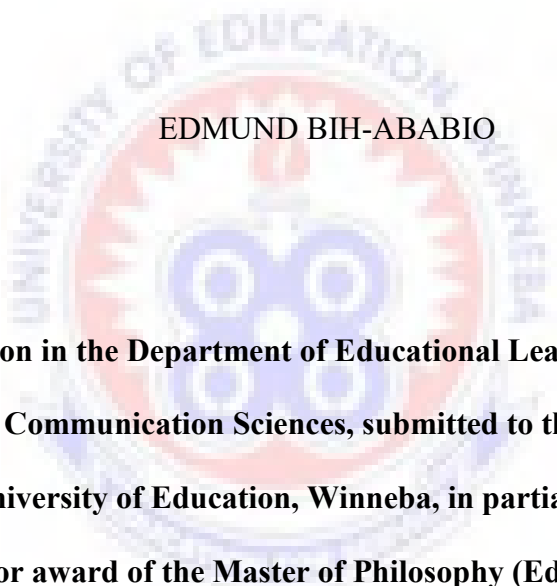


UNIVERSITY OF EDUCATION, WINNEBA

TEACHERS' PERCEPTION ON IMPLEMENTATION OF THE NATIONAL  
LITERACY ACCELERATION PROGRAMME (NALAP) IN BASIC LOWER  
PRIMARY SCHOOLS. A CASE STUDY AT SEFWI WIAWSO MUNICIPALITY

EDMUND BIH-ABABIO

The logo of the University of Education, Winneba, is a circular emblem. It features a central sun-like symbol with rays, surrounded by a blue and red border. The text 'UNIVERSITY OF EDUCATION WINNEBA' is written around the perimeter of the circle.

**A Dissertation in the Department of Educational Leadership, Faculty of  
Education and Communication Sciences, submitted to the School of Graduate  
Studies, University of Education, Winneba, in partial fulfilment of the  
requirements for award of the Master of Philosophy (Educational Leadership)  
degree**

MAY, 2016

## DECLARATION

### STUDENT'S DECLARATION

I, BIH-ABABIO EDMUND, declare that this Dissertation, with exception of quotations and references contained in published works which have all been identified and duly acknowledged, is entirely my own original work and it has not been submitted, either in part or whole for another degree elsewhere.

SIGNATURE: .....

DATE: .....

### SUPERVISOR'S DECLARATION

I hereby declare that the preparation and presentation of this thesis was supervised in accordance with the guidelines and supervision of Dissertation as laid down by the University of Education, Winneba.

SUPERVISOR'S NAME: DR. STEPHEN BAAFI-FRIMPONG

SIGNATURE: .....

DATE: .....

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“Doc, I am most grateful”

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## **DEDICATION**

To my able wife, Mrs. Grace Asieduah Ababio for her prayer and support given to me throughout my programme.



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## ABSTRACT

This study, explored teachers' perception on implementation of the National Literacy Acceleration Programme (NALAP) in Basic Lower Primary Schools in Wiawso circuit of Sefwi Wiawso Municipality. This was necessary because, it had been observed that the problem with reading, understanding and writing in these schools had been further complicated by issues regarding the teaching of the Language and Literacy subject which emanated from the NALAP. The study was designed in the framework of an interpretive case study which employed the qualitative paradigm. Semi-structured interview protocol and observation checklist were the instruments used to collect data for the study. Purposive sampling technique was used to select a sample of 25 respondents from the study population of 50. The data were collected personally during the first and the second term of 2014/2015 academic year. The data were analysed using the interpretive model. The results revealed that most of the teachers were not following the instructions and specifications in the teacher's guide and the language and literacy syllabus to teach the subject effectively. Rather, they taught based on their own classroom realities. The study concluded that, majority of the teachers lacked the prerequisite knowledge and the competences to effectively teach the subject, therefore, the results suggest that giving adequate and regular in-service training to these teachers would make them become more abreast with the content and the strategies in the teacher's guide to help them teach the Language and Literacy subject effectively

## **CHAPTER ONE**

### **INTRODUCTION**

This chapter deals with the background to the study, statement of the problem, purpose of the study, research questions, significance of the study, delimitation or scope of the study and limitations.

#### **Background to the Study**

Primary education is considered to be responsible for the success or failure of every country's educational system. It is a powerful driver of progress towards achieving the Millennium Development Goals by 2015. It is also the foundation to influencing future socio-economic and political development in every country in the world. One of the critical key components to a successful primary education in Ghana is English reading, understanding and writing.

It was considered in the Millennium Development Goals that 171 million people worldwide could be lifted out of poverty if all pupils in low-income countries left school with basic reading, understanding and writing skills (UNESCO, 2008). According to a report launched by the African Development Bank, the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) in 2008, entitled "Assessing progress in the Millennium Development Goals", approximately 125 million youth and around 160 million adults who are either in school or have completed school cannot read, and write. Out of this population, one-fifth is in Sub-Saharan Africa including Ghana. In Ghana specifically, the June 2009 Baseline Assessment towards the introduction of the National Literacy Acceleration Programme (NALAP) in Lower Primary Schools found that only 18% pupils could read a text fluently and understand in English Language (Lehher, 2009). This downward trend as far as the pupils' performance in English reading,

understanding and writing is concerned is hindering the successful achievement of the Millennium Development Goals especially in Ghana.

As part of the government of Ghana's strategy to improve or provide quality primary education especially in the area of reading, understanding and writing because of the value the government attaches to primary education, the government of Ghana invests significantly in establishing prudent educational reforms or policies that can be easily implemented and that result in achievable outcomes. One of such policies was the National Literacy Acceleration Programme (NALAP) in Basic Lower Primary Schools in Ghana from Kindergarten (KG) one to Primary three through the Ministry of Education (MOE) and Ghana Education Service (GES) with assistance from United States Agency for International Development (USAID). This was for the government of Ghana in collaboration with Ghana Education Service (GES) to aggressively solve the problem of reading, understanding and writing in all basic lower primary schools in Ghana.

The National literacy Acceleration Programme (NALAP) is based on the premise that pupils learn to read, understand and write best when they do so in a language that they understand. Based on this research fact, the language and literacy subject which emanated from the NALAP was introduced in a way that, pupils learn to read and write better and more quickly in their mother tongue and the English Language gradually introduced orally so that the pupils can transfer these skills to other related subjects without any difficulty (Lehher, 2009).

This directly also supports the 2007 Educational reform of the Ministry of Education which consists of policies which emphasize on local language instruction at the primary level.

English has been referred to as the language of globalization with a strong emphasis on the fact that pupils who do not have control over their reading and writing processes and do not apply reading strategies effectively are less likely to live up to the academic potential and global standard. Pupils in the 21st Century will have a greater need to read and write at a high proficiency level as our society moves from a labour and industrial economic base to a global technological base (Fay & Whaley, 2004). It is also a research fact that as pupils become able to read, understand and write, they come to enjoy reading. As they enjoy reading, their language input increases dramatically which further promotes their language development to meet global standard and competition. This means that, the need to introduce the National Literacy Acceleration Programme to help pupils read, understand and write is therefore very crucial for all pupils.

According to Hartwell (2010), the National Literacy Acceleration Programme (NALAP) has two features which make it stand out in the contentious history of early grade language and literacy policy and practices in Ghana and other African countries. First, it explicitly addresses the relationship between the use of the pupils first language (L1) and English in acquiring reading, understanding and writing skills.

Secondly, the language and literacy methodology and materials were built on research about how pupils learn to read and the inclusion of Ghanaian culture and life, begins by drawing on pupils existing experiences, knowledge and interests. These instructional materials are developed in all the eleven (11) local languages instruction in Ghana and include both teacher and learner materials. These material set consist of highly structured teachers' guides' which are written in English but with key sections translated in the local language to ensure that the teacher can conduct the lesson effectively. This potentially, makes classroom teaching and learning more engaging

and interesting since the pupils can actively participate. NALAP is intended to be far more than simply a new set of materials and a short orientation for teachers. It involves the transformation of the teachers' and pupils classroom experience, building core cognitive skills of interpretation, evaluation, problem solving and creativity.

Aliyu (2007) asserted that, laudable and promising as policies are, their value lies in their proper implementation. It behooves on teachers to plan and tailor their teachings in such a way that learners maximize the benefits of what is taught in their lives as they encounter new ideas, skills and knowledge in this National Literacy Acceleration Programme (NALAP). This could be realized if learners clearly understand the new concepts in the language and literacy subject which emanated from the NALAP that their teachers teach them in their schools or classes. But one can realize that teachers who are saddled with responsibility of implementing the policy may be ignorant of one or all the policy prescriptions and the way and manner such knowledge impacts their classroom activities, especially the instructional delivery. It is clear that, teachers' commitment and attitudes, effective classroom instruction, competencies and interaction patterns are very important to the implementation of the National Literacy Acceleration Programme in these lower primary and KG1 and 2 classrooms.

### **Statement of the Problem**

The ultimate aim of the government is to ensure that pupils in all primary schools can use the English Language with the proficiency required to enhance their prospects in accessing better opportunities in education, civilization, community membership and employment in their own context and or globally through the National Literacy Acceleration Programme (Lehher, 2009). This is because it has been observed that the pupils inability to read, understand and write contribute to the

high rate of pupils or students failure in English Language and other related Examinations in the Basic Education Certificate Examination (BECE).

However, it is worth nothing that the problem with reading, understanding and writing in these lower classrooms have been further complicated by issues regarding the implementation of the National Literacy Acceleration Programme (NALAP) in these lower classes. This is because assessment conducted in 2013, entitled “School Education Assessment” (SEA) on reading, understanding and writing in these schools in the Municipality, proved that, majority of the pupils could not read a text from their language and literacy big books “Let’s Read and Write”, neither could they speak nor express themselves effectively in the prescribed language and literacy “Akan version” and the English version. The pupils usually focus their attention primary on decoding individual words when reading making their reading sound rather halting and hesitant.

The researcher has personally met some stakeholders who complained bitterly of the pupils’ poor performance especially in the area of reading, understanding and writing since the inception of this language and literacy subject in these lower primary schools in the municipality.

There was a perception that unacceptable high percentage of teachers in these lower primary schools are ignorant of the scope of the components and the strategy terms in the language and literacy subject, making quality of teaching and learning generally poor.

Fortunately, in the language and literacy teacher’s guide, “Let’s read and write” and the pupils’ big books, teachers have been given a fair amount of guidance on what they need to develop under each topic. In spite of all these elaborate guidelines, teachers still find it very difficult to provide opportunities for their learners to gain the required experience.

These problems among others could be attributed to teachers' poor attitude to work, lack of knowledge and skills, commitment, dedication, inadequate materials, lack of continuous professional training and poor educational background. But it seems much scientific work has not been done on these challenges. It is for all these reasons that the researcher conducted the study in selected basic schools to find out the existing practices pertaining to the problem and to understand teachers' thoughts and perceptions regarding the obstacles of the National Literacy Acceleration Programme (NALAP) implementation in their schools.

### **Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of the study was to ascertain the perception and attitudes of teachers towards the implementation of the NALAP in these lower primary classes and how best the programme can be improved.

### **Objectives of the Research**

The study seeks to:

1. Find out the methods teachers use to teach the language and literacy subject.
2. Ascertain the professional support, or training teachers need to continue to teach the language and literacy subject effectively in their classrooms.
3. Find out how the teachers perceive the five days initial in-service training given to them in relation to the implementation of the NALAP
4. Investigate the challenges teachers face in the process of implementing the National Literacy Acceleration Programme.

### **Research Questions**

The research questions formulated to guide the study include:

1. What methods do teachers use to teach the language and literacy subject?



2. What professional training or support do teachers need to continue to teach the subject effectively?
3. How do teachers perceive the five days initial in-service training given to them in relation to the implementation of the National Literacy Acceleration Programme (NALAP)?
4. What challenges do teachers encounter in the process of implementing the National Literacy Acceleration Programme?

### **Significance of the Study**

The findings of this research work can be useful in the following ways:

The findings and suggestions will help teachers improve upon their teaching and learning approach to the language and literacy subject which emanated from the National Literacy Acceleration Programme (NALAP) in their classrooms. Furthermore, it will help education policy makers come out with effective strategies to improve or guide the implementation of the National Literacy Acceleration Programme (NALAP) in all basic lower classes in Ghana. It will also provide a lot of literature to others who may want to research into this important policy.

### **Limitations of the Study**

Although the research has reached its aim, there were some unavoidable limitations which affected the validity of the findings.

First, the interview was conducted on 25 teachers which lasted for eight weeks. Eight weeks was not enough for the researcher to interview all the 25 teachers' teaching performance in their classes.

Second, convincing most teachers to talk about their teaching experience, qualification, teaching methods and strategies was not easy. Majority of the teachers

thought their personal profile was going to be revealed for a certain unforeseen circumstances or purpose hence decided not to answer some of the questions.

### **Delimitation of the Study**

The study was restricted to the lower primary schools and teachers who teach in these schools in Wiawso circuit of Wiawso Municipality of Western Region. The study also focused on the issues as they pertain in the selected lower primary schools with the expectation that the findings from the study would form a framework from which generalization could be made.

### **Organisation of the Study**

This study was organized into five chapters. Chapter one was the introduction to the study. It gave the background of the study, statement of the problem and purpose of the study. It also covers the significance, research questions, limitation and delimitation of the study as well as the organization of the study.

Chapter two dealt with the related literature review. This focused on the main themes of the study, including the meaning of language and literacy; basic language development skills; activities to encourage language and literacy development in children; factors that affect language and literacy development in children; writing process for the language and literacy child; methods, techniques and strategies to teach language and literacy; Professional development or training of the language and literacy teacher; and challenges teachers face in the process of teaching the language and literacy subject.

Chapter three also looked at the methodology. The chapter covered the Research Design, Population, Sample and Sampling Technique. It also discussed the

Instruments for Data Collection and Administration, Pilot Testing, Validity, Data Collection Procedures and Data Analysis Procedures.

Chapter four dealt with the analysis of results and discussion of findings. Chapter five focused on the summary of the study. It also includes conclusions drawn from the findings of the study and some recommendations that can bring about effective teaching of the language and literacy subject in basic lower primary schools.



## **CHAPTER TWO**

### **LITERATURE REVIEW**

#### **Introduction**

This section reviews the related literature pertinent to the research problem. This is done under the following sub-headings: Meaning of language, meaning of literacy, types of literacy, characteristics of language development, basic skills in language and literacy development, activities that encourage language and literacy development in children, factors affecting language and literacy development in children, methods, professional development or training teachers need to teach the subject effectively, and challenges teachers face in the process of teaching the subject.

#### **Meaning of Language**

Language is, today, an inseparable part of human society. Human civilization has been possible only through language. It is through language that humanity has come out of the Stone Age and has developed science, art and technology in a big way.

Martin (2005) posited that, language is made up of socially shared rules that include the following:

1. What words mean, for example, “star” can refer to a bright object in the night or a celebrity.
2. How to make new words, example, fried.
3. How to put words together, examples, “Peg walked to the new store” rather than “Peg walk store new”.
4. What word combinations are best in what situations? For example, “would you mind moving your foot”? Get off my foot, please!

Martin continued that, language is used to:

1. Express inner thoughts and emotions.
2. Make sense of complex and abstract thought.
3. Learn to communicate with others.
4. Fulfill our wants and needs, as well as to establish rules and maintain our culture.

Language is communication of thoughts and feelings through a system of arbitrary signals, such as voice sounds, gestures, or written symbols. Such symbols according to Drummond and Utignell (2004), included its rules for combining its components such as words. Such a system as used by a nation, people, or district or community often contrasted with dialect. Drummond and Utignell asserted that, language can be defined as verbal, physical, biological innate and a basic form of communication. This simply means that, when we define language we have to be careful not to exclude symbols, gestures, or motion. This is because, if we exclude these from our definition, we are simply denying the language of the dumb and deaf community.

Human beings can communicate with each other. We are able to exchange knowledge, beliefs, opinions, wishes, threats, commands, thanks, promises, declarations, feelings, only our imagination sets limits. We can laugh to express amusement, happiness, or disrespect; we can also smile to express amusement, pleasure, approval or bitter feelings. We can shriek to express anger, excitement, or fear, we can clench our fists to express determination, anger or a threat. We can raise our eyebrows to express surprise or disapproval and so on. All these explanations, according to Snyder (2008) are language. Snyder further reiterated that, language is a means of communication, it is arbitrary and a system of systems. He posited that, language is human so it differs from animals' communication in several ways.

## **Meaning of Literacy**

Literacy is a socially accepted association among ways of using language, of thinking, and of acting that can be used to identify oneself as a member of socially meaningful group or a social network (Shores, 2006).

The Melbourne Declaration on Educational Goals for Young Australians in (2008) recognized literacy as an essential skill for students in becoming successful learners and as a foundation for success in all learning areas. This implies that, success in any learning area depends on being able to use the significant, identifiable and distinctive literacy that is important for learning and representative of the content of that learning area.

Children become literate as they develop the knowledge, skills and dispositions to interpret and use language confidently for learning and communicating in and out of school and for participating effectively in society. Literacy involves pupils in listening to reading, viewing, speaking, writing, and creating oral print, visual and digital texts, using and modifying language for different purposes in range of context.

Shores (2006), again stressed that, literacy encompasses a complex set of abilities to understand and use the dominant symbol systems of a culture for personal and community development. These abilities vary in different social and cultural contexts according to need, demand and education. The primary sense of literacy still represents the lifelong, intellectual process of gaining meaning from critical interpretation of the written or printed text. Key to all literacy is reading development, a progression of skills that begins with the ability to understand spoken words and decode written words, and culminates in the deep understanding of text.

According to Shores (2006), reading development involves a range of complex language underpinnings including awareness of speech sounds (phonology), spelling patterns (orthography), word meaning (semantics), grammar (syntax) and patterns of word formation (morphology), all of which provide a necessary platform for reading fluency and comprehension. Once these skills are acquired, the reader can attain full language literacy, which includes the ability to approach printed materials with critical analysis, inferences and synthesis to write with accuracy, coherence and to use information and insights from text as the basis for informal decision and creative thought.

The United Nations, Education, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO, 2003) defined literacy as the ability to identify, understand, interpret, create, communicate and using printed and written materials associated with varying contexts. This will help the individual achieve their goals, develop their knowledge and potential and to participate fully in their community and wider society. This according to UNESCO means that literacy is a flexible group of skills and strategies that are closely linked to context and purpose.

The Melbourne Declaration on Educational Goals for Young Australians in (2008) again posited that, literacy is the ability to read and write, use written information and write appropriately in a range of contexts. It also involves the integration of speaking, listening, viewing and critical thinking with reading and writing, and includes the cultural knowledge which enables a speaker, writer or reader to recognize and use language appropriate to different social situations.

