UNIVERSITY OF CAPE COAST

ASSESSING THE COMPETENCY BASE OF TEACHER TRAINEES IN

WRITING COMPOSITION IN GHANAIAN LANGUAGE (ASANTE TWI). A

SURVEY OF COLLEGES OF EDUCATION IN ASHANTI REGION

BY

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Dissertation submitted to the Institute of Education of the Faculty of Education, University of Cape Coast, in partial fulfillment of the requirements for award of Master of Education Degree in Teacher Education.

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DECLARATION

Candidate's Declaration

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

Candidate's   Signature………………………………   Date………………………

Name: Gloria Assan

Supervisor's Declaration

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

Supervisor's   Signature……………………………………Date…………………….

Name: Dr. O. A. Adam

ABSTRACT

The study assesses the competency base of the teacher trainee in the writing of composition in Ghanaian language. Data were collected from sampled elective Ghanaian language teacher trainees from four Colleges of Education in the Ashanti Region of Ghana. The descriptive survey design was used for the study. Questionnaire, teacher trainees' class exercises and structured interviews were the instruments used to collect the data. Frequencies and percentages were used to analyse the data.

The study showed that teacher trainees are adequately prepared to write composition in the Ghanaian language. The preparation of the teacher trainees covered the understanding of types of composition, stages in composition writing, correct spelling and expressions, logical arrangement of ideas and preparation of teaching learning materials. It was recommended among other things that education authorities must ensure that there are enough textbooks on Ghanaian language at Colleges of Education to enhance teaching and learning of Ghanaian language. There is also the need for regular workshops for Ghanaian language tutors to update their skills in the use of teaching learning materials in their lessons for teacher trainees to emulate.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to my husband Mr Francis Kwaku Assan for his love and support.

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

Background to the Study

The human resources in every economy serve as the main engine that keeps the economy growing. The human resources provide the knowledge, skills and drive that create, maintain and assist economies towards the achievement of set goals and objectives. It is against this background that many educationists, politicians, economists, psychologists, among others always think of ways of developing the human resources of an economy. Basically, human resources refer to the "energies, skills, knowledge and talents of people which are or which potentially can or should be applied to the production of goods or the rendering of services" Harbison, (1973, p3.)

The improvement of quality of products or services depends greatly on the quality of human resources available to the economy. The school as an organization in an economy is a core agent in the development of human resources that exploit other factors of production in the economy. The teacher too is the most indispensable factor in the school because when curriculum is planned, infrastructural needs met and children assembled, it is the teacher who nurtures the children to achieve the goals and objectives of the planned curriculum. The success of any educational reform depends largely on the teacher and therefore

the nature of training received by teacher trainees would have impact on the children who form the source of human resources of an economy.

Macwilliam and Poh (1975) reported that Andreas Riis, the head priest at the Elmina castle and his successors recognised that any thorough system of education depends on the supply of trained teachers. They therefore took advantage of available opportunity to train catechists and teachers, as far back as 1848 in order to get competent personnel to educate the indigenous people to read and write.

The report of the Educational Advisory Committee on the New Structure and Content of Education for Ghana (1974) also viewed teachers as critical and indispensable to the successful implementation of educational reform programme. This is because, it is the classroom teacher who has to turn into reality, the plans that have been put down to improve the quality of education. To enhance the effectiveness of teachers, structures need to be put in place to guide and assist them. New teaching strategies now make new and extra demands on teachers, which necessitate an improvement in their basic philosophy, to stimulate and to release the energies of teachers to achieve the objectives of education. This has become necessary because teachers face diverse forms of challenges on personal, material, emotional and professional needs.

Language policies of education in African countries especially at the lower primary level are not small issues. It is a contentious issue at social and political

levels. Ghana has not been spared of this phenomenon. In a country with between forty-two and sixty indigenous languages plus English as an official language, selecting a language as medium of instruction in school is not an easy task. Notwithstanding, Ghana has run a mother tongue medium of instruction policy at the lower primary level for the past three decades which has been a beacon and envy of most Francophone and Anglophone African countries alike. But in recent times, this policy has been seen as unworkable and therefore has come under immense criticisms. In September 2002, the government of Ghana embarked on English language policy of education. A policy where English should be the only medium of instruction right from primary one. Major among the reasons given for the change in policy was the multilingual nature of the country and most especially at the urban classrooms where many Ghanaian languages are found. Also most teachers never spoke English in class even in primary six and so many students could not speak or write "good" English sentences even by the time they complete the Senior High School (The Stateman, 2002 p.3).

The never ending debate on language policy of education rages on in an intensified manner after the change of policy. The issue at stake is how efficient is the teacher trainee's competence in the teaching of the Ghanaian child to write composition in his or her mother tongue. Composition writing embodies the use of grammar, spellings, idiomatic expressions and coherent expression of ideas so

if a teacher is able to guide the child to do that successfully then that teacher has done a good work. In view of the fact that schooling is a foundation for subsequent learning, the teacher's role (and that of the school) will remain multifaceted: provision of basic literacy, numeracy and initial learning skills. In early childhood and primary levels; imparting steadily higher levels of knowledge, competences and learning abilities, along with life skills. In secondary and eventually higher education; the teachers at all levels, serve as a socializing institution or agent, passing on cultural and moral values according to prevailing community standards; while sometimes challenging some of these values to suit the needs of the society at that period.

Ghana is a multilingual state and therefore different types of languages are spoken. That not withstanding, the country has English language as the lingua franca which is widely used as the language for commerce and official administration of the country where applicable or appropriate. Every college of education offers at least one of the Ghanaian languages especially the indigenous language spoken in the community in which the institution is situated as a compulsory subject. This is to equip the teacher trainees with the skills and knowledge needed to impart the language to the children they would handle in the community especially during the "out" segment of the 3-year initial teacher training programme. The extent to which the teacher trainee would excel in the

indigenous language would mostly depend on the trainee's knowledge, experience and how well the trainee is prepared to study the language during the first two year stay on campus.

The initial teacher training leading to the award of Diploma in Basic Education admits prospective students from the Senior High School where it is expected that a prospective student could read and write a Ghanaian language. On the basis of that, a syllabus has been drawn to build on such experience to prepare the teacher trainees for a take off in the reading and writing of Ghanaian language. Whether teacher trainees have the requisite background to follow successfully the indigenous language planned by the Institute of Education, University of Cape Coast or not, is another issue to look into.

A background check by the researcher on the students' results in Ghanaian language was not encouraging. Most of the students do not have any Ghanaian language on their result slips because Ghanaian language is an elective subject. Only few students read Ghanaian language at the Senior High School level. Majority of those who read the Ghanaian language, during their examination had grades below a "C".

The first semester results of the first year teacher trainees in Ghanaian language have always not been encouraging especially that of Asante Twi which is widely spoken in the Ashanti region of Ghana. The chief examiner's reports (2007 & 2008) on the Ghanaian language (Asante Twi) have always been

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lamenting on teacher trainees' inability to construct simple sentences correctly and most importantly, write a piece of composition without much fundamental errors in spelling, grammar and punctuation marks. Sequential and coherent arrangements of the facts are not considered by students at all. The use of expressions and tenses override the few lines of composition teacher trainees write during the Ghanaian language examination. The downward trend of teacher trainees' performance in Ghanaian language is of great concern to all most especially, teachers of the respective Ghanaian languages.

Asante Twi is widely spoken in Ghana and it is expected that most of the teacher trainees would do well in writing the language but the reverse is the case. The attitude of most students towards Ghanaian language is shown in how some students run away from Ghanaian language classes. How could these teacher trainees who could neither read nor write, Ghanaian language effectively when they entered the college be able to impart the knowledge to the children they would handle at the basic school properly?

Statement of the Problem

Teacher trainees are the future teachers in whose hands the future generations lie. It is expected that the future generations articulate their mother tongues effectively and efficiently. What happens if the teacher trainees who would handle the future generation are themselves handicapped in the reading and

writing of their mother tongue? How could the teacher trainees impart proverbs and other literary devices used in Ghanaian language to the future generations? How could the teacher trainees guide the future generation to write good compositions in their mother tongue? It is against this background that the writer decided to explore and assess the competency base of teacher trainees in the writing of composition in Asante Twi.

Purpose of the Study

The main purpose of the study therefore is to examine the teacher trainees' knowledge, experience and preparedness for effective writing of composition in Asante Twi. The research seeks to find out if the teacher trainees are well equipped in knowledge and experience to enable them guide pupils to write composition at the basic level of education in Ghanaian language, to be specific Asante Twi. Specifically the study would examine;

(a) trainees' understanding of the various types of composition, namely narrative, descriptive, expository and argumentative essays

(b) the various stages of writing composition irrespective of the types; and

(c) the weaknesses of teacher trainees in Asante Twi composition writing.

