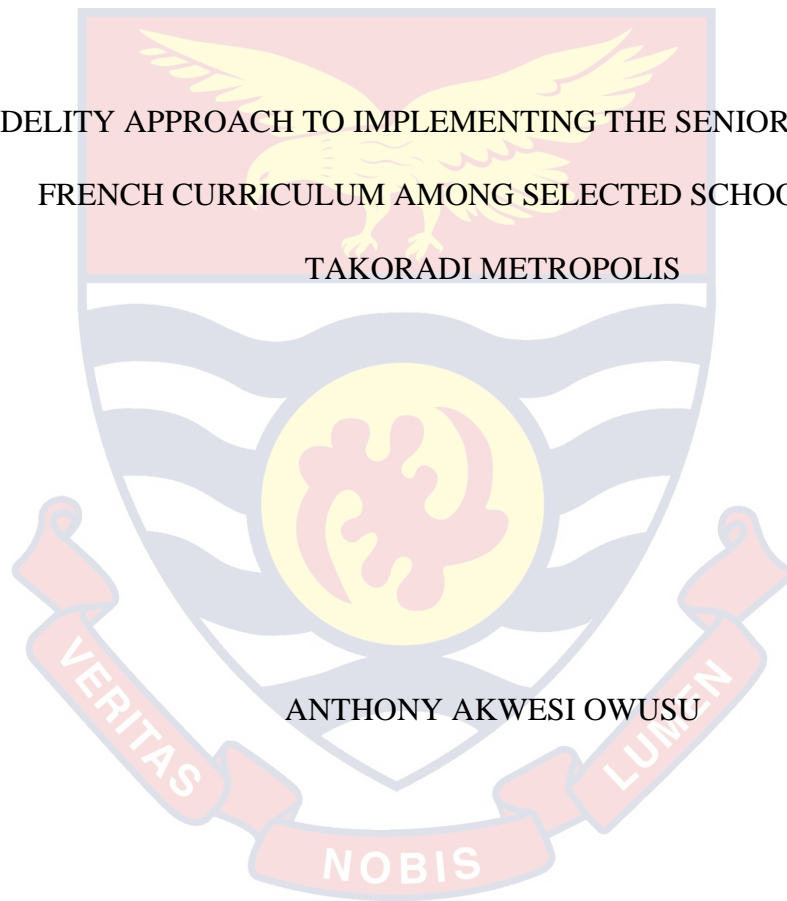


UNIVERSITY OF CAPE COAST

FIDELITY APPROACH TO IMPLEMENTING THE SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL
FRENCH CURRICULUM AMONG SELECTED SCHOOLS IN THE
TAKORADI METROPOLIS

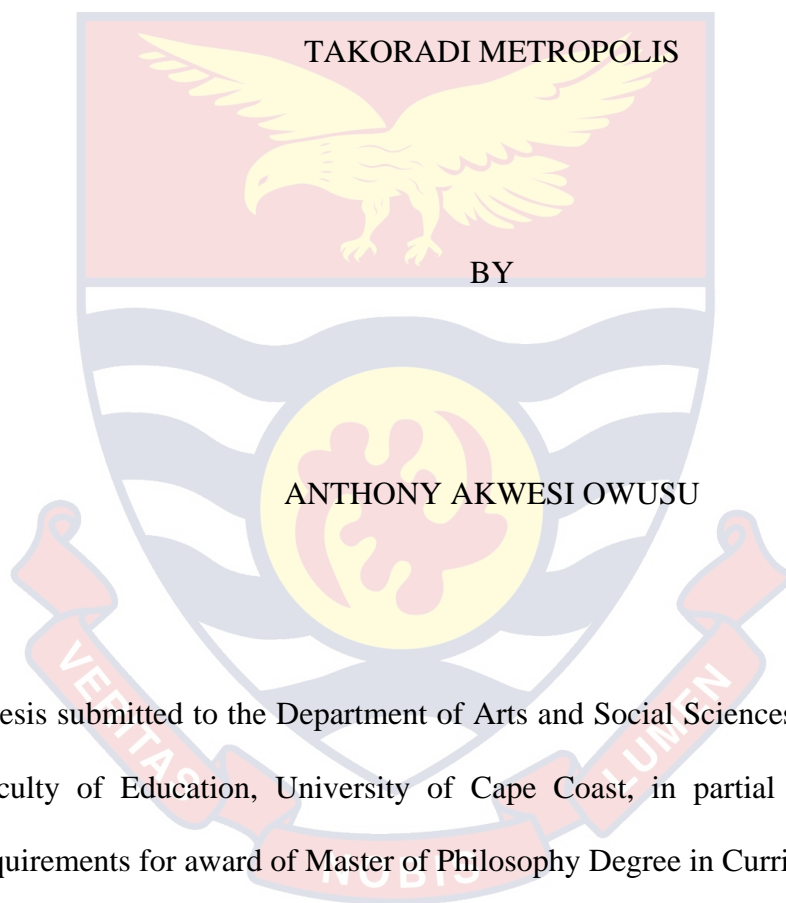


ANTHONY AKWESI OWUSU

2012

UNIVERSITY OF CAPE COAST

FIDELITY APPROACH TO IMPLEMENTING THE SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL
FRENCH CURRICULUM AMONG SELECTED SCHOOLS IN THE



This thesis submitted to the Department of Arts and Social Sciences Education of the Faculty of Education, University of Cape Coast, in partial fulfillment of the requirements for award of Master of Philosophy Degree in Curriculum Studies

MARCH 2012

DECLARATION

Candidate's Declaration

I hereby declare that this thesis is the result of my own original research and that no part of it has been presented for another degree in this university or elsewhere.

Candidate's Signature:..... Date:.....

Name: Anthony Akwesi Owusu

Supervisors' Declaration

We hereby declare that the preparation and presentation of the thesis were supervised in accordance with the guidelines on supervision of thesis laid down by the University of Cape Coast.

Principal Supervisor's Signature:..... Date:.....

Name: Prof. D. D. Kuupole

Co-supervisor's Signature:..... Date:.....

Name: Dr. K. T. Yiboe

ABSTRACT

This study used the mixed method approach to examine the fidelity implementation of the SHS French curriculum among public SHSs in the Takoradi Metropolis. The study sought also to find out the relationship between certain teacher-factors and how those factors affected fidelity implementation of teachers. In so doing, 21 teachers and 129 students were surveyed and three teachers were also observed to ascertain the approach and the degree to which they implemented the curriculum with fidelity.

The findings revealed a discrepancy between intentions of curriculum designers and teachers' implementation in that teachers were only able to implement the curriculum with moderate fidelity though they had the required qualification. Teachers also had negative beliefs and perceptions about the French programme since they complained about not being consulted in national curriculum programmes. Again, teachers' acquaintance with the contents of the syllabus was a significant predictor of teachers' fidelity implementation and thus a sine-qua-non for better students' outcomes. Teachers' participation in professional development programmes was however inversely related to fidelity implementation. Finally, the study showed no statistical difference between gender and fidelity implementation of teachers. Based on these findings, some recommendations were made to school heads, teachers and policy-makers. One of them was that teachers should '*study*' the syllabuses they teach so as to become abreast of their contents in order to implement them with fidelity.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I am greatly indebted to my principal supervisor, Prof. Domwini Dabiré Kuupole, the Pro-Vice Chancellor of the University of Cape Coast. Despite his huge working schedules, he made ample time for me and magnanimously offered his expertise, wisdom, and encouragement throughout the entire research period. Worthy of mention is his meticulous reading of every portion of the thesis and his smart and critical remarks which helped shape this research. I say, « je suis énormément reconnaissant » I am also extremely thankful to Dr. Kofi Tsivanyo Yiboe, my co-supervisor for his profound knowledge, intelligent questions, advice and passionate love for academic work which inspired me to complete this thesis in time. To him I say, « je suis infiniment reconnaissant. » Again, I would also like to express my sincere and deep gratitude to Prof. Sarah Oden, formerly of DASSE from the University of Calabar, Nigeria, Prof. Dominic Amuzu, a visiting lecturer at the Department of French (UCC) from the University of Education, Winneba, Prof. Kafui Young Etsey and Prof. Francis Amedahe (Department of Foundations, UCC). Let me particularly express profound gratitude to Rev. Asare-Danso, Head of Department for the Department of Arts and Social Sciences Education (DASSE), UCC and all my lecturers in this department for their tutelage and grooming. Finally, I thank my wife, son, and my siblings for giving me unconditional love and strong support in every way they have done and continue to do till this day.

« Que le Seigneur vous bénisse tous »

DEDICATION

In memory of My late Father, Ex-Corporal Daniel Kwaku Eto.



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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

Background to the Study

Curriculum as an educational concept could historically be traced to the Latin word “*educere*”, which means “running course” or “race course” (Connelly & Lantz, 1991). In recent years, it is used as a metaphor to describe some notion of a course of events. Since there is no single course of event in the school, the word “curriculum” has of late taken on many meanings (Kelly, 2004). To the lay person, it can be equated simply to a subject of study. Fullan and Miles (1992) posit that the term can narrowly be defined in one breadth as the subject of a study and in another breadth broadly to include every aspect of an educational set up. In many instances, the word curriculum is used whenever education comes under discussion. Lewy (1991) admits that education of any type cannot be fully described without referring to their curricular components. He described educational process to imply dealing with specific curricular contents. These curricular contents, he explains, include items of information and knowledge, feelings, values and skills that help individuals to fulfill socially endorsed roles and tasks. The curricular contents that invariably constitute the educational process make the curriculum the heart and soul of the study of education (Fullan & Miles, 1992; Erickson, 2001).

The scope of the curriculum was previously limited to relative weight of individual subjects in a school programme and the selection of topics to be included in the syllabus. Currently, however, the scope of curriculum has gradually expanded to include the process of curriculum development, implementation (the aim of this study) and evaluation. Curriculum development deals with the selection and statement of objectives, selection and designing of learning activities, the organization of the learning activities; and the evaluation of objectives (Onwuka, 1981; Fullan and Miles, 1992; Tamakloe, 1992; Widdowson, 1993). The selection and organisation of objectives of the curriculum are usually based on a thorough needs assessment, purposes and resource materials of the people for whom it is designed. It becomes a document or a programme after its complete design and thereafter gets to the stage of implementation.

Curriculum implementation is the process of putting a document or an instructional programme into practice (Fullan and Stiegelbauer, 1991). The source of the design of the curriculum determines the kind of approach to its implementation. In a situation where an individual teacher designs his or her own curriculum, they are the ones who eventually give meaning to it. The teacher, in the implementation process of their own developed curriculum material, is not bound to faithfully implement it because he or she is the creator of the curriculum and can easily modify it. It is often assumed therefore that, the more the teacher acquaints him/herself with the properties of the curriculum, the more effective its implementation could be (Hall & Louks, 1982; Snyder, Bolin, & Zumwalt, 1992).

Curriculum implementers adopt the fidelity approach to curriculum when teachers are required to implement the content of the curriculum to the letter. Simply put, fidelity of implementation is the delivery of instruction in the way in which it was designed to be delivered (Gresham, 1989). Offiong (2005) asserts that fidelity of implementation occurs when teachers deliver both the content and instructional strategies of the curriculum in the same way that they were designed to be delivered. “Most teachers perceive that there are many ways to teach students and that there is little consensus from research that would warrant change in their instructional practice” (Vaughn, Klingner, & Hughes, 2000, p. 167). The fidelity approach to curriculum implementation is therefore the determination of the degree of implementation of a programme in terms of the extent to which actual use corresponds faithfully to the kind of use intended by the designers and to determine factors which facilitate such implementation (Snyder et al., 1992; Vaughn et al., 2000).

Curriculum innovation and implementation are highly complex phenomena (Fullan, 1993; Markee, 1997) that require further research and investigation (Markee, 1997). To date, there is insufficient information on the process of curriculum implementation. The extents to which teachers carry out implementation as intended by curriculum designers depend to some extent on the school climate. In fact, how teachers go about moulding curricular to their own context, the strategies that they use during the implementation process and how their students respond to curricula innovations are influenced by the school. In the same vein, the success of curriculum implementation depends on the

administrative set up of the school. If the school culture fights against the demands of the implementation process, then failure could be anticipated in terms of programme success. On the other hand, if the school culture favours the programme, its successful implementation could be guaranteed. For instance in Ghana, some heads of second cycle institutions do all they can to promote the learning of French by providing teachers with the requisite materials and giving teachers support on issues pertaining to the study of French. However, some also, by their actions and inactions, tend to discourage learning of the subject in their institutions. For these reasons, it can be said that school support could affect how well curriculum could be implemented in a particular institution.

As a matter of fact, the successful management of a school environment is a necessary and essential educational investment. Research in recent times (Urevbu, 2001; Kelly, 2004) have increasingly showed that there is a clear link between environmental quality of schools determined by administrative underpinnings and educational performance. Facility management systems determine environmental quality in schools and the quality of the school environment shapes attitudes of students, teachers and staff. Again, attitudes affect teaching and learning behaviour and behaviour eventually affects performance which determines future outcomes of individuals and society as a whole.

Within the Ghanaian context, as elsewhere, it is common for curriculum implementations to result in a façade of change, but with little noticeable impact on what goes on in the classroom (Morris, 1992; Mkpa, 2005). A number of

problems have bedeviled the implementation of curriculum programmes in schools. Notable among these general set-backs in curriculum implementation include conservatism on the part of programme implementers (teachers), lack of commitment from teachers, lack of clarity about the curriculum programme to be implemented, teachers' capability to implement the curriculum, and lack of required curricular materials in the implementation, among others.

Conservatism on the part of implementers hinders implementation of curriculum programmes in that people fear change (Mkpa, 2005). Watson as cited in Fullan and Miles (1992) asserted several decades ago that few people welcome an aid totally in an unchanging environment. He opined that people resist change because the natural drive for newness and excitement was being counteracted by opposing forces. Most times, teachers in Ghana tend to experiment implementation of reform programmes with old methods which have outlived their usefulness. Teachers in this category are often untrained ones and those who are teachers simply because of lack of jobs. They stick to old ways of teaching and would defend their entrenched positions by statements like "we had always taught this topic this way." This attitude mitigates the smooth implementation of curriculum programmes in Ghana.

Again, teachers and administrators ought to make input into curriculum programmes; and yet the current system in Ghana does not fully allow this to happen. The entire curriculum is handed over to teachers to implement. Therefore, teachers make no or little input in curriculum design and therefore are tempted to have no sense of ownership of the programme and may therefore not be

committed to such a programme (Duyilemi, 2000). Usually, teachers tend to resist any change brought into the school without their participation from the beginning, especially if the decisions are made by others, other than themselves (Fullan et al., 1992). Among themselves, teachers say there is no need to worry too much about something they have been forced to accept. This, according to Law and Cho (2008) leads to apathy and an obvious lackadaisical attitude evidenced by ignoring for instance, certain vital aspects of the curriculum.

Lack of clarity or inadequate understanding of the philosophy and spirit behind the content of a curriculum programme constitutes a hindrance in its implementation. Curriculum illiteracy on the part of teachers poses threat to curriculum implementation in Ghana. The consent of teachers to a curriculum does not necessarily indicate that they comprehend or identify with the programme. It has been discovered from research that teachers who are supposedly implementers of curriculum sometimes cannot even identify its main features (Fullan and Stiegelbauer, 1991). For the programme to be successful, curriculum planners in view of this, need to ensure that they describe the programme in detail for the easy assimilation and digestion of the implementers. Without this, is it not possible that quality implementation will be discountenanced in Ghana?

Furthermore, for curriculum to be implemented well, teachers must have competent grasp of the subject matter and the right approach to implement the programme well. The issue of teacher qualifications could be tied to this point. In Ghana, a number of people claim the title 'teachers' but as to whether they

possess teaching skills is another matter. Wang and Cheng (2005) noted that of all the factors necessary for curriculum implementation, the orientation and skill of teachers was probably the most important. The successful teacher in this type of curriculum is not only a facilitator of student learning, but also an active agent of development. Implicitly, a successful teacher would transcend a mediocre curriculum but an excellent curriculum is unlikely to be successful in the hands of an incompetent teacher. The argument, in the Ghanaian context, is likely to engender debate as to teachers' intellectual capacity to implement curriculum programmes.

Finally, inadequate and in some cases, a lack of supporting instructional materials such as textbooks, supplementary readers, library facilities, etc is a barrier to successful implementation of the curriculum programmes in Ghana. Implementation and institutionalisation of curriculum require the use of resources. Resources such as time, material, administration support and expertise are required in implementation. The most valuable resource of the teacher which is time and the amount of it needed to implement the curriculum are almost always underestimated. The consequence is serious overload on the part of teachers which is likely to culminate in ineffective work output. Due to financial constraints, curriculum designers do not make frantic efforts to take inventory of what is required in terms of materials and budget for them accordingly. As a result, curricular materials do not often accompany the curriculum. Perhaps, this explains why teachers are encouraged to improvise and locally develop materials that could enhance their implementation. In most cases, the lack of instructional

materials accompanying curriculum programmes is also a major challenge most teachers in Ghana face in curriculum implementation.

This study therefore focuses on the implementation of the SHS French curriculum within the framework of or the context of the fidelity approach. The French curriculum, like other ones are centrally developed by the Curriculum and Research Development Division (CRDD) of the Ghana Education Service (GES) and handed down to the teachers of French in Ghana (Klein, 1991). In the design of the SHS French curriculum, the aims, objectives, content, methods and suggested ways of transacting it are explicitly outlined and illustrated in the syllabus. In a centralised system like ours, the material is then handed over to the teacher who is bound to implement it. It is therefore anticipated that the teacher (French teacher) will implement the curriculum with a high degree of fidelity. If s/he implements it to the letter, all other things being equal, students' performance in French will receive a boost.

The unsatisfactory performance of students in French at the SHS level however, should be worrying to many who desire the development of French education in Ghana. Indeed, the drive for bilingualism must be embraced by all; given that Ghana's immediate neighbours are all French-speaking. My interest lies in finding out the extent to which French teachers at the SHS are faithfully implementing contents of the curriculum and deriving the teacher factors which help facilitate and inhibit such implementation.

Statement of the Problem

The Chief Examiner's Reports on the SSSCE from 1993 till date have badly described performances generally as abysmal. The Chief Examiner's Report in French on the West African Senior Secondary Certificate Examination (May/June 2007 WASSCE Report) showed a decline in students' performance compared with the previous year's performance in the subject. The report, among other things, stated certain weaknesses of French candidates such as lack of vocabulary leading to the coining of French words from English, for example "*remembrer*" to mean "to remember" instead of "*se rappeler*". The report also indicated candidates' weakness in spelling, omission or misuse of accents, poor grammar, especially the use of the past tense (*passé composé*), and poor punctuation marks among other things. Interestingly till today, the year by year Chief Examiner's Reports appear not to have changed much as regards the comments. This worrying state of affairs therefore serves as a necessary condition for determining the degree to which French teachers are implementing the curriculum.

Additionally, there is a knowledge gap since not much research has been done in the area of teachers' fidelity approach to implementation which could be a predictor of students' performance at the WASSCE. It is for this reason that I sought to find out the degree of fidelity with which teachers in the Takoradi Metropolis of the Western Region are implementing the SHS French curriculum. In doing this, the study also examined some teacher variables and their relationship with fidelity implementation. The results, when disseminated, would

fashion out a way, which could help address the current poor performance of French students in Ghana. Again, the results of the study when disseminated, would add on to the existing knowledge in the repertoire of French teachers such that their classroom competence will be enriched. When this is achieved, teachers' positive output would eventually affect students' performance in French at the WASSCE.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study was to find out how French teachers in the Takoradi Metropolis were implementing the SHS French syllabus. Teachers' commitment to the implementation process can greatly affect performance of students of French. The study also examined relationships among certain teacher-variables and their effect on fidelity implementation to improve teachers' professional practice.

Research Questions

The following research questions and hypotheses were formulated to guide the study:

1. What levels of qualification and teaching experience have teachers attained to be able to effectively implement the French syllabus?
2. What are teachers' beliefs/perceptions about the content of the SHS French syllabus?

3. To what extent are French teachers strictly adhering to fidelity principles in the implementation of the French syllabus?

Research Hypotheses

1. H_0 : There is no relationship between teachers' acquaintance with the properties of the French syllabus and their fidelity implementation.

H_1 : There is a relationship between teachers' acquaintance with the properties of the French syllabus and their fidelity implementation.

2. H_0 : There is no correlation between French teachers' participation in planned French programmes and their fidelity implementation of the French curriculum.

H_1 : There is a correlation between French teachers' participation in planned French programmes and their fidelity implementation of the French curriculum.

3. H_0 : There is no significant difference between female teachers' fidelity implementation and that of the male teachers.

H_1 : There is a significant difference between female teachers' fidelity implementation and that of the male teachers.

Significance of the Study

The problem under investigation is very important because it seeks to:

1. Provide insight into the complexity of curriculum implementation by helping researchers and educational practitioners gain better

understanding of how and why a programme works, and the extent to which outcomes can be improved.

2. Provide information to curriculum implementers to give balanced attention to all areas of the syllabus so as not to de-emphasise certain aspects in the implementation process.
3. Confirm or disconfirm theories on fidelity approach to curriculum implementation to enhance further research on the subject.



Delimitation of the Study

The study was restricted only to the SHS French teachers in the Takoradi Metropolis and their faithfulness in implementing the French curriculum programme. The respondents of the study comprised only the French teachers in all the public SHS schools and one hundred and thirty six (136) students who were drawn from the selected schools in the Metropolis. The cosmopolitan nature of the Takoradi Metropolis informed its choice given that schools here possess the variables of interest for the study. The study did not cover teachers in other subject areas as well as students who are not studying French.