## **Types of Literacy**

UNESCO (2003) asserted that, there are many forms or types of literacy equally important to the child to function well in the society and outlined some of these types as follows:

1. Digital Literacy, that is, cognitive skills that are used in executing tasks in digital environments
2. Computer Literacy, ability to use a computer and software
3. Media Literacy – ability to think critically about different types of media
4. Information Literacy – the ability to evaluate, locate, identify, and effectively use information
5. Technology Literacy – The ability to use technology effectively in several different ways
6. Political Literacy – Knowledge and skills needed to actively participate in political matters
7. Cultural Literacy – the knowledge and appreciation of other cultures
8. Visual Literacy – The ability to critically read images.
9. Global Literacy – Understanding interdependence among people and nations and having the ability to interact and collaborate successfully across cultures.

Giving his views about the types of literacy, Armstrong (2006) has this to state;

1. Prose literacy – The knowledge and skills needed to perform prose tasks. That is, to search, comprehend, and use continuous text. Examples include editorials, news stories, brochures, and instructional materials.
2. Document literacy – The knowledge and skills needed to perform document tasks, that is, to search, comprehend and use non-continuous texts in various



formats. Examples include job application, payroll forms, transportation schedules, maps, tables, and drug or food labels.

3. Quantitative literacy – The knowledge and skills required to perform quantitative tasks. That is, helping the child to identify and perform computations, either alone or sequentially using tables and diagrams.
4. Cultural literacy – The ability to converse fluently in the idioms, which creates and constitutes a dominant culture.

### **Characteristics of Language and Literacy Development**

All human language shares basic characteristics, some of which are organizational rules and infinite generativity. Infinite generativity is the ability to produce an infinite number of sentences using a set of rules and words (Rasinski, 2011).

Rasinski, (2011) explained that, language can have scores of characteristics but the following are the most important ones.

1. Language is Arbitrary: Language is arbitrary in the sense that there is no inherent relation between the words of a language and their meanings or the ideas conveyed by them. For example, there is no reason why a female adult human being is called a woman in English and femine in French. This simply means that, the choice of a word selected to mean a particularly thing or idea is purely arbitrary but once a word is selected for a particular referent, it comes to stay as such. It may be noted that if language is not arbitrary, there would have been only one language in the world.
2. Language is a set of conventional communicative signals used by humans for communication in a community. This in short means that, language is social. Language in this sense is a possession of a social group, comprising an

indispensable set of rules which permit its members to relate to each other, to interact with each other, to co-operate with each other in a social institution.

3. Peter (2000) supported the view of the Risinski (2011) by saying that, language and literacy exist in society. It is the means of nourishing and developing culture and establishing human relations.
4. Peter (2000) again reiterated that, language is symbolic. Language according to Peter consists of various sounds, symbols and their graphological counterparts that are employed to denote some objects, occurrences or meanings. These symbols are arbitrarily chosen and conventionally accepted and employed. Words in a language are not mere signs of figures, but symbols of meaning. The intelligibility of a language depends on a correct interpretation of these symbols.
5. Peter further explained that, language is systematic. Although language is symbolic, yet its symbols are arranged in a particular system. Peter pointed out that, all languages have their system of arrangements. Every language is a system of systems. All languages have phonological and grammatical systems and within a system there are several sub-systems. For example, within the grammatical system we have morphological and syntactic systems, and within these two sub-systems, we have systems such as those of plural, of mood, of aspect, of tense, and others.

This simply means that, language is a system of communication using sounds or symbols that enables us to express our feelings, thoughts, ideas, and experience.

6. Thomson (2008) stated that, language is also vocal because it is primarily made up of vocal sounds only produced by a physiological articulatory

mechanism in the human body. In the beginning, it appears as vocal sounds only. Writing comes much later as an intelligent attempt to represent vocal sounds.

7. Thomson continued that, language is non-instinctive conventional. This means that no language is created in a day out of a mutually agreed upon formula by a group of humans. Language is the outcome of evolution and convention. Each generation transmits this convention. Each transmits this convention on to the next. Like all human institutions, languages also change and die, grow and expand. This simply means, every language then is a convention in a community. It is non-instinctive because it is acquired by human beings. Nobody gets a language in heritage. He or she acquires it from his or her innate ability.
8. Thomson finally explained that, language is productive and creative. This is so because the structural elements of human language can be combined to produce new utterances, which neither the speaker nor his or her hearers may ever have made or heard before, yet which both sides understand without difficulty. Language changes according to the need of society.

Umans (2005), also shared similar views with Thomson by outlying the following as the characteristics of language and literacy:

1. Language as a system. This implies that language has different linguistics levels (phonological – related to phonemes, intonation and rhythm). Lexical semantics – which have to do with lexis, that is, the words, and their meaning, syntactical, that is, the characteristics of spoken discourse (turn taking, use of words, and others), sociolinguistic (social factors, such as educational level, age, ethnic, sex, and others)

2. Language is dynamic; this means that, it changes constantly.
3. Words and meanings may even vary from one generation to the other.
4. Dialects (language regional variation); varieties of the same language are spoken in the same country. There are also differences between countries. For example, (U.S.A, UK, Australia) and different dialects as well, For example, (India). Sociolect, that is, language may vary depending on the speaker's social class.
5. Finally, language as idiolect; that is the individual language characteristic. This also means that, no two people speak exactly in the same way; there are variations such as voice quality, pitch and speech, there are also variations such as choice of words, use of grammar, and so on.

### **Basic Language and Literacy Skills**

According to Armstrong (2006), basic language and literacy skills is a structured, sequential multisensory approach to teaching basic reading and spelling skills. Featuring a comprehensive approach to literacy instruction, basic language and literacy skills equip teachers with skills and strategies that link;

1. reading and written expression
2. decoding and comprehension
3. mechanics and composition
4. direct instruction and opportunities to read and write.

Armstrong further emphasized that, daily activities in Basic Language and literacy skills include:

1. Instant letter recognition
2. Phonological awareness, with an emphasis on phonemic awareness
3. Discovery learning of a new concept

4. Reading practices at the word and text level, designed to develop accuracy and fluency.
5. Review of letter sounds and basic linguistic concepts
6. Syllable division and morphology
7. Spelling
8. Handwriting
9. Comprehension and composition
10. Oral language development

In addition to this, Myers (2013), stated that there are four main skills needed to develop effective language and literacy in pupils. These skills include;

1. Listening comprehension as the receptive skill in the oral mode. Actually, when we speak of listening, what we really mean is listening and understanding what you hear. Listening is one of the means of language and literacy communication, and used most widely in people's daily lives. In addition, teaching learners a lot of listening activities is good way of enlargening their vocabulary. On the other hand, it also helps the learners improve their listening comprehension. For instance, people know that the largest difference between mother language learning and foreign language learning depends on the environment. For a foreign language, we can meet it only in formal places and classes in a school.

Myers further explained that, speaking should also be seen as one of the skills for effective language and literacy learning. Speaking is the productive skill in the oral mode and involves more than just pronouncing words. Interactive speaking situations include face to face conversations in which a learner has the chance to ask for clarification, repetition and meaning

from his/her conversation partner. Speaking is often connected with listening. For example, the two-way communication makes up for the defect in communicative ability in the traditional learning. Two-way means the relationship of the communicative activities between the teacher and the pupils at school. This relationship according to Myers is connected with the communicative activities between two peoples which can create a fresh environment for speaking language.

More so, Myers (2013) posited that, reading is a skill that can help build vocabulary that helps listening comprehension at the later stages. Reading is the receptive skill in the written mode. It can develop independently of listening and speaking skills but often develop with them, especially in societies with a highly-developed literacy tradition. Reading is an important way of gaining information in language learning and it is a basic skill for a language learner. There are a lot of reading exercises in an examination today. But all these readings must be done in limited time. So learners are asked to read them correctly and with a certain speed. For instance, a pupil may read with his/her finger pointing to the words or with his head shaking. Those are all bad habits. They should read phrase by phrase. It is advised that, children should not blink their eyes so often and shake their head when reading rather they should just move the eyeball. That is enough. If they want to get more information, there must be a proper distance between their eyes and the reading materials.

According to Riley (2006), children begin to develop these language and literacy skills when they attain six months after birth. Riley came out with a typical language development chart. He stressed that most children will not

follow the chart to the latter. The chart is presented so that a teacher will know what to expect for his or her child.

<b>Age of Child</b>	<b>Typical Language Development Skills by Riley (2006)</b>
6 months	Vocalization with intonation.  Responds to his or her name.  Responds to human voices without visual cues by turning his head and eyes.  Responds appropriately to friendly and angry tones
12 months	Uses one or more words with meaning (this may be a fragment of a word)  Understands simple instructions, especially if vocal or physical cues are given  Practices inflections  Is aware of social values of speech
18 months	Has vocabulary of approximately 5-20 words.  Vocabulary made up chiefly of nouns.  Repeating a word or phrase over and over.  Much jargon with emotional content  Is able to follow simple commands

Riley (2006) insisted that when the child attains twenty-four months he or she:

1. Can name a number of objects common to his surroundings.
2. Is able to use at least two prepositions, usually chosen from the following: in, on, under.

3. Combines words into a short sentence largely noun-verb combination, length of sentences is given as 1.2 words.
4. Approximately 2/3 of what the child says should be intelligible, vocabulary of approximately 150-300 words.
5. Rhythm and fluency often poor
6. Volume and pitch of voice not yet well-controlled
7. Can use two pronouns correctly: I, me, you, although me and I are often confused
8. My and mine are beginning to emerge
9. Responds to such command, as “show me your eyes, nose, mouth, hair”.

Riley opined that, when the child attains 36 months, he or she:

1. Uses pronouns I, you, me correctly
2. Knows at least three preposition, usually in, on, under
3. Knows chief parts of body and will be able to indicate these if not name
4. Handles three word sentences easily
5. Understands most simple questions with his environment and activities
6. Able to give names of some familiar animals
7. Names common objects in picture books or magazines
8. Knows one or more colours
9. Demonstrate understanding over and under.

Riley stressed that, when the child is sixty (60) months, he or she:

1. Has number concepts of 4 or more
2. Can count to ten



3. Should be able to repeat sentences as long as nine words
4. Should be able to define common object in terms of use. Example, hat, shoe, chair
5. Should know his or her age
6. Should have simple time and day concepts: morning, afternoon, night, day, later, after, while, today, yesterday, tomorrow

**Six (6) years:**

- a. The child's speech should be completely intelligible and socially useful.
- b. Able to describe objects and happenings

**Seven (7) years:**

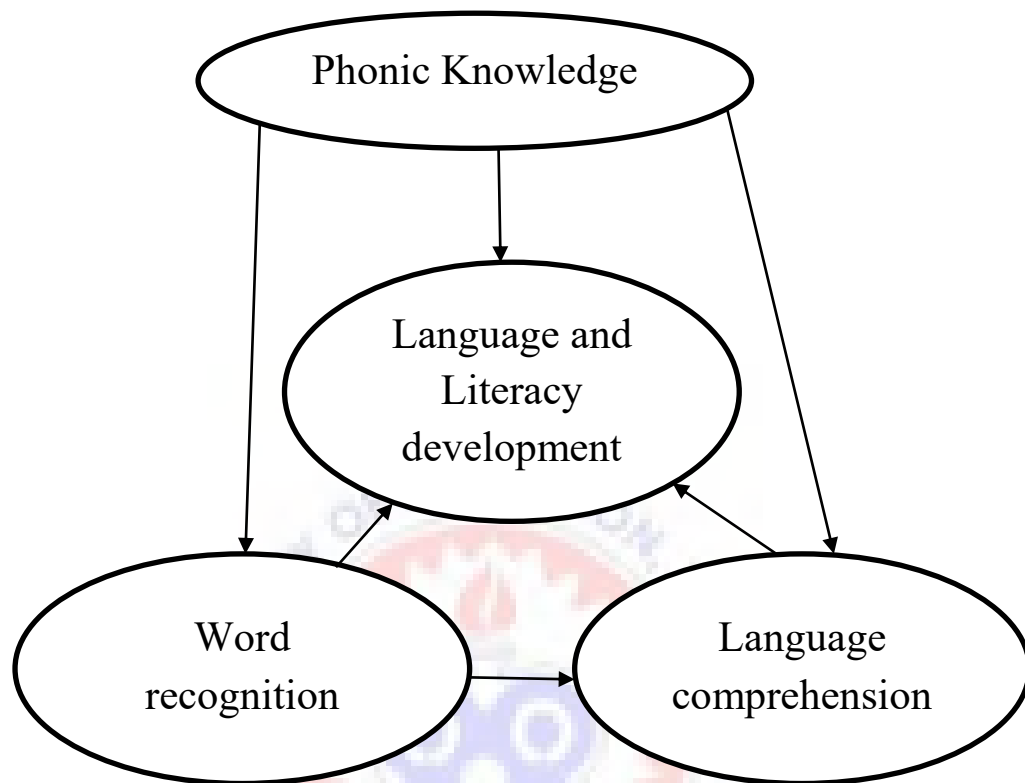
1. should handle opposite analogies easily: girl – boy, man – woman, flies – swims, blunt – sharp, short – long and others
2. Should be able to do simple reading and to write or print many words.

**Eight (8) years and above:**

1. Has develop time and number concepts
2. Can carry on conversation
3. Should reading with considerable ease and now writing simple compositions.
4. Complex and compound sentences should be used.

## Conceptual Framework

The “Simple View” of Language and Literacy Development.



**Figure 2.1: the “simple view” of Language and Literacy Development**

This conceptual framework identifies three processes for Language and Literacy development which is also essential for developing fluent and effective reading. These involves; phonic knowledge, word recognition and language comprehension. From the framework, phonic knowledge is the prime approach for developing Language and Literacy. This means that for teachers to help children effectively develop Language and Literacy, they should first assist them to acquire the skills of phonic knowledge. Phonic knowledge helps to recognize words after acquisition of letter sounds. Once words are recognized and understood, children activate their oral language comprehension to understand what they read. This also means that language comprehension occurs as the learner builds on the information contained within the

language that a teacher uses. This happens when children's general knowledge and level of cognitive development have a bearing on the comprehension of the message. In short, for children to develop Language and Literacy, they should be able to recognise single letter sounds and establish a store of familiar words that are recognised immediately on sight and linked to their meaning.

### **Activities that encourage language and literacy development in Children**

Adams (2004) said that, there are several activities which the teacher can develop to help his or her pupils acquire language and literacy easily. These include;

1. Pupil-Adult reading: That is reading one-on-one with an adult. The adult reads the text first, providing the pupil with a model of fluent reading, helps word recognition, provides assistance and encouragement and provides feedback.
2. Choral reading: That is, pupils read short sentences aloud simultaneously in a group while the teacher models fluent reading.
3. Tape-Assisted reading: In tape assisted reading, pupils read along in their books as they hear a fluent reader reads the book on audiotape. For the first reading, the pupils follow along with the tape; pointing to each word in her/his book as the reader reads it. Reading along with tape, should continue until the pupils are able to read the book independently without the support of the tape.
4. Partner reading: That is, pupils read aloud with a more fluent partner or with a partner of equal ability who provides a model of fluent reading, helps with word recognition and provides feedback.
5. Adam's final way for teachers to help pupils read with fluency is the readers' theatre, pupils rehearse and perform a play for peers or others. They read from scripts that have been derived from books that are rich in dialogue. Pupils play characters who speak lines or a narrator who shares necessary background

information. Readers' theatre provides with a legitimate reason to reread text and to practice fluency and also makes the reading task appealing. Readers' theatre also promotes co-operative interaction with peers.

In addition to this, Seznan (2009) also shared a common view on how teachers should help pupils to develop reading skills. In his point of view, developing reading skills is a big skill which is made up of a several small skills known as micro-skills' including:

1. reading from left to right
2. reading words which are not phonetic
3. distinguishing words which are very similar
4. recognizing different types of print and handwriting
5. reading without using a finger to trace the words
6. reading silently
7. recognizing the significance of each punctuation mark and others.

### **How Language and Literacy is developed**

Brown (2008) posited that, language and literacy is developed gradually over considerable period of time and through substantial practice. At the earliest stage of language and literacy development, pupils oral reading is slow and laborious because pupils are just learning to "break the code", to attach sounds to letters and to blend letter sounds into recognizable words.

Brown further explained that, language and literacy development is not a stage at which pupils can read all words quickly and easily but it depends on what pupils are reading, their familiarity with the words, and the amount of their practice with reading text.

He said that, language and literacy is developed as a result of many opportunities to practice reading with a high degree of success. Therefore, pupils should practice orally, re-reading text that is reasonably easy for them, that is, text containing mostly words that they know or can decode easily. In other words, the texts should be at the pupils' independent reading level. A text is at pupils independent reading level if they can read it with about 95% accuracy. If the text is more difficult, pupils will focus so much on word recognition only that they will not have an opportunity to develop phonic knowledge and language comprehension. The text should be relatively short, probably 5 – 20 words, depending on the age and level of the child.

Amstrong (2006) also viewed the act of developing Language and Literacy as a highly complex process composed of two main parts. The reading process and the reading product. He asserted that there are nine aspects of the reading process that combine to produce the reading product. These are; sensory, perceptual, sequential, experiential, thinking, learning, association, effective and constructive. When these aspects blend and interact harmoniously good communication with fluency between the reader and the writer results. Adams said that when pupils read, they must be able to perceive the symbols set before them, interpret what they see, follow the linear, logical and grammatical patterns of the written words make inferences from what they have read and evaluate the material. Amstrong continued that the child must remember what he/she learned in the past and incorporate new ideas and facts, recognize the connections between symbols, sounds, words and what they represent; deal with personal interest and attitudes that affect the task of language development and put everything together to make sense of the material. This is the 'Reading Process'.

In the NALAP teacher's guide (2014), there are some activities which teachers should study and incorporate them in their teaching. These strategies are the main approach to the teaching and learning of the Language and Literacy subject. These are as follows:

1. **Shared Reading:** The teacher reads aloud to children from a big book which all the children can see. During reading, the teacher points to or slides his/her hand below the words so that the children can connect sound and print and invites the children to react to the text and predict what will happen. The teacher teaches words that children may not know.
2. **Echo Reading:** This strategy encourages fluent reading. A skilled reader reads a text that the pupils see, a few sentences at a time as the learner tracks. The learner then echoes or repeats, imitating the skilled reader.
3. **Reading Aloud:** The teacher or other experienced reader reads aloud a text to pupils. Pupils listen and take part in pre- and post-reading discussion and other activities geared towards comprehension and appreciation.
4. **Paired Reading:** learners take turns reading aloud in pairs. The more able reader can help the less able reader.
5. **Parallel Reading:** In parallel reading, the learners read two texts. They then identify similarities and differences between the texts.
6. **Language Experience Approach (LED):** An approach in which learners create and read their own text. Learners relate their ideas for the story or text to the teacher or aide who writes them down. The dictated text becomes the basics for other reading and writing activities.
7. **Role-Audience-Format-Topic (RAFT):** A strategy for teaching writing in which the child is guided to assume or select a role and write to a particular

audience, using an appropriate format on a given topic. It is usually a follow-up to another activity.

