

Perception of English Learning in Junior High Schools: Evidence from NGO Projects

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ABSTRACT

Purpose: This study draws on Kolb's Experiential Learning Cycle to examine the teaching and learning of English Language in Junior High Schools in Sekyere Central District, Ghana.

Methodology: The study employed Action Research design to examine the processes involved in the teaching of English Language and its impact on learners' academic performance. The convenient and simple random sampling techniques were employed to recruit 300 respondents for the study. The major research instrument for the study was questionnaire which were administered to learners in the four Junior High Schools.

Results: The study identified strategies that were involved in the teaching of English Language to final year learners in correlation with their class exercises, quizzes and Mock Examination results. The study found that teachers adopted teacher-centered approaches which did not take into consideration individual learning needs and abilities. Through the application of Experiential Learning, it is expected that learners have more meaningful and lasting learning processes, so they can make effective use of their learning. The findings of this research showed that Experiential Learning could increase learners' motivation to become independent learners.

Unique Contribution to Theory, Policy and Practice: The results of the research are beneficial for the development of knowledge on learners' learning styles and give some benefits to teaching practitioners and future researchers as well. Therefore, the study recommends Kolb's Experiential Learning Cycle as an effective guide for instructions to suit all learners for them to achieve high academic performances in English Language at the Junior High School Level in Ghana.

1. Introduction

In recent years, educators have been diligently striving to elevate the quality of teaching and enhance the learning experience of students by embracing innovative teaching methodologies. This pursuit is particularly evident in classroom settings, where the act of teaching has evolved into a multifaceted endeavor encompassing guidance, counseling, and motivation (Tamakloe et al., 2005). Teaching, as described by Tamakloe et al., involves imparting not only knowledge and skills but also attitudes and values. This process of teaching is intricately interwoven with learning, creating a symbiotic relationship where both the teacher and the learner play complementary roles (Villegas et al., 2018; Janzen, 2008).

The importance of English Language proficiency in Ghana is widely acknowledged. English is the official language, employed in government, commerce, media, and education. Proficiency in English is pivotal for success in education, and it is a compulsory subject in Ghanaian schools (Teaching Syllabus for English Language for Junior High Schools, 2012). The Junior High School (JHS) phase serves as the gateway to comprehensive Senior High School training, making academic performance at this level a foundational step in shaping further educational pursuits in Ghana.

However, despite the significance of English Language teaching and learning, there have been persistent challenges, particularly evident in the Basic Education Certificate Examinations (BECE) results. Reports from Chief Examiners highlight issues such as inadequate explanations, poor English command, incorrect spelling, and insufficient study of set texts as major contributors to poor performance (Chief Examiners' Reports, 2014). The cumulative effect of these challenges is reflected in the distressing statistics, where a considerable percentage of candidates fail to secure placements in Senior High Schools due to poor performance in English Language or Mathematics (MOE, 2017; GES, 2019).

This study aims to explore the dynamics of English Language teaching and learning in selected public Junior High Schools in the Ashanti Region of Ghana. By investigating this critical stage of education, the research seeks to contribute to both theory and practice in the field of education. The theoretical contribution lies in the development of educational theory related to English Language teaching and learning, as well as the pedagogical strategies employed in classrooms. The study's unique approach utilizes the Experiential Learning Cycle as a theoretical framework, offering a novel perspective on assessing English Language instruction.

The practical implications of this research are substantial. It holds the potential to inform the development of effective strategies for English Language teachers at all education levels in Ghana. By shedding light on the challenges and opportunities within English Language teaching and learning, the study can guide educators in designing innovative and impactful pedagogical approaches. Ultimately, the research aims to address the persistent issue of poor English Language proficiency among students, contributing to the broader goal of achieving universal education coverage under the New Free Senior High School policy.

In conclusion, the study's focus on English Language teaching and learning within Junior High Schools presents a significant opportunity to reshape educational practices in Ghana. By delving into the dynamics of teaching and learning, the research aspires to enhance the proficiency of learners in English Language, positively impacting their academic trajectory and contributing to the overall advancement of education in the country.