Research Questions

The following research questions were raised to guide the study.

1. Do teacher trainees understand the various types of composition?

2. Do teacher trainees have knowledge about the various stages of Asante

   Twi composition writing irrespective of the type?

3. Do teacher trainees have access to support services to make them competent?

4. What are the challenges teacher trainees face as far as writing of composition in

   Ghanaian Language is concerned?

Significance of the Study

The outcome of the study would be significant in a number of ways. First of all, when the findings are disseminated, the Ministry of Education (MOE), Ghana Education Service (GES), Teacher Education Division (TED) and Institute of Education, University of Cape Coast will be well informed about the current competency level of the teacher trainees in writing of composition in Asante Twi. Based on the research findings, the Institute of Education, University of Cape Coast would modify the Ghanaian language syllabus or draw up and organise appropriate workshops for Ghanaian language tutors to sharpen their skills in various pedagogies of developing the competency base of the teacher trainees in Ghanaian language. Having known the competency base of the teacher trainees,

the entry requirements could be adjusted to cater for the Ghanaian language needs of the prospective teacher trainee.

In addition, the findings of the study would increase immensely the awareness of educational stakeholders of the challenges facing the teacher trainee in the learning and teaching of Ghanaian language and help the teacher trainee face the challenges. The findings of the study would also supplement the stock of knowledge in the development of competencies needed to assist teacher trainees in writing of composition in Ghanaian language. It would further provide useful empirical information for all who are interested in the development of composition writing in Ghanaian language. It is also hoped that the results of the study would serve as a source of reference for taking up future and further research in the area of the study.

Delimitation of the Study.

This study is delimited to the teacher trainees in the second year's ability to write good composition in the Ghanaian language (Asante Twi). There are a lot of composition types but, this study laid emphasis on narrative and descriptive types since most of the teacher trainees are expected to teach at the basic level of education. The study is narrowed to public Colleges of Education in Ashanti region of Ghana only. The colleges are Wesley College of Education, Kumasi, Akrokerri College of Education, Akrokerri, Saint Louis College of Education,

Kumasi, Saint Monica's College of Education, Mampong, Agogo College of Education, Agogo and Offinso College of Education, Offinso.

Limitation of the Study

The study is limited by certain factors such as the characteristics of the subjects. Some of the subjects interviewed were not willing to give the true information on the issues that bordered on their personal behaviour. The shortcomings of the research design could also affect the findings of the study. For instance the procedure used in selecting the sample for the study. The sample colleges used for the study might have their peculiar characteristics that might influence the findings of the study. Although precautions have been taken to avoid errors, the study might have been affected by certain events that occurred during the data collecting process. For instance, some of the respondents were reluctant in responding to the questionnaire and might have responded to the questions upon impulse. All these could affect the findings of the study.

Organization of the Study

The study consists of five chapters. Chapter one consists of the introduction to the study. It provides a background to the study, statement of the problem and the purpose of the study. Other aspects included in the chapter are research questions, significance of the study, delimitation and limitation of the

study. Chapter two deals with review of related literature of the study. It looks at the origin of the word essay, types and general parts of essay. Support for teacher trainees has been included as well as the appraisal of reviewed literature. Chapter three gives a detailed overview of the research methodology. This covers the research design, population of the study, sample and sampling procedures, instrument, data collection procedure and data analysis. Chapter four covers the results and discussion of findings, Chapter five presents the overview of the study, summary of findings, conclusions, recommendations and suggestions for further research.

CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Introduction

This study seeks to find out the competency level of teacher trainees in written composition in Asante Twi and to help build an effective and efficient teacher trainee capable of helping pupils at the basic level of education in the writing of Asante Twi composition. This chapter contains a review of related literature in the area of study under the following sub- headings:

a. Conceptual Base of the Study

b. What is Composition or Essay?

c. Types of Composition or Essay

d. The Structure of an Essay or Composition

e. Support for Teacher Trainees.

f. Appraisal of Reviewed Literature

Conceptual Base of the Study

According to Farrant (1990) a profession is a body that provides a specialised service to the community based on accumulated knowledge, skills and wisdom. Such a body, he continued, controls the entry qualification and the work standard of its members. Antwi (1992) confirms this point by saying that professional associations have the power to control recruitment and entry

qualification of its new members. They also have code of ethics. In the same vein, Adentwi (2002) defines profession as a type of job that requires advanced education and training.

Agyeman (1993) notes that teaching, as a profession is an occupation based on specialised intellectual training, the purpose of which is to give specific skilled service to clients for a fee or salary. Thus according to Antwi (1992), to practice as a teacher, one has to acquire a core of specialised knowledge; practical preparation and exhibit a relatively high level of intelligence and a practical teaching preparation. To him, this is all that goes into teacher efficiency.

Stones and Morris (1972) explain that student teachers under professional preparation needed to be equipped with special competencies during teaching practice. Teacher trainees, according to them, learn content as well as methodology before they practise. They admit that techniques of teaching are acquired through observation, imitation and practice. To Burr, Harding and Jacob (1995), it is in the classroom that the teacher uses materials, methods, traits, skills and competencies including habits to teach trainees. They admit that teaching practice enables trainees to acquire abilities and skills inherent in actual teaching and brings them into contact with learners.

Mensah (1991) defines student teaching as a period when learners receive guidance in learning to assume responsibility for the major activities in public schools. Teaching practice is therefore necessary for teaching experience and its

success implies a corresponding success in the teaching profession. Brown (1975) contends that trainees should not be permitted to handle full-scale classroom teaching until they proved competent in basic teaching skills. According to him, without mastery of the skills needed to teach, one cannot conquer the problem of controlling and motivating learners let alone to be effective in the teaching profession. Although teaching practice seems to be expensive in terms of transportation and feeding during supervision, Mensah (1991) sees the cost as minimal considering the benefits accrued from it.

What is Composition or Essay?

Though the word 'essay' has come to be understood as a type of writing in modern English, its origins provide us with some useful insight. The word comes into English through the French influence on Middle English. Tracking it back further, we find that the French form of the word comes from Latin verb 'exigere' which means to examine, test or (literally) to drive out. Through the excavation of this ancient word we are able to unearth the essence of academic essay: to encourage students to test or examine their ideas concerning a particular topic. (Backer & Brize, 1990)

Hornby (2000) defines composition as a short text that is written as a school exercise, a short essay. This definition goes to strengthen the idea that essay or composition writing is inevitable in the life of a learner irrespective of

where one finds himself or herself. (Forlini, 1987) describes composition as a group of paragraphs organized around a single main idea. Forlini contends that because composition is longer than a paragraph, however, it can cover a broader topic. The writer can discuss an idea in greater detail in composition than in a paragraph.

Montgomery (1993) has stated that while you gather information and ideas for your essay, you are not only selecting useful points, but you are at the same time imposing unity on them, that is, the points that can be relevant to a central theme of the essay. According to him, the points you gather must be capable of forming logical patterns of some kind. In general, composition can be seen as an act of putting words together in order to convey a message or specific information which could be oral or written. The teaching of composition however is quite diplomatic as some teachers fail to take learners through the process approach of writing thereby, rendering learners incapable of combining words well enough to enable recipients of their message to decipher the meaning.

Christiansen (1990) identifies this problem as he says "We who preside over composition courses have refused to solve the problem of teaching or have failed to solve it and even to see that there is a problem." Writing undoubtedly is considered one of the most complex and difficult of the four skills necessary for a child's language development. The four skills are listening, speaking, reading and writing. It can be acknowledged that acquisition of writing skills depends on the

degree of competence that has been attained at the first three stages which most students specifically at the Senior Secondary School level, seem to have mastered. It is however unfortunate to mention that students have problems putting words together to convey the message they want to put across.

Tsadidey (1996) conducted a study among teacher trainees on how they impart knowledge and came out with some findings on the teaching of composition by trainee teachers. He says "One major observation that has been made of students on practice at the basic level is that their approach to the teaching of composition follows a certain regular pattern and this makes their lesson ineffective and boring. Tsadidey does not only attack the techniques that are mostly used by the teachers on practice but also the choice of composition topics and their general disposition towards the pupils. Concerning the factors that determine success in composition writing, this is what Tsadidey (1996) has to say, "Composition writing heavily depends on the full sense of imagination and this should be considered the most important requirement for success in composition." The next factor is being able to assemble one's facts (real or imaginary) in logical order and thirdly, being able to express these logically ordered ideas in grammatical sentences.

