper use of the above strategy helps students to ''understand the terms which they use to compare and contrast information from two sources''(3). He further refers to answering questions as another strategy:

> The Question-Answer Relationship strategy (QAR) which encourages students to learn how to answer questions better and use this to assess whether the information they use to answer questions about the text is

> textually explicit information (information that is directly stated in the text), textually implicit information (information that is implied in the text), or information entirely from the student's own background knowledge. (51)

These questions he says, can be effective because they give students ‘‘a purpose for studying, focus students' attention on what they are to learn, help students to think actively as they progress, encourage students to monitor their understanding and help students to review content and relate what they have learned to what they already know’’(51). Exposing this further, Adler exposes four different types of questions which students can use to illustrate the above points. They are questions that is found right in the text that ask students to find the one right answer located in one place as a word or a sentence in the passage; questions based on the recall of facts that can be found directly in the text. Answers to this type of question are typically found in more than one place, thus requiring students to think and search through the passage to find the answer. The last one is questions that require students to use what they already know with what they have learned from going through the text. To achieve this, students must understand the text and relate it to their prior knowledge before answering the question. Students generate questions that will help them to know if they can answer the questions from the text or if they are able to process the text. Students learn to ask themselves questions that require them to combine information from different segments of the text. For example, students can be taught to ask main idea questions that relate to important information in a text. Students also recognise story structure. To achieve this, students learn to identify the categories of content (characters, setting, events and problem resolutions) in the text through the use of story maps. Instruction in story structure improves students' understanding. Adler

concludes with summarising as the last strategy. He says that it helps students to ‘‘determine what is important in the text and to put it into their own words. The ability to summarise helps students to identify or generate main ideas, connect the main or central ideas, eliminate unnecessary information and remember what they have studied’’(52). Breiseth presents three approaches to be use in order to master the strategies highlighted by Adler. The first one is that the students’ background knowledge should be utilised. To achieve this, parents, teachers, and students themselves should draw on students' existing knowledge that they already possess which they cannot yet demonstrate effectively in English Language by creating opportunities that will make associations between students' experiences and new content. To achieve this, students should be allowed to use their native language with peers for a quick brainstorm to discover what they know about a topic before presenting their ideas. Students with limited or interrupted schooling who may not have the same level of knowledge as their peers should be helped by using references that may need to be explicitly explained. The second approach is to allow students to embark on a tour of the text. Each time a text is handed to students, different elements of the text such as the table of contents and the glossary should be noted and discussed. The organisation of the text should be noted by pointing out bold prints, chapter headings, and chapter summaries. Once students learn how to recognise these elements, they will be able to preview the text independently. Third approach is the use of a picture-walk for fiction or non-fiction texts. Students should be made to walk through the book with taking notes of photographs, illustrations, and other graphic elements. They should be able to raise questions on what they notice about the pictures and how they think those details may relate to the story or content (www.ascd.org/ASCD-express/vo15/511-breiseth.aspx)

In a similar vein, Pardede calls these strategies tips. He moves on to give a summary of guidelines for effective mastering of text processing strategies (tips) by students. This he arranges into three stages. The first stage is Pre-Processing Tips. According to Pardede, before the actual act of processing a text begins, there are things to be considered in order to make the task of processing more understandable. Students need to make sure that the texts to be processed contain words and grammatical structures familiar to them. If the texts contain unfamiliar vocabulary, students can introduce key vocabulary in pre-processing activities that focus on language awareness, such as finding synonyms, antonyms, derivatives, or associated words. The topics of texts chosen should reflect the age range, interests, sex and background culture of the students for whom they are intended. If they are not, it is necessary to provide the necessary background information to facilitate understanding. This activity could be carried out by letting the students brainstorm ideas about the meaning of a title or an illustration and discuss what they know. Pardede moves further to outline some activities students can use during the pre-processing stage. These activities will not take a very long time to carry out. However, they are very effective in overcoming the common urge to start processing a text closely right away from the beginning. He calls this students-directed pre-processing in which students try to figure out some key vocabulary, ideas in the text and the type of the text. In this approach, the student directly explains the information he will need, including key concepts, important vocabulary and appropriate conceptual framework. The text types are also necessary to be introduced because texts may take on different forms and hold certain pieces of information in different places. The students' familiarity with the types of the text they are given will develop their understanding of the layout of the material. Such familiarity will, in turn, enable them to focus more deeply on the

parts that are more densely compacted with information. Even paying attention to the year of publication of a text, if applicable, may aid in presuppositions about the text as well as glancing at the name of the author. The second tip he calls interactive activities in which the students generate among themselves a discussion and draws out the information they already have and interjects additional information deemed necessary to an understanding of the text to be processed. This tip is reflective activities in which students are guided to make themselves aware of the purpose and goal for processing a certain piece of written material. They use questions to bring out the reason for engaging in the exercise. Questions like: Why am I processing this text? The second stage is During-Reading Tips. The activities carried out during-processing stage consist of taking notes, reacting, and predicting, selecting significant information, questioning the writer's position, evaluating and placing a text within one's own experience. These processes may be the most complex to develop in a university classroom setting. The reason being that in English Language text processing classes, most attention is paid to text content and ability to bring out information on the content. The third stage is Post Processing Activities. This mainly depends on the aim of the exercise and the type of information to be extracted from the text. (Pardede 10-13). Keatley concludes that the home and school environment can help students on when and how processing strategies can be used to obtain high level attainment in their chosen careers. Keatley highlights three activities students can engage in order to achieve this .The first activity is by modeling the strategies aloud, talking through the processes of previewing, predicting, skimming, scanning and paraphrasing. This will show students how the strategies work. By allowing time in class and at home for group and individual previewing and predicting activities serves as preparation for in-class or home text processing. Allocating time to these

activities indicates their importance and value. The second activity is encouraging students to talk about what strategies they think will help them approach a text processing assignment and then to say what strategies they actually used. This will help students develop flexibility in their choice of strategies and see text processing as an essential part of language instruction at every level. The third activity is to give students a variety of materials as task which will provide multiple opportunities for them to absorb vocabulary, grammar, sentence structure and discourse structure as they occur in authentic contexts. Keaty concludes that the effects of the above actions on the students who follow the strategies above will maximise their potentials in their chosen course of study (Keatley Par.4).

2.4 Regional and Social Variations in English in Nigeria and Its Implication on Text Processing

Language experts (sociolinguists) identify different types of language variation. These variations are idiolects (variation in the individual), sociolects (variation related to social factors), dialects (regional variation) and register/styles (variation due to functional aspects). Sociolinguists are more interested in studying social variation in language than regional variation. However, this research study reviewed literature on regional and social variations since the two helped to understand various procedures used in the studies of socio-economic background variables that influence text processing proficiency. Studies of social variation in language grew out of studies on regional variation. Regional variation is the most extensive type of language variation. This variation comes up as a result of different geographical barriers like mountain ranges and rivers which restricted communication between different communities. In such conditions, language of a community settled in the particular region does not spread to different places. The result is that people start devising their own variety of

language which is different from the language of the neighbouring region. Njeru sees regional variation as ‘‘varieties of the same language whose difference is on vocabularies, pronunciation and grammar, and is associated with a particular geographic region or social setting’’(129). Regional variations are varieties of a language which is spoken by the people living in different geographical areas. Multi-lingual nature of the Nigerian society leads to many regional variations in the use of English Language during text processing. This is due to the fact that different local languages have these accents directly or indirectly transferred to English. Majority of people speaking English in Nigeria do so with different accents. Njeru moves on to say that ‘‘most people from the rural areas face dialect problems in using English language because they grow up in the villages where only one language is used, therefore, facing difficulties in acquiring the second languages’’(129). Language behaviours are derived from the region or locality one is born into or live in. These variations are seen in the areas of phonology, lexis, syntax and semantics. Omoniyi asserts that the ‘‘phonological systems of the various indigenous languages are different from those of English Language and because English is learnt as a second language, what simply takes place is an adaptation of indigenous phonological system for English speech sounds and patterns rather than an attempt to manage two phonological systems separately’’(107). Students in the university under study come from these different phonological systems which affect their proficiency in text processing. Members of several ethnic groups living in different parts of the country share many characteristics. The regional variations in English are shown mainly in the spoken form of the text. The greatest influence on the pronunciation of English on students is from the sound systems of the regional languages. Hence, speakers of English tend to transfer the vowel system of their language into English, that is, this

influence can be seen at the segmental and supra-segmental levels. Omoniyi explains further what happens at segmental and supra-segmental levels when languages come in contact. According to him, at the segmental level:

> Most Nigerian languages have between five and ten vowels and have no diphthongs. These are, therefore, stretched to serve the purposes of the twenty English vowels (12 monophthongs and 8 diphthongs). At the supra-segmental level, one can identify wrong pitch and intonation patterns. English stress-timing is dropped for syllable timing in Nigerian English (101-102).

Therefore at the primary and secondary school levels, students from different regional varieties who find themselves in the same school environment tend to experience different phonological problems in text processing as a result of contact with users outside the school environment. These problems most often are carried into the university. Jowitt presents some instances of regional realisations of English in Igbo, Hausa and Yoruba.

/i:/. All regional varieties have this but for Hausa, it approximates to RP but shorter in Igbo and Yoruba. There is a phonemic distinction in Hausa between /i:/ and /i/ which approximates to RP but no distinction in Yoruba. Igbo has the pair /i:/-/i/ which is distinguished by tongue refraction, tenseness and not by length. Many Igbo learners will identify /i: / with /i/. Also, there will be great difference when learners from these regions pronounce these sounds /e/, /æ/, /a:/, /ʌ/ and /ɒ:/

> For /e/ Hausa realise it as /ə/ or /æ/; for /æ/ and /a: /, Igbo and Yoruba lack the difference in this sound but Hausa has /æ/ and /a. For /ʌ/, all three lack this sound. It is identified as either /æ/ or /ɒ/. For /ɒ/, Igbo

> and Yoruba have this but it is lacking in Hausa. For /ʒ: /, Hausa realises it as /ʒ: / while Igbo and Yoruba realise it as /ɒ/. (Jowitt 24-25)

Akindele and Adegbite opine that there are some examples of variations in lexical and grammatical forms which show a mixture of English with vernacular expressions. Hence, students from the three major regions have the following lexical items from the vernacular available to them. The semantic imports of the variation in these lexical and grammatical forms are one of the major causes of different interpretations students give during text processing exercises. They move on to give instances from the three major languages. Hausa language has:

> Buka–a cheap eating place; garri- cassava flour; kunu-a soft drink from millet. Igbo language has 'obi-title use by a traditional ruler; eze-title use by a traditional ruler; Ikenga-symbol of power/authority; udara-African apple etc.' Yoruba language has akara-fried cake made of bean flour; egusi-a type of melon seed used in making soup; agbada-a large gown worn by men; buba short loose garment with long sleeves; moi-moi-pudding made from ground beans mixed with other food items; oga-big man/master.(67-68).

Akindele and Adebgite conclude by saying that translations of common local proverbs show the variation in the syntactic and semantic features. Most of the novels, short stories and novella available to students carry different local colour because most of the authors of these books and the students do not share the same mother tongue (MT). They cite authors like Chinua Achebe from Igbo and Wole Soyinka from Yoruba. The above examples show that there is a remarkable influence of their culture on the structures of their sentences and the type of images these

authors used in all their writings. The regional languages have different impacts on students because of both positive and negative transfer of features from the mother tongue into English that affect text processing.

Another important type of language variation is social variation. There is a relationship between linguistic variation and social variation. The term is a blend of society and dialect that first appeared in the 1970s. What differentiates a sociolect from the standard variety is its lexical range which is activated in group-specific contexts. The most important requirement for a sociolect is the existence of a social group whose members maintain strong relationship (professional, social or cultural) established through regular meetings with each other. In other words, it is the language spoken by a particular social group, class or subculture whose determinants include such factors as gender, age, occupation and possibly a few others. Sociolect is a dialect that is concern with the social status and class. It is often used interchangeably with social dialect. Trudgill sees it as "a variety or lect which is thought of as being related to its speakers' background rather than geographical background"(23). Jesenska opines that Sociolect or Social Dialect is ''a significant term in Sociolinguistics and it refers to a variety of a language (a social dialect) used by people belonging to a particular social class" (24). In conclusion, there is the need to understand the cultural affiliations of students in the same school environment because students come to school from various social and cultural backgrounds with different learning styles or ways of processing any given text.

2.5 The Relationship between First Language (L_1) and Second Language (L_2) Text Processing

The ability to process texts in English language efficiently for academic purposes is widely recognised in English as a foreign language/English as a second language

(EFL/ESL) contexts. It is a critical skill in a wide range of university settings especially for advanced academic exercise. Determining text processing constructs provide rationales for the development of high level proficiency. Text processing is a complex ability to extract or build meaning from a text. These abilities entail recognising words rapidly and efficiently, developing and using a very large vocabulary, processing sentences in order to extract information, engaging in a range of strategic processes and underlying cognitive skills. These cognitive skills include setting goals, changing goals flexibly, and monitoring understanding, interpreting meaning in relation to background knowledge, interpreting and evaluating texts in line with students' goals and purposes and processing texts fluently over an extended period of time. These processes and knowledge resources allow the students to process texts to the level expected. There are key issues for L2 text processing development. These issues, according to Grabe, include the ''nature of the processes /abilities particularly in academic contexts, key component skills and knowledge bases needed for L2 text processing and the relationship between processing skills and assimilation of a text"(190). The levels involve in text processing are divided into lower level and higher level processes. The two processes occur in the working memory which is the pattern of cognitive neural network activations at any given moment. To Perfetti and Adlof, lower level processes include ''fast, automatic word recognition skills, automatic lexico-syntactic processing, that is, automatically recognising word parts and morphological information and parsing the immediate clause for syntactic information, and semantic processing of the immediate clause into relevant meaning units /propositions''(3). They move on to explain that higher level processing involves those processes and resources that more closely align with strategies and resources for ''assimilation of more difficult texts-form main idea

meanings, recognise related and thematic information, build a text model of an author-driven summary, understand and use inference, background knowledge, strategic processing and context constraints to create a situation model that has to do with a preferred personal interpretation''(4). Cain and Oakhill opine that students need to establish strong ''linkages between orthographic forms and the sounds of the language"(60). The socio-economic backgrounds of L1 students' vocabulary knowledge reflects a very large and automatic recognition-vocabulary knowledge that is highly correlated with text processing ability. Stanovich opines that ''extended exposure to print through extensive text processing over years leads to major differences in both vocabularies knowledge and processing abilities. L2 vocabulary knowledge has it that vocabulary is correlated with L2 text assimilation. L1 morphological and syntactic knowledge both have an impact on text processing''(59). Moreover, Rayner et. al. opine that ''automatic semantic processing of texts occurs at the same time that automatic syntactic parsing is been carried out''(61). Grabe and Stoller on their own part identify the importance of ''propositional meaning units in the building of text main-idea assimilation… fluent students automatically process the meaning units that they extract from the syntactic parsing of clauses''(191). Kintsch explains that the overall assimilation of a text is created when the students build a semantic network of ideas drawn from the text to form ''a text model of understanding that shows what the text is about which is supported and expanded by students' use of background knowledge, inference and attitudes to the text information thus creating a second situation model of text processing"(23). The text model, he says, requires that:

> Semantic information from clause-level processing be combined in a network of central ideas and references that recur through the text. . .

> The situation model is built upon the text model to establish what the students decide is necessary, relevant, appropriate, and useful. The active processor interprets the text to decide what it should mean. That interpretation is the information that also is stored in long-term memory as learned information.(24)

According to Goldman and Rakestraw, “strategic processing and metacognitive awareness influence text processing. They constitute a range of skills and abilities and represent a range of strategic responses to text difficulties’’(312). One of the most important factors in text processing abilities, according to Grabe, is that the processes“vary depending on the purpose... for entertainment is quite different from processing to learn information or to integrate information from multiple sources. Skimming a text for a very general idea involves distinct skill combinations from processing for main idea which is the most common type of exercise carried out by fluent students”(195). The above literature reveals that for students to attain high level proficiency in text processing, they should understand that different tasks and different activities involve different levels of demand on text processing. Some tasks require a higher level of detailed understanding while other tasks may involve the understanding of main ideas and some supporting information. Moving further, Samuels opines that ‘‘processing fluency and extended exposure to print is strongly correlated with text processing’’(24). Fuchs et. al. have shown that training to recognise words faster will lead to ‘‘faster word recognition of other words if the training is sufficiently extensive. In the area of passage fluency training primarily by rereading passages multiple times, there is a good evidence that passage rereading improves both processing fluency and assimilation’’(241). Sabatini et. al. agree strongly to ‘‘the relationship between oral text processing fluency and written text

processing'' (124). Taguchi concurs that there is evidence that ''fluency practice leads to increased L2 processing fluency and to some improvement in L2 text processing. L2 student extended exposure to print will bring about corresponding increase and improvement on text processing''428). Elly is also of the view that '' getting students to study extensively over a long period of time consistently improved text processing abilities as well as a number of other language skills''(234). This shows that L1 and L2 processing abilities/ processes share many of the same component skills and that the constructs are very similar in terms of underlying cognitive and linguistic components. Notwithstanding the above exertions by various linguists above, any consideration of L2 processing abilities has to recognise that there are several ways in which the exercise differs in L1 and L2. Most of these differences centre either directly or indirectly on the linguistic resources that students can bring to bear on text processing. The fact is that L2 students have a much smaller L2 linguistic knowledge base when they begin text processing. Their knowledge of vocabulary, grammar and discourse structure is more limited. They have much less experience with text exposure in the L2 because their exposure in the linguistic environment is limited. Kern opines that they will ''experience L2 processing differently because they have experiences working in two different languages and because cognitive processing will involve two language systems such as accessing the bilingual lexicon using a joint strategy system''(442). Apart from developing somewhat distinct cognitive processing, Dressler and Kamil say that students who engaged in L2 processing exercise will also experience a range of:

> Transfer effects in the cognitive skills, strategies, goals and expectations which will hinder or facilitate L2 understanding. L2 students rely on different combinations of general background

> knowledge when engaging in text processing in the L2. Drawing on information about "how the world works" varies between L1 and L2 text processing experiences. L2 students encounter distinct social and cultural assumptions in L2 texts that they may not be familiar with or find somewhat hard to accept. (201)

Genesee et. al. are of the opinion that beginning and intermediate L2 processing abilities are more:

> Distinct from L1 text process than in advanced L2 processing abilities. As an L2 student becomes fluent and highly skilled in text processing, the processes involved become more similar and the extent of the linguistic differences between L1 and L2 have great impact on L2 text processing. These impacts of L1/L2 differences diminish with increasing L2 processing proficiency but will not disappear completely. (158)

They move on to say that the higher-level skills relate to processing skills more generally and are not constrained by limited amounts of linguistic knowledge, so they are mainly the same in both L1 and L2 contexts. The actual underlying ''cognitive processes involved in L1 and L2 text processing are generally the same but the linguistic limitations and the processing practice limitations create real L1-L2 differences until the L2 linguistic resources and processing practices become sufficiently strong and fluent''(159). For the overall patterns of component-skills development across L1, Verhoeven and Leeuwe suggest that "the underlying component skills are essentially the same and as L2proficiency increases, the

processes look increasingly similar" (294). This, according to them, is as a result of greater amounts of:

> Practice and exposure to L2 print, greater resource knowledge of the L2 and the social/cultural world of the L2, greater fluency and automaticity of L2 processing skills, recognition of successes in L2 text processing and an increasing willingness to process text in the L2 for various purposes. Good processing strategies for text assimilation should be built on the linguistic resources, that is, words, phrases, and structures and support the basic text processing model developed by the student. (294)

Students actively engage in academic texts through multiple strategies and a heightened level of metacognitive awareness. Among students with high proficiency, these strategies are often applied initially without a lot of conscious thought. It is only when the initial set of strategies does not lead to successful assimilation that a much more conscious problem solving mode of attention is applied. The development of processing fluency, according to Gorsuch and Taguchi et. al. requires:

> An extended commitment on the part of the stakeholders: One cannot build high fluency by insufficient practice. Students should be made to know why they are working on fluency and why the activities involve is done right. Students need to be aware of the goals for working on extensive text processing. They also need to be conscious of the benefits of extensive exercise, input in them the attitude of encouraging themselves to process extensively at every reasonable

> opportunity and grab every good opportunities and resources to work extensively. (40)

From the foregoing, for ESL text processing students to achieve the level of proficiency required of them, the socio-economic background should be such that will motivate them by helping them to engage in extensive text processing through providing many attractive text materials, time for free exercise, many opportunities for all types of practice, having a good library and interesting materials for studies. Also it could be achieve by finding out what students like to work with and why. Building extensive text processing skills requires long-range practice if it is to have a major impact on fluency and text processing development.

2.6 Problem in the Acquisition of Proficiency in ESL Text Processing

Gacheche is of the view that the ‘‘ person’s ethno-linguistic heritage which is the ethnic and speech of the community which the person is born into plays a significant role in determining the degree of interaction and access to the language used by the dominant group therefore creating a barrier to acquiring L2’’ (Gacheche qtd in Njeru 2013:129). These problems may be group into linguistic, social and economic variables. Akindele and Adegbite see these three problems as:

> Features in language learning and thus group them into five:
>
> Elements (participants)- the student, the linguistic data, the agent(s) of exposure and the policy makers and planners.
>
> Process- learning, maturation and development of language
>
> Factors- time, motivation and attitudes. Procedural circumstances: formal (school system, classroom, teacher) semi-formal (mass media and

> voluntary organisations) and informal (home, playground, parties). Skills- listening, speaking, reading and writing (138-9).

A look at these features outlined by Akindele and Adegbite show that L2 students are faced with wide range of problems to surmount in the process of attaining high level proficiency in text processing in particular. To them ‘‘most of the Nigerian students of text processing in English Language are already linguistic adult unlike the native speaker who acquires the language as a child. What this means is that the student is more or less comfortable in the mother tongue (MT) and so is not in a hurry to master text processing’’(139). Ajibola goes on to say that students with ‘‘various first language backgrounds have problems trying to get immediate assistance and appropriate resources since the same teaching and learning strategies are used to assist these students” (97). The Nigerian student of English Language transfers some features of his mother tongue (MT) to English Language which hinders his text processing. As the mother tongue is the student’s only means of communicating with parents/peers, it becomes the primary vehicle for the transmission of cultural values, family history and ethnic identity before the student’s contact with the English language. The language which a student brings to the classroom and the manner in which the student uses it reflects the student’s perception of the world and attitude towards text processing. Second language students need to have a good knowledge of the universal features of text processing for the understanding of the numerous academic materials in their areas of specialisation. There is considerable evidence that many key literacy-related skills, including phonological awareness, print concept, decoding skills and extended discourse are transferable from L1 to L2. Another linguistic factor a student has to grapple with, according to Akindele and Akindele, is

the availability of raw linguistic data. In English as a mother tongue (EMT) environment:

> There is abundant data in the natural and artificial setting all surrounding the student, at home, at school, at play, everywhere but the Nigerian ESL students at the primary and secondary levels are exposed to limited data in the environment. Much of the data the student is exposed to cannot be describe as raw but artificial, occurring mainly at school and on mass media. (139)

Therefore, a student in English as a mother tongue environment (EMT) is bound to spend less time in achieving high level proficiency in text processing than a student who is not in such environment. A great difference exists in the achievement level of a student who is in an environment where there are opportunities to interact with the native speakers than one who depends on secondary source for such interaction. In EMT situation, L2 text processing is enhanced by the rich language exposure, the need to communicate and acquire the highest levels of oral and written acquisition in order to achieve one's goal. In ESL situation, L2 text processing is lower due to limited opportunities and lower need to use the English language for functional communication. The agents (parents, friends, teachers, books, the mass media etc) in an ESL environment in Nigeria are limited. Only the teachers and the textbooks provide the main source of data supply and these are complemented by the media. Subhuraam and Ananthasayanam support this by saying that ''family and school are the two main social environments in which a student grows''(47). The students are always in harmony with their environments. Otagburuagu et. al. agree with the above assertion. They view family as ''a microcosm of the student's language community which provides the language data and the reinforcement the student needs to be able

to develop the use of language''(10). These social environmental factors, according to Subhuraam and Ananthasayanam, ''determine the individual's socio-psychological perspective. The social aspects of language acquisition culminate in the differences in text processing and use among the students''(47). The ESL student is expected to transit from L1 to L2 without adequate time to learn text processing. At the same time the student is expected to study, understand and process other subjects taught in the new language that is yet to be understood. This poses a great emotional challenge to the student. Akindele and Adegbite go on to hint on the seriousness of the issue when they say that apart from the fact that ''the agents of exposure are limited, even those agents available as teachers and re-enforcers also may have their own weaknesses in terms of lack of competence, experience and dedication to duty''(14). In the same vein, Soyele further says that ''language attitudes are the evaluative judgments, opinions whether superficial or rooted, temporal or lasting, individual or societal which are made about a language, its speakers and on preference for its use in text processing''(59). The time an English as a mother tongue student spent in learning the art of text processing is not the same with an English as a second language student. English as a mother tongue student starts at birth and progresses in the area of proficiency while the English as a second language(ESL) student spends limited time probably only at school and few contacts outside the school. The student is not well motivated and this affects the predisposition and attitude towards text processing. Also there may be derogatory comments from envious speakers with far lower proficiency in text processing. In spite of these obvious challenges, students of English in Nigeria require text processing proficiency to function very well in the society.

2.7 Socio-Economic Impact on Text Processing

There may be multiplicity of factors that contribute to processing difficulties for many ESL students and the prevalence of students with difficulties in text processing is often linked with the economic and social circumstances they find themselves. Many students identified as having these difficulties in text processing experience significant language and cultural differences in their academic pursuit.

A lot of previous studies focus on variables outside the student thereby ignoring other important aspects of the student life that impacts on text processing. One of these aspects Ahmed and Najeemah refer to as ‘‘socio-economic background. It is the most important factors affecting students’ academic achievement’’(3). This is because the stakeholders “are in a good position to impact on the student, even guide and counsel the student on the best way to perform well in text processing and provide the necessary materials needed by the student’’(3). A student who comes from high socio-economic background would like to maintain it and by this, work actively in his or her studies. Ahmed and Najeemah conclude that a student from very high socio-economic background is more likely to:

> Perform better than a student from a lower one. This is because the student from an educated family has a lot of support such as a decent and good environment for academic work, parental support and guidance, enough textual and academic materials and decent feeding. The student is likely to be sent to good schools where well-seasoned teachers will handle the subjects. (3)

Student’s text processing achievement was further found to be affected by varying socio-economic background. Pribesh and Gavigan opine that the student’s socio-

economic background provide a network of physical, social, intellectual forces and factors which affect text processing. According to them, the stakeholder's ''level of encouragement, expectations and educational activities in the environments are related to socio-economic background'' (152). Ahmed and Najeemah agree with them that these agents from different socio-economic environments ''create different learning environments that affect the student's achievement in text processing. There is no doubt that their attitudes help to condition their children's attitude'' (3). Lynch has this view that an agent who "shows complete regard for text processing might have some effect upon the child's progress in this area'' (2). Many studies have examined the relationships among these constructs and students achievement. There is a consistent link between these constructs and achievement behaviours. Hart affirms in a nutshell that the influence of socio-economic and educational backgrounds on the students in text processing cannot be undermined'' (par.2). Marinelli et. al. in their extensive work opine that these socio-economic background variables play the greatest role in the development of text processing. Text processing is related to a number of variables including memory skills, oral text processing, and fluency and vocabulary knowledge''(17).