2. Theoretical Lens

Second Language Acquisition (SLA) researchers, language teachers and teacher trainers aim to develop an approach through which languages are effectively taught in the classroom (Aljadani, 2020). Within the pedagogy literature, several models have been developed to serve as a guide to teaching instructions. These models are built on the underlying assumptions that learners have different abilities and needs and teachers must plan their instructions to address the learning styles or needs of pupils (Monje, V. Y., & Saavedra, L. S. 2020; Feradepi, D., Sofyan, D., & Kasmiani, K. 2019; Wilson, S. D. 2018 & Howard G. 1983).

All human beings are equally intelligent which is based on the belief that teachers and learners create and share knowledge with learners because each learner has a unique learning style different from each other in the teaching and learning process (Deilami, 2016 & Howard, G.1983).

Adelabu & Nder (2013) also state that a number of methods such as Demonstration, Problem-Solving, Vee-Mapping, Concept Mapping and Individualized Instructions among others are used for teaching English Language.

One study endorses pedagogy that embraces critical thinking and reflection to bring to attention the process of our actions, belief systems, relationships, and environment (Barone, 2018; Gilakjani, 2017 & Cunliffe, 2009). Another recent study published by Deborah Rowland (2016) supports experiential learning as an effective tool for learners to achieve learning outcomes. She cites neuroscience research that proves knowledge acquisition is enhanced with experiences that consider active learning and the environment, thereby engaging emotion, critical thinking, and reflection (Ahmadi, D., & Reza, M. 2018 & Rowland, 2016). Lately, much of the current body of knowledge in experiential learning is derived from Kolb & Kolb. Kolb's work draws from the vast experiences of Dewey, Piaget and Jung among others (Kolb & Kolb, 2009; Kolb & Kolb, 2012). Studies related to Experiential Learning over the years had yielded positive learning outcomes amongst learners in English Language and other fields of study. These success studies which have proven record of work carried out to confirm the effective use of experiential learning as the best alternative for teaching all courses at all levels. Some of these studies can be found in the following literature (Laing, 2009; Muscat & Mollicone, 2012; Chermahini, G. & Talab, 2013; Ikuta, 2008; Lu, Clarke & Gong, 2007; Huerta-Wong & Schoech, 2010; Tete, Limongi, Almeida, Borges, 2014; Boggu, 2016, 2019 & Schnapp, 2020) have applied experiential learning approach in their studies and the results were so phenomenal. Therefore, this study will draw mainly on Kolb's Experiential Learning Cycle.

2.1 Kolb's Experiential Learning Cycle/Experiential Education

It has long been established of the relationship between experience and learning (Knutson, S. 2009). For instance, 'experience is the best teacher' demonstrates the role of experience in learning. Experiential Education was based on the principles and assumptions of John Dewey, Carl Jung, Jean Piaget & Carl Rogers among others. For example, Kolb (1984) propounded the Experiential Learning Theory, stating that learning is a process of creating and sharing of

knowledge that is grounded in the prior experiences of the learner. According to Kolb, learning as experience falls into four stages; namely: Concrete experience (Exhibiting Practical Experience) by Pupils: Learners are provided with activities to execute tasks either in groups or individuals. Reflective Observation (Participant observation): Opportunities are given to pupils to assess events with an open mind. Active Conceptualization (Abstract conceptualization): Blending theory and practice to enable pupils to overcome tasks assigned to them. Active experimentation: trying out models in order to help solve everyday problems.