8. Know-Want to Know-Learn (KWL): This strategy requires learners to think and recall what they already know about the topic they are about to learn about, ask questions about it and find answers. The strategy helps to structure a lesson into these logical steps.
9. Directed Reading Activity (DRA): This is reading comprehension activity: where the teacher guides pupils' reading by asking questions which guide them to the key points in the text.
10. T-Chart: The T-Chart is a graphic organiser used to guide pupils to make comparisons. The strategy is used to assist pupils to identify similarities and differences between texts read and to activate background knowledge.
11. Think-Pair-Share: The strategy requires pupils to think about a task, problem, question and share views with a partner. The pair may further share their viewpoints with the class.
12. Chorus Reading: In chorus reading, the pupils together read aloud in chorus. They are usually led by the teacher or other experienced reader. The purpose is to develop reading fluency.
13. Herringbone: This is a graphic organiser used to guide learners to analyse texts. The pupils identify the main idea and details of a text.
14. Inside/outside circle: Pupils form two circles, one inside the other. One pupil in the inside talks to one pupil in the outside circle. Then the inside circle rotates. This strategy is used to develop understanding and oral proficiency.
15. Sequence Map: This graphic organiser helps pupils focus on the order of events in a text they read or plan the events in a story they write. It is a series

of boxes with arrows showing that one box follows another. Pupils write in the boxes.

### **Factors Affecting Language and Literacy Development in Children**

Smith (2005) reiterated that, there are factors which affect the child's language and literacy development. Smith outlined some of these factors as follow:

1. Body – The physical organs which are responsible for speech affect the development of language. In this case, if the organs develop properly the child learns better language and their pronunciation is also correct.
2. Health-Children who are healthy and whose sense organs are properly developed, receive correct stimuli from the environment and they learn better language quickly. A child with poor health is not able to learn language quickly.
3. Intelligence – Intelligence of the child affects his or her language and literacy development. In this wise, if the comprehension of the intelligent child is good, he learns faster and better and makes less grammatical mistakes.
4. Sex – Research has proved that girls learn language earlier than boys.
5. Family background – The language of a child's family affects the language and literacy development of the child. In this wise, the language and literacy development will depend on how they communicate with the child. It is clear that children from joint or extended families learn language faster than children from nuclear family. The reason is that as more members in the family speak and communicate to the child, the child has a wider horizon to develop skills of language and literacy.



6. Economic status of the family – Smith asserted that, children from higher income group have better opportunities, better school and teachers, so automatically their language development is good. They speak correctly and they have a rich vocabulary.

Seznan (2009) thought in a similar vein but restricted her factors to only psychological. She declared that, children develop language and literacy skills at a varying rate. Some children grow to understand and speak rather quickly while others may develop slowly and these may be psychological. She posited that, the psychological factors affecting language and literacy development in children can be environment or care related, or medical problem which results in a psychological disorder and prevents children from properly developing in this area.

Seznan (2009) explained that, certain medical issues can prevent a child from developing efficient language and literacy skills or slow down the process. She reiterated that, speech problems such as dysarthria, slurring, speaking in low volume or in a slurred manner can often be embarrassing for the child and lead to emotional insecurity. As a result the child may hesitate to speak and thus delay his / her language and literacy development. She continued that, the level of care that a child receives from her or his parents may also affect his/her language and literacy development. This is true because research has shown that children who are neglected by their care providers tend to develop language skills more slowly in comparison to children who are given all the attention and care that they need. In cases where children are overlooked and left alone too much, the lack of communication and encouragement often prevent them from properly developing and may slow down the acquisition of language skills significantly.

Seznan (2009) further stressed that, traumatic stress can prevent a child from developing language and learning to speak correctly. This is so because when the child is exposed to violence and abuse they can lead to the child suffering from severe anxiety, which in turn can have negative effects on his or her language and literacy development. She finally contended that a child's ability to understand language as well as read and write has a lot to do with her social environment. Her or his parents, teachers and peers, play a decisive role in her/his language and literacy development, as a result, social environments that encourage communication significantly assist children in developing in the area of language and literacy. On the contrary, when a child's social environment feels intimidating and stressful and communication is not effectively promoted, she or he is more likely to avoid speaking and may become more reserved. This feeling of insecurity can often slow down language and literacy development.

Arend (2000) in his view said that there are numerous problems that face children in the development of Language and literacy. Some of these problems as listed by Seznan are;

1. Insufficient sight vocabulary – that is lack of the ability to group words into thought units necessary for comprehension and fluency.
2. Inability to apply phonic analysis to both easy and difficult words
3. Inadequate visual analysis skills and
4. Inability to separate words into parts for easy pronunciation.

According to Seznan, pupils are handicapped in attempting to identify new words by the use of context clues, because the vocabulary load of unknown words is too great. He explains that these problems also emanate from the following factors;

1. Lack of experiential background

2. Lack of incentives
3. Limited reading experiences
4. Overuse of the alphabets and phonetic methods in beginning instruction
5. Small speaking vocabulary for the problem of insufficient sight vocabulary.

Brown (2008) also stated that; pupils face problems of developing language and literacy because they are;

1. Unable to use meaning suggested by a story of sentence to anticipate new or unfamiliar words.
2. Unable to find the main idea of the passage being read or are not interested in the material. That is when these lack of motivation and concentration or are unable to construct an outline of the content and reproduce much of what was read, language and literacy development becomes a problem.
3. Unable to analyse carefully many words that should be identified with a minimum inspection due to ineffective use of context clues.

Adger (2010) also perceived some of these difficulties in Ghanaian schools as;

1. Poor identification of letters,
2. Perceptual reversals, that is perceiving letters backwards. For example, perceiving /d/ as /b/
3. Confusing letter names with letter sounds or the child learns sounds of letters and memorize rules without being shown how to apply them. He said that, when pupils are unable to blend sounds in working out pronunciations, and do not know how to 'attack' polysyllabic words, they face the problem of Language and Literacy development.

4. When there is faulty approach to word sounding and hurried inspection of unfamiliar words to point where middles are neglected. This comes as a result of a child having problems in his/her first language.

### **Teaching Methods used to teach Language and Literacy Effectively**

Literature suggests that children's playful, inquisitive and creative nature in learning should be exploited through various activities during instruction (GES General Pedagogy Source book, 2007). This simply means that teachers should use appropriate methods, techniques and strategies in their classroom instructions to reinforce good performance by children.

According to Bruce, Marsha and Emily (2004), any good method, technique or strategy of teaching must link up the teacher and his/her pupils into an organic relationship with constant mutual interaction. It reacts not only on the mind of the pupils but their entire personality; their intellectual and emotional equipment, their attitudes and values. Good methods, techniques and strategies which are psychologically and socially sound may raise the whole quality of the life of pupils in learning. Inappropriate method, technique and strategy in teaching debase it. So, in the choice of methods, techniques and strategies to teach the language and literacy subject, teachers must always take into consideration their end product; namely; attitudes and values inculcated in learners consciously or unconsciously. So that learners move more easily from what they know to what they need to know.

Methods, techniques and strategies are different levels of planning that a teacher thinks about when preparing to teach (Ghana Education Service General Pedagogy Sourcebook module, 2007). Generally, several methods, techniques and strategies can be used in the process of teaching a particular topic or unit in language and literacy. It is essential to note that good methods can result only from the constant

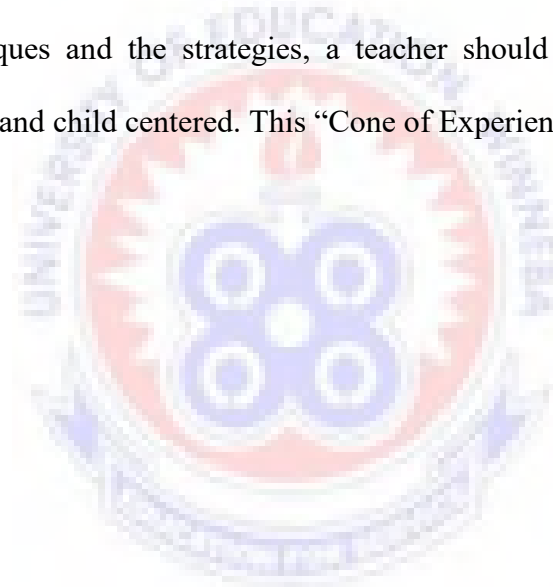
observation of certain broad principles. These include planning lesson taking into account the various levels of behavioural skills as well as specifying relevant evaluation tasks and assignments which should be the springboard of higher form of human behaviour and involve the ability to apply knowledge to solve both theoretical and practical problems, to construct or produce new things and new solution.

A method according to Bruce, Marsha and Emily (2004), is a teachers overall plan on instruction in a teaching and learning environment. Similarly, Talabi (2001) posited that teaching methods are the various methods abound in the art of teaching. A technique, on the other hand, is a change in stimulus variation (Bruce, Marsha, Emily (2004).

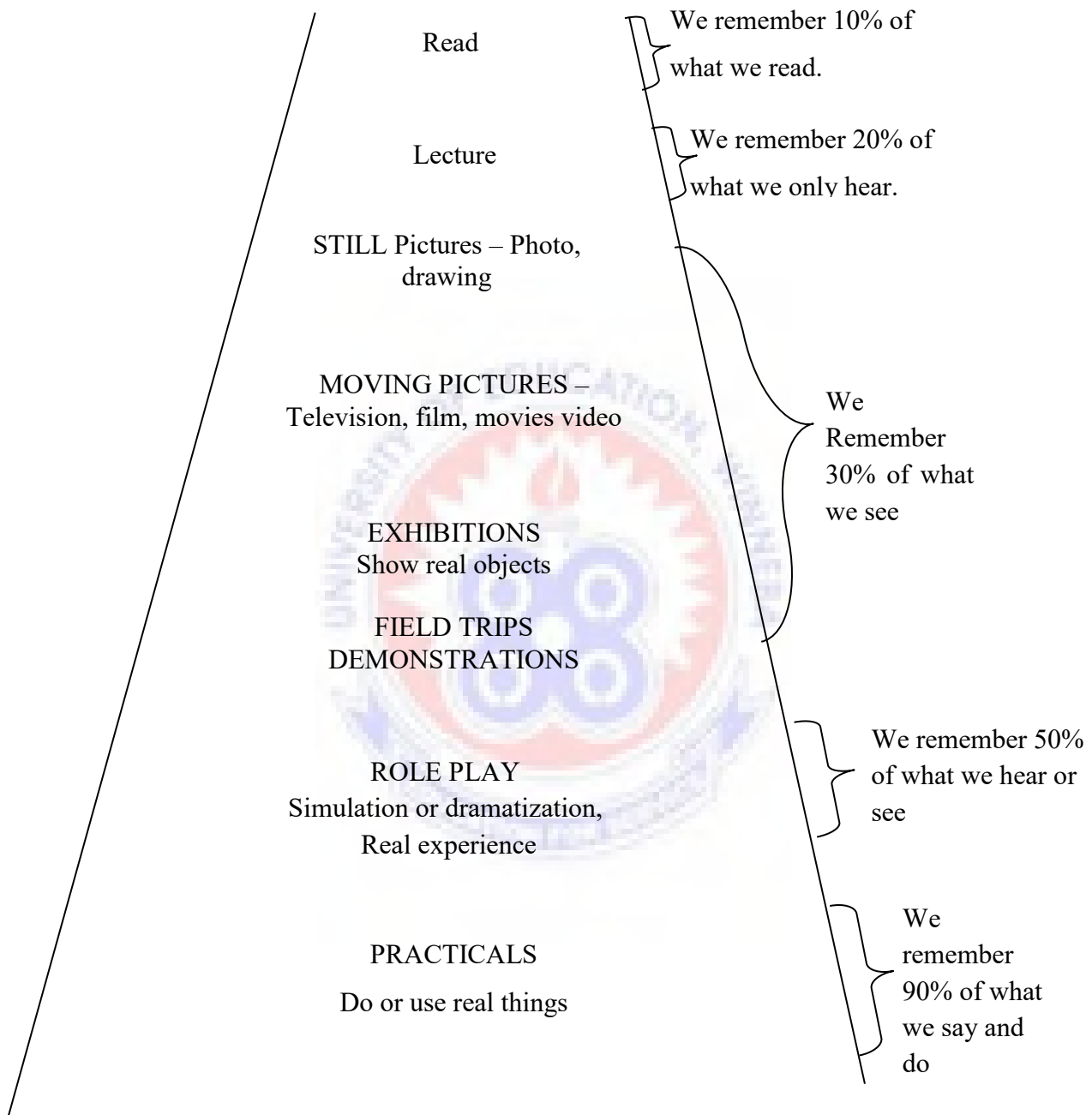
The major trust of education in recent times in the country is to get pupils and students to be more action oriented, to be more analytical and critical, to develop the capacity to do things, to plan, design, devise and create new things (Curriculum Research and Development Division (2007). These abilities can only be developed where pupils/student become participants in the learning process, and where pupils/students are constantly engaged in finding things out for themselves through practical assignments, projects, investigations and others. Teachers are expected to involve pupils/students in practical work, projects and so on as a process of fostering in pupils/students, the ability to apply knowledge, analyse issues and devise new products. As a lesson goes on. For example, a teacher can start a lesson with a learner-centered activities involving practical work, followed by projects or demonstrations or visits and investigations all in the same lesson. Strategies are the processes, sound principles, and procedures to be used in presenting content to pupils in an instructional setting. According to Curriculum Research and Development Division Manual (2007), strategies have been described as ways of “sequencing or organizing a

giving selection of techniques”. That is, during a lesson, the teacher can apply the following techniques: debate, discussion or role-play.

Tollefson (2006) explained that, a teaching strategy is a delivery system aimed at getting pupils or students to be more action oriented, to be more analytical and critical, to develop the capacity to do things, to plan, design, devise and create new things. This is clearly proved in a research conducted by an eminent psychologist, Edgar Dale, who related the information people are able to learn and remember to the way the information is presented. The psychologist studied primary school children and came out with “Cone of Experiences”: These Cone of Experience determine the method, Techniques and the strategies, a teacher should develop to make his/her lesson attractive and child centered. This “Cone of Experiences” is shown in figure 1:



## EFFECTIVENESS OF VARIOUS TEACHING METHODS, TECHNIQUES AND STRATEGIES BASED ON “CONE OF EXPERIENCE”



**Figure 2.2: Teaching methods, techniques and strategies based on “cone of experience”**

Relating the amount of information pupils are able to learn and remember to the way in which the information is presented depends purely on the teacher. Participatory teaching methods stress practical activities and keep the learner

interested and involved in the learning process. Non-participatory methods or techniques according to Tollefson (2006), are not activity base. They tend to be mostly, teacher talking and the learner listening or writing”. This creates boredom in class and usually, learners find it difficult to internalize and practice what is taught as they are not actively involved.

### **Inquiry Approach/Method**

This approach requires the learner to seek knowledge through his/her effort by carrying out investigations, drawing generalizations and finding solutions. Tamakloe, Amedahe and Atta (2005) explained that “inquiry – learning can be defined as learning that takes place when pupils/students are not presented with subject matter in its final form but rather are required to organize it themselves” (p. 88).

The advantages of the inquiry method according to Agarwal are as follow:

1. Critical thinking and problem-solving skills are strengthened and promoted.
2. It necessitates in-depth understanding and involvement of learners in solving their own problems.
3. It gives the learner a great deal of independence to plan and decide how to carry out investigations. The teacher’s role is that of guidance
4. Learners learn from success and failure
5. It stresses the ability to observe, collect information, analyse information, anticipate expected outcomes and evaluate conclusions and decisions.

The technique may be useful to motivate pupils and get their maximum participation in the lesson when teachers follow the steps below:

1. State the problem (recognizing and stating problem)



2. Formulate hypotheses (developing tentative answers)
3. Gather data and test the hypotheses.
4. Draw conclusion(s)
5. Apply the conclusion to solve everyday problems

### **Future's Wheel Approach**

Curriculum Research and Development Division Trainers' manual (2007) explained the future's wheel as a method which allows the learner to explore the consequences of past and present behaviour on future situations to understand the complexity of factors in a given situation.

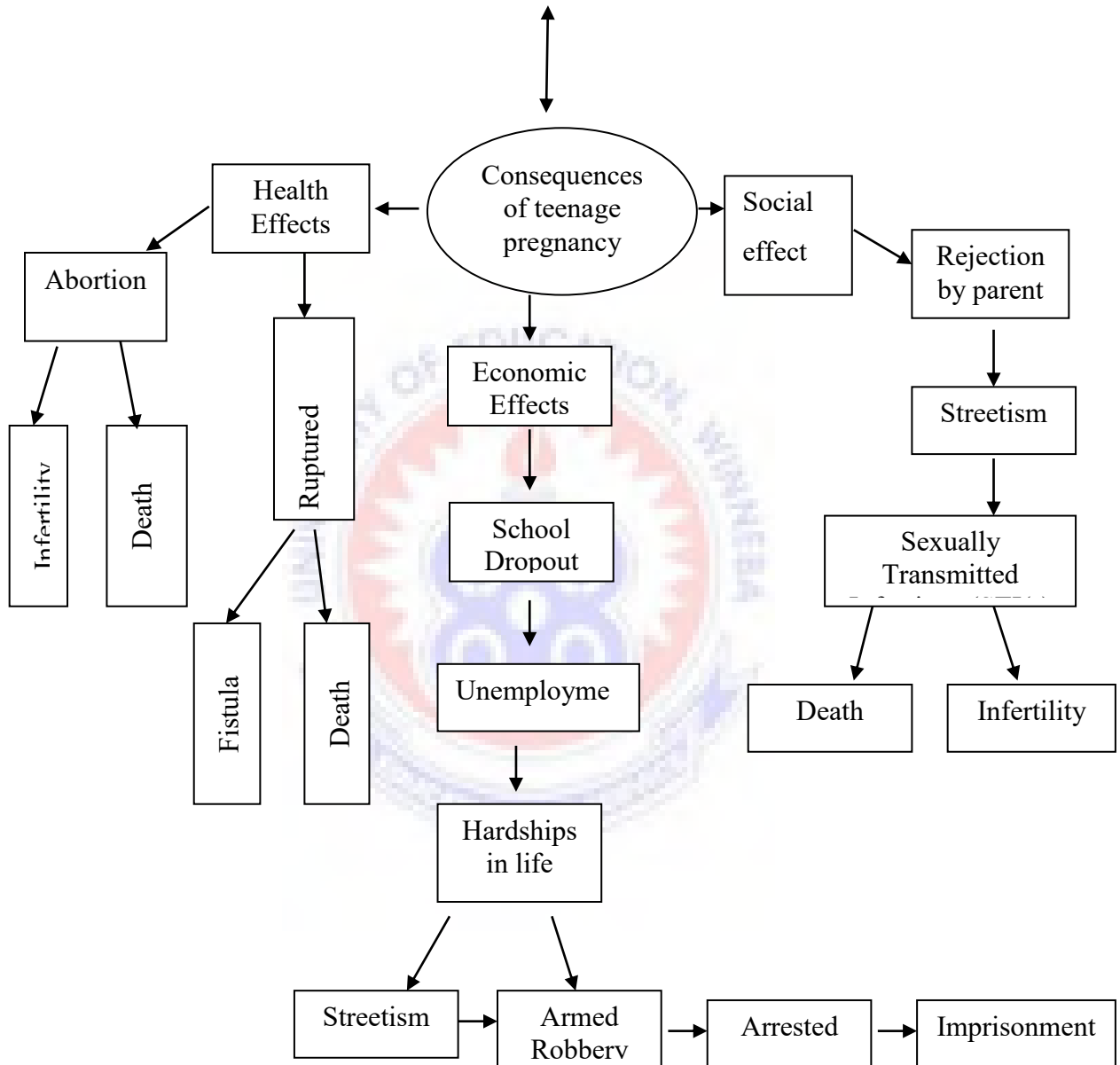
Similarly, in the Integrated Approach to Literacy Teacher's Guide (2014), a future's wheel or semantic map is a type of graphic organiser that is useful for brainstorming, or thinking about and organizing ideas related to a topic or situation. The future's wheel allows for group participation in brainstorming session, which usually keeps the attention of learners. The visual impact of the diagram emphasizes the complex nature of the problem. The process of the future's wheel can also help to identify areas on which to focus efforts/resources or strategies of programmes. It is also used to clarify values, develop critical thinking and learning that take place at effective level.