Again, the study was restricted only to curriculum implementation and not curriculum design or curriculum evaluation. The reason is that curriculum design at the SHS level in Ghana is centralised with little or no teacher input. In addition, the study examined only implementation and not evaluation.

Limitations of the Study

A limitation associated with a descriptive research design is that it is often susceptible to or easily influenced by distortions through the introduction of biases in the measuring instruments. For instance, in this study, errors due to the use of the questionnaires might distort the research findings.

Also, another limitation of the work has to do with dealing with setbacks in the generalisability of findings in the study, given that the study scope covers only a small geographical area.

Further more, as a characteristic of most researches; this study was confronted with the usual challenges relating to reliability and validity of instruments.

Finally, extraneous variables such as quality of the designed curriculum itself, students' reaction/receptivity to the French curriculum and availability of requisite curricular materials for fidelity implementation could influence the degree of implementation though they were not variables of interest to me. These were thus not controlled, hence posing a limitation to the study.

Even though the above limitations were anticipated in the course of the research, frantic efforts were taken to reduce their affects on the final results of the study.

Definition of Terms

The following words may not be familiar to readers in the way they were used in the study. Therefore, they are defined to aid readers.

Fidelity Approach

To Snyder et al. (as cited in Kelly, 2004) fidelity approach “measures the degree to which a particular innovation is implemented as planned... [and to]... identify the factors which facilitate or hinder implementation as planned, assuming the desired outcome of curricular change is fidelity to the original plan (p. 404). In my opinion, this term is specifically used to describe the degree of faithfulness with which a particular curriculum is implemented in consonance with the intentions of the designers.

Implementation

It is the execution of the developed curriculum policies, which may require a modification in teaching practices in order to achieve desired student learning outcomes. In my view, implementation entails ‘changing practice’ that consists of alterations from existing practice to some new or revised one in order to achieve certain desired student learning outcome.

Model of Implementation

This term was used to refer to the underlying principles of the French curriculum. It connotes the totality of the suggested principles of how to present the French curriculum (Snyder, et al., 1992; Kovaleski, Gickling, & Marrow, 1999; Reschly, & Gresham, 2006). In my view, implementation model explains

the application of the fundamental truths in the translation of the curriculum into learning experiences for students.

Syllabus

It is a statement of the plan for subject matter, which includes the goals, objectives, content, processes, and resources, excluding the element of evaluation itself. In my view, a syllabus is a sub-set of a curriculum but not vice versa. For, a curriculum may contain a number of syllabi. The syllabus connotes the content or subject matter of an individual subject. However, for the purpose of this study, it may be synonymously used with curriculum just as it is acceptably done in the United States of America.

Curriculum

It refers to all the experiences one has to undergo under the jurisdiction of a school (Lewy, 1991). According to Pratt (1994), curriculum refers to plans for instructional acts, not the acts of instruction themselves. It is analogous to the set of blueprints from which a house is constructed. For teachers, curriculum is often a statement of what the school authorities, the government, or some group outside the classroom requires the teacher to teach (Doll, 1996).

In my view, the curriculum encompasses the totality of all learning experiences that the student undergoes under the auspices of the school authority. The term curriculum or curriculum programme was interchangeably used with syllabus in this study.

Senior High School

It is the name given to second cycle institutions including Technical and Vocational ones in Ghana. It used to be the three-year post Junior Secondary School (JHS) course, now a three-year post JHS course. Due to inadequacy of French teachers, a majority of these schools do not offer French. In Ghana, students who go through the SHS courses successfully further their education to the universities or polytechnics.

Organisation of the Rest of the Study

The study was organised into five chapters. Chapter one was the introduction. The issues discussed here included background to the study, statement of the problem, formulation of research questions and hypotheses, purpose of the study, significance of the study, delimitation, operational definitions of terms and organisation of the study. The chapter two focused on review of related literature of the study. The views, findings and suggestions made by earlier researchers on the topic of the study were reviewed to support or help deal with themes and sub-themes in this study. Chapter three discussed the methods that were adopted in collecting and analysing data. In this chapter, the population, the sample and sampling procedure, instrumentation, data collection and data analysis procedures were dealt with. Chapter four touched on the analysis of data and discussion of findings of the study. Chapter five dwelt on the summary, conclusions and recommendations of the study.

CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Overview

The literature review explored curriculum implementation in foreign language education using the research evidence from conceptual and empirical studies from past decades. The review starts by scrutinising the assertions that have been made about the conceptions of curriculum implementation; it then examined programme implementation vis-à-vis teachers' roles and curriculum implementation models. Based on the models defined by Fullan and Stiegelbauer (1991) and Carless (1999a), this review highlighted significant factors (variables) known to contribute to or impede implementation of curriculum. Finally, a hypothesised model was proposed to guide the study. The review was done under the following sub-topics: (a) The Theory of Curriculum Implementation, (b) Curriculum Implementation Models, (c) The Concept of Fidelity Approach, (d) Factors that promote Fidelity Implementation, (e) Hypothesised Fidelity Model and (e) Summary of Literature Review.

The Theory of Curriculum Implementation

This section delved into the conceptions of curriculum implementation and the characteristics of teachers involved in implementation process. The purpose was to establish a theoretical basis for further discussion of the teacher factors or variables affecting curriculum implementation in foreign language education in Ghana. The current study also explored teacher-variables that contributed to the faithful implementation of the intended French curriculum at the SHS level. It therefore involved curriculum implementation in the context of French as a foreign language (FFL). As a policy, Ghana operates with the centralised curriculum development process which only hands over the already designed 'intended curriculum' to the classroom teacher to implement.

However, classroom teachers may not implement the curriculum as intended, due to constraints such as their entrenched beliefs and perceptions regarding the contents of the designed material, their qualification, their teaching experiences, inappropriate or inadequate skills and knowledge, among others. It is important to note that in the process of implementation, teachers may alter the intended programme Elmore and Sykes (1992). They may do this by redefining, reinterpreting, and modifying their teaching behaviour based on their classroom realities. They can welcome the designed programme but still find it extremely difficult to put it into practice, and eventually choose not to implement it.

In fact, Elmore, et al., (1992) drew attention to a very important issue of implementation in understanding the confusion and frustration that centralised curriculum development often brings to teachers when they attempt to put the

programme into actual practice. Though Snyder et al. (1992) argued that research on curriculum implementation is relatively new, and that even the term “implementation” could not be found in curriculum literature before the late 60s, recent works have revealed otherwise (Fink, & Stoll, 2005; Fullan, 2007 and Fullan, 2008). From the 1970s through the 1990s, much more attention was directed to the implementation problems involved in translating proposals into practice by scholars, researchers, and practitioners. At present, research on curriculum implementation is more prevalent. Delaney (2002) argued that among the various phases of curriculum development, implementing the material in question is the most challenging part. Perhaps this view point may be true to an extent. Fullan and Park (1981) also asserted that implementation is ‘changing practice’ that consists of alterations from existing practice to some new or revised practice in order to achieve certain desired student learning outcomes. They alleged that implementation is considered changing practice because the emphasis is on actual use rather than on assumed use. Actual use in fact entails whatever change may occur in practice. That is why the terms of change, innovation, reform, revision, and renewal are all frequently used in the context of describing implementation. They elaborated further, stating that change would likely occur in curriculum materials, teaching approaches, and beliefs, perceptions or understandings about the curriculum and learning practices (Fullan & Stiegelbauer, 1991), and that all of these changes are aimed at effectively attaining some educational goal. According to Pal (2006), implementation is the carrying out of an authoritative decision. ‘Authoritative’ in the sense that the

implementer (the teacher) only has to comply without question. At this juncture, it will be important to discuss some known curriculum implementation models which have been applied to educational issues pertaining to implementation.

Curriculum Implementation Models

This section explored curriculum implementation models from the foreign language education perspective to provide a point of entry to factors which may facilitate or inhibit fidelity implementation in the FFL programme at the SHS in Ghana. These models are the ones forwarded by Fullan and Stiegelbauer (1991) and Carless (1999a). The researchers made proposals that reflected their approaches to understanding the problems and challenges embedded in the implementation process. They designed their models based on their own individual contexts, centering on key factors or themes. The underpinning model to their work was the 'Level of Use' (LoU) model which was developed to investigate the level of use of the curriculum by teachers in the classroom. The section also introduced, and provided a critique of these two curricula implementation models.

Various stakeholders are involved in programme design and implementation. These stakeholders, identified by Fullan and Park (1981), Fullan (1982), and Fullan et al. (1991), consist of government, trustees, principals, parents/community, teachers, and students. Tanner and Tanner (1995) added other individuals or groups to this list. These included public and private interest groups, media, private foundations, external testing agencies, publishers, business

and industry, researchers, and authors of curriculum materials. These combined lists reveal that many stakeholders are involved in curriculum design and subsequent implementation.

Widdowson (1993) pinpointed the importance of taking into consideration teachers' roles in relation to other participants, such as policymakers, researchers, material designers, and learners involved in national curriculum design activities. He raised the question of what the proper professional role of teachers should be, what provisions should be made to sustain and develop teachers in that role, and whether it is more concerned with the macro-level of curriculum planning or with the micro-level of classroom practices.

Implementation in any educational jurisdiction involves a variety of stakeholders who play roles that cannot be underestimated. These roles, as a matter of fact, contribute to the degree to which new or revised curriculum will be successfully implemented in the local institutions. However, in order to operate within the scope of this study, the discussion bothered on the teacher as the final implementer of the curriculum. In the Ghanaian context, stakeholders such as School Management Committees (SMCs) and Parent Teacher Associations (PTAs) are playing significant roles in successful implementation of programmes.

Morris and Scott (2003) noted that within centralised educational system (such as the Ghanaian system), challenges often exist in transmitting policy intent to the point of delivery. They stated that many policies are impossible to implement because they are too ambiguous. In contrast, Spillane et al. (2002) stated that once more stakeholders are involved in programme design and

implementation, the programme was bound to succeed in its implementation. However, Fullan et al. (1981) and Tanner et al. (1995) again concurred that one of the reasons for implementation failure might be caused by policymakers formulating unclear and inconsistent directives regarding the behaviours desired from implementers. They concluded that when policy directives paired a clear implementation goal with helpful procedures, the policy was more likely to be implemented.

From another perspective, Hope and Pigford (2001) pointed to the significance of collaboration and cooperation between policymakers and implementers (administrators and teachers alike) during both policy design and implementation. Without such involvement, teachers charged with transforming policy into practice were likely to lack the full understanding of the policy itself and thereby the knowledge of the reason for change, which can in turn result in the lack of motivation necessary to effectively implement a new programme (Hope et al., 2001). Also, just as middle managers must be responsible for the street-level teachers being able to acquire both the capacity and will to implement the programme, so must the policymakers themselves take on that responsibility of the teachers by interacting with them and obtaining their feedback. To do otherwise is asking teachers to play the game of “broken telephone,” where the possibility exists of passing on a distorted version of the policy, as well as the further possibility that the implementers may lack a clear understanding of the central reasons for the implementation. In Ghana, teachers have constantly

complained about their non-inclusion on matters relating to curriculum design in their respective subject areas.

According to Smit (2005), teachers have often been diagnosed as “resistant to change” or simply lazy, in ignoring or subverting the success of curricular programmes (McLaughlin, 1987; Smit, 2005). However, Spillane et al. (2002) looked at their situation in a different light, explaining that this was because implementers often lacked the capacity - the knowledge, skills, the right attitude, and other resources necessary to work in ways that are consistent with policy. From the Ghanaian perspective, some of the points argued out by Smit (2005) and Spillane et al. (2002) could account for the implementation failures by teachers in the classroom.

Through their study on English language instruction in classrooms in China, Japan, Singapore, Switzerland, and the USA, Silver and Skuja-Steele (2005) examined how policy and classroom practice interacted by comparing classroom practices and teachers’ statements of pedagogical rationales with governmental policies. They found that teachers were aware of the policy initiatives related to language education. However, they were focusing on immediate classroom priorities that influenced daily lessons, and therefore placed their emphasis on student learning thereby neglecting the syllabus (McLaughlin, 1987; Cohen & Ball, 1990). Their findings revealed that language policies were reinterpreted into structural priorities, which indirectly influenced classroom priorities and thereby filtered through into classroom practice (Cohen et al., 1990).

I think that teachers' willingness to implement language policies such as French is likely to be influenced by the social and personal dimensions of classroom teaching and by their goals and beliefs.

Fullan and Stiegelbauer's (1991) Implementation Model

From an extensive review of literature, Fullan et al. (1991) integrated two categories of theme and factor and developed a theoretical model (Fullan et al.) to probe factors that commonly influence implementation. They identified three sets of interactive factors affecting implementation: change; local characteristics and extent to which government and educational agencies exert their influence on the other stakeholders

The first factor is *change*. They argued that the extent of the required change itself, in terms of actual need for change as well as how clear, complex, and practical the change is, plays a role in whether the implementation is successful or not. The curriculum over the years has been found to be an effective tool used to produce responsible citizens of a society. For this reason, the curriculum should be seen to be playing this role as such. There might not be the need to implement any change if that change will further exacerbate an already precarious societal situation. It stands to reason therefore that agents who will facilitate the change process see the need for the change or else, the change will not take place. In this study however, since teachers are already using the designed material, it presupposes that there is a universal societal acceptance for the SHS French programme.

The second factor is that of the *local characteristics*, specifically, which district, community, principal, and teacher are involved in the implementation process. Fullan et al. (1991) discovered that the supports given by the local district school board, community, and principals were also determinants affecting implementation. Particularly, teachers exerted a strong impact in promoting implementation; their perceptions and roles in implementation were indispensable (Ereh, 2005). Critically, I am of the view that the second factor in their model has not exhausted the list of other players such as Non-governmental Organisations (NGOs), spirited individuals and civil society organisations whose stake and contributions are so crucial for successful implementation of any programme. Notwithstanding that, I think for the purposes of this study, the search light would be on teachers who are the major players in this matter.

The third factor is the *extent to which government and educational agencies exert their influence* on the other stakeholders. Governments have been known to be the initiators of educational policies. By their excessive powers, they are capable of ensuring that educational programmes policies simply work. They do this by employing the enormous state resources at their disposal to achieve this target. For instance, government can induce hard work on the part of teachers to ensure the successful implementation of a programme by simple monetary incentives and other motivational means. It thus can be concluded that governments' influence in curriculum implementation cannot be over emphasised.

Fullan and Stiegelbauer's (1991) mode of analysis was comprehensive, thought provoking, and profound, and provided powerful insights into the

complexity and the dynamics of educational programmes. More importantly, their model has exerted enormous influence on later researchers and scholars interested in curriculum implementation. However, I am of the opinion that since their model is based on the North American context and mainly deals with primary and secondary education, some factors, such as district, community, or principal may not be as relevant in the Ghanaian context as the current study. It is basically because these variables fall outside scope of the current study.

Carless' (1999a) Implementation Model

While studying EFL teaching in Hong Kong, Carless (1999a) developed a conceptual model of factors affecting implementation of curriculum innovation based on the literature reviewed in language education (Carless, 1999a). His three categorisations of teacher-related, innovation-related, and change agent-related factors resonated, to a large extent, with Fullan et al.'s (1991) model. Each category matched the local characteristics, the characteristics of change, and the external factors. What is distinctive in Carless' model was his further elaboration of sub-variables and what was considered as the appropriateness of these sub-variables in China. This allowed him to investigate in depth what those factors were in each category. Carless expanded Fullan and Stiegelbauer's model with regard to local characteristics.

He detailed teacher-related factors into sub-variables such as teachers' beliefs and perceptions, teacher qualification/experience, and teachers' acquaintance with the properties of the syllabus and their understanding of change

or innovation. He also pointed out that classroom communication strategies, teaching strategies and evaluative processes, availability of sufficient resources in terms of human, material, and financial are important change-related factors.

I think however that one flaw in Carless' model lies in the category under the confusing label of change agent-related factors. Carless (1999a) defined change agents as individuals who prompt or facilitate change, but he failed to specify who these individuals were. In fact, "change agent" is a controversial term in the literature as it can be interpreted from many different perspectives. For instance, he referred to a change agent as "an individual who influences clients' innovation-decisions in a direction deemed desirable by a change agency" (p. 27). Kennedy (1988) also described the entrepreneur who "acts as a link between the different participants and as catalyst for change" (p. 334) as a change agent. However, Scileppi (1988) regarded change agents as individuals who cause or facilitate change. Fullan (1993, 1999) questioned the concepts of change agent, suggesting that both teachers and students act as change agents in educational reform. De Lano, Riley, and Crookes (1994) made a similar point and envisaged that within an educational culture, change agents can be found among administrators, teachers, and even students. Carless (1999a) in fact recognised that his own divisions or groupings of factors risked "artificiality and oversimplification" (p. 374).

Based on my review of teacher-factors affecting fidelity implementation in relation to the current study, I have attempted to categorise these variables of interest and examine their dynamic inter-plays in determining fidelity of

implementation of the SHS French curriculum. Because teachers are ultimately held responsible for the implementation, my review of the literature focuses on teachers only, specifically, teacher-related factors such as teachers' beliefs, attitudes, and their understanding and ownership of curriculum programme (Carless, 1999a).

I recognise also that students are the recipients of curriculum innovation and so student-related factors are thus important in the curriculum implementation and innovation literature; however, they are not touched upon in this review because they fall outside the scope of the current study. I have organised my discussion according to the themes that emerge from the literature, in which various kinds of factors are dealt with. Owing to the scope of the thesis, not all the factors are discussed extensively. Factors identified and discussed may not be the only ones affecting implementation; however, they are considered to be the most relevant to my research in the study of FFL at the SHS.

This study therefore hinges on the Carless (1999a) model of implementation. A justification of this is that the current study, just like the Carless model, alludes to virtually all the variables of interest. The only area of departure is the in-depth categorisations of themes and sub-themes into teacher-related, innovation-related, and change agent-related factors by Carless. However, this study limits itself to the change (implementer) agent-related factors which constituted the vital concepts for the investigation in this study.

The Concept of Fidelity Approach

The concept of implementation fidelity, sometimes called adherence or integrity, is a determination of how well a programme is being implemented in comparison with the original programme design. Deviations from, or dilution of the programme components, could have unintended consequences on programme outcomes.

The majority of curriculum implementation has been studied from a fidelity perspective or approach (Snyder et al., 1992). The intent of this approach according to Snyder, et al. (1992) was to “measure the degree to which a particular innovation is implemented as planned...[and to]... identify the factors which facilitate or hinder implementation as planned, assuming the desired outcome of curricular change is fidelity to the original plan” (p. 404)

Researchers of fidelity approach view curriculum as something concrete, something that can be pointed to, something that can be evaluated to see if its goals have been accomplished (Jackson, 1992). Its degree of implementation can be determined by finding out if teachers have faithfully followed implementation principles as planned. Teachers must have professional training (Natriello, Zumwalt, Hansen, & Frisch, 1990) to be able to do this. The implementers must also attain the appropriate skills and knowledge in their subject areas (Supovitz & May, 2003). Furthermore, the documents that specify and interpret the content of the programme - the syllabus, the textbook, and the teachers’ manual, among others must be readily available (Eash, 1991; Supovitz, et al., 2003). Snyder et al. (1992) add that a clearly defined innovation makes those charged with

implementing it know exactly what to do. The fidelity of the teacher to the curriculum implementation therefore depends mostly on those conditions.

In analysing the reality in the classroom, Dusenber, Brannigan, Fako and Hansen (2003) admit that minor variations might be tolerated, but caution that the emphasis should clearly be on ensuring that practice conforms to the developer's intentions. When practice conforms to the developer's intentions, then the degree of implementation can be determined.

Assumptions under the Fidelity Approach

The underlying assumptions of the fidelity approach to curriculum implementation relate to curriculum knowledge, change and the role of the teacher. The advocates of this theory assume that curriculum experts primarily create curriculum knowledge outside the classroom for teachers to implement in the way the experts have decided is best (Snyder et al., 1992). This assumption is practicable only in a centralised educational system like that of Ghana's. In such a system, the curriculum is centrally designed and distributed to teachers in the various institutions for implementation. The same however, does not hold in a decentralized educational system like that of England's where the teacher has every right to design his own curriculum and implement it.

In the British system, the teacher might not find it difficult implementing curriculum materials they designed themselves. On the other hand, in Ghana, the teacher has a difficult task implementing a material which was only handed to them to be implemented in a certain manner familiar only to the designers. This

truth places a huge professional responsibility on the poor teacher in a centralised educational system since society may expect him/her to deliver at all cost.

The second assumption states that curriculum change is a rational, systematic and linear process. The more the curriculum designers and implementers identify the factors that either facilitate or inhibit the smooth operation of the linear process, the better the administration and implementation of the process (Fullan, 1991; Dusenber, Brannigan, Fako & Hansen, 2003). Here, there is collaboration between designers and implementers in ways that allow implementers to faithfully implement the curriculum material. In Ghana, curricula seminars/workshops are organised for leaders of subject organisations who are also required to train their members at the grassroots on effective ways of implementing curricula. These seminars and workshops often help teachers to faithfully implement curriculum in their schools.

The final assumption under the fidelity approach relates to the role of the teacher. The role of the implementing teacher, the advocates assume, is one of a consumer who should follow the directions and implement the curriculum as the experts have designed it (Kam, Greengerg & Walls, 2003). The degree of success of its implementation is attributable to the degree of faithfulness or fidelity of the teacher to the way the curriculum was intended to be implemented. In my view, a flaw with this position is that the teacher is made 'a know nothing' who only should just accept anything and implement it hook line and sinker.

