

UNIVERSITY OF GHANA

**SENTENCE TYPES AND PROFICIENCY LEVELS IN STUDENTS'
ESSAYS: A CASE OF ACHIMOTA SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL**

BY

ISABELLA SIKA KEH

(10246759)

**THIS THESIS IS PRESENTED TO THE UNIVERSITY
OF GHANA, LEGON IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF THE
REQUIREMENT FOR THE AWARD OF A MASTER OF
PHILOSOPHY (MPHIL) ENGLISH DEGREE**

JULY, 2017

DECLARATION

I hereby declare that this thesis is the result of an original research conducted by me under the supervision of Prof John Franklin Wiredu and Dr Jemima Anderson, and that no part of it has been submitted anywhere else for the same or any other purpose. Again, all works and sources consulted for the purpose of this work has been duly acknowledged.

.....

DATE.....

ISABELLA SIKA KEH
(STUDENT)

.....

DATE.....

PROF. JOHN F. WIREDU
(MAIN SUPERVISOR)

.....

DATE.....

DR JEMIMA ANDERSON
(ASSISTANT SUPERVISOR)



DEDICATION

I dedicate this work to God who through Christ strengthens me to do all things. Also, to my beautiful daughter, Lorla, whose beaming smile lifts me up every time I am down, and to my adorable son, Nutor, I love you both.



ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

But for the patience and support of my supervisors, Prof J. F. Wiredu and Dr Anderson, this thesis would not have been possible. Special thanks to Prof Wiredu who took time off his busy schedule to follow up on the progress of my work.

My family has been a pillar of support. To Mawusi who checked up on me daily when I was frail, to Kafui and mom (Mrs Keh) who took care of my baby so I could attend lectures; to my dad who took turns with my mom at night to lull Lorla to sleep so I could rest and study for the first year second semester exams, to sister Enyonam who called frequently from UK to offer me words of encouragement when I thought of giving up, to my brothers Emmanuel, Dela and Edem who offered material and financial support, I say thank you and God bless you. You have proven to me that blood is indeed thicker than water.

To all my lecturers especially Prof Kari Dako, Prof Yitah and Dr Ansah who demonstrated patience and understanding and even offered me advice, I appreciate you all.

I wish also to thank all my course mates especially Grace and Jesse who updated me on academic work during my brief absence from class.

I cannot end without acknowledging the support and efforts of my colleagues and friends at Achimota SHS. Gladys Kuetuadu and Kuukua Biney, you readily accepted to teach my class so I could attend lectures. Mrs Andoh, you demonstrated leadership. Auntie Mirriam, you are God sent. Linda, you have been a friend. I sincerely thank you all.

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

GES.....	Ghana Education Service
SHS.....	Senior High School
JHS.....	Junior High School
WAEC.....	West Africa Examination Council
WASSCE.....	West Africa Senior Secondary Certificate Examinations
ISAT.....	Idaho State Achievement Test
SLA.....	Second Language Acquisition
L 1	First language
TWE.....	Test of Written English
ESL.....	English as a Second Language
TOEFL.....	Test of English as a Foreign Language
IEP.....	Intensive English Programme
CALP.....	Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency
BICS.....	Basic Interpersonal Communication Skills
ACTFL.....	American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages
SBOE.....	State Board of Education
ELL.....	English Language Learner
COM....	Compound sentence
Cplex....	Complex sentence
Ccplex....	Compound complex sentence

LIST OF TABLES/FIGURES

Figure 1: A cross tabulation of sentences garnered from the data.....	70
Figure 2: The number and percentage of sentences per the essay type.....	71
Figure 3: The count of sentences realised according to structure.....	72
Figure 4: Students' preference for the simple sentence according to their forms.....	74
Figure 5: Students' choice of simple and non-simple sentences.....	76
Figure 6: Contributions of non-simple sentences.....	77
Figure 7: The compound sentence according to essay types.....	78
Figure 8: The complex sentence according to contributors.....	80
Figure 9: Complex sentences according to essay types.....	81
Figure 10: Form one preference of the complex sentence in the essay types.....	82
Figure 11: Form two preference of the complex sentence in the essay types.....	83
Figure 12: Form three preference of the complex sentence in the essay types.....	84
Figure 13: Students' preference of the compound-complex sentence in narrative essays...	85

TABLE OF CONTENTS

DECLARATION	i
DEDICATION	ii
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	iii
LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS	iv
LIST OF TABLES/FIGURES	v
TABLE OF CONTENTS	vi
ABSTRACT	ix
CHAPTER ONE	1
GENERAL INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY	1
1.0 INTRODUCTION	1
1.1 THE GHANAIAN LINGUISTIC SITUATION	1
1.2 BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY	1
1.3 PROBLEM STATEMENT	9
1.4 OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY	11
1.5 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY	11
1.6 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY IN BRIEF	12
1.7 SCOPE AND LIMITATION OF THE STUDY	13
CHAPTER TWO	14
LITERATURE REVIEW AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK	14
2.0 INTRODUCTION	14
2.1 LITERATURE REVIEW	14

2.1.1 WHAT IS PROFICIENCY?	30
2.1.2 LEVELS OF PROFICIENCY	35
2.2 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK	45
2.2.0 INTRODUCTION	45
2.2.1 THEORIES OF SECOND LANGUAGE ACQUISITION (SLA).....	45
2.2.1.1 KRASHEN’S THEORY OF SLA	45
2.2.1.2. THE COMMUNICATIVE TEACHING TECHNIQUE.....	50
2.2.2. SYSTEMIC FUNCTIONAL GRAMMAR (SFG)	52
2.2.3. THE SENTENCE AND SENTENCE TYPES	53
2.2.3.1 THE INTERNAL STRUCTURE OF THE SENTENCE	56
2.2.3.2 CLASSIFICATION OF CLAUSES ACCORDING TO STRUCTURE.....	57
2.2.3.3 TYPES OF SENTENCES.....	61
2.2.4. CONCLUSION.....	62
CHAPTER THREE	63
METHODOLOGY	63
3.0 INTRODUCTION.....	63
3.1 RESEARCH DESIGN	63
3.2. POPULATION	64
3.3 SAMPLE AND SAMPLING TECHNIQUE	64
3.4.SOURCES OF DATA.....	64
3.5. RESEARCH INSTRUMENT	66
3.6. MODE OF DATA COLLECTION	61

3.7 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK	68
3.8 DATA ANALYSIS AND PRESENTATION.....	68
3.9 ETHICAL CONSIDERATION.....	69
CHAPTER FOUR.....	70
RESULTS, ANALYSES AND DISCUSSIONS	70
4.0 INTRODUCTION.....	70
4.1 GENERAL OVERVIEW	70
4.2 SENTENCE TYPES IN ESSAYS FROM ALL THREE FORMS	72
4.3 DISCUSSIONS.....	86
CHAPTER FIVE	91
SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS.....	91
5.0 INTRODUCTION.....	91
5.1 FINDINGS	92
5.2 CONCLUSION.....	93
5.3 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FURTHER STUDIES.....	94
References	95
Appendix 1.....	107

ABSTRACT

Essay writing is usually a frequently used mode of testing of language competence in schools in Ghana. Thus, when students write essays, it is mainly for academic purposes. Quite often, for purposes of testing, students are required to use, among other things, a variety of sentence types and this is attested to by the marking scheme of the WAEC English Language Examinations. Again, research evidence appears to suggest that ESL students studying at an advanced level of education use more complex structures than their counterparts at the lower level. This renders the essays of the latter, stylistically monotonous and uncreative. That the research may be able to posit that as one attains a higher level of education correlating to a higher level of language competence, there is the likelihood that one may use a more varied sentence forms and more complex structures in their essays. Accordingly, this study aims to answer the following questions, first, does one use more complex structures as he progresses on the educational ladder? Also, is the choice of the sentence type influenced by the kind of essay? This research thus sets out to study the sentences in the essays of some Senior High School students in Accra by carrying out a grammatical analysis of the types of sentences in these essays. To this end, 244 essays were collected from students in Achimota SHS. These students from form one, two and three were tasked to write a 450-word narrative, expository and argumentative essays on the same topic. The essays were then collected and analysed for their choice of sentence patterns. Contrary to earlier findings that ESL students studying at an advanced level were able to identify complex structures and used them for fluency and style, this study has proved that the use of simple and complex structures are not distinctive features of students' essays at an advanced or lower level of education (in this case, SHS 1, 2 & 3). However, the choice of a particular sentence type is largely determined by the kind of essay.

CHAPTER ONE

GENERAL INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY

1.0 INTRODUCTION/BACKGROUND

In Ghana, the Ministry Of Education through its main implementing agency the Ghana Education Service (GES), is responsible for drawing up the educational curriculum for learning institutions under them. Consequently, syllabi for the various subjects at the various levels are drawn and updated whenever it is deemed necessary. At the Senior High School (SHS) level, the teaching syllabus for English Language is managed by the same agency. Again students exiting SHS at the end of three academic years are expected to sit various examinations with various demands and are graded accordingly. In the *English Language Paper 2* administered by The West African Examinations Council (WAEC), for instance, one of the key demands is that candidates are able to express themselves fluently in English with varying sentence types and structures. These sentences are examined and graded without any scholarly data base on students' and candidates' performance as regards the use of the various sentence types and in what type of essays they mostly engage the most sophisticated sentence structures. This research, therefore, opens the floodgate to this type of research in Ghana.

1.1 THE GHANAIAN LINGUISTIC SITUATION

Linguists describe Ghana as “a highly multilingual developing nation” (Adams, Anderson & Dzahene-Quarshie, 2009:357). The same perspective is expressed differently by Dakubu (1996), Huber (2008) and Adika (2012) who see Ghana as a highly heterogeneous country with about fifty (50) different languages (Huber, 2008). However, Ofulue (2012) and Adams, Anderson & Dzahene-Quarshie (2009) argue that the languages and dialects spoken in Ghana could amount to 80. Some of these languages include Akan (the biggest Ghanaian language), Ewe, Ga, Hausa and Ga-Damgbe (Dako, 2002). The coexistence of these languages especially in urban centres has led to bilingualism and multilingualism resulting in code

alternation and code switching between these languages. Notwithstanding, none of these Ghanaian languages has emerged as a national language. Instead, English, a colonial language brought to Ghana in the 16th century, has gained so much currency in the country that it has become the language of education, media, government and administration (Owu-Ewie, 2006; Adika, 2012). This legacy that a colony adopts the language of their colonialists is a widespread phenomenon worldwide (Edwards, 2004; Baker & Colin, 2011). As a result of this legacy, the English language has become indispensable in all scholarly engagements nationwide. For one to progress academically, he is examined in English. For one to be employed into a white-collar job, he is interviewed in English. Laws are passed in English. The government addresses the nation in English. All government transactions and documents are in English (Adams et al, 2009; Agyekum, 2009; Adika, 2012). The importance of English in Ghana thus cannot be overemphasised.

The English language in Ghana is a social status marker. It is popularly held that a person who speaks English is perceived to be educated. In fact, in the words of Saah (1986), “No constituency in Ghana would elect someone, no matter how good he is, to represent them in parliament if he could neither read nor write English, because it is the language of all official occasions” (p.373). It is therefore no wonder that most of the parliamentarians we have today can read and/or write the English Language. It is for this reason, coupled with other factors such as those mentioned above, that most Ghanaians especially parents, even the not-so-educated ones, speak English at home with their children. The end result is that these children become ‘fluent’ in English at the expense of the Ghanaian language. This category of parents believes English is the language of this generation and their children must be able to acquire it before they can function effectively in the job market of their [children’s] era (Garcia and Diaz, 1992 cited in Baker and Colin, 2011). The end result is that the child is good at neither

of the languages and can best be described in the words of Dadzie (2013) as an “interlingua” (p. 134).

The truth of the matter, however, is that these children are brought up in the Ghanaian environment hence; they inevitably pick up the Ghanaian language, which is the language dominant in the locality where they are raised. In a typical Ghanaian household communication, English and other Ghanaian languages compete for importance. This situation is reflected in the larger society to the extent that sometimes when and where to speak what become an issue. Inasmuch as it is not very difficult to determine the language to use in certain “domain” such as the market place, homes and some workplaces (e.g. a microfinance officer or a *susu*¹ collector interacting with clients) where the language that is subconsciously chosen for that domain is the Ghanaian language (Hudson, 2003, p.77), and in the academia, politics and governance, legislation and adjudication of cases at the law courts where English is the language of choice (Adika, 2012); there are those communicative events, nonetheless, during which the use of language is not particularly biased in favour of either the Ghanaian or the English language. A typical example of such an environment is the church. While some charismatic churches like Action Faith Chapel, Kingsway International Christian Centre (KICC), and the International Central Gospel Church (ICGC) use English only in their sermons; other churches like Evangelical Presbyterian (EP) church and Adonai Church use Ewe. Even these churches together with the likes of Presbyterian Church of Ghana which hitherto have used the Ghanaian language in their sermons, now have incorporated English. Thus, the sermon is either in English and interpreted into the local language or delivered in the Ghanaian language and translated into English. Some of the churches mentioned here either opt for the language understood by a majority of their

¹ Susu is a widespread informal banking or savings scheme very popular in Ghana. Susu collectors are sometimes called mobile bankers.

members (hence, the use of the Ghanaian language) or wish to be labelled as a congregation of prestige (hence the choice of English).

Similarly, the Catholic Church had always used English but instead of translating from the English to the local language, a second or third service dedicated to a local language has been introduced. This phenomenon has become very common in churches in Ghana today. This has given members the liberty to attend services they are comfortable with.

It is again interesting to note that even some charismatic churches, as pointed out earlier, which originally deliver their messages in English have incorporated Ghanaian languages. A striking example is the case of the Lighthouse Chapel International. The head pastor, Bishop Dag Heward-Mills, always delivers his crusade sermons in English which are interpreted into the local language of the locality where the crusade is held. The purpose of this is to reach a wider audience. This also depicts the co-dependence of English and the Ghanaian languages in the Ghanaian society. This co-dependence is reflected in the 2010 Census which reports that about 67% of the Ghanaian population 11 years and older have indicated they can read and write English while 53% can read and write at least one Ghanaian language. What this means is that not all Ghanaians are literate in English or a Ghanaian language. Again, most Ghanaians 11 years and older, according to the census, are more literate in English than the Ghanaian language. It also presupposes that for those who are literate in both, which might not be the case for the majority of Ghanaians, English coexists with one or more Ghanaian languages resulting in “a lot of code-switching and borrowing” (Huber, 2008).

Currently, the standard language in the Ghanaian educational system is British English. It is, however, without a doubt that the language that is spoken and written by a segment of the educated Ghanaian is not quite the “queen’s” language. Expressions such as “*deskses*”, “*furnitures*” and “*luggages*” are often uttered by some educated Ghanaians. A school of thought might say they are wrong usages based on the prescriptive theorists’ perspectives on English in Ghana; another might say the speaker is appropriating his knowledge of marking plurals in English (Dadzie, 2013). Hence, the suffix *-s* in *furnitures* and *luggages* could be seen as variations and not deviations. Regardless of the standpoint, it cannot be explained why an educated Ghanaian would add *-ses* instead of *-s* to form the plural of *desk*. But orally, the Ghanaian finds it difficult to realise /k/ and /s/ together which often results in the silencing of /s/. To differentiate therefore between the singular and plural form, he adds *-ses*. It can thus be concluded that there is disconnect between what is taught in school and what is practised in the social and professional world. In order for teaching and learning to be meaningful and for it to reflect situations in the social world, the issue of standardisation needs to be addressed (Dadzie, 2013). This is the only way by which expressions such as “I am coming”, “I’m going to come” and “My stomach is paining me” can be said to be variations or wrong usages. As Ahulu (1994) puts it, “...there can be no purposeful and effective teaching/learning without any required standard. Neither will it be pedagogically useful to have educational standards which do not reflect social and professional reality” (p. 26). Against this background, educationists, textbook writers and curriculum designers have to come to a consensus on what forms to recognise as the standard so they can emphasise it as the educational target.

Where two or more languages co-exist, as noted earlier, there is bound to be interferences. The coexistence of English and the Ghanaian languages has led to the emergence of a new variety called *Ghanaian English*. The term was first used by Grieve (1964) but according to

Ahulu (1994), it was not until Sey (1973) that it “gained wide currency”. Even before them, Brown and Scragg (1948) had used a similar term – “Gold Coast English” – in *Common Errors in Gold Coast English*.

The term “Ghanaian English” is perceived differently by different scholars. There are those scholars like Brown and Scragg (1948) and Sey (1973) who perceive Ghanaian English as errors emanating from the use of the Standard British English. To this group, these errors are interferences of the L1 and should not be encouraged. Others like Grieve(1964), however, see the phenomenon as modifications of the British standard by educated Ghanaians and have opined that Ghanaian English is a variation of Standard British English, and as such should have the same legitimacy as the British English (Ahulu, 1994). Clearly the attitude of Ghanaians to the use of English is not a clear cut one. There are those that advocate for correctness in the use of the Standard British English. A second camp believes that “there are some indigenised conventions which could be codified and accepted as Ghanaian Standard” (Ahulu, 1994). The solution to the debate/dilemma, others have suggested, is to decide on one Ghanaian language as a national language (Duodu, 1986 as cited in Ahulu). Dadzie (2013) has also advocated for the continuous use of the Standard British English but that users must cultivate what he calls a “self-correcting mechanism” towards achieving a required standard of the language (p.133). In the opinion of Dadzie, this can be achieved through instilling the “sensitivity to the grammar of English at all levels” and that this method should be given a primary emphasis (p.144). But until the issue of language is sorted out in our educational curriculum, the reality of the day is that the educational target is oriented towards British English.

English is indispensable in the Ghanaian education sector. It is not only the language of education but also the official language of government (Anderson, Ansah, hMensa, 2009: 127). Gaining competence in English is key, if one is to progress academically. As a child starts formal education at age 4, his competence in the language, especially in the written

language, is basically non-existent. But as he progresses in the educational system, he begins to exhibit growth and maturity which are evident in his essays through the use of complex structures. It is therefore no wonder that at the end of SHS education, students are examined in the English Language (including writing essays) to award West African Senior School Certificate Examinations (WASSCE) certificates so they can progress to the next level of education.

The topics for such essays are based on exposition, argument, narration, description and imagination compositions as stated by the curriculum. These essays require that students put together words to form sentences appropriate for conveying the necessary information a particular question demands. As the teaching syllabus for English language puts it, the main purpose of those compositions is to train and test students ability to express themselves “clearly and comprehensively in writing” (Ghana Education Service, 2010).

Obviously, compositions are written in sentences. However, these sentences must be varied appropriately and meticulously to merit the desirable grades. The teaching syllabus drawn by GES as well as the final marking scheme drawn by The West African Examinations Council for the assessment of compositions in English stipulate that students/candidates vary their sentence types structurally. The criterion for such assessment is captured under *expression* of the marking scheme which scores about 40% of the total marks. This criterion demands that students vary their sentence types and forms to merit an average score or better.

Unfortunately, however, the reports by the Chief Examiner in English language appears to suggest that users of English as a Second Language, over the years, do not vary their sentence

forms, rendering their structure stylistically monotonous and uncreative. According to Language Usage ISAT (Idaho State Achievement Test) Proficiency Level Descriptors, Grade 8 students performing at the advanced level are able to identify variety of sentences whereas those performing at the basic level rarely are able to identify variety of sentences. Miami Dade College report (2004) points out six writing competences. In Level 1, students are able to use simple sentences; in Level 2, students are able to write simple and compound sentences; from writing Level 3 to 6, students' competences are the same - they are able to write simple, compound and complex sentences. What distinguishes each of the levels lies in the clarity, coherence and the substance of content. This reinforces the point that as one progresses academically, his competence at identifying complex structures and effectively using them for fluency and style increases.

Expression is thus key in communication. Abstract ideas are made concrete through the use of words and sentences. The wrong choice of words therefore might lead to miscommunication. Similarly, the incorrect use of sentence structures and types will cease to convey the intended message or meaning. As hinted in the West African Senior Certificate Examination Chief Examiners' Report for the May/June 2013, the performance of students in Literature-in-English 2 and English Language 2 was described respectively as "below expectation" and "not good enough" (p,2). What could account for this report? Could the use of monotonous sentence structure be responsible? It should be noted that these papers are subjective sections that demand students to express themselves by articulating ideas as a particular question deems fit, be it simple sentence or complex structured answers to comprehension or summary passage questions, or creatively blending sentence structures to answer essay type questions.

The generality of the problem is highlighted in the report with the citation of inappropriate use of language as a weakness exhibited not only in English Language paper but in all other subject areas. This is attributed to students' failure to observe syntactic rules that govern the language. The question then is: what type of sentences do students use when they write?

1.3 PROBLEM STATEMENT

The significance of language in our day-to-day life cannot be overemphasised. More importantly when that language is largely responsible for our academic progression, it needs to be accorded the necessary attention. The current 2007 Language Policy which stipulates that students are educated in English from Primary 4 underscores this importance.

More so, speaking and writing are means of demonstrating our competences in English. For students at the SHS, writing compositions are means of testing their written competence in English. The mastery and use of complex structures (including compound and compound complex) and mixing them with simple sentences, as stated above, are indications of studying at the advanced level. Besides, predominantly writing in simple sentences is commonly associated with students studying at the basic level. Thus by the time students reach SHS level, they are expected to make appreciable progress in their education and this is to be reflected in their compositions. It is for this reason that the WASSCE/WAEC syllabus focuses on the teaching and the assessment of student's ability to:

- control sentences accurately;
- exhibit variety in the choice of sentence patterns.

This is why the WAEC marking scheme stipulates, among other things under *expression*, that students vary their sentence forms and types. The assumption is that students who vary their

sentences would score above average marks and this is attested to by the marking scheme of WAEC English Language Examinations.

This is what has been reinforced in the words of Language Usage ISAT Proficiency Level Descriptors and the Miami Dade College Writing competencies levels report. That is, students at the advanced level of writing are able to identify and use, in addition to simple sentences, complex structures whereas their counterpart at the basic level can only identify and use the simple sentence. What these reports suggest is that SHS 1 student [in Ghana], because they hardly can identify the various sentence types, will not be able to vary sentence types in their essay as the SHS 3 student would. This is what has aroused our interest in this study.

