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METHODS AND CURRENT CHALLENGES IN TEACHING ENGLISH: A CASE IN BAWKU MUNICIPALITY

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METHODS AND CURRENT CHALLENGES IN TEACHING ENGLISH: A CASE IN BAWKU MUNICIPALITY

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DECLARATION

STUDENT'S DECLARATION

I, **Francis Bukari**, declare that this thesis with the 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 any other degree elsewhere.

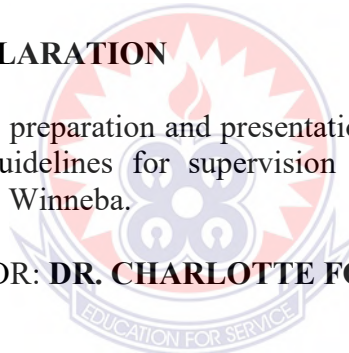SIGNATURE…………………………………….

DATE…………………………………………….

SUPERVISOR'S DECLARATION

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

NAME OF SUPERVISOR: **DR. CHARLOTTE FOFO LOMOTEY**

SIGNATURE……………………………………

DATE……………………………………………

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DEDICATION

I specially dedicate this study to my precious daughter Fant Perpertua Kombat, my wife Faustina Ane Kombat, parents and also to my siblings for all their support, love and for being my source of inspiration.

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ABBREVIATION

GES	-	Ghana Education Service
ESL	-	English as a Second Language
LI	-	First Language
L2	-	Second Language
USAID	-	The United States Agency for International Development
UNICEF	-	United Nations Children's Emergency Fund
JHS	-	Junior High School
SHS	-	Senior High School

ABSTRACT

The study investigated the methods as well as the challenges of teaching English as a second language in the Bawku Municipality. The objectives of the study were to examine the methods of teaching English Language, to examine the challenges to effective teaching and learning of English language in the Municipality, and to examine measures of improving teaching and learning of English language in the Bawku Municipality. The study adopted the qualitative design, using questionnaire, observation and interviews to obtain data from 200 teachers who were randomly sampled. The findings revealed that teachers lack the knowledge of the methods of teaching English. Most teachers adopted the Grammar-Translation method in teaching and none employed the Communicative Language Teaching Approach. The findings further indicated that lack multimedia resources, first language interference, inadequate pedagogical and content knowledge of teachers and lack of in-service training as challenges in teaching English. Other challenges also identified were lack of textbooks available for teaching, teachers' poor pedagogical and content knowledge of the English language, and large class sizes. To improve the teaching and learning of English, measures such as the provision of in-service training to teachers, motivation of teachers, provision of infrastructure, ensuring equal pupils and teachers' ratio in the class, provision of learning materials, and intensification of supervision were suggested. Further measures include mixing the mother tongue and English in the introductory classes, exposing students to lots of words and books, and integration of the four skills. Based on the results, it is recommended that the Ministry of Education, Ghana Education Service, and relevant stakeholders in the educational sector should provide in-service training for teachers of English to improve their skills. Adequate teaching and learning materials should also be made available together with adequate classrooms in order to put an end to the problem of overcrowded classrooms.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.0   Introduction

Modern English is sometimes described as the global Lingua Franca, (Graddol, 1997). Millions of people all over the world speak English since a working knowledge of English is required in certain fields, professions and occupations. In Ghana, many languages and dialects are spoken. In view of the linguistic and associated cultural differences, and as a result of the country's colonial past, English has been adopted as Ghana's official language. Unfortunately, examination results clearly show that the standard of English keeps falling. Therefore, there is the need to find out methods of teaching English and factors that have contributed to this poor state of affairs in Bawku Municipality of the Upper East Region of Ghana. The chapter presents the introduction to this research. It includes a discussion of the background to the study, statement of the problem, the objectives, research questions, limitations, delimitations, and the significance of the study. The chapter finally ends with the organization of the study.

1.1   Background to the study

Education is an engine for the growth and progress of any society (Aseidu-Addo, 2009). It not only imparts knowledge, skills and inculcates values, but it is also responsible for building human capital which breeds, drives and sets technological innovation and economic growth. English, the official language of Ghana, and it is also challenging to teach. English is a very old language and has undergone many forms and changes from Proto English derived from the Latin and the German culture to the Modern English which was established after in the post Renaissance period. Each version was simpler than the later (Bamgbose, 2000). Present day English is the

simplest adaptation of a very old Language and yet it is still difficult to teach this language effectively especially to those who speak English as a second language.

English language teaching has attracted greater attention and importance as never before in the context of its position as a global language. As an immediate offshoot of this scenario, the demand for communicative skills in English has been on the rise in all fields. Obviously the demand has brought a lot of pressure on English teachers to perform and produce good results. Consequently, English teachers and classroom practices in teaching English have come into sharp focus for the assessment of the state and stage of teaching English in Ghana classrooms. English language teaching is now at a crucial juncture as a number of methods, approaches and innovations have been discussed in series of seminars and conferences arranged at various colleges and universities in Ghana. A few of them have already been in practice for a considerable time but found to be short of expectations in improving the language skills of the stakeholders. It needs a lot of motivation, innovation and commitment on the part of all concerned to sincerely and seriously take a new approach, an experiment or a theory through the process of practice from a superficial level to a deeper one.

Mayer (2001) states that one of the foremost problems of education deals with the recruitment and preparation of teachers. In view of this, the government of Ghana has initiated certain policies aimed at improving the quality of teachers at the basic schools. The teacher training colleges have been upgraded into Degree Awarding Institutions (Colleges of Education) with better facilities. The universities have organized Distance Education programmes to enable as many as are willing to upgrade themselves to obtain either a diploma or degree. The Teacher Education Division of the Ghana Education Service has also organized the Untrained Teachers

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Diploma in Basic Education (UTDBE) programme to enrich the knowledge of 'pupil teachers' and improve their competencies since most of them are handling the basic schools. With the above stated interventions in place, coupled with a great percentage of the national budget on basic education in the form of capitation grants, school feeding and others, one would have expected a remarkable improvement in the performance of students. On the contrary, standards are falling. The situation is even worse when it comes to English assessment in the Bawku Municipality. A study of the BECE results from 2014 to 2018 gave the following appalling picture in the area of English language.

Table 1.1. Statistics on BECE English Language results of students in the Bawku Municipality from 2014 to 2018

Year	Total number of candidates	Number passed	Percentage
2014	2,583	1,008	35.6%
2015	2,031	858	42.3%
2016	1,851	838	39.4%
2017	1,668	708	34.8%
2018	1,667	795	37.1%

(Source: Bawku Municipal Education Directorate)

Various researchers had investigated and found a number of factors that contribute to poor performance of students in the English language at the basic level in several places. For instance, Etsey et al (2004), in their study of some private and public schools in Ghana, revealed that academic performance was better in private schools due to effective supervision of work. Paaku (2008) showed her concern about the poor academic performance in the BECE in some selected schools in the Ajumako-Enyan-Essiam district in the Central Region of Ghana. The study revealed that poor methods of teaching, negative attitude of students towards learning and

non-availability of relevant textbooks were some of the causes of poor academic performance of J.H.S. students.

Again, Oluwole (2008) investigated the impact of mother tongue on students' achievement in the English Language in Junior Secondary Certificate Examination in western Nigeria. The study brought to light that language background, lack of professional growth and development of teachers and lack of motivation caused students to fail in their examinations. Findings of these researchers were guiding policy makers in addressing the problem. Yet, students' performances continued to fall. There was therefore the need to conduct further research into the causes in order to find out other factors that had contributed to the low performance of pupils in English language and suggest ways of managing them.

According to Asangba (2016) factors that affect the teaching and learning of English language in Ghana are many. He said students in Ghana can be categorized into three; those in urban areas, those in rural areas and those in private schools. These categories of learners in Ghana face different challenges and opportunities in relation to infrastructure, teaching aids and quality teaching personnel hence, the problem of teaching English as a second language, to the Ghanaian learners' starts from the pre schooling. Teaching of English in Ghana has always been in difficult circumstances (Ampiah, 2003). This is so because of the large number of students in classrooms, bleak economic conditions, the cultural diversities, and so on. With the growing population in Ghana, there are no class where students' number is less than 60. As the students in the class are always heterogeneous, there is hardly any time to pay attention to the weak or creative child. Even the average child does not get enough experience in the use of language .There is no scope for individual attention. This certainly, hinders the intellectual growth of the child.

Furthermore, Adika (2012) states that most of the Ghanaian students are exposed to their mother tongues and most do not get adequate opportunities either to listen to or speak in English because of the poor social and economic backgrounds, they neither get enough exposure to English outside the classroom to improve themselves. Ahadzie (2000) also believes that students do not find any immediate need for English because most of them do not use the language for their day-to-day activities. Poverty and the sociological conditions also force them to neglect the language (Simpson, 2008). Andoh-Kumi (1999) also notes that learning a foreign language is not an easy task and the much needed exposure and practice are not available to achieve fluency in the use of the language Good teachers of English are found in small number in Ghana. Thus, not having a good teacher of English is common experience of all the students of English.

Most teachers of English are not trained by teacher training institutions in Ghana. Even those who went through training seem not to be properly trained because the materials and methodology used in these training programmes are out-dated. As such, it is the same limited experience that is shared. There is hardly any scope to improve intuitive and spontaneous knowledge of the language. With all these problems, discussed above, the standard of English in Ghana is deplorably low. Hence, a lot of responsibility is on the shoulders of the teachers to make their classes interesting and learning of English fruitful. They have to gear up to meet the demands of the situation and successfully perform their duties.

The teacher of English today is faced with a wide variety of teaching methods like the Grammar Translation Method, Direct Method, Bilingual Method and Audio-lingual method (Noor, 2018). Larsen-Freeman (2001) posits that no method can be intrinsically good or bad; it is either effectively used or not effectively used. Thus,

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every method needs to be tailored to the local situation and the content of teaching. The teachers of English should use a combination of different methods to teach English (Goodwyn & Fuller, 2012). In this regard, the Teacher Education Institutes can develop the resources in the form of audio-visual aids and handbooks of micro lessons related to core teaching skills in the context of Ghanaian classrooms and teaching-learning situations. A change is called for in the present approach to English language teaching because in the prevailing practice even after seven to eight years of formal English teaching, the students as a whole find it extremely difficult to actually use the language in normal communication, whether in the spoken or written mode. The language teacher, therefore, needs the right attitude to language learning and teaching, rather than a formal method. Das and Rajkhowa (2015) argue that in order for a particular classroom method of instruction to succeed, certain minimum essential pre-requisites by way of understanding and attitudes on the part of the teachers and students are to be adequately met, in addition to the administrative/ physical inputs such as size of the class, facilities of A-V aids, as well as the number of periods allotted to the teaching of English.

1.2 Statement of the problem

A survey of trends in the teaching and learning of the English language reveals that teaching and learning as key concepts go in tandem. The teaching of the English language by far needs to be taught in a way and manner that will boost students' knowledge and enthusiasm in the language, as the standards and performances in the English language in the formal educational sectors have taken a down turn. According to Brown (2000), in order to master the English language, learners have to be adequately exposed to all of the four basic skills; listening, speaking, reading and writing. In all, they need to be able to read and write. However,

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the standard of English among pupils of Bawku Municipality is on the decline. Despite regular workshops organized by Agencies like the Ghana Education Service (GES) and also the Millennium Development Goals to produce better teachers of English the pupils are still weak in English, especially reading and writing. A study conducted by UNICEF in March 2018 in the Bawku Municipality revealed that an alarming rate of 52% of pupils between classes one to six could not read or write. The inability of pupils to read and write has posed a lot of challenges to pupils. Hence, most of them usually do not continue their education after Junior High School because they usually fail in the final examination.

Previous studies in methods of teaching English language and challenges of teaching English language reveal that teachers' knowledge of the methods of teaching English is essential in the teaching and learning of English. It is pertinent to note that a lot of work has been done on methods of teaching English language and challenges of teaching English language in Europe, Asia and other African countries. Much work has not been done in Ghana, especially the northern part of Ghana. Notwithstanding this, there are studies on some challenges of teaching in Ghana. For example, Asangba (2016) conducted a study on the challenges that face teachers in their teaching of the English language and also examine the implications involved in the teaching and learning of the English language in Mampong. He employed qualitative research design with a population of one hundred and forty (140) students. His findings were that poor foundation in English, inadequate qualified teachers of English and L1 interference negatively affect the teaching and learning of English.

Similarly, Yeboah (2014) also conducted a study on the low performance of English students in the Basic Education Certificate Examination in the Sunyani Municipality. She used descriptive survey design with a population of 465

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participants. Her findings were that there were insufficient teaching and learning materials, large class size and misuse of instructional time. None of them investigated methods of teaching English by teachers at the basic level. As a result, that informed the need to investigate the methods of teaching English in the Bawku Municipality and also the challenges of teaching English in the Bawku Municipality. The findings will help teachers of English to adopt appropriate methods in teaching. Teachers will also be in the position to effectively combine methods in the classrooms. To do this, a qualitative design was employed to collect data from a population of 200 teachers of English.

1.3   Objectives of the study

Grounded on the background, the following objectives are formulated to guide the study:

1. To examine the methods and approaches used in teaching English Language to second language learners;
2. To determine the challenges to effective teaching and learning of English language in Bawku Municipality;
3. To investigate the strategies used in improving teaching and learning of English language in Bawku Municipality.

1.4   Research questions

Based on the background, it is necessary to examine the English Language teaching methods adopted by teachers, to examine the challenges of teaching English language in the Bawku municipality, and possible solutions to improve the teaching of English. Three research questions are formulated:

1. What are the methods used in teaching English Language to second language learners?

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2. What are the challenges affecting teaching and learning of English language in Bawku Municipality?

3. What are the strategies in improving teaching and learning of English language in Bawku Municipality?

1.5   Significance of the study

On the whole, this study contributes ideas for improving the teaching of English Language in schools. Specifically, the following could benefit from the findings of this study: English Language teachers could find and utilize the appropriate teaching methods, approaches, techniques and strategies so as to enhance the teaching and learning of English Language. Colleges and universities preparing teachers can benefit from the findings of this study. These institutions can become aware of factors that inhibit the learning of English Language, so as to institute measures to encourage trainees to teach using these techniques. Bodies such as the Ghana Association of Teachers of English (GATE) and Ghana Education Service (GES) can benefit by considering the findings of this study in developing instructional methods and becoming aware of the variables to manipulate in order to enhance teaching and learning. The study is also of great significance to English Language curriculum planners, the Curriculum Research and Development Division (CRDD) so that they will plan the curriculum bearing in mind these methods, approaches and techniques, in order to make it more of activity based. Also, the results are helpful to curriculum experts, scholars and researchers, so that further research can be carried out on using these techniques to enhance learners' performance in the classroom.

1.6   Organization of the study

The rest of the study is organized as follows: Chapter 2 presents the literature review, where an empirical analysis of relevant studies is done. The chapter also describes the conceptual framework adopted for the present study, as well as enumerates studies related to the present one. Chapter 3 describes the methodology used in carrying out the study. This part contains the research design, research approach, study area, research population of the study, sampling techniques and sample size. Variables and measurement procedures are also shown. Methods of data collection, data processing and analysis together with research ethical issues of the study are discussed. Ideas regarding validity and reliability of the study are also discussed. Chapter 4 presents the analysis of the data obtained from the field. Data collected were analyzed using Microsoft Excel and Microsoft Word in the form of figures and narrative format, and in line with the theory from Chapter 2. The study found that teachers of English in Bawku municipality lack second language teaching pedagogical skills. Some of the challenges in teaching English language in Bawku Municipality were large class size, poor teaching methods, lack of competent teachers, poor infrastructure and lack of teaching and learning resources. In addition, the mismatch between the language policy of Ghana and what is actually practised in the classroom was a challenge. Suggestions such as the provision of textbooks to all pupils, organising of in-service training to all teachers of English and improving classroom environment to be very conducive for learning were identified in the study. The last chapter contains a summary of the findings, conclusion and recommendations. The findings of the study suggest important conclusions. Recommendations are also made based on the findings of the study

1.7 **Conclusion**

In this chapter, the general overview of the study has been given. The situation that has necessitated the research into the low performance of pupils in reading and writing has been highlighted. The objectives, as well as the research questions that guide the study, have also been stated among other things. It is anticipated that findings of the study would give suitable and reliable answers to the questions posed in order for the objectives set for the study to be achieved.

CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

2.0   Introduction

This chapter reviews literature relevant to the study. The review is divided into three parts. The first part discusses history of teaching English in Ghana and teaching of English language in Ghanaian Schools. The second part discusses the conceptual framework of the study, which includes methods and approaches of teaching English, the challenges of teaching English language, and strategies in improving teaching and learning of English as a second language. The final part reviewed literature related to teaching English as a second language.

2.1   Historical sketch of English in Ghana

Accounts of the history of English in Ghana, especially, the initial contact between the British and the people of the Gold Coast (as Ghana was called then) in the 16th century and the story of how English emerged as the language of trade, education, governance, and as a cross-ethnic lingua franca abound (Adjaye, 2005). When the British first arrived in the early part of the 16th century, like the Europeans who had arrived before them, they trained some of the inhabitants as interpreters. From this perspective, Boadi (1994) describes the English used in Ghana in the early years as "Mercantile English". Later, the British pushed their European competitors out of business and acquired their forts and castles. These buildings were subsequently used to house schools for the teaching of English to the inhabitants on a more structured basis (Sackey, 1997). Sackey also points out that some of these English schools, especially the ones in Cape Coast survived into colonial times because of the extraordinary effort of Philip Quarcoe who gave his students lessons in reading, writing, and the study of the Bible. The colonial and missionary language

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policy also contributed to the consolidation of English in the country. Of significance is the role of one Reverend Denny who became school master of the Cape Coast Castle School in 1824. He advocated the exclusive use of English in the school, violations of which attracted a penalty. At the same time, the missionaries also saw the use of English as vital in their missionary work; therefore, English was used in several Wesleyan mission schools. Two educational ordinances were passed in 1822 and 1887 respectively, and these introduced into the English educational system financial support in the form of grants and a system for schools established by the missions and private persons. Accounts indicate that schools which used the indigenous languages as mediums of instruction could not qualify for financial support. Leadership in the Colonial Office in Britain felt that instruction in the native language could be left to the stimulus of self- interest and government subsidies were not needed to encourage them. In contrast, the Phelps-Stokes report (c.1920) advocated the use of indigenous languages in lower elementary stages of all schools, except in areas of linguistic heterogeneity where a common language of African origin could be used, (Sackey, 1997). Opposed to this, according to Sackey, was the Jeffrey 1951 study group commissioned by the Colonial Office which argued that the absence of empirical evidence to support the view that the literacy levels of children would be enhanced if they were first taught to read and write in the vernacular made such positions untenable. Parallels can be drawn between the colonial language policy and that of successive post-independence government policies. Governments have not been able to commit the resources needed for promoting the indigenous languages as mediums of instruction despite the various arguments that have been put forward to support it. The fate of the indigenous languages appears to have been left in the hands of the forces of language contact and the 'stimuli' of the interests of

linguists and academics to ensure their survival as vectors of education, literacy, and culture. Therefore, the debate then (colonial times) and now is no diff erent.

2.2 Teaching English as a second language in Ghana

A distinction is often made between learning a second language and learning a foreign language. A second language often refers to a language that has institutional and social role in the community (Ellis, 2008). Learning English in English speaking countries in order to function in school and in the community is considered learning a second language. In contrast, foreign language learning takes place in settings where the language plays no major role in the community and is primarily learned only in the classroom (Ellis, 2008). For example, learning French in Ghanaian schools is learning a foreign language, since French does not have an important role in order to function in Ghana.

Teaching English language skills is vital for Ghanaian workers who seek to participate actively in the global economy and want to have access to the information that forms the basis for social, educational and economic development (Burns & Richard, 2012). The assertion of Burns and Richard is because English language has become a lingua franca to the point that any literate, and educated person on the face of the globe is in a very real sense of deprivation if he/she cannot communicate in English. So in Ghana and by extension, Bawku Municipal, English language is seen as an extremely important subject. Proficiency in English language ensures progress in the educational ladder. It is the medium of instruction in upper primary (in the urban and some cosmopolitan areas like Bawku the study of English begin in the nursery school). Though good reasons have been given that pupils in the early stage of their education should be instructed in the mother tongue, sometimes it is rarely practiced. Teaching of English language in Ghana is largely based on traditional

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approaches that focus on grammar, vocabulary, and translation without paying much attention to communication. The Ghana Education service is mute about the appropriate approaches teachers of English should adopt in teaching English language at all levels. Textbooks developers scholars and Ghana's development partners such as the world Bank, European union, UNICEF, USAID who are contributing tremendously to the education of the Ghanaian children encourage teachers to adopt the communicative language teaching approaches.

According to Adika (2012), the debate on the formulation and implementation of a language policy for Basic level education in Ghana spans three centuries: the educational ordinances passed in 1822 and 1887; the Phelps-Stokes report of the 1920s; the erratic policies characterising post-independence (1957) attempts, and the eventual promulgation of an English-medium slanted policy in 2002. Early Ghanaian nationalist intellectuals of the late 19th and early 20th centuries such as Reverend J. B. Anaman, Reverend G. R. Acquaah, and Lawyer W. E. G. Kobina Sekyi were strong advocates of the use of Ghanaian languages at the basic levels of education, (Saah & Baku, 2011). From 1925 to 1951 (following the Phelps-Stokes report), a Ghanaian language was used as medium of instruction for the first three years. However, in the period 1951 to 1956, a Ghanaian language was used only for the first year.

Ironically, from 1957 (which marked Ghana's independence and an era of pan-Africanism evident in the foreign policies and rhetoric of Ghana's first president Dr. Kwame Nkrumah) to 1966 a Ghanaian language was not used at all, from 1967 to 1969 it was used only for the first year, and from 1970 to 2002 a Ghanaian language was used for the first three years, (Owu-Ewie, 2010). From 2007 till date English language and a Ghanaian language are used as a medium of instruction from pre-

school to class three while from basic four onwards English language is used as a medium of instruction. The reasons for these inconsistencies are not very clear, but the suggestion that successive governments may have adopted an implementation avoidance strategy is plausible (Yankah, 2006). The disconnection between the policy and its implementation is reiterated to by Andoh-Kumi (1999) who claims that the Ministry of Education hardly monitors the implementation of its own policy.

Therefore, it creates a situation where many schools do not bother to implement the policy, with the majority of primary school teachers unwilling to teach in the Ghanaian language, combined with grossly inadequate teaching and learning materials. The current language policy of Ghana which was promulgated in August 2007 specifies that English be used as the language of instruction from basic four through university; and that the indigenous languages are to be used as the mediums of instruction from pre-school to class three. The government argued that the new policy was to enable pupils to gain a high level of proficiency in English and Ghanaian language because all terminal examinations are conducted in those languages; to avoid delay in introducing English to children; to enable pupils to participate in and benefit from the global economy using a global language; and to bridge the gap between the academic performance of pupils in private and public schools.

2.3   Conceptual framework

Orodho (2005) defines a conceptual framework as a model of presentation of relationship between variables in the study which can be shown graphically or diagrammatically. Figure 1 shows the relationship between the school's related factors such as teaching and learning environment, contact hours, and teacher/pupil ratio, teacher related factors such as language teaching methods, teacher motivation

and teaching and learning strategies, and student related factors pupils' attendance, common language outside the school environment and mother tongue. The relationship between these three types of factors has some impact on student learning English as a language. Figure 2.1 shows that pupils learning English as a second language depend on both independent variables and intermediate variables (Alibakili, 2017). Sometimes independent variables may directly influence dependent variables that are; pupils can learn English without intermediate variables. For example, if a pupil's family uses English as their mother tongue at home then this may directly influence learning. Also independent variables together with intermediate variables can influence learning.

Independent variables   **Intermediate Variables**   **Dependent Variables**

-Language Teaching Methods (English)

-Teacher/pupil ratio
-Teaching/Learning environment

- Mother tongue

-Common language outside

-Teachers motivation

-Contact hours

- -Pupil's attendance

-Pupils' mastery of English
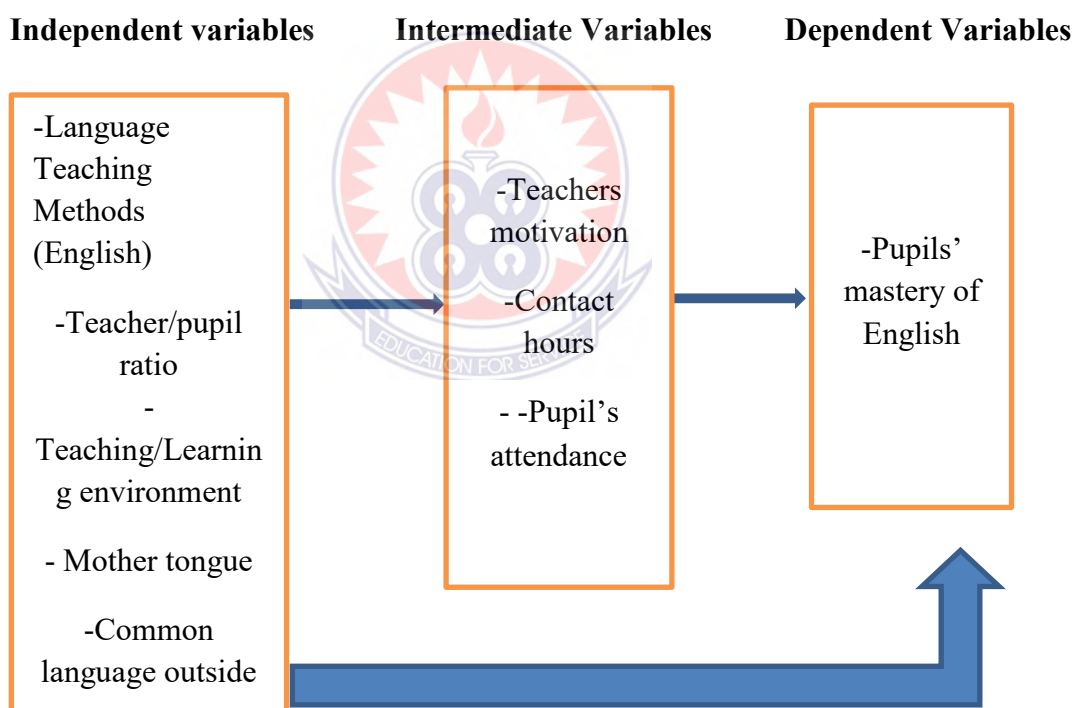
Figure 2.1 Conceptual framework (Adapted from Orodho, 2005)

From the diagram if the teacher has enough skills for teaching English language and has sufficient motivation, these can help the teacher to teach well and enable the learner to understand what is taught. The conclusion the researcher draws from the conceptual framework is that, effective teaching and learning takes place when the

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independent variables and the intermediate variable are effectives combined. This means that, the independent variables and the intermediate variables are essential for the acquisition of English language.