Obviously, the creativity and resourcefulness of the teacher in his/her job stand stifled. Under normal circumstance, the professionalism of the teacher

should be respected but the enforcement of this assumption takes away the autonomy the teacher is entitled to enjoy. My view is that teachers are professionals and need to be allowed the free hand to implement curricula programmes their own way as they deem better though without compromising fidelity.

Fidelity Dimensions

In the last decade-and-a-half, researchers have begun to apply systematic methods to weigh curricula programmes against certain critical elements (Dane and Schneider, 1998). In part, the challenge of developing measures involves not only defining concepts to be measured, but measures could be developed to assess fidelity of implementation of curriculum programmes. Understandably, measures that have been developed have often been specific to the programme or policy being assessed. In general, fidelity of implementation, according to Dane and Schneider, (1998) has been measured in five ways:

1. adherence to the programme;
2. the amount of the programme delivered or implemented, which is referred to as 'dose' in the medical field;
3. quality of programme delivery;
4. participant(s) responsiveness and;
5. programme differentiation that is whether critical features that distinguish the programme are present.

Specifically to this study, a measure gleaned from Scheirer and Rezmovic (2007) was used to calibrate the degree of fidelity on the Likert (Interval) scale. In this regard, 'very high fidelity (VHF)' was assigned '5', 'high fidelity (HF)' was assigned '4', moderate fidelity (MF) was assigned to '3', low fidelity (LF) was assigned '2' and 'very low fidelity (VLF)' was assigned '1'. The current study determined the degree of fidelity by this calibration. The diagrammatic representation of the degree of programme implementation couched from Scheirer et al. has been presented in Figure 1.

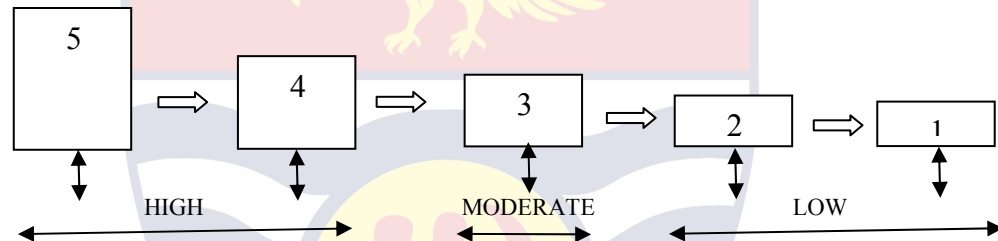


Figure 1. Measurement of degree of programme implementation

Source: Extracted from Scheirer, et al., 2007 (Modified)

However, with regard to the participant(s) responsiveness (the 4th category of Dane & Schneider 1998), the study concentrated only on the participation of teachers in the implementation process. To do this well, the study was conceptualised along the following lines:

1. teachers' qualification and teaching experience
2. in-service training and professional development
3. teachers' beliefs and decision-making in implementation
4. teachers acquaintance with properties of the syllabus
5. teachers' participation in planned curricular programmes

6. gender and fidelity implementation
7. hypothesised fidelity model
8. summary of literature review

Factors that Promote Fidelity Implementation

It is important to note that most of these variables such as qualification and experience, professional programmes, acquaintance with the content of the syllabus were found to be some of the factors that promote fidelity implementation. They were therefore reviewed in this section.

Teacher Qualification and Teaching Experience

The teaching profession in developing countries consists of under qualified, unqualified and qualified teachers. Teachers in the first two categories usually enroll in courses to upgrade their qualifications, and identify skills required in their sector of operation (Obinna, 2007). Sometimes, by upgrading their professional instincts, they are able to perform even better than the professional teacher who has had an esoteric body of knowledge at the training college. Findings of many research works have revealed that the qualification of a teacher determines his/her competence in the classroom. In a recent research conducted by Penuel, Fisherman, Yamaguichi & Gallagher (2007), it came out that the educational attainment of teachers affects their class performance. By extension, academic qualification of the teacher influences his/her classroom competence. In that research, it was revealed that teachers with professional

qualifications tended to associate and commit themselves more to curriculum implementation requirements. In my opinion however, this stance is contestable given that there have been counter arguments that the individual's qualification per se cannot determine how effective they become in the classroom. The individual's intellectual ability cannot and should not be discounted. Penuel, et al. (2007) noted that issues of professionalism and non-professionalism are closely linked to teacher qualification. I sincerely believe that professional/non-professional teachers also respond to curriculum implementation in diverse ways. For Ipaye (2002) and Penuel, et al. (2007), teachers ignore, refuse, adopt; and adapt the official curriculum. They contended that teacher qualification affects fidelity of curriculum implementation.

The issue about relationship between years of experience on the job and fidelity implementation has not been a recent phenomenon. Investigations of teacher experience have been conducted in a wide range of developed and developing countries (Hanushek, 2003). As a broad statement, the results are qualitatively similar except there is perhaps slightly stronger support for a positive impact of these on curriculum implementation in developing countries. At the same time, the additional support is slight with the majority of studies still not finding significant correlation between teaching experience and quality delivery of curricula programmes.

Several studies conducted in the past showed that teacher experience has a more positive relationship with quality teaching or implementation, but still the overall picture is not that strong (Hanushek, 2003). While a majority of the

studies finds a positive effect, only a minority of all estimates provides statistically significant results. A study that was conducted in the USA revealed that 37 value-added estimates within individual states suggest more strongly that experience has an impact on teachers' implementation of curriculum, although still only 41% of the estimates are statistically significant. It is quite likely that a number of these studies lack the statistical power necessary to identify precisely the experience effects. An important consideration in the case of experience is the possibility of a highly nonlinear relationship between the quality of instruction (fidelity) and number of years of teaching (experience). Hanushek and Kain (2005) also pursue a nonparametric investigation of experience and found that experience effects are concentrated in the first few years of teaching. Specifically, teachers in their first and, to a somewhat lesser extent, their second year tend to perform significantly worse in implementation in the classroom. Using a different estimation methodology, Hanushek et al. (2005) pinpoint the experience gains as arising during the first year of teaching, with essentially flat impacts of experience subsequently. Consequently, misspecification of the relationship between teachers' fidelity implementation and experience likely contributed to the failure to find a systematic link between faithful lesson delivery and experience.

I think that while experience can bring important benefits to the job of teaching (implementation), owing to greater maturity in the job and increased levels of on-the-job learning, it can also create problems of inertia, lack of innovation and resistance to change which may be unlikely to occur with a younger teacher population. For this reason it may be important to examine

further whether experience on the job can really influence the effectiveness in terms of curriculum implementation. Elsewhere, copious literature has supported the notion that it really is the case. However, real life experiences have also proven that the assertion can best be described as erroneous. If so, then it becomes imperative to subject it (assertion) to empirical testing as this work seeks to do.

In-Service Training and Professional Development

In order that curriculum policy is translated into practice and to ensure that successful implementation and continuity of any curriculum innovation exists in the classroom, it is paramount that teachers receive in-service training and provision of ongoing support and professional development (De Lano et al., 1994; McLaughlin, 1987; White, 1993). As Stenhouse (1975) put it, without teacher professional development there can be no curriculum implementation. Brindley and Hood (1990) claimed that ongoing in-service training and professional development constitute important components of any projected implementation. In-service training focuses on teachers' responsibilities and is aimed toward short-term and immediate goals, whereas professional development seeks to facilitate growth of teachers' understanding of teaching and of themselves as teachers (Richards & Farrell, 2005). A teacher may be doing him/herself a disservice if s/he therefore fails to take active part in professional developmental activities.

A considerable number of conceptual and empirical studies have been carried out to illustrate the importance of teachers' in-service training and professional development in assisting teachers with their curriculum

implementation skills. Analysing 15 empirical studies conducted in the 1970s, Fullan and Pomfret (1977) concluded that in-service training was a factor in seven studies. These studies indicated that teachers who received intensive in-service training had a higher degree of implementation than those who did not.

Teachers' Beliefs and Decision-Making in Implementation

Teachers' beliefs have been described by Kagan (1992) as “tacit, often unconsciously held assumptions about students, classrooms, and the academic material to be taught” (p. 65). Teachers' beliefs are related to their classroom practice (Burns, 1992; Fang, 1996; Kagan, 1992). Pajares (1992) emphasised that there is a “strong relationship between teachers' educational beliefs and their planning, instructional decisions, and classroom practices” (p. 326) and that “educational beliefs of pre-service teachers play a pivotal role in their acquisition and interpretation of knowledge and subsequent teaching behaviour” (p. 328). Nespor (1987) argued that teachers' beliefs are likely to influence their future behaviour. Nevertheless, Fang (1996) pointed out inconsistencies between teachers' beliefs and their practices. These inconsistencies reflected the complexities of the classroom reality and implied that “contextual factors can have powerful influences on teachers' beliefs and, in effect, affect their classroom practice” (p. 53). Discussing the logic of implementation, Fullan and Park (1981) claimed that implementation actually necessitates changes and adjustments in the belief systems of teachers in three aspects, and in succession; first materials, then teaching approach, and finally beliefs. They firmly contended that change in

beliefs is much more difficult and time consuming to bring about than changes in materials and teaching methods.

Woods (1996) also argued that what teachers do in their classroom practices is shaped by what they think, and that teachers' perceptions and beliefs serve as filters through which instructional judgments and decisions are made. (Shavelson & Stern, 1981; Kagan, 1992). Woods (1996) stated the importance of the teachers' beliefs on their practice of language teaching, saying, the teacher's beliefs, assumptions and knowledge play an important role in how the teacher interprets events related to teaching; both in preparation for the teaching and in the classroom, and thus affect the teaching decisions that are ultimately made. Woods found that the decisions made in planning and carrying out the course were consistent with deeper underlying assumptions and beliefs about language, learning, and teaching; yet each teacher's decisions and beliefs differed dramatically from the other along a number of specifiable dimensions (Woods, 1996).

Teachers' Acquaintance with Properties of the Syllabus

The point cannot be contested that teachers' acquaintance with the properties, features and content of the curriculum material (syllabus) exercises a positive effect on their classroom performance. Natriello, Zumwalt, Hansen, & Frisch, (1990); Elbaz, (1991) observe that teachers' who teach subjects need to strive and internalise the essential features of those subjects and carry them out as planned. It will be difficult for teachers to deliver their lessons well if they make

no deliberate effort to carefully study the syllabus to be able to meet the needs of their students (Elbaz, 1991).

The properties of the curriculum encompass features of the SHS French syllabus, the rationale for teaching French in Ghana, the general aims and objectives of the SHS French curriculum (syllabus), the scope of content of the syllabus, organisation of the syllabus and the time allocation in the syllabus. Teachers will be said to have acquainted themselves well with the properties of the curriculum (syllabus) if they imbibe these variables. All things being equal, the more teachers acquaint themselves with the content of the syllabus, the likely they are to implement the curriculum with fidelity. In the determination of the degree of implementation, the characteristics of the curriculum must be properly defined. Spillane, Reiser, & Reimer (2002) criticised Elbaz (199) for using weak variables in the self-report instruments.

In Ghana, Arthur (1999) carried out a similar study on the degree of implementation of an instructional programme in the Ashanti Region of Ghana. The findings of the study indicated that the majority of the teachers did not plan their lessons within the framework of the syllabus since most of them were not familiar with the content of the syllabus. She also found that most content areas were not adequately taught. Arthur (1999) further concluded that written exercises were less frequently assigned by the majority of the SHS Core English language teachers in most of the content areas, and finally the teaching-learning strategies suggesting high pupil activities were usually avoided. From her

research work, it turned out that acquaintance of teachers to the properties of the curriculum material (syllabus), promoted fidelity implementation.

In her work, Arthur (1999) defined the characteristics of the syllabus to include the coverage of content areas, students' activities and methods of teaching that can be critiqued. In her study, the characteristics of the syllabus were, however, not defined because they were not clearly delineated. As a criticism, I think the principles in the syllabus that constitute fidelity of implementation upon which her findings could be based were lacking. Furthermore, she used certain behaviour indicators that were not based on the syllabus. I believe that teachers implement instructional programmes by covering greater amounts of content areas and giving out activities to students as expected but whether they are more faithful and committed to the principles underlying the fidelity model of implementation may still remain questionable. At this juncture, it becomes imperative for us to look at the characteristics of the SHS French syllabus in detail.

Teachers' acquaintance with the SHS French syllabus will show that the syllabus comprises grammar/ language, essay writing, comprehension, vocabulary development, summary and speech work. Each component comprises its own teaching strategies that are classified into knowledge and understanding and the use of knowledge. Knowledge is the ability to remember or recall material already learned and constitutes the lowest level of learning (GES, 1998). Understanding on the other hand, is "the ability to grasp the meaning of some material that may be verbal, pictorial, or symbolic" (GES, 1998). The ability to use knowledge,

according to GES, includes the levels of application, analysis, synthesis and evaluation. The teaching strategies under knowledge and understanding, referred together as receptive skills, are learnt through listening and reading. Those strategies under the use of knowledge (productive skills) are also learnt through speaking and writing.

Teaching strategies under grammar or language study that constitute the use of knowledge are dialogue and the construction of original sentence. The rest - conversation drills, pair drills, competition drills, substitution drills and blank-space filling also constitute knowledge and understanding (Teaching Syllabus for French, 2010). All the teaching strategies under essay writing, discussion, organising unordered string sentence into lucid paragraphs, debating in preparation to argumentative essay and story-telling sessions in preparation to written work- are subsumed under the use of knowledge. Those under comprehension, - silent reading, oral reading, linking comprehension lesson with literature lesson and testing listening comprehension, constitute knowledge and understanding (Teaching Syllabus for French, 2003, 2010).

With the exception of writing compositions on topics selected from specified disciplines constituting use of knowledge, the rest of the strategies under vocabulary development - making vocabulary with selected disciplines and encouraging students to look up definition in dictionaries fall under knowledge and understanding. Summary writing has all its teaching strategies-expressing themes in single sentences, paraphrasing paragraphs and reducing passages to a third of original length while retaining the mood-under use of knowledge except

identifying themes of passages. Speech work has pronunciation drill through modeling or repetition, contrastive drill, and poetry recitals under knowledge and understanding while conversation, debating and acting plays, fall under the use of knowledge (Teaching Syllabus for French, 2010).

Again, studies have revealed that teacher assessment and evaluation procedures that are incongruous with prescribed guidelines in the curriculum (syllabus) may only end up alienating the student and thus constitute barriers to effective curriculum implementation (Pajares, 1992; Law et al., 2008). Teachers often perceive themselves as professionals who need to be accorded some level of professional autonomy. In spite of this, teachers need to carefully follow the laid down guidelines in the assessment of students. This ensures that students are adequately prepared for the final examinations (Law, et al., 2008).

The arrangements for continuous assessment are grouped into categories such as Projects, Class Tests, Homework, and Terminal Test (Teaching syllabus for French, 2003, 2010). The projects are assigned to students to be completed over extended period of time. They comprise practical work (such as creative writing) and investigative study. The student is expected to write a report for each project undertaken. The class tests consist essentially of written assignments covering topics/units completed at some specific period within the term (Teaching syllabus for French, 2010). The homework is also an assignment to be completed within a day or a couple of days. It may consist of essays, summaries, and other problems to be solved. Teachers' acquaintance with these areas of the syllabus improves their fidelity implementation, all things been equal.

Teachers' Participation in Planned Curriculum Programmes

Teachers need to be scholars, researchers and lifelong learners for effective teaching and learning to occur in the classroom. In line with the new dispensation in South Africa, it is of utmost importance that effective professional development models be developed to empower teachers, so that reform-based teaching and learning strategies are implemented in classrooms, in an attempt to enhance learner performance. The successful implementation of new educational policies will only be effective if teachers are adequately prepared and equipped by means of retraining and by realising the importance of improving their professional practice by means of continuous professional development (Coetzer, 2001; Hahn, Noland, Rayens, & Christie, 2002). The above assertion is supported by Anderson (2001), who suggests that it has become necessary to help teachers update their knowledge and skills by organising workshops and seminars for them to deal with curriculum change and programme implementation challenges.

Teachers who continuously research into new ways of encouraging active learner participation in the classroom demonstrate high levels of reflexive competence. One way the teacher can continue to learn and to be on top of current issues will be his/her desire to participate in curriculum programmes such as workshops and seminars to improve professional competence (Hahn, et al., 2002). For French teachers in Ghana, programmes such as '*Concours Professionnels*' during *Semaine de la Francophonie*, CREF seminars and workshops to sharpen their teaching skills, Ghana Association of French Teachers (GAFT) programmes end up helping the French teacher implement the French curriculum well. The

GES also occasionally organises workshops and seminars for especially newly trained teachers to orientate them properly into the teaching service. These programmes, coupled with other ones organised at school levels, help the teacher improve their professional skills. If a teacher however refuses to participate in these planned curriculum programmes, s/he may soon find themselves archaic on the job (Anderson, 2001).

Gender and Fidelity implementation

Teachers are the mainstay of the educational system (Afe, 2000). Teaching according to Ogunyemi (2000) is a process of imparting knowledge, skills and attitude in order to bring about a desirable change in learners. The primary goal of teaching is to ensure that meaningful learning occurs (Ogunyemi, 2000). Fidelity implementation is the extent that student's performance improves after a period of instruction in a manner consistent with the goals of an intended curriculum programme (Olatoye, 2006). Omoniyi (2005) asserted that teaching with fidelity is carrying out those activities which bring about the most productive and beneficial learning experience for students and promotes their development as learners. Ogunyemi (2000) argued that fidelity implementation goes beyond just imparting knowledge but it is a purposeful activity carried out by someone with a specialised knowledge in a skillful way to enhance the cognitive, affective and psychomotor development of a person or group of persons. Oyekan (2000) investigated the attributes of fidelity implementation among secondary school teachers. Findings revealed that fidelity implementation in classroom practices

include; Broad based knowledge of the subject matter, effective use of chalkboard, good language and communication skills; well organised learning environment; formulation of clear objective.

According to Ferdinand (2007) fidelity implementation entails a clearly formulated objective illustrated instruction and effective evaluation technique. Literature is replete on studies documenting relationship with fidelity implementation and students' achievement. A study by Odeyeji (2000) and Agbatogun (2006) in Nigeria revealed low fidelity implementation among female primary school teachers compared with their male counterpart. A similar study by Ferdinand (2007) showed a significant gender difference in the fidelity implementation among teachers in Singapore. The male 'teachers' have high level of fidelity implementation compared with their female counterparts. A study by Scriven (2008) also showed a wider variation in the fidelity implementation among various school subject teachers. Other empirical studies have revealed no significant gender difference in the implementation of programmes among subject teachers. Other outcomes of researches also have negated the findings of Ferdinand (2007) that female teachers possess high level of fidelity implementation compared to their male counterpart. Adetayo (2008) posited that male teachers do not consider teaching befitting a profession. Consequently they pay less attention to fidelity principles in the classroom compared to their female counterpart. Olatoye (2006) however posited that gender has no influence on the fidelity implementation of teachers.

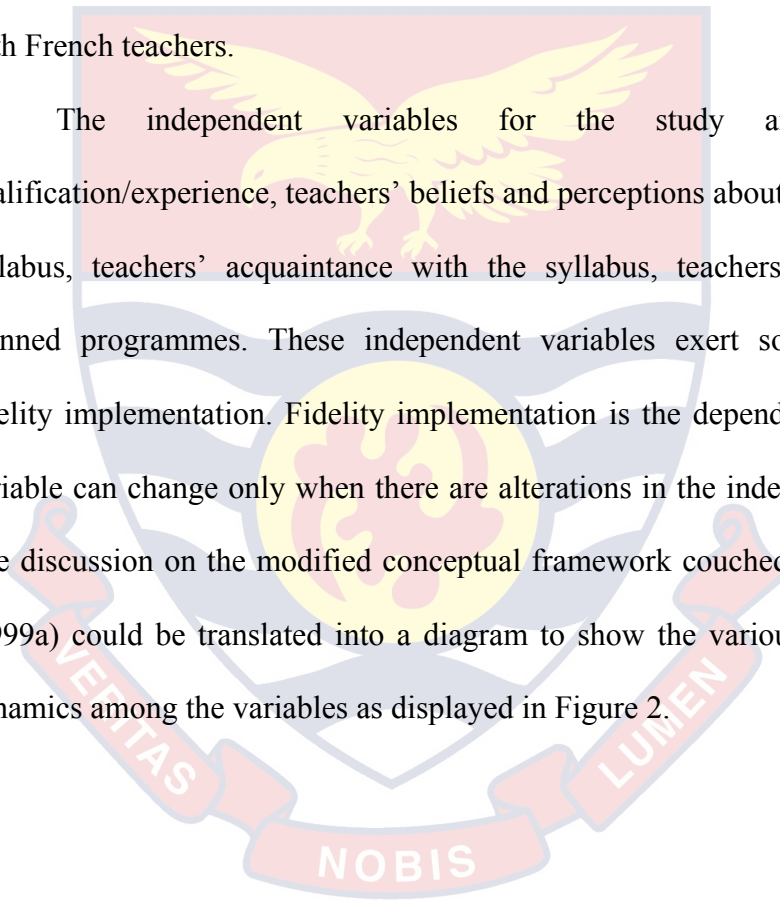
I think that the true relationships could further be explored to allow for diverse scientific discussions on the subject. This research may attempt to find out if indeed, gender plays any role in fidelity implementation of teachers.