The ministry of education through its implementing agency, Ghana Education Service has over the years been developing the curriculum for English Language education at the Secondary School/Senior High School level. The service as well as the West African Examinations Council have been examining student performance in the mastery, choice and use of sentence types and structures over the years but have not been able to establish any database on the choice and use of sentence types and structures among secondary school students and candidates. In the opinion of the researcher, it is not enough just drawing up the curriculum and syllabus as well as drafting a final marking scheme for grading students and candidates' scripts for examination scores without really finding out how effectively or ineffectively the sentence types required are being used in essays.

It based upon the above problem in the educational sector that it has become necessary to study the occurrence of the various sentence types [according to grammatical structure] in the compositions of senior high school students.

1.4 OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY/RESEARCH QUESTIONS

This research is interested in the sentence structures student use in their essay and how they correlate to their level of education. Consequently, I shall do a comparative study of the various levels at the Senior High School to ascertain the types of sentences students at SHS 1 to 3 use in their writing. Accordingly, this study shall seek to answer the following questions:

- a) What sentence forms are used in SHS students' essays?
- b) What sentence structures are predominantly used in their essays?
- c) Is there a correlation between the choice of sentence type and the class level of students?
- d) Is the choice of a sentence type determined by the essay type?

1.5 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

This research is carried out to ascertain the kinds of sentences students use in their essays. It is therefore hoped that the study will guide or serve as reference point to teachers, researchers and stakeholders in education who are interested in the sentence forms students use. It will help teachers to know the types of sentences that are predominantly and least used by students and thereby inform teachers on the sentence forms to emphasise or give special attention to when teaching. Similarly, the outcome of the research will also shape the expectations teachers have of their students, not above or below their level, to be reflected in the teaching and assessment process.

It is expected that the study will enhance policy making and implementation. The findings of this study will be useful to government and Ministry of Education in developing the appropriate policies/curriculum regarding writing, sentence choice and use. Also, it can serve as a directional tool in the revision of the English syllabus.

Again, the study will reinforce or disabuse the minds of all concerned that the more advanced ones education, the more complex structures are used.

Last but not least, it will add to the existing stock of literature on the subject area, serve as a point of reference for future studies and enhance understanding on grammatical structures.

This is because the outcome of this research will help the Ghana Education Service, The West African Examinations Council, teachers, researchers and other stakeholders in education to realize the impact of the curriculum on students.

1.6 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY IN BRIEF

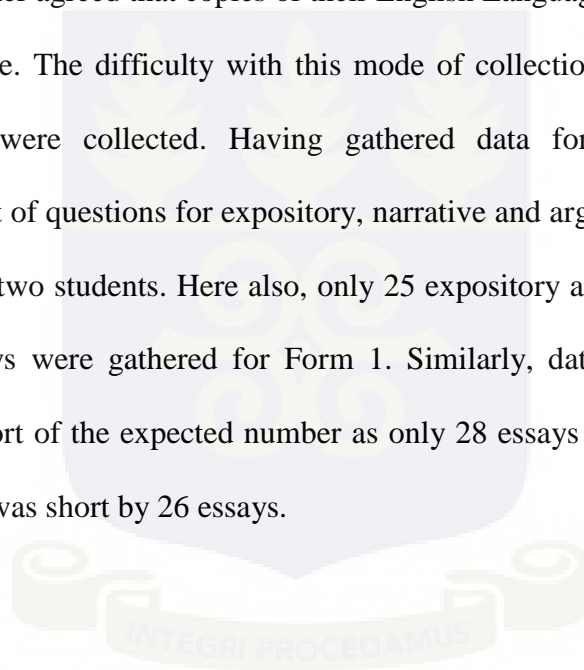
Two hundred and forty-four (244) essays comprising exposition, narration and argument essay types were collected from SHS 1 to 3 students at Achimota School in Accra. Out of these essays, 7,066 sentences were garnered. Using Halliday's grammatical analyses of sentences, the sentences were grouped into simple, compound, complex and compound complex sentences and analysed. A detailed analysis of this model is discussed in Chapter three. Thereafter, statistical representations were made from the figures obtained from the data, details of which are presented in *Chapters Four and Five*. Here is brief a step-by-step layout of the way the research was undertaken:

- a) Identification of the school
- b) Students were drawn from SHS forms one to three
- c) Students were tasked to write a 450 word narrative, expository and argumentative essays
- d) Data were grouped into the various types of sentences
- e) Data were analysed.
- f) Findings were indicated
- g) Conclusions were drawn

1.7 SCOPE AND LIMITATION OF THE STUDY

The study was designed to cover a wider area of sample size. In other words, 270 essays were expected to be collected from the students. Rather, only 244 essays were collected; 26 essays lesser than the number expected. This was because data collection was done in the middle towards the end of Second Term when Form 3 students were preparing to write their WASSCE.

Aside the difficulty faced in getting permission to collect the data, the SHS 3 students themselves were reluctant to be part of the sample size. They [form three students] however together with their teacher agreed that copies of their English Language Mock Paper II should be used for this purpose. The difficulty with this mode of collection was that only 13 F 3 argumentative essays were collected. Having gathered data for form three, and for uniformity, the same set of questions for expository, narrative and argumentative essays were given to Form one and two students. Here also, only 25 expository and narrative essays, and 29 argumentative essays were gathered for Form 1. Similarly, data garnered for Form 2 narrative essays fell short of the expected number as only 28 essays were collected. In sum, the total data collected was short by 26 essays.



CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW/THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

2.0 INTRODUCTION

This chapter has two sections: Literature Review and Methodology. The former looks at the various language policies from the Gold Coast era to modern Ghana dispensation, conforming to what Baldauf (1994:83) calls “language-in-education planning”. An attempt is made at looking at language competence and performance in these contexts. The section continues with a look at SFG and closes with a review of some SFG based text analyses that are related to this work.

2.1 LITERATURE REVIEW

Researchers have been interested in the study of Second Language Acquisition (SLA) models for years but in recent times, much of the research emphasis has been placed on language teaching (Larsen-Freeman & Long, 2014). Thus, works, such as Richards and Rogers (2012), have laid emphasis on the teaching of language. It is believed that if the teaching of language is “efficient”, then learning will be “effective” (Larsen-Freeman & Long, 2014). However, the efficiency of the methodology in teaching the English language alone is not enough as learning English in Ghana is in a second language environment.

Against this background, the language of education in a multilingual environment has been a matter of concern for educators and educational planners in Ghana. (Quadraogo, 2000; Adika, 2012; Ansah, 2014). This is due to the fact that “education and language issues are very complex in Africa because of multi-ethnic” and “multi-lingual” situations (Quadraogo, 2000:89; Bodomo, 2006). It is therefore no wonder that sixty (60) years after independence, Ghana is still grappling with language issues in education (Owu-Ewie, 2006; Adika, 2012).

In the case of Ghana, the official language is different from any of the multiple local languages (Bodomo, 1996). The question of which language to use especially at the lower level of education has always resulted in controversy. The lower primary school stage is an important one in the child's life as he transitions from home to school. Since most children are socialised in the Ghanaian language, it is prudent that in the first three years of their educational life, they are instructed in the Ghanaian language. Thus if the child is socialised in English, transitioning from home to school, he should be instructed in English in his formative years of education; but if a Ghanaian language is that child's first language, similarly then, the flexibility of the policy should allow for him to be instructed in that Ghanaian language.

Until the 1500s in Ghana, traditional education was conducted in the indigenous language before the introduction of formal education. However, with the introduction of formal education and the subsequent use of English as the medium of instruction, the local language was seen to be "inadequate" as a teaching medium (Bangbose, 2000). One can safely conclude then that bilingual education began with the inception of formal education. With bilingual education came the need for a language policy to regulate language use in schools. An overview of the policy would reveal that the emphasis on a particular language was necessitated by the objectives of the educators and policy makers at the time. As Bodomo (2006) puts it, the "best language policy is one that can promote communication between discourse participants". In a school environment, policy makers should make sure that pupils and students are ideally instructed in a language they best understand.

The history of language policy in Ghana can be traced back to the pre-colonial era. This was a period of trade between Europeans and Ghanaians [Gold Coasters]. The language

difference that existed between Africans and Europeans was a hindrance to trade. Since the Europeans' primary objective was trade, they needed people who could help them communicate with their clientele, hence the need for translators. They [the Europeans], therefore, trained some natives to serve as translators (Anderson, Ansah & hMensa, 2009). Because contact between Europeans and their African traders was minimal and the Europeans kept mainly to their trading posts and largely interacted with traders, the use of language between these groups was not structured or regulated by anybody or policy but by persons seeking to understand each other so they could transact business.

The earliest form of formal education in Ghana was recorded to have started in the 15th century (Agbedor, 1994; Huber, 2008). The schools were established by the Europeans at their forts and castles to provide education to children and relatives of wealthy African merchants, children and relatives of some important local chiefs but largely Mulatto children of European castle staff by African women. These castle schools were not purposefully meant for the formal education of indigenous Ghanaian pupils (Ansah, 2014). The essence of this education was primarily to prepare the young people for employment in the European enterprises springing up on the coast. Hence, Dutch was used at the former Portuguese fortress at Elmina; English was used at the Cape Coast castle; and Danish was used at the Christiansborg castle.

Though English instruction continued to be given in castle schools into the 17th Century, “the role of English on the coast remained insignificant” since “the number of pupils was small and schools were discontinued” (Huber, 2008:69). But the strong presence of missionary activities in the 1830s changed the face of education in terms of expansion and, teaching and

learning materials. These missionaries especially those of Basel and Bremen descent developed the local languages for the purposes of education and evangelism (Graham, 2013).

The arrival of the Wesleyan and Basel missionaries in 1835 led to the expansion of education. By 1841, according to The Rev Thomas B. Freeman, the Wesleyan (Methodist) had opened nine (9) mission schools on the coast, while the Basel (Presbyterian) missionaries, by the 1850s, had established boarding schools at the Christiansborg, near Accra, and schools on the Akuapem Ridge including one for girls at Aburi. The Basel missionaries did not just open schools but also trained teachers at Akropong and published elementary grammar books and dictionaries in Akan. Even though there were no language policies around this era (Andoh-Kumi, 1994 as cited in Owu-Ewie, 2006), the choice of language was determined by their objective. These missionaries' main objective was evangelism and language was important to achieving their aim. The Basel missionaries thought the best way to communicate to the people was to speak to them in their own language since majority of the people at the time were not literate. This is what informed their strategy of developing the local language by translating the Bible into the local languages and writing educational text in the local languages. In addition to this, they also used the medium of the school system to get their message across. The Basel instructed in Akan whereas Wesleyan and Castle schools instructed in English.

The signing of the bond of 1844 saw the colonial government's effort to increase educational activities in the Gold Coast. But the distribution of schools and the enrolment of pupils in the 1850s showed that missionaries rather than government had the highest number of schools (Graham, 1976). The distribution in the table below shows that government had only three (3) schools against 136 by the missionaries:

Controlling body	Schools	Enrolment	Teachers
Government	3	507	16
Basel	47	1285	79
Wesleyan	84	3057	106
Bremen	4	Not available	Not available
Catholic	1	150	3

To improve the number of government schools, therefore, the poll tax ordinance of 1852 was proposed by Governor Hill. It was in part to provide better education for the African by the colonial administration since part of the tax fund was to be channelled towards this purpose as entrenched in the 1852 Gold Coast Ordinance (Graham, 1976). But lack of general support by the local people for the Poll tax Ordinance limited the role of the government in education and hindered the success of the 1852 Gold Coast Ordinance. In spite of this limitation, grants were given to mission schools (popularly called “government assisted schools”). For example in 1874, the colonial administration granted £50 to the Wesleyan and £100 to the Basel missions. The grants were to help specifically in the training of teachers and to improve the quality of education in general. By 1880, Ussher, the Governor at the time, had increased grants to the Wesleyans from £50 to £200 and was spending £300 on Castle schools (Graham, 1976). Yet, the missionaries called for more grants and the government was prepared to yield to their demands provided a system of efficiency could be devised and achieved.

This development led to the promulgation of the 1882 Education Ordinance. In the Ordinance, government schools were maintained entirely through public funds, and grants were given to assist mission schools based on their efficiency level. The 1882 Ordinance was

very significant since it led to the establishment of a regulatory body – Board of Education – to monitor and control the activities of the mission schools, and it encouraged the expansion of schools and enrolment of pupils (Abiona, 2004; Graham, 1976). The Ordinance also gave legal recognition to the partnership that existed between the missionaries and the government, a phenomenon that has come to characterise the Ghanaian educational system even till date. The 1882 Ordinance also encouraged the mission schools to teach English (Huber, 2008). The Ordinance did not do much to regulate language use in the school. The Wesleyan mission used English language; the Basel and Bremen missions still emphasised the use of the local languages in the areas they operated (Huber, 2008; Ansah, 2014).

To further enhance education and control the rapid expansion of missionary education, the 1887 Education Ordinance was promulgated. In this Ordinance, the government called for improvements in the school curriculum, teacher certification and practical education for pupils. The ordinance also spelt out conditions by which private schools might qualify for assistance. Among the conditions were for schools to admit children without any discrimination based on religion or race and for religious education to be given to children only with their parents' or guardians' approval (Graham, 1976). The ordinance was to improve the educational efforts of the missionaries.

Juxtaposing the number of pupils in schools in the 1850s and 1880s, both government and denominational, it can be said that the various educational policies put in place by the colonial government were successful as enrolment increased, though marginal, from 4,492 to 4,597. More important and significant was the over 100% increase in enrolment of students in government schools from 507 to 1,049 by 1880. This meant that government schools expanded at the expense of government assisted missionary schools. From 1881 – 1891,

about two-fifth of Basel and two-thirds of Wesleyan schools closed down. This cannot be blamed on meagre or withdrawal of government grants since grants increased from £350 in 1888 to £916 in 1889, and by 1892 it had reached £2,167. With this, government gained the upper hand in education which meant that education policies would be better effected.

By the turn of the nineteenth century, however, missionary schools had recovered and improved. Methodist Church, for instance as pointed out by C. T. Eddy, had 100 schools with a 6,200 student enrolment (as cited in Graham, 1976). But cooperation between government and the missionaries, a characteristic of the second half of the nineteenth century, a phenomenon that has continued to present day, saw the need to focus on the teaching of vernacular especially by the missionaries (Basel schools used vernacular as the medium of instruction to promote evangelism) but the Wesleyan that had used English from the beginning, started to use Fanti. For example, they translated some of the Basel Twi songs into Fanti in 1859 and in 1870, Rev T. Laing, a mulatto minister, had produced the first primer in Fanti for schools (Graham, 1976). This was because they saw the need to educate the people in the language they understood. But until 1925, the Education Ordinance merely encouraged the teaching of English hence the laxity with which the missionaries decided to use Vernacular and/or English in the schools.

According to the literature, the 1925 Education Ordinance regulated language use in the schools and promoted Western style education. It made the local language the medium of instruction while English was taught only as a subject from P1 to P3. However, from P4 to 6, English became the medium of instruction and the local language was taught as a subject only. The policy expanded schools and led to the establishment of University of Ghana in 1948 (Sentell, 2000). At the time of promulgation, the ordinance would be considered a

milestone. Most Ghanaians were socialised in the native language hence, this would make for easy transition, in terms of language, from home to school.

The 1951 Accelerated Development Plan had positive and negative effects on the quality of the English language. The plan called for free six (6) years basic education and initiated the teaching of adults to read and write in their local language as well as in English (Sentell, 2000). The advantage of this educational plan was that it led to the rapid increase in the number of primary schools as more and more students enrolled into schools but this led to shortage of teaching staff to handle the huge number of pupil enrolment. Consequently, primary school leavers, not proficient in English, were employed as teachers to tutor the excess student population (Sentel, 2000).

To make matters worse, the policy changed the use of local language as the medium of instruction from Primary one to three and restricted local language use to only Primary one (Huber, 2008; Ansah, 2014). The use of English as medium of instruction instead of the native language at the basic level of education had a negative toll on the quality of English considering that most of the teachers were primary school leavers who had not yet mastered the English language.

The first post-independence administration led by Kwame Nkrumah adopted an English-only policy contrary to the recommendation of the 1956 Bernard committee. This policy continued until the overthrow of the Nkrumah government in 1966 (Ansah, 2014).

The National Liberation Council (NLC) military government (1967 – 69) adopted the use of local language at primary one only as contained in the 1951 Accelerated Development plan. For eighteen (18) years, that is, from 1951 to 1969, English was mostly used as the medium of instruction in schools.

In 1970, following the restoration of civilian rule led by Kofi Abrefi Busia, the local language again became the medium of instruction and English was taught as subject from P 1 to 3 while from P 4 to 6, English was the medium of instruction and the local language was taught as subject (reminiscent of the 1925 Education policy). The difference between the 1970 and 1925 policy was that in addition to the child's L1, he had to learn an additional Ghanaian language namely Akan, Ga, Ewe and Nzema (Agbedor, 1994). However, a coup d'état led to the overthrow of this civilian government in 1972. The Kutu Achaempong led military government did not make any significant change to the existing policy but rather introduced French in the primary school curriculum to foster closer regional communication with our neighbouring Francophone countries. (Ansah, 2014).

The 1970 language policy was modified in 1974. As a result, the use of the child's mother tongue in the first three years of education was reinforced. The mother tongue was defined to be any of the nine selected language of the locality- Akan (Twi and Fante), Nzema, Ga, Ga-Adamgbe, Ewe, Gonja, Kasem, Dagaare and Dagbani (Owu-Ewie et al, 2006). The only significant change that was made to this policy was the 1987 educational reforms which made the study of a Ghanaian language compulsory up to the secondary school level is a departure from the previous ones that demand the study of a Ghanaian language up to primary 6 only. This policy has proved to be the longest language policy in Ghana's educational history until it was changed in 2002 (Ansah, 2014).

In 2002, the new policy adopted the English language only as the medium of instruction at all levels of education. According to the then Minister of Education, Professor Ameyaw Akumfi (2002), the previous policy offered some teachers an excuse of not using the English language with students. He alleged that some teachers, especially those in the rural areas, never used English in the classroom throughout primary school education. This, he said, was evident in the inability of some of these students to speak and write good sentences by the time they completed secondary school education.

To address the issues arising from the 2002 policy, the 2007 language policy was passed. It provides flexibility in terms of language of instruction at the early stage of education. The 2007 policy which is still being practised states that the Ghanaian language and where necessary English be the medium of instruction in the kindergarten and the lower primary. The assumption is that if the child's L1 is a Ghanaian language then, he is instructed in it but if the pupil's L1 is English language, he must accordingly per the policy be instructed in English. From upper primary, however, the English language is used.

The importance attached to language policies especially in bilingual education seems to suggest that there is a direct correlation between the effectiveness of the policy and the level of proficiency of the Second Language learner. In fact, "Second Language Acquisition (SLA) research has shown that the level of proficiency in the L1 has a direct influence on the development of proficiency in the second language and that a disruption in the first language development has been found, in some cases, to inhibit second language proficiency" (Lewelling, 1991 as cited in Owu-Ewie, 2000: 80).

In a lay man's language, SLA, a sub-field in language studies, is the process by which people acquire a second language. Traditionally, SLA means to acquire a second language in a setting where the language to be learnt is the language of the community (De Bot et al, 2005). Larsen-Freeman and Long (2014) identify two environments in which second language can be acquired. They are the second language environment and foreign language environment. The second language environment is when the second language learner is learning this language in an environment where the language is spoken natively. An example is a Ghanaian learning to speak French in Paris. However, if the acquisition takes place in an environment where the language is non-native, then, the acquisition is in a foreign environment. English is a non-native language in Ghana. Therefore learning English in Ghana is in a foreign environment.

Errors are bound to occur while acquiring a new language. More so, it is important to pay close attention to these errors if the learner is a non-native speaker. Corder (1967) notes that the occurrence of errors is associated with language acquisition, "both by children learning a mother tongue and by those acquiring a second language". He sees the errors learners make in their language acquisition process as significant in three different ways:

- They serve as indicators to the teacher on "how far towards the goal the learner has progressed and, consequently, what remains for him to learn";

- they provide "the researcher the evidence of how language is learned or acquired" and "what strategies or procedures the learner is employing in the discovery of the language";

- Errors thus serve as an “indispensable” learning tool for the learner himself since the making of errors serve as mechanisms the learner uses in order to learn

(Corder, 1967, p.167).

Another feature of second language acquisition is the “interim grammars” that result from the process of acquiring the “target language” (Selinker, 1969). Selinker (1969) terms this phenomenon as “interlanguage”. This is possible because of the interconnectedness of language (McLaughlin, 1987). McLaughlin notes therefore that learners, in the process of acquiring a new or second language, are introduced to a new set of rules. Consequently, the new language is highly influenced by the language they already know resulting in language transfer. It is this new language that results from the interconnectedness of the two languages (L1 and L2) that Selinker terms interlanguage. Interlanguages are interim or temporary grammars that are necessary to the new language acquisition process. Thus, Corder and Selinker see a parallel process between the L1 and L2 in the language acquisition process as the L2 is highly influenced by knowledge of the L1 (James, 1998.12); interlanguage serve as feedback to the learner towards the “target language” goal. The influence of the Ghanaian languages on the English language is what has created the Ghanaian English phenomenon evident in the speech and writing of most Ghanaian speakers of English.

Raimes (1987) examined the writing strategies of 8 English Second Language (ESL) student writing at different levels (4 in remedial and 4 in college-level writing courses) and compared their composing behaviours to native-speaker student writers. His study showed the following results:

- L2 writers did not appear to be inhibited by their attempts to correct work. L2 writers, Raimes believes, are more interested in expressing meaning than correcting their work (Smith, 1994:22).
- The students in non-remedial courses consistently engaged in more interaction with the emerging text. They re-read their work which helped them not only to move forward and develop their next idea but also helped them to edit their work (Raimes, 1987, p.455 as cited in Smith, 1994, p.23)
- There was little correspondence demonstrated among proficiency, writing ability, and the students' composing strategies. Both groups engaged in very little planning and for those who did, the plans were very abstract and did not reflect their writing ability and proficiency. An example is Giovanna's outline (Raimes, 1987:453 as cited in Smith, 1994:22):

Introduction: give an example/ main point

Body: a person who doesn't have a family/ a person who does have a family

Conclusion: how the main point is supported

Raimes insists that instead of teachers emphasising students planning their essays, focus should be on ways of helping them develop their content ideas as specified purpose and audience had almost no observable effect on composing strategies. While composing an essay, some plan in the L1 and write in the L2 but some plan and write directly in the L2. Like Raimes, Jones and Tetroe (1987) do not see any correlation between composing strategies and the English composition. They investigated L1 and L2 writings of Spanish students learning English. In their findings, the use of Spanish in composition while writing in English did not facilitate the English composition (Chelala, reported in Jones/Tetroe, 1987,

p.38 as cited in Smith, 1994, p.23). Lay, (1982) as cited in Smith (1994) on the other hand discovered that Chinese speakers who had more L1/L2 switches in their protocols produced better compositions in English.