The implication of the independent variables is that if the method of teaching a second language learner does not meet the needs of that learner, it will not yield the desired result. Also, right materials, good infrastructure, regular attendance, and motivation can help in achieving the dependent variable-pupils' mastery of English. With a lot of contact hours, motivation and regular attendance will have a direct positive impact on the ability of a second language learner to acquire the language. Therefore, applying this conceptual framework in this study is a step in the right direction as it provides a good platform for looking at the peculiarities of the problem of pupils' inability to read and write.

2.3.1   *Methods of teaching English as a Second Language*

There is no single acceptable way to go about teaching language today (Larsen-Freeman, 2001). There has been a growing realization that people learn in different ways, and that approaches which suit one person may not suit another. For example, some outgoing personalities love to experiment and can hardly wait for the chance to try speaking the new language. Others, more reserved, prefer to listen and understand before speaking. Some people find that studying the grammar of the language is an important step for them in establishing a framework in learning language. Others never study the rules, but find that putting themselves in situations where they have to communicate is enough to trigger their learning. Against this backdrop, teachers of English have concluded that no single approach or method is appropriate for all learning styles (Yakubu, 2005). A good lesson will therefore be one in which you use a lot of activities taken from a variety of sources. By varying

your technique, you will give students of all styles the chance to shine some of the time. With this thought in mind, you can begin to appraise the language learning approaches used. Each approach has something to offer. Your task is to identify and exploit those elements.

The terms 'method' and 'approach' will be used interchangeably in this section. For example, the chapter refers to the Audio-lingual Method and the Communicative Approach. A number of different ways of distinguishing between methods and approaches have been proposed by experts in the field but the distinctions are usually blurred (Richard & Renandya 2002). They state that both deal with theory of the nature of language and language learning; with syllabus, learning and teaching activities, learner and teacher roles, and instructional materials; and with classroom techniques, practices, and behaviours. However, Olaofe (2013) believes there are fine distinctions in use methods, approaches, techniques and strategies, especially in second language teaching situations. He states that an approach refers to theories behind the nature and concept of language teaching and learning, and method is the practical realization of an approach. It includes various procedures and techniques to use in language teaching. Procedure is ordered sequence of techniques often described in terms of first thing to do, second or third steps to follow in teaching. A technique suggests sequential actions, activities and tactics used during teaching. The goal of any approach and method should be to awaken joy in creative use of English in an effective way. Various methods are discussed in this section.

2.3.1.1 Grammar-translation method

The grammar translation method of second language teaching is a traditional method of teaching (Abosnan, 2016). The main concern is to teach learners the target language through reading and then translating texts into the first language and there

are few opportunities for speaking and listening exercises (Brown, 2000). Users of this method assume that second language learners are able to speak the target language if they can translate from their first language to the second language. The basic aim of the grammar translation method is to assist learners master the target language by training them to learn the second language grammar rules. To teach second language using the grammar translation method, Baron (2006) states that the method is made up of a sequence of classroom activities in which the grammar rules are explained, studied, learned and used. The activities of the grammar translation method in class are that learners of the second language are given a bilingual list of vocabulary which they learn by memorizing. The method of teaching involves translating the text from the target language into the first language by the teacher or learners, with an explanation of unfamiliar words and grammatical rules.

2.3.1.2 Direct method

The Direct Method of language teaching was developed at the beginning of the 19th century in France and Germany as a reaction to the Grammar-Translation Method (Richards & Rodgers, 2014). The method was known as a reform movement (Richards & Rodgers, 2014), and its main philosophy was to enable students to learn the foreign language in the same way as they learnt their mother tongue. The basic rule of the direct method, according to Larsen-Freeman (2001), is that no second language should be learned through translation and that language must be used in a context. Therefore, in order to teach any language skill using the direct method procedures, the teacher should not allow learners to use their second language or bilingual dictionary because the method's main assumption is to convey meaning of the target language directly by the use of visual aids such as pictures, and charts (Akpan, 2016). Falsold and Connor-Linton (2006) argue that second language

learners acquire the target language naturally and directly if the teacher presents all information using actions and picture when required.

2.3.1.3 Audio-lingual method

The main maxim of the Audio-Lingual Method of teaching a foreign language is that the fluent 'use of a language is essentially a set of 'habits' that can be developed by a lot of practice' (Yule, 2010). The Audio-Lingual Method shares some features with the direct method such that both focus on how to use the language in listening and speaking. But according to Doughty (2003), the audio-lingual method focuses on using the second language as much as possible without reducing the use of the first language unlike the direct method. The audio-lingual method views language learning as habit formation improved through drills and repetition. The assumptions of the audio-lingual method are essentially based on the behaviourist approach of stimulus, which serves to elicit behaviour, a response triggered by a stimulus, and reinforcement which encourages the repetition of the response (Skinner, 1957).

According to Richards and Rodgers (2014), teaching procedures in audio-lingual method contain various processes such as memorizing the text and reading aloud. The audio-lingual method has some advantages, such as those described by Anderson (2011) as helping students' to interact when students take different roles in the dialogue, but this interaction is teacher-directed, because the teacher has to control the class, otherwise the class will become noisy. It also provides opportunity for each learner to do their task individually; the teacher gives his/her feedback on their performance.

2.3.1.4 Communicative language teaching

Communicative approach in teaching of English means approaching English on the basis of functional uses (Larsen-Freeman, 2001). According to Borti (2015)

communicative approach was developed due to dissatisfaction with the grammar-translation, audio-lingual, and the direct methods of second language teaching. Accordingly, language should not learnt only for understanding, speaking, reading and writing sentences, but be extended to embrace how these sentences are used efficiently and intelligibly in interpersonal communication (Mona & Yehia, 2018). Therefore language should not only be learnt for composition and correct comprehension of sentences in isolation but also how to use sentences appropriately to achieve communicative purpose and conserve the identity of the communicated message.

The teacher's role in the communicative competence context as proposed by Czura (2016) is to develop knowledge, skills and attitudes in their learners that will assist them interact with speakers coming from different cultural, linguistic and natural backgrounds. Clearly, English language taught through the communicative approach helps second language learners to have the opportunity for learning in the setting that is authentic and is focused on meaning-making and problem-solving. Theoretical assumptions underlying the communicative approach according to Nunan (2002) include learning English through use, putting learners through the use language in contact which is real, authentic, appropriate and global. The learner must also be provided with sufficient exposure to the target language. This approach is student oriented and student centred. Finally, the teacher is not occupying the central position in the class as in the traditional text-analysis syllabus.

2.3.2   Teacher/pupil ratio

Policy makers and researchers in many countries are concerned about how many students learn in primary and secondary schools. They constantly debate whether particular policies are effective in promoting learning. One policy that has

received considerable attention is reduction in class size. A teacher (whether professional or not) who had to work with a large class size would undoubtedly have his performance hindered and this would have a negative spill over effect on students (Yeboah, 2014). Large class sizes could be one of the unfavourable conditions that affect the performance of teachers in most Ghanaian schools. With the inception of the Ghana School Feeding Programme (GSFP, 2005), school enrolment has increased tremendously. In some cases, over 90 pupils in a class are handled by one teacher. This increase in class size brings in its trail problems of ineffective class management, poor supervision of assignment, fear of marking and ineffective teaching and pupil-teacher contacts. In his study of the ideal class size and its effects on effective teaching and learning in Ghana, Kraft (1999) concluded that class sizes above 40 have negative effects on students' achievement.

According to Bracey (1995), the higher the number of students in a class, the fewer the opportunities for students to participate orally in teaching and learning. The writer also observes that reduced class size provides students with greater individual attention and improved instruction in the language classroom. Freire (1998) asserts that teachers of larger classes are more likely to spend less time with each student's paper and to concentrate on mechanics rather than on style and content. He argues that if a teacher spends 20 minutes reading, analyzing and responding to each paper for a class of 25 students, the teacher must have 500 minutes for these processes alone. It is therefore clear that reduced class size gives students ample opportunities for effective interaction with peers, allows them to develop critical and reflective thinking and enables them to have a fair share of the teacher's time.

2.3.3 Teaching/learning environment

Adedji and Owoeye (2002) found that physical structure is significantly related to academic performance and therefore there should be a serious effort to acquire and maintain these resources for better performance. The physical structure of the classroom is a critical variable in effecting student morale and learning. However, according to Borti (2015), thousands of schools still have poor physical infrastructure and many are dilapidated, dangerous and unfit for human habitation. There is often no water in schools. Such conditions do not only restrict teaching and learning activities but also threaten the health of learners and educators as well. Such an environment promotes poor academic performance.

2.3.4 Mother tongue

Several studies conducted to evaluate the implementation of the Language policy show that there is no problem with the policy itself in the first place because it agrees with universal research on second language learning worldwide. There had been much research on how important it is for children to first learn their mother tongue (L1) before learning a second language. Also, research is clear on the benefits children derive from instruction that encourages the use of the primary languages to support the teaching of English as a second language. For instance, Andoh-Kumi (2002) enumerates some of the reasons given by those who found the policy laudable. One of the reasons was the view that the L1 serves as a bridge between the home and the school. Thus, children consider teachers as parent substitutes because they speak their language. Another reason was the belief that the use of L1 as a medium of instruction enables the child to express him or herself freely in the classroom and consequently not perceive any negative impression about school. There was also the

claim that language is a fundamental human right for every individual and therefore children should not be denied the use of the language they speak.

Cummins (1979), a second language researcher, posits that there is a "threshold level of linguistic competence" (p. 26) that the second language learner has to attain before success in any cognitively demanding academic work can be achieved. If a second language learner fails to attain that threshold level before he is introduced to serious academic and cognitively demanding task, he or she may end up performing poorly. Agyekum (2001) also observes that a method of teaching which ignores the mother tongue as the medium of instruction in the early stages of education could be bad and ineffective. According to him, teachers who want to use English as early as possible as the school language are holding back their learners' mental power. He notes that children could not develop thinking powers while struggling to learn a second language. In addition, Cheung (1999) claims that the use of the mother tongue as the medium of instruction creates a happy learning atmosphere in the class - lots of jokes and healthy discussions, whereas the use of L2 as medium of instruction makes most learners feel very unhappy and very pitiful in class.

Notwithstanding arguments in favour of the use of mother tongue (LI) as a medium of instruction in promoting the acquisition of English, there are equally strong arguments on the need to use English as a medium of instruction. For instance, Ellis (1985) mentions that classroom management and organization, as well as more obvious pedagogic goals, should be carried out in the target language. He suggests that using the mother tongue would deprive the learners of valuable input in the second language. Kropp-Dakubu (1988) cited in Yeboah (2014) also thinks that in a multilingual country like Ghana, any native language chosen as the medium of

instruction throughout the whole educational system might promote the spirit of ethnocentrism and therefore English should be used as the medium of instruction.

The mother tongue was given a minor place because according to Agyekum (2001), the Ministry of Education in the Gold Coast (Ghana) was influenced by certain difficulties in its use. The three main difficulties were the existence of a greater number of different languages and even of different dialects of the same language; the difficulty of training teachers in a multiplicity of languages; and the difficulty in the production of textbooks and literature. The writer also talks of a UNESCO publication in 1953 which states that the use of the mother tongue as a medium of instruction in schools is criticized on the basis that the child already knows his or her own language before entering school. As a result, that there is no need for the school to teach him or her again. He said that some people claim that it is impossible for children to acquire a good use of the second language if the school fails to adopt the second language as a medium of instruction from the very beginning. He concludes that it was as a result of these that most schools in the past actually forbade any use of the mother tongue in the schools.

Ubahake (1999), Ohia (1997), and Duff (1997) stress that the falling standard of English is due to the use of tribal indigenous languages in the lower classes. They therefore suggest that pupils should be exposed to English early from the Lower Primary class irrespective of the advantages of the use of the mother tongue. Having considered the views of the various scholars, the researcher believes that although English is regarded as the official language in Ghana, the language is learnt as a second language. Therefore, English should be taught as a second language and not as a first language of the children. Failure to recognize that English is a second

language would result in policy makers introducing instructional programmes that would not work with the English language learners in Ghana.

2.3.5   *Teaching and learning strategies*

Professional qualifications are important in education (Anderson, 2011). The professional skill of the teacher establishes a productive classroom atmosphere from the start by means of good organization and carefully planned teaching structures (Farrant, 2000). Professional competence, according to Farrant, often transforms into high quality of teaching with the expectation that this would influence students' learning. Teacher professionalism should be exhibited in skills like giving prompt feedback, questioning, dealing effectively with students' problems and creating specific kinds of climate for different lessons, making sure that pupils understand and cope with the amount of knowledge given to them. According to Ofosuhene (1997), the falling standard of English has a bearing on wrong language habit formation. It was pointed out that at the Primary School level, some untrained and incompetent teachers are employed to handle the lower classes and so such teachers find it difficult to teach the English language and to correct their students when they make mistakes. Aikings (1999) is of the view that students who pass through the hands of such teachers internalize teachers' mistakes. These mistakes are carried into their future lives since language, like habit, once learned becomes difficult to shed off.

The importance of the quality of the teacher is much appreciated in Mitchell & Myles' (2004) assertion that the problem of language learning is caused by messy and fragmentary input that makes abstract concepts, based on limited examples. Bailey (2006) refers to input as the language to which the learner is exposed, either orally or visually. In this vein, teachers are responsible for an inadequate language input due to their own limited English proficiency. In his research, Ankomah (2002)

found that regular in-service training of teachers helps to boost their quality and performance. It can be deduced from the above statement that both pre-service and in-service training are essential for the quality professional development of the teacher of English.

2.3.6 *Common language outside school*

Common language outside the school has great effects on pupils to effectively learn English language (Anyidoho, 2012). According to Ansah (2014), because most Ghanaian languages are predominantly used in day-to-day economic and social activities, it affects pupils' ability to grasp the English language. He adds that the only place learners speak English is the school. Acheampong (2012) believes that English spoken in the school alone is not enough for learners to effectively speak the English language. A study conducted by Asangba (2016) concluded that the predominance of the Twi Language in Ashanti Mampong was affecting pupils' ability to learn the English language. He further notes that pupils feel there was no need learning the English language because they can manoeuvre their environment with their native language. Also, a study conducted by Alibariki (2017) revealed that the predominance of the Kiswahili language was seriously affecting the learning of English in Tanzania. Rababah (2002) reports that when the learners and teachers' mother tongue is different from the language being studied, it is not easy for the teaching and learning process to be done well because the studied language is different from theirs. Furthermore, Ahmed (2013) adds that because teachers predominantly use Kiswahili, they face problems in pronunciation, spelling, vocabulary and grammar which make them uncomfortable during teaching English.

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2.3.7 *Teacher motivation*

Musaazi (1985) defines motivation as the inner drive which prompts people to act in a certain way. Chauhan (1988) explains that motivation causes movement in an organization or institution. From this, it is realized that motivation involves a trigger of an action by a stimulus or an event which is aimed at goal attainment. Chauhan (1988) further intimates that an individual is aroused by two types of motivation; intrinsic and extrinsic motivation. He explains intrinsic motivation as those needs, wants and desires which exist in individuals and that, the worker who is motivated intrinsically works on his own with little supervision. On the other hand, extrinsic motivation stems from external stimulation. A teacher whose needs are not met may be psychologically unstable and consequently not productive (Asamoah, 2009). In contrast, a teacher who is satisfied is stable and thus, efficient and effective. In line with this, Cook (1980) observes that the key to improving performance is motivation, and for this reason employers need to understand what motivates their employees.

Language teacher motivation has not been researched extensively despite its importance. However, language teacher motivation is not much different from teacher motivation. As a result, Pennington (1995) claims that because the determination of satisfaction in language teaching is no different from other careers, what a language practitioner wants is what any professional might anticipate. These include job security, right pay and benefits, logical workload, recognition of professional credential, participating in decision-making, decent working conditions and provision of materials and systems for organizing and managing the work and individual learners. These conditions notwithstanding, there are some differences which are unique to ESL teaching. For example, Johnston (1997) postulates that English language teachers are regarded as second class teachers and in effect are

treated as 'underclass' by colleagues and superiors. In fact, Johnston (1997) supports the establishment of the 'professionalization' of language teachers in order to alleviate the lack of proper career structure, low morale and the unfair treatment such ESL teachers receive.

A study conducted by Doyle and Kim in South America in 1999 revealed language teachers' desire to help students was often taken advantage of by the school management. Their study revealed that language teachers were demotivated by mandated curricula which stressed out teachers for two reasons. The first one entailed the restrictions of the teachers' autonomy to teach what they thought was most appropriate taking into account students' needs. The second one involved the fact that the standardized tests given to students did not at times resemble the material that language teachers were obliged to teach because of the mandated curricula, national and regional examinations. One problem with English teaching is that the final product, second language proficiency, is not really seen as an academic subject but a skill. Therefore, teachers of English are regarded as trainers rather than intellectuals. Evidence of this fact is the Ministry of Education's agreement to give special allowances to some selected subject teachers of which English teachers are excluded in Ghana. (GES Collective Agreement, 2010). This perception, to the researcher, is unfortunate because even though language entails mastering a skill, it also involves the creation of a new identity in the learner.

2.3.8   Contact hours

Academic excellence thrives on effective management of instructional time. Shipman et al (1987) see time as a commodity that is unbiased, available to everyone in the same quantity and completely at one's own disposal. The only difference is how each and everyone makes use of the time available to him/her. Time lost is lost

forever and this makes time a non-renewable resource (Baron, 2006). Time is one of the scarce resources which administrators must manage, outside of which nothing can be managed (Drucker, 2003). Cambone (1994) defines instructional time as the appropriate use of time, duration and period, indicated on the time-table for a particular subject by the teacher. It should be in an interactive setting with pupils on relevant issues that would enhance teaching and learning. This implies that appropriate use of instructional time is not limited to only the physical presence of the teacher in the classroom with the pupils at the appointed time but also, to the lessons that are taught and learnt during that time, and from which guidance is given. Cambone (1994) sees instructional time as different from planning time. He thinks that instructional time is time allocated to the actual teaching and learning activity.

A study conducted by Koomson et al (1999) on the management of instructional time in some selected Ghanaian public primary schools revealed that total time spent on actual instruction in the classroom observed was 55% of the day's instructional time. It meant that 45% of the total time of instruction was wasted. The study also revealed that the 15 minutes allocated for morning assembly was abused with announcements taking the bulk of the time and therefore eating into the first period. Also, the change-over periods created some time lost. Again, the study revealed that sports and cultural festivals also wasted a lot of instructional time, since classes had to be skipped to make way for rehearsals and the event itself. Teachers were also made to attend meetings during school instructional time which also affected the academic work and the efficient use of instructional time.

Despite all these directives, Koomson et al (1999) observe that instructional time is still being wasted with impunity. Sports festivities like inter-school, inter-house and many more are still being organized during instructional hours. The

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electoral commission of Ghana still uses teachers for many exercises during election years, and they are done during instructional hours. Meetings and refresher courses are organized during instructional hours. Until all stakeholders get on board to avert this situation, the waste of instructional hours would continue and academic performance would inevitably be negatively affected.

2.3.9 Pupil's attendance

Pupils' attendance in school has a greater effect on their language learning ability (Ahadzie, 2000). Ahadzie again reiterates that pupils who attend school regularly learn new concepts faster. Also, Bowen (2005) has established that students who attend classes more regularly seem to be more successful in their studies than those who regularly absent themselves. In addition, students who attend classes regularly are more likely to remember the information well and apply the knowledge effectively throughout their life (Crede et al, 2010). Carlson (2004) posits that absenteeism affects the abilities of students which can be the reason for the decrease in their second language ability. Performance of students becomes prominent and effective when they attend classes on regular basis in order to reap its positive impacts on the performance. Student who attend classes on regular basis get higher marks and good grades in the examinations than those who absent themselves from classes (Osei-Fosu, 2011). He adds that absenteeism has bad effects on performance. Thus, once the student is absent from class, he or she will miss the opportunity to learn new techniques. Students who attend classes regularly get high marks as compared to absentee students (Sharma, 2005). A study conducted by Noor (2018) concluded that there is a strong positive correlation between attendance and grades.

2.3.10   Concept of supervision

Supervision is seen by many as a means of helping to direct activities of individuals towards goal attainment. In education, supervision is a means of directing instructions towards achieving educational goal (Atakpa & Ankomah, 1998). Many interpretations have been given to the role supervision plays in our education. For example, while some see it as a fault finding machine, others are of the view that supervision helps to develop an individual professionally. But no matter how it is viewed, one thing stands clear; supervision focuses on ensuring the growth and development in the teaching and learning process. Etsey (2005) is also of the view that effective supervision of instruction could improve the quality of teaching and learning in the classroom. To this end, Etsey sees supervision as the process of bringing about improvement in an institution by working with people who work with students. He reports that effective supervision is necessary for efficient work.

Supervision provides a climate in which people have a sense of working for themselves. In government schools in Ghana, internal supervision is normally done by the heads of institutions or their assistants while external supervision is done by supervisors or inspectors from the Ghana Education Service. Etsey et al (2004), in a study of 60 schools in Ghana (29 from urban and 31 from rural areas), found that academic performance was better in private schools than in public schools because of effective supervision of work. The absence of an appropriate performance management framework which sets out clear and relevant accountabilities for monitoring purposes simply compounds the problem. Etsey (2005) therefore believes that supervision and regular visits to schools would motivate teachers to be more regular and punctual at school. Also, when students realize that supervisors are regular in visiting the schools and teachers are always present, they would be

challenged to change their attitudes towards school. This would in turn reflect positively on their academic performance.

2.3.11 Summary

This section has discussed the conceptual framework in which the English Language variables Framework by Orodho (2005) was used to further explain the relationship between independent variables, intermediate variables, and dependent variables. The independent variables are language teaching methods (English), teacher/pupil ratio, teaching/learning environment, and mother tongue. The rest are common language outside school, and teaching and learning strategies. The intermediate variables include teacher motivation, contact hours and pupils' attendance. It is assumed that if the independent and intermediate variables are favourable, then the pupils' mastery of English language would be enhanced. Alternatively, the independent variables may have a direct effect on mastery without necessarily relying on the intermediate variables. The concept clearly shows that the independent variables are very important in pupils' ability to learn English.

2.4 Challenges in teaching and learning of English language in Ghana

This section discusses challenges facing the teaching and learning of English language in Ghana. According to Carlson (2004), the common challenges facing the teaching and learning of English language include lack of teaching competence, inadequate English language teaching and learning materials, large class size, mismatch between language policy and practice, negative attitude of learners towards English language and the first language influence.

2.4.1 Teacher incompetence

A major problem in the learning of the English language is that qualified teachers of English are woefully inadequate. Very few teachers graduate from the

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Colleges of Education and the universities with a specialization in English (Asangba, 2016). Hence, many students rarely get the chance to be taught by qualified English teachers from their nursery to their secondary levels and sometimes at some tertiary institutions. According to Nwanyanwu (2017), most teachers of English as a second language lack or have no basic skill in teaching practice, sufficient exposure, and mastery of the structure of the language. Related to these is the low levels of personal language proficiency and lack of understanding of second language pedagogy. The educational system has created a system where the first few years of most of our children's education in literacy are shaped by almost non-competent teachers. Asangba's and Nwanyanwu's claims are supported by Quagie (2002) who states that many teachers of English language who are teaching the subject are not competent. He adds that such teachers have defective pronunciation and hardly have a satisfactory command of the English language. Clearly, most pupils are normally taught by 'pupil teachers' who do not understand the rubrics of English grammar nor the teaching methodologies involved.

In addition, Adutwum (2018) states that the greater number of issues confronting education in Ghana are the teacher. He adds that the three year period for training teachers is not adequate to produce teachers who know their pedagogy. In support of Adutwum, Aheto-Tsegah (2016) argue that most teachers of English in Ghana lack skills to deliver as it is expected. He adds that few teachers are really qualified to handle the subject. It must be reiterated however that, as a subject, the technicalities or perhaps the methodology involved require that a professional English teacher takes up the course and tackles it in proper detail for the understanding of students in general. When non-qualified teachers of English are made to teach English, there are bound to be problems: because they barely

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understand what they teach, they hardly deliver the necessary knowledge, thus creating fear and panic among students in their encounter with the language.

Furthermore, many are also of the view that anyone who graduates from the university is up to the task of teaching English. This notion is erroneous on the grounds that, the fact that one speaks the English language eloquently, which is rarely the case, does not mean that one can necessarily teach English. Many graduates from the tertiary institutions in their bid to fulfil their national service responsibilities are sent to the teaching field, and many end up teaching English, irrespective of what they studied at the tertiary levels, as if any university qualification or perhaps tertiary certificate is tantamount to an English teaching qualification. Thus, one who acquires one can teach the English language. It is however, an undeniable fact that one cannot teach what he or she does not understand.

Also, much of the teaching of the English language at the Senior High School in recent times is based on the summary and comprehension to the disregard of reading and spelling skills. In many teacher-training establishments, it has been assumed that if you teach the student how to teach grammar, composition, and so on, you have covered the field of English teaching (Noor, 2018). But in fact, you have barely begun, because the section of the language that you have dealt with is the secondary section, the written language. The teaching of spoken language is the most important of all skills and should always be included as a highly important and obligatory part of a teacher's course. Once we are clear that spoken language is the primary form and written language the secondary form, the sequence of skills obviously becomes first, understanding the spoken language; second, being able to speak it; third, learning to read it; and fourth, learning to write it. This is the ideal. The researcher thinks that to be able to ameliorate the challenges which are

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confronting the teaching of English language, only teachers with expert knowledge and experience in the field of English language teaching should be employed to teach the subject.