Langan (1984) focuses on the importance of composition writing to the language learner. To him, composition writing benefits the students in other writing courses. This is because most examinations at all levels are written in the

essay form. Langan sums up his treatment of the importance of composition writing by emphasizing that composition writing helps the students to make sound decisions not only in school or career but in all phases of his everyday streaming from his ability to recognise ideas and measure their validity.

Roberts (1985) a renowned writer adds his voice to how writing can be done effectively by emphasizing the purpose and audience of writing. He elaborates on how to write better essays in his book entitled, 'The writers companion'. He asserts that writing is more reading experience if one thinks carefully about the topic before beginning to write. He is of the view that many students simply begin writing without thinking first, and as a result, their writing lacks careful development and clear organization. To him pre-writing which includes thinking, researching and reading should be done before the first draft is made and this he says allows one to find a focus for the topic.

Roberts (1985) emphasized that if the points or ideas to be included in a write-up, are irrelevant in your opinion or would not contribute to making a unified theme, such points should be rejected. This is because an essay is not just a list of all the information you know about a given topic, rather it is a selection of some points of information on that given topic which are relevant and logically linked by a single theme which binds them together.

Types of Composition or Essay.

Ogunsanwo, Duruak, Ezechuku, & Nwachukwu, (2003) stress four main types of composition namely: narrative, descriptive, expository and argumentative. On narrative essay they explain that it requires the writer to relate an event or incident as an eyewitness would, while descriptive essay, they emphasize that it requires one to write a description of, for example, an object, a person, or an incident or a scene.

Adam (2008) emphasizes that writing is an art of communication which, like other skills has to be taught and learnt by the student. He further explains that the art of writing has some techniques which the learner has to acquire to attain excellence in writing. Adam agrees with Ogunsanwo, *et al* (2003) that there are four main types of essay, namely narrative, argumentative, expository and descriptive. He explains that other forms of essay could be letter writing, report, creative or reflective writing. He continued that features of a good essay include a rich content, orderly presentation, correct use of language and avoidance of mechanical errors. He explains that the content is the material which the writer presents and that such material must be relevant to the question set. The presentation should be an orderly exposition and must demonstrate the required formal features. To Adams, use of language shows the writer's ability to communicate and convey his ideas to the reader. This includes choice of right words, ideas and expressions, different types of sentences and effective use of

punctuation marks for sentence control. Also mechanical accuracy includes legible writing, correct spellings, concord articles hyphenation and tenses.

Sekyi-Baidoo (2000) contends that irrespective of the nature of narrative, it cannot be effective unless it is organized to include the following qualities:-

(a) Story Boundary – that is where the story begins and where it is going to end. "If the story is made to begin too early, it might have unnecessary material. Again, if it is too late, it may lose some of the facts that will make the reader understand and appreciate it."

(b) Movement plan – is a sketch of the way in which the action is going to move from beginning to the end.

(c) Important events – these activities form the incidents which make up the plot and must be recorded.

(d) Arranged / connected events – they constitute a plot. Unconnected episodes cannot constitute whole – a plot. The basic way of connecting events is to arrange and present them in a chronological sequence. Sekyi-Baidoo (2000) and Ogunsanwo *et al* (2003) move on to say that, expository essay requires that the writer explains "a thing or a process fully." This may also involve some description. Argumentative essay on the other hand is explained as the type of essay which demands persuading the reader to agree with the writer's view point on an issue, either against or for the issue at stake.

According to Backer and Brize (1990), some confusion may occur between the argumentative essay and the expository essay. They emphasized that the two genres are similar but argumentative essay differs from the expository essay in the amount of pre – writing (invention) and research involved. The argumentative essay involves lengthy and detailed research whilst expository essay involves less research.

Owusu-Akyaw (1997) describes expository essay as the type of essay which asks the writer to express his views or comment on an idea or topic. According to Owusu-Akyaw expository essay can take the form of a letter to the editor, an article for publication, debate or a speech. Analysing Owusu-Akyaw's explanation the confusion that Backer and Brize (1990) explained between expository and argumentative essays has surfaced since Owusu-Akyaw has extended expository essay to include debate while Backer and Brize put debate on argumentative essay.

According to Reinking (1996), descriptive essays create pictures of objects, persons, scenes, events or situations. To Reinking sensory impressions as in those which reflect sight, sound, taste, smell and touch form the background of the descriptive writing and often they build towards one dominant impression that the writer wants to evoke. Tsadidey (2001) states that, 'Knowledge of our intended audience will enable us to write a suitable description as we can make reasonable supposition concerning any previous knowledge which the audience may have'.

For this reason, students are often confused about the amount of detail that must go into our writing and the number of technical terms and expression which we may freely use.

Arnold and Smith (2002) state that, a writer must work at creating vivid descriptions. A well written description is one that makes readers see, feel and even smell exactly what the author had in mind. This writer is of the opinion that a good writer of description must be very good with imagination. They further explained that the student should be able to close his/her eyes and try to see exactly what is being described; "try to recall sights, sounds, colours and even their feeling of the topic." By so doing one will work into details in the describing.

Wiener and Eisenbery (1987) dwell on the readers' perspective stating that readers of descriptive writing acknowledge the power of image, phrase or sentences that provide an indelible sensation in language. The image may appeal to the sense of sight with colours and with action, portrayed by energetic verbs. To bring readers to sense what they themselves sense, writers turn to the language of the sense to words that convey sight, sound, smell, taste and touch.

According to Skwire and Wiiener (1975), when most students receive an assignment on a description of a person, place or thing; their first impulse is often to describe what the person, place or thing looks like. To them, although many excellent descriptions do just that, they think that deciding on the subject and how to treat it, one does not need to limit his choices so severely. Emory (1995) also

states that descriptive essays use words, pictures etc. to recreate a person, place, and thing or feeling in the mind of the reader. He goes further to say that to paint vivid word, picture, writers use sensory language to appeal to the senses of the sight, hearing, touch smell and taste. It is in the light of the above researches that this researcher would like to improve upon student teachers' descriptive essay teaching skills.

The Structure of an Essay or Composition

Forlini (1987) gives the part of essay as the title, introduction, body paragraphs and conclusion. Forlini further explains that the title catches the reader's interest and gives a general idea of the topic. The introduction introduces the topic and gives the background information needed by the reader to understand what follows. It makes the reader eager to read what is in the body. The last sentence of the introduction often states the main idea of the composition. The body paragraphs present specific information that supports main ideas. Each body paragraph usually focuses on one part of the main idea. They are organized in a logical order. The conclusion reminds the reader of the main ideas. It brings the composition to a close in a striking, memorable way, sometimes by adding some unusual information.

Owusu-Akyaw (1997) agrees with Forlini on the parts of essay. He emphasized that the introduction part of an essay should be brief and straight to

the point, focusing the reader's attention directly on the topic. He further elaborates that the body is the general development of the essay and it shows the writer's understanding of the topic under discussion. He went on to say that the body usually consists of a number of paragraphs, each dealing with a specific point and such points arranged logically and sequentially. He stressed that the conclusion being the last part of the essay should be the summary of the points.

Winterowd and Murray (1985) focus on ways of achieving a good introduction, body and conclusion of an essay in a sequence of paragraphs for easy reading. In writing the introduction, Wintecrowd and Murray mention that, writers should realize that, the introduction is usually the first paragraph of the composition and the purpose of the introductory paragraph is to present the basic idea that will be discussed as well as to interest the reader. With the body of the essay, they identify that, it is the main part of the paper. The purpose of the body is to develop topic stated in the introduction by presenting information and illustrations about it. The body paragraphs should follow a 'logical organization' whereby there is an ordering of thoughts and ideas that make sense. The concluding part of an essay according to them, is to bring the reader back to the main idea of the paper by restating it in a new way. A good conclusion gives the reader a sense of completion of having come to the end of a discussion. Raimes (1983) observes in this context that writers ask themselves questions such as how do they write and how do they get started? All writers need to decide how to

begin and organize the task. Writers need to realize that what they first put down on paper is not necessarily the finished product but the setting out of their ideas. She adds those teachers who use the process approach give their students two crucial supports; time for students to try out ideas and feedback on the content of what they have in their draft.