To them oral text processing refers to the:

> Levels to which a student can understand spoken language. Understanding of spoken language plays an important role in determining the level to which a student understands written text. Students who have low oral text processing tend to have low written text processing skill which in turn affects them academically. Oral text processing is largely determined by the social environment. (17)

Students learn oral language through interaction with other people. Students infer meaning of spoken words by relating it to the context in which it is used and students from highly verbal socio-economic environments develop higher level of oral understanding than students from lower ones. Social factors also determine the vocabulary skills of a student. Richness of vocabulary is an important determinant of text processing. Unknown words undermine text processing because they create a gap in meaning. The student fails to construct meaning of the text when there are too many gaps in meaning. Lynch shades more light by saying that a student who has "deep vocabulary knowledge has an advantage when it comes to text processing. A student who has meaningful interaction with in his or her socio-economic environment tends to develop rich vocabulary''(1). Also, verbal contacts the student makes in this environment determine the word fluency. Since, a student whose contacts are fluent English speakers tends to develop competency in text processing. Students who have fluent and efficient word mastery are able to develop meaning of the text resulting in improved text processing. On the other hand, students who peruse slowly experience difficulties in understanding what is in the text(s). Being slow processor exerts additional work on the working memory because the cognitive resources necessary for getting meaning are employed in text processing. Although cognitive factors also influence fluency, social factors play the greatest role in fluency acquisition. Text processing fluency also supports the student's vocabulary knowledge. High fluency exposes a student to lots of vocabulary which results to faster processing rate. Since vocabulary knowledge is determined by the amount of words to which the student is exposed, students with low socio-economic background often do not have enough vocabulary knowledge. The social-cultural environment also determines the type of resource materials to which a student is exposed. Students

from high socio-economic areas have greater opportunity to text resources and so usually have greater fluency and vocabulary knowledge than students from low social-economic areas. Working memory which is also another important determinant of text processing is affected by student's socio-economic background. Memory is responsible for retrieving, maintaining and manipulating information related to text processing. Although cognitive factors are the greatest determinants of the contribution of working memory towards text processing, social factors also contribute in determining the contribution of the working memory. Verhoeven supports the impact of the social factor. The vocabulary knowledge determines the ''effectiveness of the contribution made by the working memory towards text processing. If a student is exposed to a limited amount of words, the working memory will have limited information to retrieve hence its contribution to text processing will be highly limited''(387). The above assertion shows that high fluency reduces the demand placed on the working memory and this allows the student to pay greater attention to the understanding of the text. What we have in our heads is a theory. Our theory of the world is affected by the socio-cultural context within which students are located and also by the ongoing life experiences (including language) that impact and form those beliefs. Those beliefs, according to Ahmed and Najeemah:

> Are shaped and nurtured by social interaction and by the language used in the social contexts in which students are situated. When students assimilate communicative material, they apply their beliefs about the world and what they already know about the present topic as a mirror through which to interpret and understand the message the writer is attempting to convey. (8)

By using this method, students are more able to integrate background knowledge when needed to draw conclusion about the information in a text. Thus, the processing of information may be thwarted or enhanced by the knowledge base that the student has. Even when skilled students' have inadequate background knowledge to apply to a giving task, the students tend to use the best available schema to organise the construction of meaning. The students often depend on background knowledge of similar situations to form an analogy when relating to relatively similar text information. This does not always work well in all situations. While going through some texts, students may use background knowledge that may be wrong leading to problems with understanding. The influence of social affiliation on student's memory for text information affects the quantity and accuracy of both explicit and inferential recall. Young students often reject text information which they thought are wrong particularly if they believe that they have the correct interpretation. Thus, it follows that high level text processing is an interplay between prior knowledge and monitoring meaning by recognising and reconciling inconsistencies. There is a close association between background knowledge of language, vocabulary and appropriate text processing strategies. Every student comes into the learning environment with different levels of text processing proficiency as a result of different socio-economic backgrounds.

When students are provided with a rich social literacy environment with a lot of genres and text-based interactions with others, effective text processing will be enhanced. Cambourne maintains that in a ''social learning model, meaningful dialogical interactions between the students and others are more likely to facilitate the students' understanding of the vocabulary, the content and the structural features of the text'' (qtd in Woolley 2011 par.7). Tasks that promote interaction and

interdependence were important aspects of the learning environment. He suggests that ‘‘learning could be seen as a changing process in which the students play an active role, constantly interacting with the environment and people around them’’ (par.7). In contrast, Pressley observes that students with ‘‘low social literacy environment that have difficulty with text processing are disadvantaged when they are instructed to merely process simple text. Most students need some form of structure to their learning to be actively and purposely engaged in their own learning process’’(15). High quality guiding is most important in learning text processing. Success in helping students identify the difficulties depends on the training, knowledge, and impact of the socio-economic environments to develop appropriate tasks and strategies that provide good learning environments. When direct instruction is use in conjunction with explicit explanations, low achieving students will become more conscious of strategic reasoning. When less able students are given task direction on how to revise given task, they demonstrate higher understanding on questions that address central aspects of the texts. Also, less able students tend to have more difficulty grouping ideas together, while skilled students refine and revise their ideas continually while processing. The evidence is that effective processing intervention necessitates guiding the student on how to monitor the use of text processing strategies while performing a particular related task. The above overview of the socio-economic background influences on L2 text processing suggests that L2 text processing is an intricate psycholinguistic process where a variety of associated variables come into play. Kintsch sees no clear-cut distinction among the variables. According to him, ‘‘various sources of knowledge are anchored onto one another and linked to an associative knowledge network thus activated in conjunction with other connected knowledge simultaneously during text analysis’’(171). Students’ background knowledge may

chiefly be activated when the students perceive and recognise the meaning of the relevant lexical items that carry the cultural concepts. Having discussed these factors generally together, Verhoven et. al. group them into ‘‘physiological, social-cultural, cognitive and emotional variables’’ (389).

2.8 Theories on Text Processing

Researches, opinions, and suggestions regarding the mastery of text processing exist in a large scale and this summary of related text processing theories is by no means exhaustive. There are two related text processing theories that are discussed in this section. The theories are grouped into two: process models and componential models. The process models are the Traditional Bottom-up model, Top-down model and Interactive/Metacognitive model. Componential models are Linguistic Threshold Hypothesis and Linguistic Interdependence Hypothesis.

2.8.1 Process Models

2.8.1.1 The Traditional Bottom-up Model

The traditional bottom-up model of text processing was influenced by behaviorist psychology of the 1950s which claimed according to Omaggio that:

> Learning was based upon habit formation brought about by the repeated association of a stimulus with a response. Language learning was characterised as a response system that humans acquire through automatic conditioning processes where some patterns of language are reinforced (rewarded) and others are not and only those patterns reinforced by the community of language users will persist. (46)

The main method associated with the bottom-up approach to text processing is known as phonics which requires the student to match letters with sounds in a defined sequence. According to this view, text processing is a linear process by which a student decodes a text word by word, linking the words into phrases and then sentences. According to Samuels and Kamil, behaviorist treated text processing as a word-recognition response to the stimuli of the printed words, where “little attempt was made to explain what went on within the recesses of the mind that allowed the human to make sense of the printed page " (qtd in Alderson et. al: 25). This implies that textual understanding involves adding the meanings of words to get the meanings of clauses. These lower level skills are connected to the visual stimulus or print and are consequently concerned with recognising and recall. The bottom-up model describes information flow as a series of stages that transform the input and pass it to the next stage without any feedback or possibility of later stages of the process influencing earlier stages. Hence, language is viewed as a code and the students’ main task is to identify graphemes and convert them into phonemes. Students are, therefore, regarded as passive recipients of information in the text. Meaning resides in the text and the student has to reproduce it. The ESL and English as Foreign language (EFL) textbooks influenced by this perspective include exercises that focus on literal assimilation and give little or no importance to the student’s knowledge or experience with the subject matter and the only interaction is with the basic building blocks of sounds and words. Most activities are based on recognition and recall of lexical and grammatical forms with an emphasis on the perceptual and decoding dimension. This model of text processing has almost always been under attack as being insufficient and defective for the main reason that it relies on the formal features of the language, mainly words and structure.

2. 8.1.2 Top-Down Model

In this model, text processing is not just extracting meaning from a text but a process of connecting information in the text with the knowledge the student brings to the task. This shows that text processing is a dialogue between the student and the text which involves an active cognitive process in which the student's background knowledge plays a key role in the creation of meaning. According to Smith, text processing is not:

> A passive mechanical activity but purposeful and rational which depends on the prior knowledge and expectations of the student. It is not merely a matter of decoding print sound but also a matter of making sense of written language. Therefore, text processing is a psycholinguistic guessing game, a process in which students go through the text, make hypotheses, confirm or reject them and make new hypotheses.(2)

2.8.1.3 Interactive Model

Interactive model combines the characteristics of both top-down and bottom-up models. According to Rayner and Pollatsek, in ''interactive models, students are usually assumed to drawing upon both top-down and bottom-up information before eventually settling upon and interpretation of the text''(467). This includes the interaction between students' prior knowledge and the information in the text. It also gives room for interaction between lower-level processes such as orthographic knowledge with higher-order processes such as semantic knowledge. Students play active role in the process of handling task because they constantly hypothesise about the meaning of the text. They are able to use their orthographic, syntactic, semantic

and lexical knowledge in order to perform a given task. Rumelhart agrees with the above point raised by Rayner and Pollastek. According to him:

> Interactive model synthesises four different types of knowledge: semantic knowledge, orthographic knowledge, syntactic knowledge and lexical knowledge. This model begins with graphemes' information being registered by the Visual Information Store (VIS). The feature extraction device extracts information from VIS in addition to serving as sensory input to a pattern synthesizer. All the different types of knowledge then interact with each other in the pattern as synthesiser in order to produce the most probable interpretation. (588)

This model is relevant because it allows a student's background knowledge to interact with other types of knowledge possessed by the student. The importance is further heighten by Block who sees text processing as a ‘‘hidden process and accepts an interaction of bottom-up and top-down processing strategy. A good processor is one who uses meaning-based clues rather than over reliance on word-level input to decode’’(335). The weakness of this model is that it does not identify the degree of importance of the different types of knowledge and how text is process beyond the sentence level.

This is a concept–driven model which sample text processing as a process of testing hypothesis and making prediction rather than a data-driven model. Goodman opines that a student ‘‘moves from one sequence of a cycle to another and makes hypotheses about the conceptual meaning of a text. The efficient processor focuses on the meaning of the text and minimises dependence on visual detail’’(13). This model

presents text processing as a process of four cycles namely optical, perception, syntactic and meaning construction cycles. These cycles overlap with each other as the student constantly tries to process the text. Goodman goes on to highlight the five processes employed in the cycles as ‘‘recognition, initiation, prediction, confirmation, correction and termination”(13). In the recognition–initiation, the student recognises the visual graphic input of the written text. Then the student anticipates and predicts the meaning of the data input. The student tries to check the predictions by confirming or disconfirming earlier predictions. Where the prediction is not accepted, the student makes corrections. The last stage which is termination process ends the text processing exercise after the student has finished the task. Kintsch moves further to explain this model. According to him, it is a ‘‘model based on four principles namely: text processing is purposeful, selective, based on comprehension and is anticipatory”(28). To him, students that engage in the exercise have specific purposes in mind. The weakness of this model, Samuels and Kamils opine is “not so much a model of text processing because it is a description of the linguistic and cognitive processes that any decent model of text processing will need to take into account”(24). Another weakness is that the meanings of texts are derived from contextual with little attention to lower-level processes.

2.8.2 Componential Models

This is made up of Linguistic Threshold Hypothesis and Linguistic Interdependence Hypothesis.

2.8.2.1 Linguistic Threshold Hypothesis

The linguistic threshold hypothesis in L_2 text processing is known first as the short circuit hypothesis. This hypothesis suggests that limited control over the language

"short circuits" the good processor's system causing the student to go back to poor processor's strategies when confronted with a difficult or confusing task in the second language text processing. This hypothesis implies three things according to Clarke:

> That an L2 student needs to have a certain level of second language linguistic ability in order to process in a second language; that an L2 student has a linguistic threshold level below which they cannot use their L1text processing skills to comprehend text in a target language and that L1 processing ability may not be transferable from one language to another. (120)

A number of studies have been conducted to examine the level of influence L1 skill has over L2 text processing. Clarke conducted two studies on poor and good Spanish L1 students using close test in English and Spanish and oral text achievement using miscue analysis. Results of both studies indicate that although a good student depends on semantic cues more than syntactic cues when processing in L1, this behaviour changes when they process in L2. Their use of semantic cues reduced noticeably and they tended to rely on syntactic cues more than semantic cues when processing in L2, reverting to strategies similar to the ones employed by poor L1 students. These two studies show evidence that L1 processing ability may be transferred to processing in a target language. Bernhardt posits that ''within this hypothesis is the belief that language is the key factor in literacy activities. In other words, in order to read in a language, one has to "know" the language''(17). This study is criticised because of the use of close test as a measure of the subjects' L1 and L2 processing abilities. Horiba in his study throws more light on this. He reveals that ''processing short circuits when students lack in L2 proficiency''(459). His study was conducted with L1–Japanese and L1-English subjects. Two groups of English subjects who were

enrolled in Japanese courses, L2–intermediate and L2advanced also participated in the study. The L1 and L2 students of Japanese processed the texts in English (translated versions). Each set contained two versions, one high–coherent (with origin structure) and other low-coherent (consisting of a manipulated structure). For each text, subjects were asked to think-aloud while processing and then recall the story. Results from the think-aloud protocols show that the Japanese intermediate group tends to use lower level processing strategies, such as analysis of words and sentences. This seems to show that the intermediate subjects may be having difficulties in understanding meaning at word or sentence level and this prevents them from inferring the meaning not explicitly mentioned in the texts. He opines that:

> For L2intermediated students who have little competence in a language, disruptions in processing at lower levels occur so frequently that ideas and events are not fully extracted from the sentences, and connections are not made between ideas and events. As a result, their mental representations of the text are fragmented and underdeveloped.(459)

The advanced groups, on the other hand, usually employ higher level processing strategies, like backward and predictive inferences but not elaborative inferences and use of background knowledge. The L1 students tend to focus on the use of elaborative inferences and background knowledge but rarely lower level processing such as word and sentence level strategies. He concludes that the advanced and L1 students unlike the intermediate ones use inference strategies employed with low-coherent texts. These study show that the intermediate and advance L2 students exhibit different processing behaviours. In addition, the strategies employed by L1 and L2 students also seem to be different showing that L1 text processing may be transferable to L2 processing skill. Horiba posits that difficulties in L2 text processing may be due to

language problems rather than processing problems which therefore support the linguistic threshold hypothesis.

2.8.2.2 Linguistic Interdependence Hypothesis

The Linguistic interdependence hypothesis is referred to as underlying proficiency hypothesis. This states that text processing performance in a second language is largely shared with processing ability in a first language. This according to Bernhardt means that ‘‘processing ability in L_1 is transferable to another language. L_1 and L_2 processing ability are interdependence and are the same at some fundamental core. Once L_1 processing ability has been acquired, the same operation is not re-acquired in L_2’’(17). Another proponent of linguistic interdependence hypothesis, Cummins, examines the text abilities of Japanese and Vietnamese subjects in their L_1 and L_2 using two dimensions of proficiency, attribute-based and input-based aspect of proficiency. Results suggests moderate correlation between students’ abilities leading to a conclusion thatL_1 and L_2 processing abilities are interdependence and are similar at some fundamental core. According to Cummins, ‘‘moderately strong cross lingual relationships are observed for attribute-based L_1 and L_2 proficiency as a result of the fact that underlying attributes of the individual manifest in the individual’s performance in both languages’’(230). Geva and Ryan examine the text development of bilingual Hebrew-English subject using cognitive, memory and linguistic predictors as variables. In the study, a number of test batteries were used to “measure intelligent, linguistic knowledge in L_1, text processing in L_1 and L_2 and working memory in L_1 and L_2. Results show that the subjects’ reasoning ability correlates both with measures of their memory and their linguistic in L_1 and L_2. He concludes that the observed relationship between L_1 and L_2 can be attributed to underlying individual

difference in ability shown in terms of variables such as intelligent and memory span"(37).

2.8.3 Psycholinguistic Theory

Psycholinguistic theory is a theory emanating from two disciplines–cognitive psychology and linguistics. Psycholinguistics, according to Artley, is concerned with:

> The process of language learning… it emphasises the place and importance of cognitive structures as the means by which information is acquired and organised in the nervous system, a concept which helps to explain the comprehension process. The inherent desire of an individual to make sense of one's environment relates to text processing as an act of constructing meaning. Groff sees psycholinguistic as the ''scientific study of the relationship between language and the mental behaviour of those who use it (53).

Psycholinguistic theory deals with all the mental processes that make it possible to construct a grammatical and meaningful sentence out of vocabulary and grammatical structures, and everything that brings about complete understanding of utterances, words and text. The theory states that processors use their intuitive knowledge of the grammar of the language and their knowledge of concept to arrive at the meaning of a word instead of depending on graphonemic information. Processing a given text starts from the top to down. Meaning is derived first as the student learns to process as a whole. When students approach the task with much information which leads to enthusiasm and understanding, it becomes applicable to real life situations, attention shifts from correct pronunciation and accurate word identification. The ability to assimilate, generate and handle text is an innate human trait; the ability to process a

written text is not. All new processors require extensive training to gain written text processing skills. According to Olson, ‘‘learning to process written text is simultaneous with the discovery of organised linguistic structures’’ (84). Many aspects of cognition and linguistic performance supports this view by Olson. Students of alphabetic languages, according to Morals et. al., begin to perceive words not just as discrete objects but as made up of those constituent letters. Literacy enables processors to complete phonemic segmentation tasks”(417). Acquiring text processing skills give students the ability to judge grammaticality which is anchored on written cues instead of oral cues. This skill proceeds gradually along side with the development of punctuation and its application since it is anchored on the understanding of the grammatical structure of the text. The stages of text processing development by every student follow a consistent pattern logographic/visual cue processor, novice and mature alphabetic/phonetic cue processor and orthographic fluent processor. Logographic processing is concern with the ability to recognise text and letters as meaningful units and mapping particular sounds to visual symbols. Processors at this stage tend to ling knowledge of words to highly familiar features. Alphabetic stage has to do with the ability to shift away from linking whole words with semantic information in memory toward the systematic method of connecting spellings with unique pronunciation using phonological recording. Orthographic stage involves processors using sight word strategies in which their recoding skills involve progressive lexicalisation. Processors, Ehri, posits, ‘‘learn to consolidate grapheme – phoneme patterns that occur across many words, enabling them to decode words based on larger units’’(6). This Marsh et. al. opine that recoding which is the result of decoding larger units eases the establishment of sight words in memory and speeds up later retrieval (200).

Each stage of development according to Eric tends to have ‘‘progressively more influence on the strategies used to decipher text. These phases should not be seen as entirely discrete and sequential stages. They are more bidirectional related groups of decoding strategies and linguistic knowledge’’(12). This theory highlights major indicators of text processing proficiency as phonological awareness and linguistic consistency. Processors cannot attain to this level success without adequate attachment to their socio-economic background. This is what psycholinguists refer to as socio-psycholinguistic theory of text processing which states that processors construct meaning of a text through the use of background knowledge and prior experiences. Students become more proficient when the process texts that is comprehensible and interesting. From this angle, text is seen as a property of the discourse social setting which created them and ability to process text in this environment depends on the ability of the users to internalise the rules of the genre to the level of making use of them in processing texts. The process that leads to high level proficiency in text processing is gradual and is subject to time and personality factors. Bhatia is of the view that ‘‘the social occasions of which texts are part have a fundamentally effects on texts. The characteristics features and structures of those situations, the goals of the participants all have their effects on the forms which are constructed in those situations’’(7). Socio-psycholinguistic theory highlights the importance of motivation in text processing. There is a strong link between text processing and motivation as motivation is the leading force to fulfill the task and reach the objective because individual personality features are unique and unrepeatable.

2.9 Research Studies on Text Processing

In this section, the researcher reviews various contributions of notable experts and linguists in the area of socio-economic background and ESL text processing. Adetunji and Olagunju in their study on the Effect of Home, School, and Personal Variables on Students' Text Processing Achievement, investigate the effect of specific home, school and personal variables on students' text processing achievement based on the frequency of secondary school students' poor performances in English Language examinations. Based on a sample of two hundred (200) students randomly selected from four senior secondary schools in Oyo East and Atiba Local Government Areas of Oyo State Nigeria, the study sought answers to five research questions which were generated for the study. A descriptive survey research was adopted and the instruments used were Students' Questionnaire and Reading Comprehension Achievement Test (RCAT). Results from the findings showed that although all the variables examined affected students' text processing achievement, the home and school variables were significant while the personal variable was not. It was concluded that the variables, when taken together, would to a large extent predict text processing achievement. It was recommended that parents and teachers have major roles to play in improving students' competence in text processing. This study is similar to the present one in the area of nature and few related tested variables. However, it differs significantly in the choice of study area, heterogeneous data were used, different socio-economic backgrounds were used, the sample populations were selected from first year undergraduates' students of various universities and the level of text processing proficiency tested was equally higher.

In a similar vein, Kusumi and Jun in the study they carried out in Hiroshima Japan, want to find how EFL students in different processing proficiency levels understand

L2 texts using five-component skills comprising measures of vocabulary knowledge, drawing inferences and predictions, knowledge of text structure and discourse organisation, identifying the main idea and summarising skills and identifying supporting information of L2 texts. One-hundred and forty-six Japanese undergraduates majoring in different disciplines took part in this study. Correlation analyses and regression analysis revealed that identifying specific information and drawing inferences contributed greatly to the distinction of three proficiency levels. Results also showed that Japanese students' attention processes involving inference, problem solving, monitoring and resolving ambiguity were rather low. Further results confirmed that L2 proficiency supports the efficient functioning of both lower-level and higher-level processing skills deemed important for the text model of understanding as well as the situation model of student interpretation. The study centered on identifying proficiency levels of undergraduates which expose weakness of students in the area of advanced text processing proficiency needed at the university level without highlighting the root of such deficiency. The present study goes deeper in its investigation on the cause of this apparent weakness by undergraduates especially those in the study area.

Salim conducted a study on factors affecting the learning of English as a second language in Israel in 2003. He looked at the effects of the attitudes and culture on Israeli-Jewish students' text processing using culturally familiar and culturally unfamiliar stories. The participants were 83 Jewish 8th graders from 2 schools in southern Israel. The instruments were an attitude questionnaire, stories in Hebrew and English and multiple-choice questions about the stories. The students who process culturally familiar texts received higher text processing scores than the students who worked the culturally unfamiliar texts. The Jewish students' motivation for learning a

second language was instrumental rather than integrative. The reviewed study is close to the present work because the use of culture as a major variable was subsumed into the major variables in the present study and some instruments used were also partially used. However, the variables tested by the present researcher were more encompassing. The study area, sample population and socio-economic background variables differ too.

Salim went further to look at the cognitive and social factors affecting Arabs students learning English language in Israel. In this study, he investigated the relationship between attitudes, interest, and culture on the one hand and text processing in English language on the other. Participants were 70 native Arab students aged 15-16 who were sampled from three high schools in the Haifa area. They were administered an attitude questionnaire, culturally familiar and culturally unfamiliar stories, multiple-choice text processing questions and an interest questionnaire. The results revealed that the Arab students' attitudes towards English were more instrumental than integrative and their attitude towards the English learning situation was positive. Furthermore, they were more interested in the familiar cultural story than in the unfamiliar one and they performed accordingly. In other words, type of text (culturally familiar/unfamiliar) was the only significant predictor of text processing in English. However, when text scores were regressed on the independent variables controlling for text type, interest was the only significant predictor. Thus, in the Israeli-Arab situation, learner interest and type of text are powerful predictors of understanding of English as a third language.

Bentin et. al. in their study in 1990 examined the relationship between processing ability and syntactic awareness in native speakers of Hebrew. They identified syntactic differences between good and poor students. In a three experiment study,

they sought to examine the relationship between processing ability and syntactic awareness in native speakers of Hebrew who differ in processing competence. The groups consisted of severely text processing impaired students and unimpaired good and poor ones. The results indicate that the difference between the correct identification of syntactically deviant and syntactically accurate sentences was smaller in the group of students with severe processing disability than in either good students or relatively poor students. Good as well as poor students performed better than the disabled ones in the judgment task. According to Bentin et. al., this apparent inferiority of the latter group cannot be explained only by a reduction of the participants' short term memory span since first, very short and simple sentences (three or four words) were used; second, when tested formally all the students repeated sentences verbatim without any problem; and third, the nature of the stimuli in question did not involve the manipulation of subtle syntactic aspects but rather included straightforward syntactic violations of the subject- predicate relation and word order. They argue that inadequate phonological processing does not justify and explain all aspects of poor text processing since in their study, poor students were nevertheless good decoders. The linguistic deficiencies in these students are thus, ascribed to syntax rather than phonology. This study is limited since the objective is geared towards identifying factors that impact on lower text processing strategies.

Myong in Korea carried out a study in 2005 using both qualitative and quantitative measures to examine how different types of gloss conditions affect Korean college students' text processing. One hundred and six undergraduates at a university in Korea participated in the study. Twelve were assigned to think aloud and the rest (ninety-four) took part in the main study only. They process the material under one of three conditions: no gloss, Korean gloss (L1 glossing), and English gloss (L2 glossing).

After the exercise, they were given a multiple-choice text processing test and to answer a questionnaire. The results of the quantitative analyses showed that only the second language (L_2) gloss condition significantly affected students' text processing. On the other hand, the think-aloud protocols showed that both types of glossing made their text processing smoother and faster than was possible for those who did without glosses. The first language (L_1) glosses enabled them to understand more easily while going through the passage although statistics did not indicate a significant difference between the no gloss and L_1 gloss conditions. When surveyed, students showed their preference for glosses in the margin: more than 62% of the students favored L_2 glosses for their text material. This study reviewed tested only one variable which is the impact of gloss to text processing. The present study incorporates this as part of the variables tested.