The steps are as follows:

1. State the specific major event
2. Put the major event in a central wheel.
3. Project and indicate second level of events emanating from the major event from the central wheel.
4. Continue with the projection and indication of subsequent events and wheels, until all possible events and wheels are shown.

- Learners may indicate which event may happen to them and suggest possible actions to prevent negative events in their lives.

**A SAMPLE FUTURE’S WHEEL OR SEMANTIC MAP**



**Figure 2.3: A sample future’s wheel or semantic map**

**Role-play**

Bruce, Marsha and Emily (2004) contended that role play is the vehicle that forces pupils to take the role of others. Sharing a similar view, Nyame-Kwarteng and

Dampsey-Anim (2006) stated that, role-play is a structured activity which allows learners to take part of other personalities in the community in an imaginary situation and to act the part in a realistic manner as possible. C.R.D.D. (2007) supported the explanation of Nyame-Kwarteng and Dampsey-Anim (2006) but emphasized that role-play is an unrehearsed, informal dramatization in which learners spontaneously act out roles of a given character in a given situation. The technique may be useful to provide a strong basis for discussion and increase learners' understanding of themselves and others and therefore provide the opportunity for behaviour change.

The steps are as follows:

1. Describe background and setting of role-play.
2. Select and brief actors and observers.
3. Have learners act the parts assigned to them. Have them portray roles as they believe the character would behave in that situation.
4. Have observers take notes or remember comments they wish to share with group.
5. Watch everyone else during role-play to see if they are still interested or are becoming bored and restless.
6. Stop role-play when you feel the actors have shown the feelings and ideas which are important in the problem situation or when learners become bored and restless.
7. Have the class discuss or debrief the whole performance.
8. Go over the general summary and evaluate the lesson using any evaluative technique.

## Values Clarification Method

It is a teaching approach designed to help learners gain a clear understanding of their values and enable them make rational decision (GES general pedagogy sourcebook, 2007). Learners respond to issues raised for discussion in order to clarify and observe the personal attitudes, values, beliefs and become comfortable with listening to and understanding opinions different from their own.

Values clarification techniques include group discussions, role-play, games and simulations. Value Education has four important steps.

1. Ability to identify one's values
2. Ability to talk about one's value
3. Ability to behave in a manner that is consistent with one's values.
4. Willingness to respect other people's values.

The procedure to conduct values clarification are as follows:

1. Write three (3) signs. One which says AGREE, the second, DISAGREE and the third, UNSURE.
2. Put up the signs in separate parts of the room.
3. Read value statements and ask learners to think very carefully about how they feel about each statement read.
4. Each person will then move to the part of the room where the sign which agrees with how she/he feels about that value is pasted.
5. Ask learners (volunteers) to describe how they feel about each statement, since one characteristics of a value is that, a person can tell others about it. They should explain what they feel about that value. The teacher should emphasize that there are no right or wrong answers, only opinions.

6. Let learners know that they can change their stand on any particular value at any time. For example, some learners might feel that they disagree with a particular value but change their minds if someone else makes a good case for agreeing with a value.

Conclude with some of the Discussion Question below:

1. What did you learn about yourself? About others?
2. Was it hard to express disagreement with another person's value? Why or why not?
3. Were there times when you felt uncomfortable or unsafe? What helped you stand by your values?
4. Were there any times when you felt unable to stand for your values? Why?
5. Do you think that was so?
6. What would support people at times when they feel unable to stand up for a value they believe in?
7. The teacher should pay special attention when a learner expresses an unpopular or minority position.

According to Shores (2006), the teacher can consider some of the following value statements in a class:

1. It is okay for young people to have sex before marriage.
2. Deliberately hurting other pupils is never okay.
3. You can live a fruitful life even if you are HIV positive.
4. The place of girls is in the kitchen.
5. Girls should not be allowed to go to school.

Shores (2006) asserted that, the success of value clarification method depends on a teacher who can establish a good rapport and good questioning skills. Value clarification according to Shores (2006) it provides opportunities for learners to gain skills in clarifying their values, learners get the opportunity to explore, clarify and/or change attitudes and beliefs. It is also true that value education encourages learners to become conscious of their feelings, ideas and beliefs, and how these influence their actions. Learners are exposed to a range of opinions and beliefs different from their own, and are encouraged to respect different viewpoints.

### **Brainstorming**

Wilson (2005) asserted that brainstorming is a problem-solving technique, used to generate ideas and encourage learners' participation in a lesson. It is based on the belief that people in a group can think of more ideas than a person thinking alone.

Similarly, Parker (2001) explained that in brainstorming;

1. All ideas are initially accepted without criticism, evaluation and censorship.
2. No put-downs, either in voice or body language are allowed.
3. Pupils are encouraged to try to build on the ideas of others.

Parker (2001) reiterated that, the following procedure should be followed when conducting a brainstorming lesson.

1. State the topic clearly to the group
2. Set and enforce a time limit of about 10 minutes for the exercise.
3. Focus on the problems or try to brainstorm a complex, or multiple problems.
4. Promote a congenial, relaxed and co-operative atmosphere
5. Encourage everyone to contribute

6. Everyone should be free to build onto ideas and to make interesting contributions from the various suggestions.
7. Allow everyone to air his/her views

At the end of the set time stop the “brainstorming and allow discussion of the ideas”.

### **Activity Method**

Activity method is a method of teaching in which the pupil, placed at the centre of the teaching, and the learning process, is made to interact with materials (provided either by the teacher or the pupils) to discover concepts and facts unaided or with a minimum of teacher interference. The teacher provides pupils with materials and then he/she describes or demonstrates an activity for them to do. (Wilson 2005)

Wilson (2005) gave the following as the reasons for using the activity method of teaching at the basic level:

1. The activity method takes into consideration learners’ natural tendency to explore (curiosity) and play.
2. It also takes into consideration learners’ previous knowledge and experiences.
3. Consider learners’ familiar environments and play materials.
4. Consider pupils’ individual differences and abilities.
5. Consider learners’ developmental stage (concrete, pre-operational, operational stage, 7-11 yrs).

According to Kaplan (2009) activity can be time consuming, however, pupils learn through first hand experience and it fosters co-operation among pupils.

### **Classroom Debate**

Debate is an organised or formal discussion of an issue or topic between two opposing teams or groups, each trying to convince the other to accept its point of view on the topic or issue (Nyame-Kwarteng & Dampety-Anim, 2006). A debate is,

therefore an intellectual competition in which members of groups with opposing attitudes or ideas may use to explore their differences and finally see if they can reach a consensus. Debate develops learners critical and creative thinking skills; strengthen their speaking abilities and helps them to become active listeners and to respect their view points on a given topic. Thus, debate promotes tolerance and acceptance of divergence view in decision making process.

According to Savage and Amstrong (2000), people whose only exposure to debates have been formal debate tournaments in high schools and universities may wonder how debate might be a useful group activity. The classroom debate is organised different from the formal used in tournament debates. It features teams of students who prepare position on each side of an issue. Members of the two teams participate actively during the debate itself. There are many ways of organizing classroom debate. One version features teams of seven students each. Assignments are made as follows:

1. Three learners take the pros position.
2. Three learners take the cons position
3. One learner plays the role of critic

The teacher explains that members of the pros team will gather as much information as they can that support the controversial proposal. Each member is expected to play active role in arguing the pros team's case. Similarly, the members of the cons team will gather as much information as they can that support the controversial proposal. Each member will play an active role in arguing the pros team's case. The critic will learn as much as s/he can, about the position of the cons team and the cons team. The critic's function will be to ask probing questions towards the end of the debate that will highlight weaknesses of both positions.



To get the activity started, there is the need to select a controversial issue that will serve as a focus. Make sure that adequate background materials are available for team members. The time must be provided for team members to prepare their case and the teacher has to monitor students during this time to render assistance and to ensure they are staying on task.

The controversial issue is usually a proposal that implies a change (Savage & Armstrong, 2000). The following are examples:

1. School feeding does not promote quality education.
2. How relevant is the capitation grant to school pupils?
3. The language and literacy subject introduced in the lower primary schools has no impact on the pupils language proficiency.
4. The use of mobile phones in Basic Schools should be encouraged.

The classroom debate follows a general sequence:

1. Each member of the team speaks for a given minutes. Individual pros and cons speakers alternate.
2. Members of the pros team cross – examine members of the cons team and the vise versa.
3. Members of each team make final statements. All team members are encouraged to speak.
4. The critic is invited to ask probing questions from both pros team and cons team members. The critic, at his or her discretion, may choose to direct the questions to either some or all members of the team. The function of the critic is to point out the weak spot in arguments made by members of both teams.
5. At this time, the class as a whole votes to determine the winner.

6. The teacher debriefs the class. It is important that comments be as supportive as possible. Learners need to understand that speaking up is not going to elicit negative teachers reactions. The teacher must use focus questions such as these:
  1. What was the best argument you heard?
  2. What impressed you about those arguments?
  3. What other points would you have brought up if you had been on the pros team? The cons team?
  4. Should the critic have asked some other questions? If so, what should the critic have asked? Classroom debate can generate higher levels of interest. It provides an opportunity for large numbers of pupils/students to get actively involved in the learning process (Savage & Armstrong, 2000)

### **Discussion Method**

Discussion method involves getting pupils together to talk about issues so each one can bring out his/her own idea. The main aim is to seek possible available evidence of a solution to a problem (Tamakloe, Amedahe & Atta, 2005).

Tamakloe, et al. (2005) further asserted that, discussion may be implemented in a variety of ways. The types of discussion available to the teacher includes:

1. Question-and-Answer
2. Whole-Class Discussion
3. Small-Group Discussion

Similarly, Aggawal (as cited in Nyame-Kwarteng & Dampsey-Anim, 2006, p.108) defined discussion as “a situation where learners are allowed to give their views about a topic or problem after a careful study of the topic or a problem”. These writers suggest that discussion should be the most frequently observed activity in both

social studies and English language classrooms. This is due to the fact that discussion is a means of promoting the exchange of information and ideas between pupils/students, resulting in extended knowledge, mutual understanding and recognition of other pupils'/students' point of view.

Brown (2008), in his view described discussion as “a way of presenting and clarifying content by means of oral interaction between teachers and pupils/students” (p. 221). Discussion is thus, a speaking-to-learn technique that assists students in developing their critical thinking and interpersonal skills. It gives them practice in expressing ideas orally in a logical manner and helps them to clarify thinking, hear others' viewpoints, resolve conflicts, arrive at conclusions and final alternative solutions. (Brown 2008).

Discussion is guided by the central purpose that, pupils have the opportunity to practice their oral communication skills. It gives pupils practice in critical and evaluative thinking and listening. Undoubtedly, the key goal in discussion is the practice of co-operative deliberation and consensus decision that best solve the problem. It helps pupils to clarify their thinking and provides good practice for problem solving. (Brown, 2008).

Brown (2008), emphasized that the quality of a classroom discussion rest on student participation and the ability of the teacher to direct or manage teacher-to-pupil and pupil-to-pupil interactions. He stressed that in conducting a discussion lesson, learners are expected to:

1. Listen closely to all contributions
2. Ask questions to clarify understanding
3. Summarize or paraphrase ideas and viewpoints
4. Give reasons for their view points

5. Encourage everyone to contribute
6. Consider others' viewpoints
7. Criticize ideas constructively but not their colleagues.

## **Types of Classroom Discussion**

### **Question-and-Answer Method**

Question-and-Answer Method is the means by which a lesson is developed through effective questioning by the teacher. Question-and-Answer technique in teaching and learning stimulates pupils to think, it helps to diagnose pupils difficulties and brings the inattentive to attention in a lesson. Discussion in the form of questions, and answers helps to determine pupils' progress and direct pupils' thinking and provide feedback to the teacher.

### **Whole-Class-Discussion Method**

It is the means by which every pupil in the class is permitted to share his/her views and contribute freely to any discussion in the class through invitation by the teacher in the form of questions. In a whole-class discussion, there are pupils who are not courageous enough to stand up and contribute to the class discussion. The group discussion permits a greater number of pupils/students to present a variety of problems; gain experience in the various ways of integrating facts, formulate hypotheses, amass wealth of relevant information and evaluate conclusions arrived at. Because group discussion generates a high degree of participation and involvement, it is able to make real changes in attitudes and behaviour. Many institutional authorities who are aware of this potent role use group discussion to solve problems and diffuse

tensions. It is discernible from the foregoing that the dividends which the discussion method yields are more pronounced in the group than in the class discussion.

### **Dramatization**

Dramatization is a method of organised play in which some of the pupils are asked to represent individuals, and prove their behaviour in the form of improvised conversation or actions (Logan & Rimminton, as cited in Nyame-Kwarteng and Dampsey-Anim (2006).

Kaplan (2009) agreed that the following steps have been found to be useful in the implementation of dramatization. These include:

1. Introduce and discuss the event, story or the incident you want them to dramatize to them.
2. Improvise conversation
3. Select pupils to respect actors in the story or event.
4. Help pupils to rehearse the incident, event or story.
5. Ask them to act the play with your guide.
6. Summarise and evaluate the lesson.

Logan and Rimminton further explained that dramatization, especially when used effectively at the initial stage of the lesson has the following advantages:

1. Gives pupils or learners an insight into other people's feeling by showing empathy to them.
2. Sharpens learner's power of observation
3. Helps learners to appreciate the cultures of the past or present
4. Helps to unearth the creative talents of students/pupils.
5. Provides opportunity for learners to improve their communication skills.

6. Helps to create and maintain interest and thereby simulate or encourage learners to learn more effectively.

Parker (2001) agreed with Logan and Rimminto (1969) and asserted that, when dramatization is used at the initial stage of the lesson, it activates pupils prior knowledge, sparks their curiosity and arouses their need-to-know attitude in the lesson.

### **Simulation**

“Simulation is a technique that enables learners to obtain skills, competences, knowledge or behaviours by getting involved in situations that are similar to the real life” Gilley 1991 ( as cited in Nyame-Kwarteng & Dampsey-Anim, 2006: 184). Similarly, Talabi (2001) in his view expressed that, the use of simulation in teaching allows learners in a particular school to assume the roles, which resemble those of the real situations. Talabi explained that, the aim of the simulation method of teaching is to give an approximate or artificial experience and preview of a future natural situation to a learner. For example, the pupils can be given a chance to perform an enstoolment of a chief. Gilley 1991 (as cited in Nyame-Kwarteng & Dampsey-Anim, 2006) outlined the conditions underlying the choice of simulation as follows:

1. The lesson/topic should be suitable simulated.
2. The lesson objective should call for the use of simulation.
3. The intellectual ability of the class should be high.
4. The developmental stage of the class should also be high.
5. The use of the simulation method should be familiar to the class
6. There should be available resources and materials to be used for the simulation.

Bruce, Marsha and Emily (2004) shared a similar view when they stated that “simulations simplify reality to highlight certain key ideas”. For example, a simulation designed to focus on the legislative process may emphasize negotiation and deemphasize other features of legislative decision process. Simulations may not have winners or losers. The participants in simulation may all achieve their goals. The objective is for each participant to make decisions and so experience the consequences of the decision. Simulations are more elaborate role-playing activities.

Activities that incorporate the elements of reality as well as elements of games, such as winning and losing, are usually called simulation games (Bruce, Marsha & Emily 2004). Pupils are intensely involved during simulation. Often, they have opportunity to talk and to move to the different parts of the room. Many pupils find simulation to be highly motivating. They have the potential to add an important real – world dimension to elementary language and literacy instruction (Talabi 2001). Simulations vary enormously with their complexity. Some are simple board activities derived from popular commercial simulation games such as monopoly. Others are elaborate games that require computer to manage and make many days to play. An example, of a computer simulation available for high school learners is the popular “Oregon Trail” available in most computer software stores. The popularity of personal computers and the potential to use the computer as a means of instruction for decision making has increased interest in simulations. Often, simulations involve dividing participants into several groups. For example, there might be a simulation of cholera outbreak. Individual groups may be assigned to play roles of doctors and nurses curing a cholera patient.

Most simulations suitable for use in elementary language and literacy classroom are not excessively complex. They typically can be played in one or two

sessions, though a few require more time. Simulations require learners to assume roles, make decisions and face the consequences of their actions. They tend to be more complex in their organizations than role playing. Hence more time typically is required to prepare pupils to participate in them, and more support materials may be required. A complete simulation activity moves through these four phases: overview, training, activity and debriefing Galley 1991(as cited in Nyame-Kwarteng & Dampsey-Anim, 2006 ).

### **Overview**

During the phase, the teacher introduce pupils to the simulation. Parts to be played by individual learners are described, and assignments to these parts are made. General rules of the simulation are introduced at this time.

### **Training**

This amounts to a “walk-through” of the processes to be followed once the simulation begins. Select several learners, assign them parts, and use them to illustrate how class members will be involved once the simulation begins. Invite learners to ask questions as the teacher explains the question. Following this introductory information, pupils should be allowed to renew their roles. If the simulation features several group members, they should be allowed to meet and discuss their roles to plot preliminary strategy.

### **Activity**

This is when the actual simulation activity begins. During this time, the teacher then plays the role of discussant, coach and referee. Pupils may not grasp the point of simulation. The teacher may find it necessary to stop the action for a moment to help pupils to think about their discussions and to explain the purpose of the



activity. Some pupils may not know how to respond to certain developments. You can coach them as they consider their options and ideas. Help experienced participants gain confidence. As pupils' expertise grows, gradually disengage from the coaching role. It is common for disputes to arise during simulation activities. Often there are situations for which the rules fail to provide a specific action guideline. When this happens you need to intervene and make ruling that allows the simulation to continue.