Notwithstanding the inconsistencies in the above study where correlation between composing strategies and proficiency are varied, other performance based researches (Cumming et al, 2004, 2005; Frase, 1985, Hinkel, 2003; Shaw & Liu, 1998; Grant & Ginther, 2000; Becker, 2010) have examined the different linguistic features students use in their writing in order to assess their performance relative to the different levels of writing ability determined by scores using holistic rubrics. Grant & Ginther (2000), for example, sampled 90 Test of Written English (TWE) essays with the aim of identifying differences in L2 writing, using linguistic features such as grammatical (e.g. nouns, nominalisations, pronouns etc.) and clause-level (e.g. subordination, relative clauses etc.) features among others. The findings of the study indicate that the use of clause level features increased as the level of proficiency increased. The use of subordinators and relative clauses suggests the use of dependent clauses. The use of dependent clauses suggests the use of complex sentences. This is because dependent clauses are meaningless unless they are attached to independent. It is therefore generally assumed that the use of complex sentences increases in writings as the level of proficiency increases.

As the level of proficiency increases, student's ability to undertake more complex writing tasks also increase, and in less given time. In fact, the study of Cumming et al (2004, 2005) examined the proficiency levels of examinees writing at different levels. They assessed TOEFL integrated writing task (examinees received a reading passage of 6 paragraphs and were given 25 minutes to answer the questions by writing their response based on the

information from the passage) and TOEFL independent writing task (examinees were instructed to read the questions and instructions like the following and comply. “You have 30 minutes to plan, write and revise your essay. This task does not require reference to source materials”). Using discourse features such as lexical and syntactic complexities, they examined 216 essays written for 6 TOEFL tasks and by 36 examinees. Apart from their findings indicating that the use of certain linguistic features in writings distinguishes examinees from different levels, it most importantly showed that the choice of these features in integrated writings differed from those in independent writing tasks. Unlike independent essays, examinees in integrated task tended to write briefer compositions, used longer and variety of words, wrote longer and more clauses, exhibited greater grammatical accuracy, had better quality propositions and claims in their arguments and made more summaries of source evidence.

Research findings have established that certain linguistic features help to distinguish the proficiency of learners at different levels (Grant & Ginther, 2000; Becker, 2010). The varying results of these studies have created uncertainty about what features separate a lower-level writer from an advanced-level writer (Becker, 2010). Grant & Ginther (2000) sampled 90 Tests of Written English (TWE) essays to identify differences in L2 students’ writings. Becker (2010) replicated their study using the same methodology but different writing tasks. His aim was to find out if ten (10) features of written discourse generated in writing tasks differed among three levels of students at an Intensive English Programme (IEP). He, in this study, analysed linguistic features (such as words, clause, text length, coherence, cohesion and lexical density) in different levels of ESL students in the United States. After sampling 43 ESL student essays, he observed that some linguistic features like clause-level, words and text length clearly distinguishes ESL students writing at different levels thereby corroborating the findings of Grant & Ginther (2000). Sentences and their types can thus be used as a yardstick for measuring the proficiency level of learners.

Clearly, Grant & Ginther (2000), Cumming et al (2004, 2005) and Becker (2010) have highlighted the clause-level as a linguistic feature that differentiates one level of proficiency from the other. It is very important to note that the linguistic or grammatical feature that was used in these studies to establish proficiency level is the clause. The clause as defined by Becker (2010) refers to subordination, relative clauses and passives. But subordinations and relative clauses cannot stand alone in a sentence (Wiredu, 1999). This means that the presence of these linguistic features presupposes the use of complex or compound-complex sentences.²

Moreso, Espada-Gustilo (2011) studied the linguistic features of ESL compositions of freshmen Filipino college students across proficiency levels. His major result, corroborating Grant and Ginther (2010), Cumming et al (2004, 2005), Becker (2010), was that clause level features such as subordination, coordination and relative clauses increased as the level of proficiency increases.

The evidence of subordination and relative clauses, as discussed above, prove that complex and compound-complex sentences would characterise writings of ESL students writing at a higher level of proficiency. Espada-Gustilo makes an interesting finding different from the literatures reviewed above. He observed that, in addition to subordination and relative clause, coordination also featured in the writing of high proficiency essays but noted that the latter was favoured over subordination at all levels of proficiency. This shows that, in as much as coordination (evidence of compound sentence) dominated the essays of students at all proficiency levels, those writing at the advance level of proficiency, demonstrated the use of

other clause structures like subordination in addition to coordination. The argument here is that complex sentences distinguish writing at an advanced level than compound sentences.

Proficiency has thus been associated with certain linguistic features. In other words, to be able to measure the proficiency level of learners requires the study of linguistic features. This is best couched in the words of Becker (2010):

In order to better understand the development of writing for ESL learners, more studies could aim to investigate the linguistic and discourse features of ESL learners' writing ... as these studies have clear procedures for distinguishing levels of writing proficiency and the features that relate to the writing at those levels (p. 411)

This is what the present study is trying to unravel.

2.1.1 WHAT IS PROFICIENCY?

A definition of language proficiency is important for the field of second language acquisition and for the second language learner. For the second language learner, attaining native-like fluency, both in speech and writing, is the ultimate goal of proficiency (Baker & Colin, 2011). But the fact of the matter is that learners achieve varying levels of proficiency as they set out to learn the target language (William, 1984). This might be due to a myriad of reasons which include social and cognitive factors (Ellis, 1994). In most cases, native-like fluency is hardly even achieved since the second language learner is a bilingual as it is postulated that a person hardly ever had native-like knowledge of more than one language (Baker & Colin, 2011).

The definition of proficiency is a tricky one in that there are varying opinions on what exactly proficiency is especially in a second language situation. While Stern (1983, p.357) says proficiency is about “a near-native level”, Baker & Colin (2011, p.7) believe proficiency is about the speaker’s ability to advance from “minimal” to “maximal” level of expression in the given language. According to Adegible & Alabi (2005), the term proficiency is viewed from two perspectives – the functionalist and the formalist perspectives. The functionalists use communicative competence as the standard for establishing proficiency. Communicative competence was first proposed by Hymes (1970) as an attempt to develop the learner’s sociolinguistic, discourse and grammatical competence. Communicative competence refers to the ability of learners to organise their thoughts in a language and use language appropriately in specific contexts. To the functionalists, therefore, proficiency is “the outcome of social interaction in a linguistic environment” (Adegible & Alabi, 2005). In sum, the ability of the learner to use the target language in a given environment – such as the school, work etc. – is proficiency.

Writing is a form of communication. Thoughts must therefore be organised and communicated in the appropriate language to convey the intended meaning. That said, there must be a yardstick against which a piece of writing will be measured as proficient or not; this is where the formalist approach comes in.

To the formalist, language proficiency is the unknowable abstraction that reflects the universal competence of native speakers (Adegible & Alabi, 2005). This definition gives substance to the learner’s quest to strive for native-like fluency (Baker & Colin, 2011). It is a very useful definition since it serves as a standard for the learner to measure his proficiency. Underlying both definitions of proficiency is the setting of standards against which the

language skills of learners can be identified – whether they have attained the expected outcome of communication or whether they can approximate native speaker’s competence. Inasmuch as the two perspectives are equally important to the definition of proficiency, one can only tell if the expected outcome has been reached when there is a standard.

Bialystok (1998) also emphasises the need for standards in his definition of proficiency. He describes it as the ability to function in a situation that is defined by specific cognitive and linguistic demands, to a level of performance indicated by either objective criteria or normative standards. Establishing standards in proficiency, in essence, is very key. The standards must be relative to the knowledge and level (cognitive and linguistic demands) of the learner. Hypothetically, if a test meant for SHS three students is given to SHS one students and they (SHS one) do not perform well, or a test meant for SHS one students is administered to SHS three students and they (SHS 3) do exceedingly well, or students are tested in an area they have not been introduced to and consequently, they perform poorly, the result will not be reflective. The point is that in assessing proficiency, standards must be set to attain results that are representative. The reason for this occurrence is simply that SHS one and three students have been given test items whose profile dimensions are not commensurate with their measurable standards.

Moreover, Cummins (1979 as cited in Krashen & Lee Brown, 2007) identifies two forms of proficiency – the Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency (CALP), also called Academic proficiency; and the Basic Interpersonal Communication Skills (BICS), also called Conversational Fluency. What Cummins calls academic proficiency, is what formalists refer to as code or the standard. Conversational fluency is what functionalist term communicative competence.

Academic proficiency covers two areas. The first, knowledge of academic language, is “knowledge of the special language used in school” (Krashen & Lee Brown, 2007). Even though there are similarities, the language of English, Literature, Mathematics, Economics etc. differs (Bieber, 2006). Students must demonstrate knowledge in the academic language to be considered academically proficient. Knowledge of specialised subject matter is knowledge of the subject itself (example, of English, Literature etc.). As a matter of consequence, to understand a subject, one must understand the language of that subject; and to do well in the subject, one must have knowledge of the subject’s language. The understanding is that to perform well in composition, the learner must have knowledge of sentence types and demonstrate their knowledge in the essay.

Based on this, assessment of proficiency must adopt a two prong approach: first of all, it must establish the standards upon which the proficiency of language learners can be assessed; and second, these standards must be integrated into a context that is sensitive to the age, proficiency level of the learner, and the linguistic functions they are required to carry out (Bialystok, 1998).

The GES and WAEC/WASSCE English syllabi (2010) are two valuable reference points in terms of standards when measuring the proficiency of SHS students. The GES syllabus (2010) spells out what is to be taught and at what level. As part of its general aims, the teaching of the syllabus is to:

- Reinforce language skills and competence acquired at the Junior High School (JHS) level.

- To develop language skills and competencies which were acquired at the JHS level.

- Raise students' level of proficiency in English usage and their ability to communicate with other users of English.

This shows that the SHS language syllabus is a continuum – a continuation of the JHS English syllabus. As such, whatever knowledge students have acquired at the JHS level can be assessed and built upon at the SHS level. By implication, regardless of the level students are at, they have been introduced to all the types of sentences and the types of essays. Expectantly, there would be no disparity in the evaluation and assessment process. For instance, *Sentences* and *Types of Sentences* are aspects of grammar taught at the SHS form 2 level (2010 English syllabus). What this means is that SHS Form 3 students have already been introduced to this topic. One may think that SHS Form 1 students have not been taught this topic at their current level at the time of sampling but they also have been taught types of sentences at the JHS level (2007 JHS syllabus).

Similarly, all students at the three different levels of education have been introduced to the three kinds of essays they were asked to write on. In SHS 1, Narration is taught; in SHS 2 argumentative is taught; and in SHS 3 exposition is taught. Here also, the Form ones and twos are not disadvantaged; they have been taught narration, exposition and argumentative essays at the JHS (2007 JHS syllabus). This is the standard against which the investigation was conducted.

Whereas the English syllabus determines the standard of what to teach relative to age and level of education, the WAEC/WASSCE English syllabus sets out guidelines upon which students can be assessed. Specifically, the WAEC/WASSCE syllabus measures the extent to which the aims of the teaching syllabus in member countries have been realised in the candidates' secondary school career. It assesses the ability of students to:

- Control sentence structures accurately;
- Exhibit a variety in the choice of sentence pattern on topics based on the following kinds of writing:

- Exposition;
- Narration;
- Argumentative.

It should be emphasised that by the time students are due to be assessed at the West Africa Senior Secondary Certificate Examination (WASSCE) level, they are expected to have reached the highest level of proficiency mapped out for the SHS level. The WASSCE English Language marking scheme is very essential to the assessment process of students' proficiency. It standardises the assessment of students so as to avoid disparate outcomes. This way, when a student is graded A1³ and another is graded B3, the result is accepted as representative since the process of measuring their proficiency is standard.

³ See appendix 3 for WAEC grades and interpretations.

2.1.2 LEVELS OF PROFICIENCY

The level of Language Proficiency is perceived similarly but defined differently by different people. The United States Department of State has defined the level along the lines of speaking and reading from the scales of 0 to 5 where 0 refers to zero proficiency and 5 is equivalent to the educated native or bilingual speaker proficiency. American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages, ACTFL (2012) sets out guidelines to ascertain proficiency levels and describes these proficiency guidelines as “descriptions of what an individual can do with language in terms of speaking, writing, listening and reading in the real-world situations in a spontaneous and non-rehearsed context”. The proficiency guideline sums up the importance of the levels as thus:

These guidelines present levels of proficiency as ranges and describe what a learner or person can and cannot do with language at each level regardless of where, when, or how the language was acquired. Together these levels form a hierarchy in which each level subsumes all lower levels. The Guidelines are not based on any particular theory, pedagogical method, or educational curriculum. They neither describe how an individual learns a language nor prescribe how an individual should learn a language ...They are an instrument for the evaluation of functional language ability (ACTFL, 2012:3)

The levels must therefore be seen as a continuum of proficiency from the ‘highly articulate, well-educated language user to a level of little or no functional ability’ and hence, they are useful for functional evaluation of language ability.

Also, where or when knowledge is acquired is of no significance to the evaluation process but that knowledge has been learnt and demonstrated in the writing task. Example, SHS 1 students learnt sentence types; and narration, exposition and argumentative essay writing at JHS whereas SHS 3 students have learnt these topic at various levels at the senior high

school. What level an essay placed is dependent on the functional ability demonstrated in the writing task assigned.

Proficiency levels have been assigned to reading, speaking and writing. These levels are either in numerals or letters of the alphabet. In spite of this, three level seems to emerge – beginning, intermediate and advanced.

State Board of Education, SBOE (2004), for instance, describes five performance conditions based on which it identifies five levels of writing proficiency – beginning, early intermediate, intermediate, early advanced and advanced. Since the sample population is SHS 1 - 3, the assumption is that the students are neither beginners nor have achieved native-like fluency but are between intermediate and early advanced level of proficiency. Accordingly, attention shall be paid to the early intermediate, intermediate and the early advanced level. Again, because this study is based on the writing of students and the descriptions stipulated in the SBOE are apt and suitable for describing the proficiency level of the study population, it is useful that focus is given to SBOE Proficiency Standards. Here is a discussion on the performance conditions for SBOE (ELL I to V) after which some modifications are made to suit this study.

ELL I – students can write short phrases and simple sentences.

ELL II – Students can write essays. Texts are short. Writing at this level consists of basic vocabulary, phrase and simple sentences.

These two SBOE performance conditions shall be merged into one to correlate with the **early intermediate** level of proficiency. At this level of proficiency, there is satisfactory control over simple sentence structures. Occasionally, attempts at complex sentences are also visible. SHS 1 students are assumed to be at this level of proficiency.

ELL III – Students can write essays using basic vocabulary and common language structures.

Frequent errors are characteristics of this level especially when students try to express thoughts that require more complex language structures.

This performance criterion corresponds to the **intermediate level** of proficiency. Here, there are repetitive sentence patterns. There is some variety in sentence length and structure with limited control of complex sentences. SHS 2 students are assumed to be at this level of proficiency.

ELL IV – Students write essays and show good control over English as they express complex ideas and use a wide range of vocabulary and idioms.

ELL V – Students are approaching fluency in writing in the content areas.

Again, these two performance conditions shall be merged to correlate with the **early advanced** level of proficiency. At this level, students vary sentence length, structure and complexity. SHS 3 students are assumed to be at this level of proficiency.

It is obvious from the above that performance conditions vary with every level of proficiency. A learner at the intermediate stage is expected to perform at an expected level which is different from the one at the advanced stage. In learning to write or on the writing proficiency scale, the expectation is that simple sentence is learnt before the more complex ones, hence, SHS three students, at a higher level of proficiency, are expected to use more complex structures and less simple sentences than SHS two and one respectively

2.1.3 PROFICIENCY VS COMPETENCE

As stated earlier, proficiency is the ability of a learner to approximate native-like competence. Closely related to proficiency is competence. According to Chomsky (1965), competence is the “speaker-hearer’s knowledge or his understanding of his language” (as cited in Smith, 2004). Simply put, it is knowledge of the language system (Phillips & Tan, 2015). Chomsky used competence in 1965 to refer to the unconscious knowledge of grammar that allows a speaker to use and understand language. In other words, it guides an individual’s understanding of what is acceptable and what is ungrammatical (Phillips & Tan, 2015). Communicative competence was later coined by Dell Hymes in 1972 in reaction to linguistic competence. Communicative competence, it is argued, is the user’s knowledge of the language that allows the user to know when, where and how to use language appropriately (Rico & Weed, 2010). There is an overlap between proficiency and competence. For example, if a learner has knowledge in grammar (how to use punctuation marks) and uses it appropriately in his writing, he is likely to score high on the proficiency scale. A case in point is Van Bruggen (1946). He found in his study that the more competent writers had longer pauses (full stop) between groups of words representing thought units and shorter pauses (comma) within the group of words than the less competent writers. All in all, competence as used here is learner’s knowledge and use of grammar while proficiency is

learner's ability to approximate what he knows to the standard set. Proficiency is therefore the outcome of competence. It shall be used interchangeably in the study.

According to Halliday (1978), the concept of text analysis in line with the concept "context of situation" has led to the identification of metafunctions. The term *metafunction* originates in Systemic Functional Linguistics and is considered to be a property of all languages. The founder of the theory, Michael Halliday, (1994) states that language is functional and semantic rather than formal and syntactic in its orientation. Eggins (1994) also states that language is functional, that is language is used by people to satisfy human needs and to achieve social goals. Eggins maintains that language is about how people use language to make meanings, and how language is structured to make meanings.

SFG theorists says, it should be explained "in terms of the functions that language evolved to serve." (Halliday, 1994). Metafunction linguistic theory reiterates that both the emergence of grammar and the particular forms that grammar assume must be understood "in terms of the functions that language has evolved to serve" (Eggins, 1994). Eggins points out that all languages vary in terms of what they do and how they do it in a given human cultural context. However, all languages are seen to be shaped and structured in relation to three functions or *meta functions namely: ideational function, the interpersonal function and the textual function*. According to Halliday, *systemic* refers to the view that language is a network of systems and interrelated options for "making meaning", while *function* as Halliday puts it, refers to the view that language is as it is "because of what it has been evolved to do" (Halliday, 2004).

The theory of Systemic Functional Linguistics is different from other grammars as it is communication and meaning centred. It does not sacrifice meaning at the altar of syntax. It

therefore does not follow in Noam Chomsky's thesis that a language is a finite rule system but rather posits and explains that language is meaning potential for which reason spoken and written texts construe meanings and are organized in open systems subject to choices and are bound by meaning. In this theory of language in use, there are systemic relations between choices and forms within the less abstract strata of grammar and phonology on one hand and more abstract strata such as context of situation and context of culture.

Secondly, instead of seeing linguistics as a branch of Psychology, as many earlier grammarians like Chomsky would want to state, Halliday sees this discipline more as a branch of sociology. This explains Systemic Functional Linguistics' closer relationship with pragmatics and semantics than is the case with traditional grammar.

Halliday describes grammar as systems, not as rules, on grounds that every grammatical structure comprises a choice from a describable set of options. Language is thus a *meaning potential*. Grammarians in SFG tradition use system networks to map the available options in a language. In relation to English, for instance, Halliday has described systems such as *mood*, *agency*, *theme*, etc. Halliday describes grammatical systems as closed, i.e. as having a finite set of options. By contrast, lexical sets are open systems, since new words come into a language all the time.

As indicted earlier, there are three metafunctions in SFG, namely the *ideational* metafunction, the *interpersonal* metafunction and the *textual* metafunction (see *Chapter Three* for a full discussion of this grammatical model).

So far, there is no known literature on the analysis of students' composition scripts using SFG, yet there are some scholarly works and articles that have used this grammatical model in their textual analysis. The works discussed under this section are only related to this current study because they used SFG as their theoretical framework.

Using SFG and critical discourse analysis to study Ghanaian newspaper editorial language, Wiredu (2012) has found a high level of rankshifting in the editorial language of the *Daily Graphic*, his primary data. Wiredu's data were dependent clauses from editorials from *Daily Graphic*, the most popular and perhaps the most prestigious daily newspaper in Ghana (p.79). His study has found that the newspaper editorial preferred complex sentences to any other. In a study of 388 sentences, 270 of them accounting for 79.88% were complex sentences. This was closely followed by the simple sentence which has 30 appearances, representing 8.88%; the compound and the compound complex sentences came with 6.80% and 4.44% respectively (p.87). It is therefore safe to conclude, based on the data available, that the compound sentence is the most preferred type of sentence in Ghanaian newspaper editorial. Wiredu also found that there was a high level of rankshifting, suggesting the use of multiple clauses, finite and non-finite in the editorials. The data revealed that out of 308 instances of subordination, 103 of them (33.33%) had more than one rankshifted clause (p.98). Also of interest is the number of dependent clauses used in given sentences. This is an instance where the number of these clauses written per sentence was accounted for. Out of the 506 dependent clauses studied, 2 sentences had 9 dependent clauses occurring in them (0.40%) while 150 sentences, making up for 29.58% had 1 dependent clause each. However, the highest frequency of dependent clause occurrence is 2 dependent clauses per sentence coming with 168 occurrences (33.20%) in the data (p.88).

