

**THE INFLUENCE OF MOTIVATION AND SOCIO-CULTURAL
FACTORS ON STUDENTS' LANGUAGE COMPETENCE**

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DECLARATION

I hereby declare that, with the exception of specific references to works published by other authors, which have been duly acknowledged, this thesis is my original work produced from research under supervision and that no part of it has been submitted for another degree in this university or elsewhere.

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DEDICATION

I dedicate this work to my lovely wife, Victoria Adade;

my son, Kwasi Osei Adade;

and my daughter, Abena Frema Adade.



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My unbridled thanks go to the Lord God Almighty for seeing me through this research work. It has been a tortuous journey but His mercies have brought me this far. May His name be praised.

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ABSTRACT

This study examined the way in which socio – cultural identities and ideological motivation permeate English language learning and the effect on language competence. The investigation looked at two diametrically distinct schools (i.e. a Grade A and a Grade C school) particularly in the area of the students` background and motivation, to ascertain the effect of these socio – cultural and motivational factors that impinge on the learning of grammar and vocabulary, which reflects in their language competence. The study used Skinner Behaviourist Theory and Gardener`s socio – educational modules as bases for a conceptual framework.

The methodology used involved both quantitative and qualitative research tools. Random sampling methods were used in selecting the student population for the study while teachers were purposively picked. Students answered questionnaires while unstructured interviews were done with teachers in the case study schools. The data were analyzed using Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS).

The findings showed that students` socio – cultural backgrounds and the learning environment influence their English language learning and eventual competence. Personal motivation is critical to success in language learning and usually overrides the socio – cultural challenges of the student.

It is recommended that deprived environments be well resourced to aid in students` English language learning. Students should be given a reorientation about English language learning so as to be motivated to achieve language competence.

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CHAPTER ONE

GENERAL INTRODUCTION

1.0. Introduction

Language is one of man's major means of communication. It is significant in education be it formal or informal. For some historical and economic reasons, English has become the central language of the world in the twenty-first century. English is virtually the language of international transaction, the Internet and to a very large extent the medium of international relations. Indeed, the role of English language in the global system cannot be overemphasized. It is perceived as a key to promoting international exchange, acquiring scientific knowledge and technological expertise, fostering economic progress, and participating in international competition. A certain level of proficiency and competence in English is virtually becoming a requirement for one to function not only internationally but even locally. In the quest for this attainment of proficiency, however, certain conditions can be catalytic to enhance the process of acquisition, whereas certain factors may rather militate against the process, for which we must endeavour to address.

The manifest function of education in Ghana is for people to be able to read and write the English language and also communicate in it. The average educated Ghanaian is therefore expected to read and write English language and also to communicate in it well enough. So regardless of the individual's level of intelligence in other fields, failure to speak good English is a big issue in Ghana, especially in the formal sector. One's level of intelligence can sometimes be measured, albeit erroneously, by one's impeccable fluency in the English language.

The controlling factor in every language is its grammar. Grammar constitutes the basic element through which communication is carried out in a language. To learn to speak and write a language is to study its grammar. Every language has its own syntax and therefore to be able to

communicate in the language, knowledge of some level of grammar of the language is important. According to Feldman (1994:256), “Grammar is the framework of rules that determine how our thoughts can be expressed.” He continues by saying that every language has intricate rules that guide the order in which words may be strung together to communicate meaning. He asserts that English speakers have no difficulty in knowing that “Radio down the turn” is not an appropriate sequence, while “Turn down the radio” is. Here, we see that syntax is guided by the grammar of the language.

In effect, effective communication can be achieved generally by means of grammatical sentences or by a series of such logically related sentences when the speaker and the learner, the writer and reader have to understand. Grammar, then, becomes imperative in language.

Vocabulary is equally pertinent to effective communication, and Davies and Pearse (2000) even believe that vocabulary sometimes becomes more crucial than grammar because whereas grammar appears to be limited vocabulary is almost limitless, for we develop vocabulary every day. Cook (2001) asserts that some authors have now been emphasizing the acquisition of vocabulary as a means of making syntax more powerful. That is, much of the details of grammar are now seen as part of vocabulary. Our focus on language¹ competence will, therefore, be on these two aspects: grammar and vocabulary. The culture within which the language exists is seen as very important to communication. A good balance of these three components is effective for communicative competence.

Some students learn language faster and easier than others. Undoubtedly, some language learners are successful by virtue of their sheer determination, hard work and persistence. Learning English language is not just about cognitive functioning or phonetic development. Certain factors like age, personality, and cognitive abilities cannot be overruled as significant to language

¹ Except otherwise stated, our reference to language in this study will be English language.

learning and competence. There are also other motivational and socio-cultural factors that control the individual learner. If the student's level of motivation for learning English is high and there are positive socio-cultural influences that drive the learning process, then the student would be encouraged to maximise the conditions to the fullest. On the other hand, if motivation is low coupled with negative socio-cultural factors, then efforts must be made to address the issue.

As we appreciate the assertion that learning has to do with processes within learners, we must also acknowledge that the learner's motivation and the culture in which he learns set the agenda for learning in several ways. The culture determines what is learnt and influences how and when it is learnt. Munro (1999) notes that what and how a person learns are influenced largely by the culture in which the learning occurs and the social interaction processes in which the learner engages. It is the quality of these interactions, rather than processes solely within the learner, that determines the quality of the learning outcome.

1.1. 0 Background to the Study

According to the British Council, at least one billion people speak or are trying to speak English at the present time and of these, about 300 million people are actively studying the English language. Countries such as Japan, China and others have advanced in technology and other fields yet they use English for various purposes. Hu (2002) attests to this about China and says that because of the superior prestige English has accrued in relation to the nation's modernisation program, English Language Teaching (ELT) has received a great deal of attention. Zou et al (2006) are of the opinion that given the current social environment in Shanghai, one's proficiency in English is gradually becoming one of the survival skills for the future. They even claim that English has achieved the equal status as Chinese and Mathematics in importance in the school curriculum. Now English is rigorously studied as a foreign language (EFL) in China.

In most countries which were colonised by the British, English is studied as a second language (ESL). Here, English is crucial to the administration, education and other formal sectors of the countries. Some of them may not have a national language thereby making English the only language that bridges the language barrier of the people.

1.1.1 English in the Ghanaian School Situation

Advocates of traditional culture hold the view that we should not allow the English culture that presents itself mostly in language to overshadow our local languages. To this, Tony Adade Yeboah is reported in the *Daily Guide* newspaper of 22nd December, 2010 by James Quansah as having attributed the falling standard of English in Ghana to the argument and position held by a section of the public that English should not be allowed to domineer the over 46 recognized dialects spoken in Ghana. Many have indeed passionately raised concerns about the Anglicization of the Ghanaian culture. Adade Yeboah then says, “In as much as we want to maintain our culture through the local dialects, we still have to embrace English Language” (p22). In the same report, Lawyer Africanus Owusu Ansah, a columnist of *Daily Guide* ‘*English For You*’, also contributes to this with a more emphatic posture by saying “English has become so vital in our own culture that we do away with it at our own peril” (*Daily Guide* 22nd December, 2010:22). The conclusion that can be drawn from these is that willy-nilly English and its associate cultural dynamics have become part of the Ghanaian socio-culture.

Ghana falls into the ESL category without a national language and the average educated Ghanaian is expected to be apt in his everyday use of the English language. But the educated Ghanaian has not had it easy accomplishing this task. The inhibitions in the Ghanaian educational sector in general have existed before and after the Guggisberg era, which is noted to have seen tremendous improvement in this sector. After the numerous bottlenecks, many

committees were set up to salvage education from its falling state, but almost all the reforms yielded little or no major result. Among some of the reforms were that the calibre of teachers to teach in schools were to be properly trained (which led to the establishment of more teacher training institutions) and when and how English language was to be introduced in schools, etc. Aboagye (2002) writes that among the recommendations of the 1920 Educationists' Committee was the introduction of English as early as possible in primary schools as a subject of instruction, while vernacular was to be a medium of instruction- obviously, to make students have a firm grasp of the grammatical concepts of English as they are presented in their own language.

A good level of English will help students considerably to enter and graduate from the university, to obtain better jobs, especially those in companies or joint ventures which have international connections; to read technical materials, and to study abroad. Ghana needs citizens with a superior level of English language proficiency. To have a significant number of competent users of English in a whole range of professions, businesses, workplaces and enterprises has been seen by the authorities as a key element in Ghana opening wider to the outside world and the drive to modernization.