Hedges (1988) also says that the process of writing essay is often described as consisting of three major activities or groups of activities: Pre-writing (brain storming) writing stage and re-writing (revising) and editing the stages in the writing process are recursive rather than linear. The nature of the 'process' depends on the purpose of writing, the length of the text, the complexity of the ideas and availability of time to the writer. Parrot (1993) explains further that in practice these stages are rarely discrete. There may be overlap between them and there may be regressions to earlier stages. Goosik (2004) also thinks that process of writing essay encourages students to understand writing as a process that comprises series of interrelated activities and strategies including invention (brain storming, free writing etc) drafty and deviation.

Gardner and Johnson (1997) state that when writing, students work through stages of the writing process and that the creation of writing occurs in basically five stages: pre-writing, drafting, revising, editing and publishing. They explained further that pre-writing is the planning and idea gathering stage. Drafting refers to time spent composing a rough draft. Revision is the process of

improving the draft where students re-write their work and share it with a partner or a small group; the student can make changes in writing based on the feedback from his peers. Editing is the process of correcting mechanical accuracy in variety of ways when the work is in final form. They added that students of all ages move back and forth among these stages while writing and that stages mentioned are not lockstep or segmental

Stone (1995) puts it that writing is learning how to write by writing. He stresses that this current emphasis on writing instruction focuses on the process of creating rather than the product. Tompkins and Haskissan as cited in Margo (1999) outlines the following approach to teaching writing process: students select their own topic, teacher instructs students about the writing process, the students draft, share ideas, proof read and edit. Graves (1983) also thinks that writing is a process which has many beginning points that can begin as an unconscious rehearsal. Composition he said, refers to everything a writer does from the true first words put on paper until all drafts are completed.

Cowhurst (1988) states that teachers can help students to write more effectively getting them to examine their own creative processes. He added that although the process of writing is essentially distinctive, writers usually work through a few basic phases. Students can be shown the different stages in the production of a piece of writing and be shown the basic phases of the writing process: pre-writing, drafting, revising (editing or proof reading) and presenting.

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In addition he thinks that the writing process is the thinking process that goes on during writing. Emig (1971) states that writing is a messy process. It is not linear, it is recursive, loop rather than straight line, while the writer writes, the plans are revised, and then write again.

According to Beaven (1997) one of the most common problems students face when writing is the organization. She explains that when they are asked to write, many students simply begin by writing a rough draft. She added that they often rewrite that draft several times before they copy it neatly in the required format to turn it in. To her, this method is problematic and that not only does it take only a considerable longer time to write an essay this way but the organization is fragmentally done because the student has only a vague idea from the onset of where he/she is going. She added that this method may cause students to loose many good ideas that occur to them whiles they are writing because they do not remember them later in the writing process. Rather she emphasized that by practicing the jotting down of ideas on an outline during the writing of the rough draft (by referring back to it and by adding to it), students can avoid this problem and significantly improve their writing speed and organization. She stresses that the outline which includes drafting, brainstorming, editing and so on, is crucially important in that it saves the writer and perfect organization is got, but it is only a tool to an end of a finished essay which is well organized, coherent and thorough.

Support for Teacher Trainees.

Greenwald (1992) recommends sequencing assignments as a way of helping trainees to build on what they know. They say assignment not only provides an opportunity to assess student's performance, but by allowing students to apply and practice the course's critical skills as they are also invaluable teaching tool. This teaching function can be promoted by creating evaluation criteria appropriate to the assignment purpose and by the feedback provided when the assignment is returned. Sequencing an assignment, that is designing a series of assignments which build on and reinforce each other, is also an effective means of teaching critical skills since staged tasks allow students to apply what they have learned from the instructor's comments on previous assignments to subsequent ones. Ennis Williams Cosby Foundation identified ten things teachers can do to help pupils in the classroom;

1. Establish a classroom that promotes learning with a framework of attitudes and values;

2. Send a clear message;

3. Teach for understanding;

4. Use multi sensory teaching techniques and active learning strategies;

5. Provide clear, explicit structure for the class time, space, materials and course of study;

6. Provide frequent assignment and meaningful feedback and evaluation;

7. Offer alternatives;

8. Involve and respect students as central partners in learning; and

9. Intervene early and effectively with the individual student who is having

   difficulty learning.

Stuart, Kunje, & Lefoka (2000) suggest that there is the need for careful design of most appropriate forms of professional development for new college tutors. They added that one set of decisions involve subject upgrading with general professional educational structure for college tutors. The structure should include orientation when they move from schools to colleges and provide academic upgrading. The upgrading should make the tutors feel confident, both in the relevant subject areas and in their understanding of professional theory and practice.

Prints are also part of the modern environment that both children and adults experience and interact with daily, and for many years now, environmental print has been identified as one of the cheapest and available source of teaching learning materials that can be tapped to aid language teaching at all levels since new vocabularies are usually found in these prints. According to Crystal (1997) environmental prints in language began very long ago in newspapers, then later on signboards etc. According to Goodman (2001) there is no single road to becoming literate. She added that recipe books, food wrappers packages and many others form part of the environmental print. Children should therefore be

immersed with prints since what they see around them become part of their daily lives and this will offer them the opportunity to engage in forms of reading and writing.

Burns, Roe and Ross (1990) say another advantage of using environmental print is that, it is free and readily available. By this they feel teachers must use the environmental prints and encourage students to share them since they are easy to come by. Reinforcing the above, Searfoss and Readence (1994) say that environmental print may form part of the 'stuff' of early reading experience in school … bringing environmental print into the classroom activities. As a result, the vocabulary items that are obtained from environmental print can be used for language lessons to develop and improve on students' literacy skills and competency in the secondary school. Children learn about written language in an environment enriched with meaningful messages and functional print. Searfoss and Readence point out that formal teaching of writing and reading should not occur in school but rather, the environment can be prepared with planned activities to expose children to language in various forms. Gunn, Simmons and Kameeni (1995) echoing the usefulness of environmental print state that by creating a literacy rich environment for students, teachers give students the opportunities and skills necessary for growth in literacy development through the exposure of written language. It is worth knowing that the physical arrangement of the classroom is also crucial to developing literacy growth in students

Neumans and Rosko (1997) state that written language used for label and signs in the natural environment enhance reading strategies for students. These signs and labels also referred to as environmental print, help students to make connections between information given them in the form of writing. Arthur, Moore and James (1989) say that constant exposure to print especially images, pictures, logo, crest etc, without words enable students to ask questions about their environment and these give them the opportunity to express themselves thereby improving their literacy competence. A print rich classroom environment is a vital component for improving students' literacy development and competence. Surrounding students with books and functional prints in the classroom could lead to what the students do at home. Students' interest in reading is stimulated by what they see around them.

Burns, Roe, and Ross (1999) want to see teachers establish print rich environment in schools so that they can display attractive materials that will entice students to interact with the print they say: By establishing print rich environment, teachers can encourage children to become aware of the purpose for writing and reading. Alternatively, display books that invite children to reading and writing materials, at the play centres encourage them to write. They continue to discuss how the teachers are critical in the creation of print rich environment.

According to Whitehurst (2003) the role of the teacher is to encourage all attempting at reading, writing and speaking; allowing students of varying ability

to experience the different functions and use of literacy activities. She continues to say that, teachers use a variety of methods of communicating with students by asking questions, labeling objects and experiences with new vocabularies and offering practice to help students remember and generalize new concepts and skills. In another development she states that teachers can plan activities so that students have opportunity to integrate and extend their literacy knowledge by reading aloud, listening to other students read aloud and listening to tape recordings and video tapes in reading corners. The statement above indicates that teachers can create reading corners where both electronic and book materials would be available for students to interact with at every point in time. When the teachers teach students how to use these materials throughout the classroom, it enhances the reading skills of the students. This shows that the teacher has a duty to encourage and generate the interest of students in reading and writing.

Goodman (2001) says that there is no single road to becoming literate. Those who are not aware of the useful nature of environmental prints are very skeptical about the use so they fail to draw students' attention to them. Again Goodman is of the view that merely putting environmental prints in the classroom will not help the students to learn language. It is therefore important for teachers to draw students' attention to them.

Appraisal of Reviewed Literature.

This chapter has looked at available literature relating to developing the competency base of teacher trainees in writing composition in Ghanaian language. Forlini (1987) and Montigonery (1993) agreed that essay writing is putting down of information in a logical order to express thoughts in a clear manner. Robert (1985) stated that thinking, researching and reading should be done before the first draft of the essay. This emphasized on effective preparation on the topic before the actual writing.