Many Linguists in 2011 carried out research on text familiarity and text processing on Iranian students learning English as a second language. Pourhosein and Ahmadi in the research on text familiarity and text processing studies showed how text familiarity impacts on text processing. Their findings suggested that texts which contain culturally-familiar content schema are easier to process. Other studies have shown similar effects in that participants better understand and/or remembered passages that were more familiar to them. Further evidence from such studies also suggested that schemata for content affected comprehension and remembering more than did their formal schemata for text organisation. Johnson in his study investigated the effects of the cultural origin of prose on text processing of 46 Iranian intermediate advanced ESL students at the university level. Half of the subjects process the main version of English texts of two stories, one from Iranian folklore and one from American folklore while the other half process the same stories in adapted English. After

completing the exercise, the subjects were asked to do multiple-choice questions to test their understanding. Outcome showed that the cultural origin of the story had a greater effect on text processing than syntactic or semantic complexity of the text. In another study they conducted in 1982, they compared ESL students' recall on a passage on Halloween. Seventy-two ESL students at the university level processed a passage on the topic of Halloween. The passage contained both unfamiliar and familiar information based on the subjects' recent experience of the custom. Some subjects studied the meanings for unfamiliar words in the text. Results showed that prior cultural experience prepared students in understanding of the familiar information about Halloween on the passage. On the other hand, exposure to the unfamiliar words did not seem to have a significant effect on their text processing. Bensoussan in his own study examined the effects of faulty schemata on text processing. The participants were 125 students doing a task of text processing at the end of an advanced English reading course at Haifa University. The final examination consisted of two parts: first section required students to translate five sentences containing vocabulary learned during the course. The second section required them to go through two academic texts on abstract topics already used in class. The findings showed that use of wrong schemata or prior knowledge was a significant factor influencing text scores. Salmani-Nodoushan in his own support, investigated the effects of text familiarity, task type, and language proficiency on university student's test and task performances. A total of 541 Iranian university students took the Task-Based Reading Test (TBRT). Three instruments were used in the study. The sample consists of a version of the IELTS General Training Reading Module, a Self-report Questionnaire, and the Task-Based Reading Test. In the study, text familiarity was one of the independent variables. In order to determine whether the subjects had any

prior familiarity with the content of the texts that appeared in the different modules of the TBRT, a self- report questionnaire was developed to collect data. The results showed that their overall test performance was found to be significantly influenced by text familiarity, language proficiency and the interaction between text familiarity and language proficiency. Pulido in his study examined the effects of topic familiarity on understanding of passage(s) and intake, gain and retention of new lexical items from the passages. Ninety- nine adult learners of Spanish processed more and less familiar script-based narratives. There appeared to be only a modest significant positive correlation between lexical intake from the more familiar passages and intake from the less familiar passages. The findings also suggested a possible effect of topic familiarity on lexical intake. The related studies reviewed above indicate that all the variables and factors surrounding the issues of how background knowledge influences text processing has not been fully understood. There is need to delve more into related studies in order to bring to the fore the impact background knowledge and content schema play in understanding of passage(s),that is, whether the effect is the same irrespective of the study area.

In a study carried out on native Chinese speakers on text processing in English using advance students of English at a university, Nisbet, Tindall, and Arroyo in 2005, examined the relationship between language learning strategy preferences and English proficiency. They group text processing strategies into six factors: memory, cognitive, compensation, metacognitive, affective and social. They also included total learning strategies in the statistical analysis. The authors' main aim is to find out whether specific categories of learning strategies predict L2 proficiency. Findings revealed that metacognitive strategies were significantly correlated with the ITP-TOEFL score, and that a combination of metacognitive strategies and affective strategies was

significantly correlated with English proficiency. The authors revealed that their results bring to fore the need for further investigations that will consider the influence of cultural context and autonomy on strategy use and proficiency. They emphasised the need for future research to examine these topics in a variety of educational contexts in China. The study reviewed is relevant to this present work. It exposes the positive impact of metacognition on English proficiency which is enhanced through the mastery of high level text processing.

Finally, Niu in a comparative study in 2009 investigated the relationship of L2 vocabulary acquisition and collaborative output in comparison with text processing input. Three tasks were designed to test L2 vocabulary acquisition of the 240 English majors and consisted of collaborative written output, collaborative oral output and text processing input. Results revealed that collaborative output, both written and oral, led to significantly more vocabulary acquisition and retention than text processing input. He explained the phenomenon in terms of the lexical learning mechanisms involved in collaborative output, task requirements, and the distribution of students' in task achievement.

2.10 Summary of Review of Related Literature

In the review of literature, the researcher looked at works by different scholars on issues related to text processing and socio-economic background variables that impact on text processing proficiency. Studies on text processing strategies, according to Grabe, shows that ''text analysis is a complex process involving bottom-up and top-down strategies. These strategies when applied very well prove to be effective in ESL text processing achievements'' (384). Omoniyi explains what happens at the segmental and supra-segmental variations that impact on text processing when three

major regional languages in Nigeria come in contact. He opines that ‘‘ESL students from these regions who found themselves in the same university environment tend to experience different phonological and semantic problems during text processing exercise’’(107). Akindele and Adegbite identify problem in the acquisition of proficiency in text processing in English. These problems they see as ‘‘features in learning ESL text processing and this they group into participants, process, factors, procedural circumstances and skills’’(139). Extensive studies carried out by linguists reveal general socio-economic background variables that influence ESL text processing hinge on three variables. Ahmed and Najeemah identify a positive relationship between the degree of these variables and task achievement. The effect on university students’ ESL text processing is ‘‘jointly predictive of the level of achievement in their academic progress’’(4). The above experts have the view that proficiency and achievement in ESL text processing is connected with the ‘‘network of social and cultural influences of the socio-economic background” (4).

CHAPTER THREE

3.0 METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This chapter discussed the research design and the methodology used for the study. The theoretical framework that guided the study was also presented in this chapter**.**

3.2 Research Design

The study adopted the survey research design. Survey research design, according to Griffee, ‘‘uses various data collection procedures to enable the researcher to investigate a construct by asking questions of either fact (descriptive) or opinion (explanatory) from a sample of a population for the purpose of generalising to the population’’(53). The survey research design was considered suitable for this study because it is adequate for collecting data on groups too large to observe directly and also helps to gather data in a relatively short period of time. The data from this design were analysed statistically.

3.3 Area of Study

The research area was Enugu State, Nigeria. Four universities in the area were used. They are: The University of Nigeria, Nsukka (UNN), Enugu State University of Science and Technology Enugu (ESUT), Caritas University, Amorji-Nike and Godfrey Okoye University, Ugwuomu-Nike (GO). These universities were purposively selected to reflect federal, state and private university categories which exist in the system. Two of the universities had Christian–religious orientation and two were government institutions with government oriented culture and ideology.

3.4 Sample and Sampling Technique

The study population for this research was First Year Students from the four universities selected in Enugu State since the study was restricted to finding out the impact of socio-economic variables on text processing in this area. Twenty thousand three hundred and sixty four (20364) first year students from these universities were considered as the target population. This was because these students have really not been transformed academically by the university academic programmes, that is, they were still fresh students from home. These students also offered ‘‘The Use of English’’ as one of the General Studies’ courses in their various universities. The students were selected from one faculty each making it four faculties for this work. Two departments each were selected from each faculty. Simple Random sampling technique was used to select eight departments from these universities. The departments selected from these universities were as follows: University of Nigeria Nsukka (UNN)- Faculty of Social Sciences: Department of Psychology and Economics; Enugu State University of Science and Technology, Enugu(ESUT)- Faculty of Management Sciences: Department of Public Administration and Accountancy; Caritas University, Amorji-Nike- Faculty of Engineering: Department of Computer Engineering and Chemical Engineering; Godfrey Okoye University, Ugwuomu Nike(GO)-Faculty of Arts: Department of Mass Communication and English and Literacy Studies. The researcher’s choice of simple random sampling was because it is relatively easy to handle and is effective in homogeneous population. The departments were selected due to their large student population in the various universities. The selected departments helped the researcher to gather data which were true representative of the population for this study.

3.4.1 Determination of Sample Size and Allocation to Universities

The researcher considered and applied the most standard method/formula according to Nworuh (2014:210) to arrive at the close representative sample size of 498. Thus:

$$n = \frac{N}{1+(\alpha)^2 N}$$

Where n = Sample size

N = Population

α = margin error/ level of significance

Thus:

Sample size =

2017/2018 First Year Students' Population obtained from Admission Unit of the four universities thus:

UNN	=	13349
ESUT	=	5956
CARITAS	=	509
GO	=	550
Total	=	20364

Source: Field Work 2018

Population Size = 20364

Therefore, the sample size =

$$\frac{20364}{1+(0.05)^2 20364} = \frac{20364}{1+(0.0025)20364} = \frac{20364}{1+39.875} = \frac{20364}{40.875} = 498$$

b. Proportional allocation of sample size: Since the population of the four chosen universities varied greatly, the researcher further adopted proportional

allocation of the mathematically derived sample size of 498 to various universities in order to arrive at an unbiased representative thus:

1) UNN - $\frac{13349}{20364} \times \frac{498}{1}$ = 327

2) ESUT - $\frac{5956}{20364} \times \frac{498}{1}$ = 146

3) CARITAS - $\frac{509}{20364} \times \frac{498}{1}$ = 12

4) GO - $\frac{550}{20364} \times \frac{498}{1}$ = 13

3.5 Instruments for the Study

Survey research design (SRD) gathering instruments are face to face interviews with individuals or groups, telephone interviews, written questionnaire and direct observation. The research instruments used in eliciting data from the sample population include Questionnaire and Reading Comprehension Achievement Test. These instruments were chosen because a good questionnaire helps to provide complete and accurate information. It is easy to design and complete. It also helps the researcher directly to achieve the research objectives and provides complete and accurate information. The type of questionnaire used was Researcher Made Questionnaire (RMQ) which was designed in such a way as to enable the researcher to collect exploratory information that gave a better understanding of the issues in the research work. The researcher's choice of RMQ was because it helped the researcher collect self-report data since the respondents reported information based on what they think, believe or recall from previous experiences. The questions in the questionnaire were in three parts: demographics, close- ended items and open ended items. These questions were used to test and quantify the hypotheses. The data were analysed statistically.

3.6 Validation of Instrument

To validate the contents of the questionnaire, two experts were selected from the Department of English and Literary Studies, University of Nigeria Nsukka in the field of academic research to give their professional judgments on the template. The aim of this approach was to ensure that data elicited using the instrument could generate the required socio-economic background variables for meaningful analyses to prove the hypotheses.

3.7 Method of Data Collection

In total, 498 first year undergraduates in the four universities chosen were the participants.

Two different groups of passages were used for this study. The first group was passages with an unfamiliar cultural background. It was taken from Pride and Prejudice by Jane Austen. The second group of passages was on passages with a familiar cultural background. It was taken from *Eyes Like Diamond* by Aneke Ejike, the students' Use of English text from Caritas University. The passages were selected based on two considerations. The first was on degree of difficulty. The second consideration was on the degree of relevance to the research work. A multiple-choice processing test consists of 20 items were given to the students to ascertain their text processing abilities. They were expected to choose a correct answer among four choices. Questions were matched to all parts of the passage so that the test would check for overall assimilation of the content of the passages. A questionnaire was also used on the participants to test the home, students and school variables that affect text processing. The researcher aimed at 498 responses for the questionnaire and generated text samples each. The participants were asked to fill in questionnaires about their

demographics and other questions on their home, personal and school constructs. The questionnaires were divided into three parts. The researcher administered these questionnaires to first year students in these universities. The questions were structured using Yes/No response (close–ended) and few Likert scale ones. Questionnaire was used as it is cheaper, offer uniformity, reduced bias and gives the respondent greater confidence in their anonymity.

3.8 Method of Data Analysis

The data collected from the questionnaire were presented in a tabular form and a number of different statistical techniques were used in analysing and interpreting the data:

a. Simple percentage analysis

b. Z –Test Analysis

Simple percentage analysis was the preliminary analysis of compilation of percentage to measure the ratio of the exhibition of particular features by the samples. The Z – test of the hypothesis formulated was based on the evidence obtained through questionnaire. Hypothesis was either accepted for the time being or rejected as untenable. The Z–Test measured the difference between the expected and observed frequencies. It was used to compare the frequency observed in a sample with expected frequency distribution based on some theoretical methods. The Z-Test formula that was used for testing the formulated hypothesis was presented below:

$$Z\,(\alpha)/2 = \frac{P - \pi}{\sqrt{(\pi(1-\pi)}}$$

π While $P = x/\pi$

$Z\,(\alpha)/2$ = the critical 1 region 1.96

p	=	sample proportion
π	=	0.5 (population proportion)
x	=	Number of favourable outcome
n	=	Total number of responses
(α) /2	=	0.025 (for one tail test at Z table)
α	=	Alpha = 5% = level of significance
(α) /2	=	5%/100/2 = 0.05/2 = 0.025 (for one tail test at Z table)
Z	=	needed value

Decision Rule

The respondents that agreed on the item up to 50% and above were accepted. Also, the respondent that did not agree were considered rejected and was not accepted.

Hypothesis

If the computed Z test is ≥ than the value of Z, we reject the hypothesis and if the computed Z test is ≤ than the value observed, it will not be rejected (Iketaku: 194-8).

3.9 Theoretical Framework

The theoretical framework for this study is made up of two language theories namely Sociolinguistics theories: Labov's Variability Theory and Bernstein's Language Codes (elaborated and restricted codes) and Barlett's Schema Theory. The researcher's choice of the two theories was informed by the fact that both theories look at language studies from both theoretical and practical application base on an understanding of a number of linguistic and social factors such as the relationship between spoken and written language, economic, social and educational background

variables. Proponents of the theories see the need for language students to organise information and relate new knowledge to the knowledge the student already possesses. To achieve high proficiency, interdisciplinary approach to language studies is at the root of these two theories.

3.9.1 Sociolinguistics Theory: Labov's Variability Theory and Bernstein's Language Codes

Sociolinguistics is an important subfield of language studies that x-rays language in relation to society. It is concern with language as used for communication among different social groups in various social settings. This is an interdisciplinary field of research which developed due to the interaction of language with a number of other academic fields. It has strong bearing with culture and sociology through the study of language and the role language plays in the formation of social groups and institutions. Sociolinguistics was pioneered by Basil Bernstein in the U.K. and William Labov in the United States of America. These two linguists and their theories formed part of the theoretical base for this study. Basil Bernstein, one of the famous sociolinguists in the 20th century made an important contribution to the study of language. His Theory of Language Codes brought to light the concepts of 'Restricted and Elaborated codes'. This theory studied the relationships between social class, family and the reproduction of meaning systems. His work in this area was very popular because of its anchor on social class differences in language. He differentiated between the restricted code of the working class and the elaborated code of the middle class. According to Bernstein:

> A restricted code is particularistic with reference to meaning and to the social structure which controls its inception. It is universalistic as

> its use depends on the characteristics of form of social relationship which can arise at any point in the social structure. An elaborated code is universalistic with reference to its meaning and potentially universalistic reference to the social structure which controls its inception (61).

The language codes can be used in many ways in various social settings. Bernstein sees the restricted code as the type of language used by low socio-economic background families and elaborated code is used by middle and high socio-economic background families. To him, the language code a student is exposed to in the environment determines the impact home variables bear on the school variable. Bernstein says that ‘‘low socio-economic background child attaches significance to an aspect of language different from that required by the learning situation and is responsible for his resistance to extensions of vocabulary, the manipulation of words and the construction of ordered sentences’’(25). This student, he goes on to say, because the student has previously learned to make ‘‘personal qualifications through expressive symbolism, lacks the desire to acquire new words or order the existing vocabulary in a way which expresses this qualification’’(26). The reverse, he says, is the case with students from middle or high socio-economic background because ‘‘the child in the middle class and assertive levels is socialised within a formally articulated structure. The future is conceived of in direct relation to the educational life of the child. The child grows up in an ordered, rational structure in which his total experience is organised from an early age’’(19). Any attempt to adjust and switch codes, that is, from the restricted code of the home to the elaborated code of the school in order to change the order of communication, Bernstein says, ‘‘creates critical problems for the working class child as it is an attempt to change his basic

system of perception, fundamentally the very means by which he has been socialised''(26). Highlighting on this impact further, Ginsborg opinions that:

> Language is used not only to communicate information but also to establish position in social relationships within the family, at school, work and within the class structure of our society. These various ways of using language is known as codes. Elaborated codes are relatively context free. They enable language users to call on universalistic meanings, to be reflexive and thus to manipulate ideas. Restricted codes limit language users to their immediate, specific context (15).

William Labov, an American linguist, is generally known as the founder of Quantitative Sociolinguistics. He brought in the quantitative study of Language Variation and Change. Labov's Difference Hypothesis aimed at the explanation of all linguistic variations caused by the involvement of social variables. His study highlighted the relevance of social determinants of linguistic variations and their correlations with the social structure. He proposed a social approach to language through his sociolinguistic model in which the linguistic theorisation was linked with the society. The theory states that variation is inherent to linguistic structure. The way a language is spoken and written differs across individuals and situations encountered by the individual. These differences are not only normal but crucial to a language's functioning. This is because variation is seen as being highly structured between language forms and social categories like socio-economic backgrounds. These linguists and their two linguistic ideologies, Bernstein's 'Language code theory' and Labov's 'Variability Concept', culminated into innovative methodological tools, theoretical and practical insights in language studies. Their works encouraged many scholars to study language with new perspectives. These two theorists move for a

stronger empirical way of studying language. They question the validity of analyses based on the intuitions of language owners instead of observing naturally produced speech. Hence, patterns of co-variation between linguistic forms and social constructs are clearly revealed through statistical analysis. This input by Bernstein and Labov made different linguists to see language studies from different perspectives. Their stand is at variance with theoretical linguists who Labov says ‘‘emphasised the role of language–internal structural factors in bringing change but variationist approach hinges on speakers' attitudes and social attributes…speech community not defined by any marked agreement in the use of language elements but by participation in a shared set of norms’’(120). Moving further, Labov says that:

> Changes typically begin as indicators when the innovative usage comes to be adopted by certain groups of speakers. As a change becomes more firmly embedded in the community, it attracts some degree of social awareness and people vary their use of it across styles making it a marker. In some cases, the level of awareness rises and the innovative forms become objects of explicit stigma or prestige as stereotypes (178).

With this move, Gumperz sees language from the social point of view as “an attempt to find correlations between social structure and linguistic structure and to observe any change that occurs”(2). To Holmes, it is “the relationship between language and society”(3). Trudgill sees ‘‘language as having a strong connection with social sciences. To him, it is that part of language studies which is concerned with ‘‘language as a social and cultural phenomenon” (4). A strong debate came up among linguists as a result of how to view and study language. Some linguists have the view that it should be studied as a closed system while others have the opinion that it

should be studied as an open system. Chomsky, a theoretical linguist, perceives language as a closed system that should be studied for its own sake. To him, the emphasis should be on studying the underlying structure of the linguistic system and to devise a theory of grammar. Therefore, differences between speakers have to be ignored. Chomsky states that "Linguistic theory is concerned primarily with an ideal speaker-listener in a completely homogeneous speech community who knows its language perfectly and is unaffected by such grammatically irrelevant conditions as memory limitations, distractions, shifts of attention and interest and errors"(9). Theoretical linguists are aware of the relationship between language and society but ignore it to have a deeper insight into the language system. Mehrdad, contrary to the theoretical approach to language studies which seek for categorical rules to explain the underlying principles in language, claims that ''language varies systematically in line with social characteristics of the students''(30). Hudson, on his own part, approaches language as an open system interacting with a variety of factors. He opines that "since speech is a social behaviour, to study it without reference to society would be like studying courtship behaviour without relating the behaviour of one partner to that of another"(10). To these linguists, there is a close link between language and society. It is not possible to separate language from society and so it should be studied in the cultural context. The users of language come from different social classes. Their language use is influenced by the social norms and cultural patterns in their environments. Throwing more light on the need to study language as an open system, Troike while introducing the ethnography of communication says that "the ethnography of communication takes language first and foremost as a socially situated cultural form while recognising the necessity to analyse the code itself and the cognitive processes of its speakers and hearers"(12.) These linguists

identify factors such as the social background of the language users, their age, gender, social class, education, ethnic background, the context and manner of the communication. Bayyurt moves on to explain that one of the uses of language in society is to build and sustain meaningful relationships among people. According to him, ‘’when we meet people for the first time in a social context, our first reaction often includes speculation, on the basis of their spoken language about where they come from and what social class they belong to. Such speculation leads one to form a fuller image and understanding of people which may or may not be accurate’’(71). He, therefore, sees sociolinguistics as the branch of science that ‘‘analyses the relationship between language and society on the basis of its use in diverse social contexts. It is one of the most far-reaching sub disciplines of language studies interacting with many other disciplines including foreign language education and international relations’’(71). There are concepts that are very important in this field because they throw clear light on the study of language in relation to the society. These include language variety and change, variation and style, language attitudes, language and culture, language and interaction, bilingualism or multilingualism and multiculturalism, social class and language use, language contact, language and gender and language planning and policy. When one considers text processing proficiency in a social context noting student-teacher-parent’s interactions alongside educational components of text processing acquisition, the significance of social interactions is readily perceived. Regarding communicational functions, the application of sociolinguistics in a learning environment/context can contribute enormously to the development of text processing techniques as important language skills. There is a profound relationship between text processing and society. It is in society that man acquires and uses texts. In a social context, the study of texts tells

about how people organise their social relationship within a particular speech community. According to Wardhaugh, “there are some possible relationships between language and society”(13). There are probably three possible relationships between text processing and society. First, the social structures may either influence or determine linguistic structure and/or behaviour. Second, linguistic structure and/or behaviour may either influence or determine social structure. Third, language and society may influence each other. Chaika states that “language and society are so intertwined that it is impossible to understand one without the other. There is no human society that does not depend upon, is not shaped by and does not itself shape language”(14). The human society will be lifeless without language and so will be the language without its users. This means that language and society are inseparable from each other. This idea was developed by Ferdinand de Saussure in his work ‘‘The Course in General Linguistics’’ published posthumously in 1916 where he stated that ‘language is primarily a social activity’ and ‘language is socialised at every level from the production of phonemes to the interpretation of complex meaning. To explain the relationship further, Osuafor states that “man is constantly linked to others through language. The primary function of language is to convey ideas from one person to another be it information, command or entreaty. It plays major roles in the regulation of control of the society’’(2). The society is human beings and it cannot exist without language which is a channel of communication through the use of texts. These texts have to be processed for language to be effective. Every society would be seen as civilised and organised when it establishes an independent culture. This culture is identified from other cultures through the use of language which reflects in texts. Without texts, every society will seize to exist. Language through texts is a definer of society and anything it fails to define does not exist in the society. Texts tell us a great

deal about a culture. It is the foundation of every culture though particular texts may differ in striking ways. People can conceptualise the world only through text. Hence, people's texts reflect their concerns, values and activities. So, text is the product of the collective mind of a linguistic group. Text is a thing of the society and the meaning is determined by the society. Therefore, the semantic structure of any text is something that is inherent in that linguistic community as a whole and not dependent on individuals. Text, culture and society are interrelated. Yule says:

> It is important not to overlook this social aspect of language (text) because in many ways, speech is a form of social identity and is used consciously or unconsciously to indicate membership of different social groups or different speech communities. A speech community is a group of people who share a set of norms, rules and expectations regarding the use of language through text. (239)

On the importance of text to culture, Maduekwe asserts:

> Language is probably the most influential factor in the dynamic inter-relationship between cultures. Culture is not only what we see but also the way we see it, the language we use to express it, culture cannot merely be regarded as a body of knowledge which can be transmitted to the learners ….. Culture can be seen as a web of spoken and written texts, a linguistic landscape consisting of an infinite number of texts. Language is not only communication, but also it is an expression of culture (76).

People of various social groups process text in different ways. Therefore, text often socially varies in use with various social factors. There are two approaches to the

relation between text processing and society. One approach is that society is taken as a whole, how text functions in it and how it reflects various social differentiations. The other approach is that society is studied from the point of view of an individual social member. Language experts are more concerned with how text is processed in communication between members of a society. Text processing and society are related in many ways. If we look back at the history of language studies, we rarely found investigations of any text analysis which are completely cut off from contemporary investigations of its regional and social distributions. That is why a text is taken as essentially a set of linguistic items such as sounds, words, grammatical structures etc. Text processing is an outcome of class situations in a given society. In most countries of the world, text processing in society is distinguishable based on certain sociological parameters. The key issue among which is the class. Most varieties of text interpretations are an outcome of certain social situations which resulted in different text processing proficiency. This makes a given class to use and interpret text which creates linguistic boundaries that isolate them from the general linguistic forms used by the society. Labov concludes that in the study of language, ‘‘there is the need to understand why there is variation in the way people process text. Efforts must be geared towards looking beyond the sentence level’’(207).

3.9.2 Schema Theory

The second theoretical framework for this study is Barlett’s Schema Theory. A study of current research on text processing shows that there are numerous new theories of text processing of which schema theory is one of them. Schema theory is a theory used by famous psychologists to show how human memory work in the process of acquiring, processing and retrieving knowledge. To the cognitive scientists, it is a term used to show how people process, organise and store information in their heads.

Otagburuagu et. al. opine that schema theory is used today as a popular theory in applied linguistics to account for how students handle text processing in second and foreign language learning''(114). Schema theory was first proposed by Federic Bartlet in 1932. Bartlet suggests that ''human beings possesses genetic knowledge in the form of unconscious mental structures (schemata) and that these structures produce schematised errors in recall when they interact with incoming information''(qtd in Cook: 8). It is through schemata that old knowledge influences new information. This concept was propose to form a mental picture for selected chunks of complex knowledge which are then stored in the long–term memory. Schemata are used to organise knowledge, assist recall, to guide behaviour, predict what is likely to happen and help to make sense of current experience. They are cognitive structures that are gotten from previous experience and knowledge. Bartlet believes that students ''learn using existing schemata (schemas) that are either accommodated or assimilated. Accommodating is when an existing schema is replaced. Assimilation is when you add information to your schema'' (qtd in Cook: 8). Schema theory uses the concept of a schema to show how students/learners think, analyse and act on the text that is presented to them. In support, Otagburuagu et. al submit that ''learning is a matter of building on previous experience. The knowledge which a person acquires in learning a subject is a reconstruction of some past experience(s) and such experience(s) often form(s) the basis for projecting into and/or suggesting what the future experience(s)or learning outcomes could be''(114). The theory, therefore, states that all knowledge/data are organised into units. Each unit is a schema. Within each schema, information is stored. Smith states that ''everything we know and believe is organised in a theory of what the world is like, a theory that is the basis of all our perceptions and understanding of the world, the root

of all learning, the source of hopes and fears, motive and expectancies, reasoning and creativity''(8). This information can pertain to anything. In the mind of the students, a schema is a generalised concept or system for understanding pieces of the text(s) they encounter in the course of their university programme. The information within a students' schema can represent different data such as events, sequences of action, objects and situational knowledge. Schemata categorise students' knowledge at all levels into cultural truths and knowledge about the meaning of a world. Hence, they have schemata for all things, being a mental shortcuts use to understand the texts in every field of study. Schema theory describes the process by which students combine their own background knowledge with the information in a text to understand the text. Every student carry different schemata (background information) and these are also often culture-specific. This is an important concept in text processing and which are often designed to build or activate the student's schemata. Schema theory is based on the belief that every act of text assimilation and understanding involves one's knowledge of the world as well. Thus, Barlett opines that ''students develop a coherent interpretation of text through the interactive process of combining textual information with the information a student brings to a text'' (qtd in Cook: 86). Students' mental stores are termed schemata and are divided into three main types: content schemata (background knowledge of the world), formal schemata (background knowledge of rhetorical structure) and linguistic schema (cognitive background of the student). Alyousef views text processing as ''an interactive process between the student and text which leads to automaticity (fluency). The student interacts dynamically with the text as he/she tries to elicit the meaning''(143).