Now, in Ghana credit (between grade C4 and C6) in English has been the minimum prerequisite for further studies after senior high school, but in this age of fierce competition for tertiary education, just credit may not suffice, especially when students with 7As in the other subjects but B2 in English could not get regular admission to the medical school of Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology (KNUST) in the 2011/2012 admissions. Thus students are left with no other choice than to learn English and pass it very well in order to progress on the academic ladder, especially if they wish to pursue highly competitive programmes. Now we can say getting A1 in English is becoming more of a necessity than luxury or just an academic achievement. Some years ago, that was something left for a certain category of students. These

days, especially in some of the schools categorized under grade A, most students strive for A1 in English and this is seen in the intensive extra classes in English attended by students. English language learning comes with its own challenges and the background of the learner and the motivation behind him are pertinent.

1.1.2 Motivation and Socio-cultural Influence in Learning English

Why students learn English language is key to their success or otherwise. For some, it is to help them move to the next level of the academic ladder. Rote learning of rules to write the West Africa Senior Secondary Certification Examinations (WASSCE) or any other kind of test of that nature is adopted. For others, the school, family, society or community to which they belong incumbents on them not just to learn the language but to communicate in it impeccably. Those are the communities where an error in pronunciation or grammar is quickly detected and sometimes sharply ridiculed. The situation where people are stigmatized for their incompetence in language proficiency among ESL students is not peculiar to Ghanaians. According to the American National Council of Teachers of English (NCTE) in their *English Language Learners* (a policy research brief) (2006), some foreign students are stigmatized for the way they speak English and some also, for speaking a language other than English. Motivation for learning English in order to function well in such environments is therefore principal.

We cannot take it for granted that children learn a second language quickly and easily. This myth is discounted by Harklau (2000) in her analysis of the English language learners' situation in the United States of America. She claims that a number of socio-cultural factors can affect language learning. The English language learner might face additional challenges such as acclimating to a new culture and status that interfere with learning. The National Council of Teachers of English

(NCTE) of America therefore recommends that teachers should use culturally relevant materials to build on students' linguistic and cultural resources while teaching language through content and themes.

We start learning our mother tongue from the moment we are born and it continues at every point in our lives that by the age of six or seven, all things being equal, we must have mastered its essentials. The most important teachers of one's first language are the parents and immediate family. They have unlimited and enduring patience and enthusiasm with the children's efforts to learn the language, and by intuition offer just the right kind of input to promote optimum language learning. This guided language input is called 'motherese', a feature of which is the fact that mistakes of fact are corrected whereas mistakes of grammar generally are not (Shoebottom, 2011). If we are to do a juxtaposition of periods of learning, we can safely conclude that the two to three times a week tuition that many learners of a second language receive in the language classroom can in no way be compared with the tuition given by the child's family or society in which the child grows. The non-formal learning of English is thus influential. In the second language learning situation, the type of input from the parents should be considered, especially when the parents themselves are not competent in the language.

1.2. Statement of Problem

As indicated earlier, for obvious reasons, in many developing countries today the most ideal choice of a 'common language' is English. Fortunately or unfortunately, English has found itself entrenched in the Ghanaian educational system. We observe with trepidation that Boadi et al as far back as in 1968 pointed out that there was a great deal of evidence to show that standards of English teaching then in our schools were not only unappreciable but it would seem that they were actually becoming rather lower. They would not lay too much stress on examination results

as a measure of attainment, but they also acknowledge that most often, examination results are the only measure we have, and, therefore, it would be imprudent to ignore them completely. They express worry to read in chief examiners' reports on the performance of candidates in public examinations "constant reference to such faults as 'weak handling of sentence structure', 'inability to control sentences', 'frequent misuse of tenses', 'errors of agreement', 'unidiomatic use of prepositions'" (Boadi et al 1968: 2). This observation was made over four decades ago, but it is still true today. Like candidates of those times, the WASSCE candidates of today have been learning English for more than ten years. The question then is: how is it that so much *effort* over such a long period seems to bring so little results?

The gravity of the problem is more pronounced in the rural and third class schools where there are some news reports that some schools in some districts in the Central Region recorded 0% pass in all the subjects in the 2011 Basic Education Certificate Examinations (B.E.C.E.) (Peacefm Midday News, 28th September, 2011). The *Daily Graphic* of 27th September, 2011 reports that of the total of 375,280 students who sat for the examinations in that year, only 176,128, representing 46.93%, had between aggregate 6 and 30, which qualified them for placement into the senior high and technical institutes. This means 53.07% failed to meet the criteria set under the Computerised School Selection and Placement System (CSSPS). The story is not different from the 2010 results, where out of 350,888 students, only 172,359, representing 49%, qualified for placement. Apparently, students from these schools have huge problems with English, which is the language in which the answers in the various subjects (besides the Ghanaian languages and French) must be presented. Sad to say that the Public Relations Officer of the Ghana Education Service, Charles Parker-Allotey on *JoyFm* (a popular radio station in Accra) Midday News of 27th September, 2011 downplayed the abysmal performance of the students in the B.E.C.E., saying that there was no cause for alarm and that that was a normal

trend. That, perhaps, should suggest to us that very little has been accomplished since 1968 when the downward trend complaint was made.

Most of the qualified students will not gain admission to the first class and even second class schools. For instance, according to Samuel Oppong, the National Co-ordinator of the CSSPS, as reported by the Daily Graphic of 27th September, 2011(p3), while only 300 vacancies had been declared by Wesley Girls Senior High School in Cape Coast (a grade A school), as many as 12,400 qualified candidates had chosen the school as their first choice. Extreme competition then sets in. After the highly qualified 300 students have been admitted, the rest will be sent to their second choice schools depending on programme chosen and the availability of space in the second choice schools. Eventually, many of these qualified students but with unimpressive aggregates will find themselves in the grade C schools and also in the host of mushroom private senior high schools we have these days. Whichever category the students find themselves, they will write the same WASSCE eventually with the others. In most cases, the trend of failure, especially in English language, continues from there.

Policy makers and curriculum developers might have overlooked or downplayed the effect of the socio-cultural milieu within which some of these students found themselves at the basic level and subsequently at the secondary level. As policy makers and curriculum developers give blanket curricula to all schools across the board, educators too might also go by what they have with virtually no consideration of the peculiar societal challenges of the learning environments. Among the general aims of teaching at the senior high school as stipulated in the English Syllabus for Senior High Schools (2007) are to:

-reinforce language skills and competencies acquired at the junior high school level

-develop further the language skills and competencies which were acquired at the junior high school level

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

We then interrogate the above: what have the students acquired to build upon? If after spending nine years at the basic school, students cannot read and understand passages or string a few sentences together to communicate some meaning (for these have been cited as major factors for the appalling performances the B.E.C.E. candidates put up), then we need to interrogate the issue and find a cure to whatever could be the malaise.

1.3. Objectives of the Study

The aim of this study is

- (i) to look at the role of grammar and vocabulary in students' language competence
- (ii) to find out the extent to which motivational and socio-cultural factors influence students' language competence
- (iii) to proffer measures to deal with those factors that militate against students' language competence.

1.4 Research Questions

The research questions formulated are:

- Grammar and vocabulary: which of these do teachers pay more attention to and how does that affect students' language competence?

- How influential is motivation to students' English language learning?
- Does the socio-cultural background of the student have any influence on his English language learning and competence?
- Does parent's provision of English language learning materials affect the student's learning outcome?
- Is there any correlation between the type of JHS a student attended and his current SHS performance in English?
- To what extent does the academic environment influence the students' language competence?

1.5. 0. Theoretical Framework

The theoretical framework guiding this study is Skinner (1957)'s Behaviourist Theory. The basic assumptions in this theory are that learning is manifested by a change in behaviour and that the environment shapes behaviour. This theory emphasizes stimulus, response, and reinforcement as the basic elements of learning. Children imitate the language behaviour of their parents and other members of the social group, including family members and the community within which they find themselves. Skinner (1957) in his book *Verbal Behaviour* had argued that by a deliberate reinforcement of desirable (or undesirable) behaviour, the trainer or teacher can engineer the formation of speech habits. That is, operant conditioning and habit formation. Thus, for language acquisition, behaviourists hypothesized that children learned their first language through stimulus, response, as well as reinforcement, suggesting imitation and association as essential processes. For example, to learn the word *bottle*, the child would first associate the word *bottle* with the familiar cylindrical object, the stimulus. Next the child would produce the word by imitation, at which time an adult would praise the child for saying *bottle*, thereby

reinforcing the child's correct verbal response. Behaviourists assumed that the child's mind was a *tabula rasa*, a blank mental slate awaiting the scripture of experience.