### **Debriefing**

This is a critically important part of any simulation activity. During debriefing, lead a discussion highlighting various events that occurred during the activity. The discussion helps pupils recall things that might have escaped their notice during the fast pace of the activity itself. Debriefing discussion sometimes focus on specific dimensions made and their desirability related to alternatives. Sometimes, the debriefing concerns the design of the simulation. What issues were forced to the front because of the rules of the simulations? What did the designer of the simulation omit? Often, individuals who will want to critique their own performance and suggest ways they may act differently, were they to do the exercise another time? Teachers with no prior experience and knowledge with simulation tend to allow insufficient time for debriefing. This severely limits the effectiveness of the simulation as a productive learning activity. It is during the debriefing that the important concepts and procedures are discussed and the learning is reinforced.

### **Cooperative Method or Technique**

Cooperative teaching and learning emphasize working together. This method or approach to teaching is particularly appropriate for use in language and literacy lesson, as it replicates the kind of cooperative activity that characterize much of adult

social, economic and political life. Those advocating for cooperative learning point out that it is especially suited for coping with the individual pupils differences in the classroom. Individuals with a variety of skills and ability levels learn to work together in heterogeneous groups. Mazaro, Pickering and Pollock (2001) as cited in Borich (2004) contended that cooperative learning activities instill in learners important behaviours that prepare them to reason and perform in an adult world. Mazaro, Pickering and Pollock (2001), suggested that in planning a cooperative learning, you need to decide on the following:

1. The type of interactions you will have with your pupils.
2. The type of interactions your pupils will have with one another.
3. The task and material you will use.
4. The role expectations and responsibilities you will assign to the pupils.

Johnson and Johnson (2007) also shared similar view that in planning a cooperative teaching, the teacher must foster conceptual learning through;

1. Selecting group members based on their academic performance, skill level and interest.
2. Thinking on learning task he or she wants the learners to accomplish.
3. Setting up both academic and social goals. The results can be communicated to the learners daily or weekly.
4. Selecting groups which may have 2 or 3 members but maximum should be 7
5. Making sure that the groups share ideas and exchange news together on a task for solution. Every group member participates in the discussions.
6. Tasking each learner to hold responsible for his or her academic progress and task completion apart from the completion of the group task as a whole. Every

learner of the group has an obligation to ensure that the group achieves perfection in the task before the group.

7. Encouraging learners to interact among themselves and help one another and promote each other's success.
8. Assigning one task to all groups or different but related task to each group. Give each group time duration within which to finish the task.
9. Define clearly the mean by which each group should present its report.
10. Making sure every member is given a part to play in the presentation of the work.

Cooperative learning approaches feature positive independence, face-to-face interaction among learners, individual accountability, and pupils instruction in appropriate interpersonal and small skills (Good & Brophy, 1997: as cited in Savage and Armstrong, 2000). Good and Brophy asserted that a number of cooperative learning approaches have been developed and that the four (4) most popular ones are jigsaw, learning together, complex instruction and team achievement divisions.

Good & Brophy (1997) have found that cooperative learning;

1. requires group cooperation and interaction.
2. encourages division of labour
3. focuses and emphasizes on the task to be accomplish
4. mandates individual responsibility to learn.
5. uses small groups to work on a task together in a way that every member of the group contributes to the teaching and learning process and learns all the fundamental concepts being taught

According to Arends (2004), cooperative learning approach promotes

1. “Positive Interdependence”. Due to competition in the normal class there is negative interdependence where learners compete with one another for educational resources and academic recognition. Competition encourages better learners to broaden their knowledge and so jubilate at the expense of other learners. In the negative interdependence, brighter learners in a group tend to be selfish in sharing views with the dull learners. Positive interdependence however, trains learners that school life for everyone is enhanced if everyone becomes successful.
2. improves comprehension of basic academic activities
3. reinforces social skills
4. allows learner’s decisions
5. boost up learners’ self-esteem
6. focuses on the success of everyone.

Arends (2004) said that co-operative learning approach is characterized by cooperative task, goal, and reward structures. In co-operative learning, two or more individuals are interdependent for a reward they will share, if they are successful as a group. Co-operative learning lessons can be characterized by the following features according to Arends (2004).

1. Pupils work in teams to master academic goals.
2. Teams are made up of high, average and low achievers.
3. Whenever possible teams include a racial, cultural and sexual mix of pupils.
4. Reward systems are oriented to the group rather than the individual.

The co-operative approach was developed to achieve at least three important instructional goals: academic achievement, acceptance of diversity, and social skill development (Arends, 2004). Although co-operative learning encompasses a variety

of social objectives, it also aims at improving pupils' performance on important academic tasks, presents opportunities for pupils of varying background and conditions to work interdependently on common tasks and through the use of co-operative reward structures, learn to appreciate each other (Arends, 2004).

### **Group Teaching Approach**

In group teaching, the teacher teaches the class in groups instead of as a unit (Talabi, 2001). In this method, one group may be carrying out an activity while another may be engaged in a different type either in the same subject or a different one. This approach is especially useful in helping break the ice when teachers are forming a new classroom group. To initiate the activity ask pupils to find out a specific bit of information about one other person. Once this has been done, pairs of pupils are joined to form groups of about 4. Members of the group share and try to remember information about all the 4 individuals. The groups of 4 are joined to form groups of 8. , the group of 8 joined to form groups of 16 to form one large group. At each stage pupils are to try to remember information about each person. The multiplication of group size can be conducted up to the size you feel appropriate, given the age and maturity of pupil in the class and the class size. The exercise makes learners more comfortable with one another and builds a sense of cohesiveness. Learners who know something about one another tend to settle into academically oriented group work better than those who are assigned to work with comparative strangers.

According to Talabi (2001), group teaching can be practiced in three ways:

1. Similar Ability:

Here the learners are grouped according to their abilities in a particular subject. This means that some leaders in group A in language and literacy, for

instance may be in group C in literature. This shows that their proficiency in the English Language is not as that in literature.

2. Mixed Ability Grouping;

Here, learners of different abilities in a subject area are grouped together and taught as a unit. The weaker learners can benefit from the more brilliant ones.

3. Interest Grouping;

Interest grouping enables the teacher to group learners according to their interest on the same topic of subject. Here, the groups can be changed from time to time. Group teaching promotes team spirit. Learners see one another as identical in terms of ability or interest (Talabi, 2001). The method also caters for individual differences because every learner can work with the group and area of interest and ability.

### **How to Improve Group Method**

Group methods should be made to encourage learners of different ethnic groups, abilities and interest to work for the societies with common problems. In language and literacy for instance, learners can be told to talk about pictures on a poster in groups, tell stories around pictures. A list of teaching materials and practical activities can be used to make group teaching interesting and productive.

### **Professional Development or In-Service Training for Teachers**

Professional development or in-service training have been acknowledged as very relevant to teachers' growth and continue improvement of pupils learning.

Agezo and Baafi-Frimpong (2010) affirmed that, staff development involves learning activities designed to enhance the knowledge, skills and competencies of teachers to improve their behaviour which result in performance improvements.

School reforms have been found to be most effective when teachers are empowered to keep them abreast with new development on teaching and to enhance their teaching abilities.

Training is concerned with the acquisition of a body of knowledge and skills which can be applied to a work of a particular type. It is concerned with learning skills and knowledge for doing a particular job and increase skills required for the job (Sefenu & Nyan, 2004). It is also associated with learning related to present job. Development on the other hand is about using what trainee learned through training and turning it into skills and expertise. It is concerned with shaping the attitudes of individuals in an organization.

Similarly, Bayer (2008) stated that, the need for staff professional development or in-service training of teachers most succinctly, “the only way we are going to get from where we are to where we want to be in schools is through staff professional development and in-service training”.

Professional development or in-service training is an area in which every government has become more interested as a way of ensuring continual teacher education as part of accountability for schools (Elmore, 2002). There was community and government awareness that as the nature of schools changing, teachers require effective professional development or Training to keep pace (Elmore, 2002). Elmore further explained that changes in technology along with increasing government accountability meant that the nature of knowledge and the role of schools were changing and, therefore, challenged some assumptions about teacher professional development or training.

As a consequence of the drive to obtain better learning outcomes for pupils/students, educators and government recognize professional development as an increasingly important activity for teachers to undertake.

Research conducted since 1990s supported the linked between effective professional development improvement in pupils' outcomes in language and literacy. Research into appropriate class size had shown that smaller classes were only effective if pupils were taught by a language teacher who had good professional development or training (Sparks & Hirsch, 2009). In the USA, studies were undertaken to establish the effect of small-scale professional development or training on pupil learning outcomes. Harwell, D'Amko, Stein and Gatti (2000) found that, pupils/students in classes where language and literacy teachers engaged in professional discussions over language and literacy approaches had a higher average score in reading than pupils/students whose teachers had not engaged in such activities.

Furthermore, research suggest that, well-designed staff professional developmental or in-service training for language and literacy teachers is crucial to successful implementation of the language and literacy policy since failure to create a strong staff professional development or in-service training system is a tragic failure to the implementation of the language and literacy policy in basic lower primary schools. Based on this research fact, Bruce, Marsha and Emily (2004) reiterated that, for instructions to be successful, language and literacy teachers must spend time developing their knowledge and understanding of the language and literacy instruction as well as their awareness of their pupils' backgrounds and experiences. Language and Literacy Teachers can develop this understanding and awareness by



acquiring specific knowledge bases relating to teaching of language and literacy through in-service training and other forms of staff development.

According to Snowden and Gorton (2002), classroom teachers must be viewed as real reformers. Professional development or in-service training is essential in preparing language and literacy teachers for their role as partners with administrators in leadership for change. Snowden and Gorton (2002), insisted that professional development efforts should be deeply infused in the life of the school rather than applied as quick fixes which mean that time, space, resources, personnel and others should be aligned to support the professional development design. Snowden and Gorton stressed that “the best strategy for sustained substantive school improvement especially in the area of language and literacy is developing the capacity of teachers language and literacy to function as a professionals learning community”. The key is for teachers to view themselves as leaders of a community of learners and be aware of what such leadership requires of them.

Because of their key role in school improvement, language teachers need training that prepares them for the multiple expectations that are on their shoulders today.

### **Staff Development or In-service – Training for the Language and Literacy**

#### **Teacher**

Staff development is an important component of this study. Therefore, a well-researched staff development model must be used to guide the language and literacy teacher. The model, according to wood (2008), was referred to as RPTLM model. The model emerges from a basic philosophy about effective staff development that stresses the importance of the school as the primary unit of change in school reform. The model includes five stages; Readiness, Planning, Training, Implementation, and Maintenance. The critical attributes of each stage are listed below:

1. Readiness stage: District or Municipal Directors work with language teachers to select improvement goals and develop their commitment to implement new professional behaviours and programmes to achieve those goals.
2. Planning Stage: Language teachers design a system of in-service programmes to achieve the improvement identified in the 1<sup>st</sup> stage.
3. Training: Staff members participate in effective in-service training that reflects what is known about children language learning.
4. Implementation: language teachers and administrators translate what they learned during the in-service training into professional practice in their actual classroom setting.
5. Maintenance: Language teachers and administrators use systematic monitoring techniques to ensure that the changes they have made will continue over time.

Similarly, Caulfoeld-Sloan (2001) in a study that looked at the effects of language teachers participating in professional development or training found that these teachers improved pupils outcomes. Studies, such as Harwell et al. (2000) and Caulfied-Sloan (2001) found that professional development or training could change teaching and learning when it was relevant to the teacher's job and to pupils/students; involved small groups of language teachers; and was driven by a theory of change and communication.

“Changes in teacher behaviour can lead to changes in pupils outcomes, but change in pupil outcomes cannot be assumed without prior teacher change” (Achilles & Tienken, 2005, p.313). Achilles and Tieken, (2005) reiterated that, “professional development or training must have two measureable levels of impact: (a) to improve the language teacher's observed teaching performance and (b) to improve measurable pupil achievement” (p. 314).

Harwell et al (2000) asserted that, there is consensus among researchers regarding what constitutes effective staff development. Dufour and Sparks (2007), identified seven research-based effective staff development practices that create the climate and structure for successful language teacher's training. Those seven practices consist of the following:

1. Effective programmes are purposeful.
2. Effective programmes are designed to promote and influence teachers' thinking about teaching and learning.
3. Effective programmes are research-based, both in content and process.
4. Effective programmes have realistic time frames.
5. Effective staff development programmes are evaluated at several different levels.
6. Effective programmes generate teacher commitment to the training.
7. Effective staff development or training programmes have strong administrative support.

According to Greeleaf and Schoenbach (2004), teacher educators have developed many courses and designed many professional development or training programmes to improve language teachers attitudes about language and literacy instruction and to support implementation of language and literacy. As early as late nineties, Greenleaf and Schoenbach (2004) highlighted a professional development training programme that yielded promising results in changing language teachers attitudes. Their study of an in-service programmes that included bi-weekly workshops and expert consultation (now known as coaching) over the course of school year also indicated that participants positively changed their attitudes about language and literacy instruction.

Greenleaf and Schoenbach (2004) confirmed that the need for extended professional development or training for the language teacher provides:

1. concrete teacher-specific, and extended training
2. opportunities for teachers to observe others
3. regular meetings focused on practical problems
4. active involvement in teaching and learning
5. demonstrations and feedback about classroom implementations
6. specific knowledge regarding desirable instructional practices, findings that participation in such professional development programme significantly and positively influenced basic school teachers' attitudes, knowledge, and concerns about using literacy strategies.

Glickman, Gordon and Ross-Gordon, (2010) also affirmed that professional development or training has gathered increased attention in both research and resource allocation across every nation and that majority of nations increase their expenditure for professional development in schools. Glickman, Gordon and Ross-Gordon (2010) identified a number of effective characteristics of successful professional development or training for language teachers and other participants. These include:

1. Involvement of participants or language teachers in planning, implementation and evaluation of the programme.
2. A foundation of school wide goals but integration of individual and group goals with programme or school goals.
3. Long-range planning and development.
4. Coherence, marked by the coordination and integration of different professional development to training activities.

5. The incorporation of research on school and instructional improvement.
6. Administrative support, including provision of time and other resources during programme planning, delivery, and evaluation.
7. Adherence to the principles of adult learning.
8. Relevant, job-embedded professional development focused on student learning and teacher growth.
9. Collegial and collaboration among language teachers and between language teachers and administrators or facilitators.
10. Active learning.
11. Attention to the research on change.
12. Follow-up and support for transfer of learning of the classroom.
13. Ongoing assessment and feedback.
14. Continuous professional development that becomes part of the school culture.

Glickman, Gordon and Ross-Gordon (2010) again reported that there are five levels of professional development or training. These are:

1. Language teachers reactions
2. Language teachers learning
3. Organisation support and change
4. Language teachers use of new knowledge and skills.
5. Student learning outcomes continue

### **Challenges Teachers Encounter in the Process of teaching Language and Literacy**

Teachers' classroom instructional practices and their knowledge on the language and literacy subject are very crucial to the implementation of this laudable

programme into workable classroom practices. Thus, when teachers educational background, teaching skills, creativity and analytical thinking fall short of expectation then there is a sense of danger to the implementation of the NALAP (Silver & Skuja-Steele, 2005).

Teachers' classroom instructional practices and their knowledge on the language and literacy policy are very crucial to the implementation of this important policy into workable classroom practices. Thus, when teachers educational background, teaching skills, creativity and analytical thinking on the policy fall short of expectation then there is a sense of danger to the implementation of this policy (Silver & Skuja-Steele, 2005).

There are numerous challenges that both teachers and pupils face in the process of teaching and learning language and literacy. Some of these challenges as listed by Edwards (2008) are:

1. Insufficient sight vocabulary that is, lack of the ability on the side of both teachers and pupils to group words into thought units necessary for comprehension and fluency.
2. Inability to apply phonic analysis to both easy and difficult words.
3. Inadequate visual analysis skills.
4. Inability to separate words into parts for easy pronunciation.

Edwards emphasized that teachers are handicapped in attempting to teach the subject because;

1. Lack of experiential background
2. Lack of incentives
3. Limited reading experiences

4. Small speaking vocabulary because of the problem of insufficient sight vocabulary

Similarly, Research suggests that the major problem teachers face in the process of implementing any policy is that, they do not normally poses copies of the policy strategies let alone knowing what is in the policy (Smith 2005). These half hearted implementation strategies could lead to failure of realizing the dreams of the policy.

According to Smit (2005), teachers have been diagnosed as resistant to change or just simply lazy when they ignore policy implementation. Rodgers and Masendu (2000) supported the ideas of Smit but looked at their situation in different direction, explaining that this resistant to change is because teachers as implementers often lack the capacity, the knowledge, skills, personnel and other resources necessary to work in ways that are consistent with policy. Rodgers and Masendu (2000) warned that even if teachers construct understandings that reflect policy markers intent they may not have the necessary skills and resource to implement the policy effectively and efficiently. Wang and Cheng (2005) in a similar direction stated that, teachers inability or failure to implement policy as policy makers hoped may signal their uncertainty about outcomes and their assessment that new practices are not as good as the previous ones. These obstacles are:

1. Teachers' lack of clarity about the policy
2. Lack of knowledge and skills needed to conform to the policy initiative
3. Unavailability of required instructional materials
4. Incompatibility of the organizational arrangements with the policy
5. Lack of staff motivation
6. Teachers' prior knowledge, beliefs and experiences

7. Different interpretations of the same policies
8. Misunderstanding or superficial understanding of the policies. All of these reasons potentially impede teachers from being able to implement the intended language and literacy policy successfully.

An important contribution to the study of NALAP's early implementation was the observation and analysis of ten classrooms in five schools carried out by Adger and Dowuona – Hammond. Their findings were presented in a report, 'Early NALAP implementations' report of classroom observation' (Adger, 2010). The report provided valuable insights into the challenges that teachers face in implementing NALAP, and identified implications for continued teacher training and the revision of materials. Their observation and analyses noted that:

1. There is not a high degree of fidelity between teachers conduct of lessons and the lessons as outlined in the NALAP Teacher Guides. Teachers teach only part of the lessons, but generally emphasize repetition and memorization rather than those activities that lead pupils to greater phonological awareness (oral) and decoding practice.
2. Teachers shift between English and Ghanaian language, even when teachings Ghanaian language sections of the lesson. This no doubt reflects the long tradition of schools that print 'speak English' over the classroom doors. Thus, teachers give instructions to pupils in English p.30; stand up; and identify the alphabets. To quote from the report, 'NALAP privileges the use of the Ghanaian language. Because pupils can express their knowledge of the world more fully in that language in the early years of education, they can draw on



the linguistic skills in learning to read. For (NALAP) to take root, it is important to protect the Ghanaian language lesson from English.