2.4.2   *Inadequate English language teaching and learning materials*

Another common challenge to teaching and learning English in Ghana classrooms is the lack of school materials and technological equipment to make language teaching a reality (Quagie, 2008). He states that most classrooms in Ghana do not support language teaching. Some of the classrooms do not have access to electricity so the use of technology in teaching is hardly possible and many schools do not have reading materials to enable English teachers to teach the skills. Textbooks continue to be a major influence in classroom: in many cases it still effectively determines the curriculum. At the Primary and JHS level, each student is expected to have 3 core textbooks out of 9. These textbooks are English language, Mathematics and Science. Some schools do not any reading materials to aid students in learning the English language. Also, most of the prescribed textbooks of English have many defects in them while some are written without relating it to the surrounding environment of the learners. So the students hardly feel any attraction for the subject matter contained in the books. The vocabulary and structures in them present difficulties to the learners. Some of the textbooks are not appropriate to the mental level of the learners.

2.4.3   *Class size*

According to Bracey (1995), the growth in human population around the world affects all people economical. The author opines that over-population is not just geometrical increase in number of people but also a burden to humanity itself. Andoh-Kumi (1999) notes that over population results when there is geometric

increase in number of people and arithmetic increase food supply. According to Newton, over-population is the greatest threat to the world. Houtonsonen (2008) sees over-crowding of classrooms as the same as overpopulation of pupils in academic environment. This explains the presence of more pupils in a classroom than the available resources, teacher, infrastructure and instructional materials. Ike (2009) opines that overcrowding is over-population of the classroom and that the demand for western education far exceeds the capacity of the school's plant as well as the instructional materials. From the views of these scholars, it is clear that over-population and overcrowding of classrooms is not far from one another. Over-population considering the number of people in a society or state and relationship to the available resources there while overcrowding of classrooms concerns itself with the number in classrooms environments.

Babbie and Mouton (2001) is of the view that teaching as an activity consists of verbal interaction between the pupils and their teacher as the teacher aims to influence the behaviour of his/her pupils. The role of the teacher according to the author include imparting knowledge, ensuring the physical development of the child, helping to improve the child's behaviour, and taking care of the interest of the child. The rest are helping the child with his personal problems and ensuring spiritual development of the child. These roles of the teacher cannot effectively take place in an overcrowded situation, because there is a limit to the number of students /pupils a teacher can manage effectively well.

The introduction of Free Compulsory Universal Basic Education (FCUBE) and the introduction of free Senior High School programme has witnessed an influx of learners in the Basic and Senior High Schools, increasing the class size. The challenges of handling large classes compounded by the acute shortage of teachers

puts a strain on the teachers' ability to provide holistic and quality language teaching to the learners because the teacher-learner ratio is not proportional. Moreover, the policy demands of inclusive learning poses a challenge in the already swollen classrooms since it compromises individual attention because of the diverse needs of the learners vis-à-vis teachers' workload. In Ghanaian public schools, the number of learners on roll varies between 80 and 150. Therefore, in such overcrowded class the teacher cannot pay attention to individual learners. Hence, many students will leave the class or the entire term with many of their questions unanswered and their doubts uncleared.

2.4.4   *Mismatch between language policy and practice*

At the Basic level, there is a mismatch between language policy and the actual practice in Bawku Municipal due to the multicultural nature of the area. Ideally, mother tongue ought to be used to reinforce classroom instructions as recommended by the policy (Ministry of Education, 2007). However, the reality is that there is continued use of English which is an unfamiliar language as a medium of instruction. This creates anxiety and stalls effective classroom participation (Shoebottom, 2014). These observations corroborate those of Owu-Ewie (2010) in a study done in Ghana which pointed out that using an unfamiliar language as a medium of instruction is a major impediment to learning. This is because learners are not afforded the chance to learn from their own familiar home language with a curriculum and pedagogy that recognizes their cultural setting. For instance, there are some comprehension passages which use illustrations that learners cannot relate to. A case in point is the comprehension passage in the Class 3 English textbook which has used the English expressions, "as white as snow." This expression is difficult for learners to relate to since there is no experience of snow in the Ghanaian context. Therefore, the use of

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such expressions is a typical disregard of learners' sociocultural experience which will more often than not inhibit learning.

Andoh-Kumi (2000), Agyekum (2001), and Asamoah (2009) discuss why some scholars frown on LI as the medium of instruction. According to them, these scholars feel that the multi-lingual nature of the country encourages the use of English as a medium of instruction. To them, any education given through the medium of a Ghanaian Language could only be an inferior one since it would breed tribalism and hold the nation back industrially, economically and scientifically. They held the view that since the child learns language easily in their critical period, they should start using English as soon as they enter school because they will need English more than the Ghanaian Language in their academic life.

2.4.5   *Negative attitude towards English language*

The learners' negative attitude toward English language poses a great barrier for effective teaching. This negative attitude emanates from the fact that learners have limited competence in the language, preventing them from actively participating in classroom activities (Usó Juan, 2006). Given that English is either a second or third language to some learners, most of them have difficulties in comprehending its structures. A research conducted by Tella et al (2007) reveals that English lessons have minimal learner participation because learners do not have the necessary competence which was never developed during their formative years. This minimal learner participation can be linked to the learners' negative attitude toward the subject which eventually leads to significant levels of underperformance in the English language. Therefore, the primary school teacher in the Bawku Municipality may struggle to help learners achieve the expected proficiency. It is only when this attitude is changed that substantial learning will take place.

Students learn some pertinent rubrics that are channels to other discoverable rubrics and then apply them in their daily encounters (Cheung, 1999). Yet, some students tend to act as receptors that should merely be filled with the required knowledge. The role of parents and guardians with good educational backgrounds can be a plus to students' understanding of the English language. In actual fact, this can be a best case in the early years of education. Reading, Listening, writing and speaking the Standard English language in our daily encounters have significant influence on our comprehension of the English language. However, as stated in earlier discussions, there is scarcely enough time for tutors to tackle all these pertinent areas in their teaching. That notwithstanding, very few students make efforts to read on the relevant areas not taught by the teacher.

2.4.6   *Mother tongue interference*

Negative language transfer (also known as L1 interference, linguistic interference, and cross meaning) refers to speakers or writers applying knowledge from their native language to a second language. Dulay, Burt & Krashen (2002) define interference as the automatic transfer, due to habit, of the surface structure of the first language onto the surface of the target language. Lott (2003) defines interference as errors in the learner's use of the foreign language that can be traced back to the mother tongue. In addition, Ellis (2007) refers to interference as transfer, which he says is "the influence that the learner's L1 exerts over the acquisition of an L2" (p. 224). He argues that transfer is governed by learners' perceptions about what is transferable and by their stage of development in L2 learning. In learning a target language, learners construct their own interim rules (Ellis, 2007) with the use of their L1 knowledge. He further notes that this is done only when learners believe it will

help them in the learning task or when they have become sufficient and proficient in the L2 for transfer to be possible.

If an individual's understanding of one language has impact on his or her understanding of another language, that individual is experiencing language transfer. There can be negative transfer, otherwise known as interference, when the understanding of one language complicates the understanding of another language. Alternatively, there can be positive transfer such that knowing one language can aid in developing skills for a second language. Language interference is the effect of language learners' first language on their production of the language they are learning. It means that the speaker's first language influences his/her second or and his/her foreign language. The effect can be on any aspect of language: grammar, vocabulary, accent, spelling and so on. Language interference is considered as one of error sources; although where the relevant feature of both languages is the same it results in correct language production (positive transfer). The greater the difference between the two languages, the more negative the effects of interference are likely to be. It will inevitably occur in any situation where someone has not mastered a second language.

2.4.7 Summary

This section has discussed the various challenges of teaching English language. Challenges such as teacher competence, inadequate English language teaching and learning materials, and class size have been identified and elaborated on. Others such as mismatch between language policy and practice, negative attitude towards English Language and mother tongue interference were also discussed. The next section discusses measures that can be adopted in improving the teaching and learning of English.

2.5   Improving teaching and learning of English language

This section discusses the strategies for improving the teaching and learning of English as a second language in the Bawku Municipality and beyond. The strategies include the need for the teacher to exhibit high level of professionalism, the integrating of all the four skills in teaching, the use of Stephen Krashen's affective strategies in second language teaching s well as the use of multimedia and games.

2.5.1   Exhibition of professionalism

Since the teacher occupies a pivotal position in education with the English language treated as a language across the curriculum, it is essential that we have the right type of teachers of English (Melinda, 2004). In this sense, the teacher should be fully equipped to effectively teach the subject (Moran, 2001). Skiba and Barton (2006) state that besides a rich background of English language and literature, the teacher of English should be acquainted with the latest techniques of teaching the language and should also have knowledge of phonetics. They add that the teacher should be painstaking and patient, because an impatient teacher cannot teach English efficiently. The main emphasis, therefore, should be on the linguistic aspects of English. Hence, teachers are expected to re-model their courses in English at the secondary stage and recognize that the learning of English is not an end in itself but only the acquisition of an instrument for adding to our knowledge (Mona & Yehia, 2018). According to Lasagasbaster (2011), the stress must, therefore, shift from literature with Shakespeare language to the simple language of every day. This does not mean that our teaching of English as a language should lose human interest. Some literary pieces within the range and experience of our pupils may be included.

2.5.2   Integration of the four language skills

Another strategy for improving English language teaching and learning in Ghana is to encourage teachers to adopt instructional approaches that promote the simultaneous development of listening, speaking, reading, and writing in English (Short & Fitzsimmons, 2007). This is because the development of these skills is important for the acquisition of language. This approach is called the integrated skills approach and has become a dominant trend in teaching second/foreign language to students (Cohen & Hill, 2001). Research shows that reading and writing skills support one another and that literacy is facilitated by oral language development (Short & Fitzsimmons, 2007). Su (2007) shows that 90% of students who received integration of the four language skills had a positive view of English Language Learning instruction and recommended its continuous implementation. Pupils in Ghana can acquire academic language when the instructional language in the classroom provides integrated opportunities to listen, speak, read, and write. Teachers of English in Ghana should develop their lessons in a way that allows students to understand the English text by listening, speaking, reading, and writing collaboratively. Collaborating on these integrated skills will emphasize the importance of the English language as a tool for communication. This emphasis helps students gain a true picture of the complexity and richness of the English language and challenge them to interact in a natural setting. This ultimately allows instructors to track progress in multiple skills at the same time.

2.5.3   Affective strategies

Dornyei (2001) and Rossiter (2003) both assert that language learning is enhanced when attention is paid to affective teaching and learning strategies, especially those that work towards increasing students' linguistic self-confidence and

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improving their self-efficacy, that is, their ability to cope with specific tasks. Students' attitudes and ways of thinking can deeply influence language acquisition because internal barriers are erected when learners are poorly motivated, bored, or anxious. Hence, Stevick (1980) posits that success in language learning depends less on materials, techniques, and linguistic analyses, and more on what goes on inside and between pupils in the classroom. For instance, anxiety about their academic work may make some students strive harder but in other cases it could lead less confident students to avoid classes altogether. Attention therefore needs to be given to the both positive and negative thoughts and behaviour that learners demonstrate when they acquire knowledge.

For Maslow (1971), cognitive and aesthetic goals cannot be achieved unless human requirements such as the need for belonging, the need for self-esteem as well as the need for safety and security are satisfied. A pertinent example is the pastoral care required by first year university students who have to deal with personal lifestyle changes that often accompany higher education. The impersonal atmosphere of large classes often gives this group of students the impression that no one cares about how they perform. These concerns are further highlighted in the case of Bawku where the sense of security in years past has been severely threatened by the violent conflict in the area. In such a situation, the quality of learning is compromised when there are no assurances of support or even of basic safety.

However, students are more motivated when they are made to feel part of a learning community. That is, when they see learning as a team effort rather than as a competitive solo race they are engaged in. Therefore, classes that employ informal or formal collaborative groups to answer in-class assignments or to discuss materials covered in class are more likely to foster motivation. They also bring with them

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diverse talents and ways of learning that can be utilized to achieve learning goals. Indeed, active learning does not involve students simply listening to a teacher holding forth or memorizing a set of answers but occurs when they are given opportunities to talk about a topic, to interpret it, relate it to past experiences or apply it to their own lives. Sharing ideas and responding to the reactions of others serves to improve their thinking and deepens their understanding. The use of supplemental illustrations or examples relevant to students' lives, particularly those they may not be exposed to outside the class, will similarly enhance the learning experience (Richards & Rodgers, 2014).

While asking questions in class may mean less information is covered in the duration, it is in fact more likely to result in better understanding. A step in the right direction is for teachers to ask questions that require higher level thinking skills as they encourage students to think more deeply. However, a few minutes should be allowed for the process to take place before individual students are invited to share their conclusions with the class. When questions are directed at those who show a lack of interest or engaged in other things, it draws them back. Alternatively, students could be asked to summarize in a few minutes the main points of a lecture or to note points that need elaboration.

Scaffolding strategies that build complex knowledge upon a foundation of basic information serves to ease students into new or more demanding areas of learning. Variety, creativity, or even controversy in lessons will also help to retain students' interest. Indeed, the teacher who has a flare of the theatrical as well as the ability to employ appropriate humour is often appreciated by students. Further learning outside the classroom can be encouraged by giving students a topic to think about for the next class. In addition, visual aids such as films, overheads, computer

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graphics, pictures and even guest lecturers can help enhance the learning experience (Richards & Rodgers, 2001).

2.5.4 *The use of games to teach English language*

Learners are usually much more active in the classroom whenever games are used in language teaching than the usual classrooms where learners are passive listeners. Armstrong (2000) suggests board games as a teaching strategy that might suit students with interpersonal intelligence because they provide an excellent setting for interaction between them. There are a number of reasons for which games deserve a place in the language classroom (Doughty, 2003). First, they are fun, which is extremely important, because they can help activate students who may have been inactive before, due to lack of interest. Keeping students active is vital because teachers will never be able to actually teach students anything unless they can get them to participate in their own learning process. Second, games also play a big part in helping participants build relationships, and to feel equal. Playing games in the classroom can also help create a friendly and positive atmosphere where seat arrangement can differ from game to game, and thus cause diversity from the norm which can be extremely helpful in keeping an exciting learning environment.

Third, the reason most people want to learn a language is to be able to use it in real situations, for example when travelling. Games can be a very good way to practice this skill because they can easily be used to re-enact various situations from real life and provide students with practice in their fluency. Three, by using games in the classroom, the teacher is giving his students a bigger role, and he himself is stepping out of the frontline which is a positive thing because it allows students to take on more responsibility. Also, it allows students to do more on their own, and that can very well result in an increase in their confidence level (Langran & Purcell,

1994). Four, language students need to be exposed to the language in a variety of situations, which is a need games can fulfill. Language students also need to be ready to take on the experience, keeping their minds open and being willing participants Again, games make this possible. Five, language students need to be emotionally involved, meaning they need to feel that they are a part of the process while they are exposed to the language. Strong emotions, such as happiness, excitement, amusement and suspense allow students to feel positively about their learning situation and are therefore likely to have a positive effect on language learning.

Six, games are good for shy students and students with low confidence, and that applies specifically when playing takes place in smaller groups. As such they get a chance to speak in front of fewer audiences instead of having to express themselves in front of the whole class. Also, it is sometimes easier to open up and forget the shyness when playing a game because the atmosphere is not as serious with more emphasis placed on fluency rather than grammatical correctness (Langran & Purcell.1994). Seven, games can be a good strategy when teaching various aspects because they are very likely to spark interest amongst students. They can be used with students of all ages, and when they are used with other teaching methods they create diversity which is ideal for school work (Sigurgeirsson, 1999).

Games are also effective tools for teaching the language skills: writing, reading, listening and speaking, and according to Doughty (2003), there are many valid reasons why using games might help train each specific skill. Writing games for example, help provide important immediate feedback that is usually lacking when students train their writing skills in a more traditional way. Listening games could offer an important and more exciting alternative from the boring listening activities that some of us remember from school. Games could make reading more fun and

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provide students with a reason to read, which is important because of how essential the reading skill is. For instance, people need to know how to read in order to be able to learn how to write. When it comes to speaking, games are able to serve the very important job of helping students train their fluency.

2.5.5   *Using multimedia*

The use of multimedia in teaching English as a second language is a vital tool for second language acquisition (Jahan, 2012). From a pedagogical point of view, Jahan (2017) again asserts that effective and meaningful learning can take place in a class where learners are actively engaged. He believes that music does that perfectly. He argues that music has a unique appeal and so English teachers may choose and conduct it carefully so as to act as effective material. This stems from the fact that they are comprehensible, enjoyable and full of real life language that learners need to use in their lives. The use of music in an English class has its support both from psychological and linguistic points of view. Krashen's (1982) theory of second language hypothesis and Gardener's (1992) theory of multiple intelligence cited in Jahan (2017) directly support the acquisition of vocabulary and other English language skills such as listening, speaking and reading.

Furthermore, English teachers can teach English language with the aid of video and film (Oluwayomi, 2017). He argues that video and film are motivating and entertaining tools which provide learners with real-life language input which he believes will be difficult to receive in a non-English speaking environment. His claim is supported by Mayer (2001) who states that the use of videos and film provides learners with authenticity, quality and input. These, he argues, have positive effects on the acquisition of the second language. Teachers should therefore guide the use of multimedia to avoid excesses, carelessness and waste of time. Thus, there is a need

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for the redesigning of the English language curriculum in Ghana to address the technological needs of the digital generation of young learners of the English language.

2.5.6 *Summary*

This section discusses various measures in improving teaching and learning of English Language. The literature indicates that when teachers exhibit professionalism in the teaching and learning of English it encourages the learners to gain interest. This will translate to learners' ability to read and write effectively. With the use of appropriate skills, the section also encourages teachers to integrate all the four skills when they are teaching. According to Ahmed (2013), integration the four English skills will holistically develop the competence of the learners. Again, literature shows that affective strategies in language classroom help learners to acquire any second language easily. Games and multimedia resources arouse and sustain learners' interest in teaching and learning English. Teachers are encouraged to employ them when teaching English language. The next section discusses the related studies around the world.

2.6 Related studies

As mentioned earlier, understanding methods, approaches, strategies and challenges in teaching English as a second language in the Bawku Municipality of Ghana can assist teachers to be well informed about the rudiments of teaching the language to learners. Techniques and methods of teaching English to learners whose first language is not English language has gained interest for many decades due to the importance English plays in international communication. Many scholars in Ghana, Africa, Asia, Europe and America have conducted studies on the teaching and

learning of English. This section that follows presents a discussion of some of these studies.

2.6.1   Studies from Europe and the Americas

Solak and Bayar (2015) investigated the challenges of English language learning and teaching in Turkey. The study was qualitative in nature and participants' responses were classified in terms of overall ideas, language skills, and methods, approaches, and practices. Other issues identified are linguistic differences between two languages, personal differences, teachers, materials, family, and the environment. The study revealed that teaching and improving of the four language skills was the focus of attention rather than grammar-centred language teaching. Based on the results, it was concluded that English courses should be designed as practice-based rather than theory-based. In addition, foreign language teachers should take into consideration, individual differences of the learners, learner characteristics and plan their activities in this regard. Foreign language teachers should also undertake in-service training and update their professionalism from time to time. Finally, materials such as course books, videos, and internet websites should be chosen carefully according to the students' interest, level, and needs. It was agreed that issues regarding teaching and learning English would be beneficial when examined from the perspective of learners.

Genesee, Lindholm-Leary, Saunders, & Christian (2005) studied English language learners in US schools. The study focused on the broader field of English language learners in the American school system. One of the areas of inquiry was programme instruction and assessment. The study identified a number of instructional and programme characteristics that contribute to the academic success of language learners. For effective learning to take place, Genesee et al called for a

positive school environment, meaningful and challenging curriculum, and an enriched environment grounded in research and sound principles. They also advocated well-trained educators versed in the theories and methodologies to teach together with collaborative environments for both students and educators. Also, Zimmerman (2014) in his study on the challenges and best practices for English language learners in USA adds that the lack of resources and cognitive delay make the learners unable to communicate effectively in English. He suggests that teachers and parents should support the learners so that they may master the language more effectively.

2.6.2 Studies from Asia

Rajkhowa & Das (2015) set out to examine the academic and the professional qualification of English teachers at the Secondary level in India. The study examined the methods of teaching teachers of English adopt in teaching English in some selected secondary schools in India. They adopted the evaluative survey method and concluded that no method can be intrinsically good or bad; it is either effectively used or not effectively used. Thus, every method needs to be tailored to the local situation and the content of teaching. They therefore suggested that teachers of English should use a combination of different methods in their teaching.

Noor (2018) conducted a study to find out the appropriate approach, method, and technique to improve teaching and learning of English language in Indonesia. The researcher used a case study approach to collect and analyze data. The conclusion was that integrated techniques in language teaching are some of the most appropriate strategies for teaching grammar and vocabulary. He recommended that teachers should be abreast of the communicative teaching method. Again, he suggested that teacher Training Colleges or other institutions responsible for training

teachers should adopt integrated English skills in teaching all aspects of the English curriculum. And finally, educational researchers, especially English teaching researchers should do in-depth research on aspects and factors that support and inhibit students' learning and teacher's teaching integrated English skills.

Ankur (2012) conducted a study to find out the techniques in teaching English as a Second Language in the Kumaun region of Uttarakhand. He adopted the quantitative design and concluded that most teachers at Kumaun region of India were not competent in teaching the English language. Also, he found that most of them did not understand the aims of teaching English. The study recommended the adoption of the integrated skills learning approach to teach English language. Rababah (2002) studied communication problems facing Arabic learners of English. He found that many Arabic learners faced problems in all language skills; listening, speaking, writing and reading, because there was a big difference between English language and the learners' first language. He found that some learning problems were caused by the use of the first Language (L1) for elaboration when teaching, poor background of English and poor motivation. Also, some teachers and pupils had traditional beliefs that English is a difficult language which increased the problem.

In addition, Shehdeh (2010) investigated the challenges facing Arabic teachers of English. He found a number of problems including inadequate preparation on the part of teachers, poor motivation, use of teacher-centred techniques, inadequate assessment techniques, and poor teaching and learning environment. Ahmed (2013) also carried out a study on the difficulties and challenges of teaching and learning English as a foreign language in Saudi Arabia. The study revealed that students encountered problems in pronunciation, spelling, vocabulary, and grammar. The study suggested that teachers should use drills in teaching where simple words

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will be chosen for learners to read and understand. Moreover, good pronunciation should be encouraged so as to hear and grasp the sound. He further encouraged parents be engaged in learning in order to encourage their children in learning English.

2.6.3   Studies from Africa

In many African countries, English is not the first language; hence it is studied as a second or foreign language. Mawere (2012) conducted a study to investigate problems in the teaching and learning of English in Mozambique's public schools. The study revealed that some teachers were under-qualified this resulted in poor teaching and learning of English. Also, there was lack of teaching and learning materials like textbooks and that hindered learning. Dhillon and Wanjiru (2013) examined the challenges facing learners who study English language in Kenya. The study was conducted in primary schools in urban Kenya. Data were collected through questionnaire and semi-structured interviews. The study revealed that learners faced a variety of challenges, including poor language background which makes learning difficult. The learners had their own first languages which were different from English. The study suggested that teachers should provide a warm classroom environment so as to motivate learners in learning English. Also, the policy issue should be resolved in a way that it is clearly specified which language will be used in teaching and learning, especially in multilingual societies.

A study conducted in Nigeria is by Fatiloro (2015). It sought to determine ways of tackling the challenges of teaching English. The study revealed a number of challenges which posed difficulty for English language learners. They included large classroom sizes, language background, inadequate language policy, poor teaching and learning facilities, and shortage of specialist teachers of English. The study

suggested that teachers and society should motivate learners so as to encourage them to learn English well. It also urged the government to provide facilities for learning English language and to encourage the use of modern technology, especially in teaching pronunciation.

Similarly, Nwanyanwu (2017) conducted a study to find out how teaching of English language can be effective in a multicultural setting like Nigeria. He used Harmer's (1983) Second language teaching approach and Krashen's (1982) Second language acquisition to identify a number of issues related to effective teaching of English language in multicultural L2 classrooms. It sought to address barriers to effective learning in an L2 classroom, the potential challenges to teaching and provides diverse strategies that may improve teaching and learning in that context. It highlighted core considerations for analyzing the challenges faced by teachers and learners, and finally, recommended some directions to embrace the challenges. The researcher adopted the qualitative design and concluded that apart from personal motivation to teach well, there is also the need for adequate training to equip teachers with basic tools so that English can be learned effectively. Those recruited to teach English in L2 classrooms should be properly trained by experienced personnel so that the skills and knowledge that need to be transferred would be easily assimilated.

Oluwayomi (2017) also conducted a study to find out how film and video can be used to develop students' vocabulary in English language. The study was an action research and both quantitative and qualitative designs were adopted. The conclusion was that when teachers of English combine audio and video to teach a second language, it provides a ready motivation for learning beyond and above the ordinary classroom work. In another instance, Mona and Yehia (2018) conducted a study to examine whether teaching English as a foreign language (EFL) in Egypt's public

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schools matches the communicative English language teaching (CELT) method. The mixed method design was adopted and the results indicated that most teachers of English in Egypt still use the traditional pedagogy. Thus, classrooms in public schools remain mostly unchanged and traditional approaches and methods of teaching English remain in use. They recommended among others for syllabus experts to re-design the English language curriculum to help teachers to develop the communicative competence of students.

2.6.4 Studies conducted in Ghana

In Ghana, one of such studies is Yelkpieri, Namale, Esia-Donkoh, and Ofosu-Dwamena (2012). They investigated the effects of large class size on effective teaching and learning at the Winneba Campus of the University of Education, Winneba, Ghana. A cross-sectional sample survey was adopted in this study. Respondents were made up of 42 lecturers and 342 students. The research instruments used in data collection were questionnaire and direct observation. Some of the key findings are that lecturers disagreed with the view that large class size affects the quality of their teaching. They also disagreed with the assertion that large class size makes assessment of students difficult. The students, on the other hand, agreed that large class size does not afford lecturers an opportunity to pay attention to weaker students and do remedial teachings. In line with the findings, the authors recommended that the university should appoint more lecturers to teach general courses.

In addition to this, Yeboah (2014) investigated low performance of students' English in the Basic Education Certificate Examination in the Sunyani Municipality. The study examined the factors that impede the acquisition of English leading to dismal performance in the B.E.C.E. Participants for the study included circuit

supervisors, headteachers, teachers of English, parents, and pupils. Findings revealed that insufficient teaching and learning materials, large class size, misuse of instructional time, non-completion of the English syllabus, and teachers' limited proficiency in English have contributed to the low performance of students in the B.E.C.E. in the Sunyani municipality. Other factors are students' negative attitude to the study of English as well as lack of supervision.