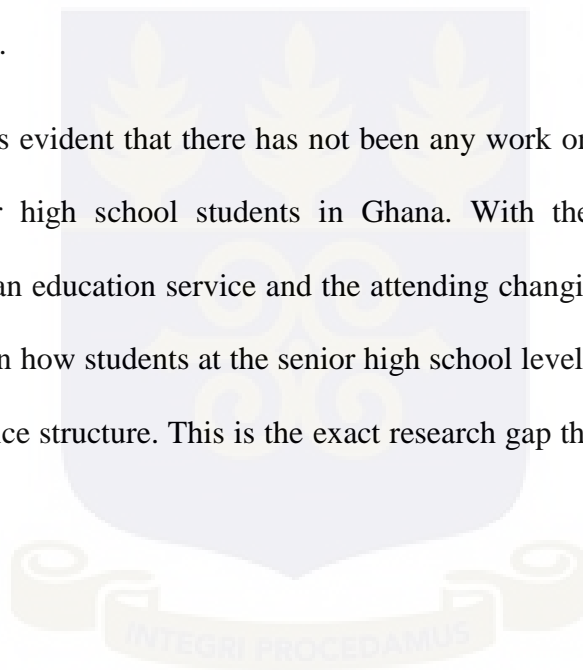
The direction of Ye (2010), Ayoola (2013) and Umani (2016) are intriguing as they all delved into the domain of politics by analysing political speeches and advertisements using SFG. While Ye studied the victory speech of Barrack Obama, Ayoola analysed the advertisements of two political parties in some Nigerian newspapers. Umani's thesis on the other hand used Halliday's transitivity model of lexicogrammatical analysis to find deeper meanings into the political speech of Benjamin Netanyahu (Prime Minister of Israel). According to the findings of Ye (2000), SFG has been used to identify sentence types and functions which have a correlation to their context of situation. Ye points out that the Obama victory speech has so many declarative sentences in positive polarity and are followed by imperative sentences. This is a true reflection of the real life speech event of the new winner of a political power whose speech is most likely to be characterized by positive declarations. The imperatives, as usual, demand for goods and services for which reason the imperatives could be used to call upon his audience to help take one action or another.

In the case of Umani (2016), the thesis used Benjamin Netanyahu's speech delivered to the United Nations General Assembly in 2013 for a transitivity analysis to, among many other things, determine the power relations in that discourse. The main participants, Umani found were *The West, Diplomatic Solution, Iranian People, Israel* and *The International Community* (p.92). A transitivity analysis of the participants proves "Iran as the affected participant" (Umani, 2016, p. 92).

Also related to this study is Obeng- Appiah (2015) who does a comparative analysis of the mood choices used by two charismatic church pastors in Accra: Archbishop Duncan William and Pastor Mensah Otabil by using SFG. Obeng- Appiah's (2015) research is premised on the fact that interlocutors make conscious and unconscious linguistic choices in their

everyday communication and each communication event “requires choices of specific linguistic units to achieve intended goals” (Hawes & Thomas, 1995, cited in Wiredu, 2012, p. 7). Studying four sermons (2 each from the two preachers), Obeng-Appiah used the mood system of SFG to do his analysis. In all, the analysis proves that both preachers used “both positive and negative polarity” (p.iv), however, Obeng-Appiah states “both preachers exhibited objectivity more than subjectivity” in their preaching (p.104). The import of this finding is that both preachers preach the message of hope to their followers and the findings could not be more reflective than what is stated. Turning to the choice of sentence types, Obeng-Appiah has found that both preachers used more “positive declarative clauses” than any other clause (p.104).

From the foregoing, it is evident that there has not been any work on the choice of sentence structure among senior high school students in Ghana. With the numerous investment packages in the Ghanaian education service and the attending changing policies, there has to be some baseline data on how students at the senior high school level make linguistic choices when it comes to sentence structure. This is the exact research gap the research work at hand is trying to fill.



2.2 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

2.2.0 INTRODUCTION

The analytical/theoretical framework relevant to the study includes theories of second language acquisition and Systemic Functional Grammar (SFG). As stated earlier, we are using Michael Halliday's model of systemic grammatical analysis as our main model, though other models of grammar are alluded to when necessary. SFG is chosen because it begins its analysis from the clause level.

2.2.1 THEORIES OF SECOND LANGUAGE ACQUISITION

Second language acquisition refers to the process of language acquisition by a person who already has knowledge of another language. The study of SLA aims at describing and explaining that process (cf. Frawley, 2003). As such there have been numerous theories by various personalities such as Noam Chomsky, Leonard Bloomfield and B. F. Skinner on the subject. One of such theorist, Stephen Krashen, propounded that SLA is pivoted around five (5) interrelated hypothesis. Some of his theories serve as frame for the study. We shall discuss these hypothesis and establish how relevant or not they are to the study. This shall be closely followed by discussion on the Communicative Language Teaching theory.

2.2.1.1 KRASHEN'S THEORY OF SLA

Krashen's theory has been useful in understanding the intricacies of how a second language is acquired. His theory is also widely accepted and has had a large impact on second language teaching and research. As stated above, Krashen's theory of SLA consists of five main hypothesis namely:

1. *The Acquisition-Learning hypothesis*
2. *The Monitor Hypothesis*

3. *The Natural Order Hypothesis*

4. *The Input Hypothesis*

5. *The Affective Filter Hypothesis*

1) *The Acquisition-Learning hypothesis*

Krashen identifies two independent systems – the acquired and the learned systems. This hypothesis makes distinction between these two systems. According to Krashen (1982) and Yule (1996), there is a difference between Acquisition and Learning. Acquisition is a subconscious process that leads to fluency. This subconscious process, very similar to the process children undergo when they acquire their first language, is responsible for the mastery of a native language. Learning on the other hand is a conscious process which involves studying the rules and structure of language (Dulay et al 1982; Yule, 1996). The learned system is the product of formal instruction culminating in conscious knowledge about the language, for instance, grammatical rules and structures (Brown, 2002). According to this theory therefore, the study population in this project have acquired their L1 (mostly a Ghanaian language) but are learning the English language. As mentioned in the Literature Review of chapter two, English in Ghana is learnt in a second language environment. This means that English, for most Ghanaian students, is learnt and not acquired. It also presupposes that learning English is a conscious process. Inasmuch as this theory does not serve the frame for our study, it is the application of knowledge acquired as a result of this conscious learning that is being tested.

2) *The Monitor Hypothesis*

The monitor hypothesis describes the relationship between learning and acquisition as well as explains the influence of learning on acquisition. In this theory, the learned system serves as a “monitor” or edits errors and makes minor changes to what has been acquired thereby polishing the language the acquired system has produced. The effectiveness of the monitor depends on three conditions (Lightbown & Spada, 1995):

- 1) The sufficient time the second language learner has at his disposal;
- 2) focus on form;
- 3) Knowledge of the rules.

This theory falls outside the scope of our study since our goal is not to investigate the effect of the L1 on the L2 or errors in learners’ essays.

3) *The Natural Order Hypothesis*

This hypothesis, based on research findings (Dulay & Burt, 1974; Fathman, 1975; Makino, 1980), states that grammatical rules or structures are acquired in a particular order which is natural and predictable (Lightbown & Spada, 1995). As Krashen & Terrell (1983) puts it, certain structures are acquired early while others are acquired late. What this means is that the use of certain linguistic structures are associated with beginners whereas others are used by learners at an advanced level. Tabors (1997) has said that second language acquisition follows stage-like development from a non-verbal to a terminal stage when children or learners are thought to be gathering data about the second language to when they might be considered fully proficient users of the second language respectively. This theory holds the view therefore that between the periods when a person decides to learn a second language, until he attains the set target [native-like fluency], he goes through different stages. One of

such stages is outlined by the Louisiana Department of Education (2005). It outlines five (5) stages a second language learner goes through till he attains native-like fluency:

➤ Stage 1: *Silent/Receptive or Preproduction stage*

- The silent period includes expressive communication through a variety of strategies such as pointing, gesturing, nodding, responding with a simple 'yes' or 'no', etc.

➤ Stage 2: *Early Production stage*

- Learners can speak in one- or two- word phrases and demonstrate comprehension by answering yes/no, either/or, or who/what/where questions.

➤ Stage 3: *Speech Emergence stage*

- Learners begin to use dialogues; asking and answering simple sentences.
- Longer sentences may be produced but grammatical errors are likely.

➤ Stage 4: *The Intermediate Language Proficiency stage*

- Learners use complex sentences, state opinions, ask for clarification, share their thoughts and speak at greater length.

➤ Stage 5: *The Advanced Language Proficiency stage*

- The acquisition of grammar and specialised content vocabulary are comparable to native speakers.

From the description above, children or learners acquire language in stages: by first using gestures to making one-word utterances; then one- or two-word phrases to simple sentences; and then the complex structures. This suggests that simple sentences are less difficult to construct than complex structures. The point is that the choice and/or use of a particular grammatical structure is associated with a particular level of competence and proficiency in language study. This theory thus serves as an appropriate frame as this is what the study seeks to examine – the use of grammatical structure and its correspondence to the level of education or proficiency level. We are trying to measure the ability of students from the three senior high school year groups to use the four different types of sentences namely the simple sentence, the compound sentence, the complex sentence and the compound-complex sentence.

It is worth noting that there is an element of “*Advanced Language Proficiency*” test in this research whereby form 1 students were tested with their knowledge of compound-complex sentences. It is common knowledge that the compound-complex sentence is a bit above their level.

4) *The Input Hypothesis*

According to this hypothesis, it is imperative for the learner to understand language that is a little above his current level of competence. Thus a learner at level i should *get* the input that is $i + 1$. By implication, the language learners are expected to be exposed to knowledge that is a bit beyond their present level of competence so that they can understand most of it [the knowledge] and still be challenged to make progress (Brown, 2002). This theory, though criticised by many psychologist like McLaughlin, provides basis of standardisation for the

essay test conducted – that Form 1’s as well as Form 2’s have been introduced to enough knowledge to enable them write on the same essay questions as their Form 3 counterpart.

5) *The Affective Filter Hypothesis*

In Krashen’s view, a number of affective variables facilitates the acquisition of second language. This hypothesis therefore states that a learner acquires a language better when he is not angry, tense, anxious or bored, but has self-confidence and motivation (Krashen, 1987 & 1988; Abtenaichinger, 2003). This means that low self-esteem, low motivation and a high level of anxiety can raise the affective filter and serve as a “mental block” to impede language acquisition. This theory does not fall under the purview of the study so we shall not dwell on it.

2.2.1.2 THE COMMUNICATIVE LANGUAGE TEACHING

The communicative approach focuses on communicative proficiency in language teaching (Altenaichinger, 2003). Proponents of this theory believe that communicative competence is the goal of language teaching hence, the approach aims at the development of procedures for the teaching of the four language skills – writing, reading, listening and speaking (Richards & Rogers, 1986). It therefore “pays systematic attention to functional as well as the structural aspects of language” (Littlewood, 1981). Communicative competence goes beyond a learner’s oral ability to use a language learnt. We should note that writing is another form of communication. Hence, a learner must be able to demonstrate his communicative competence in it [writing] as well. This theory serves as a valuable basis for testing students’ writing competence through their essays.

Howatt (1984 as cited in Altenaichinger, 2003) distinguishes between weak and strong version of communicative language teaching. Whereas the weak version emphasises the importance of providing learners opportunities [such as writing essays] to use their English [sentence types] for communicative purposes, the strong version claims that language is acquired through communication [that is orally]. The communicative approach, in essence, focuses on communicative and contextual factors in language and is learner centred and experience based (Richards & Rogers, 1986).

In the Ghanaian educational system, the communicative language teaching in the English language is assessed through two means: Oral English Test (WAEC English Paper 3) and Written Test (WAEC English Papers 1&2). This research looks at the ability of students to produce and control the various types of sentences they have been taught in the English language class.

Closely related to the Communicative Language Teaching approach is the Language theory. Communicative competence is the fulcrum of the language theory. Competence (Hymes as cited in Altenaichinger, 2003) is what a speaker needs to know in order to perform communicatively in a speech community. What the speaker needs to know includes the knowledge and the ability of language use. Canale & Swain (1980) identifies four forms of communicative competence: 1) grammatical competence; 2) sociolinguistic competence; 3) discourse competence; and 4) strategic competence.

To reiterate what has been mentioned under Communicative Language Teaching theory, writing is a form of communication, hence only grammatical competence falls within the scope of this study. The other three competence theories are ignored at this level because they are not relevant for the current study. The study examines learners' knowledge and use of

grammar, precisely grammatical structures in writing. They are then used to ascertain the competence or proficiency levels of students. The outcome of this study will help to determine if the various language policies for the second language learner in Ghana are worth continuing or not.

2.2.2 SYSTEMIC FUNCTIONAL GRAMMAR (SFG)

As indicated earlier, systemic functional grammar is the main grammatical framework through which our sentence analysis and classification take place. However, reference is made to other grammars, in part and whole where and when thought necessary.

It is another vital theoretical frame applied to the study. The major reason for selecting this theory is because SFG views the use of language as functional. SFG is an approach that examines the lexical and grammatical patterns of a text. It sees language as a system of social interaction. In other words, every linguistic choice serves a purpose in a text, ultimately to express meaning (Bloor & Bloor, 1995). As Eggins (1994) emphasised, the use of language is motivated by purpose; it could be writing a letter to a headmistress of school to give reasons for the poor performance of students, or writing a story to bring out an expression, or writing a speech on unemployment being responsible for societal crimes. Regardless of the reasons for writing, it is the language that conveys the message. SFG therefore analyses linguistic choices made in a text and the purpose for which a particular grammatical structure is selected. For this study, we are not concerned with the purpose for which the linguistic choices have been made but the grammatical choices that have been made.

Additionally, the scope of the study requires a descriptive analysis of the linguistic choices students have made in their essays. SFG theory offers a basis for systemic analysis of the sentences of students' essays thereby presenting a suitable linguistic method by which we can analyse students' essays. Thus SFG, as it is appropriated in this study, analyses the grammatical choices in the essay samples collected. In SFG, the clause is a vital unit on the rank scale. Because the independent clause for instance can function as a simple sentence, the clause is given such prominence.

As stated earlier, all analysis begin from the clause level, and which sometimes happen to be a sentence on its own. The analysis is in three categories called metafunction: Ideational, Inter personal and textual metafunctions. In ideational metafunction, there is the transitivity analysis in which participants and process types are identified and analysed in the clause.

The textual metafunction does its clause analysis by differentiating the theme from rheme whilst the interpersonal metafunction looks at the mood and residue elements in the clause.

2.2.3 THE SENTENCE AND SENTENCE TYPES

Warriner (1982) describes the sentence as “group of words expressing a complete thought” and has the structure subject and predicate. The subject is the part of the sentence about which something is being said whereas the predicate is that part which says something about the subject. Wiredu (1999, p.6) re-echoes this in his definition of the sentence as a group of words that has a subject and a predicate and expresses a complete thought. Frimpong (2015) sees the sentence as the “ultimate grammatical potential” which by its composition is seen as “the most loaded grammatical unit” (p.19). This means that a sentence can have just more than a subject and a verb. These definitions of a sentence are seen from the structural/or grammatical point of view, leaving out the functional and the stylistic viewpoints of a sentence. Ultimately, the sentence is the most investigated grammatical unit because of its

loaded potentials (Frimpong, 2015, p.28). We shall therefore look at the sentence from the grammatical, functional and stylistic viewpoints.

In line with Dadzie and Grant (2008), Warriner (1986a & b) as well as the Teaching Syllabus for English Language (GES, 2010), we shall classify sentences into three large groups. We shall call the first group “traditional sentences” which are classified according to their grammatical structure, as regards the number of clauses they contain (Thakur, 2011, p.126-127). The traditional classification of sentences has the following types of sentences.

- i. The simple sentence
- ii. The compound sentence
- iii. The complex sentence
- iv. The compound complex sentence

There is also the classification of sentences according to “discourse function” (Quirk et al., 1999, p. 803; Downing & Locke, 2006, p.197). By this, we mean sentences are classified according to the semantic implication and therefore are put into categories based on what they have been uttered to do. We therefore have such classes as the following:

- a. The declarative sentence
- b. The imperative sentence
- c. The interrogative sentence
- d. The exclamatory sentence

(Thakur, 2011; Quirk, Greenbaum, Leech & Svartvik, 1999; Downing & Locke, 2006; Kolln, 1994).

We shall also, following Dadzie and Grant (2000) Warriner (1986a & b) as well as the teaching syllabus for English language (GES, 2010), view sentences according to how they are placed in a particular paragraph and the kind of information they give. This simply means that sentences can be classified according to their stylistic structure. We therefore realize the following types of sentences:

- a. The topic sentence
- b. The major support sentence
- c. The minor support sentence.

This last category of sentences must be ordered in students' essays in such a way that the student puts the main idea of a paragraph in a particular sentence known as the topic sentence (Warriner, 1986). Thereafter, the rest of the sentences in the paragraph are used to either explain or exemplify the main idea expressed in that paragraph. These subsequent sentences are the major and minor supporting sentences (ibid).

We have talked about classifications of sentences based on the clause structure and function and style above. The division of sentences and clauses based on function and style shall be skirted because they fall outside the scope of this study. For the rest of our discussion, the mention of "sentence" or "clause" refers to the structural/traditional classification only because that alone is the focus of the study. The composition of the sentence, based on its structure will let us know if the structures are simple, compound, complex or compound-complex. It is therefore necessary to identify the types of sentences so we can ascertain how the clauses are distributed in each of them. The operative words here for defining the structural types of sentences are based on the deployment of "independent" and "dependent" clauses. Based on the clause structure, there are four kinds of sentences – simple, compound,

complex and compound complex sentences (Downing & Locke, 2006; Wiredu, 1999; Quirk et al, 1995; Thakur, 2011).

2.2.3.1 THE INTERNAL STRUCTURE OF THE SENTENCE

A sentence is made up of a clause or clauses (Quirk et al. 1999). For example, *Ama brushed her teeth* is a sentence with one clause. Moreover, a clause is any group of words with a finite verb (Dadzie & Grant, 2008). In the sentence, *Ama brushed her teeth before she went to bed*, two finite verbs – *brushed* and *went* – are identified suggesting there are two sets of clauses therein. The first one is, *Ama brushed her teeth* and the second one is...*before she went to bed*. Going by this definition is the assumption that, since a finite verb has subject, any group of words without the verb with its subject is not a clause.

However, Downing & Locke (2006) argue that the clause consists of one or more groups and since the group comprises one or more words, a word can be considered to be a clause. For example, *Eat* is a clause because it has one word which qualifies it to be a group. Also, from the perspective of Dadzie and Grant, one can argue that *eat* in the example above is a finite verb since it has the subject *you* which is implied. Thus, even though it has just one word, it is in actual sense a clause.

These one word clauses are called imperative sentences (as in *Eat*) or exclamative sentences (for example, *Hurray!*). As indicated earlier, because these are functional kinds of sentences (Wiredu, 1999) and the study is only concerned with structural types of sentences, such structures are ignored here. However, structures with finite verbs (to be discussed in detail later) will be considered in the analysis process.

In this study, our definition of the sentence will be based on what the SHS English textbook stipulates which is a group of words with subject and a predicate. For example, *Kofi took his breakfast before going to school*. This is a sentence with the subject, *Kofi*, and predicate, *took his breakfast before going to school*. Now, this sentence has two parts which is – *Kofi took his breakfast* and *before going to school*. It is this internal division within the sentence that makes it important for us to understand the definition of the clause which is any group of words with a finite verb. This is how the two parts of the sentence came about. But a close look at the second part of the sentence – *before going to school* – shows that it does not have a finite verb but it has the verb, *going* which is a non-finite. We shall therefore discuss other forms of the verb to help us identify other clause structures.

In addition, we shall discuss how to identify clauses based on structure. Those classifications based on function shall not be dwelt on; as mentioned above, they are not within the scope of the study.

2.2.3.2 CLASSIFICATION OF CLAUSES ACCORDING TO STRUCTURE

Following Downing and Locke (2006), Wiredu (1999) Quirk et al (1999) and Thakur (2011), we shall classify and discuss clauses according to the following criteria.

- I) Form of the verb;
- II) Structure of the clause;
- III) Grammatical function of the clause.

i) **Types of clause based on form of verb**

These are looked at with a two-prong approach (Thakur, 2011). We shall look at sentences with finite verbs and non-finite clauses. We have talked a bit about the finite verb forms in clauses. The other form is the non-finite clause.

The finite clause has a verbal element that marks for tense, aspect and number (Downing and Locke, 2006; Quirk et al, 1999). The finite element “carries the syntactic burden” of the clause (p. 6). In the following examples, the finite clauses have the verbs in the present and past forms. These verbs, as with finites, thus have subjects. For instance:

a) Ama *is* always happy.

b) The chairperson *came* late to the ceremony.

The verbs in italics are in the present and past tenses. In addition, *is* has the subject, *Ama* and *came* has the subject, *the chairperson*. So the structure in which they are found are called finite clauses.

Non-finite verbs have infinitive and participial (i.e. *-ed/-en*, *-ing* V, *V-ng*, *V-ed2*) forms. Consequently, the following clauses in italics are non-finite because they begin with infinitives *-to visit* – and participials – *driven and living*:

1) It is necessary *to visit your mother*

2) Mrs Mensah visited the Osu orphanage home *driven by the chauffeur*.

3) *Living in fear* is a sign of cowardice.

The structures they begin with form another category of the clause. It should be noted that finite clauses may be independent clauses, depending upon where they occur in the sentence

because they can occur alone. Non-finite clauses, on the other hand are necessarily dependent clauses for the simple reason that they cannot occur alone. Consider the italic parts of these sentences:

- I) *Kojo ate all the food.* (finite verb/independent clause)
- II) *Singing in the bathroom* gives me joy. (non-finite verb/ dependent clause)

This suggests that i) has only one clause which is independent. But ii) has two clauses – the first one is the independent clause, *singing gives me joy*; the second, embedded in the first clause, is *singing in the bathroom*. This is a dependent clause.

Downing & Locke (2006, p.15) suggests a third kind of clause aside finite and non-finite clauses which they call the “verbless clause” (Quirk & Greenbaum, 2000, p. 312). This clause lacks a verb which is usually one or the other form of the verb “*be*” *occurring with a subject*. . In this case, the verb together with its subject “is recoverable from the situational or linguistic context” (p.15). In such instances, the verb can be deduced from the context. In the example, *We shall phone her **when possible*** and *Dela believes the prisoner innocent*, the verb *to be* has been omitted from the clause... *the prisoner to be innocent*. Whereas in *We shall phone her when possible*, a subject + verb (it is) have been omitted.

Such verbless clauses will be analysed as embedded clauses but will not be a determinant of the structural analysis of the sentences type. They will not be counted as dependent clauses since the students have not been taught anything of the sort at their level of education.