Schema theorists have put forward three types of schemata: content, formal and linguistics schemata. McCarthy sees schemata as ''the underlying connections that

allow new experiences and information to be aligned with previous knowledge''(168). To Brown and Yule whether schemata is fixed or flexible, it is a way of accounting for interpretation and production of discourse''(250). A student's prior knowledge of both schemata enables him to predict events and meaning as well as to draw meaning from a wider context. Content schemata refer to the knowledge related to the content area of texts/ materials which is the key to the understanding of a text. It is the familiarity of the subject of the text. It includes an understanding of the topic of the text and the culture-specific elements needed to interpret it. It is part of the individual's cultural orientation which has a major impact on all elements of text processing. Some of these elements include things like types of text, purpose of engaging in the task, perception of the exercise, views of students in relation to the writers of the text, level of textual engagement, value of the spoken word in relation to written word and types of text topics. As a language is not only consisted of vocabulary, grammar and sentence structures, it is also the carrier of different levels of culture. Studies proved that content schemata affect understanding and remembering more than formal schemata do for text organisation. Chihara et. al. agree that interpretation is easier when experiences and expectations of the processor and writer are similar. Students remembered most when both the content and rhetorical forms are familiar to them while unfamiliar content may cause more difficulties in correct understanding. Formal schemata refer to the organisational forms and rhetorical structures of written texts, including knowledge of different text types and genres, and the acknowledgement that different types of texts use text organisation, language structures, vocabulary, grammar and level of formality differently. Different texts or materials bear different characteristics that possess corresponding task requests for students. A suitable employment of formal schemata

plays a significant role in text processing. Linguistic schemata refer to students' existing language proficiency in vocabulary, grammar and sentence structure. As the basis of understanding, language knowledge plays a vital role in understanding of the text, especially for learners at the lower stage of learning. Without basic language knowledge, no processing strategy or skill can function effectively. Therefore, the more language schemata students have in their mind, the more information students may acquire from the text, and the more effective students they may become. To activate and build schemata during text processing, Swales posits that it involves ''identification of genre, formal structure topic, all of which activate schemata and allow students to process the text. Since the student plays a fundamental role in the construction of meaning, his age, gender, experience and culture are important considerations for teachers who want to select texts that will motivate their students''(89). Wallace further says that ''the activation of schemas helps to predict what will come next in spoken or written discourse as well as organise information''(33). When students cannot find a schema that fits a text, they may find it difficult and confusing because Wallace says it is because ''different types of texts require students to adjust their schema and shape constructs with their own experiences''(33). Sometimes, students may not have a schema that fits a text, or they need help to activate existing background knowledge. Also, difficulties in assimilation may be caused by lack of background knowledge needed to work on the text. The role of teachers is two in this situation, that is, to activate previous schemata and to help students to integrate chunks of information into schema or form new one.

3.9.2.1 Schema Theory and Text Processing

It is clear that in order to teach text processing effectively, the role socio-economic backgrounds play to activate and build schemata is essential. To help students build

schemata, the stakeholders should pick texts before the actual exercise that are important to the student's needs, preferences, individual differences and cultures so as to select relevant texts that the students will understand the message. This is what is meant by activating previous schemata and helping build new schemata. Having selected the text, they need to engage in these three processes to activate and build the student's schema. The first process is Pre-processing activities. According to Aebersold and Field, it involves ''previewing the text particularly the title, subheadings and figure which helps students predict what they are going to process''(73). Students think, write and discuss everything they know about the topic, using methods like prediction, semantic mapping and reconciled testing. The purpose is to ensure that students have the needed schemata for understanding the text. The second process is 'During Processing Activities.' This guides the student and regulates the interaction between them and the text. An important skill students can acquire at this time is note taking which enables students to complete new vocabulary and important information details and to summarise information and record their inferences. The last is 'Post-processing.' This gives the student the ability and/or chance to assess their level of interpretation while taking note that accuracy is relative. Post processing activities centre on different types of questions that give room for different interpretations. While schema activation and building can occur in all three stages above, the 'pre-processing' needs special attention since it is this stage that gives student initial contact with the text and revive their schemata. They conclude by saying that as ''lower level students may have the background knowledge but not the language skills to discuss them in English language, their L_1 might be used to access schemata but teachers should present the related vocabulary

or otherwise a schema has been activated but learning the L2 has not been facilitated''(77).

3.9.2.2 Relevant Models in Schema Theory

There are three models of text processing which unveils the relationship between schema and text processing. They are the bottom-up model, top-down model and interactive model. Bottom-up model of text processing is the view that text processing is a process of building symbols into words, words into sentences and sentences into the overall meaning which shows traditional attitudes toward given task. In this model, students begin with the lowest level (individual letters/sounds) from which the symbols are identified. Strings of symbols are then analysed into morphological cluster (morphemes) from which words are recognised and then strings of words are analysed into phrases and sentences. The meaning of the text is expected to come naturally as the code is broken based on the student's prior knowledge of linguistic units like vocabulary, grammar, syntax. This McDonough and Shaw regard as ''having the reader work from letters and minimum units upward to decipher text''(109). Therefore, from the point of view of bottom-up model, it is important to understand linguistic units and the lower-level processing skills in text processing. The weakness of this model is that it weakens the importance of text processing because the focus is on the understanding of linguistic knowledge but little attention is paid to schema, that is, related cultural background of the whole text. According to Carrell, relying on bottom-up processing is considered text-bound and means that a student has limited his abilities by not accessing or not possessing a formal or abstract schema'' (101). Top-down model emphases the use of student's real world knowledge in memory. The top-down model, according to McDonough and Shaw, ''takes into consideration the rhetoric of a passage activating knowledge of the subject as well as

expectations and intuition''(109). The goal of this model is constructing meaning in response to text. It requires interactive use of grapho-phonic, syntactic, and semantic cues to construct meaning. In this model, students do not pick every word but see through the text in order to be able to guess the meaning of the words or phrases. During this process, students take in larger units of meaning of the text at a time, match what they already know with the meaning they derive from the text. Top-down processing occurs as the system makes general predictions based on higher level and general schemata. It searches the input for information to fit into these partially satisfied, higher order schemata. The top down like the bottom-up has its own shortcomings. Since bottom-up and top-down models are laden with obvious weaknesses it is important to draw a clear cut distinction between the two models. Carrell opines that ''top-down model relates to making predictions based on background knowledge (knowledge-based) and bottom-up relates to building textual meaning from the individual linguistic units-text-based''(101). The recognition of these results into a high level model called interactive model. Interactive model is a combination of bottom-up and top-down models in which the prior knowledge and prediction facilitate the processing of input from the text. The interaction in this case takes place at three levels: the interaction between lower-level and higher-level skills; between bottom-up processing and top-down processing; between the background knowledge presupposed in the text and the background of the student. Xie says that modern schema theorist believe that:

> Schema, a data structure of general structure of general ideas stored in memory, consists of variables and slots. Meaning exists neither in oral nor in written language itself, but in the student's mind, depending on the activation of his or her brain schemata whose controlling structure

> or basic moving pattern is navigated through bottom-up data-driven processing and top-down concept-driven processing. (67)

In interactive text processing, both bottom-up and top-down processing should be occurring at all levels at the same time. Students may use bottom-up process as a base for understanding a text and then turn to top-down process to handle high-level interpretation of the content of the text. Prediction of the content will be confirmed, revised or rejected through further data analysis. Interactive model of text processing is the combination of bottom-up and top-down models and thus absorbs their merits and avoids the limitations to a great extent. Having looked at the three relevant models, it becomes very clear that they are all needed for effective processing of texts. Basic bottom-up processing must not be ignored and the importance of a lexico-grammatical focus, especially, in the early stages of learning needs to be recognised. Students require training in the skill of rapid recognition of large numbers of words and structures in order to accomplish the objective of studying extensively enough to build and improve the schemata they need for fuller enjoyment of the texts. Without linguistic schemata, it is impossible for the student to decode and understand a text. Therefore, the more linguistic schemata a student has in his mind, the faster the student acquires information and the better understanding the student may get. Formal schemata are the organisational forms and rhetorical structures of written texts. They include knowledge of different text types and genres and also include the knowledge that different types of texts use, text organisation, language structures, vocabulary, grammar and level of formality. Students use their schematic representations of the text such as fictions, poems, essays, newspaper articles, academic articles in magazines and journals to help assimilate information in the text.

CHAPTER FOUR

4.0 DATA ANALYSIS, RESULTS AND INTERPRETATION

4.1 Introduction

This chapter presents analysis of data and results of data obtained from the survey study. Data collected were analysed using spread sheet of Microsoft Office Excel 2010 (see Appendix X). The first section analysed data on general socio-economic issues. The second section analysed data based on the research questions. The third section analysed data based on the proficiency test and the last section tested the hypotheses. A total of 498 questionnaires were distributed in the four selected universities in Enugu State namely: University of Nigeria, Nsukka (UNN), Enugu State University of Science and Technology, Enugu (ESUT), Caritas University, Amorji-Nike (CARITAS) and Godfrey Okoye University, Ugwuomu-Nike (GO). Fifteen (15) questionnaires representing 3% of the whole questionnaires distributed were not returned. 35 questionnaires representing 7% returned were discarded due to different types of defaults. A total of 448 questionnaires were filled correctly and the researcher accepted them. This represented 90% of the distributed questionnaires. The high rate of returned questionnaires was because the researcher administered the instrument in the course of the second semester 2017/2018 ‘Use of English’ lectures in which the lecturers served as research assistants.

The table below showed the return rate of questionnaires distributed to the four universities in the study.

Table 3: Questionnaire Distribution in the Selected Universities

Name of University	Number Distributed	Actual Number Certified	Number Not Certified	Number Not Returned	Percentage of Default
UNN	327	322	5	-	10%
ESUT	146	103	28	15	86%
CARITAS	12	12	-	-	-
GO	13	11	2	-	4%
Total	498	448	35	15	100%

Source: Field work 2018

The 15 respondents that escaped with their questionnaires were from ESUT forming 3% of the total number distributed to the state university. In order to give a valid analysis of the 'Influence of Socio-economic Background on ELS Text processing,' demographic data on students and their backgrounds were gathered and analysed. The data collected for this were on age, the gender of students, level of family income, type of parents' households, educational attainment of parents, religion, occupational distribution, the language used in the homes etc. These data were presented in the tables below.

4.2 Data Analysis, Results and Interpretation

Data for this study were analysed using simple percentage and Z-Test statistical tool. Data on students' demographics, research questions and proficiency test were analysed using simple percentages while data for test of hypotheses were analysed using Z-Test statistical tool.

4.2.1 Students' Demographics

Table 4: Age Distribution of Respondents.

Age	Number of Respondents	Percentage
15-17 years	60	13%
18-20 years	266	59%
21^{+}	122	27%
Total	448	100%

Source: Field work, 2018

The distribution of respondents by age in Table 4 above showed that more than half of the respondents 59% were within the age bracket of 18-20years. This is followed by those who were 21 years and above with 27%. The least were those within the age bracket of 15-17years which represents 13%. This showed that the study was mainly for respondents who were strictly in their early age of university academic programme. These respondents have just transited from being under parental influence into a world of academic exploits where they have to bring their background experiences to bear on their present academic output in text processing.

Table 5: Distribution of Respondents by Gender.

Sex	Number of Respondents	Percentage
Male	249	56%
Female	199	44%
Total	448	100%

Source: Field work 2018

Table 5 above presented the distribution of respondents by Gender. Analyses showed that the majority of the respondents were male with 56% while the remaining 44% were female.

Table 6: Distribution of Respondents by Type of Parent Household

Marital Status	**Number of Respondents**	**Percentage**
Married	360	80%
Divorced	49	11%
Single	39	9%
Total	448	100%

Source: Field work 2018

Data analysis from the above table revealed that 360 respondents, that is, 80% came from two-parent's household where the parents are jointly required to build up their children's text processing background. 49 respondents representing 11% indicated that their parents were divorced. The last group 9% (39) came from single-parent homes. The implication is that a reasonable number of these respondents (88) came from a type of family where the responsibility of providing sound text processing foundation falls on one parent alone.

Table 7: Distribution of Respondents by Parents' Educational Qualification.

Highest Educational Qualification	**Number of Respondents**	**Percentage**
Post Graduate	70	16%
Graduate	157	35%
NCE/OND	57	13%
SSCE/NECO/GCE	74	17%
FSLC	90	20%
Total	448	100%

Source: Field work 2018

The respondents' parents' educational qualification, according to Table 7, revealed that 70(16%)of the respondents have parents whose highest educational qualification was post graduate, 157 (35%) were graduates, 57 (13%) have Nigeria Certificate in Education(NCE)/ Ordinary National Diploma(OND), 74 (17%) have Senior School Certificate Examination (SSCE)/ National Examinations Council(NECO)/ General Certificate of Education(GCE) and 90 (20%) have First School Leaving Certificate(FSLC). This analysis showed that the respondents came from different educational backgrounds and this invariably implied that the students were exposed to different qualities of text processing foundations.

Table 8: Distribution of Respondents by Parents' Religious Affiliation

Items	**Number of Respondents**	**Percentage**
Christianity	447	99.78%
Islam	1	0.22%
Traditional	0	0%
Total	448	100%

Source: Field work 2018

Analysis of data in Table 8 above showed that 447 (99.78%) of the respondents have Christian religious affiliation while 1 (0.22%) has Muslim religious affiliation. This implies that virtually all the respondents came from one religious affiliation. This showed that even though one of the institutions is a federal government institution, students in it are predominantly Christians.

Table 9: Distribution of Respondents by Parents' Occupation

Items	Number of Respondents	Percentage
Farming	19	4%
Trading	190	42%
Public/civil servant	239	53%
Total	448	100%

Source field work: 2018

The data analysed in Table 9 above showed that 19 respondents representing 4% said that their parents were farmers, 190 (42%) were traders while 239(53%) were either civil or public servants. From the above analysis, it will not be unwelcome to deduce that 40% of the students may have been denied parents' attention on text processing and other academic values.

Proper analysis of data on level of parents' income was presented below:

Table 10: Distribution of Respondents by Level of Family Income

Income	Number of Respondents	Percentage
High (Above ₦1,000,000)	176	39.3%
Middle (Between ₦500,000 - ₦999,999)	200	44.6%
Low (Below ₦5000,000)	72	16.1%
Total	448	100%

Source: Field work 2018

The Table above revealed that more than half of the respondents came from families whose income was below high income status. Only 39% (that is above ₦1,000,000) representing 176 respondents came from high income families, 44.6% (that is ₦500,000 - ₦999,999) representing 200 respondents were from middle income families while 16.1%(72) were from low income families. Since majority of the respondents came from middle and low income (that is below ₦500,000) families, funding of school programmes by these parents will not be easy. This disposition may directly or indirectly affect the choice for private or public schools for students considering the difference in educational standard in most public schools in the study area.

Table 11: Distribution of Respondents According to Language(s) of the Home

Language	**Number of Respondents**	**Percentage**
Nigerian languages	329	73.4%
English and other Foreign Languages	118	26.6%
Total	448	100%

Source Field work 2018

Only 26.6% of the respondents used both English language (L_2) and their vernacular (L_1) as languages of communication at home. Majority of the respondents (73.4 %%) used different native languages (Igbo, Yoruba, Efik etc) in their families and home environments from the language, particularly English, language used in school. The data showed that English language which is the language of education and/or text processing is a second language to the sample for the study. Table 11 showed that

most of the parents lacked knowledge of the importance of exposing their children to both L1 (MT) and L2 (English Language).

For proper analysis of data on family size, responses are coded ‘Large’ for ‘Yes’ and ‘Small’ for ‘No’.

Table 12: Distribution of Respondents According to Family Size.

Size	**Number of Respondents**	**Percentage**
Large	256	57.1%
Small	192	42.9%
Total	448	100%

Source: Field work 2018

Analysis of the data above showed that majority of the respondents came from large size families having 57.1 %(256) of the total number of the respondents while 42.9% (192) came from small size families .The implication is that since majority of these students came from middle and low income families, having large families would be additional stress on the family income. The side effect is that these respondents have no choice but to live in an unfavourable home environment with its attendant impact on text processing.

Table 13: Distribution of Respondents According to Availability of Text Processing Materials

Text Materials	Number of Respondents (Yes)	Percentage	Number of Respondents (No)	Percentage	Percentage Total
Home	199	44%	249	56%	100%
School	249	45%	199	55%	100%
Total	448			448	

Source: Field work 2018

The Table above showed that majority of the respondents 56% (249) were not equipped with materials at home for private studies. 44% (199) of the respondents were of the view that their parents provided them with enough study materials at home. This is in tandem and in collaboration with the outcome witnessed in Tables 5, 7 and 8. Also on the availability of text processing materials in school, it was the same case. 55% said that they were not provided with enough materials in school while 44% (199) said that they had enough study materials in school. Even though these students said that they were provided with some materials at home and school, the impact was not enough because their output was poor as would be revealed in the result of analysis on proficiency test. Also, the type of materials provided may not have been relevant to sound text processing proficiency needed below the university level which forms the foundation for advanced text processing. Perhaps students' interest and the quality of text processing skills imparted by the school may be deficient.

4.2.2 Analysis, Results and Interpretation Based on Research Questions

Research Question1: What are the socio-economic background variables that affect proficiency in text processing? A lot of minor questions were used to elicit data for this (see Appendix III). The responses were grouped under three variables which were considered crucial for the study:

a. home variables (see Appendix III for questions 2-9 and 18-19).

b. school variables (see Appendix III for questions 11-16)

c. student variables (Appendix III for questions 20-25 and 26-33).

The tables below presented data from the field work on these three variables.

Table 14: Distribution of Respondents According Home Variables.

Home Variables	**Number of Respondents (Yes)**	**Percentage**	**Number of Respondents (No)**	**Percentage**
Parents' Academic Status	303	68%	145	32%
Parents' Income Disposition	249	56%	199	44%
Location of Family	325	73%	123	27%
Conducive Environment	249	56%	199	44%
Language of the Home	333	74%	115	26%
Family Size	256	57%	192	43%
Parents' Interest	216	48%	232	52%

Source: Field work 2018

Results from Table 14 showed different home variables identified by the respondents. 68% (303) identified academic status of their parents as an important home variable while 32% (145) did not identified it as home variable, 56 (249) identified income disposition of their parents while 44% (199) did not indicate that. 73% pointed

location of the family while 27% (123) did not identify it. A high number of 56% (249) pointed out conducive home environment while 44% (199) did not agree that it was a variable. Another home variable identified by 74% (333) of the respondents was language of the home but 26% (115) did not see it as a home variable. Also, family size was identified. According to the analysis, 57% (256) of the respondents agreed while 43% (192) did not see it as a variable. Finally, 48% (216) identified parent's interest as one of the key home variables while 52% (232) had a different view.

Table 15: Distribution of Respondents According School Variables.

School Variable	**Yes**	**Percentage**	**No**	**Percentage**
Location of school: urban/rural	331(urban)	74%	117(rural)	26%
Quality of teachers	276	62%	172	38%
Infrastructures	249	56%	199	44%
School affiliation: public /private	198	44.2%	250	55.8%
Availability of learning materials/ drills	199	45%	249	55%
Class size/ number	301	67%	147	33%
Impact of class size	209	46.7%	239	53.3%

Source: Field work 2018

Table 15 showed the result of the minor school variables as identified by the respondents. 74 %(331) identified location of school: urban or rural while 26% (117) did not see it as a school variable. To 62% (276) respondents, the quality of teachers (qualification) played a vital role while 32% (172) had a different opinion. Similarly, 56% (249) respondents identified infrastructure while 44% (199) had different view. For school affiliation (private/ public), 44% (198) said they attended public secondary

schools while 56% (250) said that they attended private secondary schools. On the availability of relevant text processing materials, 45% (199) had a positive view while 56% (249) had a negative view on that. The analysis also showed that the class size for the respondents differed. 67% (301) had their class size above 40 students per class while 33% (147) said their class size was below 40 students per class. Even though majority of the respondents said that their class size was large, 46.7% (209) indicated that it did not affect their text processing acquisition while 53.3% (239) said it had a negative impact on them.

The students' variables were divided into personal interest, intrinsic motivation, background knowledge and ability to use advanced text processing strategies in Tables 16 and 17.

Table 16: Distribution of Respondents According to Student's Interest/Intrinsic Motivation

Students Variables	**Number of Respondents (Yes)**	**Percentage**	**Number of Respondents (No)**	**Percentage**
Interest	377	84.2%	71	15.8%
Intrinsic motivation	354	79%	94	21%

Source: Field Work 2018

From Table 16, data from the study revealed that 84.2% (377) had interest in their text processing and while 15.8% (71) lacked interest in text processing. Likewise, 79% (354) indicated that they were intrinsically motivated to engage in advanced text processing while 21% (94) had opposing view.

Table 17: Distribution of Respondents According to Students' Background Knowledge on Text Processing

Background Knowledge	Number of Respondents (Yes)	Percentage	Number of Respondents (No)	Percentage
Ability to link text to real life situation	132	29.5%	316	70.5%
Availability of relevant background knowledge	355	79.2%	93	20.8%
Ability to apply relevant background knowledge to difficult tasks	354	79%	94	21%
Linguistic proficiency and current output	351	78.3%	97	21.7%
Impact of previous text processing skills and current achievement	322	71.9%	126	28.1%

Source: Field work 2018

Table 17 above presented data according to the availability and impact background knowledge had on the respondents' text processing. 29.5% (132) were of the view that they had the ability to link text(s) to real life situations while 70.5% (316) lacked such ability. 79% (355) of them indicated that absence of relevant background knowledge resulted to difficulty during text processing. On the contrary, 21%(94) said that it posed no problem for them. On the issue of linguistic proficiency and current output, 78.3% (351) had the view that it was very vital to the present text processing ability. However, 21.7% (97) did not see the essence of previous linguistic proficiency on current output. Also, 71.9% (322) agreed that skills acquired before

entering the university impacted positively on their output but 28.1% (126) disagreed with them. This implies that the respondents assume that they have the ability to process advanced texts irrespective of their socio-economic backgrounds as shown by the results in the Tables above.

Table 18: Distribution of Respondents According to Type of Text Processing Abilities

Type of Text Processing Abilities	**Number of Respondents (Yes)**	**Percentage**	**Number of Respondents (No)**	**Percentage**
Ability to identify and use text features	164	36.6%	284	63.4%
Ability to pin down requirement(s) in a given task	143	31.9%	305	68.1%
Ability to identify main idea(s)	175	39.1%	273	60.9%
Ability to identify supporting idea(s) to the main idea(s).	151	33.7%	297	66.3%
Ability to draw inferences	154	33.7%	297	66.3%
Ability to make use of advanced text processing strategies	201	44.8%	247	55.2%

Source: Field work 2018

Results from Table 18 above revealed the respondents' view the text processing proficiency abilities possessed by students. 36% (164) of the respondents were of the view that they could identify and use text features in any given text task(s) while 63.4% (284) expressed their inability to use different text features when handling text task(s). On being able to understand and pin down task requirement(s), 31.9% (143) said that they lacked such ability. To identify the main idea(s) and supporting details, 39.1% (175) and 33.7% (151) indicated that they were able to identify these but

60.9%(273) and 66.3% gave opposing responses respectively. Similarly, smaller proportion of 33.7% (151) had the view that they can draw inference on the author's view point while a large proportion of 66.3% (297) stated otherwise. The last part of the result in this section was on the respondents' ability to make use of advanced text processing strategies. The gap in the responses was not wide. 44.8% (201) gave positive response while 55.2 % (249) gave a negative response. Analysis of the data above revealed an overall weakness on the part of the respondents as a result of poor background knowledge. This result showed that many students lacked the requisite skills needed to tackle advanced text task(s) at the present academic level.

Research Question 2:

To what extent does socio-economic background (SEB) of first year students in the university in Enugu State affect text processing?

A lot of minor questions (see appendix (III) for questions 1-4) were used to elicit data from the respondents. Table 19 below was used to present data from the respondents.

Table 19 Impact of Home Environment on Present Text Processing Output

Impact	**Number of Respondents**	**Percentage**
Very strong	251	56%
Strong	100	22.3%
Very weak	60	13.4%
Weak	37	8.3%
Total	448	100%

Source: Field work 2018

From Table 19 above, 56 % (251) of the respondents were of the view that the extent of the influence of home environment was very strong and 22.3% (100) saw it as just

strong. 8.3% (37) of the respondents, however, were of the opinion that the degree of the influence was weak while 13.4%(60) said there was very weak impact of home environment on their present output. This implies that all the home variables analysed in Table 14 had a lot of impacts on the respondents' text processing.

Research Question 3:

Which of the variables exerts the greatest influence on text processing on first year students in the university in Enugu State? Three minor questions were used to elicit data for research question three (see Appendix III for questions 32, 34 and 35).

Table 20a: Distribution of Respondents According to Ranking of the Major Variables

Major Variables	**Number of Respondents (Yes)**	**Percentage**	**Number of Respondents (No)**	**Percentage**
Positive impact of the three major variables (home, school and student)	262	58.5%	186	41.5%
Ability to rank these three major variables	322	71.9%	126	28.1%

Table 20b: The Variable with the Highest Impact on Text Processing

Major Variables	**Number of Respondents**	**Percentage**
Home	294	65.5%
School	98	21.5%
Student	56	12.5%
Total	448	100%

Source: Field work 2018

From the data analysed in Table 20a above, 58.5%(262) identified ‘ home,’ ‘ school’ and ‘student’ as key variables that impact on their text processing output but 14.5% (186) did not see the three together as important variables that exert influence on text processing. Also, the respondents went on to rank the major variables according to their level of influence. Hence, 71.9% (322) agreed that the three variables home, school and student did not exert the same influence on the respondents while 28.1 % (126) disagreed with the view. To prove the point further in Table 20b, 66%(294) of the respondents agreed that ‘Home’ as a variable exerted the greatest influence on their text processing achievement while 22% (96) respondents said that it was ‘school’ as a variable and 13%(56) of the respondents said that it was ‘ student’ as a variable. The above analysis showed that there was an interrelationship which exists among ‘home,’ ‘school’ and ‘students’ variables. From the above analysis, the respondents even though they agreed that the three variables exert influence on their text processing output, greater number of them believed that the ‘Home’ was the bedrock on which the other two: ‘school’ and ‘student’ anchored.