Similarly, Asangba (2016) also set out to identify the challenges that face students in their formal learning of the English language. He also sought to identify the challenges that face teachers in their teaching of the English language, to examine the implications involved in the teaching and learning of the English language and the need for strong implementations of government policies and bye-laws. He adopted the qualitative method design and found that there is a greater problem in the teaching and learning of the English language in Ghana. The researcher mentioned poor foundation in English at the early stages of education, inadequate qualified English teachers, difficulty in relating English rules to the indigenous languages, and negative attitudes towards English that culminates into the notion that English is difficult to learn. Other factors identified include the use of Pidgin English and its variants in high and tertiary institutions, the propensity of others shying away from speaking the language as they will be mocked if they committed any grammatical English errors, as well as the mass media playing acting as a role modelling agent as far as the English language is concerned.

Finally, Tabiri (2016) conducted a study to find out whether communicative language teaching approach in English teaching was the appropriate pedagogy in teaching and learning of grammar. The study adopted mixed method by design. At the end of his study, the analysis and discussions revealed that it is pedagogically

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crucial to bear the interest of learners in mind irrespective of any discipline that a teacher handles by incorporating the principled eclecticism and communicative language teaching approaches in teaching and learning, particularly in a language class. It was also concluded that grammar can be taught by using the Cognitive Code approach which stresses teaching and learning grammar rules by guiding learners to deduce meanings in context.

2.7   Conclusion

This chapter has reviewed some related literature regarding methods of teaching English, challenges of teaching English and strategies to improve the teaching and learning of English. The review began with the conceptual framework in which the English language Variables framework proposed by Orodho (2005) was used to further explain the relationship between independent variables such as language teaching methods, teacher/pupil ratio, teaching/learning environment, mother tongue, common language outside school, and teaching and learning strategies and intermediate variables such as teachers motivation, contact hours and pupil's attendance to pupils' mastery of English language. The concept clearly showed that the independent variables are very important in pupils' ability to learn English.

The conceptual review also focused on English language teaching methods such as the grammar-translation method, the direct method, audiolingual method and the communicative language teaching method. The chapter again discussed various challenges of teaching English language such as teacher competence, inadequate English language teaching and learning materials, class size, mismatch between language policy and practice, negative attitude toward English Language and mother tongue interference. The study discussed measures to improve the teaching and

learning of English in the third section. Teachers are encouraged to exhibit professionalism when teaching. Secondly, teachers are encouraged to integrate all the four skills in teaching English. They are also encouraged to use games and multimedia resources in teaching English. Turning now to related studies, the study reviewed past scholarly works in Europe and America, Asia, Africa and Ghana which were conducted on the methods and challenges of teaching English. Based on the findings of past studies, literature reviewed shows that teachers' use of several methods to teach English improve the teaching and learning. The previous studies have only highlighted challenges of teaching and learning of English and strategies to improve the teaching and learning of English.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

3.0   Introduction

This chapter outlines the methodology adopted to achieve the objectives of the study. It explains why a qualitative approach was chosen. The areas covered include the research design, the data sources, the description of the population of the study and sampling procedure used in collecting sample size. Methods of data collection including questionnaire, interview and observation are also explained. Data processing and data analysis procedures were described. Finally, authenticity, credibility, data triangulation and summary of the key points are explained.

3.1   Research design

A research design focuses on the end-product and all the steps in the process to achieve that outcome (Creswell, 2014). In this sense, a research design is viewed as the functional plan in which certain research methods and procedures are linked together to acquire a reliable and valid body of data for empirically grounded analyses, conclusions and theory formulation. The research design thus provides the researcher with a clear research framework; it guides the methods, decisions and sets the basis for interpretation. Bless, Higson-Smith and Kagee (2006) define research design as "… operations to be performed, in order to test a specific hypothesis under a given condition" (p. 71). Also, according to Welman et al (2009), research design is best described as the overall plan, according to which the respondents of a proposed study are selected, as well as the means of data collection or generation, while Babbie and Mouton (2001) describe a research design as a plan or blueprint for conducting the research. The research design also entails a detailed plan, according to which research is undertaken. Creswell (2014) believes that the main function of a research

design is to enable the researcher to anticipate what the appropriate research decisions are likely to be, and to maximise the validity of the eventual results.

The design of a research is to show the procedures the researcher employs in conducting a research and the condition which the research data is obtained. Burns and Grove (2003) define a research design as 'a blueprint for conducting a study with maximum control over factors that may interfere with the validity of the findings'. Speaking on the same issue, Wiredu (1996) says that the design of any research describes in detail, all the procedures and methods the researcher employs in his work. Research design answers the research questions. This is in line with Polit, Beck, and Hungler (2001) who define a research design as the researcher's overall statement for answering the research question or testing the research hypothesis. Polit, Beck, and Hungler (2001) definition is in line with Kothari (2008) who believes that a research design shows how research questions are connected to the data and the required tools and procedures that are needed to answer the research questions. Nuhu (2010) shares the same view; he thinks that a research design guides the researcher in data collection and analysis. He added that a good research design enables a researcher to generate valid findings.

The main purpose of this study was to examine methods and current challenges of teaching English, so the researcher adopted the qualitative design to conduct the study. The qualitative research design involves an interaction between the researcher and the researched. Verma and Mallick (1999) are of the opinion that qualitative research collects data in the form of 'words' rather 'numbers'. They conclude that qualitative research describes the life-worlds of the participants from their perspectives. According to De Vos, Strydom, Fouche and Delport (2002), qualitative research design refers to research that elicits participants' accounts of

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meaning, experience or perception. It produces descriptive data in the participant's own written or spoken words. Qualitative design uses non-statistical methods and small purposively selected samples.

Burns and Grove (2003) similarly write that, text is considered a rich source of data in qualitative studies and that text provided by participants may be a component of a larger study using a variety of sources of data. The rationale for using a qualitative approach for this research was to explore, describe, and analyse all the data from the research instruments used. On his part, Nuhu (2010) sees qualitative research as a research that seeks to provide answers to carefully outlined research questions without the bias of hypothesis. Figures and numbers were involved in the analysis but as far as the analysis of information was the focus of the study to arrive at answers to the research questions and not the testing of set hypothesis, one may rightly conclude that the study is qualitative in nature. This was because it allowed meaningful generalization with respect to the numerical relationships which existed in the data, and which reflected the attributes of the entire population.

As Sarantakos (1988) cited in Yeboah (2014) had said, one of the most important attributes of a quantitative technique is that, the sample reflects the larger population, and hence conclusions drawn reflect the general attributes of the entire population. An advantage in the use of qualitative approach in this study it allowed meaningful generalization with respect to the numerical relationships which existed in the data, and which reflected the attributes of the entire population. It also helped the researcher to explore new areas which would form the basis for further research.

3.2   Population

A study population is the aggregation of elements from which the sample is actually selected (Vosloo, 2007). Avwokeni (2006) refers to population of study as

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the set of all participants that qualify for a study while Akinade & Owolabi (2009) define population as the total set of observations from which a sample is drawn. Adeniyi et al (2011) see it as the total number of large habitations of people in one geographical area, for example, the population of a country. Again, Popoola (2011) defines population as the totality of the items or objects under the universe of study. It often connotes all the members of the target of the study as defined by the aims and objectives of the study. Population can also mean the whole body of items, objects, materials or people that fall within the geographical location in which a researcher intends to investigate for his study. That is, the participants of a study.

The constituents of population have certain attributes in common; the number may be large or small. For the current research, the researcher chose topic-specific experts in the field of study as participants - based on their specialised expertise and close involvement in teaching English language as the study population for research. Teachers within the Bawku Municipality of the Upper East Region of Ghana were involved in the study. English language teachers at primary schools and junior high schools within the Municipality were selected for the research. These teachers were chosen because the researcher stays in Bawku Municipality and can easily get access to the teachers.

3.4   Sample and sampling technique

Just as there are several possible methods of collecting data, so are there several methods of determining who should be approached to contribute that data. It may not be possible to collect data from every member of a particular group. In this case, every single teacher of English as a second language, so a researcher needs to make a principled selection from that population, a sample that reflects and

represents the greater whole. This will be people who have experienced the phenomenon under investigation (Richards, 2003).

Sample is a manageable section of a population but elements of which have common characteristics. Also, it refers to any portion of a population selected for the study and on whom information needed for the study is obtained (Adedokun, 2003; Akinade & Owolabi, 2009). It is the elements making up the sample that are actually studied and generalizations or inferences about the population made. This generalization of results based on the sample is the major purpose of sampling and also a major concern in any scientific investigation. It can be emphasized here that to study the entire population may be cumbersome, time consuming and of course very costly, hence, a sample takes a fair portion as representative of the entire population. Sample size is the number of elements that can be selected for a research. This number varies from one study to another. In homogenous population (where there is little variation) requires a small size. Experimental studies tend to use relatively small sample size. But for heterogeneous population (where there is a wider variation) requires a larger sample size. This is common in survey research as in education and behavioural sciences (Akinade & Owolabi, 2009).

The researcher chose a random sampling technique. Creswell (2008) is of the opinion that whenever a researcher uses random sampling each item has equal chance of being chosen, the researcher selects individuals and sites to learn and understand the central phenomenon. The standard used in choosing participants and sites is whether they are 'information-rich', he added. With regard to the homogenous sampling technique, the researcher decided to include people or sites in his study because they have a common trait or characteristic (Creswell, 2008). Randomly, 200 teachers from 20 schools within Bawku Municipality were given copies of a

questionnaire to fill. All teachers who teach English language in the 20 schools were included. Out of this number, 20 teachers were selected randomly for the interview. Another group of 10 teachers were also sampled and observed.

3.5 Data collection instruments and data collection

The study employed a variety of instruments to facilitate data collection from the field. The following instruments were used for data collection; questionnaire, observation and interview. The use of more than one method helped to collect adequate, reliable and relevant data for the study. Sidhu (2007) argued that no single technique is superior to another. Each method has advantages and limitations; thus, using more than one technique has the benefit of obtaining data that are more adequate, reliable and relevant.

3.5.1 Questionnaire

In addition to being cheap to construct and distribute, especially by email (Brown & Rodgers, 2002; Cohen, et al, 2007; Dörnyei, 2002; Thomas, 2009), a questionnaire can provide a quick and simple way of obtaining broad and rich information (Garton, 2014) from a wide, diverse and global population. For this research, a questionnaire seemed to be one of the most practical methods of gathering data from a range of teachers and contexts. Because the study involved teachers of English as a second language, the researcher assumed the literacy level to be unproblematic. Additionally, items used in this questionnaire were referenced against the research questions and drawn from the literature (Dörnyei, 2002; Nunan, 1992; Richards, 2003). The purpose of the research questionnaire was to acquire in detail the methods, approaches and challenges of teaching English as a second language in Bawku. The items were open-ended and teachers were free to provide the answer they desired.

3.5.2   *Interview*

Richards (2003, p. 51) describes an interview as a "conversation with purpose", claiming that even informal encounters can be interviews "when the researcher designs their contribution to elicit responses… on a particular topic". Any orally interactional event can be an interview, it has design and purpose, and Richards underlines this view with his golden rule for interviewing: always seek the particular. Furthermore, he suggests that "the aim of the qualitative interview is not merely to accumulate information, but to deepen understanding. Rapley (2001) claims interviews allow a rich, deep and textured picture of a situation or experience to be drawn.

Interviews in this research were designed to deepen understanding. Interviews can be viewed as a resource, offering a window into life beyond the interview or as data itself "reflecting a reality jointly constructed by the interviewee and the interviewer together" (Rapley, 2001, p. 305). The purpose of the interviews was to explore some of the issues raised in the questionnaire in more depth. Ten people were interviewed from January 14, 2019 to February 15, 2019. An interview guide comprising 15 items was developed from the research questions, the literature and the questionnaire. During the interviews an interview guide with prepared questions was used to ensure that all areas of the topic were covered. The interview guide was also piloted beforehand to make certain that the questions conveyed the right meaning and that the questions retrieved the desired information. In addition, piloting helped eliminate questions that were not relevant and made sure that the informants understood what was asked. The interview was recorded to make it easier to review and work with the results. During the interview, a semi-structured interview guide was used to ensure that all the informants were asked the same

questions. This way, even though the answers were different, the information that was gathered was the same. Standardized, open-ended questions were made, to make it easier to analyze and also easier to compare the answers.

The interview included questions regarding the informants' previous experiences, opinions and values concerning the topic, and standard background or demographic questions such as age and educational background. The interview was ended with an open question for the informants to add any bit of information they deemed important, and also their impression of the interview. This served as a good approach for getting the story behind the participant's experiences and also presented the opportunity to pursue in-depth information around the topic. This provided focus, in addition to allowing some freedom and adaptability in getting the information from the informants. The main reason for adding interviews to the questionnaire and observation as a basis for data collection was to make it more personal and less formal, in addition to wanting to work directly with the informant creating conversations to cover all the bases of the research. It also offered the opportunity to probe and ask follow up questions. Even though the questions were prepared prior to the interview, they were relevant to the observations. The interviews offered opportunities for the teachers to comment upon the different teaching methods that they used during teaching.

3.5.3   Observation

Observation is a direct method that allows the researcher to be on the field. This allows the researcher to be present physically during the process of data collection (Kothari, 2009). Kothari adds that the method has no bias compared to questionnaire and the information is found in natural environment. The researcher observes without taking part in the teaching and learning process. Teachers teaching

Kindergarten, Primary, and Junior High Schools in Bawku Municipality were observed. Factors that were examined included teaching methods, the use of English language outside and inside the classroom, number of English textbooks, mastery of linguistic aspects, students' work, and strategies employed by teachers during the teaching and learning of English.

3.6   Data analysis

Richards (2003) defines data analysis as identifying relationships between data, suggesting three aspects, namely description, or stating what is happening, analysis; or why something is happening, and interpretation; or what it means. Miles and Huberman (1994) identify three stages of data analysis and interpretation. The first, data reduction, requires the researcher to "select, focus, simplify or transform raw data (from) written… notes leading to summarizing, coding, partitioning and clustering emergent themes" (p. 21). The second stage, data display, requires organizing the data into tables or graphs so it can be presented in a coherent and accessible form. The third stage, conclusion, sees the researcher note regularities, patterns, explanations, possible configurations, causal flows and propositions (Kothari, 2009) as well as irregularities and inconsistencies. This study followed these stages.

3.6.1   Questionnaire

The questionnaire was administered to all the 200 Basic School teachers in the Bawku Municipality. As already noted, teachers were free to choose as many options as possible as answers. The data were analysed manually with the help of a tally sheet. The data were analysed manually with the help of Microsoft Office Excel and Word Version Ten software. The analysis included tabulation and computing frequencies and percentages. The questionnaire was integrated with interview and

observation data. For example, using the responses item 6 of the questionnaire, the following list emerged showing actual respondents' numbers in each category:

Table 3.1. What teaching method do you adopt in teaching English? (Select all that apply)

Level	Grammar-translation method	Direct method	Audio-lingual method	Communicative teaching method
K.G	16	13	17	10
Primary	120	40	11	9
JHS	50	30	14	23
Total	186	83	42	42

3.6.2   Interview

During the research, a total of ten (10) teachers were interviewed from 10 schools. Teachers came from classes ranging from Kindergarten to Junior High School. Each teacher was interviewed once for 20 minutes. The purpose of interviewing the teachers was to gain knowledge about their thoughts and feelings in addition to experiences in teaching English as a second language. The interviews were transcribed at the rate of 5 hour per 20 minutes and 50 hours in total. Interviewees were level T (for teacher) + number. For example, T1, T2, or T3. the transcripts were checked against the recordings and notes for consistency and amended where necessary. The interview recordings were carefully reviewed, exactly transcribed and then imported to a computer. The imported data were categorised in accordance with the questions and themes.

3.6.3   *Observation*

Classes ranging from kindergarten to junior high school three were observed. The observation data was grouped according to the following themes; *the English language teaching methods and approaches adopted by teachers* and *the challenges affecting the teaching and learning of English*. The observation data was analysed during and after the data collection period by using narrative analysis. Analysing the data using narrative analysis was valuable as the researcher was able to understand the methods and approaches teachers of English teach English in Bawku Municipality, and to find some of the challenges and facilitating factors of this teaching situation. The narrative analysis allowed the researcher to get detailed information that may be unavailable by other means of data analysis, such as in-depth understanding of this particular teaching situation, and therefore it benefited the researcher thesis focus.

Table 3.2. Summary of data collection instruments

Instrument	No. of teachers	Frequency of administration	Total no. administered	No. of schools	Type of data gathered
Questionnaire	200	1	200	20	Qualitative
Interview	10 (from the 200)	2	40	10	Qualitative
Observation Checklist	20 (from the 200)	1	20	20	Qualitative

3.6   Validity and reliability

In order to trust the outcome of the research, the question of validity and reliability in the work, and in mixed research in general, must be addressed. Validity refers to the degree in which our test or other measuring device is truly measuring

what we intended it to measure (Kathori, 2009). This means that we have to use appropriate methods or forms of testing to find the answer to our questions. Sampling validity was employed because not every teacher teaching English language in Bawku Municipality could have been covered, so 200 teachers out of 867 teachers and 20 basic schools out of 91 basic school in the Bawku Municipality was enough to make the study valid.

During the research period, a total number of 200 copies of a questionnaire and a total of 20 observations were executed. This provided rich data as all the observations were in different classrooms and the questionnaires were administered to 200 English language teachers from 20 schools, providing information on different types of teaching, in different types of classrooms. The questionnaire, the observations, along with the interviews, gave the research depth and the possibility to compare how 200 teachers in 20 different schools, approach teaching English as a second language. By using interviews, the teachers got to explain their feelings and opinions freely. The questions included in the interview guide, the questionnaire and the observation checklist were based on the need to gather relevant information in relation to the theory. The questions are therefore a reflection of the theory presented in Chapter 2.

In addition, the question of reliability or quality is raised to gain perspective on how to assess or evaluate what we are doing (Flick, 2012). During the interview with teachers, the researcher was clear in his definitions and explained carefully what he was asking them. This eliminated confusion and also the possibility of informants interpreting questions other than intended. Therefore the researcher trusts that the outcome of the research is reliable. During the observations, a checklist was used to help guide the researcher in what to look for and to gather the same information from

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each classroom. This also allowed the researcher to look for certain aspects of teaching to compare with the other classrooms, such as 'what is in the classroom? Using this checklist helped make the comparison between schools reliable, since the information obtained was the same during each observation. To further insure validity, the data was triangulated. Triangulation involves examining hypothesis, questions, situation or issue from different perspectives and identifying points of agreement, disagreement and differences (Dornyei, 2007).

Another aspect of ensuring the credibility of the data was that the research was audited through extensive personal notes, regular meetings with supervisor, and PowerPoint presentations of aspects of the research delivered during departmental seminars. In addition, regular contact with people active in the field enabled discussion and further validation of the themes and findings of the study. Maree et al (2007) believe that reliability has to do with the consistency or the repeatability of a measure or an instrument, they believe that high reliability is obtained when the measure or instrument will give the same results if the research is repeated on the same sample. Hence the researcher observed the whole process to ensure that the process was done scientifically in a controlled environment. This was also done to ensure that all factors that might interfere with data collection were eliminated. This again ensured that all questions related to the instruments used for data collection were explained by the researcher himself.

3.7   Ethical considerations

During the research, some ethical considerations were noted. First, the research was reported to the Bawku Municipal Directorate of Education to obtain permission to conduct it. Second, letters were given to the headteachers of all the sampled schools informing them of the dates of visitation. The letters informed the

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headteachers about both the research and the researcher. Before the data collection process began, the school, teachers and Parent-Teacher Associations (PTAs) were informed that the supervisor and researcher for this thesis would be the only ones to have access to the recordings and notes taken during the research. When presenting the results, all teachers' names and the names of the respective schools were exchanged with numbers and letters to protect their privacy. They were anonymized throughout the thesis. They were also informed that after the thesis is complete, the files with their identities and the recordings will be kept for a short period of time, no more than six months, before being deleted.

3.8   Conclusion

This chapter has provided details of the method used in the conduct of the study. These include research design, population, sampling and sampling techniques, instrument for data collection, data analysis, reliability, as well as validity of the data collection tool used was described. The next chapter presents the results from the analysis of data collected
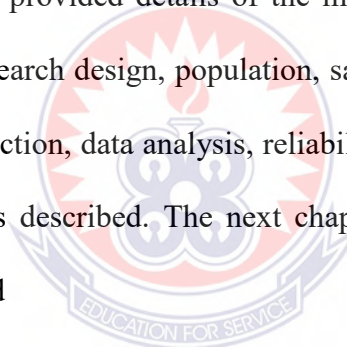
CHAPTER FOUR

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

4.0   Introduction

In this chapter, I present the analysis of methods of teaching English, challenges of teaching English, and measures to improve the teaching and learning of English in the Bawku Municipality. Readers will recall from chapter 2 that the conceptual framework discussed the variables that ensure effective teaching and learning of English. These variables include independent variables, the intermediate variables and dependent variable. The discussion revealed that the independent variables and the intermediate variables are the most important variables in the teaching and learning setting. This discussion will hinge on the two variables, the independent and the intermediate variables.

The analysis conducted here focuses on methods of teaching English in Bawku Municipality, challenges of teaching English, and measures to improve the teaching and learning of English in the Bawku Municipality. The analysis is divided into three sections; each part answers a research question. The first section examines methods of teaching English language in the Bawku Municipality with focus on the Grammar-Translation method, the Direct Method, the Audiolingual Method, and the Communicative learning Approaches. The second section discusses the challenges of teaching English and how those challenges affect teaching and learning. The third and final section discusses measures to improve the teaching and learning of English.

4.1   Methods and approaches in teaching English

This section combines information from the three instruments to determine teachers' knowledge on methods and approaches in teaching English.

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4.1.1   *Suggestions regarding the methods of teaching*

Participants were asked of their suggestions regarding the methods they employ in teaching English in the Bawku Municipality. They were asked to choose all options that were applicable to the responses. Figure 4.1.1 shows that most teachers think the methods of teaching should be different for different situations, classes, schools and students of different groups.

Figure 4.1.1. Respondents' views regarding the methods of teaching English

With regard to the suggestion concerning the methods of teaching English, Figure 2 shows that 10 (5%) of the participants believe the teacher should follow faithfully a definite method when teaching English, 122 (61%) think the methods of teaching should be different for different situations, classes, schools and students of different groups, while 25 (12.5%) are 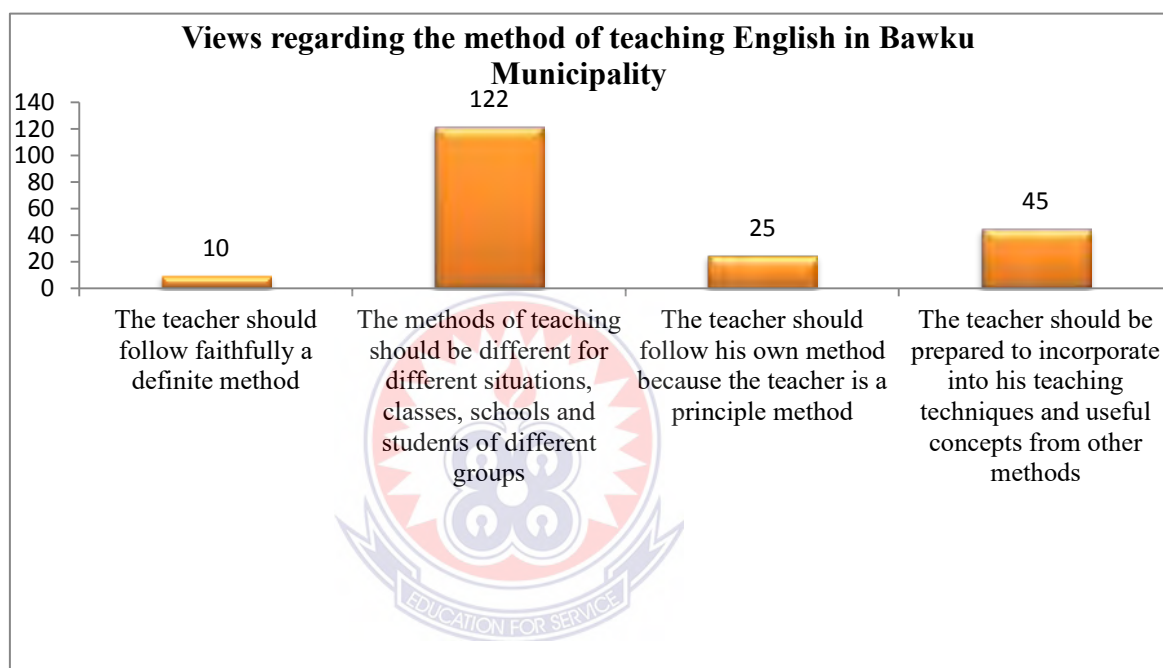of the view that the teacher should follow his own methods. Finally, 46 (21.5%) of the respondents think that the teacher should be prepared to incorporate into his teaching techniques and useful concepts from other methods.

This could be attributed to the fact that teachers may have espoused theory and practice. Ankur (2012) describes how teachers adopt theories and practices and use them side-by-side. He notes that the theory which actually governs teachers' action is theory-in-use, which may or may not be compatible with his espoused theory. Furthermore, the individual teacher may or may not be aware of the incompatibility of the theories in contrast. Other results show inconsistencies with regard to teachers' view on what method, approaches, techniques and strategies to adopt in teaching English Language. The interview responses contradict their suggestions. Furthermore, the observation showed a clear contradiction between actual classroom practice and the teachers' responses. Some teachers tried to show that they adopt a certain belief but what they actually did in the classroom was totally different. For Example, a study by Alnaqeeb (2012) indicates that there was no consistency between classroom practice and belief among any of the 10 teachers studied. This indicates that though most teachers have the belief that English Language teaching should be different for different situations, classes, schools and students of different groups, it seems that they do not have sufficient knowledge of the practical aspect to achieve what they believe in.

4.1.2 *Aims of teaching English in the Bawku Municipality*

The objective seeks to find teachers' understanding of the aims of teaching English in the Bawku municipality. The participants were asked to choose all options that apply to the responses. The findings reveal that most teachers think the aim of teaching is to help the learners to be able to read and write. The analysis is presented in Figure 4.1.2.