In sum, the form of the verb in a group of words can determine if the clause is independent or dependent thereby aiding us to identify simple, compound, complex and compound-complex sentences.

ii) **Types of clauses based on structure.**

It is important to identify the kinds of clauses because it is that which will let the researcher know if a particular sentence in the sample is simple, compound, complex and compound-complex. Under this sub-heading, there are two kinds of clauses.

- 1) The main/independent
- 2) The subordinate/dependent clause.

The independent clause is that clause which is considered meaningful when uttered or written in isolation (Dadzie & Grant, 2008; Quirk & Greenbaum, 2000). For example: *The doctor cancelled his appointment.* The dependent clause on the other hand cannot occur alone as the information or message it gives is incomplete and will have to depend on a matrix clause for meaning, hence the name *dependent* clause (Quirk et al, 1999; Quirk & Greenbaum, 2000) – for example, *because he had a family emergency* – unless they are attached to the independent clause – such as *The doctor cancelled his appointment, because he had a family emergency* cannot stand alone. Every sentence must have at least one independent clause (Dadzie & Grant, 2000) but may contain several subordinate clauses albeit, with an independent clause. The distribution of independent and dependent clauses in single grammatical structure informs the category of sentence types discussed below.

2.2.3.3 TYPES OF SENTENCES

a) The Simple Sentence

The simple sentence has one independent clause (Downing & Locke, 2006 Thakur, 2011). In other words, the simple sentence will have a finite verb. A stand-alone independent clause identified in the sample is counted as a simple sentence.

Eg. Smoking is dangerous to the lungs.

b) The Compound Sentence

This type of sentence is made up of two or more independent clauses and joined by coordinators like *and*, *but*, *or*. Thus structures with two or more finite verbs whose overt or implied conjunctions are coordinating conjunctions are analysed as compound sentences.

Eg. The two political parties must reach their faithful through whatever means, but they must not break traditional laws on etiquette and decorum.

c) The Complex sentence

The complex sentence consists of one independent clause and at least one dependent clause. Here, we will look out for structures with at least one finite verb together with non-finite. This means that a sentence with a finite verb but having the non-finite in them will be tallied for the complex sentence. The watch word is at least one independent clause and two or more dependent clauses which may be introduced by subordinating conjunctions like *when*, *because*, *that*, and so on.

Eg. He did survive the accident because the emergency care providers reached him early.

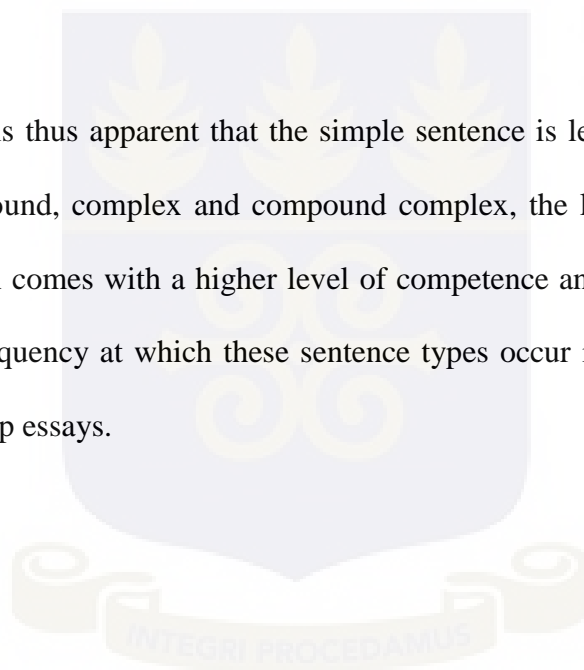
d) The Compound complex sentence

This type of sentence is composed of a minimum of two independent clauses and at least one dependent clause. Focus shall be on sentences with two or more finite clauses and one or more verbless or non-finite clauses. Such structures will be considered as compound-complex sentences.

E.g. Benny took the horse to the stream but his parents did not know he had another plan of meeting Kate whilst the horse drank.

2.2.4 CONCLUSION

From the foregoing, it is thus apparent that the simple sentence is less difficult to construct compared to the compound, complex and compound complex, the latter requiring a higher level of dexterity which comes with a higher level of competence and proficiency. The next chapter looks at the frequency at which these sentence types occur in student essays across the three SHS year group essays.



CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

3.0 INTRODUCTION

This section gives a detailed discussion of the methods employed in carrying out this research. It gives reasons and explains why one model of scientific study is chosen over another. The purview of this section, thus, covers modes of gathering information for the research. Specifically, it gives detail information on the research design, mode of data collection (population and sampling), research instrument and mode of data analysis. The methodology adopted was to enable the researcher answer the research questions.

3.1 RESEARCH DESIGN

Research design is a strategy mapped out to carry out a research and a plan for implementing the designed strategy (Cooper, 2008). Because the researcher intended to investigate a phenomenon [the use of sentence types in essays] that is peculiar to a specific population [SHS students], identify the segment of the population [SHS one, two or three] that exhibit a particular feature and find out the relationship that exists between different variables (Cooper, 2008), quantitative research was adopted for the study. This method [quantitative research] involves the collection of data and converting them to numerical form in order to make statistical calculations and draw conclusions about the subject matter (Abawi, 2008). The researcher found this method appropriate for fulfilling the set out objectives. The hypothesis for the work was that as one attains a high level of language competence, there is the likelihood that one may use a more varied sentence form and more of the complex sentence structures. To test this hypothesis, students' essays were collected and analysed for the various sentence patterns.

3.2 POPULATION

According to Remenyi and William (1998), and Cooper and Schindler (2003), a research population is the total participants that are of interest to a research from which a sample is selected for an investigation and based on which inferences are made to the whole population. The population of interest to this study is senior high school students in Ghana.

3.3 SAMPLE AND SAMPLING TECHNIQUE

Since the target population is very large and impractical to investigate in its entirety, it becomes imperative to use a sample size from the target population (Brewerton and Millward, 2002). The sample considered Achimota SHS in the Greater Accra region.

According to the Education Sector Report (2016:43), there are about 872 SHS in Ghana. Founded by Gordon Guggisberg in 1927, Achimota SHS is one of the oldest schools in the country. It has churned out some prominent personalities in various fields including politics, medicine, arts, academia to mention but a few. Notable amongst these alumni are Former presidents of Ghana, Jerry John Rawlings, John Addo-Kuffuor and the late John Evans Atta Mills. Others include Kwame Addo-Kuffuor (a renowned doctor and politician), Ayi Kwei Armah (writer and author of The Beautiful Ones Are Not Yet Born), John Dumelo (Civil Engineer by profession and a popular movie actor), Berla Mundi (a radio and television personality, and movie actor) and Patrick Armah Jr (President and founder of Ashesi University).

Currently, Achimota SHS has a high student population (2,761 as of 2015) drawn from across the country and from different backgrounds. Students in this school are expected to have come from various public and private basic schools all over the country. Apart from the

above stated reasons which include large student population, the researcher's proximity to the school and easy access to the respondents influenced her choice.

It has been noted that the best way to draw a sample should be based on the researcher's discretion which could be constraints of time and resource (Fraenkel and Wallen, 2006). They [Fraenkel and Wallen] have also asserted that there is no clear-cut method for sampling. Based on this grounds, a sample of two hundred and seventy (270) respondents were chosen.

Random and purposive sampling technique were used in selecting participants for the research. While random sampling is done without knowing in advance what is going to happen, purposive sampling targets key persons who can give the information required by the researcher for the research. Purposive sampling was used to select participants for SHS three students. This was because at the time of sampling [the second term] form three students were, as part of their preparation towards WASSCE, writing mock examinations. School authorities were therefore reluctant to grant the researcher permission. After discussions with authorities and the form three students, it was agreed that the researcher make copies of student essays as sample. Accordingly, thirty (30) essays each for exposition, narration and argumentative essays were purposively selected from the Form three mock scripts but only 13 essays were attained for argumentative essay. It should be emphasised that these Form 3 scripts were not presented in class order but according to index numbers.

The next task was to select students from the other levels to participate in the test. The researcher personally selected ninety (90) students each randomly from form one and two.

The scripts submitted fell short of the expected number and the time was limited for the researcher to undergo another selection process. Due to this, only sorting was done. For Form one, only 29 narrative and argumentative, and 25 expository essays were sampled. These were from only the Science classes. Data from Form two was better in terms of numbers and representation. Data were from the Science, Arts and Vocational classes. Again, 30 of the essays were expository and argumentative while 28 narrative essays were collected. Cumulatively, only 244 essays were gathered. The shortfall in number was because some of the participants fail to present their essays.

3.4 SOURCE OF DATA

The research method adopted for the study was quantitative. This enabled the researcher to obtain primary data for the research. The quantitative method also enabled the researcher to convert the collected data into numerical form in order to make statistical calculations and draw conclusions on the subject matter. Primary data were gathered from SHS students by administering essay questions to the sampled population. The essay topics were tailored to bring out compositions in the following essay types which are in line with the SHS teaching syllabus for English language:

- Narrative essays
- Argumentative essays
- Expository essays

3.5 RESEARCH INSTRUMENT

Essay questions were used to gather data for the study. These questions were arrived at after a careful study of the subject matter, the specific objectives, the population and the syllabi. To

ensure that the target population are all knowledgeable in the test area, the syllabi were consulted. There were three questions covering expository, argumentative and narrative essays. The questions are as follows:

- Your school has not been performing well in recent examinations, write a letter to your headmistress giving at least three (3) reasons for the poor performance and three (3) suggestions to help solve the problem. (exposition)
- Write a story that ends in the following words: "...he stood there for a long time holding his jaw in his left hand". (narration)
- The high incidence of unemployment is responsible for the various crimes in today's society. (argument)

Generally, the essay questions aimed at gathering information on the types of sentences SHS students use in their essays but specifically to find out if the preference for a particular type of sentence is dependent on the kind of essay i.e. exposition, argument and narration.

3.6 MODE OF DATA COLLECTION

The researcher personally sought and attained approval from Achimota SHS authorities. After, the researcher proceeded to collect data from the students by first obtaining their consent (including permission from SHS 3 students). They were also assured of confidentiality. Essay questions were then given to the selected students to write on and present in one week. The researcher personally administered and collected the data for form one and two students. For form three students, the researcher had to rely on the cooperation of the various language tutors for their mock scripts after which the researcher sampled scripts of expository, argumentative and narrative essays. Since all the respondents had knowledge on the essay questions, there were no verbal or visual clues to influence the

respondent. The researcher was aware of the importance of the data as the findings was dependent on the information be provided by the data. She therefore devoted much attention to the gathering of the data.

3.7 THEORETICAL/ANALYTICAL FRAMEWORK

This research investigates the percentage representation of sentence types in student essays at the Senior High School in Ghana. Though sentences are categorised severally according to structure, speech function and style, the main purpose here is to monitor the selection and sue of sentences based on grammatical structure.

In carrying out this task, Michael Halliday's SFG has been chosen as the grammatical framework within which the sentences are analysed. Though there are other grammatical models, SFG is thought adequate because unlike other grammars it is "functional" and begins its analysis from the "clausal level" and is suitable for such analysis (Wiredu, 2012, p. 79, 81). This notwithstanding, other grammatical models are referred to where and when necessary.

3.8 DATA ANALYSIS AND PRESENTATION

Data gathered were sorted into narrative, argumentative and expository essays and each further grouped into simple, compound, complex and compound-complex sentences using Halliday's grammatical analysis of sentences. However the functional types such as imperatives, interrogatives and exclamatives were ignored. The figures obtained from the data were used to make statistical calculations with the aid of tables, charts and percentages. Excellent use is made of statistical methods (charts and tables) in the presentation of the findings since it has the advantage of summarising lots of information and making the work simpler to read and easier to understand.

3.9 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

The researcher considered ethics such as rights and confidentiality of the respondents. The respondents were briefed on the goals of the research and guaranteed confidentiality.



CHAPTER FOUR

RESULTS, ANALYSES AND DISCUSSIONS

4.0 INTRODUCTION

This chapter does a quantitative analysis of the traditional sentence types discussed in *Chapter Three*. We analyse our data according to the following segments: essay types, classes and sentence types. We try to measure our findings against other documentation in the literature.

4.1 GENERAL OVERVIEW

In this section, we present a graphic representation and cross tabulation of figures representing the number of sentences gleaned from the data across the three forms and from the three types of essays tested. In all, 244 essays were collected, producing a total of 7,066 sentences from all the forms. This information is represented on the table below. The topics written on were categorized under Expository, Narrative and Argumentative essays, as we have discussed above.

	F1	F2	F3	Total
Argumentative Essay	688	546	281	1,515
Expository Essay	647	572	722	1,941
Narrative Essay	1,309	1,120	1,181	3,610
Total	2,644	2,238	2,184	7,066

Fig.1: A cross tabulation of sentences garnered from the data.

The following models also demonstrate the percentage representation of the various sentences collected per essay type from the three forms.

Across the essay types, the researcher has found the following numbers of sentences represented in each one. As indicated earlier, we have gleaned 7,066 sentences on all three topics from all three forms. Here, we present the number of sentences analysed per essay type: Argumentative, Expository and Narrative.

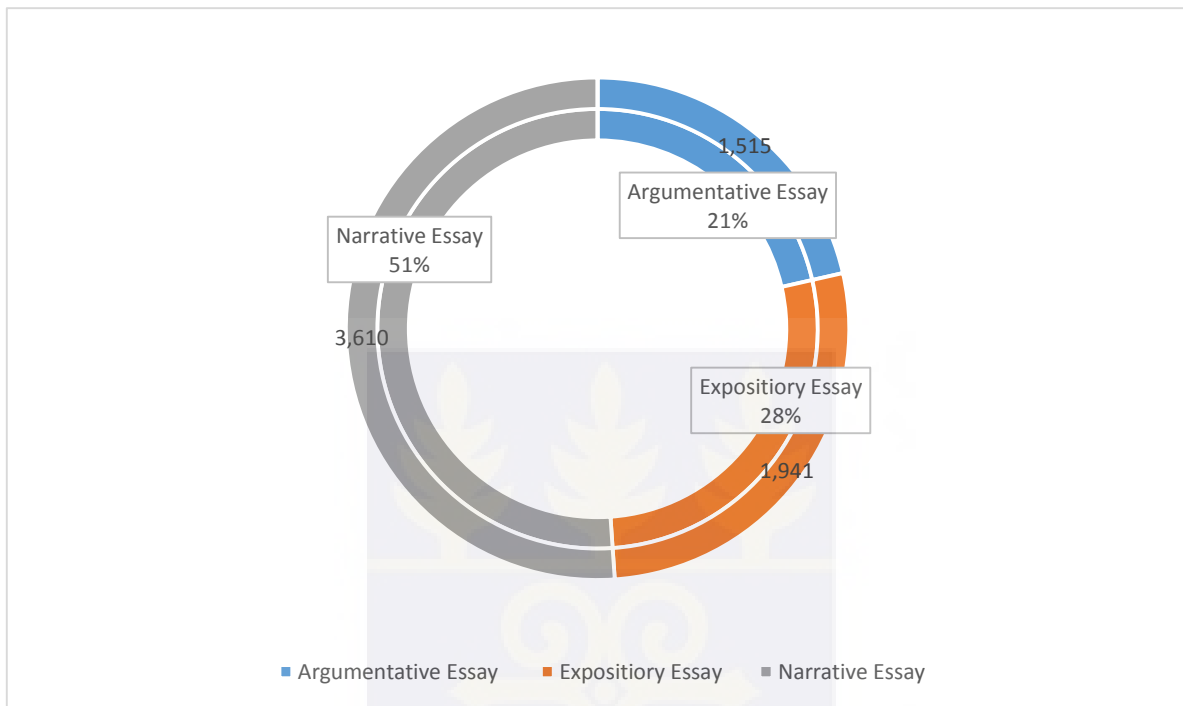


fig. 2

Fig. 2: The number and percentage of sentences per the essay type

Before we get down to the sentence type specifics, we present a graphical representation of the number of sentences realised per essay type from each class on the table below. After this, we classified the sentences gleaned according to structure (see chapter three). From all three forms and across all essay types, the complex sentence was the most preferred with 3,128 occurrences (44.27%) on the frequency table, followed by the simple sentences with 1,705 occurrences. The compound complex and the compound sentences came third and fourth respectively with 1,369 and 864 occurrences. This information is represented on the chart below.

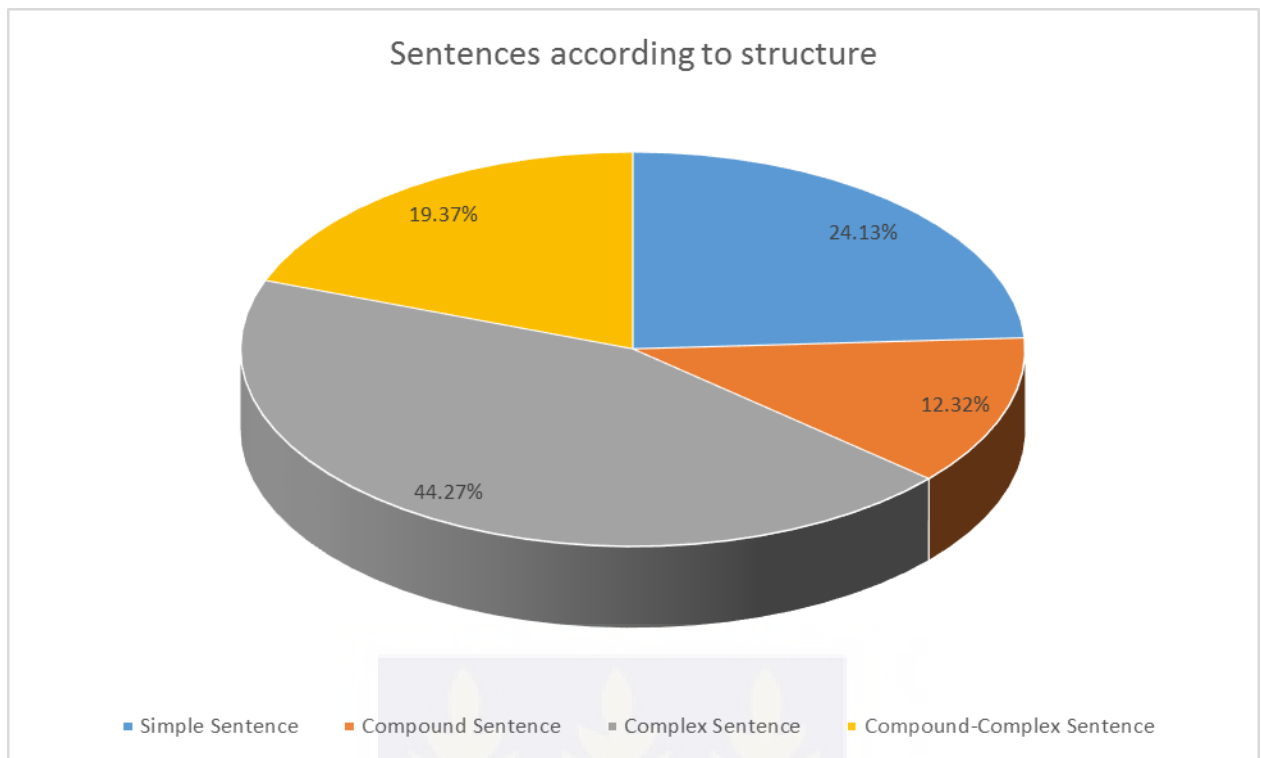


Figure 3: *The count of sentences realised according to structure*

4.2 SENTENCE TYPES IN ESSAYS FROM ALL THREE FORMS

The sentence types counted here are the four traditional sentence types classified according to grammatical structure: a) simple sentence, b) compound sentence c) complex sentence d) compound-complex sentence types. From *fig. 3* above, it is evident compound-complex and compound sentences did not feature prominently in the data collected. As such the ensuing discussions shall focus mainly on the simple and complex sentence types. Only portions of the discussions on compound and compound-complex sentences relevant to the objective of the study will be highlighted.

4.2.1 **The simple sentence** and its deployment in student essays across all three forms

With a total 1,705 simple sentences counted, all three forms tested have deployed the simple sentence in all three essays but in varying proportions. The fact that the simple sentence is the second most preferred sentence type in all three essays across all three forms informs us that it is quite popular with the study population. This is a random sample of some simple sentences from the data.

- i. Mr Chairman, please permit me to define some key words in the motion.
(Augmentative, F 3)
- ii. Most of their resting hours are being used up by the school for sports activities.
(Expository, F 2)
- iii. Kofi was a generous and hospitable man. (Narrative, F1)

Form 1 contributed 657 (38.54%) simple sentences, being the highest number thereof; this figure is followed by 538 (31.55%) sentences from Form 3 and 510 simple sentences (29.91%) came from Form 2. The occurrence of simple sentences at this level is not tied to the population's level of education. Otherwise one would have expected Form 2 to follow Form 1 with the higher number of simple sentences, but the second position rather goes to Form 3.