Teacher-Learner interaction based on Kolb's Experiential Learning Cycle

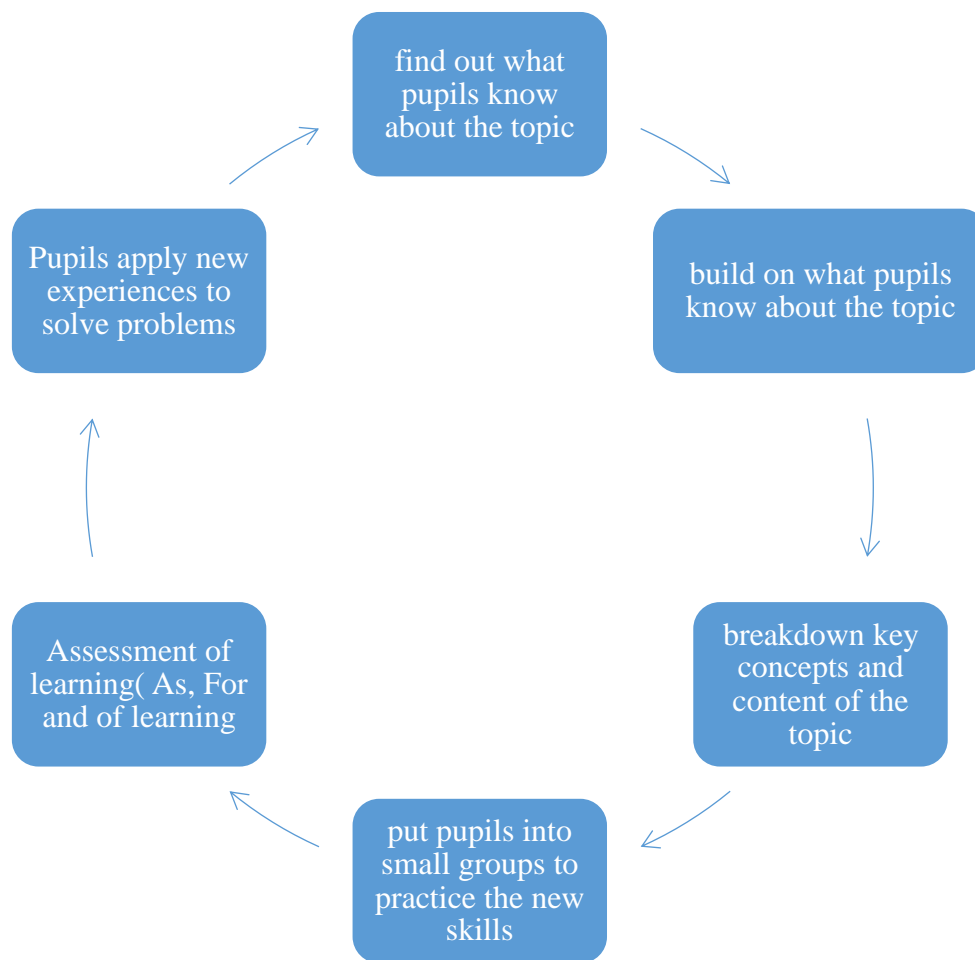


Figure 1: Kolb's Experiential Learning

Source: Adapted from Kolb's Experiential Learning Cycle (ELC) (1984)

Experiential Learning Cycle

The experiential learning cycle, shown below, provides opportunities to the facilitator to solicit views from learners' prior experiences with regard to the topic. Discussion questions and short activities help with this step to determine what pupils know. Providing new information or

demonstrating new skills helps to build on pupils' knowledge. It is important to make sure that pupils leave with accurate understanding about the new content, so the cycle provides an opportunity to clarify content and concepts, and structuring lessons so that pupils have opportunities to practice the new knowledge or skill to help them build confidence in their ability to actually apply the skills and knowledge to solve personal and societal problems.