Research Question 4:

What is the relationship between the students’ socio-economic background and text processing achievement? Data were elicited using minor questions derived from the questionnaires. (see Appendix III for questions 28, 32 and 33).

Table 21: Distribution of Respondents According to the Relationship that Exists between Respondents' Socio-economic Background and Text Processing Achievement

Relationship	Number of Respondents (Yes)	Percentage	Number of Respondents (No)	Percentage
Relevant background knowledge helps during text processing	355	79.2%	93	20.8%
Previous relevant strategies have positive impact on present task(s)	322	71.9%	126	28.1%
The three major variables together affect text processing positively	262	58.5%	186	41.5%

Source: Field work 2018

From Table 21, majority of the respondents had affirmative view on the strong relationship that exist between socio-economic background and text processing achievement. 79.2% (355) were of the view that relevant background knowledge helped them in any given tasks while 20.8% (93) had opposing view. Also 71.9% (322) agreed that previous relevant strategies impacted positively to their output while 28.1% (126) respondents had contrary view. Lastly, 58.5% (186) declared that the three major variables affect text processing positively while 41.5% (186) were of the view that these variables had no effect their impact on text processing

The above analyses were summarised thus:

Total of positive responses	939	=	70%
Total of negative responses	405	=	30%
Total	1344	=	100%

Source: Field work 2018

From the analysis in Table 21, 70% of the respondents were able to identify and agree that there exist a relationship between the respondents' socio-economic backgrounds and text processing achievement. 30% of the respondents were unable to establish a link between their socio-economic background and text processing at the present academic level.

Research Question5: To what extent does pre-university text processing proficiency principally affect high level text processing at the university level? Question 31 was used to elicit data for this (see AppendixIII).

Table 22 Previous Text Processing Proficiency on Current Output

Degree of Previous Text Processing Proficiency	**Number of Respondents**	**Percentage**
Very strong	147	32.8%
Strong	100	22.3%
Very weak	98	21.9%
Weak	103	23%
Total	448	100%

Source: Field work 2018

From the analysis in Table 22 above, 55.8% (247) stated that text processing proficiency acquired below the university level affected high level text processing at the university while 45% of the respondents have an opposing view. The margin in the responses was very small. The result showed that many students did not even realise the link between text processing achievements in their lower form of education and the present one at the university. This is in agreement with the result obtained in

Table 17 where the result showed that student background knowledge impacts heavily on text processing.

4. 2. 3 Analysis, Result and Interpretation Based on the Proficiency Test

From the field test exercise conducted, five passages involving 20-Item multiple-choice tests were used to measure participants' overall on the spot text processing proficiency. The passages were on narrative and descriptive texts with familiar and unfamiliar backgrounds. The test has both questions that required students to make inferences and literal answers. The text was designed to measure the actual proficiency and/or the level of performance of respondents on text with familiar and unfamiliar background.

Data for the performance of students on familiar background were collected using passages 1 and 2 comprising of 10-multiple choice questions (see Appendix III). Analysis of students' performances was presented in the table below.

Table 23 Performance of Respondents on Texts with Familiar Background

Performance	**Range of scores**	**Frequencies**	**Percentage**
Very Good	80-100	270	60%
Good	60-70	81	18%
Average	50-59	38	8%
Below Average	40-49	17	4%
Fail	1-39	42	9%
Total		448	100%

Source: Field work 2018

From Table 23, 60% (270) of the respondents got very good(80 -100) scores, 18%(81) had scores that were good(60 -79), 8%(38) of them got average output(50-59), 4%(17) performed below average(40 -49) and 9%(42) of the respondents failed (1-39). The above analysis showed that even though many of the respondents were able to attempt the given texts with familiar background, a good number of them12%(59) performed below expectation since the nature of the texts suited their linguistic, content and formal schemata. Data for the performance of students on unfamiliar background were collected using passages 3-5 comprising of 10-multiple choice questions (see Appendix III). Analysis on this was presented in the table below.

Table24: Performance of Respondents on Text with Unfamiliar Background

Performance	**Range of Scores**	**Frequency**	**Percentage**
Very Good	80-100	50	11.1%
Good	60-79	69	15.3%
Average	50-59	86	19%
Below Average	40-49	99	22.1%
Fail	1-39	159	35.5%
Total		448	100%

Source: Field work 2018

From the study, only 11.2% (50) of the respondents had very good (80-100) performance. 15.4% (69) of the respondents had good (60-79). 19 %(86) of respondents scored average (50-59). 22% (99) performed below average (40-49) and 36 %(159) failed having scores ranging from 1-39 indicating massive failure in

proficiency test using unfamiliar texts. The above analysis showed that even though many respondents were able to have average score on the given texts with familiar background, a good number of them performed below expectation in passages with unfamiliar background since the nature of the texts suited their linguistic, content and formal schemata. The implication is that in spite of the positive assertions by the respondents on their high level abilities in text processing, actual proficiency test on this all important language skill showed that the general proficiency was poor.

4.2.4 Analysis, Result and Interpretation Based on Research Hypotheses

The study was designed to examine the Influence of Socio-economic Background on ESL Text processing of first year Students in the University in Enugu State.

In this section, the six statistical hypotheses formulated for the study were tested using Z-test statistical tool. Also, both the Null or H_O and Alternate or H_A hypothesis would be highlighted unlike in chapter one where only H_O or Null Hypothesis was stated. Hypothesis in chapter one is research hypothesis while that of chapter four is statistical hypothesis.

$$Z = \frac{p - \pi}{\sqrt{\frac{n(1-\pi)}{n}}} \quad \text{while } P = \frac{x}{n}$$

x = Number of favourable outcome or number of Yes

n = Total number of respondents

π = Population proportion

$Z\propto/z\propto$ = Table of Z

$\propto$ = Level of significant or 5%

The law of Z-test states: reject H_O or Null hypothesis and accept H_A or Alternate Hypothesis if Z calculated is greater than Z from the table (see appendix VII) (i.e. $Z \leq -Z\propto/2$ or $Z \geq Z\propto/2$).

Hypothesis One

H_O: The students' socio-economic background (SEB) does not have any effect on text processing achievement.

H_A: The students' socio-economic background (SEB) has effect on text processing achievement. Minor question 1 was used for the analysis (see Appendix III for question 1)

Table 25: Effects of Socio-economic Background on Respondents' Text Processing

	Effects on Respondents	**Responses**	**Proportion of Responses**	**Population Proportion**	**Z-text**	
					Table	**Calculated**
Socio-economic Background	Positive	351	0.783482	0.5000	1.96	7.8249
	Negative	97	0.216518			
	Total (n)	448	1			

Therefore Hypothesis 1 in Table 25 was derived thus:

$$P = \frac{351}{448} = 0.783482$$

$$Z = \frac{0.783482 - 0.5000}{\sqrt{\frac{0.5(-0.5)}{448}}} = \frac{0.28342}{\sqrt{\frac{0.25}{448}}} = \frac{0.283482}{\sqrt{0.0005580357}} = \frac{0.283482}{0.0.36227792} = 7.8249$$

Here the Z calculated is greater than Z from the table. The Z values (table) are set at a significant level of 5% (i.e.∝). Table 25 showed the Z-test result for the respondents in order to determine if there was a difference in effects of socio-economic background on their text processing. The Z score of 7.8249 was used for assessing the impacts at the university level. Since the Z calculated (7.82≥ 1.96) is greater than Z from the table (1.96) that is (7.82 ≥ 1.96), we therefore, reject the null hypothesis (Ho) which says: The students' socio-economic background (SEB) does not have any effect on text processing. We then accept the alternate hypothesis (H_A) which says: The students' socio-economic backgrounds (SEB) have effect on text processing achievement.

Hypothesis Two

H_O: There is no variable that exerts the highest influence on first year university students' text processing.

H_A: There is a variable that exerts the greatest influence on the students' text processing.

Minor questions 32-35 were used to elicit data from the respondents on their awareness on different impacts the three variables (home, school and student) could have on their text processing output (see appendix III questions 32 - 35). The summary of the responses were presented in Table 26 below. For proper analysis of thisH2, the responses were re-coded 'Positive' for 'Yes' and 'Negative' for 'No'.

Table 26a: Socio-economic Background Variables and Awareness of Different Levels of Impact

	Awareness	Responses	Proportion of Responses	Population Proportion	Z-text	
					Table	Calculated
SEB Variables	Positive	1291	0.720424	0.5000	1.96	18.66
	Negative	501	0.279576			
	Total (n)	1792	1			

Source: Field work, 2018

Therefore Table 26a was derived thus:

Hypothesis 2: $P = \frac{1291}{1792} = 0.720424$

$$Z = \frac{0.720424 - 0.5000}{\sqrt{\frac{0.5(1-0.5)}{1792}}} = \frac{0.220424}{\sqrt{\frac{0.25}{1792}}} = \frac{0.220424}{\sqrt{0.001395089}} = \frac{0.220424}{0.0118113885} = 18.66$$

From Table 26a, the Z calculated is greater than the Z from the table, that is, $18.66 \geq 1.96$. We therefore, reject the null hypothesis (H_O) that says: There is no variable that exerts the highest influence on text processing. We then accept the alternate hypothesis (H_A) that says: There is a variable that exerts the highest influence on text processing. This strongly agreed with the respondents' choice made in the data presented in Table 27 below:

Table 26b: SEB Variable and Degree of Impact

SEB Variable	Degree of Impact	Responses	Proportion of Responses	Population Proportion/ Mean
Home	Highest	294	0.65625	0.5000
School	Higher	98	0.21875	
Student	High	56	0.125	
	Total (n)	448	1	

Source: Field work 2018

From the analysis, it was apparent that 294 of the respondents agreed that 'Home' exerted the highest influence on their text processing. 98 respondents said it was 'school' and 56 respondents said it was 'student's interest.' The result is in agreement with the result of research question 3 where analysis revealed that 'Home' exerted the highest influenced on the students' text processing.

Hypothesis 3

H_O: There is no relationship between students' socio-economic background and text processing achievement.

H_A: There is a relationship between students' socio-economic background and text processing.

Minor question 31 was used to elicit data for the analysis (see Appendix III for question 31).

Table 27: Relationship between Students' SEB and Text Processing.

	Relationship	Response (X)	Proportional of Responses	Population /Proportion Mean	Z Table	Text Calculated
SEB and Text processing	Positive	247	0.55139286	0.5000	1.96	2.173
	Negative	201	0.44866074			
	Total (n)	448	1			

Source: Field Work 2018

From Table 27 Hypothesis 3 was derived thus:

$$P = \frac{247}{448} = 0.551339$$

$$Z = \frac{0.55139 - 0.5000}{\sqrt{0.5(1-0.5)}} = \frac{0.051339}{\sqrt{\frac{0.25}{448}}} = \frac{0.051339}{\sqrt{0.0005580357}} = \frac{0.051339}{0.0236227792} = 2.173$$

Here the Z calculated is greater than the Z from the table, that is, $2.173 \geq 1.96$. We, therefore, reject the null hypothesis (H_O) that says: There is no relationship between students' socio-economic background and text processing achievement. We then accept the Alternate Hypothesis that says: There is a relationship between students' socio-economic background and text processing achievement.

Hypothesis 4

H_O: The relative influence of the school on the student does not affect text processing ability.

H_A: The relative influence of the school on the student affects text processing ability.

A lot of minor questions in the instrument were used to elicit data to test this hypothesis (see Appendix (III) questions 11 and 13-18). The summary of the data were presented in Table 28 below.

Table 28: School and Students' Text Processing Ability

	Types of Responses	**Number of Responses**	**Proportion of Responses**	**Population proportion/ Mean**	**Z-text**	
					Table	**Calculated**
School and students' text processing ability	Positive	1780	0.56702041	0.5000	1.96	7.57
	Negative	1356	0.43239759			
	Total(n)	3136	1			

Source: Field Work 2018

From Table 28 Hypothesis 4 was derived thus:

$$P = \frac{1780}{3136} = 0.567602$$

$$Z = \frac{0.056702041 - 0.5000}{\sqrt{\frac{0.5(1-0.5)}{3136}}} = \frac{0.067602}{\sqrt{\frac{0.25}{3136}}} = \frac{0.067602}{\sqrt{0.00079719}} = \frac{0.067602}{0.0089285} = 7.57$$

From the above analysis, the Z calculated is greater than the Z from the table, that is, $7.57 \geq 1.96$. We, therefore, reject the null hypothesis (H_O) which says: The relative

influence of the school on the students does not affect text processing ability. We them accept the alternate hypothesis (H_A) which says: The relative influence of the school on the student affect text processing ability. This agreed with the simple percentage outcome of Table 15.

Hypothesis 5

H_O: The income and educational background of the parents does not have any effect on students' text processing achievement.

H_A: The income and educational background of the parents have effect on students' text processing.

Minor questions 2-12 were used to elicit data to test the above hypothesis (see Appendix III for questions 2-12). After careful analysis of the respondents' responses, a summary was presented in Table 29 below.

Table 29: Income and Educational Background of Parents and Text Processing Achievement

	Types of Responses	**Number of Responses**	**Proportion of Responses**	**Population Proportion Mean**	**Z – test**	
					Table	**Calculated**
Parents' Income/Educational Background	Positive	2389	0.592509921	0.5000	1.96	11.75
	Negative	1643	0.407490079			
	Total (n)	4032	1			

Source: Field Work 2018

Therefore Hypothesis 5 in Table 29 was derived thus:

$$P=\frac{2389}{4032}= 0.59251$$

$$Z = \frac{0.59251 - 0.5000}{\sqrt{\frac{0.5\,(1-0.5)}{4032}}} = \frac{0.09251}{\sqrt{\frac{0.25}{4032}}} = \frac{0.09251}{\sqrt{0.0000620039}} = \frac{0.09251}{0.00787425} = 11.75$$

Analysis of the above Table 29 showed that the Z calculated was greater than the Z from the statistical table, that is, 11.75 ≥ 1.96. We, therefore, reject the null hypothesis (H_O) which says: The income and educational background of the parents does not have any effect on students' text processing achievement. We then accept alternate hypothesis (H_A) which says: The income and educational background of the parents have effect on students' text processing achievement.

Hypothesis 6

H_O: Students' motivation and interest does not affect text processing ability.

H_A: Students' motivation and interest affect text processing ability

To be able to get unbiased data to test the above hypothesis, minor questions 19-30 were used (see Appendix III for questions 19-30). Thorough study and analysis of data obtained were made. A summary of the result was presented in Table 30 below:

Table 30: Students' Motivation and Interest on Text Processing

	Types of Responses	**Number of Responses**	**Proportion of Responses**	**Population proportion / Mean**	**Z – test**	
					Table	**Calculated**
Interest and Motivation	Positive	3590	0.655588	0.5000	1.96	23
	Negative	1886	0.344412			
	Total (n)	5476	1			

Source: Field Work 2018

Therefore Hypothesis 6 in Table 30 was derived thus:

$$P = \frac{3590}{5476} = 0.655588$$

$$Z = \frac{0.65558 - 0.5000}{\sqrt{\frac{0.5\,(1-05)}{5476}}} = 0.155588 = \frac{0.155588}{\sqrt{\frac{0.25}{5276}}} = \frac{0.155588}{\sqrt{0.000045654}} = \frac{0.155588}{0.006756774} = 23$$

Analysis of Table 30 above showed that the Z-calculated was greater than the Z from the statistical table, that is, 23 ≥ 1.96l. We, therefore, reject the null hypothesis (H_O) which says: Students' motivation and interest do not affect text processing ability. We then accept the alternate hypothesis (H_A) which says: Students' motivation and interest affect text processing ability. This agrees with the simple percentage result in table.

CHAPTER FIVE

5.0 DISCUSSION

5.1 Introduction

In this sub-section, the findings of the study were discussed. This discussion was based on relevant issues arising from the research questions and hypotheses used for the study. The results of the analysis of the study shown in Tables 3-30 above gave rise to the following findings. Also, descriptive discussion of the findings was done in line with the theoretical framework of the study and other relevant theories.

5.2 Discussion

Analysis of data to test Research Question One using simple percentages (see Tables 14-16) collaborated with the verified Ho:2 (see Table 24), Ho:4 (see Table 27) as well as Ho:5 and this (see Table 28) revealed critical key socio-economic background variables such as academic status of parents, income disposition of parents, location of family, conducive environment, language of the home, family size, parent's interest, quality of teachers, infrastructures in the school, school affiliation, availability of learning materials, class size, student's interest, intrinsic motivation and ability to process advanced text processing. These socio-economic background variables were grouped into three: 'home, school and students' variables. These three variables have minor ones according to the data elicited from the respondents. Tables 14-16 highlighted these minor variables. However, analyses of the data led to different findings. The first findings from the result of the above analyses was that parents' educational level was a contributory factor for the first year university students' text processing performance/ability of the study sample. In the course of the research, it was established that 50% of the respondents have parents

whose educational qualifications were below the university level. The other respondents (50%) have parents who were university graduates and very few of the parents at the post university level (see Table 7). This implies that the respondents' general educational family background is on the average, that is, 50% (224) of the students came from families with poor academic status. Even the50% 0f the parents that have high academic status lacked knowledge of application of activities that would enhance their children's text processing proficiency. According to Table 14, 48% (216) of these parents lacked interest needed to spur their children up. This lack of application of parents' knowledge level was also exposed by the language of the home. Table 9 showed that most of the parents lacked knowledge of the importance of exposing their children to both L_1 (Mother Tongue) and L_2 (English Language) simultaneously. Only 26.6% of the respondents used both English language (L_2) and their vernacular (L_1) as languages of communication at home. Majority of the respondents 73.4% (329) used different languages (Igbo, Yoruba, Efik etc.) in their families and home environment from the one (English language) particularly used in school. The data showed that English language which is the language of education and/or text processing is a second language to the sample studied. Even though many of them have parents whose educational qualifications ranged from graduate and post graduate levels (see Table 7), the language of the home remained their mother tongue (MT). This study established the fact that these students were not exposed simultaneously to the two languages (native language and English language) that are very crucial in the mastery of text processing. The findings of this study are in line with the theory of Language Interdependence referred to as underlying proficiency hypothesis. This theory states that text processing performance in a second language is largely shared with processing ability in a first language. This, according to

Bernhardt and Kamil, means that 'processing ability in L_1 is transferable to another language. L_1 and L_2 processing ability are interdependence and are the same at some fundamental core. Once L_1 processing ability has been acquired, the same operation is not re-acquired in L_2''(17). Cummins another proponent of linguistic interdependence hypothesis agrees that L_1 and L_2 processing abilities are interdependent and are similar at some fundamental core. According to the scholar, moderately strong cross lingual relationships are observed for attribute-based L_1 and L_2 proficiency as a result of the fact that underlying attributes of the individual manifest in the individual's performance in both languages, that is, ''higher L_1 language and literacy proficiency tend to facilitate higher language and literacy proficiency levels in an L_2''(224). Thomas and Collier in their work also confirm the importance of exposing students to both their L_1 and L_2 at the same time. They are of the view that ''bilingual students achieve more in text processing and academic achievement when they were exposed in and taught using both of the languages'' (20).Consequently, this findings to agree with the result of Ho:5 where Z-calculated was greater than Z –table ($11.75 \geq 1.96$) and the result of the proficiency test in Table 24 where 57.6% of the respondents performed below average. This is because positive application of parent's level of education has direct and indirect influence on text processing proficiency. It is one of the most important dimensions of socio-economic influence on text processing output.

The above findings is in tandem with Myrberg and Rosen who affirm that ''parents' educational level exerts an important influence on text processing performance and is a manifestation of cultural capital within the families''(707). Generally, it is assumed that well-educated parents have more text(s) at home. They use their knowledge of text materials and written language(s) to create favourable environment(s) for their children and so influence text processing development throughout their children's

school programme. Considine and Zappala confirm this by sharing that ‘‘parents with high educational background find it easy to prepare their children for high text processing proficiency than parents who are lacking in this background’’(131). The findings also is in agreement with the view hold by Onochie and Okpalla that the “educational level of parents which is an indicator of socio-economic status has direct influence on student’s value and text processing performance in school’’(272).

Another findings from the analysis of socio-economic background variables is that the level of family income impacts on text processing. Table 8 above revealed that more than half of the respondents came from families whose income was below high income. Only 39% representing 176 respondents came from high income families, 44.6% (200) were from middle income families while 16.1%(72) were from low income families. Family income is directly and indirectly related to the type of environment students are exposed to at home which in turn reflects the choice of school and their level of academic success at later stage in life. From Table 19 above, 56%(251) of the respondents were of the view that the extent of the influence of home environment on their text processing output was very strong. What this implies is that those students from higher income families were subjected to situations, events and cultural norms that are different from lower income families. That the lower income families are mostly related to factors such as parental stress, increase work hour, limited educational opportunities etc. Adeware in a study states that ‘‘income of parents does not only affect text processing performance of students but also make it impossible for students from low socio-economic background to compete well with their counterparts from high socio-economic background under the same academic environment. This is because family income in part is directly related to the level of education of the parents’’(230).

Related to the above findings is the impact of parents' occupation on text processing. In this study, result of the analysis showed that the respondents' parents were farmers, traders, public and civil servants (See Table 9 above). Although more than half of the parents of the respondents 239 (53%) were either civil or public servants, the financial environment of the home was not high as seen in Table 8 above. Only 39% representing 176 respondents came from high income families. What this implies is that most of the respondents came from homes where financial stress on the parents was very high. The effect of this financial stress was exposed by the level of available relevant text processing materials provided by the parents as reflected in the result of analysis in Table 13. Result of the analysis of home variables in Tables 6 and 12 further exposed the type of parent household and family size. The data analysis revealed that 360 respondents, that is, 80% came from two-parents household were the parents jointly built up their text processing background. 49 respondents representing 11% indicated that their parents were divorced. The last group 9% (39) came from single-parent homes. The implication is that a reasonable number of these respondents came from a type of family where the responsibility of providing sound text processing foundation was not easy for most of the parents. This may be one of the reasons for many of the students' lack of access to relevant text processing materials at home for private studies as seen in Table 13.44%(199) of the respondents were of the view that their parents did not provide them with enough relevant study materials at home. Pattarida in a study finds out that '' insufficient number of relevant and attractive textbooks, novels or other materials in English Language which help to ignite students' interest in self-initiated text processing, bring about a negative impact on students' output''(40). The negative influence was clearly exposed in Tables 23 and 25 where the result of the proficiency test showed weak performance. Myrberg

and Rosen in their study have a similar view on the importance of text processing materials as one of the variables that influences students' interest. To them, ''learning materials at home is an important mediator of parents' educational level and an expression of objectified cultural capital in the homes''(707). The result gave a clear picture of the nature of learning materials made available to the students to awaken their interest in text processing from home. The findings of this study confirm the importance of early provision of relevant learning materials on text processing. Myrberg and Rosen maintain that the ''estimated amount of direct influence of the number of learning materials at home on text processing may reflect the parents' own text processing interest'' (707). Result further exposed the level of parents' interest on the acquisition of text processing proficiency by the students. In Table 14, only 48% (216) respondents were able to identify their parents' interest in their text processing acquisition. What this implies is that most of the parents lack interest in their children's early mastery of this important skill. Ndileleni concurs that the more ''parents become involved in their children's text processing activities, the more profound the results and the longer lasting the effect'' (254). Therefore with proof derived from Ho:1 (i.e. Z calculated greater on the table since $7.82 \geq 1.96$ (see Table 25), it shows that socio-economic background has a very strong direct influence on first year university students' text processing in Enugu State.

Further analysis of data to test research question two (see Table 19), and Ho: 4 (see Table 29 i.e.$7.57 \geq 1.96$) revealed the extent of the influence of socio-economic background (SEB) on first year university students' text processing in Enugu State. The findings from the result of the analysis are that the level of the impact of general home environment on present text processing is very significant. 56% of the respondents indicated a very strong influence of their home environment on their

general performance. This particular findings show that there is an association between family environment and text processing development and/or performance and that the family environment reflects in the outcome of the association. When parents are involved and interested in the speedy progress in their children's performance in text processing, they create favourable learning environments in the home. Table 19 above exposed this very strong influence of general home environment where 56 %(251) of the respondents were of the view that the extent of the influence of home environment was very strong. This finding is in agreement with the study by Papalia et. al. that ''when resources are limited, parenting practices suffer a lot which in turn creates a poor home environment'' (50).The result is also in line with the findings made by Dickens and Flynn that home environment has a lot to do with intelligence quotient (1Q). To them, there is ''a strong reciprocal causation between socio-economic background and environment that has a multiplier effect. Higher socio-economic background leads one into a better environment causing still higher IQ in text processing''(349).A good number of the respondents, 44%(199) were operating in an unfavourable home environment (see Table 14). The findings agree with Amadi and Segun in their study on the relationship between home and school that socio-economic background of parents influences the academic performance of their children through school influence**:**

> Where the socio-economic background (SEB) of parents is low, they tend to choose schools that usually tilt towards higher concentrations on lower skills and/or limited skills and have fewer economic resources than high socio-economic schools. Students in such schools find it difficult to develop high text processing skills. Low SEB schools are more likely to have less qualified teachers which is

> associated with the rate of text processing growth being lower than those in high socio-economic schools.(36-37)

This study obviously sees poor home environment as one of the major causes of the students' weaknesses in text processing at the university level as revealed by the analysis of their text processing ability (see Table 18 above). The result from this Table 18 revealed the respondents' view on their assumed ability in text processing. 36%(164) of the respondents were of the view that they could identify and use text features while 63.4 %(284) had a different view. On being able to understand and pin down task(s) requirement(s), 31.9%(143) said that they lacked such ability. To identify the main idea(s) and supporting details, 39.1% (175) and 33.7% (151) indicated that they were able to identify these but 60.9%(273) and 66.3% gave opposing responses respectively. Similarly, smaller proportion of 33.7% (151) had the view that they can draw inference(s) on the author's view point(s) while a large proportion of 66.3% (297) stated otherwise. The last part of the result in this section was on the respondents' ability to make use of advanced text processing strategies. The gap in the responses is not quite wide. 44.8% (201) gave a positive response while 55.2 %(249%) gave a negative response. Analysis of the data above revealed an overall weakness on the part of the students. This overall weakness is very clear from the result of the analysis of the proficiency tests (see Tables 22 and 23 above). From the study, only 11.2%(50) of the respondents had a very good score (80-100) in the performance on the proficiency test. 15.4% (69) of the respondents had good (60-79). 19%(86) of respondents scored average (50-59). 22% (99) performed below average (40-49) and 36%(159) failed having scores ranging from 1-39 indicating a massive failure in proficiency text. The above result of the performance of students on the texts with familiar and unfamiliar backgrounds revealed a slight difference in

their performance which showed that even though some respondents were able to process the given texts with familiar background, a good number of them performed below expectation since the nature of the text suited their linguistic, content and formal schemata. What this implies is that the students lack exposure to varieties of background knowledge that form the foundation. This findings is similar to the findings made by Robert and James in their study that background knowledge of a text is very important to the overall achievement in text processing. They are of the view that ‘‘background knowledge affects how much information is recalled and what information is recalled from the text task as well as processors’ perceptions of such aspects as author’s background and purpose’’(3). Correia also confirms that “students’ primary discourse will influence processing abilities at later academic stage. Different ideas of language, interests and background information is acquired during the course of primary discourse’’(100). The study also showed the outcome as reflecting performance based on interpretations highly related to background of the processors. Apart from exposing the influence of background knowledge, the findings compel one to suppose that activating or building students’ background knowledge from issues on different cultural background before entering the university goes a long way in preparing these students for the task ahead of them. Even though 65% of the respondents in Table 16 in the present study gave affirmative response on their ability to carry out any task involving text processing, the result of the proficiency text contrasts with their claims. They lacked clear or indepth concept about text processing. They have difficulty coping with some tasks’ demands that involve generating inferences and identifying main ideas. The deduction is that most students are not aware of their lapses as far as text processing is concerned .These lapses were very obvious in their level of understanding of processing task(s) and possible

strategies to be used in order to achieve proficiency in advanced text analysis. For the students to be able to process advanced text(s), they must work on improving their general background knowledge which will in turn enhance their ability to draw from what the text task(s) present(s), that is, everything they can see on the text(s) such as words, diagram(s), picture(s), special typographical features and finally from their own prior knowledge and experiences. The result of the distribution of respondents according to text processing abilities in Table 18 and the respondents' performance in Table 23 were contradictory. Their actual output presented them as those lacking the ability to manifest the difference between explicit and implicit meaning(s) in text(s), that is, inferences which add new information that is not actually stated literally by the author(s) in text(s).