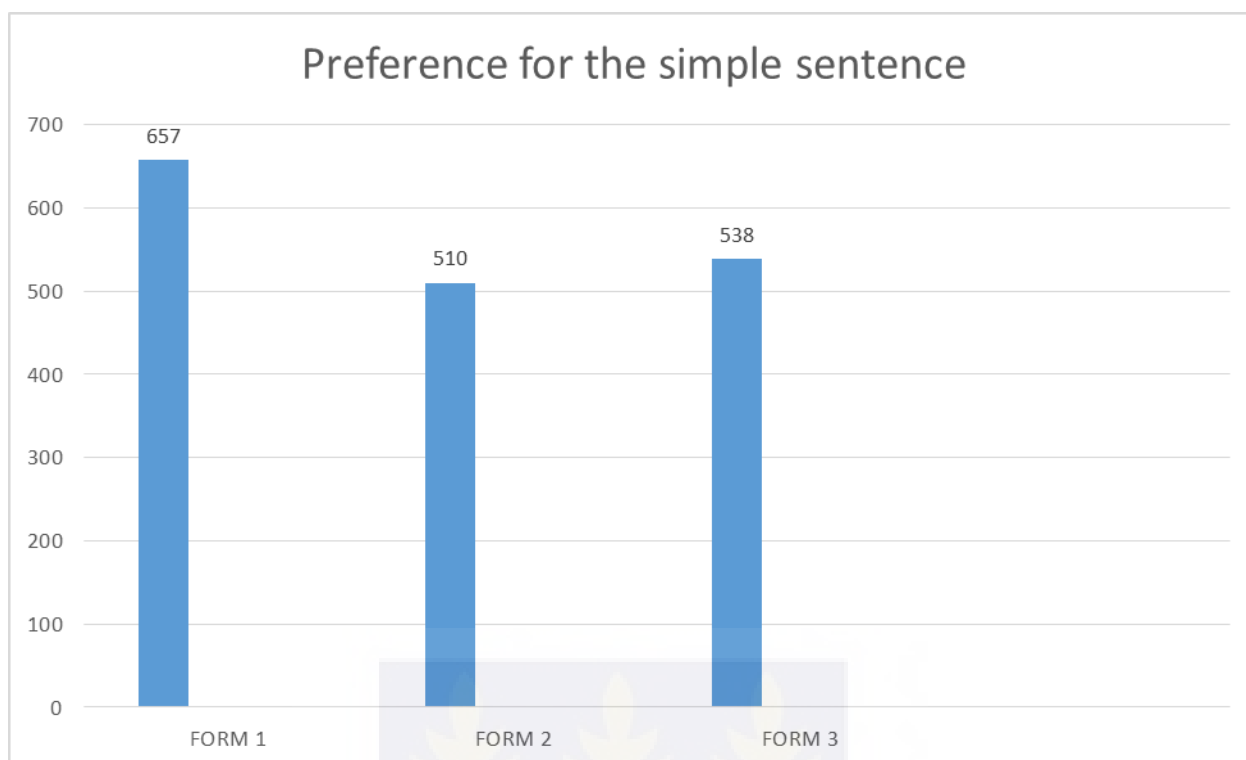


Figure 4: *Students' preference for the simple sentence according to their forms*

Another side of the simple sentences deployment is that the narrative essay contributed the highest number of simple sentences. Out of all 1,705 simple sentences realized, the narrative essay contributed 846 of those sentences, thereby accounting for 49.62%. This figure is followed by 525 (30.79%) simple sentences realised from the expository essay, while the argumentative essay yielded 334(19.59%) simple sentences. Looking again at the figures that built up 846 simple sentences within the narrative block, form 1 narratives alone contributed 319 simple sentences, representing 37.71% of all simple sentences in the narrative essay. Form 2 contributed 257 (30.38%) simple sentences while form 3, writing the narrative essay, contributed 270 simple sentences making 31.91% of the figure.

Another striking example from the data is that while form 1 contributed 163 simple sentences constituting a whopping 48.80% of the total 334 simple sentences collated for argumentative

essay, form two and three came up with 113 (33.83%) and only 58 (17.37%) simple sentences respectively.

What this means is that overall, Form 1 students used simple sentences the most using the highest number of simple sentences within the narrative and argumentative essays, while the narrative essay has the highest number of simple sentences within the essay types. On the other hand, whereas Form two students used the simple sentences the least, argumentative essay has the least number of simple sentences.

Let's move away from the distribution of the simple sentence across levels and essay types to the distribution of simple sentences according to the essay types but within the levels. A total of 2,644 sentences were gathered for form one essays. Out of the total 647 sentences collated for form one expository essay, 27.1% (175) are simple sentences. Again, out of 1309 sentences gathered for form one narrative essay, 24.4% (319) of these sentences are simple sentences. Form one argumentative essay, however, produced 23.7% (163) simple sentences of all the 688 sentences totalled. This means that even though the narrative essay presented the most simple sentences in all essay types across all levels, form one preferred the simple sentence most in expository essay and used them least in their argumentative essay.

An overview of data for form two and three simple sentence distribution in the essay types shows a similar pattern of sentence choice. Out of 2,238 sentences garnered for form two essays, 572 sentences were found in exposition, 1,120 sentences were used in narration and 546 sentences were used in argument. From these pool of sentences, expository essay accounted for 24.5% simple sentences, narrative essay gathered 22.9% whereas argumentative essay produced only 20.7% simple sentences.

Form three essays produced 2,184 sentences. Out of 722 sentences from expository essay, 29.1% are simple sentences. Narrative essay produced 22.9% simple sentences from the

1,181 sentences totalled while argumentative essay, from a total of 281 sentences, gave only 20.6% simple sentences. This demonstrate that in as much as students used the simple sentence in varying proportions, students writing at all levels used the simple sentence most in expository essay but least in argumentative essay.

Again, we looked at the data, separating the sentences into simple and non-simple clusters. Of all sentences produced, 1,705 sentences constituting 24.13% make up the simple sentence while the 5,361 non-simple sentences account for the rest 75.37% of the 7,066 sentences. This in simple terms means the simple sentence cluster constitutes nearly a quarter (25%), 0.87% shy of the quarter mark, of all the sentence types. This is represented on the bar chart below.

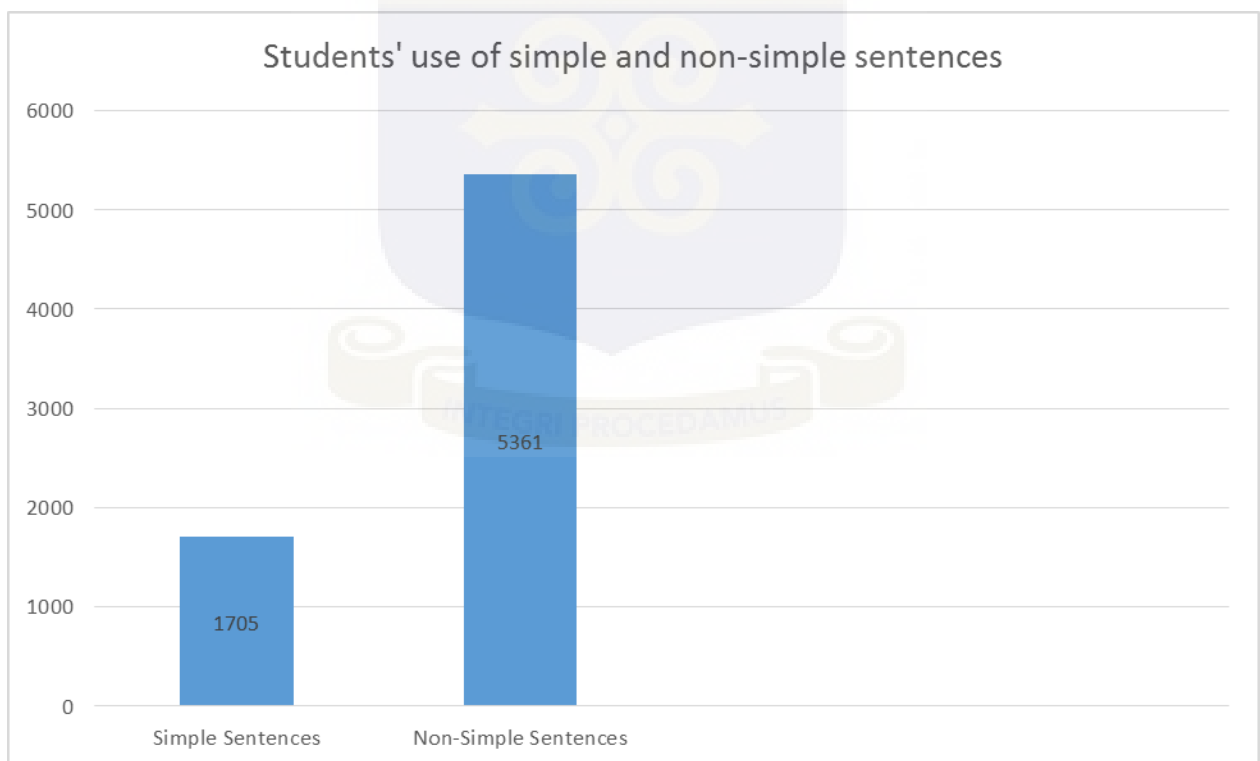


Figure 5: *Students' choice of simple and non-simple sentences*

The choices Form 1 students make are interesting when it comes to the non-simple sentences. Here too, they (form one) contributed the largest number of non-simple sentences taken together. Out of the 5,361 non-simple sentences counted, 1987 counts equalling 37.07 % went to form one. The rest of the figures in percentage representation are presented on the chart below.

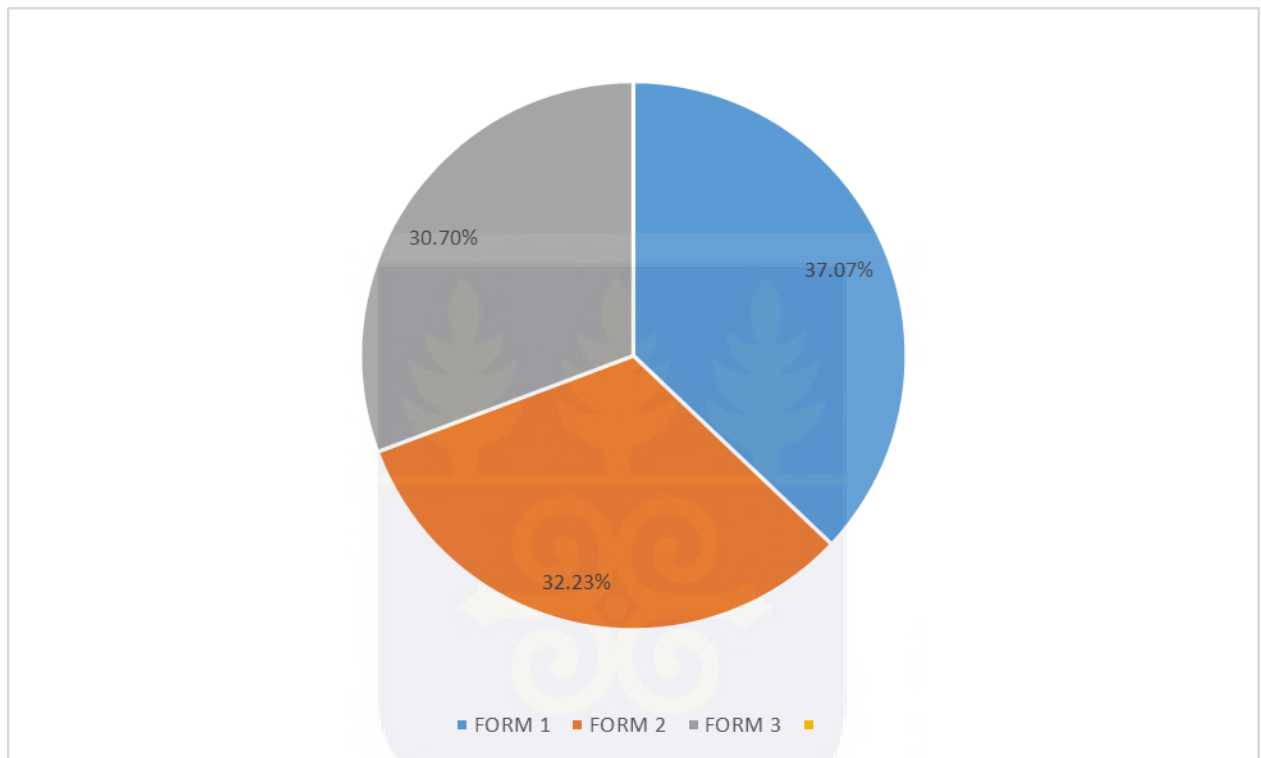


Figure 6: *Contributors of non-simple sentences*

4.2.2 The non-simple sentence

This section of the discussion looks at the deployment of non-simple sentences namely: the compound sentence, the complex sentence as well as the compound complex-sentence in the data. But as hinted earlier in this chapter, much attention shall not be given to the compound and compound-complex sentences because they were not prominent in the data collected.

a) Compound Sentences in Student Essays

According to *Figure 4*, the compound sentence has the least count among the sentences being analysed. The compound sentence has 864 occurrences, making up just about 12.23% of all 7,066 sentences counted.

The bit about the compound sentence distribution that is relevant to the study is its use in the essay types. Being analysed according to essays, there is a rather interesting trend. The narrative essay has the highest number of compound sentence, followed by expository essay and the argumentative essay in that order. Going by the figures, the narrative essay contributed 595 compound sentences of the 864 compound sentences counted; this represents 68.87%. This was followed by 157 compound sentences in expository essay translating in to 18.17% which is followed closely by the argumentative essay which has 112 counts of the compound sentence, accounting for the rest 12.96%. This information is represented in *Figure 7*.

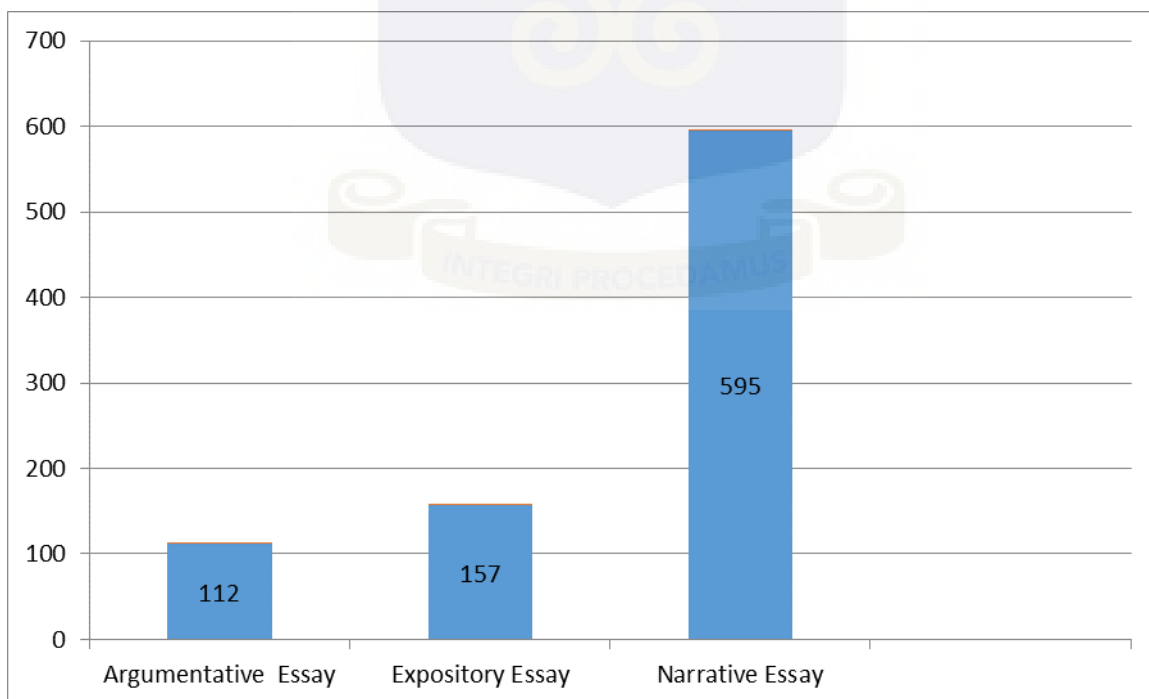


Figure 7: *The compound sentence according to essay types*

b) The occurrence of complex sentences in student essays

Referring to figure 4, it is clear that the complex sentence has the highest count among all types of sentences. This being so, it is important to identify the factors that make up that sum total. The build-up will be examined within the two clusters: students and essay type. Before then, here are some examples of complex sentences in students' essays:

- i. Since he/she cannot find any means of survival, he or she would surely engage in criminal activities that would make the person survive. (Argumentative F3)
- ii. This business continued for a long time until the day Baba Moro gave his life savings to Professor Onyam. (Narrative, F2)
- iii. All the problems mentioned above should be considered critically until their solutions (are) implemented. (Expository, F1)

Out of the 3,128 complex sentences realised from the three essays types, the greatest contributors have been the Form 1 class. For the first time in our analysis, the choice for a particular type of sentence is in a chronological order. In this way, Form 1 contributed the largest number of complex sentences, followed by Form 2, with Form 3 contributing the least. The trend in the data indicates that the higher a writer's level of education and proficiency, the least preference they have for a complex sentence. This in other words mean that junior classes prefer the complex sentence more than senior classes do. In figures 9, Form 1 wrote 1,195 complex sentences, which in percentage terms amounts to 38.20%. Form 2 came up with 1,041 complex sentences accounting for 33.28% while Form 3 contributed 892 complex sentences making up a meagre 28.52%. This information is represented on the chart in Figure 8.

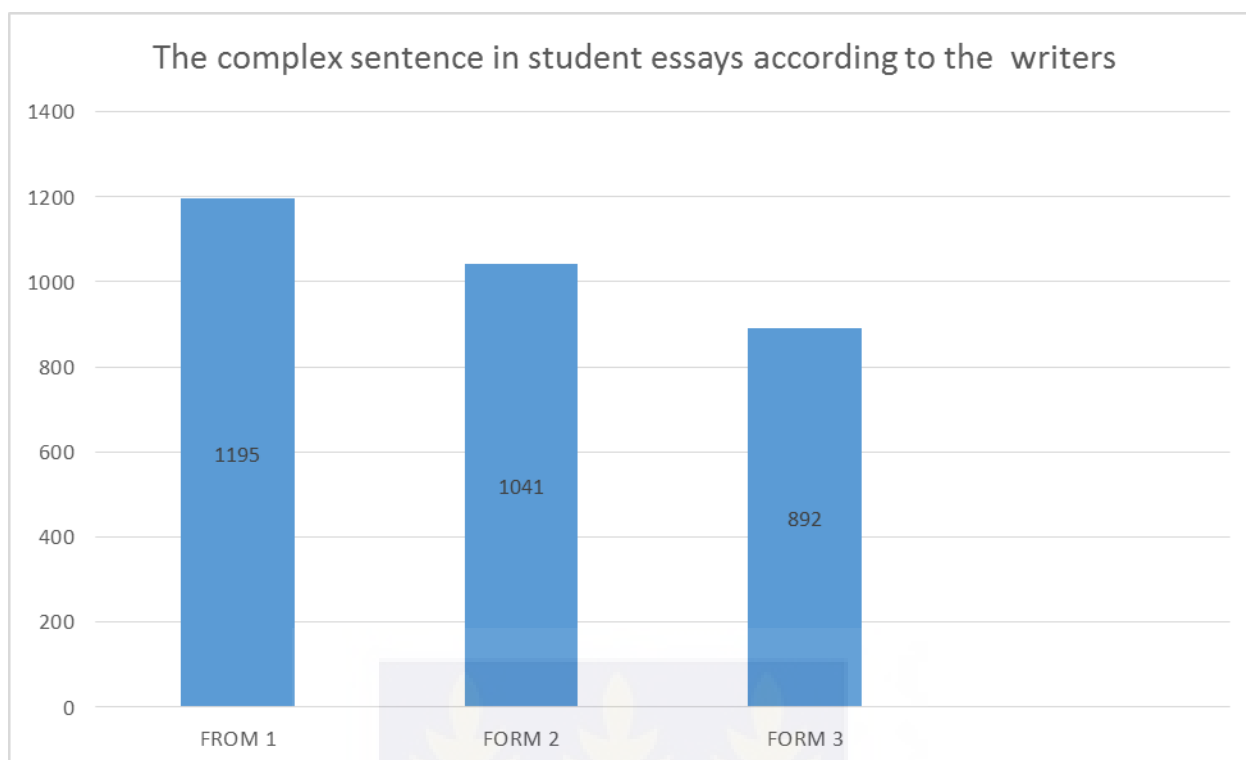


Figure 8: *The complex sentence according to contributors*

Taken from the angle of essays, the narrative essay, the expository essay and the argumentative essay in that order contributed the highest to the lowest numbers of sentences to the complex sentence block. In figures and percentages, the narrative essay contributed 1,409 of the 3,128 complex sentences counted accounting for 45.04% the total count. The expository and argumentative essays contributed 914 and 805 complex sentences respectively. In percentage terms, both the expository essay and the argumentative essay contributed 29.22% and 25.74% of complex essays respectively. We present the figures on the chart below.