3. Teachers themselves are not fluent in the reading of the Ghanaian language texts and rather than bringing forth the meanings within the stories and texts of Big Books and pupils Books, tend to overstress word repetition.
4. There is virtually no phonological awareness (the sound of words) or phonics (the link between sounds and letters / text) instruction in the Ghanaian language lessons. The alphabet cards, which are designed for this purpose, were not used in any of the 10 classes observed.
5. Teachers do not observe the time frame for activities within the Teacher Guides, and there is not a clear connection made between the activities. For example, in the Teacher's Guide the conversation posters are to support oral language development, which is essential to learning to read by stimulating discussion. But teachers tended to simply list words, describing objects in the posters on the blackboard, detached from their contextual meanings, for repetition by pupils.
6. Teachers rely heavily on traditional instructional methods and in particular a heavy use of repetition with pupils individually and collectively repeating and memorizing words and phrases. The message that teachers continue to give is that reading is about memorizing rather than understanding. This is in contrast to NALAP methodology which is designed to provide pupils with the skills to speak and read with meaning, rather than just memorize text. This is the key to unlock the blockages to pupils' literacy and learning in primary schools.
7. This persistence of traditional approaches is reflected in the use of classroom arrangements, where pupils are physically arranged in groups, but lessons

continue to be largely teacher-centered. This has led a number of teachers education officials to protest that putting the children in groups “makes their necks sore” as they have to face the teacher and blackboard. The purpose behind the organization of pupils’ interaction on academic topics, but this is not yet a common practice.

Through their empirical study on English language instructions in classrooms in China, Japan, Singapore, Switzerland and U.S.A., Silver and Skuja-steele (2005) examined how policy and classroom practices interact by comparing classroom practices and teachers’ statements of pedagogical rationales with policies implementation. They found that teachers were aware of policy initiatives related to language education. However, teachers were focusing on immediate classroom priorities that influenced their daily lessons. Their findings revealed that language policies were reinterpreted because teachers often lack the capacity, the knowledge, interpretation of the policy and understanding of the policy. All these reasons potentially impede teachers from being able to implement the intended National Literacy Acceleration Programme effectively.

According to Bruce, Marsha and Emily (2004), for instructions to be successful, teachers must spend time developing their knowledge and understanding of the language and literacy instruction as well as their awareness of their pupils’ backgrounds and experiences. Teachers can develop this understanding and awareness by acquiring specific knowledge bases relating to the teaching of language and literacy.

## **CHAPTER THREE**

### **METHODOLOGY**

This chapter focuses on the methodology adopted in conducting the study. The chapter discusses the research design, the population, sample and sampling techniques, research instruments, pilot testing, validity, data collection procedure and data analysis procedure.

#### **Research Design**

Research design simply relates to a number of issues that needs to be taken into consideration regarding the collection of data even before beginning the data collection process (Creswell, 2007). The design is the blue print for the collection, measurement and analysis of data.

The design is a case study employing the qualitative paradigm. An important consideration which informed the choice of qualitative paradigm is that, qualitative research investigates human views, opinions, assumptions and activities in terms of meanings and interprets these activities by linking them to other social and human events to enable greater understanding (Maree, 2012). Qualitative researchers believe that, the world is made up of people with their own perceptions, beliefs, assumptions, intentions, attitudes and values and that the way of knowing reality is by exploring the experiences of others regarding a specific phenomenon (Johnson & Christensen, 2012). In view of this fact, the data which was collected reflected the perceptions, attitudes, assumptions, feelings and views of the participants that took part in the interview.

Being a qualitative research, the choice of the methodology was underpinned by the interpretive paradigm which is based on the constructivist epistemology standpoint (Rug & Petre, as cited in Kusi, 2012). The main reason for choosing the

interpretive paradigm to guide the choice of my methodology was based on the idea and explanation of Rug and Petre (as cited in Kusi, 2012) that qualitative research permits the researcher to access the experiences and viewpoints of respondents and attempts to understand a phenomenon in all its complexity in a particular socio-cultural context or perspective through meaningful interaction between the researcher and respondents.

The choice of the case study design was also in line with the ontological and epistemological assumptions underlying knowledge (Maree, 2012). This means that, reality is constructed by persons and that the researcher needed to analyze the respondents' views, in-depth and in its natural setting, recognizing its complexity and its context.

### **Population**

The term population of a study is usually the “total set of people that have common observable features of interest for a study whom the researcher would like to study and draw conclusions” (Babbie & Murray, 2008:18). The target population of the study consisted of all the 50 teachers who taught language and literacy in Lower Primary Schools in Wiawso Circuit of Sefwi Wiawso Municipality. The reason for choosing Wiawso Circuit was that, the place was geographically convenient. This was because transportation system was well developed making it easier to reach the respondents. The teachers in these lower primary schools were also considered to be punctual, regular and committed to work. All the teachers in the schools in the circuit taught language and literacy in their classes.

## **Sample and Sampling Techniques**

A sample is a representative that shows characteristics that are common to those in the target population. According to Twumasi (2001) the issues involved in sampling technique are:

1. How wide a coverage is acceptable?
2. What type of respondents will be able to give answers to the research questions?
3. Will the selected group of respondents be adequate representative of the group?

For the purpose of this study, the researcher used purposive sampling technique to select the 25 teachers who taught language and literacy from the population of the 50 teachers in all these Lower Primary Schools being studied. According to Merriam (2006:6) “purposive sampling is based on the assumption that the researcher wants to discover, understand and gain insight and therefore must select the sample from which the most can be learned”. Similarly, (Patton, 2002) affirmed that, purposive sampling technique is important because studying information-rich cases yields insights and in-depth understanding rather than empirical generalizations. The purposive sampling technique gave the researcher the opportunity to gather data from respondents who had the information which could lead to the achievement of the research objectives.

## **Research Instruments**

To obtain a valid and detailed data relevant to the research questions, self-constructed semi-structured interview protocol and observation checklist were the instruments used to collect data for the study. All the 25 teachers who taught in these Basic Lower Primary Schools in Wiawso Circuit were used for both the observation and the semi-structured interviews for first-hand information.

## **Interview Protocol**

Interviews are oral, person-to-person, probing questions and responses, interaction between a researcher and a respondent (Kumar, 2005). According to Kusi (2012) interviews are classified according to structured, unstructured and semi-structured. A structured interview according to Kusi (2012) is the one which the questions are pre-determined, leaving the interviewer little or no chance to divert from them. This also means that, the fact that the items/questions in the schedule are structured, interviewees can be presented with almost the same question (Kusi, 2012). Unstructured interview on the other hand, has no definite structure according to him. It involves free-style discussion with interviewees. The questions to be asked and how the questions are sequenced to achieve the purpose are in the hands of the interviewer. However, the instrument gathers a massive amount of qualitative data, making analysis laborious and time consuming (Kusi, 2012).

For the sake of this work, data from the study was collected basically through semi-structured interview protocol because semi-structured interviews are flexible to a greater extent, offers interviewees the opportunity to express their views, feelings and experiences freely and gives the interviewer the freedom to divert from the questions in the schedule to seek clarifications (Kusi, 2012). In this approach, the researcher listed the questions to be asked based on the issues identified from the research questions and used the list as a guide for the interview. The interview protocol (See Appendix B) was divided into five dimensions. They were;

1. Demographic information about teachers' educational background and teaching experiences.
2. Methods teachers use to teach the language and literacy subject.

3. How teachers perceived the five days initial in-service training given to them in relation to the implementation of the NALAP.
4. Professional training or support teachers need to continue to teach the language and literacy subject effectively.
5. Challenges teachers face in the process of implementing the NALAP.

### **Observation Checklist**

Observation is a systematic process of recording the behavioral pattern of participants, objects and occurrences in a real life situation according to planned scheme without necessarily questioning or communicating with them during the teaching and learning process (Maree, 2012). As an important part of a qualitative research, particularly case study, observation gives the researcher an insight and in-depth knowledge of what people actually do or how they actually behave in their context. It was in the light of the explanation offered for the use of observation that an in-depth observation study of all the 25 Lower Primary Schools and all the teachers who taught in these schools in Wiawso Circuit were employed. During the observation, the researcher watched, listened and recorded what he saw and heard with field notes as each lesson progressed without questioning or communicating with them during the teaching and learning process (O' leary, 2004). The researcher interpreted the observation findings and drew conclusions later during the data analysis stage.

### **Pilot testing**

The researcher conducted a pilot testing of some teachers in some schools at Akontombra district because these schools shared common border with the schools selected for the conduct of the study and also had similar staff characteristics in terms of qualification, experiences and training towards the teaching of the language and

literacy subject. The researcher also expected these teachers to have a sound working knowledge and better understanding of the concepts of the language and literacy subject. The purpose of the pilot testing was to determine the attitude and behaviour of respondents towards the structure and wording of questions and to find out whether the semi-structured interview questions would be suitable to elicit the expected responses. It must be noted that all participants used in the pilot testing were excluded from the main research to avoid biasing the results due to the advanced exposure to the interview questions. The results of the pilot testing gave the researcher an indication of the advantages and disadvantages of conducting the larger study. The pilot testing provided feedback on questions which were asked that helped in making some modifications to the approaches to the data collection and also provided information to prove that the methods and instruments used were appropriate and adequate. This also helped to establish that the sampling frame and technique were effective.

### **Validity of the Instrument**

According to Yin (as cited in Lawis, 2009) qualitative research design must address the issue of validity. In view of this fact, after the design of the observation checklist and the self-constructed semi-structured interview questions, they were vetted by my supervisor to find out if it measured what it was supposed to measure, and that the items were not ambiguous.

### **Data Collection Procedures**

The researcher worked out an observation schedule and began the actual observation in the first term of the 2014/2015 academic year which lasted from 20<sup>th</sup> September to 10<sup>th</sup> December 2014. One classroom observation was carried out with each class teacher. Each observation lasted for (90) ninety minutes during one



language and literacy class teaching period. In the course of the observation, the researcher took field notes and recorded what he saw and heard as each lesson progressed and interpreted it at a later date. All respondents were assured of confidentiality and anonymity at the start of the observation and the interview. One face-to-face follow up interview was also conducted after the observation with each class teacher. The interview began in the second term of 2014/2015 academic year when school had just been re-opened and lasted from 20<sup>th</sup> January to 13<sup>th</sup> March 2015. The interview began with a 30 minute conversation which centered on demographic information about the teachers' education and teaching experiences.

This continued with a formal one, more in-depth interview which centered on the methods teachers used to teach the language and literacy subject, how teachers perceived the initial five days in-service training given to them in relation to the teaching of the language and literacy subject, professional training or support teachers need to help them continue to teach the language and literacy subject effectively and challenges teachers face in the process of teaching the language and literacy subject. Each interview took almost one hour, thirty minutes (1 hour 30 minutes). Some of the teachers were interviewed in their staff common rooms while others were interviewed in their head teachers/mistresses' offices. Participants were allowed to express their views in either the mother tongue (L1) or the English language (L2) without any intimidation. In the course of administering the interview, the researcher sought permission from the participants to use audio-tape recordings and note-taking as well to record the interview conversations. Expressions and quotations from the interview conversations were recorded as well. The researcher freely explored, probed and asked questions for clarification to elicit more relevant views, explanations and opinions from the participants. During the administration of the interview, the

researcher did not follow the questions one by one in any chronological order but diverted in order to seek clarifications and explanations relevant to the topic (Johnson & Christensen, 2012).

### **Data Analysis Procedures**

The researcher followed the “interpretive model” in the qualitative paradigm as the steps of analyzing observation guide and interview protocol (Hatch, 2002). According to Patten (2002) interpretation involves making inferences, developing insights, refining understanding and drawing conclusions to give meaningful data.

Being a case study design using qualitative approach, the researcher transcribed and presented the interview data through the combination of reading the written notes and listening to the audio-tape conversations thoroughly so as to familiarize with the audio tape conversations and the written notes by referring back to the research questions to check consistencies. After reviewing the written notes and the audio-tape conversations, the researcher identified themes that emerged.

The researcher described and supported the themes that emerged with evidence from both the field notes and the interview conversations from the audio-tape recordings. The findings of the study were then discussed.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

#### Introduction

The purpose of this study was to ascertain the perception and attitudes of teachers towards the implementation of the NALAP and how best the programme can be improved in Wiawso Circuit. This chapter presents the results and analysis of the data obtained from the field which centered on the demographic information of the teachers and the research question.

#### Demographic Information of Respondents

The researcher collected information on the teachers teaching experience since this may influence the teaching of the language and literacy subject. The results are presented in Table 1.

**Table 4.1: Teachers Teaching Experience**

Teaching Experience	Frequency	Percentage
Less than one year	1	4
1 – 5 years	8	32
6 – 10 years	10	40
11 – 15 years	4	16
16 and above	2	8
Total	25	100

Field survey 2014

Table 1 shows that, out of the 25 teachers who were interviewed, only one representing 4% had taught for less than one year. Eight (32%) had taught between one and five years. Ten of the teachers representing 40% had also taught between six and ten years. Four of the teachers representing 16% had taught between eleven and

fifteen years and the remaining two (2) teachers representing 8% had taught for sixteen years and above. This data purely indicates that majority of the respondents selected for the work had enough teaching experience.

### **Level of Education of Respondents**

The researcher collected information on the teachers' level of education since that was also likely to influence the teaching of the language and literacy subject. The results are presented in table 2.

**Table 4.2: Teachers' Level of Education**

Certificate	Frequency	Percentage
M. S. L. C.	1	4
S. S. C. E./O'level	2	8
'A' 4 year/ 'A' 3 year	2	8
D. B. E.	19	76
Degree	1	4
Masters	0	0
Total	25	100

Field survey 2014

Inferring from the data in Table 2, out of the twenty-five teachers who took part in the interview, one representing 4% has Middle School Leaving Certificate. Two teachers or 8% had either O'level or S.S.C.E. Moreover, two or 8% of the teachers had either 'A' 4 year or 'A' 3 year certificate. Nineteen teachers representing 76% have Diploma in Basic Education Certificate. Only one of the teachers had a degree. Even though none of the teachers reported having a masters degree, this data clearly indicates that, almost 88% or majority of the teachers who were teaching this subject in these selected basic schools were professionally trained and qualified to teach the subject effectively.

## **Analysis of the Main Data**

The analysis of the main data is presented in relation to the research questions.

### **Research Question 1**

#### **What methods do teachers use to teach the language and literacy subject?**

It was clearly set out in the 2014 Integrated Language and Literacy Teacher's Guide, ("Let's read and write series"), the Pupils Books and the Language and Literacy Syllabus that teachers should follow faithfully the pre-specified activities incorporated in these three components to help their learners acquire the skills of reading, understanding and writing in their everyday life. In effect, these new classroom instructional activities also seek to reinforce the four language abilities of listening, speaking, reading and writing in an integrated manner for an effective oral and written language communication.

On the whole, the classroom observations revealed that, majority 18 (72%) of the teachers conducted classroom teaching exclusively in accordance with the activities in the "pupils book" assigned to them only instead of adherence to the pre-specified instructional activities set out in the teacher's guide and the syllabus. This made teachers focused primarily on developing pupils productive skills of speaking and writing than promoting pupils' reception skills of reading and listening. Cultivating of pupils' reading skills with the activities in the teacher's guide, pupils books and the language and literacy syllabus was fully covered in their teaching by few 7 (28%) of the teachers. This was reflected in both teacher/pupil detailed explanation of texts and reading skills. These teachers also conducted both Ghanaian Language and English Language to engage the pupils in pattern drill practice and to check whether the pupils understand the text or not.

When the interviews were conducted, 17 (68%) out of the 25 teachers who answered the interview questions complained that, they did not have a sound working knowledge of the teacher's guide, the syllabus, the pupils books and the pupils big books and how to go about the pre-specified activities in them because they were not fully trained to use the specifications in the teacher's guide, the syllabus, the pupils books and the pupils big books, nor did they have a deep understanding of the content in them. Although, each of the teachers in all these lower primary classes accepted that, they were given copies of the teacher's guide, pupil's book, the big books and the language and literacy syllabus, they only had "vague" idea about how to apply the activities in them to help their learners achieve the reading, understanding and writing skills requirements; as the following quotes by some teachers illustrate;

"Although, there are several activities in the teacher's guide, the pupils books and the big books, I am not interested in using them and I don't read much either ..., every time I was assigned to use new textbooks, I teach in the same way as before (P3 male teacher).

A P2 female teacher also explained that;

"I really don't understand much of the teacher's guide and the syllabus, so if you ask me, I don't have much to say". "Toss tell you the fact, I don't think I have a good understanding of it, because seldom did I study it or read it". "I must say the truth; it's a waste of my time and energy"... "I don't take reading the teacher's guide and the syllabus seriously and maybe, ok, I don't like reading before teaching because I am experienced teacher".

One of the explanations for this is that, the teacher's guide lays out the activities that build phonetic awareness and phonic reading skills in the systematic

and engaging lessons with both Ghanaian Language and English Language over a 90 minute period but these teachers teach only part of the lesson in the teacher's guide. These teachers explained that even though the activities in the language and literacy components are child friendly, some are new to them making teaching and learning very difficult. This confirmed the findings of Adger and Dowuona-Hammond (2010) in their study of NALAP early implementation that, teachers teach only part of the lesson but generally emphasize repetition and memorization rather than those activities that lead pupils to greater phonological awareness and decoding practice. Wang and Cheng (2005) also stated that teachers' inability or failure to implement policy as policy makers hoped may signal their lack of clarity about the policy and lack of knowledge and skills needed to conform to the policy initiatives. With regard to teaching and applying the activities in the syllabus, the teacher's guide and the pupils' big books to help pupils improve their reading, understanding and writing skills without any difficulty, only 8 (32%) of the teachers interviewed reported that they taught to expose their pupils to a variety of activities in the teacher's guide, pupils books, big books and the syllabus to help their pupils become fluent readers. This is in line with the Ghana Education Service inset source book (2007) which stated that teachers should use appropriate activities and methods in their classroom instruction to reinforce good performance by pupils.

### **The Pupil-Centered Approach**

NALAP policy makers also clearly stated in the language and literacy teacher's guide and the syllabus that, language and literacy teaching and learning in the classroom should center on the pupils, should reduce teachers' talking or speaking time and encourage pupils' participation. The observation from most of the teacher's classes revealed that teachers had adopted a teacher-centered approach. In a Ghanaian

Language reading and writing component, the teachers speaking was mainly lecturing to the whole class. Teacher talk took up almost 80% of the class time and pupils talk 20% in P2 and P3 classes. Likewise, teacher talk took up 55% and pupils talk 45% in P1 class. Pupils only contributed when a teacher felt she/he should ask the whole class to repeat a listening word or text chorally and reading aloud when sitting on their desks. The above results demonstrated teachers' non-implementation of the intended NALAP curriculum in their actual classroom teaching. Instead of adherence to the recommended methods, techniques and strategies in the teacher's guide, the syllabus, the pupil's books and the pupils' big books which specify the use of the learner centered approach, majority of the teachers primarily adopted a teacher-centered approach with teacher talk taking up most of their class time during teaching. The lecture method preferred by the teachers perhaps because it is easy to adopt. Thus, the use of the lecture method was firmly established (Tamakloe, Amedahe & Atta, 2005).

When the researcher asked the teachers why they had adopted the teacher-centered approach to teach their pupils, 18 (72%) out of the 25 teachers who were interviewed explained that, even though the child-centered approach to the teaching and learning of the language and literacy subject is embodied in the teacher's guide, the large class sizes only call for choral work to enable pupils to have more chances of practicing reading fluency and understanding. A P2 teacher said that;

“Even though, the methods or approaches suggested in the teacher's guide sound good and appropriate”, “we use our way according to the pupils' needs, competencies and differences”.