Sakyi-Baidoo, (2000) Adam, (2008) and Ogunsawo *et al* (2003) all emphasized four main types of essays. The types of essays are narrative, descriptive, expository and argumentative. Owusu-Akyaw (1997) explained expository essay to include debate while Backer and Brize (1990) put debate on argumentative essay. Emory(1995), Reinking (1996), Arnold *et al* (2002*)* agreed that descriptive essay should make the reader see, feel, touch and even smell exactly what the writer is writing about. Tsadidey (2001) emphasized that the writer of descriptive essay should have knowledge of the intended audience in order to make a suitable descriptive essay. Adam (2008) however, extended the forms of essay to include letter writing, report writing, creative or reflective writing.

Owusu-Akyaw (1997) agreed with Forlini (1987) on parts of essay. The parts are introduction, main body and conclusion. They all agreed that the

introduction of the essay directs the reader's attention to the topic. The body is made up of the main ideas of the essay while the conclusion gives the summary of the essay. Gardiner and Johnson (1997) however identified five stages in essay writing. They continued that the five stages are not segmented but are related. Beaven (1997) was concerned with the problems students faced in the organization of their essays. The problems include forgetting of essential points during the write-up. She however concluded that with constant practice students could do well to write a well organised, coherent and purposeful essay. Adam (2008) like Beaven (1997) stressed on rich content, orderly presentation, correct use of language and mechanical error free as features of a good essay.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

This study aimed at examining the competency base of the teacher trainee in Asante Twi composition writing. Means of developing such competencies to be used effectively at the basic school were also suggested. This chapter described the methodology of the study. It covered the research design, population, the sample and sampling procedure, instrument, data collection procedure and data analysis

Research Design

The descriptive survey design was used for the study. The design involved collecting data through questionnaire, interview and students' class exercise to suggest answers to the research questions raised in the study. In descriptive surveys, the events or conditions either exist or have occurred and the researcher merely selects the relevant variables for the analysis of the relationships and reports the way things are (Bartels, 1997; Gay 1992). The research design was therefore suitable for the study because I collected data through questionnaire, interviews and used class exercises done by the teacher trainees to answer the research questions concerning the level of competencies of the teacher trainees in writing of composition in Asante Twi.

Frankel and Wallen (2000) indicated that there are some difficulties involved in the use of survey design. These are:-

a. Ensuring that the questions to be answered are clear and not misleading;

b. Getting respondent to answer questions thoughtfully and honestly.

c. Getting a sufficient number of the questionnaire completed and returned so that meaningful analysis can be made.

To deal with the first difficulty, a pre-test of the newly developed instruments were administered at Offinso College of Education to test the validity of the instruments. Corrections were made before they were used for the final study.

To get the respondents to answer the questions thoughtfully and honestly I explained to the respondents exactly what was needed from them and allowed them to go through the instruments and asked questions for clarification before they answered them. The copies of the questionnaire that were sent out were collected personally by me after their completion.

Population

The population for the study consisted of the seven public Colleges of Education in the Ashanti Region. They are Akrokerri College of Education, St Louis College of Education, Wesley College of Education, Offinso College of Education, Agogo Presbyterian College of Education, St Monica's College of Education and Mampong College of Education. The entire number of students

who study Asante Twi as elective subject in all the seven public Colleges of Education and the Twi tutors in the colleges constituted the target population.

Sample and Sampling Procedure

The study was carried out in four out of the seven Colleges of Education in the Ashanti region. The four colleges were picked through a random sampling technique. The target population of the trainees in the four sampled Colleges of Education was two hundred and forty. Sixty from each of the four Colleges of Education and each member reading Twi as an elective subject. The sixty trainees from each college were also selected through a random sampling technique since the students have similar characteristics. A sample of twenty trainees from each of the four selected Colleges of Education was picked using the systematic random sampling technique.

The systematic sampling technique enables the researcher to select the sample from the sampling frame at regular intervals. To do this, a sampling fraction was calculated. Sampling fraction = Actual sample size ÷ Total population. In the case of this study the sampling fraction is given by $80 \div 240 = 1/3$. This means after the first sample is selected using a random sampling technique, the other elements are selected at equal interval of three. To do this, the individuals in the sampling frame were given numbers. The numbers were written on pieces of paper, folded and mixed with each other. A student was called to

pick at random for the first number. Starting from the first number every individual whose number falls at the third interval was selected to join the sample. This was done in each of the sampled colleges to select twenty students.

The systematic random sampling was used to enable each member of the target population have equal chances of becoming a member of the sample. A total sample of eighty trainees who were reading Asante Twi as elective was selected for the study. A total of eight tutors were used for the study, two from each of the four selected Colleges of Education. Purposive sampling was used to select two tutors from each college. The first two tutors with topmost experience and level of education were selected for the study.

Instrument

The instruments for the study were questionnaire, structured interview schedule and work done by the teacher trainees. The researcher settled on the use of these instruments because they were the mostly used instruments in similar studies (Edzii, 2000; Stuart, Kunje & Lefoka, 2000). Questionnaire includes all techniques of data collection in which each person is asked to respond to the same set of questions in a pre-determined order (de Vaus, 2002). This explains that a questionnaire includes structured interviews and telephone questionnaires as well as those in which the questions are answered without an interviewer being present. The questionnaire was administered on the teacher trainees. The structured

interview refers to a situation where interviewee answers questions that have been prepared and followed by the interviewer. Answers provided by interviewee do not have influence on questions to be asked. The structured interview schedules were used on the various Ghanaian Language (Twi) tutors in the sampled colleges since the interview would allow the tutors to express themselves more than a questionnaire.

The questionnaire used to collect data for the research was made up of three parts. The first part solicited from the respondents what they knew about composition writing. The first part of the questionnaire consisted of five items. Respondents were expected to tick (✓) the appropriate column that corresponds with their answer. The second part elicited the problems the trainees encounter when writing composition themselves. The second part of the questionnaire was made up of five questions. Respondents were asked to tick (✓) the suitable column that corresponds with their response. The third part asked the trainees to come out with challenges they encounter and the support they would need to make them competent in writing of Twi composition. Open-ended questions were asked to allow respondents to come out with their views. The open-ended questions were six. Respondents were asked to supply the appropriate answers in the written form.

The questionnaire allowed for both subjective and objective data through the use of open-ended and closed-ended items respectively. The open-ended

questions allow respondents to give answers in their own way (Fink. 2003a). Closed-ended questions provide a number of alternative answers from which the respondent is instructed to choose (Dillman, 2000). Questionnaire was comparatively less cumbersome to administer and less time consuming as compared to other methods like observations. Data collected were also easy to analyse since they were coded and entered into a computer for the needed analysis. All these made the use of questionnaire suitable for the study considering the volume of work ahead of the researcher and that of the respondents.

The interview schedule for the tutors made it possible to have the views and expertise of the tutors in the development of the competency base of the teacher trainees in composition writing in Asante Twi. Structured interview was used to elicit information from the Ghanaian language tutors. It had two parts. The questions in each part were open-ended to allow tutors to come out with their opinions based on their expertise and experience. The first part asked the respondents to state among other things what they think are the causes of the teacher trainees' inability to write good composition in Asante Twi. The second part asked the respondents to make suggestions on how such problems could be solved. Each part consisted of five questions making ten questions on the whole. The use of teacher trainees' work served as empirical evidence of their level of competency at the beginning of the study and directed the researcher to areas where trainees needed much attention to be focused.

Validity and Reliability of the Research Instrument

Validity is concerned with whether the findings are really about what they appear to be about. Nachmias (1985) says validity is concerned with the question 'Is one measuring what one thinks one is measuring?'Robson (2002) has also charted the threats to validity as history of the activity, testing, instrumentation, mortality and maturation of the study. Foddy (1994) discusses validity of questionnaire in terms of the questions and answers making sense. In particular, he emphasizes that the question must be understood by the respondent in the way intended by the researcher and the answer given by the respondent must be understood by the researcher in the way intended by the respondent.

To ensure that the questionnaire and the interview schedules measure what the researcher intended to measure, they were given to colleague tutors to assess the contents based on the research questions. They were also given to my supervisor for assistance. Necessary modifications were made after discussing the questionnaire and interview schedules with the colleague tutors and my supervisor taking into consideration the research questions and purpose of the research. This type of validity is a content validity since it is concerned with the representativeness or sampling adequacy of the content of a measuring instrument. (Burns, 2000)

Reliability refers to the extent to which data collection techniques or analysis procedures will yield consistent results. It can be assessed by posing the following three questions (Easterby-Smith, Thorpe, & Lowe 2002).