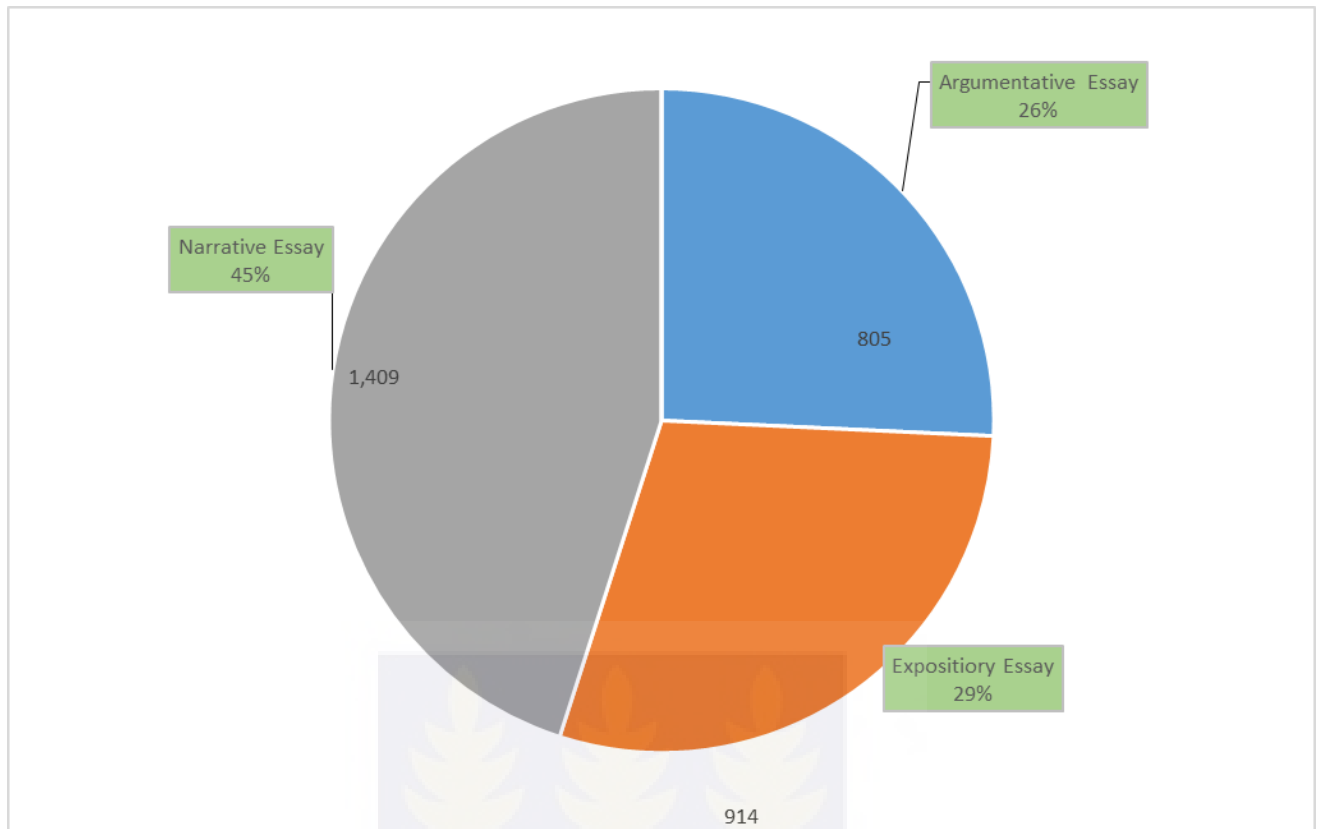


Figure 9: *Complex sentences according to essay types*

It is important to point out, regardless of the fact that cumulatively all students contributed the most complex sentences to the narrative block, intra-level analysis of the essay types proves that the preference of the complex sentence favoured the argumentative essay. Form one argumentative essay alone, for example, generated 52.5% complex sentences of the total number of sentences (688) tallied for form one argumentative essay. Form one expository essay produced 49.2% complex sentences of the total (647) sentences put together for form one exposition whereas 39.4% complex sentences were accumulated from 1309 sentences of form one narrative essay. This proves that form one students used the complex sentence most in argumentative essay than exposition and narration as depicted in the bar graph below:

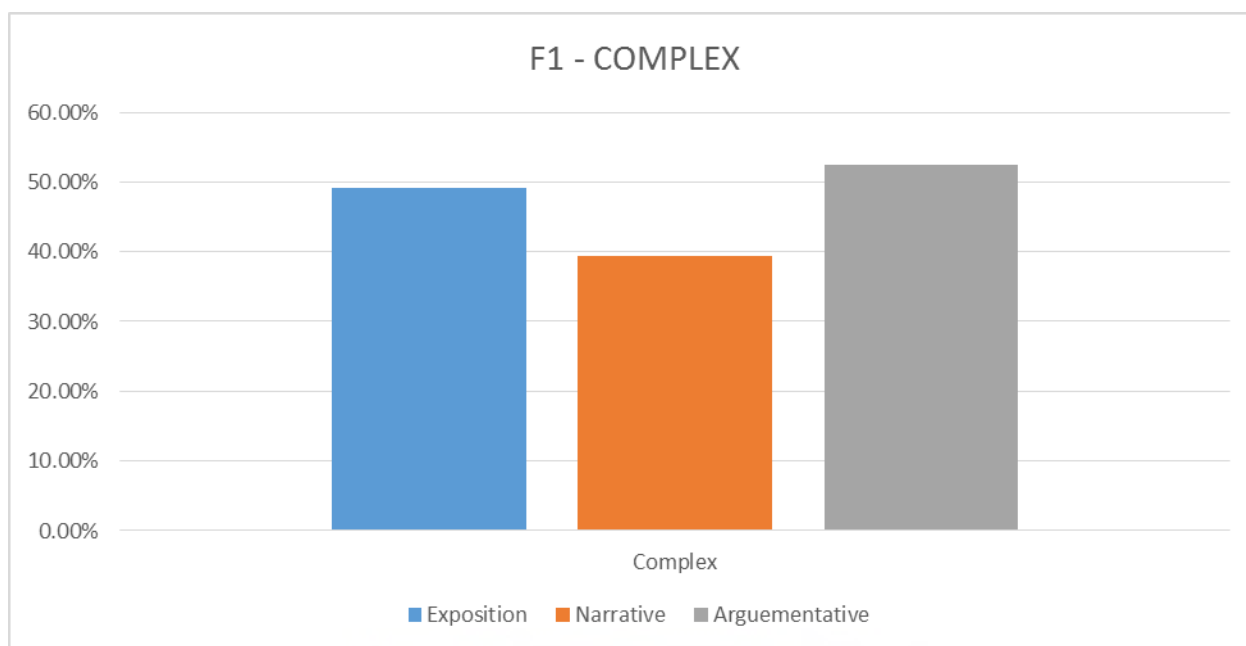


Figure 10: *Form one preference of complex sentence in the essay types*

The preference of the complex sentence in the argumentative essays of form two and three students is no different from that of form one. Form two students contributed: 55.7% (304) complex sentences of the 546 sentences totalled for argumentative essay; 50.7% (290) complex sentences of the 572 sentences totalled for expository essay; 39.9% (447) complex sentences of the 1120 sentences totalled for narrative essay. Figure 12 is a representation of this in a graph form.

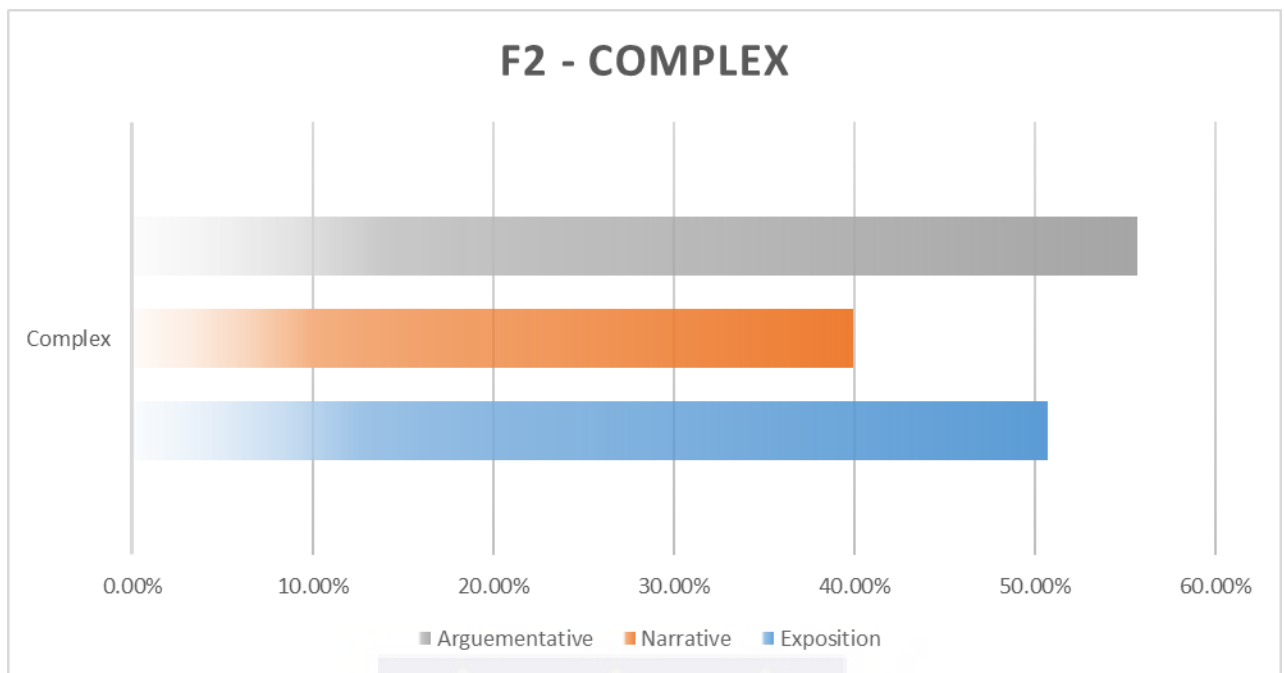


Figure 11: Form two preference of complex sentences in the essay types

Similarly, argumentative essay garnered 49.8% (140) complex sentences of the total 281 sentences in form three argumentative essay. Expository essay is second producing 42.4% (306) complex sentences of all the sentences (722) collated for this essay type, leaving narrative essay at the bottom of the table with only 37.8% (446) complex sentences of the cumulative 1181 sentences put together for this essay type. The graph below in figure 12 shows the preference of the complex sentence in the argumentative essay of form three students:

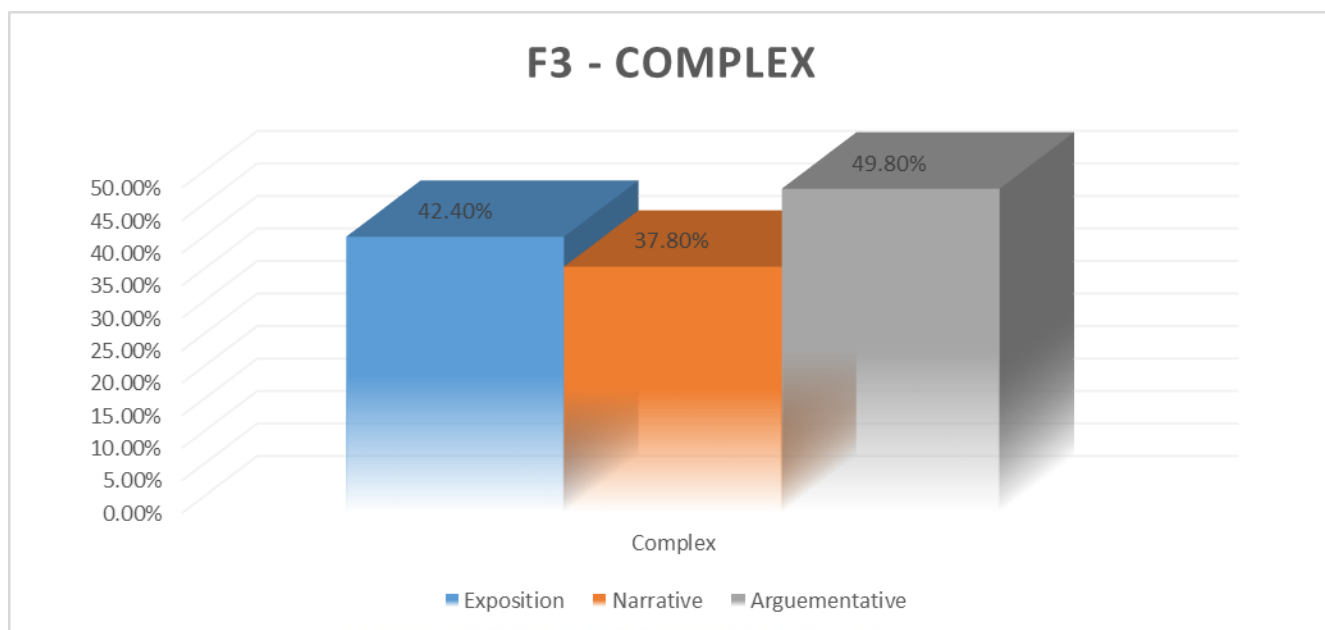


Figure 12: *Form three preference of complex sentences in the essay types*

The discussions above therefore presents us with some interesting facts:

- Form one students used complex sentences the most in all essay types
- Form three students used complex sentences the least in their essays
- For all the sentences collated for each level, all students used the complex sentence most in the argumentative essay
- However, for all the complex sentences collated for all levels in the argumentative essay, form three students used the complex sentences least
- For all the complex sentences put together for all levels, the narrative essay produced the most complex sentences.
- In contract, comparing the distribution of complex sentences in the essay types of every level, it is realised that each level used the complex sentence least in narrative essays.

- The narrative essay produced the most compound and compound complex sentences

c. The compound-complex sentence in student essays

From our discussion so far, the compound-complex sentence has only 1,369 counts out of 7,066 sentences, making 19.37% of all sentences counted. It comes just one step ahead of the compound sentence which has been identified as the least preferred in student essays. There are two variables analysed in this section: the contribution of the essay type and the student writers with their various classes, but we shall limit the analysis to only aspects of the data pertaining to the essay type. Narrative essay alone accounted for more than half [i.e. 55.52%] of the compound-complex sentences students wrote. Expository essay and narrative essay garnered only 25.20% and 19.28% respectively. All students, as reflected by the data, preferred the compound-complex sentence type in narrative essays. This is presented in figure 13 below:

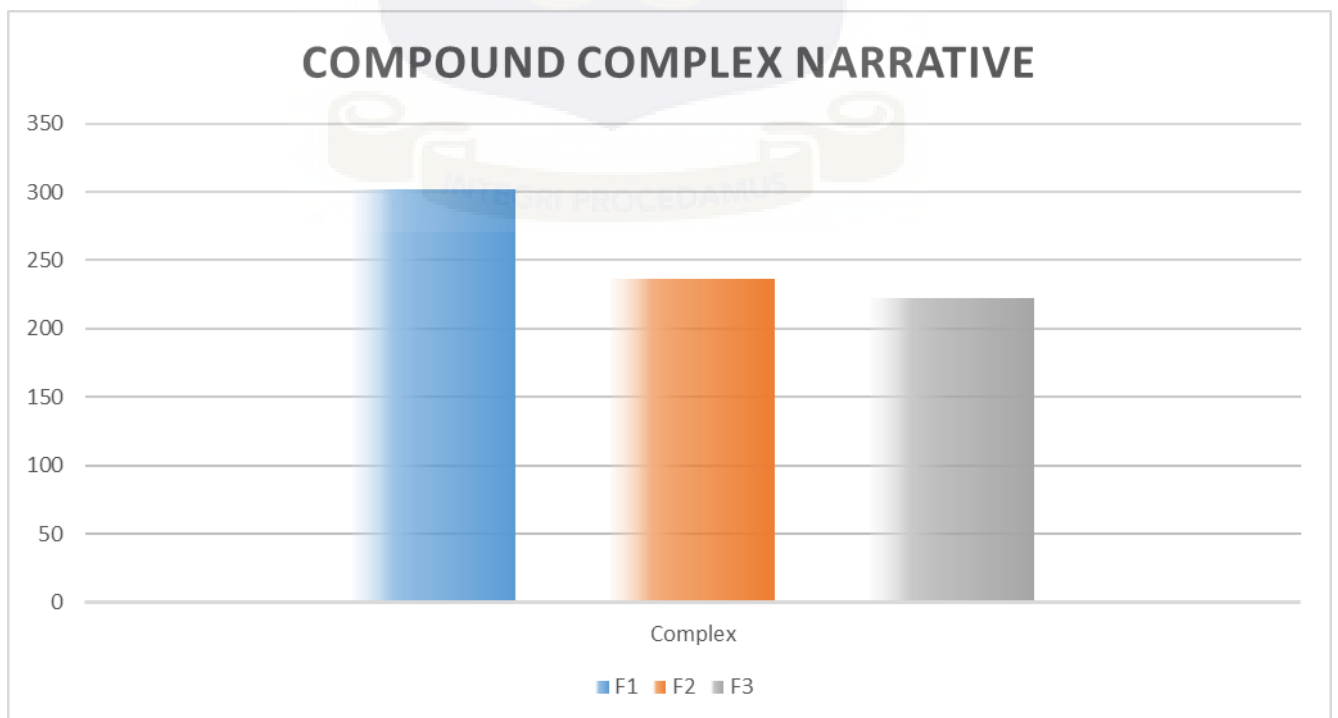


Figure 13: Students' preference for the compound-complex sentence in narrative essays

4.3 DISCUSSIONS

Our analysis has so far taken three clusters into consideration:

- a) the essay types (argumentative, expository and narrative);
- b) the types of sentences written (according to structure);
- c) those who contributed them (forms 1, 2 & 3).

These parameters were the stakes around which our analysis centred. However, since our focus is to find out what type of sentences students write at what level, the rest of our discussion is going to be based on the number and type of sentence written, taking into consideration the level of the writer.

As indicated earlier, the use of complex structures in general allow for more information to be included in a single grammatical structure. But the use of the complex sentence in particular does not allow for as much information to be included in a single structure as the compound-complex sentence would. It is comparatively easier therefore to construct a complex sentence than a compound-complex sentence. It is thus no surprise that in all the essay types, SHS 1 to 3's sentence choices follow this pattern; complex, simple, compound-complex and compound (complex being the most used and compound, the least preferred). The overwhelming preference of all SHS students for the use of the complex sentence attests to this.

Notwithstanding, it is realised that preference for a particular sentence type is determined by the type of essay. Across all levels, simple sentence was the most preferred choice of sentence in students' expository essays than any other essay. For this same essay type, it is noted that students did not use the complex structures least; for SHS 1, compound and complex were their second choice whereas SHS two and three used the complex and compound-complex as their second most preferred sentence type. This shows that students, inasmuch as they used the simple sentences most, also used appreciable number of complex structures in their expository essays.

Exposition states facts and explains ideas to the reader – Baker, Brizee & Angeli (2013). Because it is factual in nature, the style of writing is direct and to the point as it [exposition] leaves no room for embellishment or exaggeration of content. The language is also concrete rather than abstract as this create the needed imagery for the reader. All these accounts for the predominant use of the simple sentence in this type of essay.

Moreover, the less preference of complex structures in expository essays demonstrates that students did not have use for them as they did not have to include too many information in a single sentence. Where they had to, they settled mostly for the complex sentence which does not need as many information as the compound-complex.

The least preference of SHS students for compound sentences is inexplicable. Research has shown that it is easier to use coordinators than subordinators. The use of coordinators suggests the formation of the compound sentence while the use of subordinators means complex sentences are present. But if both coordinators and subordinators are used in a single grammatical structure, then that structure maybe said to be a compound-complex one. If this was the case, students at this level should have used more of the compound sentence than the complex sentence. But we need to put the choice and use of compound sentences into

perspective. In spite of the least preference of compound sentences in their essays, it [compound sentence] was dominantly used in narrative essays. In addition to the compound, the compound-complex sentence was also predominantly used in narratives.

Narratives tell stories and therefore are conversational. Hence, this type of essay makes copious use of compound and complex sentences. The use of coordinators and subordinators (and, or, but) are some of the features that make language conversational. Consequently, the predominant use of compound and compound-complex sentences in the narrative essay is not surprising as they require the use of coordinators and subordinators. Interestingly, complex sentences were the least preferred sentence type in narrative essays. However, a closer look at the diagram for sentence distribution in narrative essays shows an even distribution of the sentence pattern. Inasmuch as complex sentences were least used in narrative essays, compound and compound-complex sentences were the most preferred sentence types in narrative essays. Thus increasing the use of complex structures in the narrative essay.

The nature of the narrative essay allows for events to be described in detail. These structures like the compound-complex allow for the compressing of several details or events into a single grammatical structure. The tool for achieving this objective is language. The language used can be concrete and/or abstract. The writer can use concrete language in order to paint a mental picture to the reader. In addition, abstract language can be used to appeal to the emotions of the readers. The flexibility that narratives offer in terms of plotting style where the writer can flashback or flash forward or switch between characters or dialogues allows for diversity in the choice of sentence patterns and this is what has reflected in the dominant use of compound and compound-complex structures in this type of essay under discussion.

The complex sentence was mostly used in all essay types but it was most preferred in argumentative essays. An argumentative essay addresses an issue with the aim of persuading the reader. As such each paragraph details out a reason for the writer's position. Within each paragraph therefore there would be a topic sentence, most likely a simple sentence stating the position, and support sentences developing the idea in the topic sentence. If about five points are developed in an essay, there would be about five paragraphs, and as a result, five simple sentences. Because the support sentences are substantiating the points made in the topic sentences, they are likely to contain more complex structures and these complex structures would constitute the bulk of the sentence. This explains why in argumentative essays more complex sentences rather than simple sentences were the most used sentence type.

Analysis of the data also presents findings that are interesting. While SHS 1 students used the most simple sentences in their essays, it was SHS 2 rather than SHS 3 students that used simple sentences least. Per the Natural Order hypothesis, it is expected for SHS 1 essays to present the most simple sentences but what is surprising is the fact that SHS two essays used the least simple sentences. A further comparative look at the sentence types used in the essays of SHS one to three displays a more interesting finding. Out of the three complex structures, SHS one used complex and compound-complex sentences most while SHS three used only the compound sentence most. It is clearly evident that even though SHS one students used the simple sentence most, they also dominated in the use of complex structures in their essays. This shows that Form one students varied their sentence forms better than the form two and three students.

As stated earlier in connection with standardisation, testing someone not only based on the level but also based on what the person has been introduced to is key to getting the desired

result. Here, all the levels have been taught the sentence and essay types. From the data gathered it was realised that how students choose to use a particular sentence type in their writing is not dependent on the level of their education but to a large extent, determined by the kind of essay they are writing. Consequently, distribution of the sentence types in a particular essay type, regardless of the level of education, is the same – simple and complex sentences mostly used in exposition; compound and compound-complex sentences mostly used in narration; complex sentence mostly used in argumentative essay.

In conclusion, we agree with Wiredu (2012) who argues that continues writing such as the type with the purpose to argue and persuade uses the complex sentence the most. From our discussion, the argumentative essay the students wrote on as well as the expository essay sought to argue out a standpoint and to persuade the audience to agree with the speaker. The narrative, though not in an explicit way, employs the technique of persuasion through the willing suspension of disbelief. This technique is to persuade the reader to imagine being in the writer's world. It is therefore not surprising that the complex sentence is the most preferred in all three essay types from all three classes.

CHAPTER FIVE
SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.0 INTRODUCTION

Chapter 5 concludes the task of analyzing the sentence types (according to structure) in the compositions of students from Achimota School, Accra. The sentence types studied and counted were

- a) The simple sentence
- b) The compound sentence
- c) The complex sentence
- d) The compound-complex sentence.

These sentences were generated in three types of essays namely:

- a) Argumentative essay,
- b) Expository essay,
- c) Narrative essay.

The sentences were collected from classes spanning all three year groups in the school which were Form 1, Form 2 and Form 3.

This thesis sought to investigate the choice of sentence types in student essays. The research specifically sought to answer the following questions:

- a) What sentence forms are used in students' essays?
- b) What sentence structure is predominantly used in their essays?
- c) Is there a correlation between the choice of sentence type and the class level of students?
- d) Is the choice of a sentence type determined by the essay type?

In arriving at the answers to these questions, 244 essays were collected from the three SHS year groups, which gave a total of 7,066 sentences. This task was carried out by manually marking out sentences and grouping them according to their structural composition. The data were later analyzed using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS version 16.0), whilst the Microsoft Excel program (2013) was used to generate the charts in *Chapter Four*.