Steps in the Experiential Learning Cycle

Step 1: find out what pupils already know about the topic: At the beginning of every lesson the teacher should adopt series of techniques such as brainstorming to find out the knowledge pupils have and the teacher makes notes of the pupils' response to check the level of familiarity learners have with the topic. **Step 2:** add/ build on pupils' knowledge on the topic: Review pupils' relevant previous knowledge on the topic under discussion. For instance, role play, small group discussion, lectures and demonstrations for pupils to understand concepts better. **Step 3:** Clarity content and key concepts on the topic: Allow ample time for learners and make sure that the new concepts introduced have been accurately understood by pupils otherwise you may continue with the lesson with some of the pupils not grasping the already taught concepts well enough. Questions and answers are often used for this, but suitable experiential techniques such as videos, drama, demonstration can be used for the practice step that will allow the teacher and the pupils to see whether there is any misunderstanding about the concepts or skills studied. **Step 4:** practice and apply new skills or experiences on the topic: Pupils will effectively learn new skills and knowledge with series of activities such as role plays, small group discussion, panel discussion and jigsaw task for pupils to master pieces of information while the teacher plays the role of a facilitator. **Step 5:** assessment of learning ('As', 'For' and 'of' Learning): Evaluation is a critical last step in the cycle. Teachers need to evaluate what pupils have learnt, and pupils should also evaluate their own learning. This can be done through assessment as learning which involves pupils to work in groups to identify their own strengths, potentials and weaknesses in the learning process, assessment for learning means pupils performances are often checked to see if there is a desirable change in behaviour and assessment of learning has to do with end of session examination to ascertain from learners if they can independently execute tasks. Teachers can use tests (thus testing the pupils' knowledge, finding out whether pupils think the learning objectives set have been met. **Step 6:** pupils Apply Learning to solve problems: When pupils complete their learning/studies, the hope is that they put their experiences to solve personal and societal problems. As they put their new skills to the test, pupils may identify new learning needs which can feed into the cycle of learning.

2.0 Methodology

2.1 Research Design

The study employed Action Research design. Action Research is a teacher-driven professional development in which teachers decide what will be studied (Cooper-Twamley, S. M, 2009). Dana & Yendol-Hoppey (2008:11) stress:

“Rather than sweeping the problems under the carpet and pretending they do not exist, teachers who conduct action research...welcome problems by deliberately naming them, making them public, examining them, and making a commitment to do something about them”.

This commitment develops into the action research plan. Mills (2007:5) defines action research as “any systematic inquiry conducted by teacher researchers...or other stakeholders in the teaching and learning environment to gather information about how their particular schools operate, how they teach, and how well their students learn. This information is gathered with the goals of gaining insight, developing reflective practice, effecting positive changes in the school environment (and on educational practices in general), and improving student outcomes and the lives of those involved”. The study adopted this approach because value of using action research as a vehicle to improve the conceptual understanding of school teachers involved with action research to improve upon their practice in the classroom. The study examined the processes involved in teaching and learning of English Language; the methods of teaching, medium of instruction, use of teaching and learning materials, pupils’ participation in the teaching and learning processes among others were examined by employing action research. Action research was employed because the situation under study was solely centered in the classroom

2.2 Population of the Study

A research population is a well-defined collection of individuals or objects that have similar characteristics. All individuals or objects within a certain population usually have common binding characteristics or traits. The abstract idea of a large group of many cases from which a researcher draws a sample and to which results are generalised (Neuman, 2014). Fraenkel and Wallen (1996) also assert that a population is the group to which the research findings are intended to apply. It comprises of all one wants to study. Thus, the population chosen for the study was 150 pupils in Form Three class in both Schools, in the selected Public Junior High Schools in Sekyere Central District of Ashanti Region of Ghana.

2.4 Sample and Sampling Procedure

According to Neuman (2014), a sample is a small set of cases a researcher selects from a large pool and generalises to the population. Sampling, according to Osuala (2005), is taking a portion of the population as a representation of the total population. Sampling can also be described as depending on a cross-section of a target population to perform an experiment or an observational study. It is not always possible to study the entire population and therefore, there is the need to sample. Sampling is necessary in research because it helps the researcher to look at the “few” in order to know about the “many”. Also, Krejcie and Morgan (1970) table for determining sample size based on the enrolment of 300 final year learners in the selected public Junior High Schools.

2.4.1 Sampling Design

The sampling design adopted for the study affects the extent to which the results can be generalised. In this study, the convenience and simple random sampling techniques were employed. Hayes (2011) adds that the selection is based on the most readily available persons as subjects in a study. The convenience sampling was adopted to select the Junior High Schools for the study because the researcher is closer to the schools and also saved time and resources for travelling too far for data collection. In simple random sampling, each member of the population under study has an equal chance of being selected and the probability of a member of the population being selected is unaffected by the selection of other members of the population, i.e. each selection is entirely independent of the next. The method involves selecting at random from a list of the population (a sampling frame) the required number of subjects for the sample. This can be done by drawing names out of a container until the required number is reached, or by using

a table of random numbers set out in matrix form (these are reproduced in many books on quantitative research methods and statistics), and allocating these random numbers to participants or cases (e.g. Hopkins et al. 1996: 148-9; Cohen et al, 2007). The simple random sampling technique was employed to select the four Junior High Schools for the study. Hence, the sample size for the study was 300 participants.