Hypothesised Fidelity Model

The proposed hypothesised model is a modified model carved out of the Carless model of implementation. It encapsulates the variables of interest in this study. Teacher-variables such as teacher-qualification and experience could be on the same continuum. The interplay of the two variables could also shape teachers' beliefs and perceptions about the content of the SHS French programme. The higher a French teacher attains in education and the longer he/she stays on the job, all things being equal, the more s/he develops a positive mentality towards implementing a programme with fidelity. To a large extent, the inherent beliefs and perceptions of French teachers may be affected by their participation in planned French programmes aimed at sharpening their professional classroom competencies (Ereh, 2005). In addition, teachers' readiness to acquaint themselves with the properties of the syllabus is, to greater degree, contingent on their beliefs/ perceptions about the programme on one hand, and their participation in professional developmental programmes on the other hand. Indeed, the more teachers acquaint themselves with the content of the syllabus and participate in planned French professional programmes, the more likely they are to adopt good teaching strategies and methods that inure to better student learning outcomes.

For instance other factors held constant, if teachers are highly educated in French (with much years of teaching experience), they are likely to participate more in professional programmes, and are likely also to familiarise themselves with the content of the syllabus they are supposed to implement. They are also likely to adopt better teaching strategies and methods in line with the demands of the syllabus. The reverse will surely happen when these variables are non-existent with French teachers.

The independent variables for the study are the teacher qualification/experience, teachers' beliefs and perceptions about the content of the syllabus, teachers' acquaintance with the syllabus, teachers' participation in planned programmes. These independent variables exert some influence on fidelity implementation. Fidelity implementation is the dependent variable. This variable can change only when there are alterations in the independent variables. The discussion on the modified conceptual framework couched from the Carless (1999a) could be translated into a diagram to show the various relationships in dynamics among the variables as displayed in Figure 2.



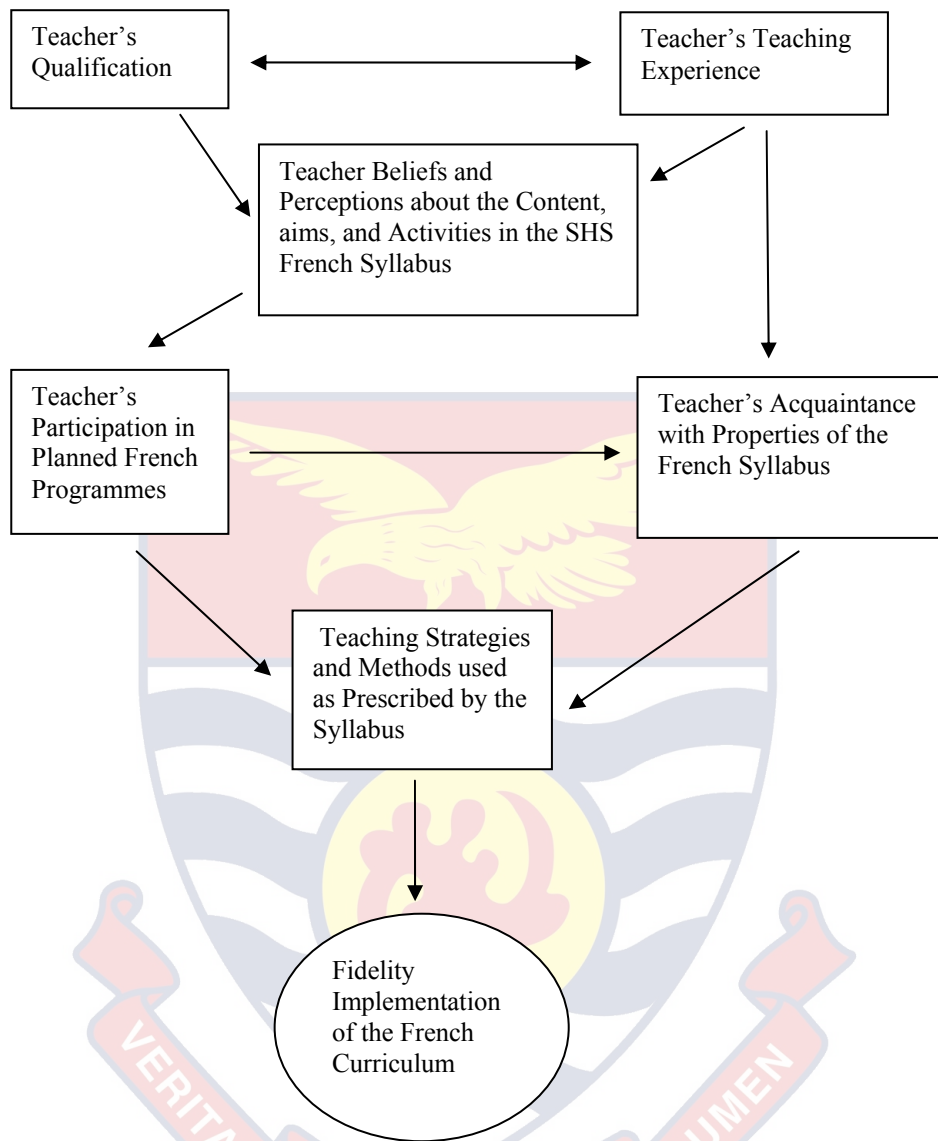


Figure 2. Hypothesised conceptual framework of the study

Source: Couched from the Carless' (1999a) Model of Implementation

Summary of Literature Review

In fact, the irreplaceable role of teachers in curriculum development, especially at the implementation phase, has been increasingly recognised by policymakers, researchers, and other stakeholders. Indeed, it can be posited that teachers make important decisions with consequences for students the reason for which they should be involved in decision-making. In the classroom, they do so behind closed doors since no one can control all of the specific decisions they make even during a highly specified instructional episode.

Deductively, failure to involve them in the formulation of curriculum policy could result in a situation where teachers change, reject, or ignore intended curriculum when it is to be implemented in their classrooms. They decide if and then how they will implement the required curriculum. Therefore, their roles should not be overlooked. How well they implement the curriculum also depends on their level of education, their teaching experience, their participation in professional programmes, their beliefs and perceptions about the material whose content they deliver, how well they *'know'* what they purport to teach and follow the *'rules'* to the letter and other factors. These variables play to determine whether French teachers are doing the *'right things'* in the typical SHS French class. Also, for teachers to do the right things I think pro-fidelity implementation factors such as acquaintance, participation in professional programmes, beliefs/perceptions, teaching experience may have a correlation with actual fidelity implementation. Again, as to whether gender influences fidelity implementation may sooner than later be explored by this study.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

Overview

In this chapter, the research design, population as well as statistical tools for data analysis were discussed. All the data collection techniques, specific methods and procedures used in ascertaining teachers' fidelity approach in the implementation of the French curriculum at the SHS level were as well discussed.

Research Design

I used the descriptive survey method for the collection of data and the analysis of information. This comprised descriptive sample surveys. I used the sample survey because the procedure helped me to focus only on a portion of the entire population. Also, I used descriptive research because it involved collecting data in order to test hypothesis or answer research questions concerning the current status of the subject of study (Gay, 1992; Creswell, 2003). In fact, due to the conceptual framework used to formulate the research questions and research hypothesis, a methodology which could provide a holistic view of the implementation process was required and this explains the use of the simple descriptive design.

As a result, a method that allowed me to observe individual teachers in their natural setting, interpret their interactions in the classroom during the implementation process was adopted. I chose a classroom observation and teachers' self-report (questionnaire) to examine change in teaching techniques and curriculum implementation because this afforded me the means to interrogate the research questions and the hypotheses. Due to the complexity of the process of curriculum implementation, I selected an approach that supplied information about the classroom setting, participants, resources, and the interactions which result from curriculum implementation (Copa & Parsons, 1983; Schultz & Torrie, 1984).

I used observation; a qualitative method which lends itself to a holistic analysis of process, not just outcomes (LeCompte & Goetz, 1982). I should be quick to state however that the observation procedure has certain setbacks, in that, it is relatively laborious and time consuming. Again, it is obvious that observation cannot, in most cases, offer quantitative generalisations on the results.

Clearly, I used the mixed method (qualitative and quantitative) such as observation and questionnaire to collect necessary data from respondents. These tools helped me to trace the activities and procedures of teachers in the implementation of the curriculum (LeCompte & Goetz, 1982; Dusenberget al., 2003). Because each method may reveal different aspects of empirical reality, the triangulation of these approaches was employed. This enabled me to arrive at supporting conclusions via different data sources (student and teacher surveys), thus enhancing the validity of the study (Creswell, 2003).

Again, the use of observation and questionnaire was appropriate in that, these tools helped me to assess the situation on the ground as far as the implementation of the SHS French curriculum was concerned. It also paved way for me to report on the current status of implementation strategies adopted by teachers in the selected schools for the study.

Population

The accessible population for the study consisted of all 21 French teachers and 467 students who were drawn from eleven (11) public SHSs in the Takoradi Metropolis. These teachers and students were considered the implementers and co-implementers respectively of the French curriculum whose responses were deemed relevant in interrogating the research questions and hypotheses of the study.

Sample and Sampling Procedure

I chose a sampling frame because studying a whole population in order to arrive at generalisations would be impractical. Some populations are so large that their characteristics cannot be measured, because, before the study would be completed, the population would have changed. A sample is a small proportion of a population selected for observation and analysis. By observing the characteristics of the sample, any researcher can make certain conclusions about the characteristics of the population from which it is drawn (Best, 1981; Creswell, 2003). With a sample, less time is required and answers are quickly produced

(Sarantakos, 1998). Finally, researches have shown that sampling is less demanding in terms of labour requirement, since it requires a small portion of the target population (Best & Kahn, 1993; Sarantakos, 1998; Creswell, 2003). These considerations informed my decision to sample from the student population instead of including all the students.

Many other researchers have contended that the sample size for any ideal study should be at least 10% of the population. For this study, the sample size of the student population was 29% of the entire student population; a figure that exceeds the minimum percentage for any ideal study (Creswell, 2003; Ary, et al., 2006).

Since all public SHSs in the Metropolis do not offer French, the purposive sampling technique was used to select only cases of schools that offer French (Patton, 2002; Johnson & Christensen, 2004). I used purposive sampling because schools needed to be selected on grounds of programme profiles. In purposive sampling, the researcher does not randomly select people to complete questionnaires or to be interviewed, but people who will best meet the purpose of the study are selected from a heterogeneous group (Baily, 1987; Creswell, 2003). Again, I used purposive sampling because it was the only technique that could help maximise chances of obtaining accurate information about the studied phenomenon since it relies on choosing those who both have the experience of the phenomenon and also the ability to communicate their experience on that phenomenon (Siegle, 1999b; Patton, 2002; Johnson & Christensen, 2004). I used this technique to select teachers and students in the schools that offer French.

Through the purposive sampling, seven (11) schools in the Metropolis, which comprised Ghana Secondary Technical School (GSTS), Takoradi SHS (TADISCO), St. Mary's SHS (Apowa), St. John's SHS, Fijai SHS, Sekondi College (SEKO), Arch-Bishop Porter Girls' SHS (ABPGS), Bompeh Secondary Technical School (BSTS), Adiembra SHS, Methodist SHS, and Ahantaman SHS (AHANSS) were selected for inclusion. Western Senior High Technical School, Takoradi Technical Institute (TTI) and Diabene Secondary Technical School were not included since they did not offer the French programme.

I used the proportional sampling technique to draw one hundred and thirty (136) students from the said schools for inclusion. Proportional sampling refers to a sampling procedure where objects to be included are drawn based on a determined proportional figure. This procedure in the first place, was to allow students in the selected public SHSs (in the Metropolis) equal and independent opportunity to be included in fair proportion for the study. This was due to differences in French students' enrollment figures in the schools. A proportion of 0.29 or 29% was used to sample the students. Gender was not a variable of interest to me given that my focus was on students' responses in general, irrespective of gender on the subject of study. The break down of schools, student population, teacher population and sampled subjects for the study is presented in Table 1.

Table 1: Breakdown of Student/Teacher Populations and their Samples

Schools	Teacher Population		Student Population		
	No.	(%)	No.	(%)	29% Sample
AHANSS	2	9.5	39	8.3	11
ABPGS	3	14.3	75	16.0	22
TADISCO	1	4.8	43	9.2	12
BSTS	3	14.3	70	15.0	20
SECKO	2	9.5	37	7.9	11
GSTS	1	4.8	20	4.3	6
ST. JOHN'S	2	9.5	23	4.9	7
FIJAI	1	4.8	41	8.8	12
METH. HIGH	2	9.5	65	14.0	19
ST. MARY'S	2	9.5	20	4.3	6
ADIEMBRA	2	9.5	34	7.3	10
Total	21	100	467	100	136

The selection of students was limited only to Form Three students. The choice of Form Three students was premised on the fact that these students were deemed to have studied French and have done approximately 420 hours a year, resulting in 1260 hours for the three years. I believe that these students were capable of providing valid and relevant responses regarding how their teachers were implementing the French curriculum. That is to say, being in Form Three, all

things being equal, the students have been living witnesses to how their teachers implemented the French programme. Having been part of the process for at least three years, the Form Three students would be better positioned to answer questions regarding the subject under study.

On the other hand, Forms One and Two students were excluded because they were considered not to have had enough experiences in a French class and therefore would be somehow deficient in providing valuable answers for the study. The Form Four students, obviously as a final year class, would be too busy preparing towards their 2012 West African Senior Secondary Certificate Examination (WASSCE) at the time students' questionnaire would be administered. So it was possible most of them might not avail themselves well to respond to the questionnaire, even though they would have been the best class to have been included in the study. For this reason, I decided to relieve them of the task of responding to the questionnaire for the study.

For the teacher survey, I used the census technique to select 21 teachers in the participating schools. Census in research work refers to the procedure that allows the researcher to include every body as subjects or respondents for a study (Hatch, 2002; Patton, 2002). It often includes all persons in a study irrespective of their capability to contribute substantially to the research work. The use of this technique has advantages and disadvantages. For instance, census can include a respondent who may not have the ability to provide genuine responses to enable the researcher delve into an issue of interest (Patton, 2002). However, its use also allows the researcher to undertake a study when the subjects for it are small in

number. In this study, the use of this technique was necessitated by insufficiency of SHS French teachers.

Instruments

Questionnaire and observation techniques (mixed method) were used to collect primary data for the study. These tools were the most highly recommended research instruments for finding out the degree of use of the fidelity approach in the implementation of an instructional programme (Fullan & Pomfret, 1977; Patton, 2002).

Questionnaire was found to be appropriate for the study because it could cover a large number of respondents as well as subjects in scattered locations such as the ones in this study. The use of questionnaire could also guarantee confidentiality of respondents since it is generally a self-report medium which elicits more truthful responses from respondents. However, the use of questionnaire, like other instruments, can have inherent problems. For instance, some of the questions on the questionnaire could be misinterpreted due to poor wording or differential meanings of terms (Patton, 2002). The respondents could also give socially accepted responses regarding what they think are the approaches being adopted in the implementation of the French curriculum, which could blur the genuineness of the real situation on the ground. A measure to avert this possible situation was pilot-testing of the instruments.

Structure of the Instrument

I designed two sets of questionnaire to enable me gather the necessary information from both teachers and students. The questionnaire was designed taking into consideration, the research questions and hypotheses. Information was elicited from both teachers and students to provide bases for answering the research questions and testing the hypotheses. The questionnaire for teachers was divided into four sections; each section had items, each of which helped to test the hypotheses.

The section 'A', sought to find out whether teachers had the requisite training to teach French. The items under this section included respondents' academic qualification, subjects of specialisation and number of years teachers may have been teaching.

Section 'B' contained items meant to obtain information on the extent to which teachers did implement the French curriculum with the fidelity. Section 'C' also sought their views on the degree to which they had acquainted themselves with the contents of the French curriculum. These items were designed on a five-point Likert scale ranging from 'a very great extent' to 'not at all'. The other items under this section sought responses that elicited the number of times in a year that teachers' were involved in French programmes such as in-service training, workshops on how to teach French, and their involvement in Francophonie celebrations and participation in activities of the Centres Régionaux pour l'Enseignement du Français (CREF) that could enhance the teaching of French.

Section 'D', the final section encapsulated items which elicited information on teachers' beliefs/perceptions about the characteristics of the French curriculum. The items elicited responses that bothered on the extent of teacher agreement on the explicitness or otherwise of the goals and objectives, subject matter content, activities and materials of the SHS French curriculum. The items were measured on a five-point scale, ranging from 'strongly agree' to 'strongly disagree'.

For the students' questionnaire, the items were divided into three distinct sections. In section 'A', the items spelt out the names of schools of the students and their form. Sections 'B' contained items that elicited information on students' perception of the extent to which French teachers employed the recommended teaching strategies in the classroom on a five-point Likert scale ranging from 'a very great extent' to 'not at all'. Again, this section contained items on the number of times teachers treated certain aspects of the syllabus. This was done on a five-point Likert scale ranging from 'more than three times' to 'nil'. The section closed with items on the extent to which students agreed to certain principles in language teaching. The items here were measured on a five-point scale ranging from 'strongly agree' to 'strongly disagree'. Section 'C' sought students' views about their knowledge on the extent to which their teachers used the recommended guidelines for testing students and the testing procedures involved.

The CECR observation guide consisted of four (4) sections (A to D). Sections A and B, titled 'Learning Organisation and Management' and 'Knowledge of Subject Matter' respectively comprised two questions on the

extent to which the teacher demonstrated six behaviours during the observed sessions. A five-point Likert scale ranging from ‘completely’ to ‘not applicable’ was used. Section C which was captioned ‘Teaching Style/ Method’ consisted of a question on the extent to which the observed teacher exhibited certain qualities co-terminus with fidelity implementation. The final section of the guide (Section D) which was titled ‘Instructional Strategies’ contained a question that bothered on the percentage of time the observed teacher spent on the teaching strategies in language learning. Here, a percentage range from 0% to 75-100% was used.

Validity and Reliability of Instruments

Since according to Fraenkel and Wallen (2000), pilot-testing is so crucial; I therefore pilot-tested the instruments in three randomly selected SHSs in the Cape Coast Metropolis from 26th September to 30th September, 2011. The exercise was aimed at establishing the internal consistency and reliability of the items on the questionnaire. Before the pilot-testing, an introductory letter from Department of Arts and Social Sciences Education (DASSE) was sent to the authorities of the selected schools (Oguaa Sec. Tech., Adisadel College and Ghana National College) to seek approval to undertake the activity. After the approvals were given, I explained the content of the questionnaire to the respondents especially the student respondents, assuring them of anonymity. I then proceeded to administer the questionnaires to five teachers (5) and twenty (20) Form Three students. A four-day period was then given to them to complete the questionnaire after which I went for them.

Pilot-testing of instruments for the teachers' yielded reliability co-efficient of .847 whereas those of the students yielded .692 co-efficient of reliability. An overall average reliability coefficient of .77 was obtained for both teacher and student questionnaires. With the approval of my supervisors, certain modifications and minor alterations were made to the questionnaire to ensure their face and content validity before the actual data collection process. I also submitted the items to experts in the area of curriculum studies for vetting and approval. I showed the items to some of my colleagues for further advice in ensuring their content validity.

The questionnaire was triangulated with an observation technique known as the Center for Educator Compensation Reform (CECR) guide. CECR, a teacher performance observation guide, was awarded to Westat - in partnership with Learning Point Associates, Synergy Enterprises Incorporated, Vanderbilt University, and the University of Wisconsin - by the U.S. Department of Education in October 2006. The primary purpose of CECR was to support the Teacher Incentive Fund (TIF) grantees with their curriculum implementation efforts through the provision of technical assistance and the development and dissemination of timely resources in teaching. The observation was employed because it allowed for the description of teaching and learning behaviour as they naturally occurred (McMillan, 1996). I used this technique because I believe it was the most vigorous technique in the determination of the degree of implementation of an instructional programme.

Validity and reliability in classroom observations was concerned with the consistency between occasions of observation (Allwright & Bailey, 1991; Weir & Roberts, 1994). Seliger and Shohamy (1989) pointed out consistency as the essential criterion of reliability in data collection, analysis and interpretation. Therefore, I employed the intra-rater comparison approach in the data collection for the observation. Intra-rater or intra-observer reliability compares data obtained by the same observer on different occasions of the same event. To explore this reliability, I randomly re-rated the written notes after a period of time had elapsed from the initial categorisations of the responses.

Data Collection Procedure

In the actual data collection, introductory letters were sent to the schools' authorities for approval. After the approvals were obtained, I introduced myself to the heads and staff of the concerned schools; I briefed the respondents on the rationale for the study and appealed for their maximum cooperation during the data collection period. This ensured a rapport and a collegiality between me and the respondents. I then administered the questionnaires to students. To ensure high return rate, the questionnaires were distributed to the students (in the boarding schools) during the second break but were collected the next day. This move was aimed at allowing the students enough time to complete the questionnaire items. Again, this helped to prevent biases related to my presence.

On the other hand, the questionnaires of the day students were administered during the first break. The students were then given some time to

complete the questionnaire. They were asked to complete the items during the two break periods. I finally waited and collected the questionnaire at the close of days. This act was to prevent students from sending the material home since I could not guarantee their presence in school the next day. The exercise was very successful

The questionnaire for teachers was administered within a two-week period. I went round the schools at the end of the two-week period to collect the completed questionnaire. I however sent a reminder note after one week to remind them of the need to complete the material on or before the deadline. This was a measure taken to obtain high return rate of the questionnaire.

Through a simple random sampling technique, three schools (three teachers) were selected and included in a classroom non-participant observation. The rationale for the use of this technique was to allow the purposively sampled schools an equal opportunity and chance of being included in the observation session. The schools were: Fijai SHS; GSTS and Methodist High.