5.1 FINDINGS

The study found out that all four sentence forms, namely simple, compound, complex, compound complex sentences are used in the students' different types of essays across all the three Senior High School levels. So also, complex sentences appeared to be the most dominant sentence used in their essays.

The most interesting finding in this study is that there appears to be an inverse relationship between the level of education and proficiency in English as Form one (1) students had the highest number of complex sentences in their essays compared with Forms 2 and 3 students.

Finally, the study discovered that the choice of sentence type is largely determined by the type of essay. For example, it is argued that the complex sentence is the most preferred in argumentative essays, while the compound sentence is the most preferred in story writing i.e. narrative essay.

5.2 CONCLUSION

In the first place, all four sentence forms namely simple, compound, complex and compound complex were used in student essays except that their frequencies of use occurred in varying proportions. One cannot therefore say that a certain type of essay does not allow a particular type of sentence.

The complex sentence, as found by Wiredu (2012), is the most dominant sentence type in this research as well. The complex sentence discovered to be the most dominant sentence type in students' essays. From all three forms and across all essay types, the complex sentence was the most preferred with 3,128 occurrences (44.27%) out of 7,066 sentences on the frequency table.

Interestingly, Form 1 had the highest number of complex sentences counted. Out of the 3,128 complex sentences realized from the three essays types, Form 1 wrote 1,195 complex sentences, which in percentage terms amounts to 38.20%. One would have expected the confirmation of the Natural Order hypothesis where the Form 3 class would be the leading contributor of complex sentences, followed by Form 2 and Form 1 coming last but this does not hold per our data. This study therefore challenges the Natural Order Hypothesis which assumes that language proficiency, which may be indexed by grammatical complexity, tends to be commensurate with one's level of education.

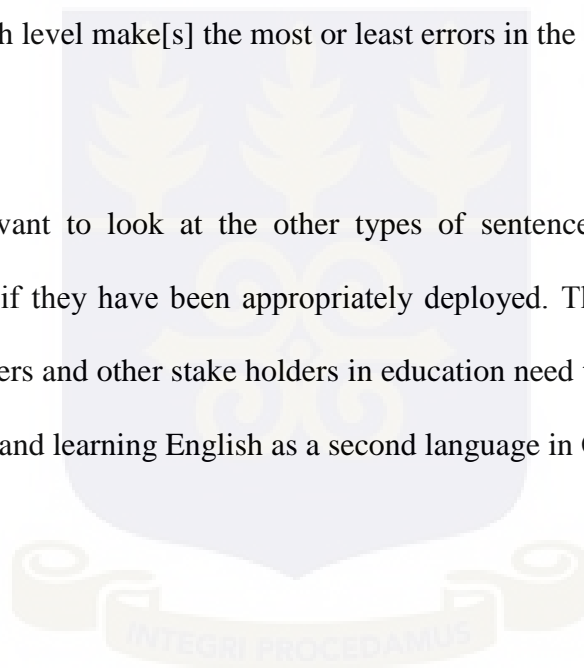
While the complex and compound complex sentences are most populated in the argumentative essay, compound sentence is dominant in narrative the essay. The simple sentence, however, occurs more in the expository essay. That the choice of sentence type among the students is dependent on the type of essay being written is consistent with the

notion of ‘choice’ as the fundamental concept in Systemic Functional Linguistics, which is the main theoretical framework of analysis.

5.3 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FURTHER STUDIES

This study has established that the choice of sentence pattern is not determined by one’s level of education. But what it has not done, which is equally important to second language research, is a look at the errors in the complex structures especially in the complex sentences. This will ascertain which level make[s] the most or least errors in the structures they use.

It will equally be relevant to look at the other types of sentences [functional types] in students’ essays to see if they have been appropriately deployed. This is what the research community, policy makers and other stake holders in education need to formulate policies for the purpose of teaching and learning English as a second language in Ghana.



References

2010 Population and Housing Census. (PDF). Government of Ghana

Aarts, Bas. (2001): *English syntax and argumentation* (second edition). NY (USA): Palgrave Publishers Ltd.

Abawi, K. (2008). *Qualitative and quantitative research*. Geneva Foundation for Medical Education and Research. Retrieved February 21, 2011, from http://www.gfmer.ch/MedicaleducationEn/Afghanistan2008/pdf/Qualitativequantitative_researchAbawiAfghanistan2008.pdf

Abiona, T. C., Balogun, J. A., Adefuye, A. S., & Sloan, P. E. (2010). Body art practices among inmates: Implications for transmission of bloodborne infections. *American journal of infection control*, 38(2), 121-129.

Adams, B, Anderson, J.A. & Dzahene-Quarshie, J. (2009). A kente of many colours: multilingualism as a complex ecology of language shift in Ghana. *Sociolinguistic Studies* Vol. 3.2 357-379. Equinox Publishing.

Adebile, J. A., & Alabi, O. F. (2005). Proficiency and communicative competence in L2: Implications for teachers and learners. *International Journal of African & African American Studies*, 4(2), 31-37. Retrieved from <https://ojcs.siue.edu/ojs/index.php/ijaaas/article/viewfile/72/131>

Adika, G. S. K.(2012). English in Ghana: growth, tensions, and trends. *International Journal of Language, Translation and Intercultural Communication* (P1-16).

Agbedor, P. K. (1994). *Language Planning for National Development: The Case of Ghana* (Unpublished PhD Thesis). British Columbia, Canada: University of Victoria.

Agyekum, Kofi. (2009). Language shift: a case study of Ghana. *Sociolinguistic Studies* Vol. 3.2 381-403. Equinox Publishing.

Ahulu, S. (1994). How Ghanaian is Ghanaian English? In *English Today*, 10(02), 25-29.

Alduais, Ahmed Mohammed Saleh. (2013). Main schools of grammar, grammar in schools and pedagogical grammar. *International Journal of English Language Education* Vol. 1, No. 1, ISSN 2325-0887 pp 35-48.

Altenaichinger, A. L. E. X. A. N. D. R. A. (2002, October). Theories of second language acquisition. In *Second language acquisition: The interface between theory and practice. Summary of findings of a project-based linguistics seminar, Department English Studies, University of Graz, Austria* (pp. 8-12).

Ameyaw – Akumfi, C. (2002). English only: No more vernacular. Published on the 17th May, 2002 edition of The Daily Graphic. Retrieved on 27/03/2016 from www.ghanaweb.com

Anderson, J., Nyarko Ansah, G., hMensa, A. (2009). Domains of English in Ghana and its use for specific purposes

Andoh-Kumi, K. (1994). *Topics in Ghanaian language education* (Unpublished)

Ansah, G. N. (2014). Re-examining the fluctuations in language in-education policies in post-independence Ghana. *Multilingual education*, 4(1), 1-15.

Ayoola, M.O (2013) an interpersonal metafunction analysis of some selected political advertisements in some Nigerian newspapers. *International journal of humanities and social science* (pp165-178),

Baker, Colin: (2011). *Foundations of Bilingual Education and Bilingualism*. Multilingual

Baker J., Brizee A. & Angeli E. (2013). Essay writing. Retrieved from <https://owl.english.purdue.edu/resource> on 11/03/2013

- Baldauf, R. B. (1994). [Unplanned] Language Policy and Planning. *Annual review of applied linguistics*, 14, 82-89.
- Bamgboṣe, A. (2000). *Language and exclusion: The consequences of language policies in Africa* (Vol. 12). LIT Verlag Münster.
- Becker, A. (2010). Distinguishing linguistic and discourse features in ESL students' written performance. *Modern Journal of Applied Linguistics*, 2, 406-424.
- Bialystok, E. (1997). Effects of bilingualism and biliteracy on children's emerging concepts of print. *Developmental Psychology*, 33, 429-440.
- Bialystok, E., & Shilpi, M. (1998). The relationship between bilingualism and the development of cognitive processes in problem solving. *Applied Psycholinguistics*, 19, 69-85.
- Biber, D. (2006). *University language: A corpus-based study of spoken and written registers*. Amsterdam: John Benjamins.
- Bloor, T., & Bloor, M. (1995). *Functional analysis of English: A Hallidayan approach*. New York: St. Martin's Press.
- Bodomo, Adams B. (1996). On language and development in Africa: Brewerton, P & Millward, L. 2004. *Organisational research methods: a guide for students and researchers*. London: Sage
- Brown, H. D. (2000). *Principles of second language learning and teaching* (4th ed.). Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall.
- Brown, P. P. & Scragg, J. (1948). *Common Errors in Gold Coast English: their cause and correction*. Macmillan

- Brubaker, R. (2012). Religion and nationalism: Four approaches. *Nations and nationalism*, 18(1), 2-20.
- Canale, M., & Swain, M. (1980). Theoretical bases of communicative approaches to second language teaching and testing. *Applied Linguistics*, 1, 1-47.
- Chomsky, N. (1965). *Aspects of the theory of syntax*. Cambridge: MIT Press
- Cloud, N., Genesee, F., & Hamayan, E. (2000). Dual language instruction: A handbook for enriched education. Boston: Heinle & Heinle.
- Cooper, D. R. & Schindler, P. S. (2003). *Business Research Methods*.
- Cooper, D. R. (2008). *Business Research Methods*. New York: McGraw Hill
- Corder, S. P. (1967). The significance of learner's errors. *IRAL-International Review of Applied Linguistics in Language Teaching*, 5(1-4), 161-170.
- Cumming, A., Kantor, R., Baba, K., Eouanzoui, K., Erdosy, U., & Jamse, M. (2005). Analysis of Discourse Features and Verification of Scoring Levels for Independent and Integrated Prototype Written Tasks for the New TOEFL®. *ETS Research Report Series*, 2005(1), i-77.
- Cumming, A., Kantor, R., Baba, K., Erdosy, U., Eouanzoui, K., & James, M. (2005). Differences in written discourse in independent and integrated prototype tasks for next generation TOEFL. *Assessing Writing*, 10(1), 5-43.
- Cummins, J. (1979). Cognitive/academic language proficiency, linguistic interdependence, the optimum age question and some other matters. *Working Papers on Bilingualism Toronto*, (19), 197-202.

- Dadzie, ABK. (2013). Prescriptivism and the second language learner of English. *Ghanaian Voices on Topics in English Language & Literature (University of Ghana Readers)*. Pp.161-185.
- Dadzie, ABK & Grant, N. (2008). *New Gateway to English for Senior High Schools*. Pearson Education Limited pp 7-17
- Dako, K. (2002a). Pidgin as a gender specific language in Ghana. *Ghana Journal of English Studies*, No.1: 73-82.
- Dakubu, Kropp M.E. (1996) *Language and Community* Accra: Ghana Universities Press.
- De Bot, K., Lowie, W., & Verspoor, M. (2005). *Second language acquisition: An advanced resource book*. Psychology Press.
- Downing, A. & Locke, P. (2006). *English Grammar: A University Course*. 2nd ed. Abingdon and New York: Routledge
- Dseagu, S. A. (1996). English in Ghana. *English Studies in Africa*, 39(1), 57 – 66.
- Dulay, H., & Burt, M. (1974a). Natural sequences in child second language acquisition. *Language learning*, 24, 37-53.
- Dulay, H., & Burt, M. (1974b). A new perspective on the creative construction process in child second language acquisition. *Language Learning*, 24, 253-278.
- Dulay, H.C.; Burt, M.; Krashen, S. *Language Two*. Rowley: Newbury House, 1982.
- Duodu, C. (1986). How bias maims African history. *Index on Censorship*, 15(2), 14-18.
- Edwards, S. (2002). Grammar and fluent aphasia. In E. Flavia (Ed.), *CILT Series, Clinical linguistics: Language pathology, speech therapy and linguistic theory*. Philadelphia: John Benjamins

- Eggs, Suzanne, 1994. *An Introduction to Systemic Functional Linguistics*. Pinter, London.
- Ellis, R. *The Study of Second Language Acquisition*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994.
- Espada-Gustilo, L. (2011). Linguistic features that impact essay scores: A corpus linguistic analysis of ESL writing in three proficiency levels. *3L; Language, Linguistics and Literature, The Southeast Asian Journal of English Language Studies.*, 17(1), 55-64.
- Fathman, A. (1975). The relationship between age and second language productive ability. *Language Learning*, 25, 245-253.
- Fraenkel, J. R. & Wallen, N. E. (2006). *How to design and evaluate research in Education*. (4th ed.). Boston: McGraw Hill 432
- Frase, L. T., Macdonald, N. H., & Keenan, S. A. (1985). Intuitions, algorithms, and a science of text design. *Designing usable texts*, 97-112.
- Frawley, W. J. (2003). *International encyclopedia of linguistics* (Vol. 4). Oxford university press.
- Garcia, R. L., & Diaz, C. F. (1992). The status and use of Spanish and English among Hispanic youth in Dade County (Miami) Florida: A sociolinguistic study, 1989–1991. *Language and Education*, 6(1), 13-32.
- Gottlieb, M., & Hamayan, E. Assessing Oral and Written Language Proficiency in English Language learners.
- Graham, C. K. (1976). *The history of education in Ghana*. Ghana Publishing Corporation.
- Graham, C. K. (2013). *The History of Education in Ghana: From the Earliest Times to the Declaration of Independence*. Routledge.
- Grant, L., & Ginther, A. (2000). Using computer-tagged linguistic features to describe L2 writing differences. *Journal of Second Language Writing*, 9, 123–145.

Greenbaum, Sydney. (1996). *The Oxford English grammar* (very advanced). Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Grieve, D. W. (1964). *English Language Examining: Report of an Inquiry*. African Universities Press

Halliday, M. A. K. (1978). 'The Teacher Taught the Student English': an Essay in Applied Linguistics. *Linguistics and Literature/Sociolinguistics and Applied Linguistics*, 10, 233.

Hawes, T., & Thomas, S. (1995). Language Bias against Women in British and Malaysian Newspapers. *Australian Review of Applied Linguistics*, 18(2), 1-18.

Hinkel, E. (2003). Simplicity without elegance: Features of sentences in L1 and L2 academic texts. *TESOL Quarterly*, 37(2), 275–301

Howatt, A. (1984). *A history of English language teaching*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Huber, M. (2008). Ghanaian English: Phonology. In *Varieties of English*, 4, 67 – 92.

Huddleston, Rodney. (1989). *Introduction to the grammar of English*. New York: Cambridge University Press.

Hudson, R. (2003). *Sociolinguistics (Second Edition)*. Kundli: Cambridge University Press.

Hymes, D. (1971). *On communicative competence*. Philadelphia, PA: University of Pennsylvania Press.

Hymes, D., 1970. *On communicative competence*. In: Gumperz, J.J., Hymes, D. (Eds.), *Directions in Sociolinguistics*. Holt, Riehart and Winston, New York.

Hymes, D., 1974. Why linguists needs the sociologists. *Foundations in Sociolinguistics: An Ethnographic Approach*. Philadelphia Press, Philadelphia University.

ISAT Proficiency Level Descriptors. Retrieved from

www.sde.idaho.gov/...ISAT/languageusage/PLDs_language on 02/09/15

Jones, S., & Tetroe, J. (1987). Composing in a second language. In A. Matsuhashi (Ed.), *Writing in Real Modeling Production Processes* (pp. 34 ± 57). Norwood, NJ: Ablex.

Krashen, S. (1981). *Second language acquisition and second language learning*. Oxford: Pergamon.

Krashen, S. (1988). *Second language acquisition and second language learning*. Great Britain: Prentice-Hall.

Krashen, S. D. (1982). *Principles and practices in second language acquisition*. Oxford: Pergamon.

Krashen, S. D., & Terrel, T. (1983). *The natural approach: Language acquisition in the classroom*. Oxford: Pergamon.

Krashen, S.D. & Brown, C.L. (2008). What is academic language proficiency *Singapore Tertiary English Teachers Society (STETS) STETS Language and Communication Review* 6(1), p. 1-4. Retrieved on July 18, 2008, from www.sdkrashen.com/articles/Krashen_Brown_ALP.pdf.

Larsen-Freeman, D. and Long, M. H. (2014). *An Introduction to second language acquisition research*. Routledge.

Lay, N. (1982). Composing processes of adult ESL learners. *TESOL Quarterly*, 16, 406.

Legon Journal of Humanities (pp75-124)

Lewelling, V. W. (1991). Academic achievement in second language. *ERIC Clearinghouse on Languages and Linguistics*. Washington DC. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED 329130)

Lightbown, P. M., & Spada, N. (1999). *How languages are learned*. Oxford: Oxford University Press

Lightbown, P. M., & Spada, N. (2013). *How Languages are Learned 4th edition*. Oxford University Press.

Littlewood, W., 1981. *Communicative Language Teaching*. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge

Llurda, Enric. (2000). On competence, proficiency and communicative language ability. *International Journal of Applied Linguistics*, Vol. 10, No. 1, 2000. (pp. 86-95).

Makino, T. (1980). *Acquisition order of English morphemes by Japanese adolescents*. Tokyo: Shinozaki Shorin Press.

Matters. Blackwell: Blackwell Publishing.

May/June 2013 West African Senior School Certificate Examination. General Resume of Chief Examiners' Reports

McCawley, J. D. (1998). *The syntactic phenomena of English*. University of Chicago Press.

McLaughlin, B. (1989). *Theories of second-language learning*. Arnold.

Miami Dade College. (2004). EAP 1141 – 1640 Writing Competencies Levels 1- 6.

Retrieved from www.mdc.edu/north/esl/pdf on 19/03/16

Morgan, D. L. (2013). *Integrating qualitative and quantitative methods: A pragmatic approach*. Sage publications.

- Obeng-Appiah, Kwame. (2015). A comparative study of the mood choice in sermons of two charismatic church preachers. (Unpublished MPhil Thesis, Department of English, university of Ghana, Legon)
- Ofulue, Christine I. (2012). Nigeria Pidgin and West African Pidgins: a sociolinguistic perspective. *Legon Journal of the Humanities*. Special Edition, 2012. Pp.1-47
- Ouedraogo, R. M. (2000). *Language planning and language policies in some selected West African countries*. International Institute for Capacity Building in Africa.
- Owu – Ewie, C. (2006). The Language Policy of Education in Ghana: A Critical look at the English-only Language Policy of Education. In *Selected Proceedings of the 35th Annual Conference on African Linguistics* (pp.76 – 85). Massachusetts: Cascadilla Proceedings Project.
- Owu-Ewie, C. (2006) Selected Proceedings of the 35th Annual Conference on African Linguistics. John Mugane et al. (ed), 76-85. Somerville, MA: Cascadilla Proceedings Project.
- Quirk, R & Greenbaum, S. (2000). *A university grammar of English*. New Delhi: Pearson Education Limited.
- Quirk, R; Greenbaum, S; Leech, G,& Svartvik, Jan. (1999). *A comprehensive grammar of the English Language*. London:Longman
- Raimes, A. (1987). Language proficiency, writing ability and composing strategies: a study of ESL college student writers. *Language Learning* 37,439-468.
- Remenyi, D. & Williams, B. (1998). *Doing research in business and management: An introduction to process and method*. Sage.
- Richards, J. C. and Rodgers, T. S. (2014). *Approaches and Methods in Language Teaching*. Cambridge University Press.

- Richards, J., & Rodgers, T. (1986). *Approaches and methods in language teaching*.
Cambridge: Cambridge University Press
- Saah, K. K. (1986). Language use and attitudes in Ghana. *Anthropological Linguistics*, 367 – 377.
- Selinker, L. (1972). Interlanguage. *IRAL-International Review of Applied Linguistics in Language Teaching*, 10(1-4), 209-232.
- Sentell, R. (2000). Education in Ghana. Retrieved on 27/03/2016 from www.novaonline.nvcc.edu
- Sey, K. A. (1973). *Ghanaian English: and exploratory survey*. London: Macmillan.
- Shaw, P., & Liu, E. T. K. (1998). What develops in the development of second language writing? *Applied Linguistics*, 19(2), 225–254
- Smith, N. (2004). Chomsky: Ideas and Ideals (2nd éd.).
- Smith, V. (1994). *Thinking in a foreign language: An investigation into essay writing and translation by L2 learners* (Vol. 393). Gunter Narr Verlag.
- Tabors, P. O. (1997). *One child, two languages: A guide for preschool educators of children learning English as a second language*. Brookes Publishing Company, PO Box 10624, Baltimore, MD 21285-0624.
- Thakur, Damodar. (2011). *Linguistics simplified: syntax (2011 print)*. New Delhi: Bharati Bhawan (Publishers & Distributed).
- the case of Ghana. *Nordic Journal of African Studies* 5(2): 31-51 (1996)
- The English Language*. (5th impression) London: Longman Group Limited.
- The Teaching Syllabus for English Language (Junior High School 1 – 3). 2007.

The Teaching Syllabus for English Language (Senior High School 1 – 3). 2010.

The West African Examination Council May/June 2015 Final Marking Scheme English
Language 2

Umani, Habiba. (2016). A critical discourse analysis of Benjamin Netanyahu's speech.
(Unpublished M.A. Thesis) Department of Linguistics, Diponegoro University,
Semarang

Van Bruggen, J. A. (1946). Factors affecting regularity of the flow of words during written
composition. *The Journal of Experimental Education*, 15(2), 133-155.

Warriner, J.E. (1982). *Warriner's English Grammar and Compositions*. 5th edition. Harcourt
Brace Jovanovich Publishers pp. 24-58

William, L. (1984). Foreign and second language learning. *Language acquisition research
and its implications for the classroom*, 22-35.

Wiredu, J. F. (1999). *Organised English Structure*. Academic Publications (Ghana) Limited

Wiredu, J. F. (2012). The grammar of newspaper editorial language: the complex sentence.

Wiredu, K. (1996). Reply to English and Hamme. *Journal of Social Philosophy*, 27(2), 234-
243.

Ye, R. (2010). The interpersonal metafunction analysis of Barack Obama's victory speech.
English Teaching Vol. 3 (pp 146-151)

Yeh, W. H. (2000). *The alienated academy: culture and politics in Republican China, 1919-
1937* (Vol. 148). Harvard Univ Asia Center.

Yule, George. (1996). *The study of language*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Appendix 1

WAEC Grades and Interpretations

A1= 80-100% - Excellent

B2=75-79% - Very good

B3= 65- 74% - Good

C4= 60-64 – credit

C5= 55-59 –credit

C6=50-54 – credit

D7= 45-49 – credit

E8=40-44 –pass

F9=39 & below -fail