One of the teachers explained that, in spite of all the comments in the approaches described in the teacher's guide and the syllabus, she knew little about the ideas prepared in them.

“I have received some materials associated with the language and literacy subject but since I didn't take part in the orientation to the teaching of this subject, I just follow the requirements of the topics in the pupils' books but not the instructions on the use of the approaches or the methods in the teacher guide and the syllabus”. “Because I am neither familiar with the teacher's guide nor with the approaches related to language and literacy teaching, teacher lecturing is the most appropriate”. (P1 teacher).

These assertions by the teachers clearly attest to the fact that some of the teachers were not conversant with the methods, techniques and strategies to teach the subject effectively for their pupils to acquire the concept of the language and literacy approaches to help them develop the skills and knowledge of reading fluency and language comprehension processes that underlie both spoken and written language comprehension. This confirmed the idea of Rodgers and Masendu (2000) that, teachers as implementers often lack the capacity, knowledge, skills and other resources necessary to work in ways that are consistent with the policy.

On the other hand, 5 (20%) of the teachers who took part in the interview insisted that they were seriously applying the learner-centered approach in their classroom during teaching and learning. These teachers reiterated that they normally used the strategy terms with some of their corresponding traditional methods especially group work and discussion to teach their learners to acquire the concept of the language and literacy strategies. Aggawal (as cited in Nyame-Kwarteng &

Dampsey-Anim, 2006, p.108) defined discussion as “a situation where learners are allowed to give their views about a topic or problem after a careful study of the topic or a problem”. These writers suggest that discussion should be the most frequently observed activity in both social studies and English language classrooms. This is due to the fact that discussion is a means of promoting the exchange of information and ideas between pupils/students, resulting in extended knowledge, mutual understanding and recognition of other pupils’/students’ point of view. On the other hand, the use of the group method by the teachers clearly attest to the fact of the statement made by Talabi (2001) that group teaching promotes team spirit. Learners see one another as identical in terms of ability and interest. Other 2 (8%) of the teachers also admitted during the interview that, they normally used discovery method with its’ corresponding strategy term of think-Pairing Share activity to help their pupils develop the skills of reading fluency and understanding of a short story or passage in their pupils’ books. One of these two teachers explained that;

“As for me, I want to be a good teacher so I read the teacher guide well, “I make sure I prepare well before going to the classroom”. “I don’t joke”. “I read the strategy terms and keep them”. “I mean, I prepare fully before class” (P3 teacher).

This point to the fact that, Tamakloe, Amedahe and Atta (2005) explained that, discovery method of teaching encourages critical thinking and problem solving skills in children, permit learners to solve their own problems, analyze information and evaluate conclusions. This also clearly indicates that some of the teachers were making every effort to teach the subject with understanding and appropriate approach for pupils to read fluently.

## **Research Question 2**

### **How do teachers perceive the initial five days in-service training given to them in relation to the teaching of the language and literacy subject?**

The Education Quality for All Projects (EQUALL) designed and carried out 5 days initial orientation workshop for all primary school head teachers, circuit supervisors and P1 – P3 teachers in both private and public basic schools in all districts in Ghana towards the teaching of the language and literacy subject in 2009. This provided an orientation to the concepts, knowledge, and skills that teachers would need to begin to organise and use the teacher's guide, the language and literacy syllabus, pupils' books, the big books and other supplementary readers.

Initially, a 12 day orientation workshop was planned and designed by EQUALL but due to time and financial difficulties, EQUALL reduced it to a 5 day orientation workshop programme for the teachers, head teachers and all circuit supervisors. Training manuals were the only source of materials prepared for the resource team to be used to train the head teachers, teachers and circuit supervisors.

### **Perception of the Training Workshop by Teachers**

The observation by most of the teachers was that the initial 5 days orientation workshop organised for them towards the teaching of the language and literacy subject in their schools could not provide the necessary skills and knowledge for them to effectively utilize the language and literacy approaches and the curriculum materials in these basic lower classes. This could be true because it was observed that only few teachers used Asante twi (L1) which is the approved Ghanaian language to teach Asante twi topics in the teacher's guide. Majority of the teachers observed still used a large amount of English language to teach language and literacy to their learners. During the interview, these teachers accepted that they had to use a lot of

Asante twi (L1) to teach language and literacy to their learners as specified in the teacher's guide but the use of English to teach the subject helps them to save time which should not be the case. The interview again revealed that, out of the 25 teachers who were teaching in these basic lower primary schools, 10 (40%) participated in full the 5 days initial orientation workshop. An exception to this level of participation was found in those schools where a significant number of 7 (28%) newly trained teachers were posted to four of the schools after the initial orientation workshop. Also 8 (32%) of the teachers interviewed were also teachers transferred from different Junior High Schools after the initial orientation workshop to teach in three of the schools used to conduct the observation and the interviews.

Moreover, there was almost a universal agreement by all the teachers observed and interviewed who took part in the initial 5 days orientation workshop that, the orientation workshop was very important. It was too short for them to master the new approaches, specifications, and concepts, skills, knowledge and competencies. The teachers explained that the orientation workshop would have been better and helpful if the initial 12 days orientation workshop designed by EQUALL was organised (Hartwell, 2010). This could have helped them acquired the basic skills and knowledge of the language and literacy subject. These teachers were again with the opinions that, the initial 5 days orientation did not have any impact on the teaching delivery of the language and literacy subject since some of the necessary components of the subject especially the teachers' guide, the big books and the syllabus that would be needed during the initial 5 days orientation workshop to help them understand the scope and sequence of the teacher's guide, standard and milestones, and the glossary were not supplied during the workshop. This affected them during class delivery. The teachers expressed that, when the training began, it was also anticipated that all he

NALAP curriculum materials (teachers' guide, pupils book, big book, readers, alphabet cards, and conversational posters) would be available so that they would be able to immediately begin to use them during the training session but that was not the case. Training manuals were the only source of materials provided during the training as already explained. As evidence to support this explanation, a P3 teacher asserted that;

'The language and literacy teacher's guide is the most critical NALAP tool without it the teacher may make use of other materials'. Since the teacher's guide was not supplied during the orientation workshop. "Some of us teach, using the training manual but this is likely to be unsystematic and unlikely to contribute to pupils' literacy skills development".

On the issue of interest to teach the subject almost all the teachers interviewed expressed their lack of interest to teach the subject because they were finding it very difficult to prepare lesson notes on the subject, master the strategy terms in the teachers' guide and go about the specifications in the pupils books which contain sample of the activities to be performed in each 90 minutes lesson in both the Ghanaian language and the English language versions.

This clearly attest to the fact of the declaration made by Aliyu (2007) that, teachers' perceptions sometimes guide their teaching delivery. This also means that despite the amount of skills and competencies that teachers may hold, it is their beliefs and perceptions that are more likely to dictate their actions in their classroom delivery regardless of their pre-service exposure and preparation.

### **Research Question 3**

#### **What professional support or training do teachers need to help them teach the language and literacy subject effectively?**

The issue of teachers' professional development or training to help them teach the language and literacy subject effectively is very important to be discussed. Notwithstanding this fact, some issues were raised by the teachers interviewed showing that professional development is very necessary to help them continue to teach the language and literacy subject effectively. This clearly shows that there was a consensus by the teachers observed and interviewed that a staff professional support or training is mostly needed for effectively teaching and sustaining the use of the language and literacy strategies.

The strategy of developing a team of District Teachers Support Team, Trainers within each district, the curriculum leaders, and the head teachers within each school was based on the expectation that after the training, during classroom teaching and learning, teachers would receive further support or training from these trainers in their schools to help them continue to teach the subject effectively. Unfortunately, this was not the case according to majority of the teachers observed and interviewed. The reality was that, the study found that 21 (84%) of the teachers interviewed especially P1 teachers had not participated in any professional training to help them teach the subject effectively since the inception of the language and literacy subject in their schools apart from the initial 5 days training which some of them attended at the beginning of implementation. This contradicts the views of Bruce, Marsha and Emily (2004) that, for instructions to be successful teachers must spend time developing their knowledge and understanding of the language and literacy as well as their awareness of pupils' background and experience. Only (2) two teachers representing

16% reported participating only once in their former districts on how to prepare some of the teaching and learning materials in the pupils' book.

A basic two teacher complained that, she in particular had written officially through her circuit supervisor to the District Teacher Support Team (DTST) to organise an in-service training for them to help them teach the subject effectively but to no avail. This P 2 female teacher reiterated that:

“From time to time, I had intended to talk to the Municipal Director of Education about my opinion or suggestions related to the teaching and pupils learning of the language and literacy, but as I said, nobody would be approachable, and I'm afraid my suggestion will not be accepted”.

Moreover, during the interview specific questions were asked regarding what immediate or long term support the teachers needed. Out of the 25 teachers interviewed, 15 representing 60% considered collegial support as most helpful. That is teachers getting support from their colleague teachers who are teaching the language and literacy subject in their schools or another school. Those teachers explained that, collegiality is a key concept which help teachers to develop the culture of learning and sharing ideas with each other in order for them to overcome their difficulties and limitations.

Individuality, teachers may have limitations or challenges in their effort to improve upon their teaching competencies. In order to overcome such limitations of challenges, they need to collaborate with each other as colleague professionals. These teachers continued that, teachers can interact with one another to share their teaching experiences, ideas and knowledge, thereby influencing one another to employ good teaching practices. Through such collegiality, they can improve their teaching

competencies. These opinions were heard frequently from teachers interviewed in other schools, such as;

“Collegiality offers teachers the opportunity to improve their own competencies continuously base on their daily teaching activities and experiences at the classroom level and through the sharing of ideas with colleague teachers”.

“Teachers in every basic school must be given a day within every month to come together to plan a lesson in a particular topic of language and literacy and select a teacher who is competent in that topic area to present it. The other teachers observe the lesson and record their observation. The teachers discuss the strengths and challenges of the lesson presented and offer suggestions to improve subsequent lesson. This helps to improve the teacher’s professional competencies.

If all of these are done well, the quality of the teacher can be enhanced”. A teacher in P2 also narrated that;

“It is extremely useful to dialogue with other teachers on how to prepare some of the specified learning materials in the pupil’s big books and how to teach some of the topics in the pupil’s books. Well, I think being able to sit down with other teachers that are using the NALAP books and discuss the topics, well, this will help”.

This is in line with the views of Savage and Amstrong (2000) that, teachers who have had an opportunity to practice in this type of activity tend to work more productively when they are assigned to teach than those teacher who have not.

Few of the teachers 3 (12%) explained that, they also needed support from their curriculum leaders. The curriculum leaders were the teachers selected from lower



primary school and trained specifically by the District Teacher Support Team (DTST) to help other teachers in the form of in-service training to teach topics they consider as challenging. The main responsibility of curriculum leaders is to sensitise and organise effective school Base In service training for teachers to teach all challenging topics in the teachers' guide.

Teaching and learning materials preparation and usage was also needed by some of the teachers 5 (20%) as support. These teachers argued that, it is difficult to prepare some of the recommended materials in the teachers' guide and in the pupil's big books.

A P2 teacher said that;

“It would be extremely better for a demonstrator to show how to construct a teaching and learning material using local available materials”.

These teachers felt if all the materials needed could be prepared for them by experts, it would be helpful. A teacher teaching in P3 also stated that;

“There are too many materials in the big books to help me incorporate them in my lesson to teach. I have to jump over some of them due to difficulty in the preparation and usage. Although it is hard to do so, I select something else for enhancing the pupil's knowledge and skills of reading fluency”.

A P1 teacher also narrated that;

“The teaching and learning materials specified in the teacher guide and the pupils' textbooks were very engaging as far as the topics in their textbook is concerned but they are very difficult to prepare and use so there should be an in-service training to help us learn how to prepare

some of them. The teacher felt if all the materials needed could be prepared for them by experts, it would be helpful”.

Supervisory support was also viewed by few of the teachers interviewed 2 (8%) as very important. A class three teacher said that;

“It was really helpful having a dialogue with your immediate supervisor after he or she had come to observe you on how to teach a lesson in the language and literacy subject. Having someone observes you ... not in a fault finding way but in a cordial relationship situation was very helpful”. In confirmation to the above assertion.

Agezo and Baafi-Frimpong (2010) explained that, instead of a supervisor telling teachers how better to do their work, the supervisor rather works with them to discover how to improve the total teaching-learning situation. Making it more of a co-operative effort.

Lesson notes preparation was also mentioned by 12 (36%) of the teachers interviewed as very critical to be considered. These teachers explained that it is very difficult to prepare the 90 minute lesson notes for both the English language and Ghanaian language topics to teach. A P1 teacher narrated that, they were only asked to teach the subject as teachers. However, this was not entirely the case as they had to some extent made their own classroom decisions as the following quotes illustrates;

“When we see that it is very difficult to prepare lesson notes on some of the topics, to help us in our classroom delivery but there is no way to let our supervisors in the Directorate understand our challenges and suggestions, we intentionally ignore the lesson note preparation, the specifications and the instructions. We only follow those we think are suitable in the pupil’s book and teach”.

These teachers stressed that;

“The strategy terms suggested in the syllabus and the teacher’s guides sound attractive, but we use our way according to the pupils need and differences because it is very difficult to prepare notes”.

Key elements of professional support most of the teachers interviewed admitted they needed to help them teach the language and literacy subject effectively included;

1. How to prepare language and literacy lesson notes using the teachers’ guide, syllabus and the pupils’ text books.
2. Help for teachers who are not fluent readers and writers in the Ghanaian language.
3. How to use the NALAP methodology especially the strategy term and their corresponding traditional methods in the teachers’ guide.
4. How to prepare specified teaching and learning materials which emphasize much greater pupil engagement and interaction.
5. How to assess the pupil’s achievement and performance using the School Based – Assessment strategies in the teachers’ guide and the syllabus.
6. How to teach some of challenging topics in the form of a demonstration lesson. According to Bruce, Marsha and Emily (2004), all these can be done through effective in-service training which would provide teachers with some knowledge, skills and other competencies necessary to perform.

#### **Research Question 4**

#### **What challenges do teachers encounter in the process of teaching the language and literacy subject?**

As pointed out earlier in the literature, Wang and Chang (2005), indicated that, teachers failure to implement new policies as policy makers hoped is because teachers as implementers may often lack the capacity, skills, knowledge and clarity about the policy to work in ways that are consistent with the policy. When teacher's educational background, teaching skills, creativity and analytical thinking fall short of expectations then there is a sense of danger (silver & skuja-steele, 2005). These statements could be true from the findings because the observations revealed that majority of the teachers were not able to vary some of the strategy terms which are the accepted and specified strategies in the teacher's guide to help them achieve the intended objectives of the lesson prepared. Some of these challenges can also be seen in the following ways during observation;

1. Teachers found it difficult to recognise and use words related to core topics and activities from the language and literacy teachers guide, the syllabus and the pupils books. For example, weather - cloud; wet – rains.
2. They found it difficult to produce and discriminate between distinctive sounds.
3. They found it difficult to recognise and use simple instructional language. For example, match, copy, slow.
4. They found it very difficult to express a greater variety of communicative meaning. For example, apologizing, agreeing and disagreeing.
5. They found it difficult to use different words orders in order to distinguish meanings. For example, statements verses questions.

There were many more cases when the teachers were not fluent readers to the prescribed Ghanaian language they were teaching. This affirmed the findings of Adger (2010) that teachers themselves are not fluent in the reading of the Ghanaian language texts and rather than bringing forth the meaning within the pupils books.

A teacher's fluency in reading, speaking and writing of the Ghanaian language has an obvious and direct effect on handling NALAP lessons and of course enables the teacher to read, understand and effectively use the NALAP instructional materials (Lehher, 2009). When the teacher has command over the Ghanaian language and explains concepts in different ways so that learners understand, they help to equip the majority of children leaving the basic education system with skills of literacy that would improve their learning abilities (Hartwell 2010).

Generally, I found that the teachers observed had difficulty in covering the lesson and the sequence of lessons in the time available. When the questions were posed during the interview on what challenges the teachers were facing in the process of teaching the subject, majority 15 (60%) of the teachers listed large class size, over 60 pupils in P2 and P3 classes and over 70 pupils P1, pupils low language proficiency, heavy workloads each term, preparation of daily lesson notes, completing required teaching task, pupils depending too much on them for instruction and the reading and writing of the prescribed Ghanaian language (Asante twi). One of the teachers in P2 said that:

“As for me, I'm a Fante and Fante is the language I learnt since my schooling, so I can't read the 'twi' language and explain it to teach the pupils but since I'm here, I have to try”.

This clearly indicated that selection and postings of teachers to these schools ought to have been guided by the prescribed choice of the language of the teachers

and the schools because the fundamental premise of NALAP is that pupils learn to read and write best when they do so in a language that they understand and speak through their teachers (Lehher, 2009).

Some of the teachers 8 (32%) also reported that pupils who had not had previous exposure to the language and literacy strategies and had not learnt to read in a Ghanaian language in P1 were finding it very difficult to use the P2 and P3 language and literacy books. This challenge to the teachers is a threat to effective teaching and learning of the language and literacy subject in all schools.

Time was also a challenge a few teachers, 5 (20%) mentioned throughout the interviews. Time to study and learn the strategy terms, time to prepare full 90 minutes language and literacy lesson notes and finding time to prepare some materials and work it into their lesson were seen as challenges. A teacher narrated that;

“It’s time consuming and takes a while to teach pupils as well as monitoring their attitude and progress so time is the biggest challenge”.

Many of the teachers 19 (76%) also reported that, teacher confidence and expertise were critical to successful teaching of the language and literacy subject. Evidence to support this proposition is stated below by a P3 teacher.

“I don’t have the confidence and expertise to incorporate some of the strategy terms in the teaching guide into the lessons I have to teach. Some of these strategy terms are very difficult”.

This challenge which most of the teachers mentioned especially with three of the strategy terms which are very paramount. These are: phonic approach, language experience approach (LEA) and whole - part- approach. In the let’s read and write series, the phonic approach and the whole – part- whole approach are skillfully combined taking into account the best out of the two approaches. Language is

introduced on the assumption that children can learn to read and write better using meaningful and “connected” text rather than disconnected words and phrases. Children are exposed to many different genres of text, poems, stories, non-fiction, recipes, invitations and traditional tales. A key instructional strategy employed is the Language Experience Approach (LEA) which helps children to conjure up a story from a stimulus picture. The teacher then writes the story for the children. In this way, children learn to link what they think and say with that they write or the teacher writes. Alongside, children identify letters and words within the text so that they can learn basic sound – letter combinations – the phonic approach. Additionally, they study vocabulary within a meaningful context. The teachers interviewed realized that as they become more confident with the strategy terms, so do their learners. Teacher confidence and expertise with the strategy terms were critical to successful explanation to these concepts to their pupils to achieve the pronunciation of letter sounds and short sentences in their everyday life.

“Phonic strategy has been a struggle for me in learning how to teach it and having time to allow myself and the pupils to get comfortable with the process. Actually, I don’t have the expertise and the insight into this critical approach. So using the approach to teach reading and understanding to my pupils is not easy for me” (P1 teacher). Edwards (2008) shared similar view that teachers face challenges of inability to apply phonic analysis to both easy and difficult words.