I observed the lessons of teachers in these schools to ascertain the effectiveness of teaching of the French programme. A teacher each, who taught in these schools became automatic cases to be observed. I schooled the teachers concerned on the need for them to do their normal classroom teaching. I gave them the assurance that the results of the observation would be kept only for the purposes of research and nothing else. This provided a reason for them to do their usual normal teaching.

The entire exercise of data collection was done within a five-week period, from 17th October to 25th November, 2011. The observation began two weeks

after I had surveyed the various institutions with survey instruments. That exercise took two weeks to be completed after which an extra three weeks was used for the observation. The whole data collection exercise began in October and ended in November, 2011.

The CECR observation guide was used based on fidelity dimensions in implementation. I stuck to the type of teaching behaviour teachers demonstrated during the lessons. The three teachers were observed on three separate periods of 80 minutes per week. One class from each school was randomly selected for the observation. For each period of observation, I occupied the back seat of the classrooms and recorded by hand on the CECR observation sheet, what was really demonstrated by the teachers. The rapport, I had created with teachers and students prior to, and during the administration of the questionnaire helped in creating an enabling atmosphere for the teachers and their students to interact freely and confidently. I did not interrupt the class by asking questions or attempting to correct mistakes the teachers or students committed. The observation was done following a thorough procedure which has been described.

Observation Procedures

People do not often do what they say they do and it is for this reason that observation becomes an important tool to collect information about people. The only way to get direct information on classroom events, on the reality of programme implementation was by observation (Weir & Roberts, 1994). Kerr,

Kent and Lam (1985) purported that observation can provide detailed information which cannot be produced by any other methods and this explains why I chose it.

The study explored fidelity implementation of the SHS French programme by teachers. In order to achieve this, I observed three teachers who were sampled randomly from the selected schools for the study. The primary aim of the exercise was to ascertain the extent to which teachers of French were translating the content into meaningful learning experiences with fidelity. As has been said, there is always the possibility of gaps between what is theoretically intended and what is practically implemented. To uncover the factors that impede faithful implementation and to triangulate the findings from the teachers and student surveys, I observed the three teachers. Table 3 presents a breakdown of schools observed with periods and (dates) of the observations.

Table 3: Distribution of Schools Included in the Observation

Schools	Sch. Code	Observation Dates	Periods
1. FIJAI	A	7 th – 11 th Nov., 2011	7
2. GSTS	B	14 th – 18 th Nov., 2011	7
3. METH. HIGH	C	21 st – 25 th Nov., 2011	7
Total		7th – 25th Nov., 2011	21

I designed an observation guide in consonance with the CECR Observation guide to facilitate the sessions. This guide comprised six questions which touched on the learning organisation and management. The next section focused on

teachers' knowledge of their subject matter. This necessarily reflects in certain behaviours that the teacher may exhibit in the class delivery process – the extent of demonstrating mastery of curriculum content. The third section focused on the teaching style/method and the final section focused on the percentage of instructional time that teachers spent on teaching strategies.

I chose the CECR guide because it embraced more communicative orientations with regard to the quality of interactions between students and teachers whilst appraising teachers' effectiveness in the class (Kerr, et al., 1985).

I adopted what Patton (2002) referred to as 'unobstructive observations' or non-participant observation. Out of research ethics, I first informed the three French teachers in schools A, B and C of the research purpose even though they had earlier been surveyed. Their consent was obtained to enable me enter their classrooms to collect the data. I then worked out an observation schedule with each of them. Final arrangements were confirmed about the location of each class period and the content of their instruction. The observation lasted for three weeks, seven teaching periods of forty (40) minutes each. All teachers were teaching third year French students. I focused my attention on the normal teaching practice of the teachers. Altogether, twelve (12) classroom observations were carried out within the three schools during the three-week period.

Scoring of items

I used two scaled items like the Likert type items in the design of the questionnaire. The reason for using this was to allow for points to be assigned to

the various responses. Measures of central tendency (means), variability (standard deviations) and correlation were also calculated (Ary, et al., 2006).

Most of the items in sections A, B, C, and D of the teachers' questionnaire were scaled items that asked respondents to rate the intensity, frequency and degree of fidelity of teachers' implementation. A scoring key was prepared to help assign points to the responses. Section 'B' asked questions on the extent to which teachers implemented the curriculum with the fidelity indicators. These items were graded on a five-point scale ranging from 'a very great extent' to 'not at all'. A numerical value of 1 was assigned to 'not at all', 2 was assigned to 'little extent', 3 to 'to some extent', 4 to 'to great extent' and 5 to 'to a very great extent'. With this particular set of questions, the ideas of Scheirer, et al. (2007), was applied in assigning degrees of fidelity to all the points on the interval scale. For instance '5' represented 'VHF', '4' for 'HF', '3' was 'MF', '2' was denoted by 'LF' whereas '1' represented 'VLF' to allow for easy analysis. One part of section C contained items that sought teachers' responses on their degree of acquaintance with content of the syllabus. The other part elicited responses on the number of times teachers have participated in planned programmes in a year. The items here were graded on a five-point scale ranging from 'more than three times' to 'nil'. A numerical value of 1 was assigned to 'nil', 2 was assigned to 'once', 3 to 'twice', 4 to 'three times' and 5 to 'more than three times'.

Under section 'D', statements on teachers' beliefs/perception about the properties of the French curriculum were solicited on a scale which ranged from 'strongly agree' to 'strongly disagree'. Numerical values of 1 was assigned to

‘strongly disagree’, 2 for ‘disagree’, 3 for ‘undecided’, 4 for ‘agree’ and 5 for ‘strongly agree’.

Data Analysis

A descriptive sample survey method was used to gather data. I used the same descriptive method, making use of the mean, median, mode standard deviation, range etc. to gain a sense of what respondents’ response patterns looked like. Since descriptive surveys do not typically require complex statistical analysis, I used the tools of central tendency to analyse (Ary et al., 2006). Also, for the student surveys, these same tools (frequencies, percentages, and means) were used to compute the major variables. This process enabled me to check mistakes in the data entry by identifying outliers from the display of data output. The survey data were also subjected to a number of statistical analyses intended to address three of the hypotheses in the study.

On the teacher surveys, frequencies and percentages and mean average rating schemes were employed to answer the research questions whereas the Spearman’s Moment Correlation Test (r) and a Chi square Test (χ^2) were run using the Predictive Analytic Soft Ware (PASW) to test the hypotheses. The correlation was used to determine the relationship between the independent variables and the dependent variable and the Chi Square analysis was used to find out whether there are significant differences between teachers’ gender and their fidelity implementation. The hypotheses were tested at .05 level of significance or at 95% certainty of prediction.

Analysis of the observation data mainly involved readings descriptions of my written field notes from the observed lessons. For the observation guide, I conducted the analysis as follows. In the first stage, I listened to all the lessons and took down written notes. In the second stage, I reviewed my detailed field notes, determined the average ratings based on the checklists and identified the themes that emerged. I described and supported these themes with evidence from the written field notes. Since I did the observation for three weeks, the average ratings on the checklists for all the sessions observed were used for the final analysis. I converted the qualitative data into quantitative data and combined the ratings of all the days' observation that was done. I then struck the average for all the items school by school. The findings provided the basis for the description of emerging themes on fidelity. In the third stage, through analyses of lessons on the field notes, I determined French teachers' approach to implementing the curriculum by their degree of adherence to the teaching procedures of the syllabus.

To provide a clear picture of my overall research activities, I presented a summary in Table 2, in which I displayed the three research questions to be answered and the three hypotheses to be tested. I included information on the focus of the data collection, relevant information such as who participated in the study, what instruments were used in the gathering of data.

Table 2: Summary of Research Focus, Participants, Instruments, Data Collection Schedule and Test Statistic used

Research Focus (Questions and Hypotheses)	Participants	Instruments	Data Collection Time Line	Statistical Tool
1. What levels of qualification and experience have teachers attained to effectively implement the French syllabus?		Survey	17 th – 31 st Oct., 2011	Frequencies, percentages and means
2. What are teachers' beliefs/perceptions about the content of the SHS French syllabus?		Survey	17 th – 31 st Oct., 2011	Frequencies, percentages and means
3. To what extent are French teachers strictly adhering to fidelity principles in the implementation of the French syllabus?		Surveys Observation	17 th – 25 th Oct., 2011 31 st Oct., – 25 th Nov., 2011	Frequencies, percentages and means
1. There is a relationship between teachers' acquaintance with the content of the syllabus and their fidelity implementation.		Survey	17 th – 25 th Oct., 2011	Pearson's Product Moment Correlation (r)
2. There is a correlation between teachers' participation in planned professional programmes and their fidelity implementation.		Survey	17 th - 25 th Oct., 2011	Pearson's Product Moment Correlation (r)
3. There is a significant difference between gender and fidelity implementation of teachers.		Survey	17 th – 25 th Oct., 2011	Chi Square (χ^2)

Note: Only alternate hypotheses are stated



CHAPTER FOUR

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Overview

The purpose of this study was to determine the degree of fidelity with which teachers implemented the French curriculum and with a view to also determining teacher-factors that could promote fidelity implementation at the SHS. In doing this, statistical tools such as frequencies, means, percentages, Pearson Moment Correlation, Chi Square were used. The various statistical tools were used to help answer the research questions or test the research hypotheses.

In this chapter, the collected data are presented and analysed. The findings are then discussed around the formulated research hypotheses. Attempts are also made to as much as possible, relate findings and discussions to alternative or supportive views as reviewed in the literature, and other sources read or known.

The analysis focuses on the respondents' responses to items that are relevant to the hypotheses that guided the study. Frequency tables are constructed on the student response data. An average (mean) rating for each response was also calculated to support the analysis. To facilitate scoring and analysis of student data, I used the values 5, 4, 3, 2, 1 (the 5 point Likert scale) to do it effectively.

Background Information of Respondents

My findings were based on the analysis of the data collected through the teacher and student surveys. The student survey items were aimed at either confirming or disconfirming the teacher responses on the subject of fidelity. For the student surveys, scoring was done using frequencies, percentages and mean rating for each specific item. Out of the 136 student questionnaires administered, 129 (95%) were retrieved, representing a relatively high return rate. For the teacher surveys, all the 21 teachers, (100%) completed and returned the questionnaires. The final distribution of completed questionnaires retrieved from both the teacher and student respondents are presented in Table 4.

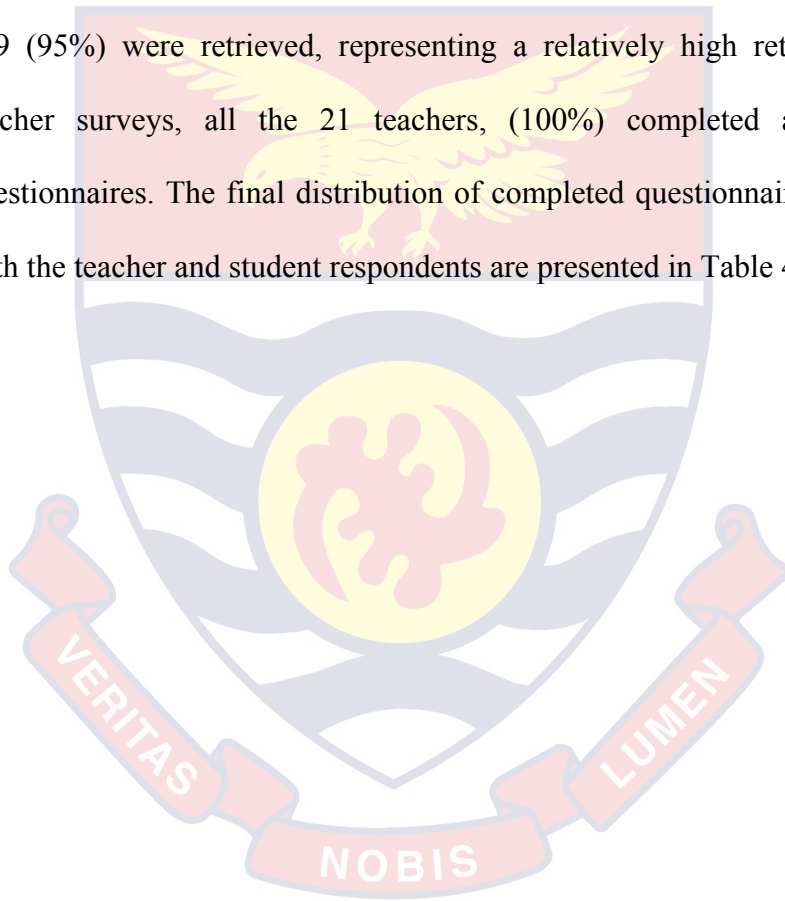


Table 4: Distribution of Questionnaires Received from Teacher/ Student Respondents

Schools	Teachers		Students	
	N	(%)	N	(%)
AHANSS	2	9.5	9	6.9
ABPGS	3	14.3	22	17.1
TADISCO	1	4.8	12	9.3
BSTS	3	14.3	18	14.0
GSTS	1	4.8	6	4.7
SECKO	2	9.5	11	8.5
ST. JOHN'S	2	9.5	7	5.4
FIJAI	1	4.8	11	7.8
ST. MARY'S	2	9.5	6	4.7
METH. HIGH	2	9.5	19	14.7
ADIEMBRA	2	9.5	9	6.9
TOTAL	21	100	129	100

Table 4 provided individual school percentages for both teacher and student respondents. For instance, the only school that presented a high percentage of both teacher and student respondents is ABPGS. For this school, three teachers (14.3%) and 22 (17.1%) students completed the questionnaires. The schools with the least number of students included in the study were GSTS and St. Mary's Boys SHS. Also from the table, the only schools with the highest

number of French teachers were BSTS and ABPGS. The distributions of teacher respondents by qualification and experience were also presented in Table 5.

Demographic Description of Teacher Participants

This section provided descriptions on the background information about teachers who participated in the study. The data show the profiles of teacher respondents. Table 5 presented data on gender, educational attainment of teachers and their teaching experience.

Table 5: Demographic Distribution of Teacher Survey Respondents

Variables	N = 21	%
Gender	N = 21	100
Male	19	90.5
Female	2	9.5
Educational Qualification	N = 21	100
1 st Degree	18	85.7
2 nd Degree	3	14.3
Teaching Experience	N = 21	100
1 – 3 years	2	9.5
4 – 6 years	3	14.3
7 – 9 years	4	19.0
10 – 12 years	4	19.0
12 years and above	8	38.1

Teachers' Qualification and Teaching Experience

“What levels of qualification and teaching experience have teachers attained to enable them effectively implement the French syllabus?” Table 5 helped to answer the research question one.

Table 5 showed the distribution of teacher respondents by qualification. A majority, 18 (85.7%) of them were first degree holders whereas three (14.3%) had their second degrees. The implication here was that all the teachers who were included in the survey had the required qualification to help interrogate the research hypotheses. Table 5 as well portrayed data on the number of years teachers (teaching experience) had taught French. The significance of teaching experience cannot be underestimated in fidelity implementation. With teachers' teaching experience, a majority, eight (38.1%) had taught French for more than twelve years. Two (9.5%) had taught the subject for between one and three years, whereas three (14.3%) had taught for between four to six years. Four (19.0%) had taught the subject between seven and nine years and four had also taught between ten and twelve years. For this, it can be said that most of the teachers who were surveyed had taught French for quite a long time. Table 5 depicted only five (23.9%) had taught French for between one and six years. The rest, 16 (76.1%) had taught it for over six years. By this statistics, I acknowledged that I was dealing with teachers with a lot of teaching experience who were capable of revealing the approach they used in translating the content of the syllabus into learning experiences for students.

This finding concurs with an earlier one done by Hanushek (2003). His research posited that teacher experience had a more positive relationship with fidelity implementation, and therefore was crucial to implementation (Hanushek, 2003). Again, the finding satisfies the idea that the qualification of a teacher determines his/her competence in the classroom. For instance, Penuel, Fisherman, Yamaguichi and Gallagher (2007) came out to state that the educational attainment of teachers affects their class performance. By this statistics, I acknowledged that I was dealing with teachers with a lot of teaching experiences and who were capable of teaching or translating the content of the syllabus with fidelity into learning experiences for SHS French students. In terms of teaching experience, 12 (57.1%) of them have taught French for over ten years. As a result, the majority of teachers could be said to have got the necessary experience and exposure which can propel them to implement the French programme with fidelity. Hanushek, Kain, Brien and Rivkin (2005) however cautioned that while experience can bring important benefits to the job of teaching (implementation), owing to greater maturity in the job and increased levels of on-the-job learning, it can also create problems of inertia, lack of innovation and resistance to change which may be unlikely to occur with a younger teacher population. The finding confirms the work by Reschly and Gresham (2006) that there is no significant difference in fidelity implementation based on teaching experience. In contrast however, Ruiz-Promo and Li (2003) reported in an earlier research that increased experience promotes fidelity implementation.

The importance of studying teachers' qualification and experience cannot be over emphasised because it provides a measure about their classroom effectiveness. For instance, Odeyeji (2005) report revealed that qualification and experience were major predictors of teachers' fidelity implementation. Hanushek et al. (2005) also pursued a nonparametric investigation of experience and found that experience affected fidelity in only the first few years of teaching. Specifically, they mentioned that teachers in their first and, to a somewhat lesser extent, their second year tended to perform significantly worse in implementation in the classroom.

From here, it was important to also look at teacher beliefs/perceptions to answer the second and third research questions. In this regard, Tables 6, 7, and 8 were used. These tables consisted of teacher responses on their beliefs/perceptions, their adherence to fidelity indicators and their responses on use of teaching principles.

Teachers' Beliefs/Perceptions about the Content of the Syllabus

“What are teachers' beliefs and perceptions about the content of the SHS French syllabus?”

In answering this question, teachers' views on the subject were presented in Table 5 to ascertain teachers' beliefs/perceptions about the SHS French programme. Only relevant items on the questionnaire were commented on.

Table 6: Distribution of Teacher Beliefs/Perceptions about the SHS French Syllabus

BELIEFS/ PERP.	RATINGS					TOTAL N (%)	MEAN RATING N / (%)
	5 N (%)	4 N (%)	3 N (%)	2 N (%)	1 N (%)		
Understand rationale	6(28.6)	1(4.8)	2(9.5)	6(28.6)	6(28.6)	21(100)	2.8
Syllabus content too high and difficult	9(42.9)	5(23.8)	3(14.3)	3(14.3)	1(4.8)	21(100)	3.9
Overloaded activities	9(42.9)	8(38.1)	2(9.5)	2(9.5)	0(0)	21(100)	4.1
Enough communicative activities	6(28.6)	2(9.5)	7(33.3)	2(9.5)	4(19.0)	21(100)	3.2
Teach other subject	2(9.5)	0(0)	7(33.3)	6(28.6)	6(28.6)	21(100)	2.3
Stress of rushing lessons	7(33.3)	4(19.0)	6(28.6)	3(14.3)	1(4.8)	21(100)	2.6
Syllabus not well designed	7(33.3)	4(19.0)	4(19.0)	5(23.8)	1(4.6)	21(100)	3.5
Periods are not enough to teach	2(9.5)	0(0)	0(0)	7(33.3)	12(57.1)	21(100)	1.7
Syllabus structure enhances learning	9(42.9)	0(0)	8(38.1)	2(9.5)	2(9.5)	21(100)	3.6

Table 6 showed teachers' responses on their beliefs and perceptions about the French syllabus. On whether teachers understood the rationale for teaching the syllabus, an average rating of 2.8 was obtained. This showed that a majority of them were undecided on the issue. On whether they perceived the subject matter content to be too high and therefore difficult for students, a mean rating of 4.0 was obtained. This implied that a majority agreed with the assertion. The mean rating of 4.0 also showed that the majority agreed that activities in the syllabus were overloaded. Also, a mean rating of 3.0 showed that teachers were undecided on whether they believed the activities in the syllabus were communicative enough. Most of the teachers agreed that the syllabus has not been well designed. This item received an average rating of 3.5. The finding here resonates ideas from Elmore & Sykes (1992) who contended that teachers in a bid to overcome their ill perception may resort to redefining, reinterpreting, and modifying their teaching behaviour based on their classroom realities without much regard for fidelity. They could also welcome the designed programme but still find it extremely difficult to put it into practice, and eventually choose not to implement it at all in some cases. In fact, centralised curriculum development often brings to teachers some frustrations when they attempt to put the programme into actual practice (Elmore, et al., 1992).

Table 6 further revealed that a majority disagreed that the periods allotted for French on the time table are enough to teach all topics in the syllabus. On the last issue, a majority with a mean rating of 3.6 agreed with the statement that the structure of the syllabus did not enhance student learning.

It appeared that because teachers had indicated earlier that they were not involved in national curriculum programmes, they perceived the curriculum not to have been designed well. Sometimes, the consequence of this perception was their failure to implement curriculum content to the letter. Many policies were impossible to implement because they were often times too ambiguous (Morris & Scott, 2003). Spillane, Reiser and Reimer (2002) concurred, saying that one of the reasons for implementation failure might be caused by policymakers formulating unclear and inconsistent directives regarding the behaviours desired from implementers. I cannot agree much with Spillane et al. in that when policy directives pair a clear implementation goal with helpful procedures, the policy was more likely to be implemented. From the findings; it was obvious that teachers perceived there was something wrong with the way the programme had been designed. With similar views, Shavelson and Stern (1981) and Kagan (1992) also asserted that what teachers did as their classroom practice was shaped by what they thought, and that their perceptions and beliefs served as filters through which instructional judgments and decisions were made.

In sum, to answer research question two, it was concluded that French teachers, per the findings, believed and perceived something to be wrong with the designed SHS French curriculum.

Teachers' Adherence to Fidelity Principles

“To what extent are French teachers strictly adhering to fidelity principles in the implementation of the French syllabus?”