There is also the ideology of contiguity and reinforcement (Skinner, 1957). Learning occurs effectively where there is constant closeness and contact with the learning source. So whether the environment in which the child learns is motivating enough and whether the child has external forces that drive him to learn the second language must all be factored in such discussion as proficiency in English. Second language acquisition was therefore considered to be habit formation through reinforcement and it was environmentally determined.

Gardner's Socio-Educational model shall also be considered. This model seeks to interrelate four features of second language acquisition and these include the social and cultural surroundings, individual learner differences, the context within which learning occurs and linguistic outcomes (Gardner, 1982). The model is concerned with the role of various individual differences in the learning of an L2. In the model, two classes of variables, integrativeness and attitudes toward the learning situation are said to contribute to the learner's level of motivation. Within the model, motivation is perceived to be composed of three elements. These include effort, desire and affect. Effort refers to the time spent in studying the language and the drive of the learner. Desire indicates how much the learner wants to become proficient in the language, and affect illustrates the learner's emotional reactions with regard to language study (Gardner 1982).

Gardner's theory of second language learning has its leanings on his definition of motivation as the extent to which the individual works or strives to learn the language because of a desire to do so and the satisfaction experienced in this activity (Gardner, 1985). According to Gardner, as cited in Liuoliene and Metiuniene (2006), a highly motivated individual will want to learn the language, enjoy learning the language, and strive to learn the language. The socio-cultural milieu

for learning is thus imperative for that can shape up the student's values, beliefs and aspiration that will push him to learn the language or behave otherwise.

1.5.1. Relevance of Framework

Behaviourists' claim is that all animals, including man, are born with a set of instinctive responses to external stimuli, and that by the reinforcement of responses which produce 'good results', animals learn to acquire secondary skills which go beyond their primary instinctive responses. Their conclusion that events in the environment can predict a person's behaviour is relevant in this research.

The socio-educational model also ascribes successful learning to the society. External forces and demands, of which the society of the learner is the nucleus, is very critical to second language learning, and these reinforce our assumption that one's motivation for learning English and where one learns it are critical to proficiency and competence. As the English language has been nativised in its new environments, certain nativised forms have been embedded in it. Thus, the tendency of individual learners bringing in such deviant usage may come to play as they use the English language. Some may, however, wish to gravitate towards British English (or in some cases BBC English). But we will like to treat nativisation as a general situation in ESL environments.

1.6 Operational Definition

Language proficiency may be defined as the ability to use a language effectively and appropriately throughout the range of social, personal, school, and work situations required for daily living in a given society. In literate societies, language proficiency includes both oral and

written language. For us as educators, we want our students to become competent in four language processes: listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Our definition of language competence should therefore emphasize not only the linguistic rules governing sounds, word forms, and word orders to convey meaning (phonology, morphology, syntax, and semantics) but also knowledge of social conventions of language use.

Thus judgments concerning language proficiency are deeply rooted in social and cultural norms. For this reason, the term *communicative competence* is often used instead of *language proficiency* to emphasize the idea that proficient language use extends beyond grammatical forms to include language functions and the social conventions of language to achieve communication (Canale and Swain, 1980). However, in our school situation here in Ghana, our measurement of language competence is largely seen in results in written test. The supposed oral English tests conducted in our examinations are more of aural than oral. Students are not made to speak but rather listen to speakers on a tape and shade answers from options based on what they hear. Thus most of the analysis in this study will be done on what the students write, though the spoken English will be scantily considered.

Peterson and Coltrane (2003) say that culture is information capable of affecting individuals' behaviour that they acquire from other members of their species through teaching, imitation, and other forms of social transmission. By information, they mean any kind of mental state, conscious or not, that is acquired or modified by social learning, and affects behaviour. A group's culture is expected to be perpetuated by their offspring, and the cycle goes on. Any deviation from the practice is usually reprimanded. In all human societies, children learn culture from adults. Anthropologists call this process enculturation, or cultural transmission.

The use of socio-culture here, therefore, is the beliefs, vision and aspirations of the society in which the learner grows up. Within the socio-cultural environs are variables such as the teachers' attitudes to teaching, the family, community, and the academic achievements of the schools (from the basic to the secondary). It is thus the influences from the environment that have entrenched themselves in the domain of the student as far as English language learning is concerned. The atmosphere and general aspirations of the schools as influenced by the schools' history and how these shape up the English language performance of the students are our reference points.

Motivation, according to Gardner (1985), is the learner's orientation with regard to the goal of learning a second language. It is the reason that drives one to do something. It is an inner state that drives an organism towards the fulfillment of a certain goal. It is seen by psychologists as forces (of which societal demands is key) that determine behaviour.

In operationalising motivational and socio-cultural influences, we may find instances of these two terms overlapping each other. For the belief systems and practices associated with a particular group can equally be a motivation or de-motivation in the student's language learning.

1.7 Background of Case Study Schools

Kumasi Anglican Senior High School (KASS) has been chosen because it is one coeducational institution that is categorized under grade A in the Ashanti Region and is located in the heart of the city. Since the school is a grade A day and boarding school, we are likely to have students coming from outside the region with various backgrounds. Besides, Kumasi is cosmopolitan and this reflects in the calibre of students in the school. This is complementary in that the school

gives us a typical situation of the melting pot of students. The school offers all the major courses in the senior high school (General Science, General Arts, Business, Visual Arts, and Home Economics). It has facilities conducive for learning. These include a fully-furnished library, a modern computer laboratory with internet connection and a well-equipped science laboratory. There are 15 English language teachers to meet the language needs of the students.² The English teacher – student ratio in Kumasi Anglican Senior High School is 1: 220. As a result of this imbalance, which basically cuts across the other subjects, coupled with the shortness of the duration of the SHS course, the school organizes an intensive extra classes programme for its students. Some students who are either weak in English or wish to score very high in English engage teachers on a one-on-one extra tuition in addition to these extra classes.

By virtue of it being a grade A school, we are again likely to have in the school more of the students who graduated from grade A JHSs and had very good passes in English at the Basic Education Certification Examinations (BECE). The Computerised School Selection and Placement System (CSSPS) will definitely place in the school some of these good students, most of whom picked the school as their first choice. Most of these students often go ahead to perform well in English Language at the West Africa Senior Secondary Certificate Examinations (WASSCE) and proceed to the universities and other tertiary institutions.

Achinakrom Senior High School can be described as a less-endowed school. It has a small, inadequately-furnished library, an equally ill-equipped computer laboratory, and just one mini bus that runs the activities of the school. It is a grade C coeducational day and boarding school with the majority of the students being day students from neighbouring towns and villages like

² The majority of schools in Ghana, regardless of the standard or grade do not have adequate English language teachers to meet the size of the student population. The teacher to student ratio has always been on the high side. In some schools it is as high as 1:350, and sometimes even higher.

Onwe, Kwaso and others. Achinakrom is a farming community, and most of the parents of these students are either farmers or traders, there are few civil and public servants amongst them. There are only four English language teachers making the English teacher to student ratio 1:303. Like Anglican Senior High School, the school organizes extra classes for the students to augment the inadequate time of the official school programme. The difference is that even though there are a lot more very weak students in English in Achinakrom Senior High school, students do not engage teachers on a one-on-one extra tuition in addition to these extra classes.

Most of the students from Achinakrom Senior High School graduated from grade C public JHSs and local preparatory/private schools with relatively not so impressive grades in English. The school has some students who entered the school with aggregate 30 and even more. Most of the boarders, who come from outside the district, are mostly the residue of the Computerised School Selection and Placement System (CSSPS). The majority of the students in the school chose other schools as their first choice schools but due to their grades, they were sent to this school. Quite a few students from this school do very well in English to proceed to the universities. Grade C4 or even C6 in English that will afford a student the opportunity to go to any of the training colleges is appreciated. In some instances, one will find graduates of the school going into trading or other commercial activities outside academics. There are scholarship schemes for some of the needy but brilliant students from the various districts to motivate such students to aspire high in their academics. With the Professor Andam quota for less-endowed schools instituted at Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology a few years ago, between two and five students are able to find themselves at that university occasionally.