Aims of teaching English in the Bawku Municipality
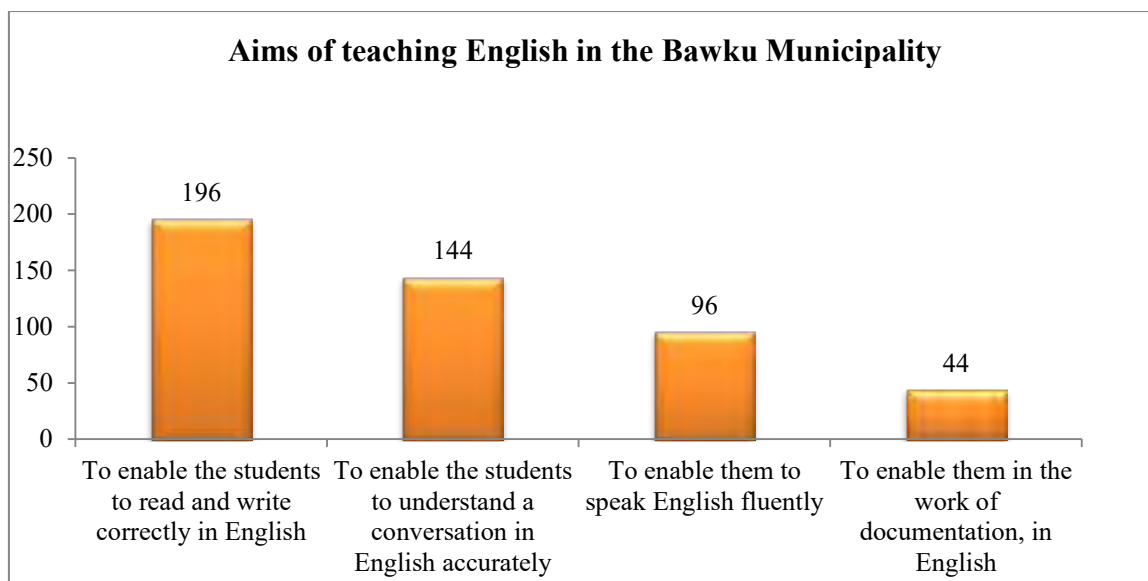
Figure 4.1.2. Views on the aims of teaching English in Bawku Municipality

The data indicate that as many as 196 teachers generally think the aim of teaching English is to enable the learners to be able to correctly read and write English. In the interview, a similar number, nearly 90% said the aim of teaching English is to help the children to be able to read and write. Ten (10) per cent of those interviewed believe that the aim of teaching English is to enable the pupils to speak English fluently. With the 10% who think the aims of teaching English is to help the pupils to speak fluently, 12 teachers also think that teachers must focus on teaching pupils to read and write accurately. This may be as a result of their belief but not what they practice. The results are not different from T3 who remarked that:

If I am able to assist my students to read and write well, I think the

job is done. My motivation actually is seeing my students reading.

Teacher T8 however believes that the aim of teaching English should be to assist the pupils to be fluent in speaking the English Language. As he said:

I believe the aim of teaching English language to every teacher

should be guiding the students to read and speak fluently. So I

don't joke with my pronunciation lessons at all.

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Teachers T6, T9 and T10 were of the opinion that learners' ability to engage in conversations in English language is enough. For instance, T10 noted:

If you teach and the students cannot converse with you in English,

it means you have to do more.

This is a further manifestation that teachers believe in Communicative language teaching but do not practice it. This goes to support the claim of Naveen and Medta (2010) that teachers practice what they know not what they believe. The researcher thinks every teacher must have understanding of the aims of the curriculum he or she teaches. As Ankur (2012) points out, every English language teacher must have practical knowledge of the aims of teaching the language. He adds that teachers of English should not be allowed to teach if they are not properly equipped with the aims of the curriculum. His views are supported by Abosnan (2016) who also observes that a teacher, especially second language teachers of English, should not be allowed to teach without the knowledge of a curriculum.

4.1.3 Methods of teaching English

Participants were asked of the English language teaching methods they adopt in teaching. The theoretical data shows an even level of likeness of all the methods as can be seen in Figure 4.1.3. The participants were asked to choose all options that apply to the responses.

Methods of teaching English
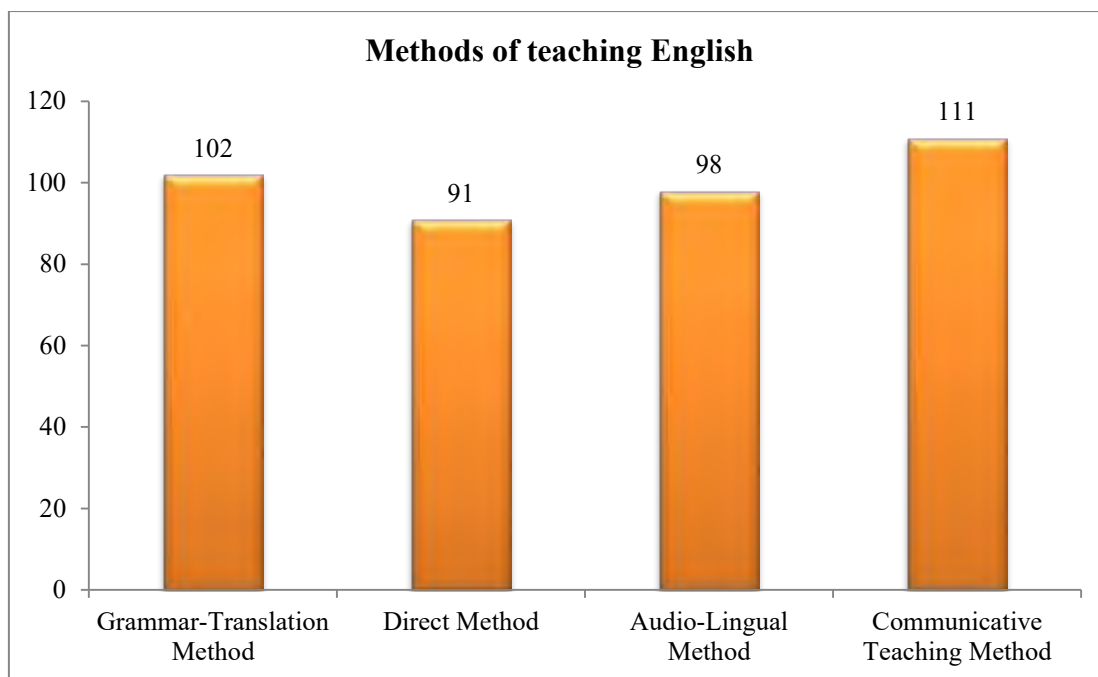
Figure 4.1.3. Participants' views on methods of teaching English

As can be seen from Figure 4.1.3, most of the teachers adopt all the English language teaching methods identified. From this, 102 (51%) said they adopt the Grammar-Translation method while 91 (45.5%) mentioned the Direct method. Again, whereas 98 (49%) said they adopt the Audio-Lingual Method, 111 (55.5%) said they adopt the Communicative language teaching method. This shows that more than a half of the teachers follow the Grammar-translation method and the Communicative Learning Teaching Approach. For the Numbers in the Grammar-Translation, this could be as a result of the ease of applying the method and the lack of skilled English Language teachers. Ellis (2006) points out that the Grammar-translation method is easy for teachers with limited knowledge of the language they teach. In addition, Brown (2000) thinks that English language teachers from Outer and Expanding circles may not have good knowledge in the content and methodology of teaching English.

He indicates that most of those teachers adopt the Grammar-Translation method since it is easier to teach English language using the Grammar-Translation

method. The results also match with Attamimi (2003), whose findings suggest that teachers' limited knowledge in English Language account for them adopting the Grammar-translation method. Teachers are still stuck with Grammar-Translation method because of the dominance of teacher-centredness. He concluded that more work must be done to encourage teachers to move from the Grammar-Translation method to communicative Teaching Approaches. One may also infer that teachers tend to use this method because they were taught the same way. This result is consistent with many other principles and results that show preference given to the Grammar-Translation method.

The high number of participants also indicated that they adopt the communicative teaching approach; however, data from the observation and the interview do not agree with that because all the 20 teachers observed only adopted the Grammar-Translation method. None adopted the Communicative Teaching Approach. The difference in the questionnaire data and the observation data may be as a result of teachers' lack of knowledge of what English Language Teaching methods are, as T4 remarked:

I use whole class discussion method to teach English.

Teachers T8, T2, T6 all remarked that they adopt the *child -centred method* to teach English language. The reason teachers do not adopt the communicative teaching approach is that it is impractical for classroom teachers because of the constraints of resource, time and even skill. This may be attributed to the predominance of the communicative approach in the present times (Ellis, 2006). In contrast, practice results are contradictory. This again shows that teachers' theoretical beliefs are based on experiences, qualification, facilities and the general direction of the concerned authorities that ask teachers to finish certain units regardless of the

way or how to do them. This result is in line with Canh and Barnard's (2009) study about the implementation of a new communicative, learner-centred curriculum in Vietnam. The study revealed that teachers' beliefs about students' proficiency level, motivation and the examination had a strong influence on their delivery of the new curriculum, which caused a deviation from the curriculum requirement.

A similar study by Kararas-Doukas (1999) found that teachers had a positive attitude toward Communicative approach principles through their responses to the survey questionnaire, but classroom observation practices deviated considerably from the principles of the Communicative Approach. Another study carried out in China by Hanan (2018) observed that teachers found it difficult to implement Communicative Learning Teaching. Major limitations and problems that were observed were related to the curriculum being very extensive and finding it difficult to relate to CLT, both students and teachers were comfortable with the traditional teaching methods. The number of students per class was high, and the teaching schedules were not consistent with the CLT approach. Availability of resources and equipment was another challenge besides having less efficient teachers who were trained to teach analytical skills rather than communicative techniques. Teachers' incompetence in their spoken English and sociolinguistic and strategic competence were among other issues that caused a major hindrance while applying the CLT to the EFL context.

Furthermore a study was conducted by Ghanbari and Ketabi (2011) on pre-university teachers in the Middle East (Iran) regarding the different components of this new curriculum and evaluating the teachers' perceptions, that is, attitude, methodology, or practice. The findings of this study have confirmed that certain issues seriously affected the innovative aims of the communicative language

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teaching. The most highlighted and significant issues included less viability, incompatibility of the newly introduced approach with the existing rigid practices, lack of training causing lower confidence among teachers in implementing the latest approach, and negative feedback and criticism from fellow workers. The findings may fit the context of Bawku where most teachers seem to lack competence in teaching English Language.

No teacher observed or interviewed mentioned or were seen adopting the audio-lingual. The possible reason may be that classrooms in Bawku Municipality are not learner-rich, hence teachers' inability to adopt the method, or they do not have the competence to adopt the audio-Lingual Method. According Xia (2014) "a teacher acts as the conductor of an orchestra" (p. 562) in adopting the audio-lingual method with learners playing a passive role during the lessons. This may be the reason why teachers of English do not adopt the Audio-lingual Method. A study conducted by Hussein (2013) dedicated to learning English by Arabic students, states that "the results of both questionnaires show that the use of Arabic in an English classroom is justified. He said it is mainly useful to explain the meaning of new or difficult words, to explain syntactic rules, and to explain difficult questions" (p. 178). Needless to say, these results are true and also for other languages. The evidence shows that learners often need additional explanations, and using mother tongue makes them feel more confident during the lesson.

4.1.4 *Teaching of grammar*

The sub-objective was to seek the views of respondents on the importance of teaching Grammar of English in a second language setting like Bawku Municipality. The belief of respondents was that grammar is an important aspect of teaching and

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learning of English language and should be taught. The result is shown in Figure 4.1.4.
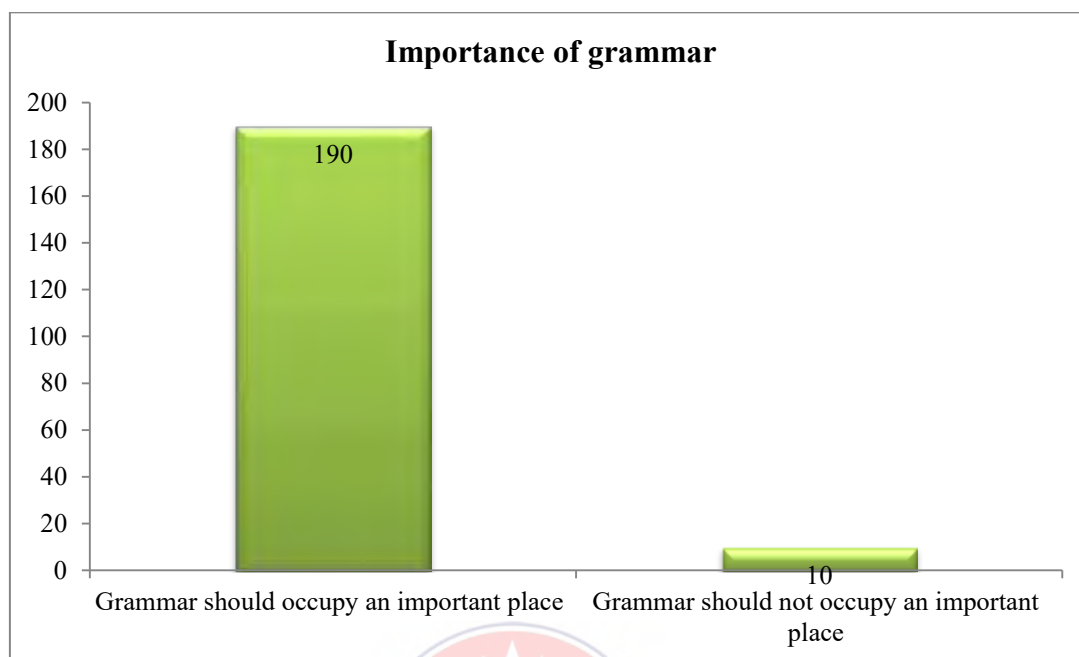
Figure 4.1.4. Views on the importance of Grammar in language teaching

As can be seen from Figure 4.1.4, a total of 190 (95%) participants said that Grammar should occupy an important place in the teaching and learning of English in Bawku Municipality while only 10 (5%) think that Grammar should not occupy an important place in the teaching and learning of English in the Bawku Municipality. The ninety-five per cent explains why teachers focus on grammar translation method. Another reason is that grammar is easy to be measured in the examinations.

When asked why Grammar should occupy an important place,133 participants said it helps learners to correctly and efficiently learn the language, 112 participants believe that it gives the students confidence in the active use of the structural patterns of the language, while 61 participants were of the opinion that Grammar is very important for the purpose of correct writing. On the other hand, of the respondents who said grammar should not occupy an important role in teaching and learning of

English language in Bawku Municipality, 60 participants said the knowledge of grammar is not a condition for the learners to use language and respond to it while 20 participants argued that grammar exalts the importance of cramming the rules which are not good to students. In addition, 40% said that it deals with only a part of language because it does not deal with idioms, phrases, proverbs, fluency, articulation, colloquial expression and power of speech with 20% noting that teaching grammar alone hinders the spontaneous learning of a second language.

Classroom observations showed that most of the frequent errors made by the pupils were in grammar and vocabulary. Majority of the students disliked grammar and students were found to have problems in the use of verbs and in the production of sentences because the deductive method was used to teach grammar. It was clear from the respondents that teachers in the Bawku Municipality teach grammar through the deductive method rather than the inductive method. This is opposite to the assertion of Huddleston & Pullum (2002) who propose that grammar should be taught inductively. They advise teachers of English not teach grammar in deductive form.

4.1.5   *Improving the teaching of grammar*

Participants were to suggest ways to improve the teaching of English grammar, the results are shown in Figure 4.1.5. The participants were asked to choose all options that apply to the responses.
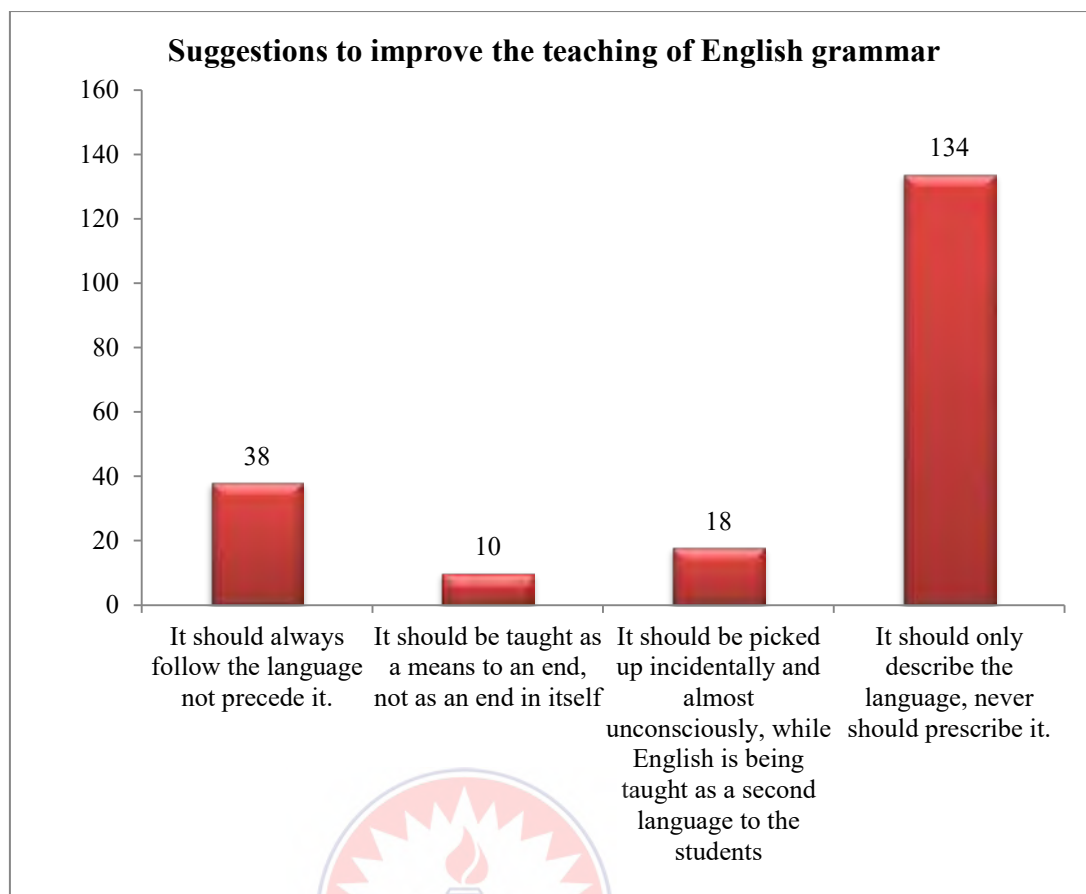
Figure 4.1.5. Suggestions to improve the teaching of English grammar

On suggestions to improve teaching of English grammar, 22% said grammar should always follow the language, not precede it. Five percent (5%) said grammar should be taught as a means to an end, not as an end in itself, while 9% is of the belief that grammar should be picked up incidentally and almost unconsciously and 69% think grammar should only describe the language, never should prescribe it. This finding is not consistent with observational data that show that teachers concentrate on teaching Grammar explicitly. This result could be attributed to teachers' belief on how Grammar should be taught. The findings are contrary to the belief of Abubakar (2019) who intimates that the teaching of grammar should start when learners begin to learn English language, with formal grammar gradually introduced to learners.

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4.1.6   *Teaching of English prose and poetry*

This sub-objective was to find out teachers' views on method, approaches, and strategies in teaching English prose and poetry. The responses indicated that most teachers of English lack the competence in teaching English literature, which is an aspect of English language.
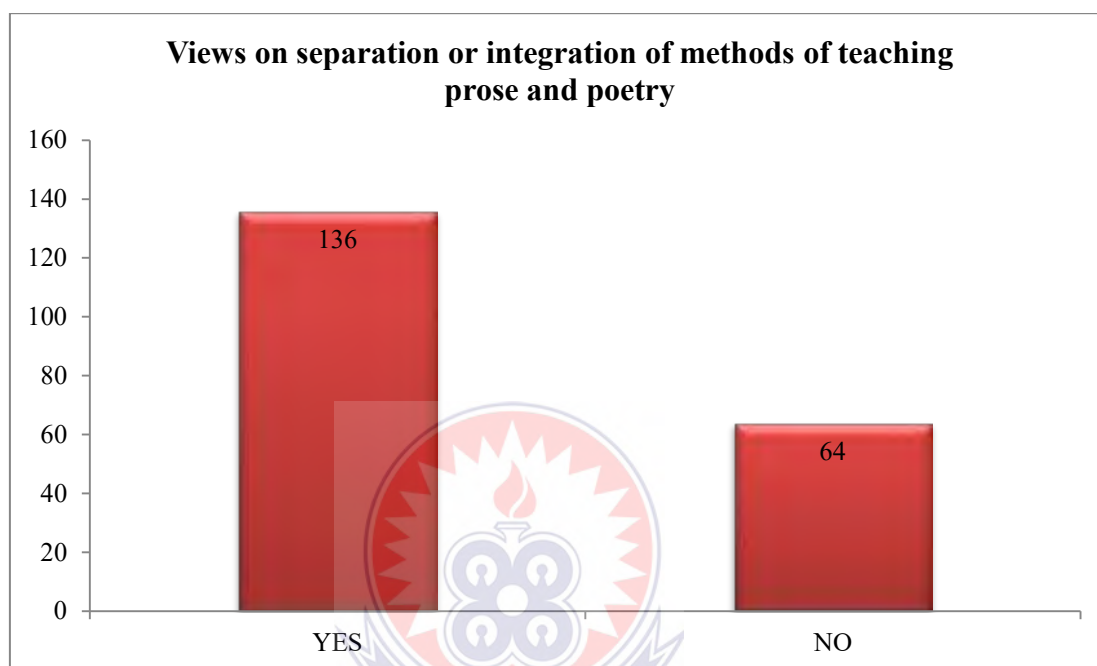
Figure 4.1.6. Respondents' view on separation or integration of methods of teaching prose and poetry

A total of 68% of the respondents think that the teaching of prose and poetry should be different from the other aspects of English while 32% think that the teaching should be the same as other aspects such as reading comprehension, grammar and writing. The analysis suggest that 94% of the teachers said the teaching of the genres of literature should be the same as the other aspects of the English language while 6% think prose and poetry should be taught differently from the other aspects. In line with the views of the majority, Brown (2001) thinks that literature is a specialised aspect of a language and must be taught like other aspects such as grammar.

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The language that literature uses is not the same as that is normally used in everyday communication (Larsen-Freeman, 2001). For instance, poetry is *recreating language*. The poet deliberately uses words in a way that ordinary speakers of the language cannot. His words carry more meaning or multiple meanings than we could normally think of in real life communication. The aim of teaching literature is basically to enable learners to understand and appreciate it as a piece of art in the same way as one appreciates a good painting/picture. She believes that teachers' ability to teach the genres of literature enables students to explore the linguistic and conceptual aspects of the written text without concentrating on the mechanics of language.

4.1.7 *Summary*

This section has discussed the results regarding the methods of teaching English language and aims of teaching English. The findings of the study revealed that most teachers believe that the aims of teaching English are to only read and write. On suggestions on how English teaching methods should be employed, 122 (61%) think the methods of teaching should be different for different situations, classes, schools and students of different groups. However, other results show inconsistencies with regard to teachers' view on what method, approaches, techniques and strategies to adopt in teaching English Language. The interview responses contradict their suggestions. Furthermore, the observation showed a clear contradiction between actual classroom practice and the teachers' responses. Most teachers adopted the Grammar-Translation methods in teaching. Through observation it was revealed that none of the teachers employ the Communicative Language Teaching. The findings also concluded that grammar was taught deductively. Finally, the analysis shows that teachers employ the same approach in teaching English

literature and other aspects of the English language. The next two sections discuss the challenges and measures in improving the teaching and learning of English.

4.2 General challenges in teaching of English language

The second objective sought to examine general challenges faced by teachers of English language in the Bawku Municipality, Ghana. Three instruments were used to assess what were discussed in the literature. The main issues discussed include inadequate materials, large class size, lack of multimedia resources, inadequate pedagogical and content knowledge of teachers, mother tongue interference, and poor infrastructure. The responses obtained are presented in Figure 4.2. The participants were asked to choose all options that apply to the responses.
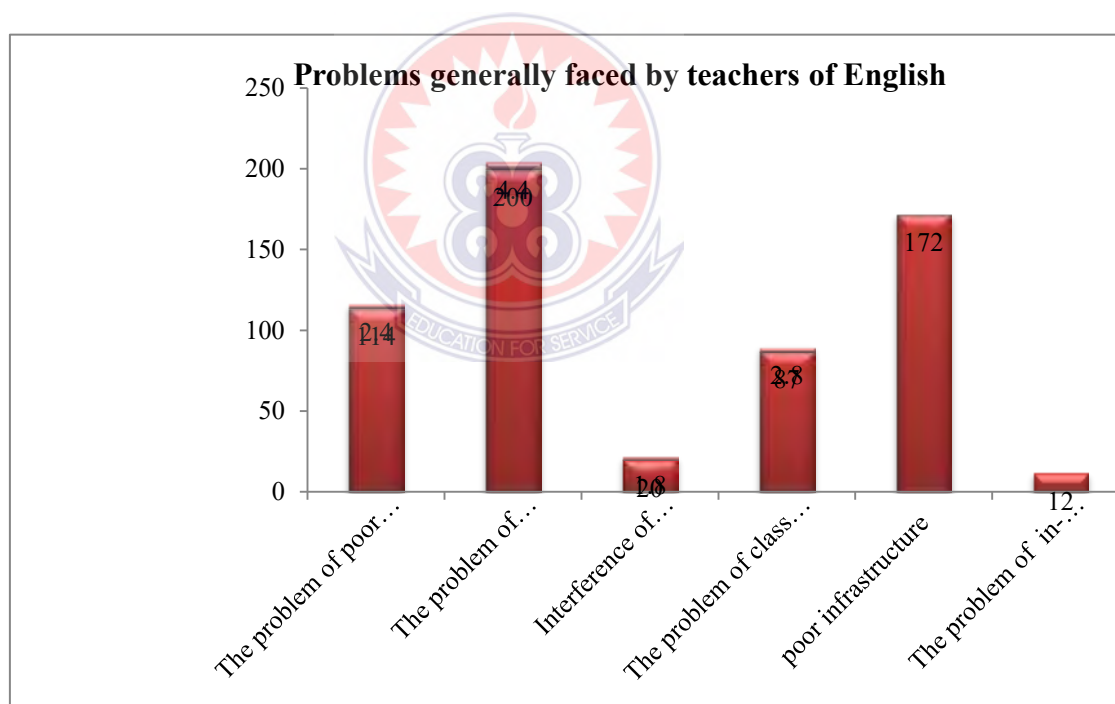
Figure 4.2. Challenges of teaching English

The challenges identified were unavailability of reading material (100%), large class size (86%), and inadequate teaching methods (57%). The rest are poor infrastructure (43%), interference of mother tongue (10%) and low student attendance (6%). These challenges were further explored with the interviews and observation, which

highlighted the same issues of inadequate materials, large class size, motivation, mother tongue interference, poor infrastructure and attendance. These findings are similar to some earlier studies about challenges in teaching English language at the basic level. For example, in Kashikar (2012), 98% of the participants mentioned inadequate teaching and learning materials as the major challenge they face in India. They also said that poorly written textbooks affected the teaching of English in India. In addition, Nwanyanwu (2017) conducted a study in Nigeria on effective teaching of the English language in multicultural L2 classrooms. His findings suggest that teachers in Multicultural settings face challenges such as first language interference, poor infrastructure, inadequate textbook, and large class size. The findings are addressed as follows:

4.2.1　First language interference

Responses from the questionnaire completed by the sample of 200 teachers show significant agreement about the mother tongue being a challenge to the effective teaching and learning of English in the Bawku Municipality. This is shown in Figure 4.2.1. A follow-up interview and observation with teachers from the group further confirmed the prominence of these concerns.