2.4.2 Data Collection Instruments

According to Babbie (1998), a questionnaire is a series of questions or instruments specifically designed to illicit information that will be useful for analysis. Frankael and Wallen (2003) define it as predetermined issues, orderly written out, well planned and systematically arranged, typed and sent to respondents to solicit answers. Kokoroko (2010) views questionnaire as widely effective means of collecting information about practice and condition and enquiring into opinions and attitude of subjects. When properly constructed and responsibly administered, a questionnaire becomes a vital instrument by which statements can be made about specific groups or people. Questionnaire should always have a well-defined purpose that is related to the objectives of the research, and it needs to be clear from the onset how the findings will be used. Questionnaires are usually cheaper to administer to a large number of people simultaneously thereby increasing accessibility of potential respondents. Written questionnaires are also useful tools for gathering information from which training needs may be derived. It can reach many people in a short-time, at reasonable expense, offers opportunity to express feelings freely and unanimately without any of the embarrassment or anxiety that can accompany interviews (Knowles, 1980). However, the major disadvantages of questionnaires are that there is the possibility of the misinterpretation of questions and difficulty in establishing rapport with the subject.

2.5 Data Analysis

Charts, tables and percentages were used in analysing the data. Microsoft Office Excel was the software used to assist in the data analysis.

3.0 Results

Findings from Questionnaire Administered to Pupils on the Teaching of English Language at Ghana Muslim Mission Junior High School (Junior High School A)

Table 3. 1

Item	Satisfied	Percentage (%)	Dissatisfied	Percentage (%)
Methods of Teaching	10	12.5	70	87.5
Medium of instruction	32	40	48	60
Pupils Performance in English Language	26	32.5	54	67.5
Availability Teaching and Learning Materials	12	15	68	85
Usage of Teaching and learning materials by teachers	0	0	80	100
Pupils Attitude towards English Language	26	32.5	54	67.5
Teachers Attitude towards Pupils	60	75	20	25

Methods of Teaching

Out of 80 respondents, 10 representing 12.5% stated that they were satisfied with the teaching methods adopted by their teachers whereas 70 pupils representing (87.5%) of them said strategies employed in teaching English Language, specifically ‘**Subject-Verb Agreement**’ were not satisfactorily enough to enhance their understanding of the concept.

Pupils making 54 representing 67.5% stated that they usually underperformed in English Language while 26 pupils representing 32.5% usually performed well in English Language.

On the issue of medium of instruction used by the teacher, 32 (40%) of the respondents preferred to be taught in the Local Language (Asante Twi) during English Language lessons while 48 (60%) of them preferred to be taught in English Language.

All respondents stated that both subject teachers normally discussed lesson objectives before the start of class each day.

Availability and Usage of Teaching and Learning Materials

Out 80 respondents, 12 representing 15% were satisfied with the available teaching and learning materials to support their learning of English Language especially English Language text books, novels and story books in school and at home while 68 respondents representing 85% were dissatisfied with the available teaching and learning materials such as textbooks, novels and story books to support their learning of English Language in school and at home. All respondents stated that their teachers never used any teaching and learning materials during teaching sessions in the classroom.

Pupils Attitude towards English Language

26 pupils representing (32.5%) out of 40 said their attitude towards English Language learning were satisfactory while 54 respondents representing 67.5% stated that they were dissatisfied with English Language as a Subject.

Teachers attitudes towards Pupils

Out of the 80 respondents, 60 representing 75% said teachers’ attitude towards them was encouraging and satisfactory while 20 (25%) stated that subject teachers’ behaviours towards them were lukewarm and therefore, teachers did not consider them as intelligent.