1. Will the measures yield the same results on other occasions?

2. Will similar observations be reached by other observers?

3. Is there transparency in how sense was made from the raw data?

Robson (2002) as quoted by Saunders, *et al* (2007) asserts that there may be four threats to reliability. These are participant error, participant bias, observer error and observer bias. To test for reliability of the instrument, the test-retest method was used. The instrument was administered on a sample of elective Twi students of Offinso College of Education. The responses were quantified and noted. After two weeks the same instrument was administered again on the same set of students from Offinso College of Education for the second time under the same condition. The responses were also noted. The two sets of responses were correlated using Pearson r statistics. The coefficient of correlation obtained was 0.78. The result indicated that the instrument was very reliable.

Data Collection Procedure

I obtained an introductory letter from my Department, the Institute of Education, UCC. The required number of questionnaire and the structured interview schedules were prepared. I went to the Colleges of Education selected

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for the study one after the other to personally to administer the questionnaire to all respondents and conducted interviews with the selected Twi tutors of the colleges. In each of the colleges, I introduced myself to the Principal of the college and informed the Principal of my mission and purpose of the study. The Principal in turn introduced me to the teaching staff and specifically to the Twi tutors. After that I explained my mission and purpose of the study. I then booked interview appointment with the Twi tutors for the interview. I solicited assistance of the Twi tutors to have access to the elective Twi students and explained the questionnaire to the students.

I gave out the questionnaire to students to look through and asked questions for clarification. I negotiated for a time, went back to collect the questionnaire and conducted the interviews on the agreed days. After the collection of questionnaire, students' exercises on Twi composition and conducting of interviews, letter of appreciation was sent to the respective colleges for the assistance received. It took a month to go round the sampled colleges of education to collect the data.

Data Analysis Procedure

Analysis of data commenced with the editing of the research data collected. According to Amedahe (2006), the intention of editing the data is to detect errors as far as possible and to reduce errors in the data collected to the

barest minimum. He further explained that editing involves correcting mistakes in the data where necessary, and deciding whether some of the data collected should be deleted or kept for data analysis later. After the editing, the responses for the questions were fed into a computer for analysis. Responses to the open-ended questions were grouped based on similarity for analysis. The data were organized in frequency tables and percentages to enhance analysis through the use of Excel package.

CHAPTER FOUR

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The study assesses the competency base of teacher trainees in the writing of composition in Ghanaian language at the basic level of education. This chapter provides results and discussions of the study. The respondents were elective Twi students sampled from four Colleges of Education, namely Akrokerri, Wesley, St Louis and St. Monica's Colleges of Education. The data collected ranged from teacher trainee's understanding of various types of compositions, stages in writing composition, support needed by teacher trainees, challenges and suggestions needed to make teacher trainees competent in the writing of Twi composition. The data were organized in frequency tables with the percentage of each item shown.

General Information on Respondents

The information on respondents covered the educational background and experiences of the respondents as far as teaching and learning of the Twi language is concerned. For the sake of convenience, related columns were put together in the following manner : 'Strongly Agree' and 'Agree' were put together as 'Agree 'while 'Strongly Disagree 'and' Disagree' were put together as 'Disagree.' The tables for the analysis were presented in that manner. A cut-off point of 50% and above was set by the researcher to help identify the major findings.

Table 1

Distribution of Respondents on Background Experience in Twi Language

Item	Elective Twi at S.S.S	No Elective Twi at S. S. S	Total
Teacher Trainees	19 (23.8%)	61 (76.2%)	80 (100%)
Tutors	1st Degree in Ghanaian language 6 (65%)	2nd Degree in Ghanaian language 2 (25%)	8 (100%)
Teaching experience in Ghanaian language	X < 5 years 3 (37.5%)	X ≥ 5 years 5 (62.5%)	8 (100%)

Source: Field survey 2010   Where X is the number of years of teaching.

Table 1 shows that only nineteen out the eighty students sampled for the study had offered Twi language at the Senior Secondary (High) School. This indicates that as much as 76.2% of the sampled trainees offering elective Twi language did not offer Twi language at the Senior High School level. The tutors sampled for the study were eight. All the eight had first degree in Ghanaian language. Out of the number only two, representing 25% have read Master's degree in Ghanaian language. Three out of the eight tutors have less than five

years experience in the teaching of Twi language whilst the remaining five representing 62.5% have five or more years in the teaching of Twi language.

Research Question 1: Do Teacher Trainees Understand the Various Types of Composition at the Basic Level of Education?

Research question one which was "Do teacher trainees understand the various types of composition at the basic level of education?" had only one item in the questionnaire given to teacher trainees. The responses have been shown in Table 2.

Table 2

Assisting Teacher Trainees to Understand Various Types of Composition by Tutors.

Item	Agree	Disagree	Total
Tutors guide teacher trainees to understand various types of composition.	68 (85%)	12 (15%)	80 (100%)

Source: Field survey 2010.

From Table 2 sixty-eight respondents representing 85.0% agreed that their tutors helped them to understand various types of essay indicating that tutors are doing well to equip teacher trainees with knowledge on various types of

composition being taught at the basic level of education. The study revealed that tutors do explain and work on types of composition with teacher trainees. This came to light when 85% of the student respondents affirmed the statement on various types of composition being taught at the basic level of education. From the study it is clear that teacher trainees understand the various types of composition at the basic level of education. As explained by Sakyi Baidoo, Adam and Ogunsawo, *et al* (2003) that there are four main types of essays namely: narrative, descriptive, expository and argumentative essays, the study confirmed that teacher trainees are taken through all such four main types as stated in the literature review and teacher trainees do understand.

Research Question 2: Do Teacher Trainees have Knowledge about the Various Stages of Asante Twi Composition Writing irrespective of the Type?

Research question two had three items in the questionnaire. It looked how tutors assist teacher trainees to have knowledge on the stages of writing composition. The responses have been organised in Table 3.

Table 3

Assistance from Tutors on Writing of Ghanaian Language Composition

Item	Agree	Disagree	Total
Trainees are taught stages of composition writing	42 52.6%	38 47.4%	80 100%
Trainees are taught parts of composition	58 72.8%	22 27.5%	80 100%
There are enough exercises for trainees to ensure constant practice.	56 70%	24 30%	80 100%

Source: Field survey 2010.

Table three shows that on stages of composition writing forty two representing 52.6% responded affirmatively that tutors do teach them stages of composition writing. However the remaining thirty eight trainees representing 47.4% disagreed. The study indicates that tutors need to do more than what they have been doing since as many as thirty eight out of eighty disagreed with the statement that tutors take trainees through stages of composition writing. On the issue of teacher trainees being taught parts of composition writing, fifty eight respondents representing 72.8% agreed to the statement. This indicates that tutors

do teach teacher trainees on parts of composition. On the issue of enough exercises given to trainees to ensure constant practice, fifty six representing 70% of the respondents agreed while twenty four representing 30% did not agree. This also indicates that tutors give and mark exercises and is confirmed in the teacher trainees' exercise books collected.

. The stages of essay writing which tutors teach teacher trainees are pre-writing, writing and re-writing. These stages confirmed what Hedges (1988) had stated, pre-writing, writing and re-writing stages. The study revealed that the stages in essay writing are not discrete, they overlap. This confirms Parrot (1933) that the stages in practice are rarely discrete. The stages overlap and sometimes regress to earlier stages. The study indicates that teacher trainees do have average knowledge about the stages of writing composition in Ghanaian language because 52.6% of the s respondents agreed to the statement in the questionnaire

Research question 3: Do teacher trainees have access to support services to make them competent?

The results of research question three are presented in Tables 4, 5 and 6. Thirteen items dealing with various issues on research question three were presented. The items have been categorized under various headings. The presentation considers the frequencies of the responses and their percentages.

Table.4

 Availability of Teacher Trainee Support Services

Item	Agree	Disagree	Total
Tutors always use TLMs in their lessons	24 30 %	56 70%	80 100%
There are enough textbooks on writing of Twi composition at the basic school in the college.	12 15%	68 85%	80 100%
Basic school Twi syllabus is thoroughly explained to teacher trainees by tutors.	43 53.8%	37 46.2%	80 100%
Use of proverbs and other literary devices by tutors in lessons.	73 91.3%	7 8.7%	80 100%

Source: Field survey 2010.