Another findings based on the performance of the proficiency test is that many of the students lacked the requisite speed needed to process given text tasks that involve advanced skills. Some did not attempt the passages at all. Out of 36% of the respondents that failed the text, 31%(50) did not attempt and /or finish the section while 69%(109) were those that finished but lacked knowledge of how the text(s) were structured, how information was organised and what kind of meaning(s) to search for. This particular findings is in agreement with Schema theory which at its core uses the concept of a schema to show how students/learners think, analyse and act on the text that is presented to them. Smith in a study exposes the impact of schemata on text processing output and concurs that "Everything we know and believe is organised in a theory of what the world is like, a theory that is the basis of all our perceptions and understanding of the world, the root of all learning, the source of hopes and fears, motive and expectancies, reasoning and creativity''(8). Otagburuagu et. al. in confirmation say that:

> Learning is a matter of building on previous experience. The knowledge which a person acquires in learning a subject is a reconstruction of some past experience(s) and such experience(s) often form(s) the basis for projecting into or suggesting what the future experience(s)or learning outcome(s) could be (114).

This study further confirms earlier work by Hunt in which he finds a significant main effect of prior knowledge on text processing. He maintains that "academic texts need deeper approach that is shaped partly by the text, partly by the processor's background and partly by the situation the reading occurs in''(137). The students in this study failed to use deeper approach to process the given texts. Rather than contextualise the authors' line of thought¸ they took the author's idea at face value. The result of the analysis of the present study according to Tables 20 and 23 revealed that rather than recreating the meaning of the text(s), the students concentrated on finding information on the text(s). This result is not far from the findings made by Hermida that ''first year students do not know why they have to process assigned texts'' (24). Also, Biggs further exposes the reason for the weakness students have in text processing which is carried into the university persists even after the first year. According to Biggs, '' lecturers lecture the texts and evaluate students on their retention of facts and principles conveyed in the lectures''(58). This is in agreement with Correia that "students' primary discourse will influence processing abilities at later academic stage. Different ideas of language, interests and background information are acquired during the course of primary discourse''(100).

Analysis of Research Question Three (see Table 20) and Ho:2 (see Tables 26 and 27 i.e. $18.66 \geq 1.96$) revealed the variable that exerted the greatest influence on text processing on these students. Table 20 pointed to the fact that home variable exerted

the highest influence on students' text processing. Analysis of the test for Ho:2 revealed that Z-calculated in Table 26a and 26b was greater than Z-table, that is, 18.66 ≥1.96. This means that the 'home' plays a crucial role in the students' text processing. This study establishes from these findings that the 'home' is the foundation and bedrock of every other impact of socio-economic background variables. It directly or indirectly mapped out the direction and nature of school and student variables. The totality of the influence of home variables metamorphosis into what the school and student variables built on. Apart from providing them with resources, the way parents brought up their children is more crucial. This findings is in agreement with the findings made by Auerbach that:

> Home as an indirect factor which include frequency of student's outings with adults, emotional climate of the home, amount of time interacting with adults, level of financial stress, enrichment activities and parental involvement with the schools had a stronger effect on many aspects of text processing than did direct literacy activities. (169)

In a similar vein, analysis of Research Question Four (see Tables 21 and 22), Ho:3 (see Table 28 i.e. 2.173≥1.96) and Ho:6 (see Table 30 i.e. 23≥1.96) exposed the relationship between the students' socio-economic background and text processing achievement. There is a very strong link between socio-economic background and text processing. Where socio-economic background is positive, output is positive but when socio-economic background becomes negative, output is equally negative. This findings is made on the relationship between parents' socio-economic background, lack of their interest in text processing and students' future interest and achievements in text processing. This is reflected in the students' attitude towards text processing. Many of the students under study showed a very high level of apathy. Many of the

students lacked intrinsic motivation needed to achieve high level attainment in text processing. The students preferred to supply data on the section that did not involve high level intellectual capabilities than to process given text task(s). The apathy was reflected in the result of their actual performance in the proficiency tests (see Table 23). It was in contrast with the result in Table 14 where the students quickly indicated their assumed interest. Data revealed that 84.2 % (377) had interest, while 15.8 %(71) lacked interest in their chosen fields and text processing in particular. Likewise, 79% (354) indicated that they were extrinsically motivated to engage in advanced text processing while 21 %(94) had opposing view. The conclusion from this study on this is that majority of first year students in the university in Enugu State lacked the requisite interest needed for advanced text processing. Apart from engaging in text processing for academic examinations, students do not give adequate attention to any text processing task(s) no matter the reason. This findings is in agreement with the findings made by Little et. al. that ‘‘providing students with real world reasons for engaging with information text(s) is a significance factor in their processing text(s)’’(443). Students prefer to work on text(s) that connect to their real life. This particular findings is in line with the Cognitive theory of language learning where the students’ internal and external motivation plays an important part between the students’ self-efficiency and text processing achievement. There exists a strong link between socio-economic background and proficiency in text processing. Where socio-economic background is stimulating and encouraging, output tends to be high. The reverse is the case in performance when socio-economic background is neither stimulating nor encouraging. This is due to the fact that good schools can make tremendous positive impact on text processing. The type of school a student attends depends mainly on the family’s socio-economic background. The quality of school

depends on the resources that are channeled towards enhancing school organisation, resources and/or infrastructure and teacher's abilities and/or attitudes. To achieve this, there must be a close and strong positive relationship between 'home' as an independent variable on one side and 'school' and 'student' as an offshoot of this important socio-economic variable on the other side.

Finally, analysis of Research Question Five (see Table 22) and Ho:3 (see Table 28 i.e. 2.173≥1.96) revealed the extent previous text processing proficiency acquired below the university level affect high level text processing at the university level. The nature and level of this primary discourse acquired by the students under study was reflected in their actual performance in the proficiency test. In order to strengthen the primary discourse, the 'school' must complement the 'home'. Result from the study revealed key 'school' variables that must complement 'home' variables (see Table 15) for effective proficiency in text processing at the university level. The data revealed that the students exposed these salient 'school' variables: 74% identified location of school, 62% quality of teachers, 56% availability of infrastructure, 56% school affiliation and 56% and class size 67%. Even though these variables were identified, direct comparison of some of the variables with the result of the proficiency test showed a contrary result. For availability of learning materials, only 44% of the students were adequately provided with this 'school' variable. 67% had large class size, 44% were not provided with adequate infrastructure. Result of analysis in Table 27 above highlighted the level of influence of 'school' variable on text processing. The simple percentage result of Research Question Five as expressed in Table 22 was in agreement with the proof in Ho: 4 as derived from Table 29. The Z calculated was greater than the Z from the table, that is, $7.57 \geq 1.96$. This means, according to the findings of this study, that there is a relative influence of previous text processing

skills acquired in ‘school’ on the students’ present text processing ability. Hence, the result in Table 23 showed that text processing acquired by the students under study below the university level was weak. Therefore, a lot is needed in order to help these students overcome these weaknesses. There is need for a paradigm shift in the process by which these students acquire text processing. Sylva confirms the findings of this study that ‘‘high quality, active learning school environments can have positive lasting effects which are measurable and cost effective”(162). It is very obvious that effective schools have consistent outcomes in text processing since the overall effects of primary and secondary schools’ text processing performance were greater than any at the university level. The influence of ‘school’ as one of socio-economic background variables should be in line with interdisciplinary theory in order to help students improve tremendously in text processing and bring about a positive change in the way ‘school’ as an important variable impacts on text processing achievement. Farrar and Al-Qataneh said that the ‘school’ is ‘‘a means of modeling, mentoring, facilitating and source of information to students. Skills and strategies are explicitly demonstrated through the spirit of inquiry’’(63). This is due to the fact that good schools can make tremendous positive impact. The type of school a student attends depends mainly on the family’s socio-economic status. The quality of school depends on the resources that are channeled towards enhancing school organisation, resources and/or infrastructure and teacher’s abilities and/or attitudes. To achieve this, there must be a close and strong positive relationship between home as an independent variable on one side and school and student as an offshoot of this important socio-economic variable on the other side. This relationship is established in the course of this study. The result of analysis in Table 20 points to the fact that home variable exerted the highest influence on students’ text processing. Analysis of the test for H2

revealed that Z-calculated in Table 22 is greater than Z- table, that is, $7.82 \geq 1.96$. This means that the home plays a crucial role in the acquisition of text processing proficiency. It is the foundation and bedrock of every other socio-economic background variables. It directly or indirectly maps out the direction and nature of 'school' and 'student' variables. The totality of the influence of the 'home' variables metamorphosis into the type of skill student carries into the university. 'Home' as an indirect factor has a stronger effect on many aspects of text processing than direct literacy activities. From the statistical analysis of the data, it is quite obvious that there exist a strong relationship between the students' socio-economic background variables and their text processing proficiency. The result of analysis in Table 14 established the fact that there exists a strong positive relationship between text processing and socio-economic background. From the data, these socio-economic background variables were identified. Over 60% of the respondents on the average identified these variables as variables that affect their proficiency in text processing. This findings also agreed with the analysis in Table 25 for test on Ho:1. The result of the Z-test analysis showed that $7.82 \geq 1.96$ which showed a very strong influence of socio-economic background on the students' text processing. The findings of this study is in agreement with the previous research by Cheng and Wu that shows ''evidence of associations in socio-economic background and students' text processing ability''(672). Their study revealed a strong mechanism of relationship between socio-economic background and text processing in students at the lower academic level. Also, Noble et. al. identified a ''multiplicative relationship between socio-economic background and text processing such that inadequate provision of resources may amplify risk factors that result to poor text processing whereas greater resources buffer text processing skills among students''(351). Hence, this study

establishes the fact that there is a strong relationship between socio-economic background and text processing achievement throughout a student's academic programme. Text processing is a language skill that differs from student to student. This findings is supported by Vygotsky's Constructivist Theory of Learning which states that students' learning is affected by their social interactions. The student is totally dependent on other people at the early part as the social-cultural environment goes on to expose the student to a lot of tasks. According to this theory, what the student(s) bring to any text processing task(s) as an active–meaning–maker and problem-solver is very important. The two key aspects of the theory are the zone of proximal development and scaffolding show that text processing tasks are too difficult for a student to master alone but needs assistance of more skilled stakeholders and this assistance should be given at the right time. The concept of cognitive theory is in line with schema theory that addresses the relevance of linguistic, social and cultural backgrounds students bring to text processing situations which Goodman refers to as interactions with culture in which students grow curious and form hypotheses about their functions and purpose.

Drawing on data from the students' actual performance on proficiency test in ESL text processing for this study, this research work investigates the extent to which Socio-economic background (SEB) influences text processing of first year students in the Universities in Enugu State and considers some implications for advanced text processing ability that would enhance English Language Studies. A number of theoretical models such as Labov's Variability Theory, Bernstein's Language Codes (elaborated and restricted codes) and Barlett's Schema Theory were used to form theoretical base for this descriptive analysis in order to account for the socio-economic background variables that influence the cognitive processes that allow a

student to collect information from a text and develop high level skills to process text at various levels. While these theories diverge in more specific components, they highlight the influence of socio-economic variables that reflect the constructive and active nature of text processing in the university's ESL academic programme. To understand how to develop effectively advanced text processing skills, students must understand what background knowledge is shared between each tasks. In the present study, findings from the analysis of proficiency tests revealed that the students used the same background knowledge base to process texts with familiar and unfamiliar backgrounds which resulted to a poor performance on the part of these students. This showed that these students lacked the four knowledge bases necessary to process any given text. The four knowledge bases according to Fitzgerald and Shanahan are; meta-knowledge, domain knowledge, knowledge about universal text attributes and procedural knowledge"(41). Meta knowledge, Allen, et.al. say helps the students to have ''a clear knowledge of the purpose of processing any given text, understand the interaction between processors and writers and monitoring one's own comprehension and knowledge''(668). Kellogg opines that "domain knowledge" is ones' prior knowledge about a given subject matter and the knowledge gained during the exercise''(10). The main problem with students' application of domain knowledge as revealed by the findings of this study is that most students are not aware of their obvious weaknesses in this area even when they have entered the university and are confronted with numerous texts that must be analysed in order to go through the university programme. The findings of this study showed students who lacked knowledge of how the texts were structured, how information was organised and what kind of meaning(s) to search for. Rather than contextualise the authors' line of thoughts in the given texts, they took the ideas at the surface level. Their knowledge

about universal text attributes was limited. Also, their procedural knowledge which must be shared across text processing and other language skills in order to construct meaning from a text was lacking. Therefore, to have these skills, students must have clear cut mastery of advanced text processing skills involving application of schemata knowledge (formal, linguistic and content schemata) and mastery of specific language features. The reason for these students' weakness is not far-fetched. The findings revealed that "home" which exerted the highest impact on the students was laden with a lot of deficiencies. Primary among the deficiencies was the parents' lack of knowledge of the link between L1 and L2in the development of sound text processing proficiency at the foundation level. This weakness on the part of the parents resulted into separating the students' language of communication in their social environments from the language of ESL text processing which is the English Language. The parents failed to realise, according to Stanovich that "extended exposure to print through extensive text processing over years leads to major differences in both vocabulary knowledge and processing abilities. L2 vocabulary knowledge is correlated with L2 text assimilation. L1 morphological and syntactic knowledge both have an impact on L2 processing"(59).Due to the fact that the students did not have indept language background necessary for strong foundation, they failed to develop higher-level abilities such as comprehension and production which depend on discourse knowledge and strategic knowledge.

Other 'home' variables identified were the educational level and income disposition of parents. Their influences on text processing, according to this study, were not positive. From the findings, majority of the parents were people with first degrees and in some case postgraduate qualifications. The expectation here would have been a very high performance from these students in text processing. This is in line with

previous studies carried out by many researchers. Odo et. al. in their research on the influence of parental occupation and level of education on academic performance of accounting students in Nigeria, confirm that ‘‘parental level and income determine the students’ academic performance’’(26). In addition, Ahmed and Najeemah are of the view that “students from educated families have a lot of support such as decent and good environment for academic work, parental support and guidance, enough textual and academic materials’’(3). The findings of this study is at variance with the above assumption but agrees with the findings made by Amuda and Ali in a study they conducted in the North-Eastern States of Nigeria where they conclude that ‘‘fathers and mothers’ level of education are not significant predictors of academic performance of students of Colleges of Education in the North-Eastern States, Nigeria’’(47). Many of these students from these enlightened families were denied relevant study materials at home and even in school. Analysis showed that only 44% (199) of parents provided their children with relevant text processing materials. The impact of this textual lack resulted to lack of intrinsic interest among students which was detrimental to the mastery of advanced text processing. Every language scholar is required to engage in extensive, active and critical text processing. Active and critical processing, according to Northedge, is to ‘‘be able to make sense of the text, think about whether or not you are convinced by the arguments being presented”(123). The findings of this study showed parents and students whose interest was only on purposeful text processing for examination. As such, these students lacked the dexterity needed to handle advanced text processing. Many of the students abandoned the passages given to them in the course of this study because the exercise was not part of their examination. With this type of attitude from the students, mastery of text processing proficiency which is a vital language tool suffers a lot. This is because

they lacked positive levels of the affective domain that culminate in processing engagement. Guthrie and Wigfield agree that "engagement leads to improved text processing ability"(404) which help to suppress the effect of poor socio-economic background of first year students in the university in Enugu state. Since the influence of socio-economic background on most of these students were not positive, students can overcome this and engage in text processing through what Guthrie and Wigfield see as 'the motivated use of strategies to gain conceptual knowledge during text processing"(404).Guthrie, Schafer and Huang agree that processing engagement trumped socio-economic background as a correlate of text processing achievement"(145). This is why students whose parents' educational level was high in the present study still performed poorly in the proficiency test. Guthrie and Wigfield say that:

> Engaged students deeply engage with texts and exchange ideas with fellow students. Their devotion to text processing spurs across time, transfers to a variety of genres, and culminates in valued text processing performance. Disengage students, tend to avoid processing text(s), minimise the effort, rarely enjoy processing text(s) during free time and hardly become absorbed in literature (403).

They conclude by saying that students are ''decision makers whose language and cognition play a role in the text processing practices (404). To perform this role, these students have to realise that at degree level, according to Northedge, ''you don't simply accept everything, weighing up the strengths and weaknesses of the case the author makes"(123). Another 'home' variable that manifested in the findings of this study was the classification of the students into social class based on their family social class. Findings revealed that 176 students belonged to high class (39.3%), 200

students belonged to middle class (44.6%) and 72 students belonged to low (16.1%). With these social strata, the influence of socio-cultural affiliation of the parents on these students' text processing was reflected in their performance in the proficiency test where analysis showed 55.6% (258) students performing below average. These students having come from different social classes could not avoid the influence of the different socio-cultural settings that formed their text processing foundations. This findings is in line with Bernstein's Language Codes which brought in the concept of 'elaborated' and 'restricted codes'. Jones agrees that "there is the perennial correlation between children's achievement in conventional education and socio-economic factors''(162). These explained the reason for the parents of the students' choice of schools. 44.2% (198) of the students attended public primary and secondary schools, while 56.8% (250) attended private primary and secondary schools. This choice is what Jones means by implication when he says that ''schools have sorted children from different social groups into winners and losers"(162).These groups is what Bernstein also called grouping into elaborated and restricted codes users. According to Jones "Bernstein called the language of the educational process the "elaborated code", a system for the transmission of explicit, universalistic and context independent linguistic meanings conveying generalisations and forms of rationality proper to special kinds of information and knowledge"(162). Since very few students used for the present study came from lower class families 16.1% (72), the middle class children's success in text processing should have been outstanding but findings showed otherwise because 73.4% (329) did not acquire this 'elaborated code' in speaking with their parents at home. Only 26.6% (118) used this elaborated code. This is why the analysis of the proficiency test revealed their inherent weaknesses. There was no apparent difference in their performance with students from lower-class

families against the notion held by Jones that students from “lower-class families do less well in text processing when compared with high class students. Their language background affords them less experience with proficiency in the relevant meaning”(162). Having acquired the ‘restricted code’ which they used in the social environments, this distances these students from the context independent meanings that is required for extensive, active and critical text processing which will help them to realise implicit, particularistic and context bound meanings. This findings reveals the importance of schematic continuity between the home and the school. Bernstein summarises this link in this words “The educational process requires, at least, an orientation to an ‘elaborated code’. Children who already have this orientation are in a situation of symbolic developments; those without it are in a situation of symbolic change”(110). Cloran continues by supporting the connection between the codes at home and school by saying that “school instruction takes place through decontextualised language use-‘elaborated code’ which some children may participate in more than others at home”(42).

Another findings from this study is that there exists a strong relationship between text processing and the students’ socio-economic background. Important information regarding the areas of strengths and challenges first year students in the University in Enugu State have in text processing was uncovered and socio-economic background variables that impact on their text processing performance were highlighted. This is because the general performance of students on text processing is directly related on the type of relationship that exists between students and their socio-economic background. Hunt is of the view that text processing is ‘‘partly shaped by the text, partly by the students’ background and partly by the situation the exercise occurs in’’(137). To achieve the desired level of proficiency by first year students in the

university, numerous background knowledge is necessary. These prior knowledge according to Melby–Lervag includes “decoding (the process of accurately and fluently translating print to spoken words); phonological awareness (the ability to manipulate the sounds in spoken words) and language comprehension-the ability to understand the meaning of words and sentences in language’’(409).Identifying these facts, they went further to say that it is ‘‘crucial to understand what affects text processing levels and underlying skills of second language learners”(410). Cummins on his own part is of the view that socio-economic background of a student can mar or enhance ESL text processing proficiency due to the transference of skills from the first language and moderation by socio-economic status” 410). He goes on to say that students from higher socio-economic backgrounds are more likely to use context–independent language at home that corresponds with the schooling language” (Cummins qtd in Melby: 410). Through this, interplay is created between the language of home and school. The present study reveals no difference between high socio-economic background and low socio-economic background students in the use of L1 and L2 simultaneously. The findings of this study are in contrast with the above notion posited by Cummins. This is because the languages of the home and school in this study were quite different since few families applied this important principles of interplay of L1 (Vernacular) and L2 (English language) to ESL text processing which leads to a better ESL text processing proficiency. More than half of the parents of the students used for this study were mainly university graduates. It is expected that the findings of the present study will be in line with findings of most studies which Melby Lervag and Lervag “consider socio-economic background to be a proxy for exposure to greater amounts of decontextualised text processing’’(427). The findings of the study is also in contrast with the research by Cheng and Wu that ‘‘students

from more educated and advantaged parents might have greater proficiency in text processing''(672). Since the parents of the students for this study were highly learned, the general expectation will be for these parents to use their experiences from using English language in an academic context to transfer their knowledge and so influence their children with positive attitude towards high level text processing proficiency but this was not revealed. The findings of this study is also in agreement with Farid who states that "the mid/ high students have welfare in their life, so they may not have spent time and effort for learning and by this, they achieve lower GPA"(55).This means that there are other socio-economic background variables apart from level of education of parents that impacted heavily on the text processing of the students used for this study. This analytical findings is in line with application of practical theories of language studies posited by Labov in his Variability Theory in which he claims that text processing varies systematically in accordance with social characteristics of the students. According to Mehrdad, this variation starts with real linguistic sample, analysis and takes into consideration the socio-economic background variables behind the variation"(30). Juan states that Labov's early work in this area helps to ''establish two main principles: firstly, languages are essentially variable. Secondly, this variation is principled and should, therefore, be the subject of attention of linguistic theory. All attention in this study was paid to the array of socio-economic variables that influence the patterning of variation in the performance of the students in text processing. These socio-economic background variables Juan says are "the external causes of variability in text processing"(169). Among these variables that forms the strong base for the relationship between text processing and students' socio-economic background is the income. The findings of this study showed that 'home' as a variable has 65.5% and were taking the lead. It is in the home that the foundation is laid for

successful text processing in the university. If the students used for this study were helped to developed text processing competence early enough, they wouldn't have faced the kind of weaknesses as shown in their massive failure in the proficiency test. Poehner concurs by saying that "if students genuinely develop language skills, they should be able to maintain their improved performance when the task changes"(324). Further findings from this study reveals the relative influence of 'school' on students' text processing ability. The school as an important socio-economic background variable is highly dependent on the 'home' variable. Having highlighted the importance of 'home' variable, it is very crucial to look at the findings of this study based on the influence of the second socio-economic background variable. It is in the school that students' prior experiences manifest. School regulates and moderates these experiences in order to prepare students for serious text processing tasks ahead of them in their various academic programmes especially at the university level. The type and location of schools students attended have a tremendous impact on their performance. In this study, majority of the students settle in urban areas with 74% (331) and 26% (117) settling in the rural areas. The implication of this is that these students by virtue of their location should perform well in text processing tasks but the result of the proficiency test proved otherwise. This is in contrast with the findings by researchers such as Hamid who is of the view that " the rural students had low levels of academic achievement in English and within this overall low level of achievement, there were patterned relationships between the students family income and parental education and their academic achievement in English (Hamid qtd in Farid:50). Farid in supporting Hamid says that students ''who had higher levels of parental education and family income were more likely to obtain higher scores on the proficiency test''(50). These students whether from rural or urban schools can only

achieve higher or lower proficiency depending on the general school environments. Findings from this study reveals general school environment that was below standard. Infrastructures, availability of learning materials and class size were below average in the schools attended by these students. Therefore, these schools could not help the students accomplish by execution of class work what has been acquired over the years from his social environments because it is in the school that students' sound foundation or otherwise in text processing are proved or disproved. In the present study, analysis showed that many of the students were not solid as far as text processing is concerned. The foundation that should be consolidated upon in the university (present academic level) was lacking. Analysis in Table 18 revealed students who were weak in text processing abilities. 63.4% (284) of the students lacked ability to identify and use text features; 68.1%(308) lacked ability to pin down requirement(s) in a given task; 60.9% (273) lacked ability to identify main ideas, 66.3% (297) lacked ability to identify supporting idea(s) to the main idea(s); 66.3% (297) lacked ability to draw inferences and make use of advanced strategies. This findings leads to the conclusion that these students were not equipped for the job ahead of them in the university from their previous schools. This is in line with Barlett's Schema theory that human beings possesses genetic knowledge in the form of unconscious mental structures and that these structures produce schematised errors in recall when they interact with incoming information. These schemata are cognitive structures that are gotten from previous experience and knowledge'' (Barlett qtd in Cook:87). Since every student carry different schemata which is often culture specific, there is bound to be differences in their performances. Analysis in Table 17 showed that only 29.5% (132) had the ability to link test(s) to real life situations while majority of them, 70.5% (316) lacked such ability. What this implies is that they

lacked what Anderson call “knowledge of the world” (Anderson qtd in Carrel: 73). This is as a result of the “problems related to absent or alternate often culture-specific schemata and non-activation of schemata” (Carrell, Devine and Eskey:4). Wallace supports the view that student’s schemata is very important in text processing and that “the first part of a text activates a schema… which is either confirmed or disconfirmed by what follows”(33). Performances of students in school will confirm or disconfirmed availability of these right schemata. This study disconfirms the presence of relevant schemata by these students. 79% (354) of the students indicated their inability to apply relevant background knowledge to difficult tasks, the reason being the fact that their socio-economic environments did not prepare them well for the task ahead. Swales concur by saying that “the environments set up powerful expectations. We are already prepared for certain genres but not for others before we open scholarly journal”(88). Because these students lacked these important text processing skills, performances in text with unfamiliar background were poor. Only 45.6% (205) of the students scored above average in the test. They were able to have such performance because of the fact that “text processing, according to Swales, involves formal structure and topic all of which activate schemata and allow students to process the text’’(89). Therefore, in any given text task, it is assumed that the students not only possess all the relevant schemata but that these schemata are actually activated if not there will be a break in total assimilation of the text. This is why the findings of this study reveal very high performance, 78% (351) in tests with familiar background which proves the fact, according to Swales, that “when content and form are familiar, the texts will be relatively accessible (87). When students are faced with text(s) whose content schema fails to exist in their schemata, they tend to show negative attitude to the text tasks. A good number of students in this study

revealed a very serious negative attitude while handling tests with unfamiliar background. About 31% (50) of the students abandoned and/or failed to finish the task because they worked at the limits of their linguistic abilities and this agrees with Aebersold and Field that if the topic… is outside of their experience or base on knowledge, they are a drift on an unknown sea"(41). This study concludes that differences between author's aim and student's assimilation and analysis of the text(s) exist clearly due to variation in the students' life experiences and the writer's model student. Many students, according to the findings, did not even realise this obvious weaknesses. The responses on the section on general socio-economic indices and text processing skills and strategies were at variance with their actual performances in the proficiency test. Because they lacked knowledge of their weaknesses in text processing, they failed to cover the gaps created by their socio-economic backgrounds by their personal efforts. This self-effort is what Lyons calls "motivation which is self-generated and happens within the student"(77). At this level of text processing in the university, students need to have a clear understanding of their ability in order to fill the gap created by their socio-economic backgrounds. This is because when students are ignorant of their lapses, they will also lack the zeal to improve on these lapses. Sajeerat concurs by saying that students from different English programs perceived that they were not "sure whether they had the itemised problems of text processing. This becomes a problem as they didn't know what areas of text skills that they need improvement in"(41).