Table 7 presented views of teachers on fidelity indicators and how they applied themselves strictly to these indicators in the classroom.

Table 7: Distribution of Teacher Responses on Fidelity Indicators

FIDELITY INDICATORS	RATINGS					TOTAL N (%)	MEAN RATING N / (%)
	5 N / (%)	4 N (%)	3 N (%)	2 N (%)	1 N (%)		
Content coverage	0(0)	11(52.4)	8(38.1)	2(9.5)	0(0)	21(100)	3.7
Following periods	0(0)	9(42.9)	10(47.6)	2(9.5)	0(0)	21(100)	3.3
Use of guidelines	0(0)	9(42.9)	11(52.0)	2(9.5)	0(0)	21(100)	3.4
Communicative approach	0(0)	8(38.1)	11(52.4)	2(9.5)	0(0)	21(100)	2.7
Teaching strategies	0(0)	8(38.1)	11(52.4)	1(4.8)	1(4.8)	21(100)	2.8

Table 7 portrayed teachers' views on fidelity indicators in the classroom. On their adherence to content coverage, a majority with a mean rating of 3.7 responded that they adhered to a great extent, to ensuring that all content is covered before students sit for their final examination. On the issue of use of guidelines for

continuous assessment, a mean rating of 3.4 was gained. By implication, most of the teachers indicated that to some extent, they strictly used the guidelines. On applying the principles of the communicative approach, a mean rating of 2.7 was obtained. This implied that the majority responded that to some extent, they adhered to the communicative approach principles in the syllabus.

An overall mean rating of 2.7 indicates that as far as degree of fidelity was concerned, implementation was approximately moderate. This is so because even though the finding falls within Dane and Schneider's (1998) work on fidelity dimension/indicators, it still fell short of all the indicators. This implies that teachers implemented the SHS French programme but with moderate fidelity. Since teachers did not fully satisfy the indicators outlined by Dane, et al., (1998), fidelity is at a minimal level. Inferentially, the results suggested generally that teachers' implementation of the French curriculum could best be described as 'moderate' from the perspective of its degree (Scheirer, et al., 2007).

As a matter of fact, since students 'lived' with teachers in the classroom and knew what went on there, their responses were used to determine teachers' fidelity approach to implementing the curriculum. The findings were presented in the subsequent tables. Interestingly, students' response on fidelity revealed similar results as the teachers' own. The results were presented and discussed in Table 8.

Table 8: Students’ Responses on Teachers’ Adherence to Teaching Principles

	RATINGS					TOTAL	MEAN
	5	4	3	2	1		
TEACHING PRINCIPLES	N (%)	N (%)	N (%)	N (%)	N (%)	N (%)	N / (%)
Setting exercises after teaching.	10(7.8)	16(12.4)	28(21.7)	36(28.0)	39(30.2)	129(100)	2.3
Following textbook strictly.	11(8.5)	13(10.0)	32(24.8)	33(25.6)	40(31.0)	129(100)	2.4
Teaching a topic before proceeding to teach other ones.	18(14.0)	9 (7.0)	21(16.2)	30(23.2)	51(39.5)	129(100)	2.3
Using French as medium of instruction.	13(10.1)	10(7.7)	39(30.2)	25(19.4)	42(32.6)	129(100)	2.4
Using both English and French as media of instruction.	44(34.1)	37(28.7)	31(24.0)	13(10.0)	4 (3.1)	129(100)	3.8

Table 8 represented students’ responses on their teachers’ adherence to teaching principles of the syllabus. Only the relevant items on the questionnaire were discussed. On using only French as a medium of instruction, a mean rating figure of 2.4 depicts that a majority of the students disagreed that teachers used

only French as a medium of instruction in class. On the issue of whether teachers used both French and English as a medium of instruction, a mean rating of 3.8, showed that a majority agreed that their teachers used both English and French as a medium of instruction. From the discussions, it was obvious that French teachers preferred to use both English and French as the media of instruction in class. Teachers did not violate principles of the communicative approach since the approach allowed for code mixing.

Students' responses on teachers' use of teaching strategies that enhanced the development of listening and reading comprehension skills were sought. The outcome of the survey has been displayed and discussed in Table 9.

Table 9: Students' Responses on Teachers' use of Strategies that Develop Listening/Reading Comprehension Skills

STRATEGIES	RATINGS					TOTAL N (%)	MEAN RATING N (%)
	5 N (%)	4 N (%)	3 N (%)	2 N (%)	1 N (%)		
Silent Reading	48(37.2)	39(30.2)	17(13.2)	18(14.0)	7 (5.4)	129(100)	3.8
Oral Reading	55(42.6)	49(38.0)	11 (8.5)	9 (7.0)	5 (3.9)	129(100)	3.0
Linking comp.	1(0.8)	3 (2.3)	25(19.4)	28(21.7)	72(55.8)	129(100)	1.7
Identification	2(1.6)	2(1.6)	19(14.7)	64(49.6)	42(32.6)	129(100)	1.9

As shown in Table 9, students' responses on the strategies produced diverse results. On silent reading, a mean rating of 3.8 shows that the majority of

the students intimated that to a greater degree, teachers used it to develop the above skills. On oral reading (what is termed as “*lecture à haute voix*”), a mean rating of 3.0 was obtained. This means that a majority said oral reading was used by their teachers.

Deductively, one can say that the students portrayed that teachers often used ‘silent reading’ and ‘oral reading’ in class as opposed to linking comprehension to literature lessons and identification of literary devices as strategies in developing listening and reading comprehension skills. Students’ responses on their teachers’ use of teaching strategies that enhance the development of oral/written skills were sought. The outcome of the survey has been displayed and discussed in Table 10.

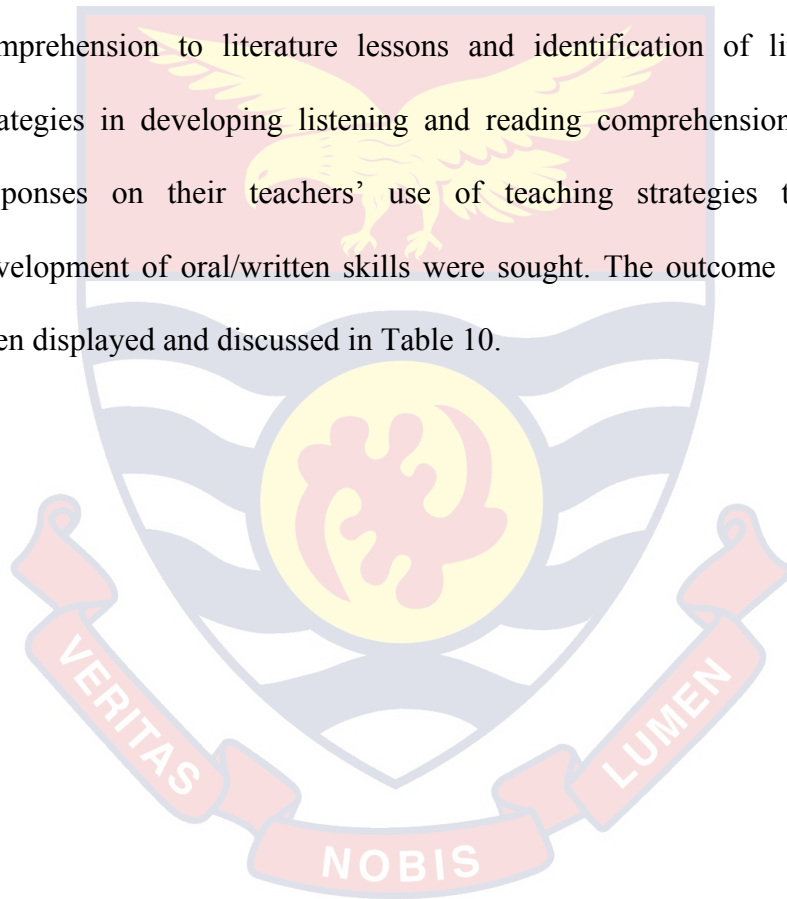


Table 10: Students’ Responses on Teachers’ use of Strategies that Develop Oral / Written Skills

STRATEGIES	RATINGS					TOTAL N (%)	MEAN RATING N / (%)
	5 N (%)	4 N (%)	3 N (%)	2 N (%)	1 N (%)		
Conversation	46(35.6)	46(35.6)	29(22.5)	1 (0.8)	7 (5.4)	129(100)	4.0
Dialogue	10 (7.8)	15(11.6)	33.(25.0)	41(31.8)	30(23.2)	129(100)	2.5
Pair drills	5 (3.9)	18(14.0)	6 (4.6)	16(12.4)	84(65.1)	129(100)	1.8
Substitution drills	15(11.6)	13(10.0)	4 (3.1)	35(27.1)	62(48.0)	129(100)	2.3
Blank-space filling	66(51.1)	29(22.4)	12 (9.3)	18(14.0)	4 (3.1)	129(100)	4.0
Discussion	43(33.3)	49(38.0)	23 (17.8)	13(10.1)	1 (0.8)	129(100)	3.7
Questions and answers	28(21.7)	50(38.8)	45 (34.9)	0 (0%)	6 (4.6)	129(100)	3.8
Debates	10 (7.8)	7 (5.4)	21 (16.2)	54(41.9)	37(28.7)	129(100)	2.2
Writing compositions	53(41.1)	35(27.1)	19 (14.7)	16(12.1)	6 (4.6)	129(100)	3.9
Story telling	3 (2.3)	2 (1.6)	17 (13.2)	44(34.1)	63(48.8)	129(100)	1.7
Looking up definitions	58(50.0)	49(38.0)	14 (10.8)	1 (0.8)	7 (5.4)	129(100)	4.2
Summary writing	0 (0)	2 (1.6)	29 (22.4)	45(34.9)	53(41.1)	129(100)	2.0
Pronunciation drill	40(31.0)	43(43.3)	31 (24.0)	11 (8.5)	4 (3.1)	129(100)	3.8
Poetry recitals	1 (0.8)	2 (1.6)	18 (14.0)	42(32.5)	66(51.1)	129(100)	1.7
Dramatisation	1 (0.8)	4 (3.1)	9 (7.0)	37(28.7)	78(60.4)	129(100)	1.5

As shown in Table 10, students expressed dissenting views on the strategies that develop their oral/written skills. With the use of conversation, a mean rating of 4.0 was obtained. This implied that a majority responded that to a great extent, teachers used conversation. This finding contrasts a work conducted by Arthur (1999) in Ghana, which indicated that the majority of teachers did not plan their lessons within the framework of the syllabus. Here, it was obvious that teachers emphasised ‘conversation’ as the syllabus prescribes. On the use of

dialogue, a majority with a mean rating of 2.5 said their teachers used it to some extent. On the use of discussions, a majority, with a mean rating of 3.7 intimated that teachers used it to a great extent. This finding disconfirms Arthur's (1999) project finding which asserted that teachers tended to avoid the teaching-learning strategies suggesting high pupil activities such as discussions

Also, on writing compositions, the mean rating of 3.9 indicated that a majority of the students were of the view that to a greater extent, teachers made them write compositions. This outcome is in contrast with a similar work done by Arthur (1999) which revealed that written exercises were less frequently assigned by the majority of the SHS Core English language teachers in most of the content areas.

Students' responses were sought on how their teachers frequently used some aspects of language. Data on the outcome of the survey has been displayed and discussed in Table 11. Here again, only relevant items on the questionnaire were commented upon.

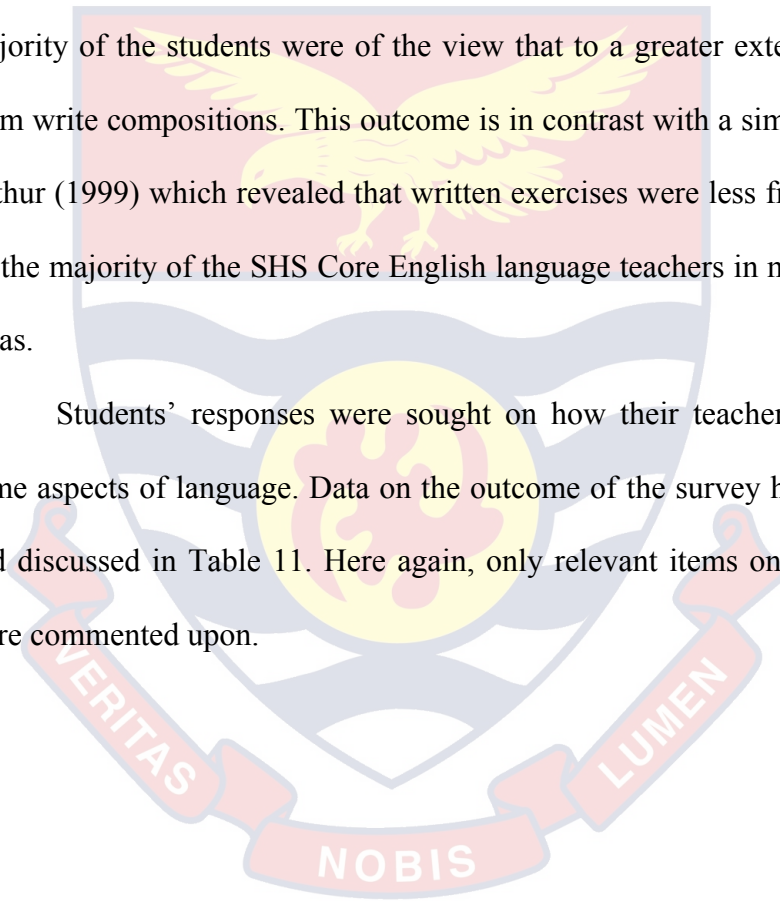


Table 11: Students' Responses on how Frequent Teachers Employ the Aspects of Language

	RATINGS					TOTAL	MEAN RATING
	5	4	3	2	1		
LANG.COMPO.	N / (%)	N (%)	N (%)	N (%)	N (%)	N (%)	N / (%)
Reading composition.	44(34.1)	44(34.1)	22(17.1)	17(13.1)	2(1.6)	129(100)	3.9
Listening composition.	36(28.0)	34(26.3)	28(21.7)	23(17.8)	8(6.2)	129(100)	3.5
Grammar	47(36.4)	35(27.1)	23(17.8)	15(11.6)	9(7.0)	129(100)	3.7
Vocabulary development.	19(14.7)	29(22.4)	46(35.7)	32(24.8)	3(2.3)	129(100)	3.2
Spoken French	47(36.4)	39(30.2)	30(23.2)	11 (8.5)	2(1.6)	129(100)	3.9
Essay writing	51(39.5)	36(28.0)	21(16.3)	16(12.4)	5 (3.9)	129(100)	3.9
Summary	2 (1.6)	7 (5.4)	18(14.0)	38(29.4)	64(49.6)	129(100)	1.8
Literature	1 (0.8)	5 (3.9)	19(14.7)	31(24.0)	73(56.6)	129(100)	1.7

Table 11 presented students' views on the frequency with which their teachers made use of certain aspects of the French language in a month. On comprehension, a mean rating of 3.9 was obtained which indicates that most of the students saw their teachers to be using comprehension three times in a month. The fact that teachers employed these aspects of language meant they were conscious about what the syllabus prescribes. The syllabus itself stated that the

use of knowledge was dialogue and the construction of original sentence. The rest - conversation drills, pair drills, competition drills, substitution drills and blank-space filling also constituted knowledge and understanding (Teaching Syllabus for French, 2010).

The mean rating obtained on the use of listening comprehension in a month was 3.5. The figure revealed that a majority agreed that teachers used listening comprehension at least three times in a month.

On grammar, 47 (36.4%) of the students reported that their teachers used it more than three times. Then 35 (27.1%) said their teachers used it three times. However, 23 (17.8%) indicated that teachers used it twice even though 15 (11.6%) admitted teachers used it only once. On grammar, 3.7 mean rating was obtained. It was clear from the figure that the majority thought their teachers used grammar more than three times. With regard to vocabulary development, a mean rating of 3.2 was suggestive that a majority of the students agreed that teachers at least used vocabulary two times in a month. On the use of spoken French (expression oral), a mean rating of 3.9 indicated that teachers used spoken French at least three times in a month during teaching.

Similarly, a mean rating of 3.9 was gained on essay writing. The figure suggested that a majority of the students opinionated that teachers used essay writing at least three times in a month. For summary, a mean rating of 1.8 shows that a majority of them said their teachers used summary about only once in a month. With teaching literature, a mean rating of 1.7 suggests that the majority responded that their teachers taught it once in a month. It became necessary for

students to respond to teachers' use of guidelines for continuous assessment.

Their responses were displayed and discussed in Table 12.

Table 12: Students' Responses on Teachers' use of the Guidelines for Continuous Assessment

GUIDELINES	RATINGS					TOTAL	MEAN
	5 N (%)	4 N (%)	3 N (%)	2 N (%)	1 N (%)	N (%)	RATING N (%)
Practical Work	29(22.4)	25(19.3)	51(39.5)	13(10.0)	11(8.5)	129(100)	3.4
Investigative Study	2 (1.6)	13(10.0)	23(17.8)	31(24.0)	60(45.5)	129(100)	2.0
Written Assignments	43(33.3)	37(28.7)	28(21.7)	13(10.0)	8 (6.2)	129(100)	3.6
Home Work	59(45.7)	32(24.8)	23(17.8)	11 (8.5)	4 (3.1)	129(100)	4.5
Terminal Test	8 (6.2)	91(70.5)	30(23.3)	0 (0)	0 (0)	129(100)	3.8

Table 12 showed students' responses on their teachers' use of the guidelines for continuous assessment. On whether teachers used practical work, the mean rating of 3.4 suggested that a majority of the students said to some extent, practical work was used as part of their continuous assessment. On written assignments, it was obvious that with a mean rating of 3.6, the majority responded that teachers gave written assignments as part of continuous assessment. Finally, on terminal test, a majority with a mean rating of 3.8

intimated that their teachers gave them this test. Students’ responses were then sought on teachers’ use of evaluative exercises as prescribed by the syllabus. Data on the outcome of the survey was displayed in Table 13, and discussed.

Table 13: Students’ Responses on Teachers use of Evaluative Exercises

EVALUATION EXERCISES	RATINGS					TOTAL N (%)	MEAN RATING N (%)
	5 N (%)	4 N (%)	3 N (%)	2 N (%)	1 N (%)		
Oral Questions	41(31.)	38(29.)	26(20.)	18(14.)	6(4.6)	129(10)	3.7
Oral / Written Quizzes	33(25.6)	9(7.0)	55(42.6)	23(17.8)	9(7.0)	129(10)	3.3
Class Assignments	38(29.4)	38(29.4)	40(31.0)	10(7.8)	3(2.3)	129(10)	3.8
Essays	21(16.2)	44(34.1)	31(24.0)	9 (7.0)	24(18.)	129(10)	3.2
Structural Questions	35(27)	27(20.9)	32(24.8)	21(16.2)	14(10.8)	129(100)	3.4

Table 13 showed diverse responses from students. On the use of oral questions as an evaluative exercise, a mean rating of 3.7 was obtained. By this, a majority of the students said their teachers used oral questions to a great extent. On the use of oral/written quizzes, a mean rating of 3.3 was obtained. It implied that a majority of the respondents indicated that to some extent, teachers used

quizzes. As regards the use of essays, a mean rating of 3.2 was obtained. This was indicative that the majority intimated that to some extent, teachers used essays as evaluative exercises. The fact that teachers employed some of these aspects of language meant that teachers were conscious of what the syllabus prescribed even though their commitment to following it fully was only partially guaranteed.

Teachers' Acquaintance with Contents of the Syllabus and Fidelity Implementation

It became necessary to test hypothesis 1 on teachers' acquaintance with the content of the syllabus and their fidelity implementation. In doing this, I used the correlation figures in Table 14. The *p*- values were compared with the alpha value derived from the statistic to obtain the significance of the relationships.

Table 14: Correlation between Teacher-variables and Fidelity Implementation

Variables	N	Mean	SD	<i>r</i>	<i>p</i> -value
Teachers' Acquaintance	21	3.0	.64	.454	.040*
Teachers' Participation	21	2.10	1.16	-.337	.140

* *p* < .05; **Note:** Items on the questionnaire were merged

N= Sample size; SD= Standard Deviation; *r*= Correlation coefficient

Testing Hypothesis 1

H₀: There is no relationship between teachers' acquaintance with the properties of the French syllabus and their fidelity implementation.

H₁: There is a relationship between teachers' acquaintance with the properties of the French syllabus and their fidelity implementation.

To test this hypothesis, the Pearson Moment Correlation (r) test was used to determine the relationship between the variables. Testing was done at .05 level of significance since the hypothesis is a non-directional one (two-tailed).

It was important to note that at this level of significance, if the p –value exceeded alpha, the result was not statistically significant. We thus failed to reject the null hypothesis and concluded there was no relationship. On the other hand, when the p –value was less than alpha ($\alpha = .05$), the result was declared statistically significant and we thus rejected the null hypothesis. All the tested hypotheses were two-tailed, non- directional ones.

For teachers' acquaintance, $r(21) = .45$, $p < .05$ given $\alpha = .05$ and p –value = .040. Since p –value is less than α , the result is statistically significant. The null hypothesis is thus rejected and a conclusion made that, there is a correlation between teachers' acquaintance with the properties of the syllabus and their fidelity implementation ability. Implicitly, if teachers familiarised themselves with the content of the syllabus, they were well able to implement the curriculum with appreciable level of fidelity. This outcome was congruous with the findings by Natriello, Zumwalt, Hansen, and Frisch (1990) and Elbaz (1991) who opined that teachers' acquaintance with the properties, features and content of the

curriculum material (syllabus) exercised a positive effect on their classroom performance. Again, the finding concurred with Elbaz, (1991) work. As an advice, Elbaz suggested that teachers' who taught subjects needed to strive and internalise the essential features of those subjects and carry them out as planned. It would have been difficult for teachers to deliver their lessons well if they had made no conscious effort to carefully study the syllabus to be able to meet the needs of their students (Elbaz, 1991).