Table 4 depicts the responses of the study on availability of support services to teacher trainees as far as the writing of composition in Ghanaian language (Twi) is concerned. On the issue of tutors using teaching learning

materials (TLMs) in their lessons to support trainees only 30% agreed. The rest disagreed to the statement. This indicates that most tutors of Ghanaian language do not use TLMs in their lessons. Arthur *et al (*1989) had said that constant exposure to print especially images, pictures, logo, crest, etc. without words enable students to ask questions about their environment but tutors do not use TLMs to facilitate understanding. On availability of textbooks on Ghanaian language composition writing only 15% of the respondents affirmed it. The use of proverbs and literary devices to support trainees received 91.3% affirmation. On explanation of basic school Ghanaian language syllabus to trainees 53.8% of the respondents agreed. From the study it is clear that Colleges of Education lack Ghanaian language textbooks on composition writing. The study however shows that Ghanaian language tutors use a lot of proverbs and literary devices in their lessons to enable trainees emulate.

Table 5

Specialised Professional Pedagogy for Trainees to Emulate

Item	Agree	Disagree	Total
Trainees are taught how to prepare Twi TLMs	45 56.3%	35 43.7%	80 100%
Trainees are taught how to use TLMs in Ghanaian language lessons.	37 45.9%	43 54.1%	80 100%
Tutors always motivate trainees to learn Twi through rewards like clapping, etc.	64 80%	16 20%	80 100%
Tutors always mark exercises and discuss the correct answers with trainees.	73 91.3%	7 8.7	80 100%

Source: Field survey 2010.

Table 5 looks at the specialized professional pedagogy used by tutors to enable teacher trainees emulate. The response on preparation of teaching learning materials by trainees under guidance of tutors received 56.3% while guidance on the use of TLMs received 45.9% affirmation. On marking of exercises and discussions by tutors 91.3% agreed to the statement. Also sixty four respondents representing 80% agreed that tutors motivate teacher trainees to learn Twi through rewards. The study indicates that tutors do motivate teacher trainees to learn Twi. The study also points out that tutors do mark and discuss the correct answers to exercises with trainees effectively. Greenwald (1992) has recommended sequencing assignment as a way of helping trainees to build on what they know. The exercises tutors give are in line with Greenwald's recommendation. However the result indicates that tutors' guidance on preparation and use of TLMs by trainees is inadequate.

Table 6

Rating on how Trainees are Taught how to Write Composition in Ghanaian Language

Item	Often	Not Often	Not at all	Total
Correct spelling	75	5	0	80
	93.7%	6.3%		100%
Correct register	76	4	0	80
	95%	5.0%		100%
Correct grammar	78	2	0	80
	97.5%	2.5%		100%
Correct punctuation marks	78	2	0	80
	97.5%	2.5%		100%

Source: Field survey 2010.

Table 6 shows the ratings by trainees on how they are taught how to write composition in Ghanaian language. On the item "correct spelling' 93.7% of the entire respondent's attested to 'often'. On the item 'correct register' 95% attested that their tutors taught them correct register.. On the item 'correct grammar' 97.5% of the respondents accepted that tutors give trainees a lot of guidance on grammar to enable them use appropriate grammar at any given piece of composition. On the item 'punctuation marks' 97.5% of the respondents affirmed that they were often taught by their tutors. The study shows that correct spelling of words in Ghanaian language, correct register, correct grammar and punctuation marks needed to write good composition are effectively carried out in Colleges of Education. Adam (2003) and Beaven (1997) stressed on rich content, orderly presentation, correct use of language and mechanical error free as features of a good essay and Ghanaian language tutors have done exactly that.

Research question 4: What are the Challenges Teacher Trainees face as far as writing of Composition in Ghanaian Language is concerned?

The results of this question are presented in Table 7 in the form of frequencies and percentages of the responses. Other relevant responses are reported under suitable headings.

Table 7

Rating of Challenges Faced in the Learning of Composition Writing in Ghanaian Language

Item	Major Challenge	Minor Challenge	Not a Challenge	Total
Lack of grammar textbooks	69 86.2%	11 13.8%	0	80 100%
Lack of qualified tutors	2 2.6%	78 97,4%	0	80 100%
Lack of interest in Ghanaian language	64 80%	0 0%	16 20%	80 100%
Lack of motivation from GES	79 98.7%	1 1.3%	0	80 100%
Lack of appropriate teaching learning materials	72 90%	8 10.0%	0	80 100%

Source: Field survey 2010.

Table 7 shows the rating of challenges faced by teacher trainees in the learning of Twi composition writing. On lack of Twi textbooks 69 respondents representing 86.2% rated it as a main challenge to them. None of the respondents rated lack of textbooks as not being a challenge. From the study lack of Twi

textbook is therefore a challenge being faced by teacher trainees. On lack of qualified Ghanaian language tutors, seventy eight respondents representing 97.4% rated it as a minor challenge. No respondent rated it as not being a challenge. From the study one can say that lack of qualified Ghanaian language tutors is not a major challenge to the successful development of teacher trainees in Ghanaian language.

On lack of interest in Ghanaian language by trainees, sixty four representing 80% classified it a major challenge. This indicates that lack of interest in Ghanaian language is a challenge to the teacher trainee. On lack of motivation, all the respondents except one classified it as a major challenge facing the teacher trainees. Ninety percent of the respondents classified lack of appropriate TLMs as another major challenge faced by the trainees. Based on the study it is clear that lack of teaching learning materials is a challenge to the teacher trainees.

Ghanaian Language Tutors' Responses to Interview

The study involved the Ghanaian language tutors through a guided oral interview. The interview was carried out on eight tutors, two tutors from each of the four Colleges of Education. I interviewed the tutors individually using an interview schedule. The responses were summarized as follows.

Responses to Ghanaian Language Syllabus

The respondents agreed that the Ghanaian language syllabus was comprehensive enough to cater for the needs of the teacher trainee. The syllabus covers spelling, grammar, idioms, punctuations, types of essay, etc. Six of the respondents representing 75% suggested the need to include literature in the trainees' syllabus. This would help the trainees to handle the Junior High School literature with ease.

Responses to Pedagogy Training

The respondents agreed that both the individual and group methods of teaching they use in class assist trainees to develop the needed skills to write composition in Twi. The methods implored specifically include 'True for me true for you' 'Fill in the blanks' and others. All the respondents recommended the use of rewards like marks, clapping, etc. as effective ways to motivate both adult and child learners. The preparation of teaching learning materials in class with trainees serves as a way through which trainees learn to prepare needed teaching learning materials, all the respondents emphasized. The respondents also agreed that the use of teaching learning materials while teaching serves as a practical way of guiding trainees to effectively use teaching learning materials.

However the respondents lamented on unavailability of audio-visual aids in our Colleges of Education. They said that audio-visual aids enhance teaching of

composition writing. The respondents also agreed that the on-campus teaching practice segment of teacher training helps tutors straighten trainees' pedagogy before the trainees go out of college. The respondents continued that to ensure continuous trainees' professional development, trainees are assigned to exercises found in the few Twi composition textbooks available. They said a lot of exercises are given on imagination of scene and logical presentation of events

.

Challenges in Teaching Composition

All the tutors interviewed lamented on lack of clear effective language policy to serve as a guide on the use of appropriate language at the basic level of education. Lack of teaching learning materials especially audio–visual aids to facilitate the teaching of composition in Ghanaian Language. Another challenge identified by the tutors was lack of motivation, for instance lack of scholarships from Ghana Education Service to Ghanaian language teachers to further their education. Workshops which serve as platform for Ghanaian language teachers to share ideas and update their skills are hard to come by. All these hamper the smooth training of the teacher trainee in Ghanaian language composition writing.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This chapter presents the overview of the study, summary of the research findings, conclusions and recommendations based on the analysis of the data collected. In addition, the chapter offers suggestion for future research.

Overview of the Study

Every College of Education offers at least one of the Ghanaian languages especially the indigenous language spoken in the community in which the institution is situated as a compulsory subject for the first year and elective subject the second year. This is to equip the teacher trainees with the skills and knowledge needed to impart the language to the children they would handle in the community especially during the "out" segment of the 3-year initial teacher training programme. The extent to which the teacher trainee would excel in the indigenous language would mostly depend on the trainee's knowledge, experience and how well the trainee is prepared to study the language during the first two year stay on campus.

The study assessed the competency base of the teacher trainee in the writing of composition in the Ghanaian language. The assessment looked at how well equipped is the teacher trainee in understanding various types of essays,

stages in essay writing and other skills needed to write good composition. Challenges faced by the teacher trainee in the writing of composition in Ghanaian language are also assessed. The study population was elective Twi students in Colleges of Education in Ashanti region of Ghana.