Although, lack of confidence and expertise were considered by most of the teachers as a challenge at one point in the teaching and learning of the language and literacy subject, it was a challenge that could be overcome as indicated by few of the teachers 6 (24%) who persevered and master these strategies. A P 3 teacher said:

“When I began to use the strategy more, I became comfortable with it. I think the impact has gone up because I was more comfortable with it and can convey to learners what they need to do. I think that most of these strategies that we are teaching aren’t skills and knowledge that our pupils just picked from the street or in their homes. I think that our influence and impact is pretty big and it’s true, as we become more comfortable we’re going to instil that in our pupils. But many of our pupils come in and they’ve heard the word reading, they’ve done a couple, but they don’t really know the process leading to the skills of reading fluency”.

A fifth major challenge narrated by the teachers interviewed was the initial lack of pupils success with pronunciation of letter names, words and reading of short sentences. Some of the teachers interviewed 4 (16%) viewed this as pupils resistance. Teaching the process of how to pronounce words, and reading short sentences were new to most of the pupils, if not all. The comments by the teachers interviewed focused a great deal on frustration on their part with pupils’ inability to pronounce, read simple words and short sentences as indicated by the comments listed below:

“The reading is the part my pupils don’t like. They do not take it seriously at all. They take this word and stick it pronunciation with another one. Getting it in their own word is a real challenge” (P2 teacher).

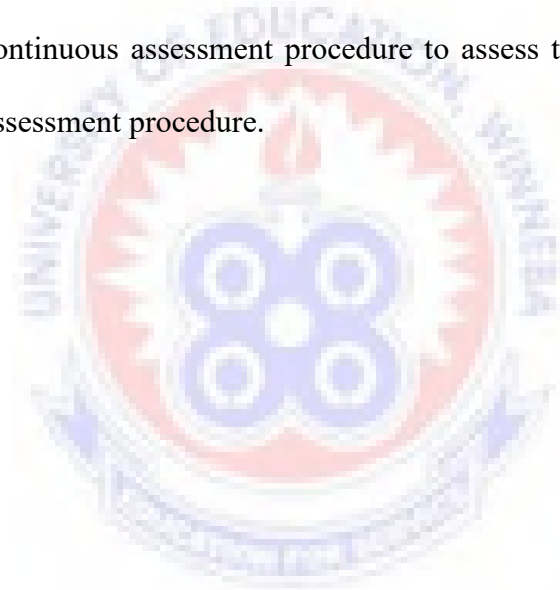
Few of the teachers interviewed 5 (20%) also complained bitterly about the assessment procedures in the teacher’s guide and the syllabus as very difficult. These teachers said that they had a problem with how to assess the pupils because they were



not conversant with the assessment procedures in the teacher's guide. The following comment by a teacher was rather common among all the teachers interviewed;

“We were posted to teach in these lower classes from college and have no idea as to how to use the assessment procedures in the teacher's guide. To assess the pupils using the School – Base Assessment (SBA) approach is very challenging to me”.

Finally, most of the teachers 16 (64%) interviewed were with the view that, the teacher's guide does not give specific procedure or direction as to how to assess the pupils using the assessment guide in them. That had led most of them to resort to the use of the continuous assessment procedure to assess their pupils instead of the School-Based Assessment procedure.



## CHAPTER FIVE

### SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This chapter of the study concerns the summary of the findings, conclusions and recommendations

#### Summary of the Study

The purpose of this thesis was to explore teachers' perception of implementation of the National Literacy Acceleration Programme (NALAP) in Basic 1-3 classes in Wiawso circuit of Sefwi Wiawso Municipality of Western Region of Ghana. This was necessary because it had been observed that the problem with reading, understanding and writing in these Basic Lower Classes in the circuit had been further complicated by issues regarding the implementation of the National Literacy Acceleration Programme (NALAP).

The objectives of the study were to;

1. Find out the methods teachers use to teach the language and literacy subject.
2. Ascertain the professional support or training teachers need to continue to teach the language and literacy subject effectively in these lower classes.
3. Find out how the teachers perceive the initial five days in-service training given to them in relation to the implementation of the NALAP.
4. To find out the challenges teachers face in the course of teaching the language and literacy subject which emanated from the NALAP in their classes.

Observation checklist and semi-structured interviews protocol were the main instruments used to gather all the data. The target population of the study consisted of all the 50 teachers who taught language and literacy in these thirteen Basic lower Primary schools in Wiawso circuit of Sefwi Wiawso Municipality. Purposive sampling technique was used to select all the 25 teachers from these thirteen Basic

Lower Primary Schools in Wiawso Circuit to form case study for this thesis. The teachers' views and opinions were captured qualitatively and underpinned by the interpretive paradigm based on constructivist epistemology standpoint.

The researcher began the actual observation in the first term of the 2014/2015 academic year. Face to face interview was also conducted in the 2nd term of 2014/2015 academic year which centered on the research questions. The researcher explored, probed and asked questions for clarification to elicit more relevant views, explanations and opinions from the participants during the interview. The researcher followed the "interpretive model" in the qualitative paradigm to analyse the observation made and the responses from the interview protocol. Being a case study design using qualitative approach, the researcher transcribed and presented the interview data through the combination of reading the written notes and listening to the audio-tape conversations by referring back to the research questions to check consistencies. The researcher described and supported the themes that emerged with direct quotations from the interview conversations. The findings were then discussed.

### **Key Findings**

Among other things the study found that; Out of the twenty-five teachers sampled for the study, 24 representing 96% have more teaching experience to enable them teach the language and literacy subject effectively. With regard to the level of education of respondents, twenty-two representing 88% also have the professional qualification to enable them teach the language and literacy subject effectively.

Majority of the teachers 17 (68%) conducted classroom teaching exclusively in accordance with the activities in the "pupils books" assigned to them only instead of adherence to the pre-specified instructional activities set out in the teacher's guide, the syllabus and the pupil's books. Cultivating pupils reading skills with the activities

in the teacher's guide, pupils books and the syllabus to help them improve their reading, understanding and writing skills without difficulty was fully covered in their teaching by only 8(32%) of the teachers.

Almost 68% of the teachers sampled for the interviewed complained that they did not have a sound working knowledge and deep understanding of the content in the teacher's guide and that served as a significant impediment to building the teachers confidence to teach the language and literacy subject effectively in their classrooms. This also seemed to prevent them from trying to use the strategy terms in the teacher's guide.

Majority of the teachers (80%) in P2 and P3 had primarily adopted a teacher-centered approach during teaching instead of adherence to the recommended methods, techniques and strategies in the teacher's guide and the language and literacy syllabus which specify the use of the learner-centered approach to teaching. Only 20% of the teachers in P2 and P3 who took part in the interview insisted that they were applying the learner-centered approach in their teaching and learning delivery. These teachers emphasized that they normally used the strategy terms in the teacher's guide with their appropriate corresponding traditional methods respectively to help their pupils develop the skills of reading fluency, understanding and writing.

Some of the teachers interviewed still used a large amount of English Language to teach the language and literacy topics to their learners. Even though, the "Asante twi" was the approved Ghanaian Language to be used to teach asante twi topics in the teacher's guide, the pupils big books and the syllabus in these lower classes. Only few of the teachers who teach in these lower classes used the "asante twi" (LI) to teach the asante twi topics in the teacher's guide and the syllabus to the pupils in their classes.

Out of the 25 teachers who were interviewed, only 5(20%) participated fully in the initial 5 days orientation workshop. Almost 20(80%) of these teachers did not participate in the initial 5 days orientation workshop towards the introduction of the language and literacy subject in these basic lower classes. Meanwhile, these 20% teachers who even participated in this initial workshop insisted that the workshop did not have any influence or impact on their teaching delivery of the language and literacy subject and therefore they were not confident in teaching the language and literacy subject since;

1. The initial 5 days orientation workshop was too short for them to master the new approaches, specifications, concepts, skills, knowledge and the competences needed to help them teach the subject effectively.
2. All the components that would be needed during the workshop were also not supplied.
3. The use of the teacher's guide, the assessment strategies in the teacher's guide, the strategy terms in the teacher's guide, the syllabus, teaching and learning materials and the preparation of the language and literacy lesson notes were not fully developed during this initial 5 days orientation workshop.

There was a consensus by all the teachers observed and interviewed that a staff professional support or training is mostly needed for effectively teaching and sustaining the use of the language and literacy strategies. Almost 60% of the teachers said that they needed support from their curriculum leaders on how to teach some of the challenging topics in the teacher's guide, 28% of the teachers also insisted that they needed support on preparation of some of the teaching and learning materials in the teacher's guide which emphasis much greater pupil engagement and interaction and 60% of the teachers emphasized that they needed support on how to prepare the

90 minutes lesson notes using the teacher's guide, syllabus and the pupils books.

Other key elements of professional support most of the teachers interviewed admitted needed to help them teach the language and literacy subject effectively included;

1. Help for teachers who are not fluent readers and writers in the prescribed Ghanaian language.
2. How to use the NALAP methodology especially the strategy terms and their corresponding traditional methods in the teachers' guide and the syllabus.
3. How to assess the pupil's achievement and performance using the School-Based Assessment Strategies in the teachers' guide and the syllabus.

All these can be done through effective in-service training which would provide teachers with some knowledge, skills and other competencies necessary to perform.

Majority of the teachers (72%) were not able to vary some of the strategy terms which are the accepted and specified strategies in the teacher's guide to help them achieve the intended objectives of the lessons prepared to teach and also not fluent readers in the prescribed Ghanaian language (asante twi) they were teaching. In effect, this has an obvious and direct effect on handling language and literacy lessons and of course hinders the teacher's reading, understanding to effectively use the NALAP instructional materials. This also had a number of other unfortunate consequences. First, many teachers taught without using appropriate strategies and methods. Second, teachers selected less challenging topics to teach leaving the more challenging topics which needed some strategy terms

Generally, all the teachers observed and interviewed had difficulty in covering the lessons and the sequence of lessons in the time available, study and learn the strategy terms and work it into their lessons so time was the challenge most of the

teachers mentioned through-out the interviews. Almost 36% of the teachers also reported lack of expertise with three of the strategy terms – Phonic Approach, Language Experience Approach (LEA) and Whole-Part-Whole-Approach, 32% of the teachers said that pupils who had not had previous exposure to the language and literacy strategies and had not learnt to read in a Ghanaian language in KG1 and 2 found it very difficult to use the P1, P2 and P3 language and literacy books. The teachers described this challenge as a threat to effective teaching and learning of the language and literacy subject in all schools, 24% of the teachers narrated that, lack of pupils' success with pronunciation of letter names, words and reading of short sentences were viewed as the pupils' resistance.

### **Conclusions**

Many people may quickly react that once there are teachers who have the various qualifications and enough teaching experience, the purpose of inserting the language and literacy subject in these lower classes would be achieved. But it is an indisputable fact from the findings that teachers face challenges in the teaching and learning of the language and literacy subject in their schools.

As it has already been identified, the success of children learning the language and literacy subject in their early age depends largely on the knowledge a teacher has on the content, the teaching methods a teacher uses with them and the appropriate child-centered activities adopted in the teaching and learning process.

Notwithstanding this fact, the findings have proved that teachers lacked the prerequisite knowledge, skills and competencies to effectively teach the language and literacy subject to help pupils improve upon their reading and writing abilities. Therefore, with the importance attached to this subject, it was suggested that continuous in-service training should be put in place for teachers especially newly

posted teachers who teach language and literacy subject in the basic lower level to help them adopt the right methodology and the right assessment procedures. This in-service training will also help the teachers become more abreast with the content and put the right strategies in the teacher's guide and syllabus in place to help pupils overcome most of these deficiency to improve upon their language proficiency.

At the same time, strict supervision by both head teachers and circuit supervisors should be enforced whilst Curriculum Leaders in these basic Lower Primary Schools are well resourced to monitor how teachers teach challenging topics in the teacher's guide and the language and literacy syllabus effectively. The application of child-centered activities could also be used to enhance pupils' performance in reading, writing and understanding.

### **Recommendations**

From the results of this study and conclusions drawn, it is important to make the following recommendations to help improve upon the teaching and learning of Language and Literacy subject in Ghanaian Basic Lower Primary Schools.

It was discovered that most of the teachers in this study were not able to use the recommended methods and strategies in the teacher's guide and the syllabus to teach the language and literacy subject effectively especially the strategy terms and their corresponding traditional methods. In this case, the researcher recommends that, Ghana Education Service should make sure to depend on the District Master Trainers to train the teachers well to adopt the right methodology and put the necessary strategies in the teacher's guide into practice so that pupils can overcome most of these problems and improve upon their language proficiency.



Again, the researcher recommends that GES should lay much emphasis on the use of the L1 in teaching the “asante twi” topics in the language and literacy subject since children are better prepared to learn to read a second language such as English when the concept of reading and writing have been established in the mother-tongue.

More so, the researcher recommends that reading and writing as aspects in the language and literacy subject could be treated as a subject on its own. Much attention should also be given to reading and writing at all levels of education in Ghana. The formation of reading and writing clubs should also be encouraged in all Basic Lower Primary Schools with devoted English teachers as coordinators. This is because reading and writing play significant roles in essay writing, reading comprehension and even summary writing. If pupils are conversant with reading and writing, their chances of doing well in other fields will be high.

Furthermore, G.E.S. should make sure to organize continuous in-service training to all newly posted teachers who are teaching in the lower primary schools specifically on how to teach the language and literacy subject effectively. The focus of this training should be drawn from the findings of this study, particularly issues of methods, the use of the strategy terms in the teacher’s guide, and Language and literacy lesson notes preparation.

It is further recommended that a second round of orientation and training of the District Master Trainers, curriculum leaders and the teachers in KG to P3 should be given. The training should address the high attrition rate of early grade teachers and the need to train their replacements.

The agenda for this training should be drawn from the findings of this study, particularly issues of teachers’ concepts of literacy and methods, the use of the

Teacher Guide, assessment strategies and for selected areas, help with L1 reading and teaching.



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## APPENDIX

### APPENDIX A

#### Classroom Observation Guide:

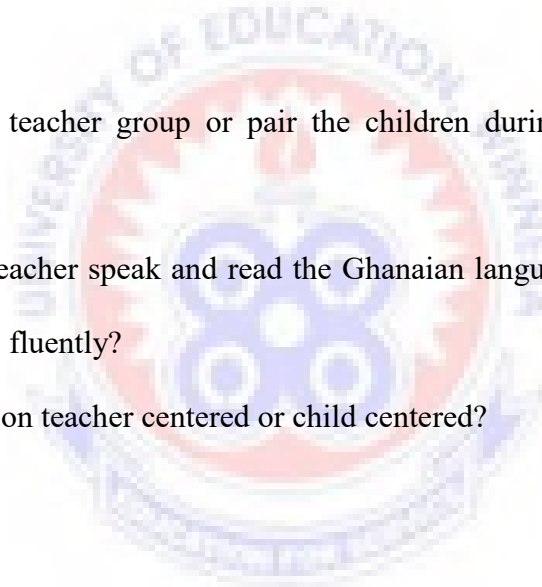
##### General information:

1. Name of school:
2. Name of teacher:
3. Class level
4. Subject:
5. Observer:
6. Date of Observation
7. Time started:
8. Children Present: Boys = Girls=
9. Language of instruction:
10. Time ended:

##### Focus of the Observation

1. Does the teacher use the (3) basic NALAP Curriculum materials effectively in his/her lesson? (Conversational posters, big books with pictures, teachers' guide, Syllabus and supplementary readers.
2. Is the teacher able to use the conversational posters appropriately in his or her lesson?
3. How appropriate is the statement of the specific objectives(s)?
4. How appropriate and relevant or the conversational posters incorporated in the lesson?

5. Are the teacher and learner activities relevant to the lesson or the topic that will develop the necessary knowledge and skills to the children?
6. Is the topic relevant to the child's immediate environment?
7. Is the evaluation exercise appropriate and relevant to achieve the objective?
8. Is the teacher conducting most of the talking or the child?
9. What method does the teacher use?
10. Is the method appropriate and relevant to the topic?
11. Is the teacher able to use the strategy terms in his / her lesson?
12. How much is the Ghanaian – Language and English Language used in the class?
13. Does the teacher group or pair the children during and after teaching and learning?
14. Can the teacher speak and read the Ghanaian language and speak the English Language fluently?
15. Is the lesson teacher centered or child centered?



## **APPENDIX B**

### **Interview protocol for Teachers**

My name is Bih-Ababio Edmund and I'm M.Phil. Student of University of Education, Kumasi. You have been consideration for selection for this thesis because you teach in the basic lower primary school. This thesis is being conducted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the award of a Master of Philosophy (M.Phil) degree in educational leadership by the University of Education, Winneba. I would be glad if you could permit me to interview you to provide the needed information to help in the above thesis. You are assured that your response and identity will be respected and kept confidential and shall be used only for the thesis. Thank you.

#### **The background of the teacher**

1. Please, what is you highest qualification?
2. How many years have you taught as a teacher?  
Teacher's language background
3. What language did you study at your highest level(s) if applicable?
4. What approved Ghanaian Language is used to teach the language and literacy in your school?
5. How well do you understand the language used in the school?
6. How well do you speak the language used in the school?
7. How well do you write the language used in the school?

#### **Training given to teachers towards the teaching of language and literacy**

8. How many years have you been in this school?
9. Do you teach language and literacy in your class?

10. If yes, how long have you been teaching this subject?
11. If no, why do you not teach the subject?
12. Have you received any training or workshop on how to teach this subject effectively?
13. For how long did the training take, if applicable?
14. Were you satisfied with the number of days, the skills and knowledge gained during the training which will help you to teach the subject effectively?
15. If no, why?
16. Have you been invited to attend any other workshop or in-service training on how to teach the subject effectively?
17. If yes, what are some of the things you learnt during the training or the workshop if applicable?
18. Were you taken through enough activities and methods to help you organize the topics to teach?

### **Teaching methods, techniques and strategies**

19. What are some of the teaching methods you normally use in teaching the language and literacy?
20. What other methods or strategies have you developed to help you teach this subject effectively?
21. Have you received some or all the necessary NALAP curriculum materials with some methods and strategies of teaching? (Conversational posters, teachers', guide, syllabus, big books or pictures' books and supplementary readers).
22. Are you able to teach the topics in the curriculum materials? Yes / No

23. If no, why?
24. Do you understand and able to incorporate the strategic terms in the teachers' guide in your lessons?
25. Are assignments / home works specified in the teacher's guide for easy school-base assessment?
26. Are you able to assess the pupils using the assessment procedures specified in the teachers' guide?
27. Are the topics in the textbooks adequate and relevant enough to help pupils develop the concept of the language and literacy using an appropriate methods, techniques and strategies?

#### **Problems Teachers Face in the Process of Teaching**

28. Can you please enumerate some of the problems that you consider to be hindering the effective implementation of the NALAP in your class or school?
29. How have you tried to overcome these problems if any?