These 2 schools under study are far apart from each other so control is guaranteed. There is also inter-learner variability: the input they experience and their socio-psychological attitudes can all result in variant patterns. The two schools have some things in common and certain areas of

departure will be of interest to the researcher. There is some disparity in academic achievements of the schools in terms of their scores in English in WASSCE. Their environments and facilities are sharply different. Kumasi Anglican Senior High School scores better grades than Achinakrom Senior High School; Kumasi Anglican Senior School is located in the academic environs of Ghana Baptist University College, Kumasi Polytechnic and a cluster of JHSs. This academic ambience makes the school less susceptible to negative socio-cultural influence. Achinakrom is located in the community where passers-by use the school as a route to their farms making it more susceptible to influences from the town folk.

In the course of this work, for the sake of convenience, Anglican Senior High School may be referred to as KASS and Achinakrom Senior High School simply Achinakrom.

1.8.0 Methodology and Data Collection

A total of 151 students from Anglican Senior High School, Kumasi and Achinakrom Senior High School, Achinakrom will constitute the sample study group. These two schools have been chosen because of the disparities stated earlier. These categories give us a basis for comparison of the type of students and the type of learning environments they experience.

1.8.1. Sampling and Data Collection

Hundred students will be randomly selected from KASS while 51 students will be randomly selected from Achinakrom. This is because KASS has a larger number than Achinakrom. Details of the figures will be given in the chapter on Methodology. The respondents will be selected from form 1 – 3 and across all courses. The form 4s may not be available because of the WASSCE. The crux of the data will be questionnaire designed to solicit information from students to know the influence of their backgrounds and motivation in English learning in

relation to their SHS performance. There will also be informal conversation with the students in the two schools to augment the written responses. Some essays will be sampled and analysed, and that will be added to the above methods to make a general statement on the students' performance in English. Teachers will answer questions on the effects of some socio-cultural issues of students that present themselves in the teaching and learning process.

1.9 Organisation of Work

This work is divided into five chapters. Chapter one consists of the introduction to the thesis. This is subdivided into background to the study, statement of the problem, purpose of the study; definition of culture, motivation, vocabulary and grammar are also examined; the target population and the sample as well as the reason for the choice are also mentioned. Chapter two deals with a review of the relevant literature on the topic; views held by other authors and researchers are reviewed and their relevance to the study are duly analysed. Chapter three discusses the methodology used in the research: the research design, the target population, sampling procedure, etc are examined. Chapter four presents a systematic analysis of the research data and the corresponding discussions. Chapter five also presents the findings, conclusion and recommendations made.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0. Introduction

This section deals with a review of relevant literature on the impact of motivation and socio-cultural factors on the learning of grammar and vocabulary for effective communication. We shall undertake a systematic review of issues on grammar and vocabulary since they serve as the bases of our case on language proficiency. Literature relevant to socio-culture and motivation will be reviewed. Findings by researchers on the correlation between socio-culture and motivation on one side, and success in second language learning on the other will be analyzed. Contrary views to that effect will also be examined.

2.1. Grammar

Grammar is central to the teaching and learning of language. Different views are held by linguists on the significance of grammar in language learning. According to The National Capital Language Resource Centre (NCLRC), many people, including language teachers, hear the word "grammar" and think of a fixed set of word forms and rules of usage. They associate "good" grammar with the prestige forms of the language, such as those used in writing and in formal oral presentations, and "bad" or "no" grammar with the language used in everyday conversation or used by speakers of non-prestige forms (NCLRC, 2004).

Language teachers who adopt this definition focus on grammar as a set of forms and rules. They teach grammar by explaining the forms and rules and then drill students on them (Byrd, 1998). This usually results in students who can produce correct forms on exercises and tests, but consistently make errors when they try to use the language in context (NCLRC, 2004).

Other language teachers, probably influenced by the universal grammar theory, tend not to teach grammar at all. Believing that children acquire their first language without overt grammar teaching, they expect students to learn their second language the same way. They assume that students will imbibe grammar rules as they hear, read, and use the language in communication activities (Byrd, 1998). This approach does not allow students to use one of the major tools they have as learners: their active understanding of what grammar is and how it works in the language they already know. A middle way between these two extremes should be adopted since grammar cannot be sacrificed on the altar of expediency. In cases of writing, poor grammar will obviously inhibit understanding. Discussants as well as examiners usually get frustrated when students are not able to communicate their thoughts well as a result of poor grammar.

Earlier writers like Close (1981) had asserted that what disturbed many teachers is the fear that notional syllabuses and the communicative approach to language teaching mean excluding grammar from the curriculum but that would amount to absurdity. Close (ibid) had claimed that while grammatical rules are formed, people often said that conforming to the rules was not as important as to communicate. As a result, some teachers are tempted to ignore grammatical errors in students' expressions. But Close also shares the opinion that a reasonable paramount aim would be to master the solid core by learning the facts by any means possible. Aspects of this study will therefore try to look at teachers' impression on this view as to whether the rules of grammar are important to them or it should suffice for one to be understood in communication without necessarily possessing excellent grammatical competence. For instance, who cares if I say, "If I go I **would** buy you a gift" instead of "If I go I **will** buy you a gift"? After all, the listener understands they will get a gift on condition that the speaker goes.

Batstone (1994:3) asserts that “if there were no grammar, language would be disorganised, leaving us seriously handicapped.” Knowledge of grammar is thus seen to be the significant area of the language system around which the other areas revolve. Cook (1996:14) says “[Grammar] is impossible to manage without” and that regardless of how important the other components of language may be in themselves, they are connected to each other through grammar.

Kianiparsa and Vali (2010) believe that the linguistic knowledge in English consists of the ability to analyse and recognise the structural features and components in the language. These abilities are concerned with phonological, morphological, syntactic, and semantic issues. The building blocks of the communication are grammatical points which make the structure of a language. They argue that before one starts to communicate, many factors and components must be formed in the person’s mind. After sounds have been matched with each other to shape different words, these words need to be put together to form phrases, clauses, and eventually sentences by which a certain meaning can be conveyed. In the light of these, they conclude that it is probably impossible to communicate in a foreign language without knowing the grammatical rules and structures of the target language.

Zhong-guo & Min-yan (2007) assert that language competence means that one possesses a good command of grammar and words, and can speak, read and write in grammatical foreign or second language. Since errors in grammar are likely to lead to miscommunication and therefore misunderstanding, we should try to develop the students’ ability of using language in communication in a correct way.

Much as the above suggest the significance of grammar in language, in ethnography of communication, knowledge of grammar is nothing but knowing the cultural grammar, and the context of usage is crucial. Lyons (1977) has said that communication competence implies

knowing linguistic forms and their appropriate use; pragmatic use of language has to do with appropriate choice of vocabulary and expression for communication. This concept is reinforced by Gumperz (1972:205) as cited in Agyekum (2010). Gumperz says:

whereas linguistic competence covers the speaker's ability to produce grammatically correct sentences, communicative competence describes his ability to select from the totality of grammatically correct expressions available to him, forms which appropriately reflect the social norms governing behaviour in specific encounters.

Communicative competence thus goes beyond grammatical competence. The context within which communication is carried out matters a lot.

A significant observation is made about a structural issue a learner is likely to contend with. Boadi et al (1968) observe that in one sense, all uses of prepositions are 'idiomatic' and, like most words, each idiom is a lexical item rather than a structural problem. Like words, idioms are best learned in context. In an idiomatic phrase, the meaning is not readily apparent from the meanings of the preposition and the following word or structure. Thus, whereas in: *The book is on the table* the meaning of *on the table* is fairly readily apparent if a student knows the commonest meaning of 'on', in *The soldier is on duty* the meaning of 'on duty' is not readily apparent. But he has no such apparent clue to help him to interpret expressions such as: *It is on fire*, which is quite different from 'on the fire'.