Supervisory Roles played by Head Teachers

All respondents 80 (100%) stated that they were dissatisfied because they did not see any form of supervision being carried out by the head teacher in the school. Findings from Questionnaire Administered to Pupils on the Teaching of English Language at Beposo D/A Junior High School (Junior High School B)

Table 3. 2

Item	Satisfied	Percentage (%)	Dissatisfied	Percentage (%)
Methods of Teaching	30	39.47	46	60.52
Medium of instruction	40	52.63	36	47.36

Pupils Performance in English Language	18	23.68	58	76.31
Availability Teaching and Learning Materials	0	0	76	100
Usage of Teaching and learning materials by teachers	0	0	76	100
Pupils Attitude towards English Language	26	34.21	50	65.78
Teachers Attitude towards Pupils	50	65.78	26	34.21
Supervisory Roles played by Head Teachers	0	0	76	100

Source: Field Survey, (2019)

Methods of Teaching

On the issue of teaching methods 30 pupils representing (39.47%) of the respondents said methods of teaching English Language employed by their teacher were satisfactory while 46 (60.52%) of the respondents were dissatisfied with the teaching strategies adopted by the teacher.

Out of the 76 respondents questioned, 40 (52.63%) were satisfied with English Language as a medium of instruction while 36 (47.36%) of respondents were dissatisfied with the teaching methods adopted to the teaching of English Language while 46 (60.52%) of them which formed the majority preferred to be taught in the local language (Asante Twi) during English Language lessons because they were dissatisfied with the teaching methods employed by the teacher.

Majority of the learners 58 representing (76.31%) of the respondents stated that they usually underperformed in English Language while 18 representing (23.68%) which formed the minority performed well in English Language in class exercises and end of term examinations.

Availability of and Usage of Teaching and Learning Materials

All the respondents 76 (100%) argued that they did not have adequate learning materials (textbooks, novels etc.) to support the learning of English Language both at home and in school.

Pupils Attitude towards English language

Out 76 respondents representing 50 (65.78) opined that teacher's attitude towards them was satisfactory while 26 (34.21%) of the respondents said teacher's behaviour towards them was not satisfactory.

Teachers Attitude towards Pupils

In the case of the relationship between teacher and pupils 26 (34.21%) of the respondents argued that teachers' attitudes towards them were not motivating enough as she shouts and insults them

whiles 50 (65.78%) said that English Language teacher's behaviour towards them was encouraging.

Supervisory Roles played by the Head Teacher

All respondents 76 (100%) stated that there was not any form of supervision done by the head teacher in the school. That is, subject teacher is left to teach without head teacher's presence to ensure that teaching and learning processes are properly carried out.

Findings from Questionnaire Administered to Pupils on the Teaching of English Language at Boama Kwabi D/A Junior High School

Table 3.3

Item	Satisfied	Percentage (%)	Dissatisfied	Percentage (%)
Methods of Teaching	10	12.19	72	87.80
Medium of instruction	38	46.34	44	53.65
Pupils Performance in English Language	24	29.26	58	70.73
Availability of Teaching and Learning Materials	0	0	82	100
Usage of Teaching and learning materials by teachers	0	0	82	100
Pupils Attitude towards English Language	32	39.02	50	60.97
Teachers Attitude towards Pupils	50	60.97	32	39.02
Supervisory Roles played by Head Teachers	0	0	82	100

Source: Field Survey, (2019)

Methods of Teaching

On the issue of teaching methods 10 learners representing (12.19%) of the respondents said methods of teaching English Language employed by their teacher were satisfactory while 72 (87.80%) of the respondents were dissatisfied with the teaching strategies adopted by the teacher. Out of the 82 respondents questioned, 38 (46.34%) were satisfied with English Language as a medium of instruction while 44 (53.65 %) of respondents were dissatisfied with the teaching English Language as a medium of instruction who formed the majority preferred to be taught in the local language (Asante Twi) during English Language lessons because they were unable to express and write well in English

Majority of the learners which is 58 representing (70.73%) of the respondents stated that they usually underperformed in English Language whiles 24 representing (23.68%) who formed the

minority performed well in English Language in class exercises, end of term examinations and mock examinations.