Does the learners L1 affect their ability to acquire the English Language
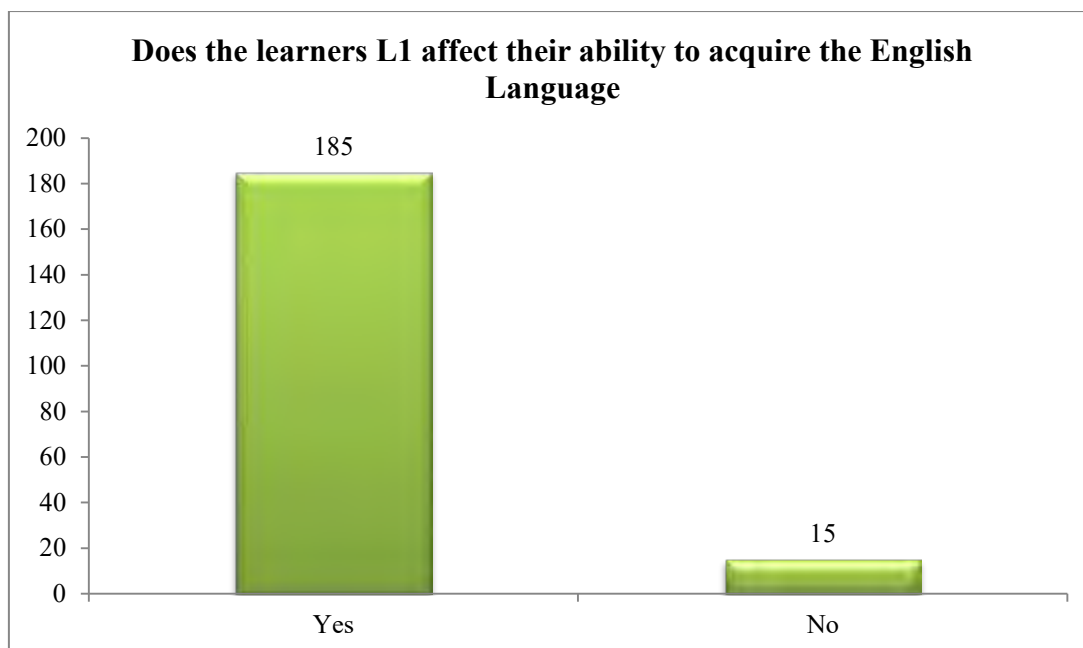
Figure 4.2.1. Respondents' view on effects of learners L1 in acquiring English

The majority of teachers (92.5%) agreed that most learners use Mother Tongue in school thus affecting the learning of English, with nearly all respondents agreeing that learners had difficulties expressing themselves using English. Reinforcing this observation and interviews from respondents believe that learners' L1 affect their ability to learn the English Language. Some of the teachers said:

T6: yes, children first language interferes a lot in the effective teaching and learning of English in this school. Here they do not want to speak English at all. We encourage them but they do not speak.

T9: when parents are educated and speak English to their children, they do well in class. They understand me when I am teaching. But the rest will always want to speak Hausa or Kusaal.

T10: Here the speaking of the local language is too much. It affects their ability to learn the English Language. In this school

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some are in JHS three but cannot express themselves in the

English Language. This is too bad.

T4: We used to be proud expressing ourselves in English, but

these days the story is different, they enjoy communication in

Hausa. Go round now, you will hear them speaking Hausa, none

speaks English.

Hausa and Kusaal are the dominant languages in the Bawku municipality so learners do not interact in English outside the school. This hinders their ability to communicate effectively in the English language. This finding agrees with the study conducted by Rababah (2002) who reports that when the learners and teachers' mother tongue are different from the language being studied, acquiring the second language becomes difficult. Furthermore, Ahmed (2013) adds that teachers face problems in pronunciation, spelling, vocabulary and grammar which make them uncomfortable during English teaching they therefore revert to using their first languages in which both the teachers and learners are fluent. According to the data presented in this section, it is evident that many teachers' learners L1 affect their ability to speak the English language.

Furthermore, Karim and Nassaji (2013), in the investigation of the first language transfer in L2 writing, found that when second language students write in L2, their L1 has an effect on their writing. Also, Fatemi et al (2012) investigated the differences in consonant clusters orally in the first and second language, and concluded that if the structures of first and second language are different, students have difficulty in L2 pronunciation due to unfamiliar phonological rules. On the other hand, Lord's (2008) study investigated the effects of L2 acquisition on L1 and pointed out that learners who become members of bilingual communities lose their

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L1. Therefore, teachers of the second language should be aware that when students of L2 want to speak or write in the target language, there is the tendency to rely on the first language.

4.2.2   Lack of in-service training

From the questionnaire and interview, the researcher noted that most teachers of English in the Bawku Municipality have never gone for any in-service training to enrich their pedagogical and content knowledge of the teaching of English.
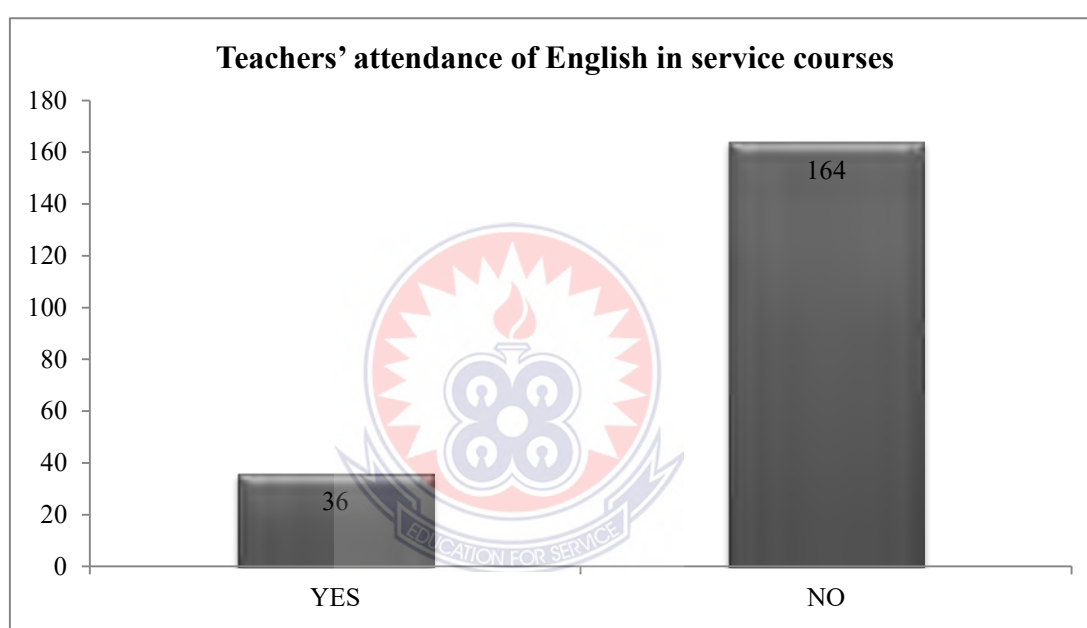
Figure 4.2.2. Respondents' view on Teachers' attendance of English in service courses

The aim of this question was to see if the teachers were given English courses in order to improve their competence in English language teaching. This information was collected using questionnaire. The results show that a majority of teachers of English (82%) had not had an opportunity to attend any in-service training. Only two out of the 10 teachers interviewed said they have ever attended in-service training. The remaining 8 indicated they have never attended any in-service training since joining the Ghana Education Service. The Ghana Education Service needs to take

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teachers through on the job training because in-service training improves teachers' competence in teaching English. For instance, T1, T5, T7, and T8 said they have never attended any in-service training. They believe getting opportunity to attend in-service training will improve their performance in the classrooms. They said:

> T1: I have never gone for any in-service training. But I think in-service training will definitely help teachers to improve.
>
> T5: No, please, I wish they can organise one for us.
>
> T7: No, since I started teaching they have never called us for one.
>
> T8: no, I am hoping to go for in-service training one day.

As a matter of fact, in-service training acts as a catalyst for teachers' effectiveness. It is also a way of updating teachers' skills and knowledge for improving teaching and learning which eventually leads to better job performance (Omar, 2014). In-service training is a fundamental aspect to improve teacher professionalism. The effectiveness of in-service training is important so that teachers can apply the knowledge acquired in teaching and learning. According to Marsha and Naftaly (1999), one of the important components to improve the quality of education is through in-service training for teachers. With respect to this, the Ministry of Education should organise periodic in-service training to help English language teachers within Bawku Municipality and beyond to improve teaching and learning.

This finding agrees with the recommendation given by Solak and Bayer (2015) that second language teachers should be given in-service training to update their professionalism from time to time in order to master language and improve their teaching competency. Moreover, these activities are in agreement with the theories that the capacity of implementers should be improved by training them so as to have enough skills and attitude (Gross, 1971). In view of the responses presented, inability

of teachers to access in-service training is one of the factors that lead to low capacity of teachers of English in Bawku Municipality.

4.2.3   *Unavailability of textbooks*

A look at Figure 8 shows that inadequate textbooks present itself as a major challenge that affects the teaching and learning of English in the Bawku Municipality. The challenge might be due to lack of supplies from the Ministry of Education as T2 remarked:

The government has refused to supply the schools with books.

Another reason for the shortage of textbooks was attributed to teachers and pupils careless handling of the textbooks. As a result, most of them were stolen or torn. The effect is immense because pupils and teachers do not get textbooks for effective teaching and learning to take place. The current pupil-to-textbook ratio in all the schools visited stood at one textbook to about twenty pupils. As T1 remarked:

I have challenges because the materials for teaching are not

available. I think I have seen only just one English book; this is not

helpful because the students themselves need books to read. I am

trying to teach comprehension unfortunately all the students do not

have any comprehension books to use.

The situation is worse in some villages where a whole school was found no to have a single textbook. A class four teacher in a school lamented that the lack of textbooks has brought challenges upon pupils and teachers alike. He said up to ten pupils' crowd around a single textbook at her school. He said:

Ten pupils have to share a single book. It is difficult for those in

the far corner to access the contents and in the end they lose out on

some concept and it is very difficult for pupils to effectively learn

the English language without textbooks. The learning environment

for pupils has turned into that of struggling to access information.

If pupils have to stand up or strain themselves to read.

Other Teachers, T5 and T7 also claimed that pupils' lack of textbooks is affecting teaching and learning of the English language at the basic level. They said:

T5: The first challenge I face here is lack of textbooks for the

children to read and other literature books that will help the

children to improve upon the language. Not even a single reading

book. I cannot remember the last time government supplied the

schools with textbooks.

T7: We have no textbooks to aid us in teaching English. For

instance, most of JHS3 has only 9 textbooks for 36 students in the

class. Sometimes I have to put them into six or seven in a group. I

have to print some passages with my own money before effective

teaching and learning can take place. We use our own money to

purchase most teaching aids.

Classroom observation in the schools confirmed that the main problem in each school was lack of English textbooks. In one of the classes it was observed that one English textbook was used by 89 pupils. In most schools it was observed that students did not use textbooks', they only listened to their teachers. Moreover, teachers taught without using any teaching aids. The observation also proved that schools lack adequate textbooks, and in some case teachers have to borrow a textbook from colleagues in a different district to aid them in teaching. Some also have to look for the passages online and copy them onto the chalkboard for learners. This revealed that inadequate textbooks continue to be a major problem which

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confronts public basic schools in Ghana. Some schools do not have any reading materials to aid students in learning the English language and the prescribed textbooks of English have many defects while some of the subject matter is unrelated to the surrounding environment of the learners.

4.2.4   Lack of multimedia resources

In their interview, T10 thought that the use of multimedia in classroom will be very difficult because the classrooms are not resourced enough.

> T10:   *You cannot use any multimedia in this condition. Where is*
>
> *power supply? The whole community has no electricity.*

According to Oluwayomi (2017), schools should take interest in relevant videos and films that illustrate students' comprehension passages. He states that multimedia play important roles in improving second language acquisition and encourages all second language teachers of English language to use multimedia in the classroom. However, the challenges of using multimedia in language classrooms is that most schools lack the necessary resources to aid their use (Mayer, 2001)

4.2.5   Large class size

Large class size accounts for the second most popular response; 86% of the questionnaire report this as the challenge to effective teaching of English in class. T8, in the interview noted that:

> *The enrolment is always large so making teaching and evaluation*
>
> *very difficult to do. In JHS one they are 98 pupils, JHS two they*
>
> *are79 pupils and in JHS three we have 106 pupils, it is difficult*
>
> *attending to all of them during lesson, if you give one exercise, it*
>
> *take a long time before you can finish marking. I hardly give*
>
> *composition questions as exercise.*

She wondered why only one teacher should teach a class as large as 90 or 100.

Another teacher, T4 remarked that: *Such a teacher will not be effective because class control alone will be a difficult task for the teacher.*

She thinks teachers should not be made to teach a class with a population that is more than 35. Teacher T2 also felt that large class size actually demoralises a teacher. She indicated that "f*acing a large class size demotivates every teacher"*. She believes the teacher immediately fails before even starting to teach. She is also of the opinion that early childhood classes should not be over populated. Teacher T3 had similar concerns related to second language teaching. He said

The first challenge I have here is the numbers, take a look at the register they are 124 pupils in this small classroom. How can you have this great number in a kindergarten class? This class need to be divided into two or three. What we know is that K. G. class is supposed to have 30-35 pupils. Here they can hardly draw or write because there is no space.

He added that:

The classroom environment is also a challenge; we do not have furniture for the pupils to sit. You will realise that two or three students are also pairing a table which is not conducive for them and for me because I have to work round when I give them work but it is difficult to do that. So, what meaningful learning can take place without furniture and books?

In all the twenty classes observed, there was no class where the population was less than 60 pupils. Teacher 8 complained about the large class size she has to deal with:

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> *Check the register, they are 123 pupils in this small classroom,*
>
> *how can teaching and learning be effective here?*'

She said that she was unable to attend to all the learners in the class. Similarly, T3 mentioned that the large numbers in the class was a hindrance to effective teaching and learning. She said that: '*the numbers are just too much for me to handle, something must be done'.* The problem, according to Shedu and Tafida (2016), is a serious one that affects language acquisition. They further mention that large class size does not motivate learners to learn, hence, poor performance in English. Popoola (2011) is convinced that the population explosion that has been witnessed in many countries is severely impacting on the quality of education.

The world population continues to rise, but there appears to be a direct correlation between that growth and the difficulties now being encountered in classrooms. It is becoming increasingly evident in Ghana that as more and more children attend school, there is a huge strain placed on systems that are already overburdened. Resources are stretched as budgets are squeezed and teachers become overburdened and overwhelmed by the demands of large class sizes. Certainly, in the case of the Bawku Municipality, societal recognition of the importance of formal education has on the quality of life, as well as government efforts to bring about mass education has contributed to the phenomenon of large class sizes in all basic schools. However, the high demand for education without a corresponding increase in the provision of adequate resources such as sufficient numbers of qualified teachers, classroom spaces, and good teaching materials is impacting negatively on the quality of learning.

The large sizes of classes, indeed, have negative effects on the quality of teaching and learning processes inside classes (Borti, 2008). He is of the view that

teachers in such crowded classes face several difficulties with respect to a wide range of linguistic capability and motivation. In such conditions, discipline is a major problem, particularly in a system where discipline is considered very important. Teachers do not like the noise from other classes. If students talk at the same time or become over-enthusiastic, the class becomes unacceptably noisy (Asangba, 2016). Thus, students' involvement is very restricted. This is just the opposite of the type of environment which is considered positive for English language teaching.

4.2.6   *Inadequate pedagogical and content knowledge of teachers*

A serious challenge the researcher observed is that some of the teachers are not competent enough to be able to teach English at the basic level. In a Kindergarten class, the researcher observed that the teacher was teaching spellings and dictation. Some teachers could not read the questionnaire so the researcher had to read for such teachers. Some also showed complete lack of understanding of how English language should be taught. Related to these, Akpan (2016) mentioned the lack of understanding of second language acquisition pedagogy as the competency that teachers of English lack. She further states that English in the Outer and Expanding circle is badly taught which results in poor performance in examinations. Fernandes (2013) also observes that most teachers of L2 classrooms lack experience in teaching young learners. Observation showed that some 50% of the teachers lack competence to teach English. Teacher T15 who teaches Basic 1 could not communicate in English language; she had bad handwriting and mixed lower and upper case letters. Again, T19, who teaches Primary 4, misspelt some words on the board. Another finding was that teachers lack the competence to the characteristics that influence the whole teaching and learning process. These include child literacy development and oral skills, and other motor skills of young learners.

According to Richard and Renandya (2002), it is not just enough to know English in order to teach it. A teacher of English, especially English as a second language, needs to be a professional English language teacher. That is, one who possesses a certain degree of professional skill and 'expertise' in the teaching of the language. Lack of this kind of professional skill negatively affects the teaching and learning of English. Most teachers of English at the Basic level in Bawku are people who are graduates of Colleges of Education whose specialty is not the English language. This leaves them unprepared to teach English language with the degree of mastery needed for a second language situation. The use of this category of people and even graduates of subjects other than English for the teaching of English is necessitated by the shortage of English language teachers in the country. Apart from this, it has been noticed that the average English teachers' knowledge of English is limited to linguistic competence. They lack communicative competence, that is, the ability to use the language appropriately according to relevant factors in the context of use. This defect is transferred to the students because they are just taught the rules of the language which they learn in order to pass examination and obtain certificates. They are rarely able to properly use the language.

It was also observed that teachers did not vary their teaching strategies; mostly, the lecture techniques were employed even at the kindergarten level. This is strange because Copland and Garton (2014) posit that a child of three years will be very different from a child of five or seven, and classroom approaches that are suitable for the latter will not be so for the former. It is the view of the researcher that teachers of English should understand what interest and motivates learners to learn a second language, and the types of strategies that can be used to engage learners minute-by-minute and day-by-day. According to literature, learners can learn English

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well if they are given some activities to motivate their learning. Solak and Bayar (2015) argue that the learning of English language should be practical rather than theoretical. Duarte (2015) mentioned drama as one of the activities that can enable learners master what they have learned. The findings of this study have revealed that many teachers do not provide activities that may help their learners to master English language.

4.2.7   *Inadequate teaching and learning materials*

Another challenge the researcher identified is inadequate teaching and learning materials in all the basic schools visited. The teachers observed only used chalk and board as their only material to teach. The situation may be due to lack of proper investment by the government in the educational sector. Some of the pre-school classrooms do not look like pre-school class because they lack resources. As T2 who teaches kindergarten lamented:

> *We have a lot of challenges but we do not know who can help us*
>
> *solve them. KG class like this we need to have four corners such as*
>
> *shopping corner, make or believe corner and home corner but look*
>
> *around this class, does not look like a K.G classroom? A*
>
> *kindergarten environment needs to be full of pictures as you can*
>
> *see not even a single picture for our kids to learn.*

This relates to the theoretical stance (Gross, 1971) which contends that in order for the teaching and learning to take place there should be availability of teaching and learning facilities. The findings further agree with the study by Mawere (2012) who argues that many teachers did not teach well due to lack of teaching and learning materials. Reddy (2012) adds that teaching and learning materials motivated the learners to learn English language well. Results from the observation confirmed

that the environment was unsuitable for conducting teaching and learning. When discussing the role of good classroom environment in improving teaching and learning, Genesee et al (2005) commented that positive school environment enabled the learner to learn the subject well. This is supported by Dhillon and Wanjiru (2013) who suggested that having a warm teaching and learning environment increased learners' motivation

4.2.8   Poor infrastructure

The infrastructure challenge runs through all the 20 schools visited. The researcher observed pupils sitting on the bare floor, pupils learning under dilapidated classrooms and pupils learning without any material aids. All the twenty school do not have a library. The situation significantly affects teaching and learning in the Bawku Municipality. Two of the schools have their roof ripped off but pupils were still learning in that condition, exposing pupils to heat and strong winds. Only 2 out the 20 schools the researcher visited have adequate furniture. Most of the pupils lay on the floor to write, a situation that affects quality of teaching.

In one of the schools, a participant lamented the poor state of infrastructure. He remarked:

This classroom block is a death trap. Anytime I am entering in to teach I get frightened. My brother, the situation is affecting teaching and learning especially in the rainy season. Our appeal to the District assembly to build a new block for us yielded no results.

Poor infrastructure seriously affects the quality of teaching, especially the teaching and learning of English language because no teacher can meaningfully teach when the facilities are poor or non-existent. This situation in the Bawku Municipality

confirms Sanoff's (2001) study which found that school buildings had an impact on the mental development of pupils. He further explained that schools that are properly built, attractive to look at and have resources motivate the children to stay in school and learn as well. In addition, Ampiah (2003) posits that poor infrastructure in high-poverty areas, plagued by poor-planned infrastructure, and decaying building threatens the health, safety, and learning opportunities of learners. Observation by the researcher found that poor infrastructure is seriously affecting the teaching and learning of English language in the Bawku Municipality.

4.2.9   *Summary*

The study identified specific challenges related to teaching English in Bawku Municipality, and the findings mirror current literature. Specifically, the study found the inadequate of multimedia resources, first language interference, inadequate pedagogical and content knowledge of teachers, inadequate of in-service training to be some of the major challenges facing the teaching and learning of English in the Bawku Municipality. The lack of textbooks available for teaching English in Bawku Municipality was also found to be challenging for the teachers. The findings further reveal teachers' poor pedagogical and content knowledge of the English language, and large class sizes to be challenges confronting the effective teaching and learning of English in the Bawku Municipality. The research findings are in line with Surkalovic (2014), who observes that today's teaching programs do not sufficiently prepare teachers to teach in the classroom, as they do not entail sufficient training.

4.3   Improving the teaching of English language

The third and final objective of the study sought to investigate measures to be taken to improve teaching and learning of English language in the Bawku Municipality. This section is divided into two, the role of policy makers and the role

of teachers in improving teaching and learning of English Language. Teachers were asked to give their views on what should be done in order to help learners learn English language effectively. Here too, they were asked to select all the options that applied to their answers.

4.3.1   *The role of policy makers in improving teaching and learning of English Language*

Teachers were asked to give their views on what should be done by policy makers in order to help learners learn the English language effectively. Their responses include Provision of in-service training to the teachers, motivation of teachers, provision of good infrastructure, ensuring equal pupil teacher ratio, and provision of learning materials. The participants were asked to choose all options that apply to the responses. Their responses are shown on Figure 4.3.1.
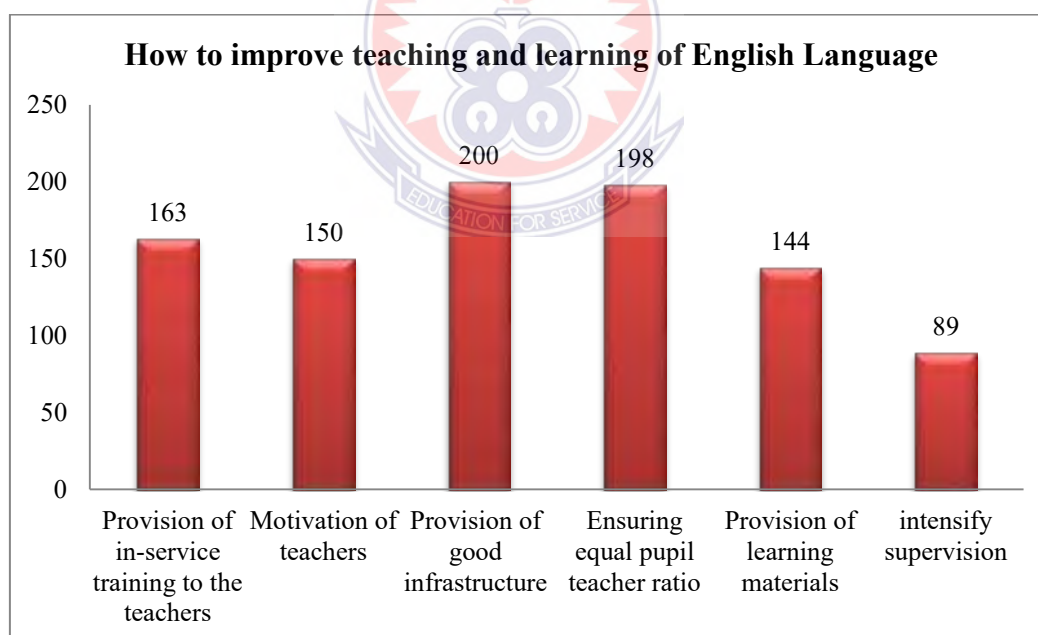
Figure 4.3.1. The role of policy makers in improving teaching and learning of English Language

4.3.1. Views on the role of policy makers

4.3.1.1 Provision of in-service training

Findings in Figure 11 indicate the different suggestions regarding the role of policy makers in improving the teaching and learning of English. Suggestions made include the provision of in-service training to teachers 84%. Here, the participants believe that providing in-service training to teachers will greatly improve their teaching and this will eventually improve performance. Most teachers were found to have low mastery of the language, which resulted in the non-utilization of good teaching methodology in their lessons. Some of the participants said this was the case because they have never attended any in-service training since joining the Ghana Education Service. As they remarked:

> *T1: I have never gone for any in-service training. But I think in-service training will definitely help teachers to improve.*
>
> *T5: No, please, I wish they can organise one for us.*
>
> *T7: No, since I started teaching they have never called us for one.*
>
> *T8: No, I am hoping to go for in-service training one day*

Some of the teachers called on policy makers to organise in-service training for them to enhance their performance. As T5 and T7 said:

> T7: *I suggest frequent in-service training should be organised for English teachers.*
>
> *T5: I think Ghana Education Service should regularly organise in-service to all teachers especially English language teachers.*

Programmes of teachers' training and professional development are of importance in any educational institution; at Primary, High school or even the University level (Baron, 2006). He adds that teachers at all levels need to be trained in their related

fields and subject matter on a regular basis if they are to change their teaching beliefs, attitudes and daily life practices in classrooms. According to Cohen and Hill (2001), such programmes help teachers sharpen their teaching skills and deepen and improve their knowledge in the subject matter they teach, and hence improve students' learning and schools education. For positive and beneficial change to take place, Craft (2000) thinks that there should be an alignment between the curriculum and teachers' actual experiences in teaching. Teachers will benefit better from professional development that has as its main focus activities which focus on high-quality-subject-matter content. In relation to the importance of in-service training to the development teachers' competence, Borko (2004) conducted a study to find out the impact of professional development of teachers and its impact on performance of teachers in the classroom. The conclusion was that teachers who have gone through in-service training were performing better than their colleagues who did not.