2.2. Vocabulary

Some writers have also skewed their argument in favour of vocabulary. To them, for communication to be effective, it is not only grammar that matters, vocabulary is equally important to language and sometimes more crucial than grammar. Learning a language entails learning numerous aspects about that language, including its pronunciation, writing system,

structure, pragmatics, rhetorical modes for reading and composition, culture, and spelling. But according to Folse (2004:1), “the most important aspect is vocabulary.” Comprehensible input helps learners figure out how a language works. If the language that a learner is hearing or reading has many unknown words, then that language is not comprehensible and therefore cannot be input. In other words, without vocabulary, comprehensible input is neither comprehensible nor input. Folse (2004:2) points out that adult ESL learners are keenly aware of their "vocabulary plight."

Like the arguments in favour of grammar, the arguments in favour of vocabulary have got their own challenges too. Lado (1957:77) writes, “It is quite an illusion to think, as even literate people sometimes do, that meanings are the same in all languages, that languages differ only in the forms used for those meanings.” Languages may have exact translation equivalents for words when these are used in their central senses, but not when they are used in more marginal or metaphorical ways. The way vocabulary is arranged in conversation may differ from one culture and its language to another. The issue becomes more complex when people with dissimilar cultures classify things (especially abstract concepts) so differently that it becomes very difficult to establish cross-linguistic equivalences at all. As Swan (2008) illustrates, words like *guilt*, *shame*, *apology*, *repentance*, for instance, reflect concepts that may not be in anything like a one-to-one correspondence with the ways in which another culture analyses notions of these concepts. Again, for instance, ‘wear’ in Twi can be ‘*bɔ*’, ‘*fira*’ or ‘*hyɜ*’ depending on what is being worn, be it wrist watch, cloth, or dress. Thus it doesn’t become just a matter of putting labels in different places on the same picture; the picture itself may be so different that it is hard to relate the labels to each other in any meaningful way (Swan 2008).

A case in point is the following idioms in contemporary American English:

- Her nose is running and her feet smells.
- Drive down the parkway and park on the drive way.
- Chop the tree down and cut the pieces up.

A student not tutored on the contextual and cultural use of the words in the sentences above will definitely be confused.

Read (1994) observes that many students tend to perceive second language learning as essentially a matter of learning words so they spend quite a substantial amount of time on vocabulary acquisition and mainly depend on their bilingual dictionary in situations where they are required to communicate in the target language. He stresses the fact that words are the basic components of language. This method is supported by proponents of contrastive analysis. However, as a result of the differences that exist in meaning behind words, error analysis and contrastive analysis as theories of second language pedagogy have received severe criticisms from some writers. They argue that you don't just put words side by side and interpret them from one language to the other. Consequently, Gregg (1995:10) reviewing Cook (1993) writes, "...contrastive analysis, error analysis, etc. are not simply unrelated to linguistic theory in particular, they are dead meat in general." That may be harsh but communicative competence goes beyond grammar and words. Bauman and Sherzer (1974 as cited in Agyekum 2010) admonish that laws of grammar are simply not enough to comprehend the use of language in society; patterning of languages goes with a combination of the verbal as well as the socio-cultural. Second language learners face the problem of establishing the range of reference of new words and expressions that they meet, and a good deal of exposure may be needed before they have enough experience of the way words are used to be able to do this accurately. Swan (2008) is hopeful that second language learners have one great advantage over infants: they have

already learnt how one culture groups and labels the world. Whatever the differences among human cultures and their perceptions, there is also massive common ground, so we have a fair idea of the scope of much second language vocabulary before we learn it.

Considering the strong positions taken by Close (1981) and the other writers on the importance of grammar in second language learning, and the equally strong stands taken by apostles of vocabulary, it becomes obvious that these two elements of language are critical to language competence. We will therefore go with Groot (2000), who in reacting to views about vocabulary and grammar teaching says that the view that the vocabulary of a language should be seen as a set of basic irregularities unyielding to systematic study, and its acquisition as a haphazard process of learning largely unrelated elements is long outdated. He goes further that the language teaching profession has come to realise that in second language teaching, a grammar-oriented approach is also not an efficient way to achieve language competence. He ends that an integrated approach combining systematic attention to the acquisition of both grammar and vocabulary is much more effective.

That nonetheless, the cultural use of a word or a grammatical structure is more important than knowledge of the grammar or vocabulary of a language. Cultural influence of both the native and target cultures impacts learning styles, pedagogy used and language skills such as listening or speaking. Cultural knowledge provides insight to the relationship between cultural backgrounds and language learning; awareness of cultural influence on English language learning can inform classroom decisions and lead to an increase in positive learning results.

To this, Hussin et al (2001) mention that what occurs in the language classrooms must be extended beyond the walls of the classroom so that a link is created between what is learned in the classrooms with what occurs outside of the classrooms. Languages cannot be learned merely

in classrooms. Learning a language requires communication in real life situations. Thus, students need to acquire an array of communication skills that they can use with various kinds of people. It is essential that they learn not only how to communicate in the target language but also the background, history, and culture that defines it.

2.3.0. Motivation

Most researchers agree that motivation plays a vital role in the learner's achievement; it is often attributed with the capacity to override other factors, such as language aptitude, to affect achievement in both negative and positive ways (Liuolienė and Metiūnienė, 2006). Research on motivation, according to Cote and Waugh (2004), had been on other human behaviours other than language learning, but after Gardner and Lambert brought to light the complexities of motivation with their studies in 1959, its significance in second language learning has been realized and series of research have been carried out to establish an association between various aspects of motivation and second language achievement.

MacIntyre et al (2001:463) define motivation as “an attribute of the individual describing the psychological qualities underlying behaviour with respect to a particular task”. This goal-directed behaviour, like Gardner (1985)'s definition, shows itself through distinct actions of the motivated individual. Dörnyei (2003:173) gives a more elaborate description when he writes the following:

The motivated individual expends effort, is persistent and attentive to the task at hand, has goals, desires and aspirations, enjoys the activity, experiences reinforcement from success and disappointment from failure, makes attributions concerning success and or failure, is aroused, and makes use of strategies to aid in achieving goals.

Dörnyei's statement shows motivation as internally driven. However, there are also external forces that play a role in addition to the internal drive. Gardner (1996) as cited in MacIntyre et al. (2001: 463) believes that motivation should be viewed as a hybrid concept, "an internal attribute that is the result of an external force". This suggests that a combination of both intrinsic and extrinsic motivation comes to play. One's internal and personal drive is regulated or influenced by external societal and other forces that motivate one in learning (in our case the English language).

To MacIntyre et al. (2001:462), "Motivation represents one of the most appealing, yet complex, variables used to explain individual differences in language learning." Dörnyei (2001:43) referring to Gardner's work in 1985, comments, "The emerging body of research studies established motivation as a principal determinant of second language acquisition..." Gardner (1985:10) had defined motivation with respect to second language learning as "the combination of effort plus desire to achieve the goal of learning the language plus favorable attitudes toward learning the language." Gardner added, "Individuals who are truly motivated not only strive to learn the material but also seek out situations where they can obtain further practice" (p. 50).

Motivation makes language learners positive about their own learning. It also creates the drive in them to acquire the targeted language, enjoy the learning process, and experience real communication. The component of Gardner's goal motivation that talks about the learner's attitudes towards the learning situation is that in the context of a language classroom the learning situation could include variables such as the teacher, classroom activities, classmates and so forth. The learner's attitudes toward these variables will influence the learner's core motivation as well as the learner's orientation. Positive attitudes toward the learning situation will likely

produce greater enjoyment in the study of the language, the desire to learn the language, and the effort put in learning the language.

Ebata (2008) is of the opinion that it is motivation that produces effective second-language communicators by planting in them the seeds of self-confidence. It also successfully creates learners who continuously engage themselves in learning even after they complete a targeted goal. Experience of success and satisfaction has a strong connection with motivation. By realizing their improvement and achievement, students always gain the feeling of success. Ebata writes that in order for language students to become satisfied with a lesson, it is required to produce a stress-free classroom and develop integrated-tasks lesson. People's motivation for learning a language can be integrative or instrumental.

2.3.1. Integrative Motivation

Crookes and Schmidt (1991) identify integrative motivation as the learner's orientation with regard to the goal of learning a second language. It refers to the learner's positive attitudes towards the target language group and the desire to integrate into the target language community. When someone becomes a resident in a new community that uses the target language in its social interactions, integrative motivation is a key component in assisting the learner to develop some level of proficiency in the language (Norris-Holt, 2001). It becomes a necessity, in order to operate socially in the community and become or feel like one of its members. This can be in the school, church or working environment. Under such situations, the individual may feel rather odd in his inability to associate well with the other members as a result of language barrier.