Availability of and Usage of Teaching and Learning Materials

All the respondents 82 (100%) argued that they did not have adequate learning materials (textbooks, novels etc.) to support the learning of English Language both at home and in school.

Pupils Attitude towards English language

Out 82 respondents 32 representing (39.02%) opined that teacher's attitude towards them was satisfactory while 50 (60.97%) of the respondents said teacher's behaviour towards them was not satisfactory.

Teachers Attitude towards Learners

In the case of the relationship between teacher and pupils 50 (60.97%) of the respondents argued that teachers' attitudes towards them were not motivating enough as she shouts and insults them while 32 (39.02%) said that English Language teacher's behaviour towards them was encouraging.

Supervisory Roles played by the Head Teacher

All respondents 82 (100%) stated that there was not any form of supervision done by the head teacher in the school. That is, subject teacher is left to teach without head teacher's presence to ensure that teaching and learning processes are properly carried out.

Findings from Questionnaire Administered to Pupils on the Teaching of English Language at Nsuta D/A Junior High School

Table 3.4

Item	Satisfied	Percentage (%)	Dissatisfied	Percentage (%)
Methods of Teaching	16	25.80	46	74.19
Medium of instruction	24	38.70	38	61.29
Pupils Performance in English Language	22	35.48	40	64.51
Availability Teaching and Learning Materials	0	0	62	100
Usage of Teaching and learning materials by teachers	0	0	62	100

Pupils Attitude towards English Language	26	41.93	36	58.06
Teachers Attitude towards Pupils	32	51.61	30	48.38
Supervisory Roles played by Head Teachers	0	0	62	100

Methods of Teaching

On the issue of teaching methods 16 learners representing (25.80%) of the respondents said methods of teaching English Language employed by their teacher were satisfactory while 46 (74.19%) of the respondents were dissatisfied with the teaching strategies adopted by the teacher. Out of the 62 respondents questioned, 24 (38.70%) were satisfied with English Language as a medium of instruction while 38 (61.29 %) of respondents were dissatisfied with the teaching English Language as a medium of instruction who formed the majority preferred to be taught in the local language (Asante Twi) during English Language lessons because they were unable to express and write well in English

Majority of the learners which is 40 representing (64.51%) of the respondents stated that they usually underperformed in English Language while 22 representing (35.48%) who formed the minority performed well in English Language in class exercises, end of term examinations and mock examinations.

Availability of and Usage of Teaching and Learning Materials

All the respondents 62 (100%) argued that they did not have adequate learning materials (textbooks, novels etc.) to support the learning of English Language both at home and in school.

Pupils Attitude towards English language

Out 62 respondents representing 26 (41.93%) opined that teacher's attitude towards them was satisfactory while 36 (58.06%) of the respondents said teacher's behaviour towards them was not satisfactory.

Teachers Attitude towards Learners

In the case of the relationship between teacher and pupils 32 (51.61%) of the respondents argued that teachers' attitudes towards them were not motivating enough as she shouts and insults them while 30 (48.38%) said that English Language teacher's behaviour towards them was encouraging.

Supervisory Roles played by the Head Teacher

All respondents 62 (100%) stated that there was not any form of supervision done by the head teacher in the school. That is, subject teacher is left to teach without head teacher's presence to ensure that teaching and learning processes are properly carried out.

4.0 Discussion

It is evident from tables (3.5, 3.6, 3.7 & 3.8) that learners had performed abysmally in English Language in the just ended mock examination in all schools. Though, this was their preparatory

examination towards the final examination (BECE), pupils' academic performances in English Language were not encouraging as majority of pupils have failed to obtain a grade 1-highest. From table 3.5 out of forty (80) pupils, only one of them representing 2.5% scored grade 6 interpreted as low. Four pupils representing 10% obtained grade 8 which is interpreted as lower whilst 34 pupils representing 85% failed to obtain a pass mark. In fact, out of the 80 pupils who sat for the Mock examinations, 12 of them representing 15% obtained a pass mark while 34 pupils representing 85% failed the examination. In table 3.6, the academic performances of pupils were not different from the first school because they both exhibited similar characteristics. From the table 3.3 above, out of total number of 76 pupils who wrote the mock examinations, 5 of them obtained a pass mark representing 13% and 66 pupils representing 87% failed to obtain a pass mark.