4.3.1.2 Motivation of teachers

From the findings, 75% of the participants think that teacher motivation will help to improve the teaching and learning of English Language in Bawku Municipality. Participants said teachers of English are not motivated to teach the subject. They said much emphasis is given to Mathematics and Integrated science teacher to the neglect of English language. As teacher T8 lamented:

> *All the NGOs are concentrating on only the maths and the science*
>
> *teachers only. They invite them for workshops and provide them*
>
> *with materials to teach. But they do not think of English at all.*

Motivation helps to energise, direct and sustain positive behaviour of teachers over a long period. Hoy et al (2002) posit that when teachers are motivated, they perform beyond expectation. This finding is in agreement with Utoma's (2018) study in which

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he observed that most teachers who are motivated perform remarkably in the class. Deduction from this is that motivation will help teachers to give their optimum best in teaching English. Some will be in the position to devote most of their time in developing their skills and knowledge to be able to teach effectively. The weaker pupils' classes will benefit because a motivated teacher will take his or her time to attend to each pupil in the class regardless of their number and it will help to improve the teaching and learning of English in the Bawku Municipality.

4.3.1.3 Ensuring optimum pupil-teacher ratio

Almost all the participants (99%) think that policy makers should ensure optimum pupil- teacher ratio in the classroom. This is an indication that the pupil-teacher ratio in classrooms in the municipality is a serious issue that needs to be addressed urgently by policy makers. The numbers in the classrooms confirm the lamentations of the participants. They called for the GES to help reduce the overpopulation and overcrowding of pupils in the classrooms. This is because overcrowding affects teaching and learning. A participant who teaches Primary 3 said she does not attend to the weaker pupils because the population in her class is 89. She complained that:

> *I think the number of pupils in a class should be reduced, in this*
>
> *class they are 89, how can access all of them effectively?.*

Weaker pupils tend to suffer in overcrowded classrooms. Observation of teaching revealed that the classes were overcrowded and it affected the learners' ability to learn well. For example, in one of the primary schools, the researcher observed that there were more than 90 pupils in one class. This does not promote effective teaching and learning. In view of this, a study by Olaleye (2018) on the impact of overcrowded classrooms on academic performance of students in selected public

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secondary schools in Surelere Local Government of Lagos State, Nigeria, concluded that overcrowding of classrooms significantly influenced behavioural attitude of students to their studies. It also showed that overcrowding of classrooms significantly affect effective teaching and learning. The analysis further indicated that overcrowding of classrooms negatively affected academic performance of students, and this was found to be the major factor responsible for poor performance of pupils in public schools in the municipality.

4.3.1.4 Provision of learning materials

Another suggestion to improve teaching and learning of English in the Bawku Municipality is the suggestions to provide English learning materials 72%. In this study, the availability of English materials was seen to be necessary for the learners to learn well. Most of the schools the researcher visited did not have teaching learning material to aid in effective teaching and learning. There were no textbooks for both the teachers and the pupils to use. Some participants appealed to the government to support them with English textbooks. As T7 said:

We beg the government to give us reading books.

He added that during comprehension lessons she has to write the passages on the board for the learners to copy from a torn textbook she borrowed from another school in a different region. Learning materials are important because they can significantly increase students' achievement by supporting their learning (Muithungu, 2003). In a study conducted by Gogoi (2015) on the importance of teaching and learning materials to young learner in India, it was concluded that the use of teaching and learning materials in a classroom makes learning joyful. Again, Oluwole (2008) state that teaching and learning materials have instructional values that are simultaneously used with the teachers' voice to facilitate learning. Teaching and learning materials

like the television as well as other aids ease the problems the learners encounter in the lesson that teachers teach. These would eventually help remove any disadvantages associated with the system if teaching was limited from a teacher to learners' direction only (Solak & Bayar, 2015)

In sum, teaching and learning materials can introduce demonstration in the classroom which is synonymous to taking the learners to a part of the world they could not otherwise experience having in a class room situation. Teaching and learning materials are also accepted as a capable of creating a remarkable on the learners when used in a lesson in teaching English language, it suffice to believe that the use of teaching and learning materials can help create the expected awareness and arouse learner interest towards teaching and learning of English language in the Bawku Municipality.

4.3.1.5 Provision of Good Infrastructure

All the participants (100%) believe that providing good infrastructure is one of the effective ways to improve teaching of English in the school setting. Availability of good infrastructure was seen to be necessary for the learners to learn well. Most of the participating schools lack infrastructure such as furniture. The researcher observed that all school lack inadequate furniture. This forced pupils to sit on the dirty floor during class hours. Some of the pupils' even lies prostrate with their books in front to enable them do class exercise. Another finding was that while some classrooms do not have furniture at all, others have limited desk, which accommodate just half of the class, while the rest sit on the floor in the same classroom. Teaching and learning of English cannot improve when the schools lack basic things like furniture. Therefore, government needs to provide basic schools with furniture. This will help to improve the teaching and learning in the municipality. In the opinion of

Treves (2019), school is the second home for children, and serves a number of purposes in a child's life. With this, he argues that a good school environment boosts the confidence of learners and helps them to learn effectively.

All the schools the researcher visited has a library. According to Sanoff (2001), a school library is integral to the teaching and learning process. It plays a great role in the life of a pupil. Among other things, the school library equips the students with the skills necessary to succeed in a constantly changing technological, social and economic environment (Maron, 2001). Noor (2018) is of the belief that the mind of the student gets broadened and he commands a better grasp over any subject when learners constantly visit the library. The school library also ensures each student has equitable access to resources, irrespective of opportunities or constraints. Students can borrow books and take home for further study. It also promotes individual and group learning.

Apart from the benefits to students, the presence of functional and well equipped libraries in schools also facilitates the work of the classroom teacher. They are able to access relevant curriculum information and professional development materials that can help them to cooperatively plan, implement and evaluate learning programmes (Tayo, 2011). However, due to the absence of functional school libraries in all the 20 schools the researcher visited in the Bawku Municipality, students and teachers are ill-equipped with adequate educational materials and resources that could greatly contribute towards the improvement of the quality of teaching and learning of the English language. It is therefore of prime importance that schools in the Bawku Municipality be provided with functional and well equipped libraries, as this will contribute significantly towards improving the quality and standard of teaching

English language. Government and other stakeholders in education should make it priority to provide libraries to all basic schools.

4.3.1.6 Intensification of supervision

From the participants, 45.5% think that intensive supervision by the Ghana Education Service will help improve the teaching and learning of English in the Bawku Municipality. This low percentage as compared to the others suggests that teachers believe the barrier to effective teaching and learning of English is not supervision but other factors that they have enumerated. Supervision is a process that helps to improve learning. Supervision is directed towards both maintaining and improving the teaching-learning process in the school. Abubakar (2019) states that supervision is very important in schools to ensure that the standards set by the Ministry are adhered to, and that not only the institutional goals but also the national goals are met. He adds that if supervision is enhanced, then the teachers' job performance shall be monitored where timely effective corrective measures would be implemented to ensure improvement of teacher competencies and general professional growth. Instructional problems can be easily detected through observations and appraisals.

Ineffective supervision has effects on quality of teaching and learning in the basic level, especially the teaching and learning of English language, teachers tend to do whatever they what when they are not supervised. In some schools the researcher observed that some teachers were late for school, others fail to mark exercises with the excuse of large class size. Proper supervision will solve all these. Supervisors are also obliged to supervise the lesson of teachers in the class but this was not done in Bawku Municipality, as a result teachers who are not doing the right things in class will continue. This will affect the quality of teaching in the basic level.

4.3.2 *The role of teachers in improving teaching and learning of English Language*

This section discusses the role of English teachers in improving the teaching and learning of English in the Bawku Municipality. The roles of teachers discussed include the mixing of English and the Mother tongue in the lower level help to expose learners to a lot of reading materials. Teachers should also integrate all the four skills when teaching English. The participants were asked to choose all options that apply to the responses. Their responses are shown on Figure 4.3.2.
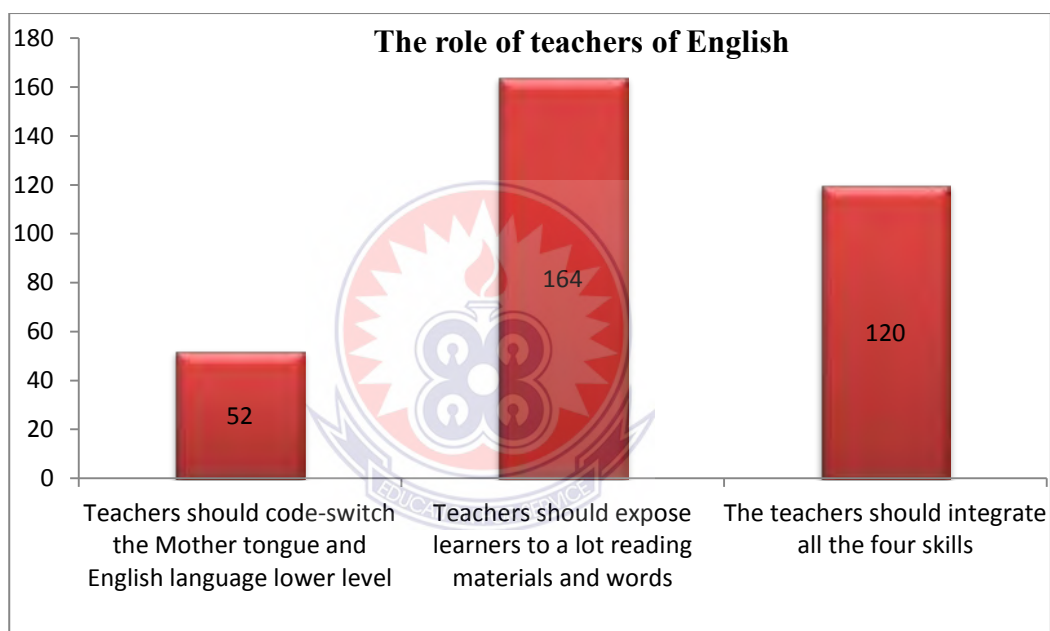
Figure 4.3.2. Views on the role of teachers

4.3.2.1 Mixing mother tongue and English

Of the 200 participants, 52% think that when teachers mix the mother tongue and English in the introductory classes, learners will be in a good position to master the English language. This is because the L1 facilitates the process of comprehension and reduces insecurities that may arise from learners' limited language proficiency (Randall, 2005*)*. The L1 helps to consolidate knowledge that learners have about the second language, such as the vocabulary, sentence structure, and cultural aspects

(Owu-Ewie, 2010). Eight of the participants support the use of L1 in English class because according to them, it aids their learners to quickly acquire the English Language. They remarked:

T8: It depends, I was posted to a deprived area where the children find it difficult to understand the language, how can they even speak? So sometimes you have to fuse the two, you use the L1 and then English language so that they can understand you and can also do the translation

T9: Yes, I think that the L1 is part of learners so it will help them to improve in the learning of the English language. It also helps to facilitate the teaching and learning of the English language. So including the L1 is a plus.

T1: I don't involve their L1 always; I do it once in a while. It does not happen most of the time. I try much as I can to just stick to the English language. I only use the L1 when I need examples.

T3: I use the L1 a lot in my lessons. I normally use the L1 to explain things I think the learners have some difficulties.

T4: I think that sometimes it really requires the involvement of the first language but that also depends on the stage that you are teaching the subject. If you look at the policy as it stands now where the L1 is not supposed to be used at the JHS level but mostly you come across words that are not familiar and the children are not familiar with those words, you have no option than to employ the first language in order for you to explain to them to understand. So sometimes the necessity will require that you

employ the use of the L1 in order to explain things for them to understand.

T6: yes, I do always, without the L1 it will be difficult for the pupil to understand entirely what the concept you are teaching is about. If you involve the L1 it boasts the understanding of any concept you are presenting to the children. I do this particularly in English lesson.

It was found that first language mostly interferes in the second language learning process. A lot of factors that cause interference were considered such as the similarities and differences in the structures of two languages, background knowledge of the learner, proficiency of learners on second languages, and the structures of consonant clusters in L1 and L2. If there are similarities in L1 and L2, the learners have less problems in acquisition of L2 and fewer errors may occur in L2, but if there are no or little similarities of the structure of first language and second language, learner is faced with a lot of problems in L2 acquisition and it is not easy for them to learn. The studies showed that first language can have a negative or positive transfer on second languages. Where the structures of two languages are different, negative transfer occurs, and where the structures of two languages are similar, the positive transfer occurs and L1facilitate the L2 acquisition. Therefore, teachers of English in the Bawku Municipality need to be aware of these and employ appropriate strategies to help learners to overcome their challenges.

Research by Cook (2001) concluded that switching between languages and translation happens instinctively to all language learners and the L1 is actually an important resource in second language learning. For these reasons, teachers should try to work with these innate tendencies rather than working against them. This can

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be achieved when teachers who can speak the L1 of the learners are posted to those schools. In some schools, teachers who could not speak the native language were assigned to teach Kindergarten classes. Examples of such teachers are T8 and T3 who are not natives of Bawku and so could not speak any local language in the area. Teacher T3 complained that:

> *It is very difficult teaching this the children don't understand*
>
> *English, I cannot also speak the Kusaal, what I do is to sing.*

Teacher T8 also remarked:

> *I use English throughout because I cannot speak Hausa, Moshi or*
>
> *Kusaal. I wish I could speak the language so that I would be able*
>
> *to explain some concept for the children.*

Once such teachers cannot speak the L1 of the learners, they could to be moved to Upper Primary or the Junior High School where they can be effective. This is because L1 is not used as a medium of instruction at these levels. Teachers should be encouraged to use the L1 were necessary at the lower level. Only teachers who can speak the native language of the learners should be allowed to teach at the lower primary. It will help them to effectively employ the L1 to explain difficult concept to learner. There should also be intensive training for teachers teaching the lower primary on how to effectively use the L1 in class.

4.3.2.2 Expose students to lots of words and books

From Figure 4.3.2, 82% of the participants think that exposing learners to a lot of words and reading materials will enhance their mastery of the English Language. Royanti (2007) suggests that Comics could be used in pupils' textbooks, by offering broad variety of activities based on those. These activities will develop reading skills and reading comprehension and can also be used to develop other

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skills. To this end, Oladunjoye (2017) conducted a study on the effect of exposing students to a lot of words in the classroom. His results revealed that the participants in the experimental group outperformed those in the control group in terms of their vocabulary development. The findings may be shared with other teachers in order to inform them how exposing learners to a lot of words influence the vocabulary learning students. Teachers should engage pupils in dialogic reading. This is the process where pupils and teachers or parents have a dialogue around the text they are reading. Their conversations include defining new vocabulary, improving verbal fluency, introducing story components, and developing narrative skills of the learners.

4.3.2.3 Integration of all four skills

To improve teaching and learning of English, teachers have to integrate all the four skills (Rahman & Akhter, 2017). These are listening, speaking, reading and writing in their lesson delivery. From the questionnaire, 183 teachers believe that they should integrate all the four skills in their English language lessons. The researcher further explored teachers' views on which language skill is the most important as shown in Figure 4.3.2.3. The participants were asked to choose all options that applied to the responses.
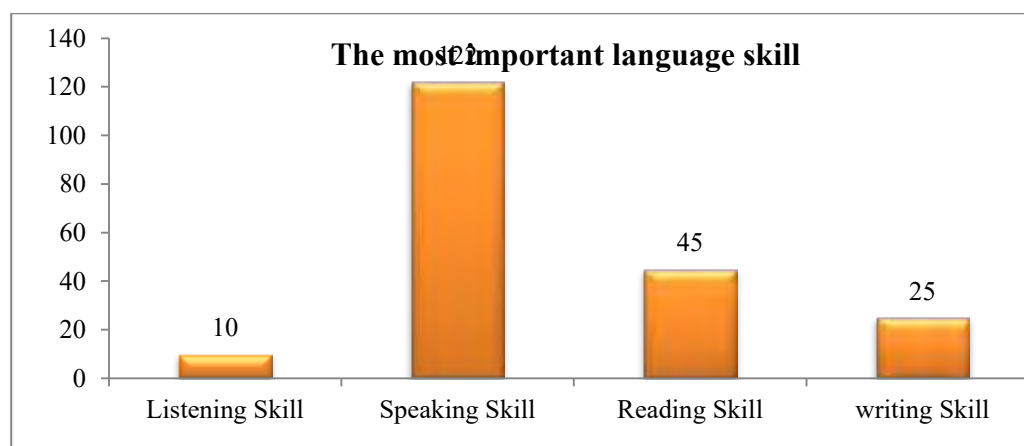
Figure 4.3.2.3. Views on the most important language skill

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From this, 5% of the respondents think that listening is the most important skill, 12.5% believe that writing skill is the most important whilst 22.5% have the notion that reading skill is essential for language skill development. Overall, 61% of the respondents indicated that speaking skill is the most important in the teaching and learning of English language. The interview revealed that most of the respondents think reading skill is the most important in second language acquisition process. Six (6) out of the 20 interviewees said reading skill is the most important skill they want their learners to acquire. To buttress this point, one teacher, T2 said,

I think children ability to read is the most important skill need in

every class room in Ghana

The belief of T2 was the same as T3, T4, T8, T9 and T10. Teacher T1 however indicated that writing and speaking skills were the most important in language learning, and T5 also stated that speaking skill was the most important skill. On the other hand, T6 and T7 said combining all the skills is necessary for language acquisition.

T6 said, *no skill is important than the other, as a teacher you must*

help to develop all the four skills.

T7: *I think all the skills are very important, teachers should*

combine all of them when teaching.

The assertions of T6 and T7 are in line with Noor (2018) who is of the view that teachers must integrate all the four skills to make learning of the language effective. He adds that teachers should use English in a real world situation so as to help learners to develop all the four skills. The opinions shared by the participants in are contrast with what they believe was the aims of teaching English language. When participants were asked of what should be the aims of teaching English most of them

said the aims of teaching English are to enable learners to read and write. Again, the researcher observed that all the teachers adopted the Grammar-Translation method, the principles underling the Grammar Translation Method do not promote speaking. Teachers of English should employ the communicative learning, teaching this will help to integrate all the language skills.

4.3.2.4 Summary

The section identified some measures to improve the teaching and learning of English language in the Bawku Municipality, and the findings is in line with current literature. Specifically, the study found the provision of in-service training to teachers, motivation of teachers, provision of infrastructure, ensuring equal ratio of pupils and teachers in the class, provision of learning materials, and intensification of supervision as what policy makers must do to improve the teaching and learning of English in the Bawku Municipality. The findings further reveal that teachers could mix the mother tongue and English in the introductory classes, expose students to lots of words and books, and integrate the four skills as what teachers must do to improve the teaching and learning of English in the Bawku Municipality. The research findings is in line with Harner (2001) and Larsen-Freeman (2001) who argue teachers of English should always do 'Need Analysis' to know the strength and weakness of their learners. Aside conducting 'Needs Analysis', teachers of English must continue to upgrade themselves as this will help improve their professional competence. Harner again, encourages teachers to read professional and leisure materials in print and online. He notes that teachers should join professional English language teachers' communities online with whom they may interact through mail and via social networking sites. This enables teachers of English to keep abreast of ideas in their thinking and practice

4.4   Conclusion

This chapter has discussed the different results from all the research instruments used; the questionnaire, the interview and observation it was found that teachers adopted the Grammar-Translation methods in teaching; none of the teachers employ the Communicative Language Teaching. The findings also concluded that grammar was taught deductively and the analysis shows that teachers employ the same approach in teaching English literature and other aspects of the English language. The Second objective was to examine the challenges of teaching English. The results identified large class size, poor teaching methods, lack of competent teachers, poor infrastructure and lack of teaching and learning resources. In addition, the mismatch between the language policy of Ghana and what is actually practiced in the classroom was a challenge. Learners' first language interference was also a major challenge in teaching and learning of the English language in the Bawku Municipality. Though with all the challenges of teaching English language in the Bawku Municipality, there are some suggestions as to how to improve teaching and learning of English. These included the provision of textbooks to all pupils, organising of in-service training to all teachers of English, improving classroom environment to be very conducive for learning among others.

All the findings are in line with Larsen-Freeman (2001) who advises teachers to continuously practice their language skills, both productive and receptive, to be up-to-date. Informal activities such as watching of Sitcoms, documentaries, international news broadcast should be practised regularly by teachers of English. This will help them be abreast of real use of the language. Teachers also need to be well-motivated to excel in the language. The motivation should go beyond material gains. In addition, teachers of English should integrate all the four skills (Rahman & Akhter,

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2017). This integration of the four skills allows learners to use all the skills simultaneously during communication.

More so, policy makers should make available English language textbooks and other supplementary books to learners. The non-availability of textbooks is seriously affecting the teaching of English. The findings showed that there is a serious lack of textbooks in the Bawku Municipality. Most of the schools visited do not have up to ten textbooks per class. Learners were heavily dependent on what their teachers write on the board. Team teaching and peer feedback should also be encouraged regularly. The researcher observed that there was no peer feedback or team teaching in all the 20 Basic Schools visited.

Again, teachers of English as a second language should be encouraged to use multimedia technology to teach. Sadly, in all the schools the researcher observed, no teacher used any multimedia to aid in teaching the English language. Richard and Rodgers (2014) posit that songs and movies are the best ways to communicate how to use a language to express feelings. None of the teachers who were observed, interviewed or responded to the questionnaire employed the use of these multimedia tools. Teachers of English should teach through games. Noor (2018) states that word games form part of learning and would help the students keep their interest as the desire to win is very strong. It keeps learners going and when included in different aspects of learning the learning process would continue almost throughout the day without the children getting tired or bored of studying. In addition, word games are an important part of learning the vocabulary of any language. To understand the meaning of the words and to use them in day to day life is a very difficult task and games can help the students overcome this difficulty. Shedu and Tafida (2016) suggest that games like scrabble and Housie have been designed for this specific

purpose. These games are just based on words and would help pupils to develop their

vocabulary (Rajkhowa & Das, 2015).

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

5.0   Introduction

This chapter summarizes the findings of the analysis and the interpretation of the results. The research questions on the methods teachers of English adopt in teaching English, challenges of teaching and measures to improve the teaching of English in Bawku Municipality have been answered. A qualitative interpretative design was chosen for the analysis of the data of 200 participants in the Bawku Municipality in the Upper East Region of Ghana. Using questionnaire, interview and observation, it has been shown that most teachers adopt the Grammar-Translation Method to teach English language. Challenges such teacher competence, inadequate English teaching and learning materials, class size, negative attitude towards English, influence of the mother tongue and mismatch between language policy and practice were also identified. Measures such as exhibition of professionalism by teachers, integration of the four language skills, use of affective strategies, use of games and the use of multimedia in teaching English language were identified as measures to improve the teaching and learning of English. A summary of the findings of each objective is presented in the next section. The third section presents a discussion of the factors that affect the teaching and learning of English language. The fourth section discusses the pedagogical implications of the results. The fifth section presents suggestions for future research and the chapter ends with a conclusion.

5.1   Summary of findings

The findings of the study are presented in accordance with the specific objectives of the study which are to examine methods and approaches teachers in the Bawku Municipality employ in teaching English as a second language; to examine

the challenges of teaching English as a second language in the Bawku Municipality, and to describe measures to be taken to improve English language teaching and learning in the Bawku Municipality. The first objective concerns methods and approaches teachers in Bawku Municipality employed in teaching English as a second language. The findings revealed that the teachers lack an understanding of methods and approaches in second language teaching. In fact, all the teachers exhibited lack of understanding of what language teaching methods and approaches are. The observation however showed that teachers use the grammar-translation method mostly in teaching. From this, it was revealed that 98% of teachers do not employ methods that provide activities that help learners to master English language. It was revealed that they employ less activity-based teaching, adopting more of the lecture approach to teach English. Additionally, there were no pair/group work or storytelling in all the classrooms observed. This shows that teachers' capacity to facilitate English language in basic school level is low.

Another worrying finding was that teachers of English in the Municipality do not know the aims of teaching English language at the basic level. They stated that English language is just a subject like any other subject studied. The findings showed that most frequent errors made by the pupils were in grammar and vocabulary and those teachers of English indicated majority of the pupils disliked grammar. Classroom observation showed that pupils were found to have problems in the use of verbs and in the construction of sentences because the deductive approach was used in teaching grammar. Observation in the classrooms confirmed that the teachers were not employing the appropriate methods in teaching English language. This was verified by finding some teachers using methodologies and approaches which are not appropriate for learners at their level.

The second objective related to examining the challenges of teaching English in the Bawku Municipality. The results revealed a number of shortcomings in the teaching of English language in the Bawku Municipality of the Upper East Region of Ghana. These include a lack of sufficient English textbooks, leading to poor teaching and learning and shortage or lack of other teaching resources apart from English text books. The findings also revealed that most teachers used only one teaching technique; question and answer due to the lack of teaching aids. Besides the challenge of class size, there was also the challenge of infrastructure. Thus, classroom spaces were inadequate for the pupils. Furthermore, the number of teachers was inadequate compared to the number of pupil and this posed a difficulty for teaching and learning. The findings further revealed that many teachers had not attended any English course or in-service training relating to English language teaching since they started teaching. This resulted in poor quality teaching.