The descriptive survey method was used for the study. A sample of teacher trainees and tutors in Ghanaian language unit of each of the following Colleges of Education were used for the study. Akrokerri College of Education, Akrokerri, Saint Monica's College of Education; Ashanti Mampong, Wesley College of Education, Kumasi and Saint Louis College of Education, Kumasi. Random and systematic sampling techniques were employed for the study. The instruments used for the study included questionnaire, interview and trainees' class work. The questionnaire and the interview were designed based on the relevant literature review. Frequencies and percentages were used to analyse the data collected.

Summary of Findings

The following are the findings that emerged from the study.

1. The teacher trainees understand the four main types of composition. The types are descriptive, narrative, expository and argumentative essays.

2. a. The teacher trainees have adequate knowledge in stages of composition writing. The stages are pre-writing, writing and rewriting.

b. The teacher trainees have knowledge in parts of composition writing.

c. The teacher trainees are guided on the fundamentals in writing composition. The fundamentals are correct spelling, register, grammar and punctuation marks.

3. a. The Ghanaian language tutors do not use a lot of teaching learning materials in their lessons for the teacher trainees to emulate.

b. Textbooks on Twi composition writing are scarce in Colleges of Education.

c. The basic school syllabus on Ghanaian language is explained to teacher trainees.

d. Tutors use proverbs and other literary devices in lessons for teacher trainees to emulate.

e. The teacher trainees are taught how to prepare teaching learning materials but not adequately taught how to use them in Ghanaian language lessons.

f. The teacher trainees have a lot of exercises for practice.

g. Tutors do mark exercises and discuss them with the teacher trainees.

4. a. There is lack of grammar textbooks on Ghanaian language in Colleges of Education.

b. Lack of qualified Ghanaian language tutors is not a major challenge in Colleges of Education.

c. There is lack of motivation in the teaching and learning of Ghanaian

language at Colleges of Education.

d. There is lack of appropriate teaching learning materials for Ghanaian

language units in Colleges of Education.

Conclusions

The findings of the study revealed that teacher trainees do understand the four main types of composition. This is a confirmation of what Sekyi-Baidoo (2000), Adam (2008) and Ogunsawo *et al* (2003) have all emphasized in the literature review that there are four main types of composition. The findings also showed that teacher trainees have adequate knowledge in the writing of composition in the Ghanaian language. This includes stages in composition writing, parts of composition, correct register, spelling, grammar and punctuation marks. The findings also indicated that teacher trainees could use appropriate proverbs and other literary devices in the composition they write.

The findings also revealed that teacher trainees do a lot of exercises which are marked and discussed by their tutors. Also tutors explain the basic education Ghanaian language syllabus to teacher trainees to enable them be conversant with what they would teach when they finish the program. Based on the findings it is clear that, the teacher trainee is adequately prepared to write good composition

and could therefore function well at the basic school as far as basic school Ghanaian language is concerned.

However the study has indicated that the teacher trainees face the challenges of lack of Twi textbooks, appropriate teaching learning materials and lack of motivation to learn Ghanaian language. It went on to reveal that most tutors do not use teaching learning materials in their lessons although Goodman (2001) had emphasized on the need to use teaching learning materials.

Recommendations

The following are the recommendations emerging from the study. The Ghana Education Service should revive teachers' resource centres to enable teacher trainees have access to a lot of teaching learning materials in their work. Also there is the need to have regular workshops for tutors to update their skills in the use of teaching learning materials. The tutors could then use teaching learning materials effectively in their lessons and teacher trainees could emulate the tutors in the use of teaching learning materials.

It is recommended that the Curriculum Research Development Division of Ghana Education Service should employ experts to write textbooks on grammar and writing of composition in Ghanaian language for Colleges of Education. This would ease the problem of lack of textbooks teacher trainees face in the acquisition of knowledge in writing of composition in Ghanaian language.

The government should motivate Ghanaian Language tutors through scholarships to further their education and other incentive packages like interest free loans to motivate Ghanaian language tutors to give their best. Also the Ghana Education Service should give Ghanaian language students scholarships to further their studies.

Suggestions for Further Research

The study looked at the competency base of the teacher trainees in writing composition in Ghanaian language. It is essential that the competency base of teacher be assessed in grammar also. It is therefore recommended that further research assesses the competency base of the teacher trainee in grammar in Ghanaian language.

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QUESTIONNAIRE FOR TEACHER TRAINEES

This study is carried out in all the Colleges of Education in the Ashanti region of Ghana to find best ways of improving the competency of teacher trainees in the teaching of Twi composition at the basic level of education. Kindly be part of the study by completing the questionnaire provided below. The information you provide would be handled confidentially. It is hoped you would sincerely complete the questionnaire. Thanks.

I read Elective Twi at the Senior High/ Secondary School / GCE Ordinary Level

Underline the option which applies to you.   YES   NO

Section A

Please complete the following by ticking (√) the appropriate option as far as you are concerned using:

1 for Agree,   **2** for Disagree

Item	1	2
Tutors always begin Twi lessons with the fundamentals in the writing of Twi language. Example correct spelling, pronunciation, punctuation marks, tenses, etc		
.The basic school syllabus for Ghanaian language is thoroughly explained to teacher-trainees by tutors		
Tutors always use Teaching Learning Materials in their lessons such charts, pictures, tape recorders, projectors, etc		
Tutors always motivate trainees to learn Twi. For example through clapping, award of marks, etc.		
Trainees are taught the various techniques of imparting knowledge to the children. For example the use of role play, demonstration, class method of teaching. Discussion, etc.		
Tutors always guide trainees to identify the various types of essays such as narrative, descriptive, and argumentative.		
Tutors use proverbs and other literary devices during Ghanaian language lessons		
Tutors always mark exercises and discuss the correct answers		

Item	1	2
with students.		
Teacher trainees are taught how to prepare Twi Teaching Learning Materials. Eg. Word card,		
Teacher-trainees are taught how to use Teaching Learning Materials in Ghanaian language Lessons. For example how to use charts and pictures correctly.		
There are enough exercises for teacher trainees to ensure constant practice, prompt marking and corrections.		
Item	1	2
Regular seminars are organized by the college to equip teacher-trainees with the needed experience in the writing of Ghanaian language		
There are enough textbooks on writing of Twi composition at the basic school level in the college.		
Teacher trainees are taking through the stages of composition writing, that is pre-writing, drafting , editing and presenting.		
Teacher trainees are taking through the part of composition, that is introduction, body and conclusion.		

Section B

Rate the following on how you are taught how to teach composition in Ghanaian language using:

1 for often, **2** for not often , **3** for not at all.

Through the teaching of correct spelling………………………………….

Through the teaching of correct register……………………………..

Through the teaching of correct grammar…………………………………

Through the teaching of correct use of punctuations marks……………….

Through the teaching of stages in composition writing……………………

Section C

Rate the following challenges as faced in the learning of composition in Ghanaian language in your college using:

1 for major,   **2** for minor , **3** for not at all

Lack textbooks…………………………………………………

Lack of qualified tutors…………………………………………

Lack of interest in Ghanaian language by the trainees…………………………

Lack of motivation from GES……………………………………………

Lack of teaching learning materials…………………………….

Make suggestions to minimise the challenges stated above.

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APPENDIX B

INTERVIEW SCHEDULE FOR GHANAIAN LANGUAGE TUTORS.

1. For how long have you taught Ghanaian language?
2. How do you use teaching learning materials to teach composition writing in Ghanaian language at your college?
3. How do you ensure that your trainees inculcate the habit of teaching learning materials preparation and usage?
4. To what extent do you agree that the Ghanaian language syllabus at Colleges of Education is comprehensive enough to equip the teacher trainees with the competencies needed to teach Twi at the basic level of education?
5. How do you use the periods at the Colleges of Education to ensure adequate preparation of the teacher trainees in the teaching of composition writing at the basic level of education?
6. How do you ensure that the available textbooks on Twi composition writing at your college are used effectively by teacher trainees?
7. What are the major challenges facing the teaching of Twi composition writing at your College of Education?   Any suggestions to minimize the named challenges.
8. What specifically do you do to ensure that your students are adequately prepared to teach Twi composition at the basic level of education?
9. How often do you get opportunity to attend workshop to update your skills in the teaching of Ghanaian language in a year?

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APPENDIX C

Introductory Letter

APPENDIX D

Students' class exercise

APPENDIX E

ABBREVIATIONS

MOE- Ministry of Education

GCE –-General Certificate of Examination

GES   ---Ghana Education Service

SSSCE – Senior Secondary School Certificate Examination

TED- Teacher Education

TLM – Teaching Learning Material

WASSCE- West Africa Secondary School Certificate Examination