2.3.2. Instrumental Motivation

In contrast to integrative motivation is instrumental motivation. Instrumental motivation is often characteristic of second language acquisition, where little or no social integration of the learner into a community using the target language takes place, or in some instances is even desired. Hudson (2000) writes that this type of motivation is characterized by a desire to obtain something practical or concrete from the study of a second language. Instrumental motivation is reward-driven. Liuolienė and Metiūnienė (2006:94) add that “instrumental orientation is a more utilitarian orientation; it refers to learners’ desires to learn the language in order to accomplish some non-interpersonal purpose such as to pass an exam or to advance a career.” Instrumental motivation, therefore, deals with situations such as meeting the requirements for school or university graduation, applying for a job, requesting higher pay based on language ability, reading technical material, translation work or achieving higher social status (Norris-Holt, 2001).

Brown (2000) is of the view that both integrative motivation and instrumental motivation are not necessarily mutually exclusive. He contends that learners rarely select one form of motivation when learning a second language, but rather a combination of both orientations. He cites the example of international students residing in the United States, learning English for academic purposes while at the same time wishing to become integrated with the people and culture of the country. For students in Ghana, much as their core motivation may be to learn English in pursuance of an academic goal, the desire to function properly among speakers of English in school and later at the workplace is also a determining factor.

Norris-Holt (2001) admonishes that motivation is an important factor in L2 achievement. For this reason it is important to identify both the type and combination of motivation that assists in the

successful acquisition of a second language. At the same time it is necessary to view motivation as one of a number of variables in an intricate model of interrelated individual and situational factors which are unique to each language learner.

2.4.0. Language and Culture

Language is arguably the most important component of culture because much of the rest of culture is normally transmitted orally. Language and culture are virtually inseparable. It is impossible to understand the subtle nuances and deep meanings of another culture without knowing its language well. And it is impossible to understand a person's variety of English if we are oblivious of the culture from which they come.

Yule (1996) posits that many of the factors which are responsible for linguistic variation are often analysed in terms of cultural differences. It is for this reason that we have tags like 'working class culture' and 'Black culture'. He continues that this view has been partly "influenced by the work of anthropologists who tend to treat language as one element among others such as beliefs, within the definition of culture as 'socially acquired knowledge'" (p195). He mentions that in societies where there is strong language loyalty and the people are attached to the original language, a chunk of features of the original are transferred into the second language learning process. The case of Black English is cited where you have instances where the copula is sometimes omitted as in: 'They mine' or 'You crazy' (p192). Black English is also noted for the use of double negative such that statements like 'I don't know nobody' or 'I ain't giving you any money' are heard. When learners consistently speak or write like this, the teacher may be frustrated if he does not appreciate this difficulty.

There is, however, a general situation in Ghana, and for that matter English West Africa. Here, regardless of one's level of education and even the conscious desire to reach the native-like status, we are arrested by the concept of nativization. A variety such as Ghanaian English is born out of this. The English language as introduced in new socio-linguistic and cultural environments has had to go through certain modifications to suit its new users. Through the process the variety adapts itself to the new environment by exhibiting linguistics as well as cultural features peculiar to the new environment. Consequently, we observe that uncountable nouns are susceptible to pluralisations in West African English. Words such as 'information', 'equipment', 'furniture', and 'advice' very often have the plural morpheme added to them.

At the lexico-semantic levels linguistic devices such as semantic restrictions (SR), semantic extensions (SE), and coinages have given words additional meanings which are unknown to British Standard English. We have 'engagement' for traditional marriage (SE) and 'wedding' for church marriage (SR), 'bush meat', 'chop bar', and 'coal pot' (coinages). These are definitely indications of nativization because the educated Ghanaian uses them too. And as Sey (1973:7) says "the educated Ghanaian would not 'accept' anything other than educated British Standard English", but the reality is that there are certain linguistic features that run across the West African region (dialect continuum) that are distinctive from the British Standard English. Sey (1973:135) quotes Wingfield (1968) as listing the following among others as WAE idioms 'which a teacher would be unwise to suppress as bad English': *I want to drop at the corner; The exam disappointed me (I failed).*

2.4.1.0. Language and Society

One of the most controversial issues in the arena of psychology is how human beings develop intelligence. The contention has been as to whether the primary source of human intelligence is

genetic (often called nature) or environmental (nurture). The argument is, if intelligence is genetic the student's ability to learn is fixed. Thus the teacher hasn't got much to do. On the other hand, if it is environmentally determined, then the teacher has the duty to manage the learning environment to aid the student's learning. There is no doubt that the environment greatly shapes our learning and this shall be discussed in due course.

2.4. 1.1 Learning a Second Language

In learning a second language, two things are very significant: the kind of linguistic input and the kind of language learning environment to which the learner is exposed. According to Laurell (1987:329), "The language that learners hear serves as their learning model, and the environment in which they hear it affects how they view the second language and how they learn it". It is obvious that a child has a greater level of attaining fluency in a second language than an adult because of the child's massive exposure to the second language users; he is practically immersed in the language. The adult may not get similar opportunity, thus affecting the learning process.

The debate on how children acquire their native language and the significance of this to second language learning has been a contentious one for some time now. Even though evidence for L2 learning ability declining as one progresses in age is a complex zone, the general perception is that children learn second languages easily and older learners hardly achieve fluency regardless of the number of years spent in the new language. Broca (1987) cites the case of adult immigrants to Canada who after so many years stay are still not fluent in English or French. Ghanaians also attest to similar situations here in Ghana where people who move as adults from the northern part of the country to the south have difficulty with fluency in the southern languages even after so many years' stay in the south. Unlike their parents, the children easily

pick up the southern languages and within a few years some easily attain fluency. It is therefore argued that it is prudent to introduce children in the second language as early as possible before they get into adulthood.

Studies like Mayberry and Lock (2003) have appreciated that certain aspects of SLA may be affected by age, though others remain intact. As we concede that many adults have challenges with learning a second language, it seems there is more to this than just cerebral maturation. There are a number of socio-cultural, environmental, and personality factors that come to play. For instance, the extent of the child's exposure to the second language, and his level of integration to its users from school and the playgrounds *vis-à-vis* the adult's must be factored in. We cannot discount the affective and emotional differences between adults and children as being imperative in second language learning, too. Adults are generally mindful of what they say and how they say it -the fear of ridicule can inhibit the learning process. Most children, on the other hand, are free to mimic sounds from adults. Children do not usually display self-consciousness and anxiety, which can impede the learning process. Moreover, generally, children do not have negative attitudes toward the second language culture, especially for those who learn in the native speakers' environment. And that is a great incentive to second language learning. In terms of motivation too children usually have great integrative motivation, which is also critical in their drive to learn the L2.

Thus, though the widely acclaimed language learning concept of 'the younger the better' is being interrogated, there is also the fact that the starting age of the learning and the number of years of exposure to the L2 influence the eventual degree of success. All things being equal then, the school child going through English language learning for a number of years up to the SHS level should be able to exhibit a certain minimum level of proficiency. Again, the children's

integrative motivation for learning a second language is always high as they seek acceptance and recognition among their peers who may be fluent speakers of the second language.

2.4.2.0 Factors Affecting English Learning

In psychology and education, learning is commonly defined as a process that brings together cognitive, emotional, and environmental influences and experiences for acquiring, enhancing, or making changes in one's knowledge, skills, values, and world views (Illeris, 2000). Learning as a process focuses on what happens when the learning takes place. This buttresses the point that it is not enough to have cognitive abilities to learn a second language, but what motivates one to learn and the circumstances under which the learning occurs are vital.

2.4.2.1 The Environmental Factor

We can consider the situation of two students: one from an environment where English speaking is cherished and the language virtually ubiquitous, and another environment where people really do not attach so much importance to English speaking and the child rarely hear people speak English. Generally, the child in the first situation will have a higher chance of perfecting his English than the one in the second condition. The input that the first child hears is likely to be good since the environment occasions it. In the school setting, if the first child finds himself in an English speaking school and continues to get the right input, then the learning process becomes much smoother. Conversely, even if the second child finds himself in an English speaking school, his learning process will not be as smooth as the first child who constantly finds himself in the enabling environment.