From table 3.7, out of 82 respondents, cumulatively 73 representing (48.78%+40.24%) 89% failed to obtain a pass mark while 9 of the 82 respondents 11% was able to obtain a pass which in essence was not representative enough.

Finally, from table 3.8, out of 62 respondents who wrote the mock examination, 38 of them representing 61.29% failed to obtain a pass mark while 24 out of 62 respondents representing 38.70% was able to obtain a pass mark.

These poor academic performances of pupils were attributed to so many factors the research found out. These were poor teaching methods adopted by teachers, teachers not using teaching and learning materials to teach, inadequate text books, lack of library facilities in both schools, teachers not demonstrating pedagogic content knowledge and subject knowledge in the fields of English Language since none of them had specialised in English Language in their field of study. Another factor is that head teachers who did not teach in the schools the research was carried out also failed to supervise all teaching activities that go on within the schools.

The school head's ability to do these supervisions would have gone a long way to put subject teachers and pupils on track because head teachers' main work was solely supervisory.

In all schools, the pupils demonstrated a lack of understanding of basic grammar, composition and comprehension. As these pupils were preparing for their final Basic Education Certificate Examination, one would have thought that the candidates could demonstrate better understanding of the questions asked. This goes to confirm with the chief examiners' report in 2017 about candidates' weaknesses in English Language.

Methods of teaching were dictated by the medium of instruction for example, where English Language is used, the method of instruction has to be more interactive than passive (Pillar and Skilling, 2005). It is also argued that classroom teachers urgently need to master the techniques of teaching in order to facilitate effective study of the subject (Sifakis, 2019; Stosic, D. 2019; Rahman, 2018 & Thompson, 2004).

5.0 Conclusion and Policy Implication

The study was carried out in four Public Junior High Schools in the Sekyere Central District in Ashanti Region on the teaching and learning of English Language. The methods of teaching employed by the schools were mainly teacher-centered approaches which were used to teach different groups of pupils did not consider their learners' abilities, backgrounds, competence and learning differences in teaching.

Generally, lessons were taught to learners in whole class as a unit just like poultry farmer feeding chickens. This means that, the high quality of teaching that were sought by the schools could not be fully achieved the learning outcomes since the schools used the same processes of teaching of English Language. This goes to corroborate the findings of Thompson (2004) who suggests that English Language teachers should have pedagogical content knowledge and experience in order to teach English Language effectively.

The non-availability and usage of teaching and learning resources for teaching and learning of English Language in the four schools made majority of learners attain poor scores which implies that majority of them did not understand the teaching of English Language in the schools since instruction did not involve hands-on activities.

Pupils lack of interest in English Language, teachers' negative attitudes discouraged majority of them from contributing to discussions in class and these have affected their academic performance in both spoken and written in the English Language. The lack of interest and use of distasteful comments contributed to the poor academic performance in English Language in their mock examinations. The non-existence of supervision in the schools gave English Language teachers the opportunity to teach how they deemed right and this made some learners lazy, late or absent to English Language classes. These led to low and poor academic performance recorded by pupils in English Language in the Mock Examinations.

The study recommended Kolb's Experiential Learning Cycle to be employed by teachers to make their lessons more practical, engaging and interesting for their pupils. The justification for this recommendation hinges on the following.

Teachers should produce and use variety of teaching and learning resources, and variety of instructional strategies that encourage pupil participation and critical thinking. This is because no single strategy can satisfy all the learning needs since learners have different learning styles and also pay attention to all learners, especially learners with special educational needs. Employ instructional strategies appropriate for mixed ability, equity and inclusivity, multilingual and multi-age classes since pupils learn best in small groups when tasks are properly designed, will go a long way to enhance their understanding of experiences learners will acquire through, discussions, panel discussion, jigsaw tasks, debates etc. and set meaningful tasks that encourages learner collaboration which leads to purposeful learning.

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