Clearly when students are aware of socio-economic variables and their influences, they will apply the right attitude towards their text processing tasks. They will realise the fact that processing academic text entails negotiating the meaning with the author by applying their prior knowledge to it. They will endeavour to internalise, according

to Hermida, “both the general analytical tools and discipline-specific values and strategies that facilitate disciplinary text processing”(23).

Finally, the researcher noted some variations in the findings of this study in relation to opinions held by some renowned scholars. The socio-economic background variable pertinent to this study coupled with the contextual realities on ground as discovered on the field exercise justifies the variation from this part of the world. The analytical discussion in this chapter with its proof and statistical models are purely in tandem with theoretical models expunged in this descriptive discussion. It further helped to strengthen and highlight the socio-economic background variables’ influence on text processing as posited by various scholars.

CHAPTER SIX

6.0 SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

6.1. Introduction

Based on the analysis and discussions in chapters four and five, the following conclusions are made. The sub-headings include: Summary of Findings, Contributions to Scholarship, Suggestion for Further Research, Recommendations and Conclusion.

6.2 Summary of Findings

1. One of the major socio-economic variables is 'home' which is made up of minor variables: educational level of parents, income disposition of parents, and location of the family, general home environment, language of the home, family size/type and parents' interest. All these minor variables are contributory factors to the level of text processing performance by the first year students in the university in Enugu State.

2. Even though many of the students have parents whose educational qualifications were university graduates and post university graduate levels, the language of the home remains the mother tongue (L_1) which means that these students were not exposed simultaneously to their native languages and English language that are very important in early mastery of text processing.

3. A reasonable number of the students came from a type of parent-homes where the duty of providing sound early and consistent text processing foundations were difficult due to financial stress.

4. Most of the parents lacked interest in text processing and this indirectly affected their children's interest in text processing at the present academic level. First year students in the university in Enugu State lacked the requisite interest needed for advanced text processing. There is an association between family environments and text processing proficiency.

5. The level of the influence of general home environment on text processing at the university level is significant since there is an association between family environment and text processing development and/or performance and the family environment determines the result of the association.

6. Poor home environment (as shown in Table 16) is one of the major causes of the students' weaknesses in text processing.

7. Students were not aware of the obvious weaknesses/lapses they have in understanding processing task(s) and possible strategies to be used in order to achieve high level proficiency in advanced text analysis. This is because the students lacked knowledge of how the texts are structured, how information is organised and what kind of meaning(s) to search for. Rather than contextualise the author's line of thought, they took the ideas at surface value.

8. Students lacked knowledge of different social backgrounds due to insufficient exposure(s) and this hindered them from drawing from what the text task(s) presented.

9. The home was the variable that exerted the greatest influence on first year university students' text processing in Enugu State. Hence, the 'home' as an indispensable variable played an important role and it determined the

influence of ‘school’ and ‘student’ as socio-economic variables. The totality of ‘home’ variables resulted to what the ‘school’ and ‘student’ variables built on.

10. There was a strong link between socio-economic background and text processing achievements throughout the school programmes. This study establishes that where socio-economic background is stimulating and encouraging, achievements tend to be high as against poor achievements when it is not conducive to text processing.

11. There is a relative influence of previous text processing skills acquired before entering the university on the students’ present text processing ability. This was because the nature and level of this language skill acquired by the students under study reflected in their weak performances. This implies that their background knowledge of text processing was weak. Findings from this study have shown that application of information processing theories alone to text processing is inadequate to the mastery of advanced text processing. This is because the theoretical process neglects the power and influence of social interaction. Through this study, attention is shifted from departmentalised and disciplinary text processing to integrated and inter disciplinary exercise where students process text(s) with the knowledge, attitudes and skills of a variety of domain (Farrarand Al-Qatawneh: 61).

The findings of this work is in line with Vygotsky’s Constructive Theory that socio-economic background positive interactions are crucial and that text processing is co-constructed between two people. Developing text processing proficiency occurs through cultural transmission of language skills which starts from social interaction to personal and then to inner/covert problem solving.

6.3 Contributions to Scholarship

1. The results of this research would contribute positively to general understanding of the influence of different socio-economic variables on text processing. This study both validates and refines the schema theory, a new theory of text processing which aims at motivating English Language scholars to see the need to have a paradigm shift in their analytical approach to text processing. Language scholars would see the need to embrace pair and group text processing as a means of fostering the usage of social strategies. Through this, ideas would be shared and discussed, tasks worked on, final products revised together and appropriate strategies that would help them fulfill their roles as viable students in the university would be developed.

2. Scholars of language and related disciplines who have access to this works would now understand why students lack interest in text processing and consequently perform poorly in this area during the first year in the university.

3. Through the findings of this study, language experts would see the need to ensure parents participation during text processing intervention programmes.

4. Through the findings Language experts would see the need to be part of Curriculum planners in order to make text processing an integral part of school curriculum at all levels of academic programmes especially at the university level.

5. These findings would point to the need to address more than one variable at a time, that is, linguistic, formal and content schemata when designing intervention programmes to improve students' text processing problems.

6. Through this study, language experts would now see the limitations of using only theoretical approach when handling students in text processing and see the urgent need to embrace inter-disciplinary, deep and tactical approach in imparting high level text processing.

7. The findings of this study would be a stepping stone for language experts who would gain more insights into other areas of sociology of language that impact heavily on text processing.

8. Findings from this study would make every university student to be sensitive about his/her socio-economic background and to be aware of the implications of the socio-economic background on text processing and overall academic achievement. Where socio-economic background is not positive to text processing, the students concern would find positive ways of overcoming the lapses early instead of engaging in social vices that would be detrimental to the overall success in the university.

6.4 **Conclusion**

The relationship between students' socio-economic background and text processing proficiency is established in this study as a very strong bond. A lot of factors influence this bond within particular socio-economic background bands. Graetz says that "mastery of advanced text processing strategies depends very strongly on the socio-economic background of the students''(25). The impact of socio-economic background on students' text processing proficiency may be neutralised or strengthened by a lot of other situational, family and individual features. The results of this study show that economic and social aspects of socio-economic background have important

influences on students' text processing. The implication is that families where the socio-economic background are positive socially, educationally and economically, higher level of text processing outcomes are achieved by the students. This is due to the fact that higher level of psychological support through stimulating environments that encourage the development of advanced text processing skills in the university are made available to the students.

6.5 **Recommendations**

Based on the findings above, the researcher made the following recommendations.

1. Parents should embrace the old culture of equipping their children with stimulating environments and should stop buying gadgets that prevent the students from engaging in text processing for pleasure.

2. Stake holders in every university need to create avenues to impact general analytical tools, discipline specific values and strategies that help disciplinary text processing and overall academic achievement.

3. Students should use a deep approach to any assigned text processing task in order to analyse, synthesise, and solve problems metacognitively.

4. Stakeholders at the lower form of text processing acquisition especially secondary school should embrace practical application of interdisciplinary theory of language learning. All text processing activities must embrace the linguistic, psychological, cognitive and social aspect of text processing acquisition. Parents should be extra cautious while raising a young child.

5. University students and first year students in particular should continually interact with one another and so co-construct knowledge.

6. Stakeholders should spend more time learning about areas of students' interests because it would likely increase their text processing skills and processing abilities.

7. The social and cultural ideologies within the family must be addressed in programmes aimed at producing long term changes in students' text processing proficiency especially those from low socio-economic background.

8. Policy makers should organise intergenerational literacy programmes in order to help socio-economic background disadvantaged parents and students.

9. Intervention programmes should be organised to help family members to build useful meanings and definitions of text processing.

10. All students should be exposed to early literacy programmes with strong components that will help them to adapt to high level text processing later in life.

11. Students must work on improving their general background knowledge which will in turn enhance their ability to draw from what the text task(s) present(s).

12. The influence of 'school' as one of the socio-economic background variables should be in line with interdisciplinary theory in order to help students improve and bring about a positive change in the way school impacts on text processing achievement.

6.6 Suggestions for Further Research

It is suggested that more research work should be carried out on socio-economic background variables and ELS text processing at the first year level of university academic programme in other universities in Nigeria. It cannot be denied that the present research cover a portion of Nigeria, Enugu State only. More of this type of study is suggested to cover every first year students in the universities in all states of Nigeria as well.

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APPENDIX 1: REQUEST FOR INSTRUMENT VALIDATION 1

Department of English and Literary Studies,
Faculty of Arts,
University of Nigeria,
Nsukka.
21st May, 2018

Prof. Ezema P.A.
Department of English and Literary Studies,
Faculty of Arts,
University of Nigeria,
Nsukka.

Dear Sir,

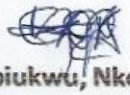
REQUEST FOR VALIDATION OF Ph.D. RESEARCH TOOL

I humbly request that you examine the attached questionnaire and proficiency test in order to establish its suitability or otherwise as a researchtool for the study titled"Influence of Socio-economic Background on ELS Text Processing of First Year Students in the University in Enugu State."

My registration number is Ph.D./09/51462.

Kindly give your valuable suggestions and expert guidance.

Yours faithfully,



Obiukwu, Nkechi Elizabeth

APPENDIX II: REQUEST FOR INSTRUMENT VALIDATION I

Department of English and Literary Studies,
Faculty of Arts,
University of Nigeria,
Nsukka.
21st May, 2018

Dr Melefa Moses
Department of English and Literary Studies,
Faculty of Arts,
University of Nigeria,
Nsukka.

Dear Sir,

REQUEST FOR VALIDATION OF Ph.D. RESEARCH TOOL

I humbly request that you examine the attached questionnaire and proficiency test in order to establish its suitability or otherwise as a researchtool for the study titled"Influence of Socio-economic Background on ELS Text Processing of First Year Students in the University in Enugu State."

My registration number is Ph.D./09/51462.

Kindly give your valuable suggestions and expert guidance.

Yours faithfully,

Obiukwu, Nkechi Elizabeth

APPENDIX III: INFLUENCE OF SOCIOECONOMIC BACKGROUND ON ESL TEXT PROCESSING OF FIRST YEAR STUDENTS IN THE UNIVERSITY IN ENUGU STATE.

QUESTIONNAIRE:

This questionnaire aims to investigate the Influence of Socioeconomic Background on ESL Text processing of First Year Students in the University in Enugu State. Your participation in the research will remain confidential and will be used only for this academic research study. Findings in the final report will be presented anonymously.

Section A: Student Background Information Sheet

Please tick (□) where applicable

Date:_____

Name:_____

Age:_____ Sex:_____ Male ☐ Female ☐

Name of university: _____

University Affiliation: Federal ☐ State ☐ Private ☐

Location of University: Urban ☐ Sub urban ☐ Rural ☐

Year of Study _____ 1st ☐ 2nd ☐ 3rd ☐ 4th ☐

Nationality: Nigerian ☐ Others ☐

State of Origin if a Nigerian: _____

Birth Place: Urban ☐ Sub urban ☐ Rural ☐

Native language(s): _____

Other languages spoken: _____

Religion: Christianity ☐ Islam ☐ Others ☐

Parents' Profile

Name of Mother:_____

Name of Father:_____

Marital Status: Married ☐ Divorced ☐ Single ☐ separated ☐

Parents' Highest Educational Qualification

Mother: FSLC ☐ O'Level ☐ NCE/OND ☐ Graduate ☐ Post Graduate ☐ Others ☐

Father: FSLC ☐ O'Level ☐ NCE/OND ☐ Graduate ☐ Post Graduate ☐ Others ☐

Occupation of Parents

Mother: _____

Father: _____

Place of Work:

Mother: _____

Father: _____

Religion: Christianity:

Language(s): _____

SECTION B

Please respond to the following items by ticking (√) the appropriate option for each statement.

1 Does your home environment affect your text processing output at the present academic level?
Very Strong ☐ Strong ☐ Very Weak ☐ Weak ☐

2 Does your parents' academic status affect your text processing proficiency before this present level?
Very Strong ☐ Strong ☐ Very Weak ☐ Weak ☐

3 Does your parents' income disposition affect acquisition of text processing materials in your home?
Very Strong ☐ Strong ☐ Very Weak ☐ Weak ☐

4 Does your parents' income disposition determine location (urban or rural) of your family? Yes ☐ ☐

5 Did your parents demonstrate sufficient interest in your acquisition of text processing skills early in life? Yes ☐ ☐

6 Is your general home environment cognitively stimulating and supportive on text processing at the present level?
Yes ☐ No ☐

7 Can your parents be classified as belonging to high income class earners? High ☐ Middle ☐ Low ☐

8 Is English language one of the languages spoken in your home? Yes ☐ No ☐

9 Is your family size above six persons (parents inclusive)? Yes ☐ No ☐

10 Was the language spoken in your school and that spoken at home the same? Yes ☐ No ☐

11 Were the schools you attended in urban areas? Yes ☐ No ☐

12 Was your school equipped with sufficient learning infrastructures for text processing acquisition? Yes ☐ ☐

13 Did you attend public primary and secondary schools? Yes ☐ No ☐

14 Were you properly exposed to text processing materials and exercises at home and school? Yes ☐ ☐

15 Do you think your English Language teachers below the university level were qualified and effective? Yes ☐ No ☐

16 Was your class size above 40 students in number? Yes ☐ No ☐

17 Did your class size affect your acquisition of text processing skills positively? Yes ☐ No ☐

18 Was it your parents who initiated your going into the university? Yes ☐ No ☐

20 Do you actually have interest in your course of study and text processing in particular? Yes ☐ No ☐
21 Do you identify and make use of numerous text features within a text while processing text at this level? Yes ☐ No ☐
22 Do you understand what is expected of you when processing a text task? Yes ☐ No ☐
23 When processing a text can you identify the main idea(s) expressed by the author? Yes ☐ No ☐
24 Can you identify supporting idea(s) to the main idea(s) in any text processing exercise? Yes ☐ No ☐
25 Can you predict the author's view in different paragraphs in a given text processing passage? Yes ☐ No ☐
26 Do you have the capability of linking information in texts to real life situations previously and at the present? Yes ☐ No ☐
27 When faced with a difficult text task, can you apply information acquired previously in processing the text exercise? Yes ☐ No ☐
28 Do you think that an absence of relevant background knowledge can result to difficulties when processing advanced text? Yes ☐ No ☐
29 Do you believe that a text with foreign cultural background will pose a challenge to you at this present level? Yes ☐ No ☐
30 Does your resent language proficiency in vocabulary, grammar and sentence structure play a vital role in your present text processing ability? Yes ☐ No ☐
31 Do you think applying different text processing strategies such as monitoring understanding, metacognition, summary etc. acquired previously when processing an advanced text helps a lot? Yes ☐ No ☐
32 Do the home and school as well as interest affect your text processing ability positively? Yes ☐ No ☐
33 Do you agree that the text processing skills acquired previously have positive impact on the present text processing achievement? Yes ☐ No ☐
34 Do you agree that home, school student' interest do not exert equal influence on text processing? Yes ☐ No ☐
35 Among these three socioeconomic variables: home, school and student's interest, tick the one that exerts the highest influence on your text processing ability? Home ☐ School ☐ Student ☐

SECTION C: PROFICIENCY TEST

PASSAGE 1: Read the passage below and choose the best answer to the questions.

Ever since then, Angelina had not stopped telling her son to be very careful in life, especially in picking his friends. She warned him particularly about girls. This supreme warning came up again when Mike gained admission into the university. For the first time in his life, he was going to leave his mother and begin to look after himself. His mother was very much afraid that Mike might begin to follow bad companies and then go after campus girls. Mike agreed in his heart with his mother. He gave her his wholehearted promise to be a good boy. You have seen how I have been trading since we came to the city. I go out in the morning and come back very late in the evening.

On the very day Mike stepped on campus, he made some resolutions, the chief among which was that he would read his books very seriously. In order to achieve that, he decided never to look at girls. After his resolution, he became very happy and faced his studies with all seriousness. In those days he realized that discipline begot happiness. He avoided the girls. But he had male friends and those his friends at length became a problem to him. While in their company, he found himself at certain places he should not be. He went with them to the Students' Union Building Complex, where boys and girls gathered at nights to seek the attention of the opposite sex, and converted all the corners of the complex into sex cubicles. Mike knew that he did not need to do any of those things in order to belong. He knew that everybody among his friends liked him very much. They valued his presence in their group. Mike was a handsome boy, and had the look of a ladies' man. In fact, many girls on campus had wanted him but he gave them all cold shoulders. His friends noticed it and were disappointed. They wondered why Mike never went with girls, or even drank alcohol. Maybe something was wrong with him.

1. This passage shows that:
a. Mike has gain university admission.
b. She has stopped telling her Mike to be good.
c. Mike is always going after girls.
d. Mike will leave the city.
2. The main subject of the passage is:
a. Mike's conduct in the university.
b. Mike is leaving the house.
c. Angelina goes out in the morning.
d. How to read his books.
3. The first underlined expression in the passage means:
a. His heart and his mother's own was one.
b. He told her the whole truth.
c. He agreed not to go after any girl.
d. His mother was not afraid.
d. His mother was afraid.

a. He would do that by going to the university.

b. He would do that by picking his friends.

c. He would do that by facing his studies squarely.

d. He would not go to the university.

5. He gave them all cold shoulders, according to the passage, means:

a. His shoulder was cold. b .He gave them a shoulder that was cold. c. He rejected all of them. d. He accepted a shoulder that is cold.

PASSAGE 2: Read the passage below and choose the best answer to the questions.

So if you wish to be in tune with God, don't spend your days seeking for power as fools do. Go always for mercy because a man of mercy is safer than a man of power. Anyone who places much premium on power, and uses it is dealing with other, is certainly not a man of God. He is nice meat for the devil's hot dinner. The devil rules in a nation where the people are power drunken and know no mercy. Such a nation never grows, but instead experiences disaster after disaster. There is no vision there; and poverty envelopes everywhere, like a cloud of death.

6. The main idea in the passage is:

a. God is powerful. b. People should use power to deal with others. c. People should acquire mercy as a virtue. d. There is no vision in mercy.

7. According to the passage: a. A person with power held high. b. A man of mercy is greater than one with power. c. Mercy attracts poverty. d. A man with power is not food to the devil.

8. What literary device is the expression ''like a cloud of death''?

a. oxymoron b. metaphor c. simile d. paradox

9. The expression he is nice meat for the devil's hot dinner means:

a. The devil eats nice dinner. b. The devil can easily attack and destroy him. c. The meal is always very hot. D .The devil has access to him.

PASSAGE 3: Read the passage below and choose the best answer to the questions.

When dinner was over, she returned directly to Jane and Miss Bingley began abusing her as soon as she was out of the room. Her manners were pronounced to be very bad indeed, a mixture of pride and impertinence; and she had no conversation, no stile, no taste, no beauty. Mrs. Hurst thought the same and added, 'She has nothing, in short, to recommend her, but being an excellent walker. I shall never forget her appearance this morning. She really looked almost wild.' 'She did indeed, Louisa. I could hardly keep my countenance, very nonsensical to come at all! Why must she be scampering about the county, because her sister has a cold? Her hair was so untidy, so blowsy!'

11. The tone of the passage is:

a. sarcastic b. love c. approval d. not sarcastic

12. According to the passage,

a. Elizabeth was not rude and proud. b. Elizabeth has appealing personality. c. Elizabeth's character was written off.

d. Elizabeth's appearance was calm.

13. According to the passage, all the options except one is used to portray Elizabeth as:

a. an animal. b. a child who goes about looking for fun. c. a person that does not know what she wants in life. d. feels remorse for every action taken.

PASSAGE 4: Read the passage and answer the questions that follow.

There was just such informality in the terms of the bequest as to give me no hope from law. A man of honour could not have doubted the intention but Mr. Darcy chose to doubt it- or to treat it as a merely conditional recommendation, and to assert that I had forfeited all claim to it by extravagance, imprudence, in short anything or nothing. Certain it is, that the living became vacant two years ago exactly as I was of an age to hold it. I cannot accuse myself of having really done anything to deserve to lose it. I have a warm, unguarded temper, and I may perhaps have sometimes spoken my opinion of him, and to him, too freely. I can recall nothing worse. But the fact is, that we are very different sort of men, and that he hates me.'

14. The passage implied that:

a. the narrator is happy. b. there is an important bone of contention.

c. the issue under contention was settled peacefully by the bequest.

d. his right to the bequest was denied him.

15. The underlined sentence implies that:

a. the narrator has no legal backing to support him. b. the narrator was strongly backed by law. c. everything was formally stated. d. the narrator was sure of what he was saying.

16. The expression '' living became vacant'' in the passage means

a. he has access to the will. b. the living room was not occupied two years ago.

c. he was told to vacate the living room. d. he lost the right to the will.

PASSAGE 5: Read the passage and answer the questions that follow:

The park was very large and contained great variety of grounds. They entered it in one of its lowest points, and drove for some time through a beautiful wood, stretching over a wide extent. Elizabeth's mind was too full for conversation but she saw and admired every remarkable spot and of view. They gradually ascended for half a mile, and then found themselves at the top of a considerable eminence, where the wood ceased, and the eye was instantly caught by Pemberley House, situated on the opposite side of a valleys into which the road with some abruptness wound. It was a large, handsome, stone building, standing well on rising ground, and backed by a ridge of high woody hills;- and in front a stream of some nature importance was swelled into greater, but without any artificial appearance. Its banks were neither formal, nor falsely adorned. Elizabeth was delighted. She had never seen a place for which nature had done more, or where natural beauty had been so little counteracted by an awkward taste. They were all of them warm in their admiration and at that moment she felt that to be mistress of Pemberley might be something!

17. The word "wood" in the passage means

a. Planks use in building Pemberley.

b. Woods scattered in the park for cooking.

c. Beautiful trees in the park.

d. Forest in close to Pemberley

18. One of the options is true according to the passage.

a. Pemberley was surrounded by valley.

b. Pemberley was surrounded by rising ground.

c. Pemberley was built in a valley.

d. Pemberley was surrounded by natural beauty.

19. The underlined expression in the passage means that:

a. the mistress of Pemberley is something beautiful. b. Pemberley has a beautiful mistress. c. To be the wife of the owner of Pemberley might not be bad.

d. The mistress of Pemberley is something else.

20. The passage implies that:

a. there was no artificial touch in the park.

b. The park was beautified by an awkward taste.

c. The owner was not attached to nature.

d. The park was the most beautiful one the narrator has seen.

APPENDIX IV: VALIDATION OF INSTRUMENT BY VALIDATOR 1

UNIVERSITY OF NIGERIA, NSUKKA
DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH AND LITERARY STUDIES
Block B, Faculty of Arts Complex
Nsukka Campus,
Enugu State, Nigeria

Date: 13th June, 2018

To Whom It May Concern

Mrs. Obiukwu Nkechi Elizabeth is carrying out a Ph.D. research study on "Influence of Socio-Economic Background on ESL Text Processing of First Year Students in the University in Enugu State.

She has brought to me the instruments she has developed for carrying out the study. She has a set of forty questionnaire items and seven reading passages for eliciting data which she will use for the study. I have critically gone through the instruments. The questionnaire items should be reduced to about thirty. Similarly, five instead of seven passages should be used in carrying out the study. I have also indicated the language errors observed in some of her questions for her to correct.

If the candidate attends to my corrections and other observations, the instruments will actually go a long way in aiding her to elicit useful data for this study.

Prof. P.A. Ezema

Department of English and Literary Studies
University of Nigeria,
Nsukka.

APPENDIX V: VALIDATION OF INSTRUMENT BY VALIDATOR 1

UNIVERSITY OF NIGERIA, NSUKKA
DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH AND LITERARY STUDIES
Block B, Faculty of Arts Complex
Nsukka Campus.
Enugu State, Nigeria

Date:. 28th May, 2018

VALIDATION OF INSTRUMENT FOR Ph.D. RESEARCH WORK

TOPIC: INFLUENCE OF SOCIO-ECONOMIC BACKGROUND ON ELS TEXT PROCESSING OF FIRST YEAR STUDENTS IN THE UNIVERSITY IN ENUGU STATE

CANDIDATE NAME:OBIUKWU, NKECHI ELIZABETH

REGISTRATION NUMBER: Ph.D./09/51462

I hereby state that I have examined the instrument for data collection and analysis for the above Ph.D. research study. The tool is appropriate in the area of content validity, format, response system, language and suitability for the investigation.

I, therefore, certify that the instrument is adequate for a meaningful research work.