Several research work have shown that most children begin speaking during their second year and by age two are likely to know at least 50 words and to be combining them in short phrases

(Rescorla, 1989). By the age of four to six, most children have acquired the basic grammar of the sentence. From that point onward, children learn to use language more efficiently and more effectively. They also learn how to create, and maintain, larger language units such as conversation or narrative (Owens, 2001). Although there are individual differences in the rate of development, the sequence in which various forms appear is highly predictable both within and across stages.

There is also considerable agreement that the course of language development reflects the interplay of factors in at least five domains: social, perceptual, cognitive processing, conceptual and linguistic. Theorists differ in the emphasis and degree of determination posited for a given domain, but most would not disagree that each is relevant. Johnston (2006) accepts that there is a large body of research supporting the view that language learning is influenced by many aspects of human experience and capability. In her research on factors that influence language development, Johnston affirms the claim that the verbal environment influences language learning. She says that from ages one to three, children from highly verbal “professional” families hear nearly three times as many words per week as children from low verbal “welfare” families.

Hart and Risley (1995) observed the lives of American families and made certain discoveries that reinforce the assertion that the type of family and society greatly affects the child’s language competence. First, they looked at how much talk actually goes on between parent and child in everyday life. They observed that when they are awake and with their parents, 1 and 2 year old American children hear an average of 340 utterances per hour and 1440 words per hour. Also, the amount of parent talk differs greatly between families: Some parents address fewer than 500 words to their child in an hour of family life, while others address over 3,000 words. They

estimate that by the time they are four years old, some children have heard over 50 million words addressed to them by their parents, while others have heard only 10 million words. Here, we see the enormity of the social influence on the child's language development. The kind of parents one has can be very significant in the child's language success.

Hart and Risley (1999) in *The Social World of Children Learning to Talk* describe how the pattern of interaction – the social dance between parent and child – changed as the child learned to talk. They hypothesize that:

- The amount of social language interaction between parents and children in the first years of life is the primary source of early language experience and a major determiner of later language experience.
- The amount of social language interaction between parents and children in the first years of life, although influenced by shared biological temperament, is largely a function of the children's accommodation to the family micro-culture set by the parents' own childhood experience.

A good language foundation is obviously influential in later language success. At home families' traditions, discipline styles, attitudes toward education, and prejudices are very different. Each family may have their own attitudes toward education and to what level they may want to reach, and for which reason they may want to take the English language seriously. The orientations of the parents themselves in most cases are transferred unto the children thereby perpetuating the beliefs and aspirations of the family lineage. A child who deviates from this line is often regarded as the odd one. The desire to see to the successful language learning of their children is usually dictated by the upbringing of the parents themselves. If the amount of vocabulary a child is initiated into has an influence on the language learning outcome, then the family or school that introduces the child early to the language is more likely to have their children speaking better

English in later lives than children from those who do not. This, however, may not necessarily translate into good writing skills or better grades in English in future. More cases in our schools are evidentiary enough that there is more to scoring excellent grades in English than merely speaking 'good' English. There are also instances of people whose parents are stark illiterates and may not have been speaking English in their infant stages, but they may go ahead to perform better than children from the elite families. A lot of factors may come to play and these will be discussed subsequently.

2.4.2.2 Socio-cultural/economic factors

Oxford (2003) in a study in reference to Vygotsky (1978)'s Socio-cultural Perspective in Second Language Acquisition says that Vygotsky considered learning second language process in two stages: First, that learning is through interaction with others; second, that learning is integrated into the individual's mental structure. Oxford reviewed the cognitive process as interaction between social relations and mental functions through mediated learning.

Stern (1983) presents a model on the essential factors that play a role in language learning. The socio-economic factor is mentioned in addition to sociolinguistic and socio-cultural factors. According to his paradigm, the learning outcomes from multiple exposures to target language are different from those from the single, classroom instruction-based exposure. The student who has other sources of learning English, which include the home and the environment, stands advantageous as compared to his counterpart whose source is only from the classroom. That is, tutelage from the classroom alone does not speed up the journey to the attainment of competence in English. Thus where the socio-cultural inclination is toward higher education, economic obstacles are not tolerated.

In a research to look into the relationship between language education and learner's social context, Stern (1983) identifies a number of background variables to take into account in conducting language teaching research. Several factors are mentioned as heavily influencing second language learning and some of them are socio-cultural ones that bear up motivation, instrumental values and cultural values of the second language. A good language teaching result, including the teaching of a second language, should involve wider social context and environment, which not only provides a context of language use, but also, equally important, offers multiple opportunities of learning (Spolsky, 2000). The learning with more opportunities will certainly be superior to that bereft of such opportunities.

Zou et al (2006) postulate that embedded in the socio-cultural factors in language learning may be an economic dimension. In 2005 they began a research on the influence of family background on English learning in Shanghai. Among the objectives was to look at how the family's social, cultural and financial factors related to the outcomes of English language learning. In their analysis, they would not put too much premium on the economic background of the family as hugely influencing the learning outcomes, yet they would not discount its significance. To them, although the economic factor plays only a secondary role in affecting the testing scores of the learners, its power should not be neglected because "economic conditions determine both quantity and quality of language exposure for a learner through outsourcing extra opportunities of language exposure and contact in commercial programs" (Zou et al 2006:10). This deals with parents' ability and willingness to support the English language learning of their wards and a well-resourced learning ambience.

A well-sourced family coupled with a motivating ambience will definitely add impetus to the learning process and more likely, a better outcome (Traylor, 2010). The learning outcomes of a second language are as a result of the interaction of "many factors, including social, cultural and

economic factors as the last three factors will influence the learner's motivation, attitude, and the ability to source opportunities and quality of language exposure" (Zou et al 2006:14). Students come from various homes- poor and affluent. Each of these may have different motivations for learning English. However, students from affluent neighbourhoods with more learning opportunities and logistical support could have a better chance of perfecting their English language than those from poor neighbourhoods. Traylor (2010)'s observation is that often the rich neighbourhoods have more tutoring companies, afterschool activities and other attractions that the poor neighbourhoods lack. Since such environments may have a culture of higher education, invariably students in these neighbourhoods are expected to follow the pace of the society. Going up to the tertiary level in such societies is more or less a matter of natural sequence and English speaking is almost by default. This can explain why we have most students from the city schools speaking better English and mostly coming out with better English results than those from rural and impoverished schools.

Dankwa-Apawu (2007) administered a reading test among children as a basis for advocating the importance of using English to reflect socio-cultural context. He observes that children from highly-privileged social class had the highest reading test scores in English. He reckons one's proficiency in reading and, by extension, L2 learning as dependent on one's social background. His recommendation to educators and examining bodies is to factor this realization in educational assessment procedures and adopt more pragmatic means of assessment, such as the norm reference type, that balances social and pedagogical factors.

In researching into the problems associated with the teaching and learning of English grammar, some researchers picked certain geographical areas with certain peculiar characteristics and came out with certain findings. For instance, Appiah (1997) chose Tafo Pankronu M/A JSS A and

Bamang JSS in the Ashanti region as case study. These areas can be described as less endowed and the standard of living is not high. Her findings attributed the problems to:

- lack of supporting teachers and learning materials
- students not motivated to speak English because of fear of being ridiculed when they committed an error
- teachers' motivation being very low combined with the economic hardship of the area preventing teachers from buying their own textbooks.

On the same topic, Awuni (1997) also chose Bawku Secondary School and Bawku Technical Institute in the Bawku East District as areas of research. This district is seen as one of the most deprived in Ghana. He identified the following among other factors as negatively impacting on the learning of English:

- no motivation from teachers to students to develop interest in the language
- unavailability of teaching and learning materials
- students' inability to buy supplementary books

We can see certain common traits operating in these two studies: both findings revealed sociological and economic factors. Motivation is interwoven with socio-cultural and economic factors in all these issues. It is obvious that a favourable environment can attract quality teachers. Evidence on the ground shows that most teachers will prefer well-endowed schools, where there are facilities that enhance effective teaching and learning and students are ready to learn, to areas which lack these. Moreover, one cannot divorce issues of students buying their own supplementary books and the lack of intrinsic motivation on the part of both teachers and students from economic and sociological reasons.