The correlation showed there was a moderately positive ($r=.45$) relationship between fidelity implementation and teachers' acquaintance. In my view, and as evidenced by the co-efficient of correlation, the more teachers acquainted themselves with the syllabus and got abreast of its content and requirements, the more they were able to teach faithfully as they were required to. On the other hand, it also implied that if French teachers failed to familiarise him/herself with the content of the syllabus, they are likely to do their own thing in the class.

Without hesitation, a correlation test was again run to find out if participation in professional programmes earned teachers some benefit in terms of their potency to faithfully implement the curriculum. The figures were derived from Table 13.

Teachers' Participation in Planned Professional Programmes and their Fidelity implementation

As indicated earlier, attempts were made to ascertain the relationship between participation in professional developmental programmes and teachers' fidelity implementation. The independent variable here was teachers' participation whereas fidelity implementation was the dependent variable. Results from the test could be deduced from Table 13.

Testing Hypothesis 2

H₀: There is no correlation between French teachers' participation in planned French programmes and their fidelity implementation of the French curriculum.

H₁: There is a correlation between French teachers' participation in planned French programmes and their fidelity implementation of the French curriculum

Testing was done at .05 level of significance.

Results on teachers' participation from Table 13 shows $r(21) = -.34$, $p > .05$ given $\alpha = .05$ and p -value = .140. Since p -value is greater than α , the result is not statistically significant. We therefore fail to reject the null hypothesis and a conclusion made that, there is no correlation between French teachers' participation in planned programmes and their fidelity implementation ability. That is to say teachers' participation in the professional programmes does not contribute anything to their ability to implement the curriculum with fidelity

approach. In fact the results revealed a negative weak correlation ($r=-.34$) between the independent (teachers' participation) and the dependent (fidelity implementation) variables. This finding contradicted an earlier work which was done by Coetzer, (2001). This work posited that successful implementation of new educational policies were only effective if teachers were adequately prepared and equipped by means of retraining and by realising the importance of improving their professional practice by means of continuous professional development (Coetzer, 2001; Hahn, Noland, Rayens, & Christie, 2002).

In contrast, Anderson (2001) in an earlier research viewed professional developmental activities as having a correlation with implementation and therefore suggests that it is necessary to help teachers update their knowledge and skills by organising workshops and seminars for them to deal with curriculum change and programme implementation challenges. Hahn, et al. (2002) contributing to the subject, said that one way the teacher could continue to learn and to be on top of current issues would be his/her desire to participate in curriculum programmes such as workshops and seminars to improve professional competence (Hahn et al., 2002). The finding from the teachers' participation in this study seems to suggest that even if a teacher decides not to take part in these activities, s/he can still implement their subjects with fidelity. The inverse of this assertion is what Anderson says that if a teacher refuses to participate in these planned curriculum programmes, s/he may later find his or herself archaic on the job (Anderson, 2001).

Teachers' participation in professional programmes goes a long way to improve their quality of teaching. Most of them (teachers) were happy they were not involved in curriculum design programmes. Regrettably, teachers are the ones expected to translate the policy intents into learning experiences for students. Widdowson (1993) pinpointed the importance of taking into consideration teachers' roles in relation to other participants, such as policymakers, researchers, material designers, and learners involved in national curriculum design activities. One way a teacher can continue to learn and to be on top of current issues will be his/her desire to participate in curriculum programmes such as workshops and seminars to improve professional competence (Hahn, et al., 2002).

Many studies in the past have established a relationship between gender and fidelity implementation (Ruiz-Primo & Li, 2003). I ran a chi square test to ascertain the correlation between gender and fidelity implementation of teachers.

Gender and Fidelity implementation

In order to test the hypothesis on gender and fidelity implementation, the responses of the teachers were cross tabulated. Table 15 therefore presented the cross tabulation on male/female teacher responses for fidelity implementation.

Table 15: Cross Tabulation on Gender and Fidelity Implementation

Rating Gender	5		4		3		2		1		χ^2
	M No. (%)	F No.(%)	M No.(%)	F No.(%)	M No.(%)	F No.(%)	M No.(%)	F No.(%)	M No.(%)	F No.(%)	
Responses											
Content coverage	0(0)	0(0)	8 (31.1)	0(0)	9 (42.9)	2 (9.5)	2(9.5)	0 (0)	0(0)	0(0)	0.37
Periods on time table	0(0)	0(0)	7 (33.3)	2 (9.5)	10(47.6)	0(0)	2 (9.5)	0(0)	0(0)	0(0)	0.23
Guidelines for assessment	0(0)	0(0)	8(31.1)	2(9.5)	11(52.4)	0(0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0(0)	0.12
Communicative principles	0(0)	0(0)	7(33.3)	1(4.8)	10(47.6)	1 (4.8)	2 (9.5)	0 (0)	0(0)	0(0)	0.86
Employing required strategies	0(0)	0(0)	7(33.3)	1(4.8)	10(47.6)	1(4.8)	0 (0)	0(0)	0 (0)	0(0)	0.96

* $p < \alpha$; $\alpha = .05$ (two-tailed)



Testing Hypothesis 3

H₀: There is no significant difference between female teachers' fidelity implementation and that of the male teachers.

H₁: There is a significant difference between female teachers' fidelity implementation and that of the male teachers.

Testing was done at .05 significance level.

With gender and fidelity implementation (as shown on Table 15), $\chi^2(1, N = 21) = 2.01, p = .05$ (or: $\chi^2(1, N = 21) = 2.01, p = .37$. $p > \alpha$ given that $\alpha = .05$ and p -value = .37. Since p -value is greater than α , the result is statistically not significant. I fail to reject the null hypothesis. The conclusion is that there is no significant difference between female teachers' fidelity implementation and that of the male ones. The result contradicts a similar study by Ferdinand (2007). His study revealed a significant gender difference in the fidelity implementation among teachers in Singapore. The study further stated that the male 'teachers' have high level of fidelity implementation compared with their female counterparts (Ferdinand, 2007).

Again, $\chi^2(1, N = 21) = 2.95, p = .05$ (or: $\chi^2(1, N = 21) = 2.95, p = .23$. $p > \alpha$ given that $\alpha = .05$ and p -value = .23 (Refer to Table 15). Since p -value is greater than α , the result is not statistically significant. I therefore fail to reject the null hypothesis. The conclusion is that as far as gender is concerned, there is no significant difference in teachers' fidelity implementation. This outcome confirms a similar study conducted in Nigeria, by Olatoye (2006) who also posited that gender has no influence on the fidelity implementation of teachers.

In addition, (Referring to the Crosstabs), $\chi^2(1, N = 21) = 2.43, p = .05$ (or: $\chi^2(1, N = 21) = 2.43, p = .12$. $p > \alpha$ given that $\alpha = .05$ and p -value = .12. Since p -value is greater than α , the result is not statistically significant. We thus fail to reject the null hypothesis and a conclusion is made that there is no significant difference between female teachers' fidelity implementation and that of the male ones.

Also with gender (Referring to Table 15), $\chi^2(1, N = 21) = .30, p = .05$ (or: $\chi^2(1, N = 21) = .30, p = .86$. $p > \alpha$ given that $\alpha = .05$ and p -value = .86. Since p -value is greater than α , the result is not statistically significant. We thus fail to reject the null hypothesis. The conclusion is that there is no significant difference between female teachers' fidelity implementation and that of the male ones.

Finally, (Referring to Table 15) the data show, $\chi^2(1, N = 21) = .30, p = .05$ (or: $\chi^2(1, N = 21) = .30, p = .96$. $p > \alpha$ given that $\alpha = .05$ and p -value = .96. Since p -value is greater than α , the result is not statistically significant. We thus fail to reject the null hypothesis. The conclusion is that there is no significant difference between female teachers' fidelity implementation and that of the male ones.

The results again disconfirm similar work done by Adetayo (2008). For him, there is a relationship between gender and implementation and that male teachers do not consider teaching a befitting profession. Consequently, they pay less attention to fidelity principles in the classroom compared to their female counterpart. Also, the finding of the current study contradicts the one done by Agbatogun (2006). His work revealed low fidelity implementation among female primary school teachers compared with their male counterpart. On the other hand,

a similar study by Ferdinand (2007) showed a significant gender difference in the fidelity implementation among teachers in Singapore. In this research, the male ‘teachers’ had high level of fidelity implementation compared with their female counterparts. A study by Scriven (2008) also showed a wider variation in the fidelity implementation among various school subject teachers. It could be said that the findings of the current research have discredited results of earlier studies done on gender and fidelity implementation of the curriculum. In my view, perhaps, the results of the differences in the socio-cultural contexts of the work done by Ferdinand and Scriven may have accounted for the disparity in the results of the current research.

Observation Results and Analysis for All Schools

During the observed sessions, all three teachers started and ended classes on time. In school C for instance, there was ample evidence from the teacher’s body language that he was prepared to conduct the class. Particularly, his ‘*mise en train*’ activities were captivating enough. This was the case in schools A and B but on a moderate level. The teacher in school A and B minimally ensured students’ active engagement in the class discussions. I observed also that much attention was given to good students. It also became evident that the teachers in schools B and C did most of the talking. Therefore participatory teaching could be said to be minimal. However, the mark for school A on student participation was adequate. Averagely, all the teachers’ explanations were adequate even though the teacher in school C used more translations to explain concepts. The summaries

they offered at the end of the lessons were rated minimal for all the days of observation. In terms of knowledge of the subject matter, the output of teachers in schools A and B were adequate. The teacher in school C obtained a minimal rating since he used more English and found it difficult to explain simple concepts. Teachers in schools A and B used more appropriate real world examples to illustrate concepts for the full grasp of students. All teachers' responses to students' questions were averagely adequate.

All three teachers spoke clearly and audibly and so scored an adequate mark for the observed sessions. Teachers in schools B and C showed more enthusiasm for the subject matter for all the sessions. They therefore had an adequate average rating, though it was obvious that enthusiasm for the teacher in school A, had waned a little perhaps because he appeared older than the other teachers. All three teachers did their best to encourage student questions and so they received an adequate rating for the days of observation. The three teachers also gave students adequate time to respond to questions and gave feedback that gave students direction for improvement. On this, all the three schools obtained adequate rating on the scale. The student-teacher interactions were varied. In school A, the interactions were lopsided even though in schools B and C, they appeared symbiotic. In school C for instance, the teacher related with students and so they were free to participate meaningfully in the sessions. The ratings for schools B and C were on quality interactions of teachers with students. The interactions were adequate for schools B and C through out the observed sessions. For school A, they were minimal for the observed sessions. The use of the techniques that

reflected the communicative approach was lacking in school C and therefore obtained an average minimal rating. For the other two schools, an adequate rating was given on the average for the observation days. All teachers did not apply the guidelines for evaluation. When the teacher in school C was personally questioned (after one of the sessions), he claimed that teachers were rather preoccupied with ways and means of ensuring that students pass their examinations and not necessarily what the syllabus prescribes. And so, for the three teachers, each obtained a minimal rating on strict adherence to evaluation guidelines. The teacher in school B added that teachers preferred to structure the exercises in the same fashion as the final examination.

On the percentage of instructional time teachers spent on grammar, in school A, between 40% and 74% were spent on grammar whereas between 75% and 80% of the time was spent on grammar in school B. As for school C, between 1% and 15% was devoted to grammar for all the sessions of the observation. For the entire periods, none of the schools devoted time for essay writing. On time spent on comprehension, school C spent between 40% and 74% whereas schools A and B spent as less as between 1% and 19%. Again, the schools did not devote any instructional time to summary writing as well as to vocabulary development. On oral expression, schools devoted between 75% and 80% to it whereas between 20% and 35% was spent on it in school A. For school C, oral expression occupied just between 1% and 10% of the time for all the observation sessions.

In sum, it became clear that teachers adhered to certain aspects of the syllabus which did not task their energies. They appeared however to modify certain

aspects too to suit their teaching. This went contrary to fidelity principles. For instance, exercise guidelines, essays, summary writing exercises were not adequately given to balance students' language acquisition skills. All of the schools observed, placed emphasis on oral expression. Therefore, the conclusion from the observed lessons show that implementation cannot be wholly fidelity-oriented. Teachers' rather considered their convenience and therefore did not think too much about fidelity (Arthur, 1999).



CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Summary

Overview of the Study

The research was conducted to find out about the fidelity approach to implementing the SHS curriculum in the Takoradi Metropolis. In doing this, the study concerned itself with certain teacher variables that promote fidelity implementation and whether these variables had any relationship with teachers' ability to implement the curriculum with fidelity. A total of 129 students and 21 teachers from eleven (11) public SHSs participated in the study. The schools included in the study were selected using the purposive sampling technique. Again, the census technique was used to select the teachers whereas a proportional sampling technique was used to select the students for the study. Also, three (27%) teachers out of the 21 were observed in the classroom for three weeks to ascertain the faithfulness with which they implemented the French programme. I administered the survey instruments in the various schools.

The responses from the students gave a direction for the class observation. The responses of both respondents were indicated on a five-point Likert scale from 'to a very great extent' to 'not at all', from 'strongly agree' to 'strongly disagree' and from 'very strict adherence' to 'not at all'. The responses were

tabulated with frequencies and percentages calculated for each response. Based on the ratings, a mean rating was also derived to help the analysis.

Key Findings

1. The findings revealed that a majority of French teachers had their first degree to be able to implement the curriculum in with fidelity. Again, a majority of them were found to have taught French for at least ten years.
2. The study also uncovered that French teachers generally had negative beliefs/perceptions about the quality of the designed SHS French curriculum.
3. With the degree of fidelity, the study showed that teachers implemented the SHS curriculum with a moderate degree of fidelity.
4. Furthermore, the findings uncovered that there was a significant positive correlation between teachers' acquaintance with the properties of the syllabus and their fidelity implementation ability.
5. Secondly, there was no significant correlation between French teachers' participation in planned programmes and their fidelity implementation ability.
6. Finally, the study revealed that there was no statistically significant difference between female teachers' fidelity implementation and that of the male ones.

Minor Findings

1. With particular reference to the student surveys, it was discovered that teachers used 'conversation' to develop students' oral expression skills as the syllabus prescribes.

2. More so, the student survey again revealed that with vocabulary development, teachers encouraged students to look up for definitions and meanings of words in dictionaries as a strategy in enriching their stock of vocabulary for written work.
3. Then, it was discovered that teachers used pronunciation drills a lot in class to develop students' skills in spoken French.
4. The student surveys also revealed that teachers used reading comprehension so many times in a month just as they did with listening comprehension, grammar and vocabulary development. However, with regard to vocabulary development, the observation revealed other wise. On the contrary, it was discovered that teachers did not treat essays as often as they did with grammar perhaps because of the heavy task of marking.
5. Also, it was discovered that only few of the teachers used only French as a medium of instruction in class and a majority of them (teachers) were found to be males.
6. Finally on the adherence to guidelines for continuous assessment, it was found out that teachers did not follow the guidelines for evaluation even though teachers gave the terminal test as the syllabus prescribes. The survey also showed that teachers did not give investigative study as project.

Conclusions

Per the results, most of the surveyed teachers had been teaching French for more than ten years. And as the saying goes, experience is often the best teacher. The important thing is for the less experienced teachers to open up and be prepared to learn new ways of making things work better in the classroom. With that, teachers can function effectively as though they were experienced people. This is what I expect all French teachers to know and do. Though experience sometimes counts, 'more' experience may lead to a decline in efficiency in the classroom (Hanushek, et al., 2005). Perhaps, this is why a lot of old and more experienced teachers have stuck to their old ways of teaching for so long a time.

The study brought to the fore a correlation between teachers' acquaintance with the properties of the syllabus and their fidelity implementation ability and so there is the need for teachers to imbibe the content of the syllabus they purport to implement. This finding confirmed the research by Natriello, Zumwalt, Hansen, and Frisch (1990) and Elbaz (1991) who opined that teachers' acquaintance with the properties, features and content of the curriculum material (syllabus) exercises a positive effect on their classroom performance. I think quality teaching would be lost if teachers failed to study their teaching materials. A teacher who fails to do this is likely for instance, to fumble in the class and throw the concept of quality teaching to the dogs.

Additionally, even though teacher participation in professional programmes affects implementation, this study showed no significant correlation between these variables. This finding is a contradiction of an earlier work by

Coetzer, (2001) and other works which posit that successful implementation of new educational policies will only be effective if teachers are adequately prepared and equipped by means of retraining and by realising the importance of improving their professional practice by means of continuous professional development (Coetzer, 2001; Hahn, Noland, Rayens, & Christie, 2002). The GES, which acts as the teacher's employer and other bodies should strive and organise professional development programmes for teachers with the content of these programmes tailored towards equipping them to teach with fidelity in the classroom

It came out that there was no significant difference between female teachers' fidelity implementation and that of the male ones. Interestingly enough, the results of the current study was similar to the one conducted by Olatoye (2006). In his research, he also posited that gender has no influence on the fidelity implementation of teachers. The novel discovery here is that, unlike other works, this study has revealed no correlation between gender and implementation.

Recommendations

Following the issues that emerged from the data, the following recommendations are made for policy:

1. Firstly, it is obvious that little has been done to involve teachers in the design of curricula programmes. I therefore recommend that as a policy, the Ministry of Education (MoE), the umbrella body of the Curriculum Research and Development Division (CRDD) of the Ghana Education Service (GES), roll out initiatives that will ease the teacher's access to national curriculum design

forums. This way, teachers' views and contributions will be brought on board in the policy design to ensure the smooth implementation. This is because when teachers are involved, they feel part of the entire curriculum and are likely to make it their 'own' material thereby ensuring its fidelity implementation. It is when they feel sidelined and ignored that they harbour unpleasant feelings (beliefs/perceptions) which are inimical to successful fidelity implementation.

2. Secondly, policy makers should also consider how to develop and market professional programmes with more pedagogical support to help build up teachers' professional capacities.
3. Thirdly, since a majority of the teacher participants were males, I recommend that as a policy, French teacher training institutions such as the University of Cape Coast and the University of Education (Winneba), give a certain quota in admissions to female students who may want to study French and teach it after school. In the same vein, these institutions should put in place measures to motivate these female students to stay through the French programmes since lots of them 'fall through the cracks' and therefore drop the subject after Level 200.
4. Finally, the Department of Arts and Social Sciences Education (DASSE) of the University of Cape Coast, charged with the responsibility of churning out students in curriculum studies should as a matter of concern, extend their services to the GES by organising curricular seminars for teachers. The focus

of these seminars should be to equip teachers with requisite strategies for implementing curriculum with fidelity approach.

Again, following the issues that emerged from the data, the following recommendations are made for practice:

1. Firstly, due to the strong correlation between teachers acquaintance with content of the syllabus and fidelity implementation, teachers should make it a point to 'study' the syllabus they teach and become abreast of what they are required to do in the classroom to maximise students' learning.
2. Secondly, the current study demonstrated that teachers' participation in professional development programme was nothing to write home about. I recommend that more emphasis should be placed on programmes teachers actually need. The local school heads should therefore come out with more workshops/seminars which place focus on teacher preparation to professionalise teaching and to make them more effective in the classroom.
3. Finally, as a minor finding the study revealed that teachers did not follow the guidelines for evaluating students' performance. It is therefore recommended that teachers give exercises to students congruent with the guidelines provided in the syllabus. This way, teachers will be more focused in the classroom and students will also be abreast of the question formats for their final examinations.

Suggestions for Further Research

1. Students serve as the receivers of any curriculum outcomes and may eventually determine whether the intended curriculum is successfully implemented or not. I suggest therefore that future research should focus on investigating how students respond to curriculum innovation during the implementation process, and whether or not the enacted curriculum promotes their learning. Such endeavours may produce a fuller and more realistic picture of how curriculum fidelity implementation influences students' learning at both junior and senior high schools in Ghana.
2. Also, to investigate factors affecting curriculum implementation, I suggest that future research should be expanded to include other variables such as teachers' motivation to teaching, their income, social status, and influence of colleagues with wider dimensions needed to uncover which factors have more impact on teachers' fidelity implementation.
3. Additionally, I suggest for future researchers to use larger-scale surveys, involving more French teacher participants from multiple regions of our country in fidelity implementation studies. In other words, I recommend for a replication study on the subject with large teacher sample coverage.
4. Finally, I suggest that future research focuses on evaluating the entire French curriculum and assessing the extent to which available curricular materials in various schools contribute to fidelity curriculum implementation.

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APPENDICES



APPENDIX B

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR TEACHERS

UNIVERSITY OF CAPE COAST

Introduction

You are requested to kindly respond to the items that follow to enable me gather information about the fidelity approach to implementing the Elective French curriculum at the SHS. As much as possible, provide answers from your personal opinions. The information you provide is just for the purposes of research and therefore shall be treated with most confidentiality.

SECTION A

BACKGROUND INFORMATION OF TEACHERS

1. Name of school:.....

2. Sex M [] F []

3. Academic Qualification

Certificate []

Diploma []

1st Degree []

2nd Degree []

Other(s) (please specify).....

4. Subject(s) of Specialisation

- French []
- English []
- Ghanaian Language []
- Linguistics []

Other(s) (please specify).....