The third objective related to the examination of measures to be taken to improve the teaching and learning of English language in the Bawku Municipality. Here, teachers were asked to suggest ways for improving the teaching and learning of English as a second language. The findings revealed that a number of measures can be taken in relation to this. These include providing training to teachers as well as providing motivation to teachers and learners. Other measures suggested by the teachers are ensuring optimum pupil-teacher ratio, making teaching materials and text books available, and providing good infrastructure. Teachers also indicated that the formation of reading clubs and debating clubs in schools help in improving teaching and learning of English.

5.2   Factors responsible for effective teaching and learning of English

At present, teaching of English around the world preferably is tailored around the communicative teaching and learning, rather than the audio-lingual method and its derivatives. However, we must remember that a successful teacher of English should not be necessarily biased in favour of one method or another. He/she should be competent in and comfortable with the methods he/she wants to use. It is the role of teachers to select different teaching strategies from different methods, and blend them to suit the needs of their materials and pupils. It is important that teachers, and other stakeholders in education to design a system that gives learners ample opportunities to practice English in the class as well as outside the classroom, even as it is important for them to have time and freedom to digest, reflect and analyze what has been exposed to them.

Derakhshan and Torabi (2015) argued that the use of teaching and learning materials in teaching English is essential in helping the learners to overcome their difficulties in learning a   second language, hence, teaching and learning materials should adequately be provided and used in every English language lesson. The whole notion of the teacher as the disseminator of knowledge has undergone a tremendous change today. While in the old dispensation, the teacher was the only dispenser of knowledge, in the new dispensation, the teacher has become the facilitator (Hussein, 2013). The teacher who employs knowledge in the classroom guides the students about the information to be assessed and interacted with. He added that "the teacher is no longer the sage on the stage but the guide on the side" (p. 45). A teacher can be called competent only if he has the competence in his teaching. Therefore, policy makers have the role to aid in continuous development of the teacher.

Secondly, infrastructure is key to the development of every educational sector around the globe, therefore, there is the need for the government to provide good infrastructure such as well-equipped class rooms and good textbooks to all basic schools. This will aid in effective teaching and learning of the English language. It will also ameliorate the large class size most basic schools in the country are currently saddled with. Teachers also need to be self-motivated in the teaching and learning process. Furthermore, supervision plays a key role in any organisation. There is the need for policy makers to intensify their supervisory role. Supervisors should be well-trained and well-equipped with logistics such as means of transportation to enable them perform their roles effectively. Another factor that affects the teaching and learning of English is teaching and learning materials. Teaching and learning materials is central to effective teaching and learning. Without them teaching and learning will not be effective especially the teaching of English language.

The environment is not English-speaking. Even though English is the official language in Ghana, it is not the language used in most places. The English language is often used only in formal environments like schools, offices, banks, etc. But the local or primary dialect is the language often used in the immediate surroundings of most English learners which include the home, neighbourhood, market and social gatherings. As a result of this, people are more accustomed to speaking their native language than mastering English.

Another factor affecting English learners in Ghana begins with childhood. It is a problem caused by mother tongue interference in English. There are more than fifty different languages in Ghana. These languages are not in any way close or have anything in common to each other and to English language. Most English learners

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develop in their early years speaking their native language. By the time they start to learn English, they have problems with pronunciations and use of the language. The mother tongue comes with accent and so this accent often interferes with word pronunciation. Schools that offer students a positive learning environment, including the use of technology in the classroom and a quality library, give students an edge in mastering English and other subjects. Up-to-date textbooks and other materials to use during lectures and other teacher presentations are also important. Students learn best in a safe, caring, welcoming and inclusive environment. They are able to talk about the importance of valuing differences and celebrating diversity from different backgrounds.

Teacher motivation is of utmost importance in ensuring that the time spent in school is beneficial to students and fulfilling to teachers, especially in a lacklustre environment. In situations where the home and school environments do not provide the atmosphere and features that support the gratification of curiosity and inquisitiveness, students may attend school without being able to exploit opportunities available for learning to the maximum without teacher support. The teacher's role therefore should not be limited to the teaching of subject, but teaching in ways that make learners want to learn. If this is not done, it affects the teaching and learning of English.

The number of pupils in a classroom is a factor that teachers need to consider in order to plan a lesson. In this respect, Mayer (2001) claims that the way teachers implement the course content, instructional pedagogy, and technology used in the classroom may all be influenced by the number of students in the class. The researcher considers that students learn better in small class size because teachers are able to use techniques and pedagogy effectively.

5.3   Pedagogical implications

After investigating the methods of teaching English, current challenges teaching English and ways of improving the teaching and learning of English in the Bawku Municipality, it is necessary to suggest some implications that these results may have on English language teaching. There should be regular language professional development seminars for teachers of English as a Second Language. Indeed, regular workshops will give teachers of English the opportunities to meet, discuss and practice with colleagues and help them develop professional awareness which is required to make personal decisions in helping learners improve in their classrooms. Those that are recruited to teach English should be properly trained by experienced personnel so that the skills and knowledge that need to be transferred would be easily assimilated. The quality of the language curricula need to be improved because it has been observed that well-developed curricula can influence the capacity of the teachers and learners to learn and adapt to new performance expectations.

Education managers should set up English Language centres to ensure that teachers of English in schools and higher institutions in Ghana meet the requirements and education standards. Teaching research in language teaching should be encouraged to improve teaching quality. That is, facilitators of education should promote language teacher research engagement and, there should be workload allocation for research time, to enable teachers of English to research. The English language curriculum in Ghana should be redesigned to address the technological needs of the digital generation of young learners of English. A new paradigm is needed in Schools. English songs are a wonderful source and rich in materials by which ESL learners can easily be moved and motivated initially. Songs have a unique

appeal. If chosen and used carefully, they can function as effective materials as they are comprehensible, enjoyable and full of real life language that learners need to use in their lives. The intrinsic merits of songs undoubtedly cultivate interest and high motivation in ESL learners and develop linguistic intelligence.

Teachers of English should encourage pupils to study and practice speaking and other skills with friends, teachers, using various kinds of techniques of speaking naturally. Pupils should also be encouraged to use grammar and vocabulary they have had in sentences, listen to English news from radio or TV. Azikiwe (1998) advises that English teachers must have knowledge of the structure of the students' mother tongue to be able to identity its structural qualities which might be different from those of English. This implies that the teacher should have knowledge of the dominant first language spoken in the area where he teaches so that he would be able to do a simple comparative analysis of the two. This will help him/her to identify the possible areas of difficulty and ease in learning the target language. The learner of English is at the centre of the teaching and learning process. The role of the language teacher, according to Obi (2009), is to guide the learner to inculcate basic language skills and acquire communicative competence. To achieve this, teachers must try and be flexible in delivering their lessons. They should vary their methods of teaching and read a lot to be abreast with current trends in teaching English language.

5.4   Suggestions for future research

The study of methods and current challenges of teaching English was restricted to the Bawku Municipality. Conditions prevailing in this municipality may be different from other areas. There will be the need therefore to conduct similar studies in other parts of the country to establish a holistic trend of affairs. In addition, an experimental study into dominance of Grammar-Translation Method in English

Language teaching in Ghana is recommended. Lastly, since teachers are transmitters, transformers and facilitators of knowledge, a research into factors that cause mismatch between teachers' belief and classroom practice is also recommended.

5.5.   Conclusion

The conclusions are made in relation to the research objectives. With regard to the findings of this study, it is possible to deduce that teachers of English as a second language in Bawku Municipality face many challenges. According to the findings, some challenges originated from the teachers and others from the environment. Poor English language background for teachers, pupils' mother tongue interference and incompetent teachers due to lack of in-service training are some of the challenges which face pupils learning English as the second language. Over congested classes, insufficient teaching materials, shortage of classrooms, insufficient textbooks and poor teacher motivation are among the challenges they face. The findings further reveal that shortage of time to practice English; lack of activities conducted by teachers to strengthen their language and lack of support from the society are additional challenges facing the teaching and learning of English in the Bawku Municipality.

Furthermore, the study shows that students' low performance in internal and external examinations; together with the students' incompetence in reading and writing English are extra challenges which pupils face. Low teachers' and learners' motivation has been shown to affect negatively the process of imparting English language knowledge, skills and attitudes to learners in the Bawku Municipality. Approaches, methodologies and techniques continue to be the same old ones. The teachers are not motivated for upgrading of teaching. Whatever they learned at the time of learning even that is not being practised properly due to lack of self-initiation.

For example, the traditional Grammar-translation method that is most wasteful is still followed in a majority of schools in Bawku Municipality. Oral work that is the soul of any good teaching is neglected.

Although it is countable that in some of the books skill-based lesson or exercises are given even then there is no oral practice on the part of students as a result of which they cannot construct a few sentences of English of their own accord. The attitudes of teachers in general are yet other factor that stands in the way of effective English language teaching in Bawku Municipality. These attitudes are a legacy of the past and have become part of traditional thinking and practice. The teachers do not exactly understand the main aim of teaching English. They feel fully satisfied if the pupils are kept busy during the whole period. In addition there is a shortage of well-trained, fully qualified teachers of English in schools.
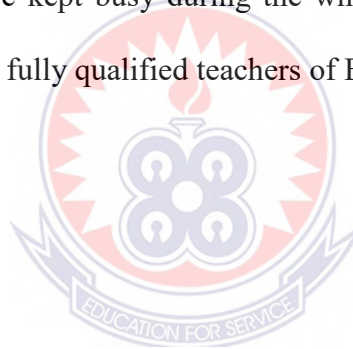
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APPENDICES

APPENDIX I: Questionnaire

Respected Sir/Madam,
I am carrying research project work on teaching of English. You are humbly requested to respond the questions in the questionnaire regarding methods, skills and approaches of teaching English. So that teaching of English may be made effective in the classroom.

Part- I (General Background)

1. Age: …………………………………………….………
2. Gender: Male /Female
3. Level: Kindergarten   Primary school   Junior high school
4. Highest level of education: CERT. A',   Diploma,   B.Ed./B.A,   M. Phil., Any other……….
5.   Number of years in teaching (in years): ………………….……………………

Part-II (Views on teaching English)

1. What should be the aims of teaching English in the Bawku Municipality? (select all that apply)
    > To enable the students to read and write correctly in English.
    > To enable the students to understand a conversation in English accurately.
    > To enable them to speak English fluently.
    > To enable them in the work of documentation, in English.
    - Any other…….……………………………………………………

2. What teaching method do you adopt in teaching English? (select all that apply)
    > Grammar- translation method
    > Direct method
    > Audio-lingual method
    > Communicative teaching method
    - Any other…………………………...…………………………

3. If you adopt translation method, tick the reasons for preferring this method? (select all that apply)
    > The chief advantage of translation method is in the sphere of vocabulary getting.
    > Its judicious use of mother tongue helps children in vocabulary getting.
    > It is economical because it saves time.
    > It does not need material aid.
    > Students reading in medium schools find it easier to learn English through this method.
    > You prefer this method simply because you have also got your education through translation method.
    > It is suitable for overcrowded classes.
    > Any other……………………………………………………………

4. If you adopt direct method, tick the reasons for preferring this method? (select all that apply)

> The Direct method enables the students to express their thoughts and feelings directly in English without the intervention of mother tongue.
> It is interesting because it is full of activities.
> It is strictly in conformity with the educational principles.
> You have also got education through this method.
> It develops the habits of speaking English.

- Any other. ………………….……………………………………………

8. If you adopt the audio-lingual method, tick the reasons for preferring this method? (Select all that apply)

> There is students' interaction when students take different roles in the dialogue.
> Each learner does his/her task individually

- Any other. …………………………………………………………………

9. If you agree to point that the translation method has failed to work now, tick the causes of its failure. (Select all that apply)

> It prevents the student from thinking and expressing directly in English.
> It fails to capture the delicate shades of meaning, local colour and secondary meaning.
> The structure of English language is different from the languages in Bawku.
> It does not emphases on these aspects- speaking, correct articulation, intonation and pronunciation.
> It tries to teach English by rule not by use.
> Any other. …………………………………….…………………………

10. If you say that the direct method is not perfect, tick the reasons for its imperfections. (Select all that apply)

> It is based on the principle that the foreign words and its idea should be linked together.
> It does not seem suitable method for students in Bawku Municipality.
> It ignores the reading and writing skills of language learning.
> Only the clever genius can profit by this method
> Grammar is not taught systematically.
> It is expensive because a lot of audio-visual aid is needed.
> In this region, there is scarcity of teachers who are trained on this line.
> For an overcrowded class this method is inconvenient.

- Any other ……………………………….…………………………………

11. What do you think about the decision that the students cannot talk in other language than English in school time? Please tell.

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12. What do you think about grammar?

- Grammar should occupy an important place in the teaching and learning English in Bawku Municipality.
- Grammar should not occupy an important place in the teaching and learning English in Bawku Municipality.

13. If your answer is (a), tick the reasons. (Select all that apply)

It helps to learn the language correctly and efficiently.
It gives the students confidence in the active use of the structural patterns of the language.
Its value is unsurpassed for the purpose of correct writing.
- Any other………………………………………………………………

14. If your answer is b, tick the reasons. (Select all that apply)

The knowledge of grammar is not a condition for the learners to use language and respond to it.
It exalts the importance of cramming the rules which does no good to students.
It deals with only a part of language because it does not deal with idioms, phrases, proverbs, fluency, articulation, colloquial expression and power of speech.
It hinders the spontaneous learning of a foreign language.

Any other………………………………………………………………

15. What do you think about the problems generally faced by teachers of English in the Bawku Municipality? (select all that apply)
The problem of teaching method
The problem of reading material.
Interference of mother tongue.
The problem of declining standards.
The problems related to students.
The problems related to training program.
The problems related to class size.
- Any other……………………………………………………………

16. What is your view on the probable solution regarding the problem of teaching English by the policy makers in Bawku Municipality? (select all that apply)

- Provision of in-service training to the teachers,
- Motivation of teachers,
- Provision of good infrastructure,
- Ensuring equal pupil teacher ratio,
- Provision of learning materials.
- Intensify supervision

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17. What is your view on the probable solution regarding the problem of teaching English by teachers in Bawku Municipality? (select all that apply)

Special units for teaching English should be opened in school/colleges and universities.

- Mixing of English and the Mother tongue in the lower level;
- Help to expose learners to a lot of reading materials and
- Integration all the four skills when teaching English.

18. Have you made any extra effort to improve your English teaching? Write it.

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18. What are your overall suggestions regarding the method of teaching English in Bawku municipality? (Select all that apply)

The teacher should follow faithfully a definite method.
The methods of teaching should be different for different situations, classes, schools and students of different groups.
The teacher should follow his own method because the teacher is a principle method.
The teacher should be prepared to incorporate into his teaching techniques and useful concepts from other methods.
- Any other. …………………………………………………………………

19. What are your suggestions to improve the teaching of English grammar in Bawku Municipality? (Select all that apply)

- It should always follow the language not precede it.
- It should be taught as a means to an end, not as an end in itself.
- It should be picked up incidentally and almost unconsciously, while English is being taught as a second language to the students.
- It should only describe the language, never should prescribe it.
- Any other…..…………………………………………………

19. Please write the language skills- listening, speaking, writing, and reading on your priority basis.
1-………….…....…………...….   2-……..………..…….…..….
3-…………….…..………….   4-……….……..……..………….

21. What are your final suggestions that can bring a complete positive change in

English language teaching? Write them in detail.

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THANK YOU.

APPENDIX II

Observation Guide

1. Environment – what's in the classroom?

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2. What is on the board?

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3. What are the students doing while the teacher is talking?

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4. What material is being used?

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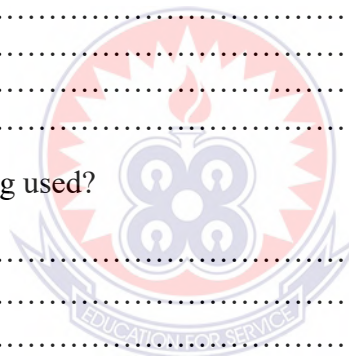
5. Is the teacher interacting with the students, and how?

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6. What methods is the teacher using?

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7. Are all the students being talked to and helped during the class?

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8. What is being taught? Topic

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APPENDIX II

INTERVIEW GUIDE

**Research Interview on Teaching English as a Second Language**

INTERVIEW DATE: _____

1. How long have you been working as a teacher

2. What is your educational background

3. Which method do you find most effective?

4. How do you measure the skills of the students?

5. What is prioritized – vocabulary, fluency, literacy, reading skills

6. Can you describe the most challenging aspect of teaching English?

7. What do you think the main challenges are in teaching English language?

8. What are the methods and approaches you adopt in teaching English?

9. What are the strategies you employ in improving the learning and teaching of English?

10. Did you get any in-service training/support? Could you tell me about it please?

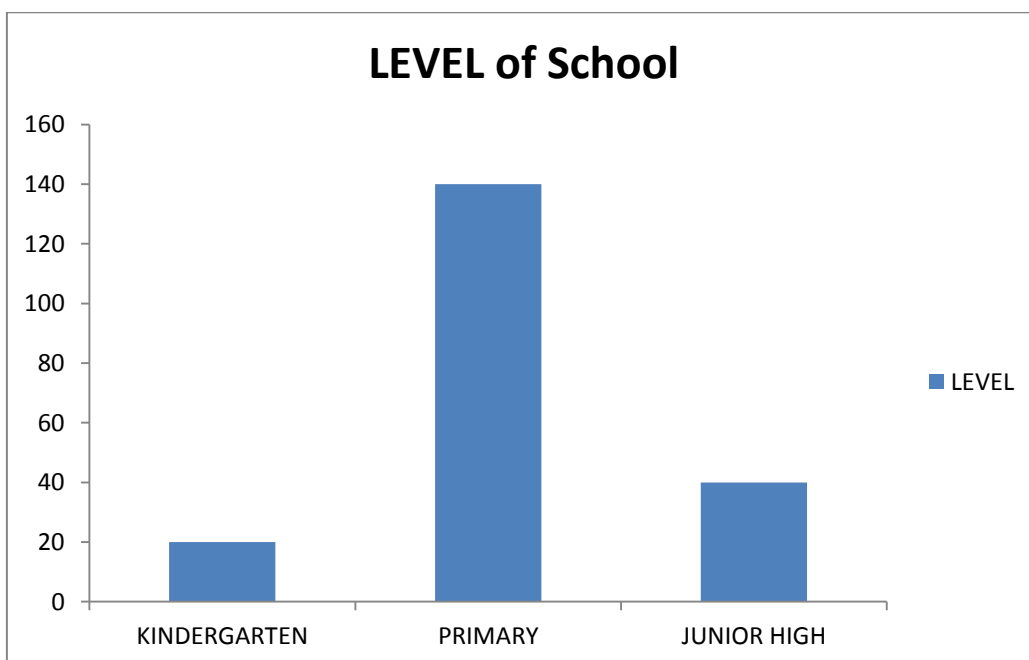11. When teaching English do you involve the pupil first language?
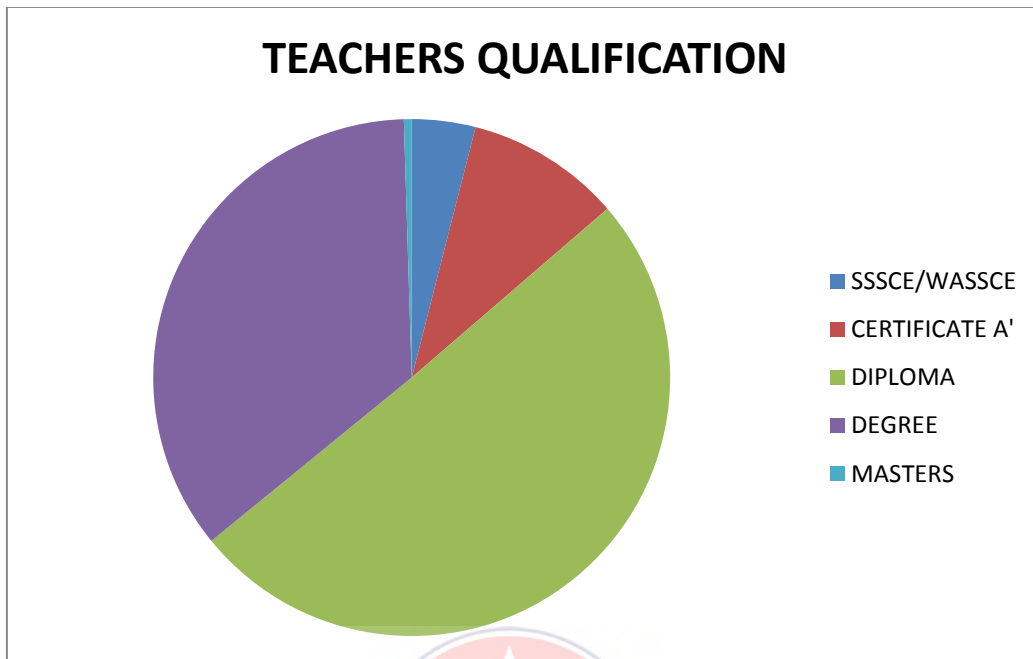
APPENDIX IV

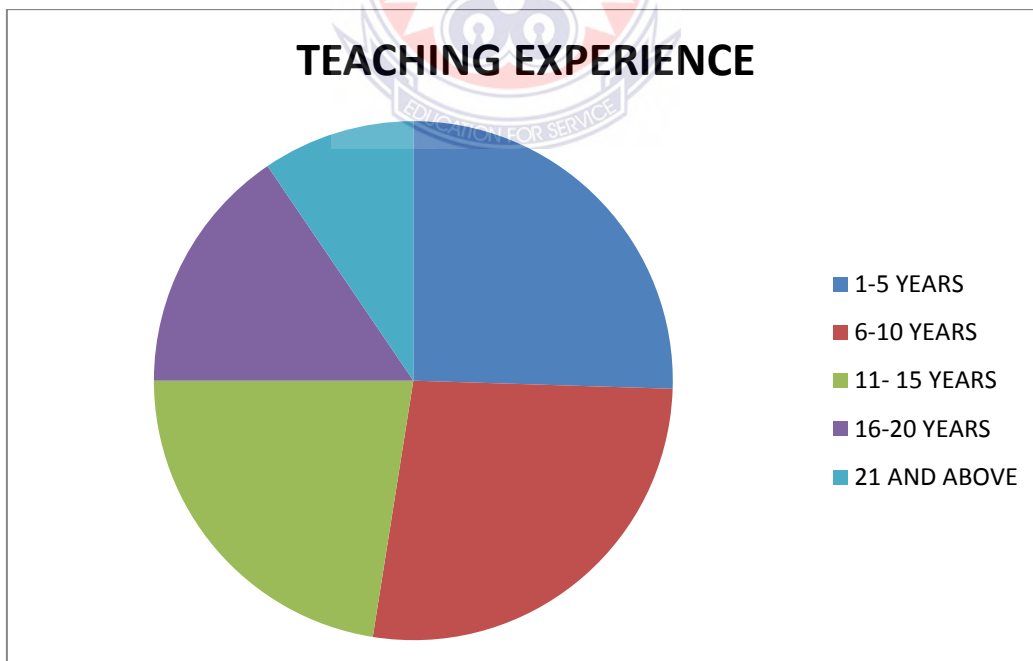## General Background

Distribution of participants by Gender group
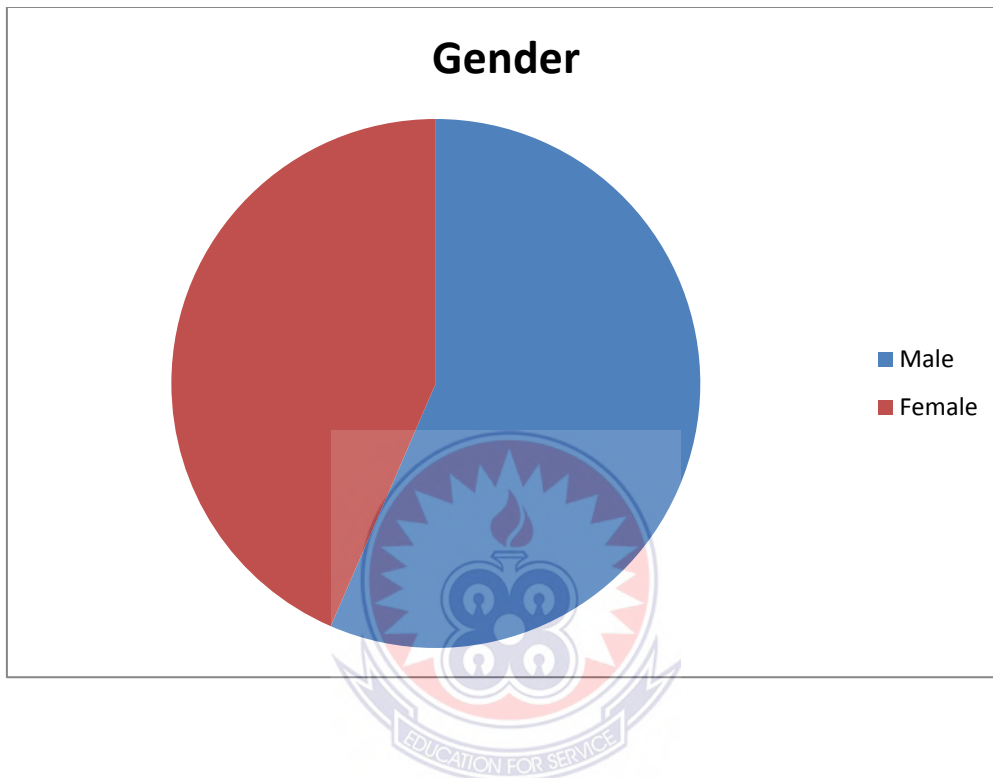
Distribution of participants by Level of School

Distribution of participants by qualification of Teachers

TEACHERS QUALIFICATION

Legend:
- SSSCE/WASSCE
- CERTIFICATE A'
- DIPLOMA
- DEGREE
- MASTERS

Distribution of participants by Teaching Experience

TEACHING EXPERIENCE

Legend:
- 1-5 YEARS
- 6-10 YEARS
- 11- 15 YEARS
- 16-20 YEARS
- 21 AND ABOVE

Distribution of participants by Age group

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