Dr Melefa, Moses

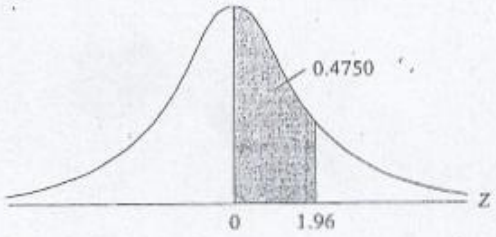
APPENDIX VI: Z-TEST TABLE

TABLE D.1
Areas Under the Standardized Normal Distribution

Example

$\Pr(0 \le Z \le 1.96) = 0.4750$

$\Pr(Z \ge 1.96) = 0.5 - 0.4750 = 0.025$



Z	.00	.01	.02	.03	.04	.05	.06	.07	.08	.09
0.0	.0000	.0040	.0080	.0120	.0160	.0199	.0239	.0279	.0319	.0359
0.1	.0398	.0438	.0478	.0517	.0557	.0596	.0636	.0675	.0714	.0753
0.2	.0793	.0832	.0871	.0910	.0948	.0987	.1026	.1064	.1103	.1141
0.3	.1179	.1217	.1255	.1293	.1331	.1368	.1406	.1443	.1480	.1517
0.4	.1554	.1591	.1628	.1664	.1700	.1736	.1772	.1808	.1844	.1879
0.5	.1915	.1950	.1985	.2019	.2054	.2088	.2123	.2157	.2190	.2224
0.6	.2257	.2291	.2324	.2357	.2389	.2422	.2454	.2486	.2517	.2549
0.7	.2580	.2611	.2642	.2673	.2704	.2734	.2764	.2794	.2823	.2852
0.8	.2881	.2910	.2939	.2967	.2995	.3023	.3051	.3078	.3106	.3133
0.9	.3159	.3186	.3212	.3238	.3264	.3289	.3315	.3340	.3365	.3389
1.0	.3413	.3438	.3461	.3485	.3508	.3531	.3554	.3577	.3599	.3621
1.1	.3643	.3665	.3686	.3708	.3729	.3749	.3770	.3790	.3810	.3830
1.2	.3849	.3869	.3888	.3907	.3925	.3944	.3962	.3980	.3997	.4015
1.3	.4032	.4049	.4066	.4082	.4099	.4115	.4131	.4147	.4162	.4177
1.4	.4192	.4207	.4222	.4236	.4251	.4265	.4279	.4292	.4306	.4319
1.5	.4332	.4345	.4357	.4370	.4382	.4394	.4406	.4418	.4429	.4441
1.6	.4452	.4463	.4474	.4484	.4495	.4505	.4515	.4525	.4535	.4545
1.7	.4454	.4564	.4573	.4582	.4591	.4599	.4608	.4616	.4625	.4633
1.8	.4641	.4649	.4656	.4664	.4671	.4678	.4686	.4693	.4699	.4706
1.9	.4713	.4719	.4726	.4732	.4738	.4744	.4750	.4756	.4761	.4767
2.0	.4772	.4778	.4783	.4788	.4793	.4798	.4803	.4808	.4812	.4817
2.1	.4821	.4826	.4830	.4834	.4838	.4842	.4846	.4850	.4854	.4857
2.2	.4861	.4864	.4868	.4871	.4875	.4878	.4881	.4884	.4887	.4890
2.3	.4893	.4896	.4898	.4901	.4904	.4906	.4909	.4911	.4913	.4916
2.4	.4918	.4920	.4922	.4925	.4927	.4929	.4931	.4932	.4934	.4936
2.5	.4938	.4940	.4941	.4943	.4945	.4946	.4948	.4949	.4951	.4952
2.6	.4953	.4955	.4956	.4957	.4959	.4960	.4961	.4962	.4963	.4964
2.7	.4965	.4966	.4967	.4968	.4969	.4970	.4971	.4972	.4973	.4974
2.8	.4974	.4975	.4976	.4977	.4977	.4978	.4979	.4979	.4980	.4981
2.9	.4981	.4982	.4982	.4983	.4984	.4984	.4985	.4985	.4986	.4986
3.0	.4987	.4987	.4987	.4988	.4988	.4989	.4989	.4989	.4990	.4990

Note: This table gives the area in the right-hand tail of the distribution (i.e., $Z \ge 0$). But since the normal distribution is symmetrical about $Z = 0$, the area in the left-hand tail is the same as the area in the corresponding right-hand tail. For example, $P(-1.96 \le Z \le 0) = 0.4750$. Therefore, $P(-1.96 \le Z \le 1.96) = 2(0.4750) = 0.95$.

SPREAD SHEET ANALYSIS OF QUESTIONAIRE ON INFLUENCE OF SOCIO-ECONOMIC BACKGROUND ON ESL TEXT PROCESSING OF FIRST YEAR STUDENTS IN THE UNIVERSITY IN ENUGU STATE

SPNT	1		2		3		4		5		6		7		8		9		10		11		12		13		14		15		16		17		18		19		2
	Y	N	Y	N	Y	N	Y	N	Y	N	Y	N	Y	N	Y	N	Y	N	Y	N	Y	N	Y	N	Y	N	Y	N	Y	N	Y	N	Y	N	Y	N	Y	
1		1	1		1		1		1			1		1	1		1			1	1		1			1	1			1	1			1		1		1	1
2		1		1	1			1	1		1		1		1			1	1		1		1			1	1		1		1			1		1		1	1
3		1	1			1	1		1		1			1	1		1			1	1			1	1			1		1	1			1	1		1	1
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29	1			1	1		1		1		1		1		1		1			1		1	1			1	1		1		1			1		1			
30	1			1	1		1		1		1			1	1		1			1	1		1			1	1		1			1		1		1		1	1
31		1		1		1	1		1			1	1		1		1			1	1			1	1			1	1		1		1			1		
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35	1			1	1		1		1		1			1	1			1		1	1		1			1	1		1			1		1	1			1	1
36		1	1			1	1		1			1		1	1			1	1			1		1	1			1	1		1		1			1		1	1
37	1		1		1		1		1			1	1		1			1	1		1		1			1	1			1	1			1		1		1	1
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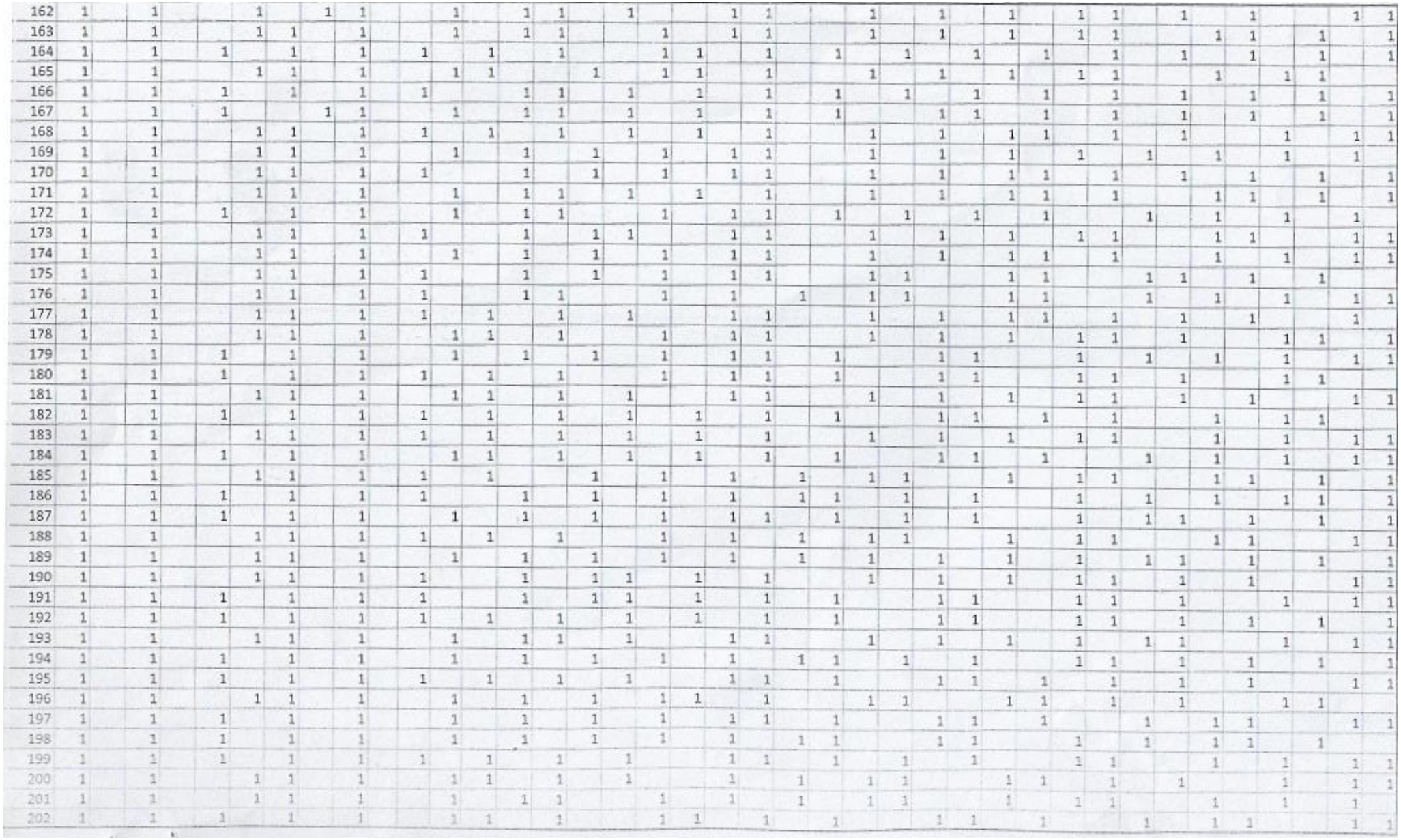

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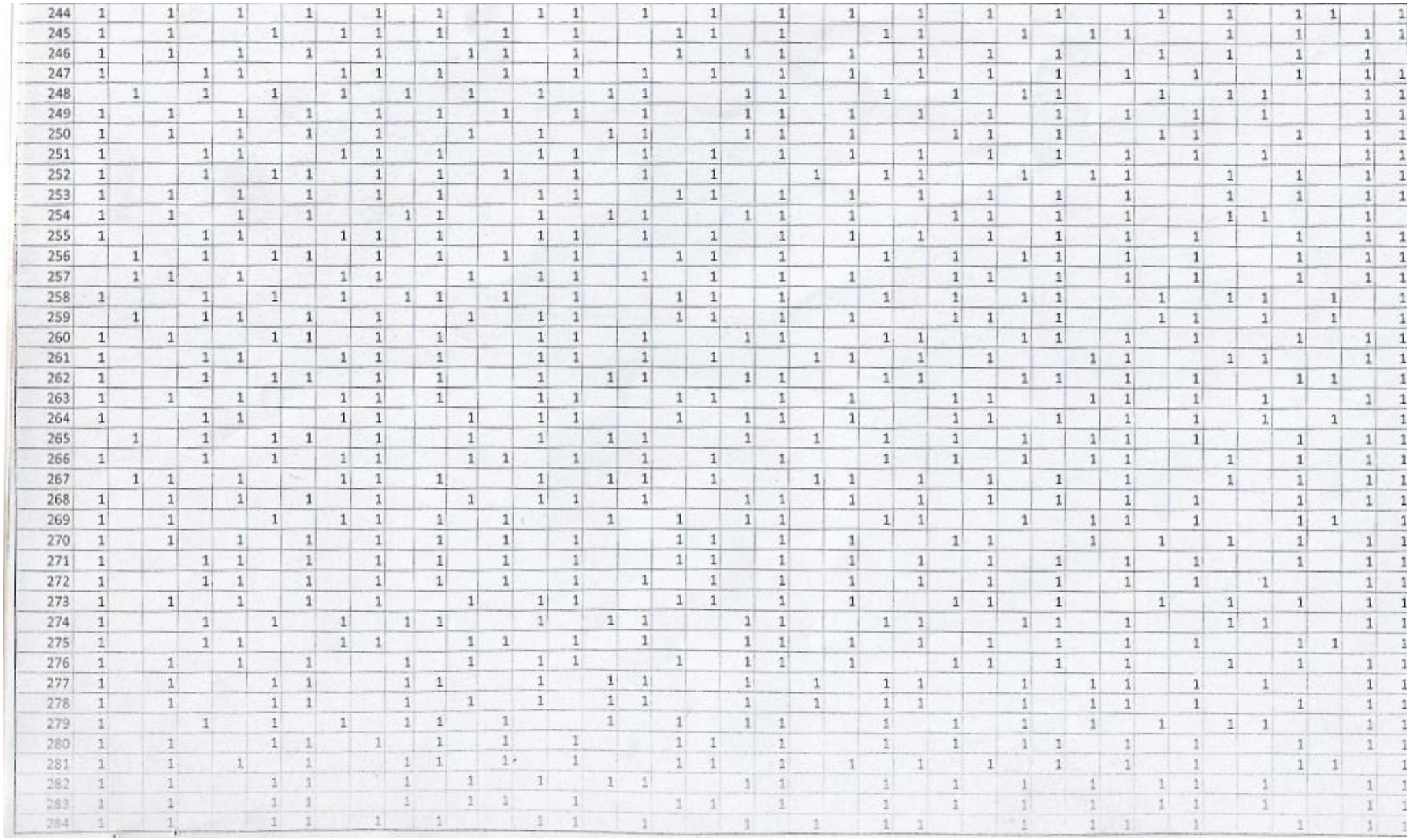

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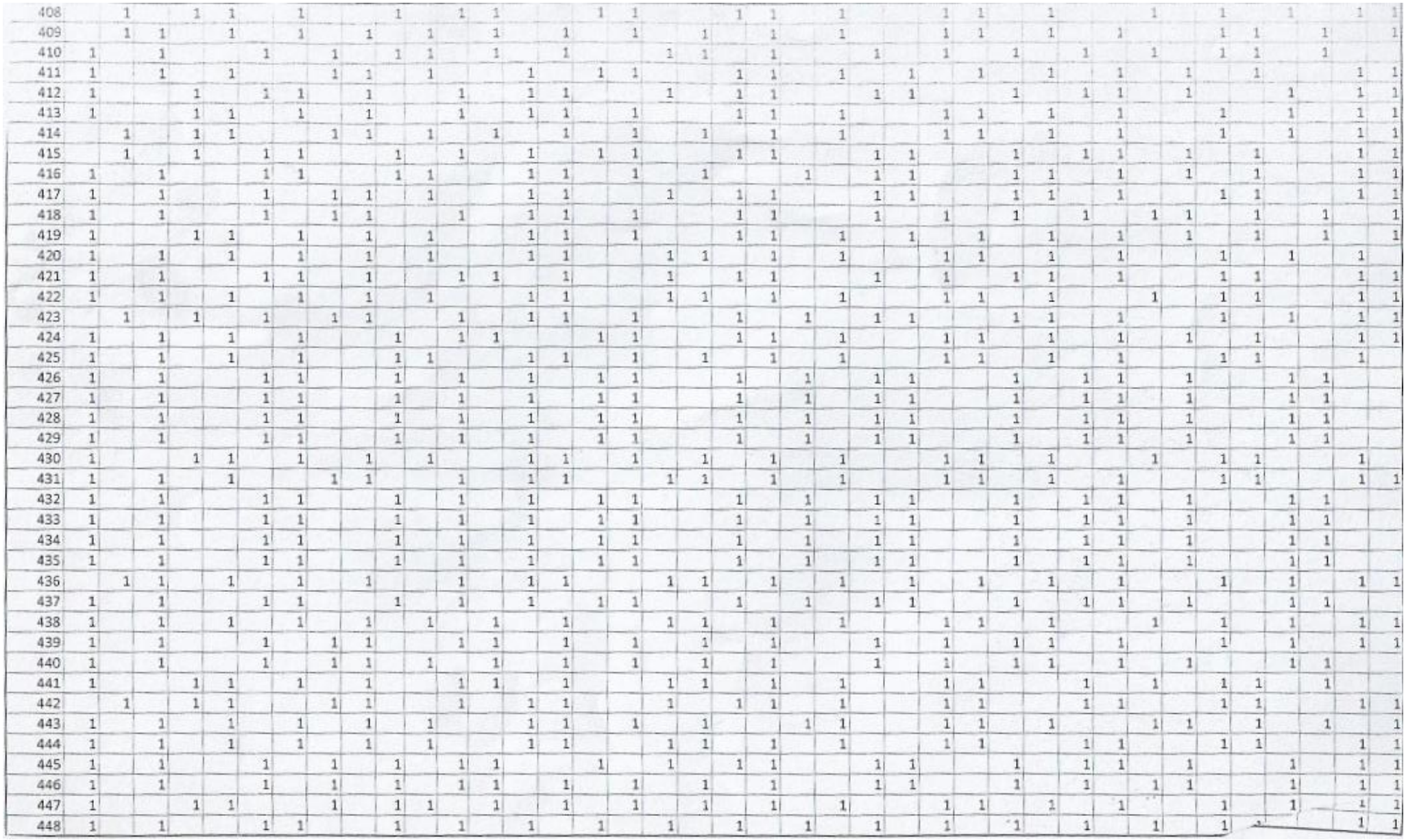
399		1		1	1		1			1		1		1	1			1	1		1		1			1	1			1		1	1			1		1	1
400		1		1	1		1		1		1		1		1		1		1		1		1		1		1		1		1			1		1		1	1
401	1			1		1		1	1			1		1	1		1			1		1		1		1		1	1		1			1		1		1	1
402		1		1	1			1	1		1		1		1			1	1		1		1			1	1		1		1			1		1		1	1
403		1		1		1		1		1	1			1	1			1		1		1		1	1			1		1	1		1			1		1	1
404	1		1			1	1		1			1	1			1	1			1		1		1	1			1	1		1		1			1		1	
405	1			1		1	1		1		1		1		1		1		1		1			1		1		1	1		1		1		1			1	1
406	1			1		1		1		1	1			1		1		1		1		1		1	1			1		1	1			1	1			1	1
407	1			1		1		1	1		1			1	1		1		1			1		1		1		1		1	1			1		1		1	1



	351	97	303	145	249	199	325	123	363	85	249	199	176	272	333	115	256	192	219	229	331	117	249	199	198	250	249	199	276	172	301	147	209	239	216	2
	448		448		448		448		448		448		448		448		448		448		448		448		448		448		448		448		448		448	

0	21		22		23		24		25		26		27		28		29		30		31		32		33		34		35			TOTAL	REMARKS	
N	Y	N	Y	N	Y	N	Y	N	Y	N	Y	N	Y	N	Y	N	Y	N	Y	N	Y	N	Y	N	Y	N	Y	N	H	SC	ST			V.G (80-100)%
		1		1		1		1		1		1		1	1		1		1			1		1	1			1			1	35		1
		1	1		1			1		1	1			1	1			1	1		1			1		1		1	1			35		1
	1		1		1		1		1		1		1		1		1		1		1		1		1		1				1		35		1
	1		1		1		1		1		1		1		1			1	1		1		1				1	1				35		1
	1		1		1		1		1		1		1			1		1	1		1			1	1		1			1		35		
	1		1		1		1		1		1		1		1			1	1		1		1		1		1		1			35		
	1		1		1		1		1		1		1		1			1	1		1		1		1			1		1		35		
	1		1		1		1		1		1		1		1		1		1		1		1		1		1			1		35		1
	1		1		1		1		1		1		1		1			1	1		1		1		1		1			1		35		1
1	1			1	1		1		1		1		1		1		1			1	1			1	1		1			1		35		1
	1		1		1		1		1		1		1		1		1		1		1		1		1		1			1		35		1
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		1	1		1		1			1	1		1		1		1			1	1			1	1		1				1	35		
	1		1		1		1		1		1		1			1		1		1		1		1		1					1	35		1
	1		1		1		1		1		1		1			1		1		1		1		1		1					1	35		1
	1		1			1	1		1		1		1		1			1	1		1		1		1		1			1		35		1
	1		1		1		1		1		1		1		1			1		1	1			1	1			1		1		35		1
	1		1			1		1	1			1	1		1			1	1			1	1			1		1		1		35		1
	1		1		1		1		1		1		1		1			1	1			1	1			1		1		1		35		1
1		1		1		1		1		1	1			1		1		1		1		1		1		1	1				1	35		1
		1		1		1	1			1		1	1		1		1		1			1		1		1		1				35		1
		1		1	1			1	1			1		1	1		1		1			1	1		1		1			1		35		1
		1		1		1		1	1			1		1	1		1		1			1	1		1		1			1		35		1
	1		1		1		1		1			1		1	1		1		1			1		1		1			1			35		1
		1		1		1		1	1			1		1	1		1		1			1		1		1			1			35		1
1		1		1		1	1		1		1		1		1		1		1			1	1		1			1		1		35		
	1		1			1		1	1		1		1		1			1	1		1		1		1		1			1		35		1
1	1		1			1	1			1	1		1		1			1	1		1			1	1		1				1	35		
	1		1			1		1	1			1	1		1			1	1			1		1	1		1			1		35		1
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	1		1		1			1	1			1	1		1			1		1	1			1		1		1				35		1
		1		1		1		1	1			1	1			1		1		1		1	1			1		1				35		1

71	284	164	305	143	273	175	297	151	294	154	316	132	354	94	355	93	283	165	351	97	247	201	262	186	374	74	322	126	294	98	56	15680	0
	448		448		448		448		448		448		448		448		448		448		448		448		448		448			448			

SPREAD SHEET ANALYSIS OF PROFICIENCY TEST FOR Ph.D WORK																	
FAMILIAR BACKGROUND TEXT SCORES				UNFAMILIAR BACKGROUND TEXT SCORES					GENDER		AGE			UNIVERSITY		
GUD(60-79)%	AV(50-59)%	BV(40-49)%	F(1-39)%	V.G (80-100)%	GUD(60-79)%	AV(50-59)%	BV(40-49)%	F(1-39)%	MALE	FEMALE	15-17	18-20	21+	FEDERAL	STATE	PRIVATE
							1			1		1				1
						1				1		1				1
						1				1		1				1
					1					1		1				1
1						1			1			1				1
	1			1					1				1			1
1								1	1				1			1
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						1			1		1					1
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						1				1		1		1		
								1	1			1		1		
					1					1	1			1		
								1	1					1		
			1					1	1					1		

81	38	17	42	90	119	86	44	109	249	199	60	266	122	322	
448					448					448		448			
FAMIIAR TEST					UNFAMILIAR TEST					GENDER		AGE			UNIV

STUDENTS' BACKGROUND INFORMATION ANALYSIS													
RELIGION		PARENT'S MARITAL STATUS			PARENT'S EDUCATION					PARENT'S OCCUPATION			TOTAL
CHRISTIANITY	ISLAM	MARRIED	DIVORCED	SINGLE	FSLC	O/L	GRADUATE	PG	OTHERS	FARMER	TRADER	PUB/CIVIL SERVICE	
1		1					1					1	9
1		1					1					1	9
1		1					1				1		9
1		1					1					1	9
1		1					1					1	9
1		1			1					1			9
1				1	1						1		9
1		1						1				1	9
1				1				1				1	9
1		1			1						1		9
1		1					1					1	9
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1				1		1						1	9
1		1				1						1	9
1				1		1						1	9
1		1				1					1		9

447	1	360	49	39	90	74	157	70	57	19	190	239	4032
	448		448				448				448		4032
	RELIGION		MARITAL STUTUS				EDUCATION				OCCUPATION		

APPENDIX VIII: REQUEST FOR ACADEMIC DATA I (UNN)

Department of English and Literary Studies
Faculty of Arts
University of Nigeria
Nsukka
7th June, 2018

The Admission Officer
University of Nigeria
Nsukka
Enugu State

Sir/Madam,

REQUEST FOR ACADEMIC DATA

I am Obiukwu, Nkechi E, a Ph.D. student of the above university. Currently, am conducting an academic research on "Influence of Socio-Economic Background on ELS Text Processing of First Year Students in the University in Enugu State."

Kindly assist the researcher by providing the data required below. The information provided is strictly for academic research only.

(a) Number of 1st year students admitted in 2017/2018 academic year ....13,349.........

(b) Name of Officer:..

(c) Designation:..

Thanks for your kind cooperation.

Yours faithfully,

Obiukwu, Nkechi E.
PG/Ph.D./09/51462

REGISTRAR'S DEPT. 8/6/18 ADMISSIONS OFFICE

See the liaise with Nneka and provide summary statistics of 2017/2018 admission 13/6/18

APPENDIX IX: REQUEST FOR ACADEMIC DATA II (CARITAS)

Department of English and Literary Studies
Faculty of Arts
University of Nigeria
Nsukka
7th June, 2018

The Admission Officer
Caritas University
Amorji-Nike
Enugu

Sir/Madam,

REQUEST FOR ACADEMIC DATA

I am Obiukwu, Nkechi E, a Ph.D. student of the above university. Currently, I am conducting an academic research on "Influence of Socio-Economic Background on ELS Text Processing of First Year Students in the University in Enugu State."

Kindly assist the researcher by providing the data required below. The information provided is strictly for academic research only.

(a) Number of 1st year students admitted in 2017/2018 academic year 507

(b) Name of Officer: Mefumanya Brendan Kadiq

(c) Designation: Registry

Thanks for your kind cooperation.

CARITAS UNIVERSITY Registrar ENUGU

Yours faithfully,

Obiukwu, Nkechi E.
PG/Ph.D./09/51462

APPENDIX X: REQUEST FOR ACADEMIC DATA III (ESUT)

Department of English and Literary Studies,
Faculty of Arts,
University of Nigeria,
Nsukka.
18th June, 2018.

The Admission Officer,
Enugu State University of Science and Technology,
Enugu.

Sir/Madam,

REQUEST FOR ACADEMIC DATA

I am Obiukwu, Nkechi Elizabeth, a Ph.D. student of the above university. Currently, I am conducting an academic research on "Influence of Socio-Economic Background on ELS Text Processing of First Year University Students in Enugu State"

Kindly assist the researcher by providing the data required below. The information provided is strictly for academic research only.

(a) Number of 1st year students admitted in 2017/2018 academic year ……5956……

(b) Name of officer: ……

(c) Designation: ……

Thanks for your kind cooperation.

Yours faithfully,

Obiukwu Nkechu Elizabeth.
PG/Ph.D/09/51462

APPENDIX XI: REQUEST FOR ACADEMIC DATA IV (GO)

Department of English and Literary Studies,
Faculty of Arts,
University of Nigeria,
Nsukka.
8th June, 2018.

The Admission Officer,
Godfrey Okoye University,
Ugwuomu-Nike,
Enugu.

Sir/Madam,

REQUEST FOR ACADEMIC DATA

I am Obiukwu, Nkechi Elizabeth, a Ph.D. student of the above university. Currently, I am conducting an academic research on "Influence of Socio-Economic Background on ELS Text Processing of First Year University Students in Enugu State"

Kindly assist the researcher by providing the data required below. The information provided is strictly for academic research only.

(a) Number of 1st year students admitted in 2017/2018 academic year ..... 550 .....

(b) Name of officer: .....

(c) Designation: .....

Thanks for your kind cooperation.

Yours faithfully,

Obiukwu Nkechu Elizabeth.
PG/Ph.D/09/51462