5. Number of years in the teaching profession

- 1 – 3 years []
- 4 – 6 years []
- 7 – 9 years []
- 10 – 12 years []
- More than 12 years []

SECTION B

FIDELITY INDICATORS IN THE LANGUAGE CLASSROOM

Circle the number on the scale to show the extent to which you adhere to the following in teaching.

- 5...*To a very great extent*
- 4...*To a great extent*
- 3...*To some extent*
- 2...*Very little*
- 1...*Not at all*

6. I ensure that all the content of the syllabus is covered before students' sit for their final examination..... 5 4 3 2 1

7. I follow the periods allotted to French on the time table.....5 4 3 2 1
8. I use the guidelines for continuous assessment as the syllabus prescribes..... 5 4 3 2 1
9. I keep to the principles of communicative approach to teaching French..... 5 4 3 2 1
10. As the syllabus suggests, I employ other teaching strategies that maximise students' learning..... 5 4 3 2 1

SECTION C

TEACHERS' ACQUAINTANCE WITH THE SYLLABUS

Circle the number on the scale to show the extent to which your acquaintance with the following aspects of the syllabus enhances fidelity implementation of it.

5...To a very great extent

4...To a great extent

3...To some extent

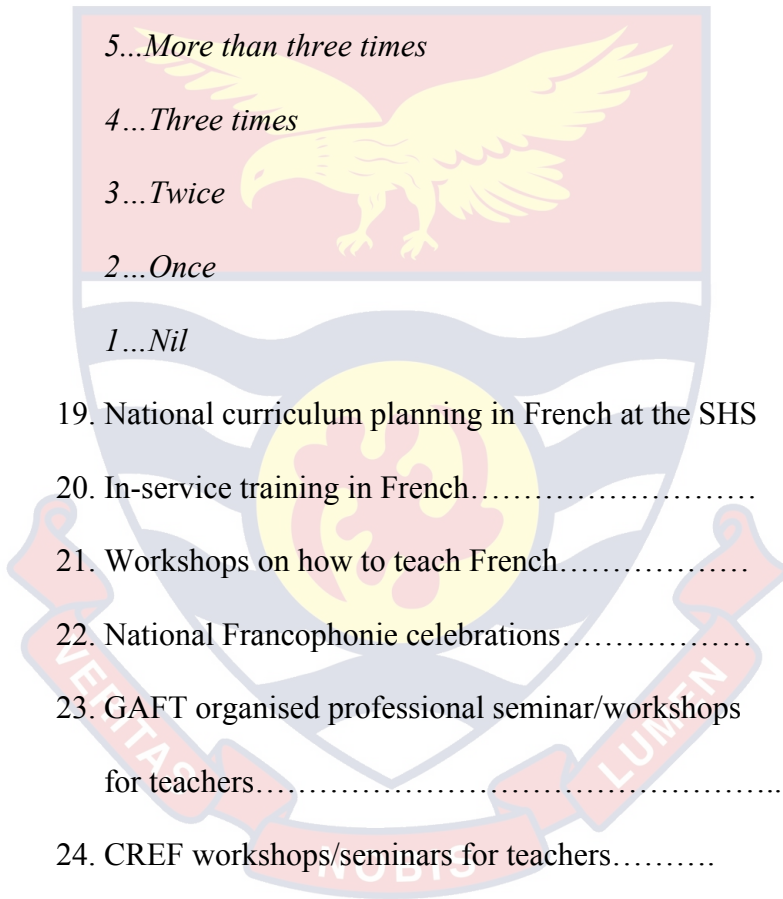
2...Very little

1...Not at all

11. Rationale for teaching French..... 5 4 3 2 1
12. General aims for teaching French..... 5 4 3 2 1
13. General objectives outlined in the syllabus 5 4 3 2 1
14. Specific objectives outlined in the syllabus..... 5 4 3 2 1
15. Scope of content of French at the SHS level..... 5 4 3 2 1

- | | |
|--|-----------|
| 16. Organisation of the SHS syllabus..... | 5 4 3 2 1 |
| 17. Time allocated to French in the syllabus..... | 5 4 3 2 1 |
| 18. Suggestions by the designers of the syllabus for
teaching it..... | 5 4 3 2 1 |

Circle the number on the scale to show the number of times in a year that you have been involved in the following programmes.



<p>5...<i>More than three times</i></p> <p>4...<i>Three times</i></p> <p>3...<i>Twice</i></p> <p>2...<i>Once</i></p> <p>1...<i>Nil</i></p>	
19. National curriculum planning in French at the SHS	5 4 3 2 1
20. In-service training in French.....	5 4 3 2 1
21. Workshops on how to teach French.....	5 4 3 2 1
22. National Francophonie celebrations.....	5 4 3 2 1
23. GAFT organised professional seminar/workshops for teachers.....	5 4 3 2 1
24. CREF workshops/seminars for teachers.....	5 4 3 2 1

SECTION D

TEACHERS' BELIEFS AND PERCEPTIONS

Circle the number on the scale to show the extent to which you agree with the following statements.

5...*Strongly Agree*

4...*Agree*

3...*Undecided*

2...*Disagree*

1...*Strongly Disagree*

25. I do not even understand the rationale for teaching

the syllabus..... 5 4 3 2 1

26. I believe the goals and objectives of the

syllabus are explicit..... 5 4 3 2 1

27. I think the subject matter content of the syllabus

is too high and therefore difficult for students' understanding..... 5 4 3 2 1

28. Recommended tasks and activities for students

are overloaded..... 5 4 3 2 1

29. Tasks and activities in the syllabus have

been well sequenced..... 5 4 3 2 1

30. Activities in the syllabus are 'communicative'

enough..... 5 4 3 2 1

31. Given the chance, I will teach any other subject

than French..... 5 4 3 2 1

32. I often think about the stress of rushing lessons in

order to finish the syllabus..... 5 4 3 2 1

33. I think that the French syllabus has not been

- designed well..... 5 4 3 2 1
34. The allotted periods for French in the syllabus is
enough to treat almost all the topics in it..... 5 4 3 2 1
35. Structure of the syllabus does not enhance
student learning..... 5 4 3 2 1



APPENDIX C

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR STUDENTS

UNIVERSITY OF CAPE COAST

Introduction

Kindly respond to the items that follow to enable me gather information about the fidelity approach to implementing the Elective French curriculum at the SHS. As much as possible, provide answers from your personal opinions. The information you provide is just for the purposes of research and therefore shall be treated with the most confidentiality.

SECTION A

BACKGROUND INFORMATION OF STUDENTS

Name of school:

Form:

SECTION B

TEACHERS' USE OF THE RECOMMENDED TEACHING

STRATEGIES IN THE SYLLABUS

Circle the number on the scale to show the degree to which your teacher(s) use(s) the following teaching strategies in teaching the French syllabus.

5...To a very great degree

4...To a great degree

3...To some degree

2... *Very little degree*

1... *Not at all*

1. Conversation drill in language study.....	5	4	3	2	1
2. Dialogue in language study	5	4	3	2	1
3. Pair drills in language study.....	5	4	3	2	1
4. Substitution drill in language study.....	5	4	3	2	1
5. Blank-space filling in language study.....	5	4	3	2	1
6. Discussion in essay writing.....	5	4	3	2	1
7. Question and Answer in essay writing.....	5	4	3	2	1
8. Simple debates in preparation to argumentative essay.....	5	4	3	2	1
9. Writing compositions on topics selected from specified disciplines.....	5	4	3	2	1
10. Story-telling sessions in preparation for written work.....	5	4	3	2	1
11. Silent reading in comprehension.....	5	4	3	2	1
12. Oral reading in comprehension.....	5	4	3	2	1
13. Linking comprehension lesson with literature lesson.....	5	4	3	2	1
14. Encouraging students to look up definitions in dictionaries in vocabulary development.....	5	4	3	2	1
15. Expressing themes in single sentences in summary writing.....	5	4	3	2	1

16. Pronunciation drill through modeling or repetition in speech work.....	5 4 3 2 1
17. Poetry recitals in speech work.....	5 4 3 2 1
18. Conversation in speech work.....	5 4 3 2 1
19. Debates in speech work.....	5 4 3 2 1
20. Role Play (jeu de rôle) in speech work.....	5 4 3 2 1
21. Oral reading in literature.....	5 4 3 2 1
22. Discussion of essential aspects emerging from a literary material.....	5 4 3 2 1
23. Dramatization of important scenes.....	5 4 3 2 1
24. Identification of literary devices in literature.....	5 4 3 2 1

Circle the number on the scale to indicate the number of times (in a month) that your teacher(s) treat(s) the following aspects of the syllabus.

5...*More than three times*

4...*Three times*

3...*Twice*

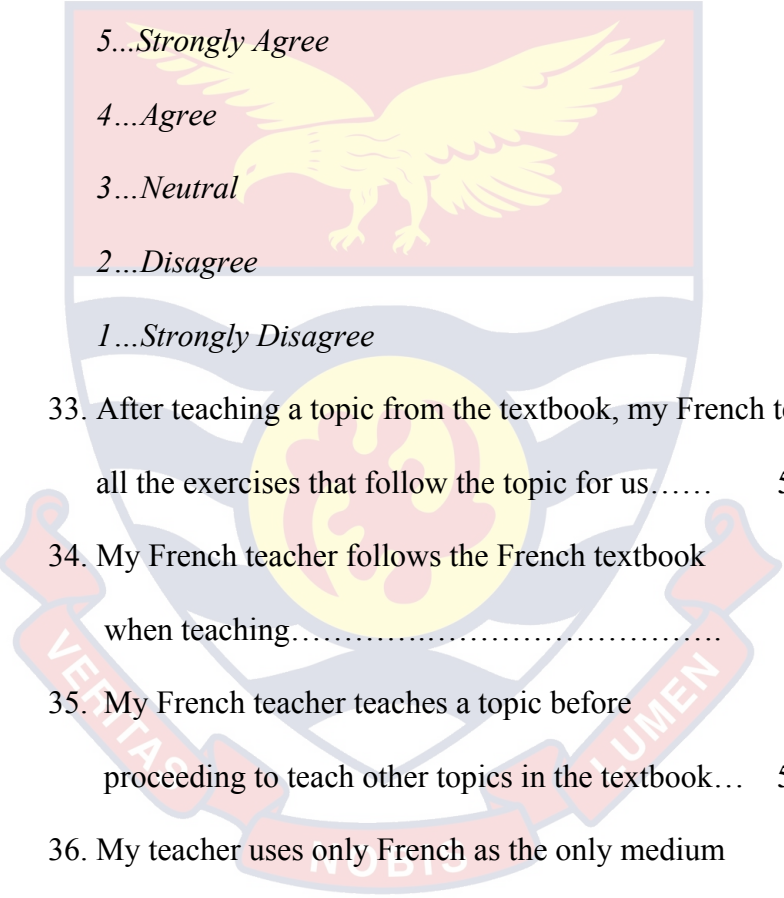
2...*Once*

1...*Nil*

25. Reading comprehension.....	5 4 3 2 1
26. Listening comprehension.....	5 4 3 2 1
27. Grammar/Language study.....	5 4 3 2 1
28. Vocabulary development.....	5 4 3 2 1

29. Spoken French..... 5 4 3 2 1
30. Essay writing..... 5 4 3 2 1
31. Summary..... 5 4 3 2 1
32. Literature-prose/Drama..... 5 4 3 2 1

Circle the number on the scale to show the extent to which you agree with the following statements.



5...*Strongly Agree*

4...*Agree*

3...*Neutral*

2...*Disagree*

1...*Strongly Disagree*

33. After teaching a topic from the textbook, my French teacher sets all the exercises that follow the topic for us..... 5 4 3 2 1

34. My French teacher follows the French textbook when teaching..... 5 4 3 2 1

35. My French teacher teaches a topic before proceeding to teach other topics in the textbook... 5 4 3 2 1

36. My teacher uses only French as the only medium of instruction..... 5 4 3 2 1

37. My teacher uses both French and English to teach in class..... 5 4 3 2 1

SECTION C

**STUDENTS' KNOWLEDGE OF TEACHER(S) USE(S) OF
RECOMMENDED GUIDELINES FOR ASSESSMENT**

Circle the number on the scale to show the extent to which your teacher(s) use(s) the following guidelines for your continuous assessment.

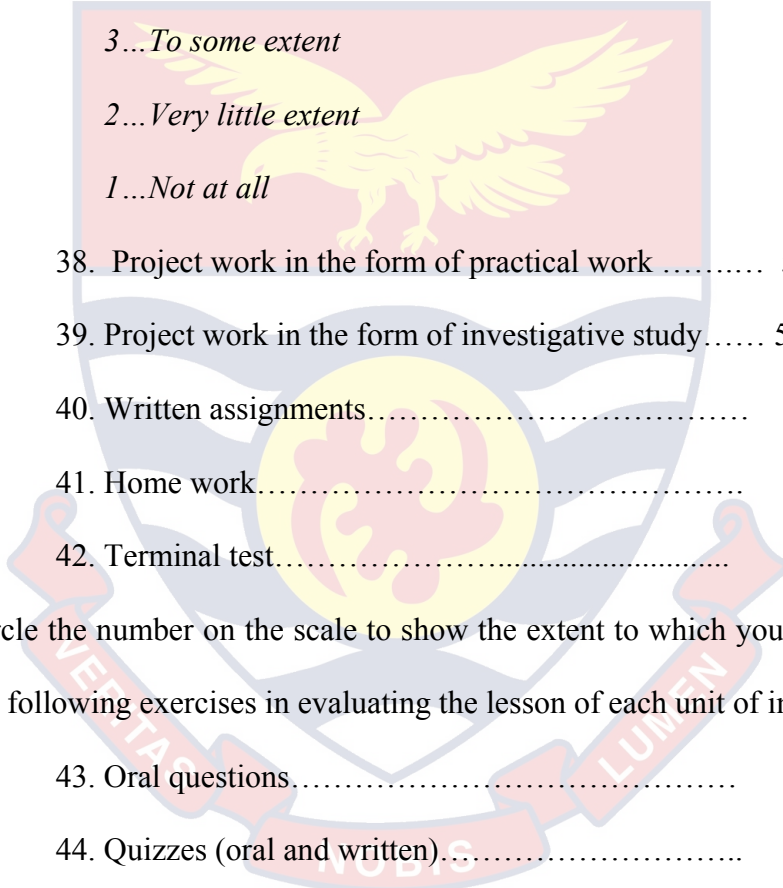
5...To a very great extent

4...To a great extent

3...To some extent

2...Very little extent

1...Not at all

- 
38. Project work in the form of practical work 5 4 3 2 1
39. Project work in the form of investigative study..... 5 4 3 2 1
40. Written assignments..... 5 4 3 2 1
41. Home work..... 5 4 3 2 1
42. Terminal test..... 5 4 3 2 1

Circle the number on the scale to show the extent to which your teacher(s) use(s) the following exercises in evaluating the lesson of each unit of instruction.

43. Oral questions..... 5 4 3 2 1
44. Quizzes (oral and written)..... 5 4 3 2 1
45. Class assignments..... 5 4 3 2 1
46. Essays..... 5 4 3 2 1
47. Structured questions..... 5 4 3 2 1

Thank you

APPENDIX D

CECR OBSERVATION GUIDE

Teacher: _____

Date: _____ Session: _____

School: _____

Form: _____ No. on Roll: _____

Period: _____ Duration: _____

Number of Days per Week: _____

Subject Matter Treated in Lesson: _____

SECTION A

LEARNING ORGANISATION AND MANAGEMENT

During the observed class session(s), to what extent did the teacher demonstrate the following behaviours?

1. Started and ended class on time.....5 4 3 2 1
2. Was by his/her demeanor prepared to conduct
Class..... 5 4 3 2 1
3. Ensured that students were engaged in the
learning activities planned for the session..... 5 4 3 2 1
4. Noted when a student or students were not
engaged and took action to involve students
in the class activity. (Participatory Learning)..... 5 4 3 2 1
5. Clearly explained the learning objectives

- for the class session..... 5 4 3 2 1
6. Summarised the major points at the end of
the lesson..... 5 4 3 2 1

SECTION B

KNOWLEDGE OF SUBJECT MATTER

During the observed class session (s), to what extent did the teacher demonstrate the following behaviours?

7. Explained French concepts clearly..... 5 4 3 2 1
8. Gave 'real world' examples to illustrate
Concepts..... 5 4 3 2 1
9. Responded adequately to students' questions 5 4 3 2 1

SECTION C

TEACHING STYLE/ METHOD

During the observed class session(s), to what extent did the teacher demonstrate the following qualities?

10. Spoke clearly and audibly, using French only
as the medium of instruction..... 5 4 3 2 1
11. Showed enthusiasm for the subject matter
and teaching..... 5 4 3 2 1
12. Treated all students in an equal manner 5 4 3 2 1
13. Encouraged questions and student
participation and gave them adequate time to
respond to questions 5 4 3 2 1

14. Provided feedback inline with prescriptions
of the syllabus that gave students direction
for improvement..... 5 4 3 2 1
15. Interacted with individual students during the
class session.....5 4 3 2 1
16. Encouraged a general culture of speaking
French in class..... 5 4 3 2 1
17. Used techniques that reflect an awareness
of the communicative approach dictated
by the SHS French syllabus..... 5 4 3 2 1
18. Appropriately used teaching materials required
for the lesson..... 5 4 3 2 1
19. Correctly applied the guidelines in the syllabus
for evaluating each unit of instruction taught.. 5 4 3 2 1

KEY

5--- *Completely*

4--- *Adequately*

3--- *Minimally*

2--- *Not at all*

1---*Not applicable*

SECTION D

INSTRUCTIONAL STRATEGIES

During the observed class sessions(s), what percentage of instructional time was spent on each of the following teaching strategies?

20. Language study (0) (1- 19) (20-39) (40-74) (75-100)

21. Essay writing (0) (1- 19) (20-39) (40-74) (75-100)

22. Comprehension (0) (1- 19) (20-39) (40-74) (75-100)

23. Vocabulary development (0) (1- 19) (20-39) (40-74) (75-100)

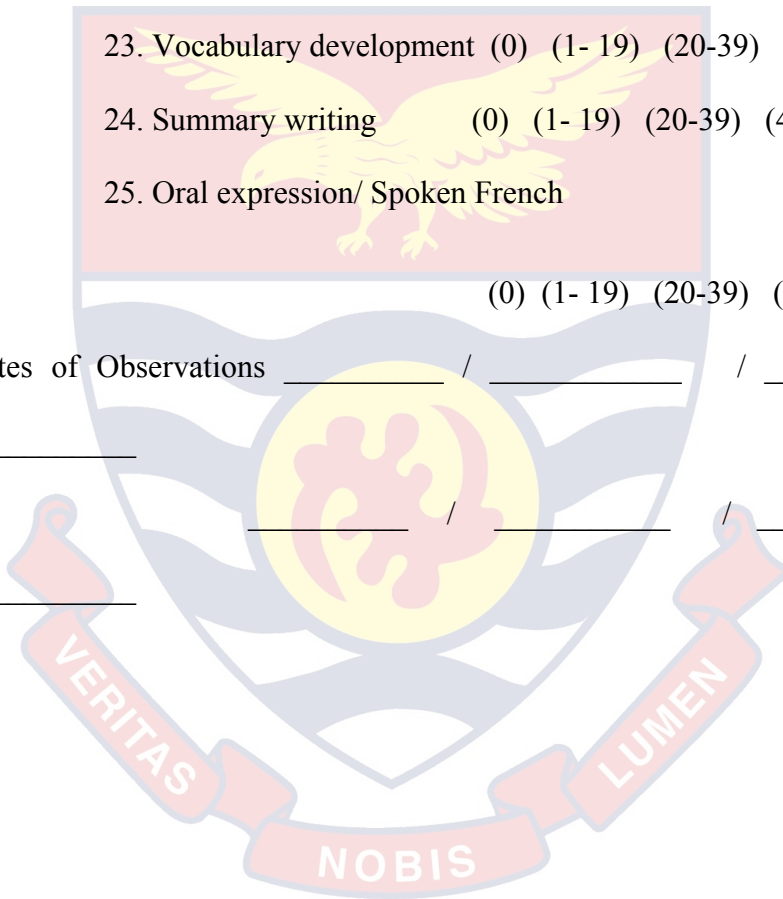
24. Summary writing (0) (1- 19) (20-39) (40-74) (75-100)

25. Oral expression/ Spoken French

(0) (1- 19) (20-39) (40-74) (75-100)

Dates of Observations _____ / _____ / _____ /

_____ / _____ / _____ /



APPENDIX E
TEACHERS' RESPONSES ON THEIR PARTICIPATION IN PLANNED PROGRAMMES

Teacher Responses on their Participation in Planned Programmes

	RATINGS					TOTAL	MEAN
	5	4	3	2	1	N (%)	RATING
	N (%)	N (%)	N (%)	N (%)	N (%)	N (%)	N / (%)
PROFESSIONAL PROGRAMMES							
National Curriculum Planning.	1(4.8)	0(0)	1(4.8)	3(14.3)	16(76.2)	21(100)	1.4
In-service Training in French.	5(23.8)	2(9.5)	0(0)	11(52.4)	3(14.3)	21(100)	2.7
Workshops on the Teaching of French.	1(4.8)	2(9.5)	0(0)	14(66.7)	4(19.0)	21(100)	2.1
GAFT Organised Programmes	2(9.5)	3(14.3)	1(4.8)	9(42.9)	6(28.6)	21(100)	2.3
Francophonie Celebrations	0(0)	0(0)	5(23.8)	6(28.6)	10(47.6)	21(100)	1.7
Workshops/Seminars for Teachers	2(9.5)	3(14.3)	2(9.5)	10(47.6)	4(19.0)	21(100)	2.4