2.4.2.3 Who teaches English in the School?

Boadi et al (1968) contend that it is not enough for the teacher of English simply to be able to speak and write good English. He needs to know English sufficiently well to distinguish the good from the bad, and where it is bad, to recognize what has gone wrong and how it can be put right. For this, he needs some acquaintance with the structure of English. Their worry is that whereas in most fields of study a teacher is required to carry his study of a subject up to a level much higher than that to which he will have to teach, oddly, until recently, this has rarely been true of the English teacher. His study of the modern English *language*, as distinct from the literature written in that language, has rarely been carried beyond the secondary level leaving a deficit in the system. "It is this gap, more than anything else, which has led to the misunderstanding of the work of the linguists on the part of teachers and the lack of insight into the teachers' problems on the part of the linguists" (Boadi et al 1968:192). That was a contention they held some decades back. But even now, in some less-endowed, remotely sited rural SHSs and some private SHSs in the cities, one is likely to find an English teacher whose highest level of education is the SHS. Apparently, he is there to help because the school does not have an English teacher. The question then is what kind of help can he offer these unfortunate students? For some 'fortunate' students in some situations, one is likely to find somebody who graduated in geography and sociology teaching English language. Obviously, the highest level of English such a teacher might have done is up to the SHS level, but it is presumed that once he has finished the university and can speak some English, he can teach English, regardless of the technicalities involved.

2.5 The Curriculum

The term curriculum can be described as a master plan devised by educators and other stakeholders that will best serve their needs, and the needs of their children. Crowl et al

(1997:17) say it “represents the body of knowledge that a society deems valuable.” It consists of a preconceived design of education experiences that should lead to desired goals eventually benefitting the individual and the society. The selection and structuring of the learning opportunities intended to bring about desired changes in any society is influenced by a number of factors. The nature of the society involved, the cultural background whether it is developed, developing or under-developed is important. Also, the educational philosophies that a society prefers, for example, perennialism, essentialism, idealism among others should be considered. Again, the nature of knowledge needed to help meet the needs and aspiration of the society, for instance, the expertise needed to implement aims, is also considered. Finally, knowledge the learners need in the various subject areas to help meet the needs.

It is for this reason that Kirkpatrick (2007) advances that English teaching should be done to reflect the socio-cultural needs of the user. Having acknowledged this undisputable fact, he even goes as far as stressing that the specific teaching and learning contexts and the specific needs of the learners in those contexts should, as a matter of fact, determine what should be taught and how it should be taught.

It is a moot point whether different kinds of learners require different kinds of teaching procedures and techniques, but methods often embody such assumed differences. In learning language, Azadeh (2012) emphasizes that the influence of other factors which are the descriptions of individual learner differences, such as effective language learning aptitude or motivation, attitudes towards language learning strategies, fear of failure should not be ignored. Ellis (1994) makes a distinction between the following two broad categories of factors: Individual learners’ differences, which includes age, motivation, learning style, personality type, and situational and social factors, such as the learning setting and the type of the task (pp. 540-545). Each of these has to be factored in second language teaching. Most of the private schools

especially do not follow the systematic teaching prescribed by the English syllabus. These days a primary four child from a private/international school comes home and the English grammar homework is one meant for a JSS 2 student. Apparently, such schools want to appear as learning advanced things since that supposedly gives them a psychological edge over those who are behind them. The fact, indeed, is that some primary pupils from such schools are able to read passages that some students from some public JHSs cannot read.

There are blanket curricula and textbooks for all schools in Ghana and every school is expected to finish the English syllabus within a specified period. The question is: looking at the kind of foundations they had, how do students from Bonwire Senior High School and Edinaman Senior High School (both grade C schools) commence and end the same syllabus with students from Prempeh College and St Louis Senior High School (all grade A Schools)? The backgrounds and circumstances under which these categories of students learn English are very different but the expectations from them are the same.

2.6 Conclusion

In addressing the issue of students' language competence, therefore, the issue of motivation and socio-cultural factors cannot be underestimated as influencing the English language learning outcomes of students.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

3.0 Introduction

This section presents the methodology and the procedure used in obtaining the data for this research. It lays emphasis on the following areas: population, sample and sampling technique, data collection, instrument for data collection and data analysis. The study employed both qualitative and quantitative survey approach in gathering and analyzing the field data. This involved the collection of quantitative data, which was analyzed using quantitative techniques, to understand the influence of motivational and socio-cultural factors on students' language competence — to understand the extent to which these factors affect students' eventual performance in English language.

3.1 Methodology of the Study

The approach used in this study is tilted towards the inductive descriptive approach. By this approach the information on English language performance in the schools and other relevant documents that would enhance effective analysis of the topic were collected and analyzed. In addition, structured questionnaires were used to obtain valuable information from the students. The data was analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistical method. The descriptive statistics include tables with their accompanying interpretations while the chi-square test of independence was the inferential statistics used. Again, teachers of English were interviewed to solicit some information that would be relevant to the research.

3.2.0 Data Collection

Data collection refers to the information the researcher obtained about the sample chosen. The information is used to generalize the findings on the population. The students of the case study schools expressed their opinion on the topic through questionnaire while the teachers' opinions were gathered through interviews. Both sets of subjects participated in the study on their own volition without any coercion or any overt influence from the researcher. They were also assured of their anonymity and the confidentiality of their responses. Both primary and secondary data were collected and used for the study.

3.2.1 Primary Data

The primary data which constitutes the basis for the analysis was obtained from the field survey using questionnaires administered through interview schedules. The unstructured interviews were conducted with teachers from the case study schools and used to obtain information about the English language performance among students (see Appendix C for the interview guide). The research adopted both open and close-ended questions so that the interviewees could share complementary information on the impact motivation and socio-cultural factors have on the teaching and learning of English language. Apart from issues that pertained to their individual schools, teachers also shared their views on the curriculum and English language syllabus.

The analysis of the primary data was relevant in examining the objectives of the study while the discussions of the literature review were very instrumental in confirming or contrasting the findings of the analysis. (See Appendix B for the close and open ended questionnaires that were used for primary data collection).

3.2.2 Secondary Data

The secondary data was obtained from a wide variety of sources such as libraries, newspapers, and the Internet. Other information was obtained from books, journals, and published articles. These provided relevant background information for the actual research survey.

3.3.0 Population

A population is the aggregate of all the elements showing some common set of characteristics that comprises the universe for solving research problem. The population for this research comprised students from Kumasi Anglican Senior High School and Achinakrom Senior High School. It involved students from S.H.S. 1 to S.H.S. 3 and across all the programmes offered in the two schools. It also included a selected number of English teachers from both schools.

The total population of KASS is 3,367. The breakdown is as follows: SHS 1 is made up 1,007 students, SHS 2 has 931 students, SHS 3 has 790 students, and SHS 4 is made up of 639 students. Achinakrom has a total population of 1,317. The breakdown is as follows: SHS 1 has 333 students, SHS 2 comprises 256 students, SHS 3 is made up of 343 students while SHS 4 has 279 students.

3.3.1 Sample Size

Based on the population of the two schools, time constraints and logistics, a sample of 151 students was used in the study. 100 students were sampled from Kumasi Anglican Senior High School and 51 students from Achinakrom Senior High School. Kumasi Anglican Senior High School has 15 English language teachers and eight of them, who were long-serving members (three females and five males), were interviewed. Achinakrom Senior High School has four

English language teachers and three of them (two females and one male) were interviewed, which included the head of department and two other long-serving members. The reason for the selection of this target population is that they constitute the people who have long been directly or indirectly responsible for English language performance in the schools. These people have seen different batches pass through the schools and therefore have a better overview of the students' behavioural patterns and learning outcomes. The experience of this target population therefore offers the researcher the opportunity to develop and have a comprehensive understanding into the motivational and socio-cultural factors that influence the students' performance in English language in the schools.

3.3.2 Sampling Procedure

The researcher distributed the questionnaires for the students using stratified, quota and random sampling techniques. The students were stratified as form one, two and three, and then into General Arts students, Business students, Home Economics students, Visual Arts students, and General Science (Agricultural Science in the case of Achinakrom Senior High School). Stratified sampling was used because it guarantees equal and specified chance to every sampling unit to be picked. Simple random was used to select respondents from the various strata. As stated earlier, teachers were purposively sampled.

3.4 Instrument of Data Collection

The main instrument used by the researcher for collecting data was questionnaires. The questionnaires were divided according to the objectives of the study. Some informal conversations with some students were also carried out. Unstructured interviews were done with

the teachers. To ensure accuracy and authenticity, the interviews were captured on a recording device before they were later transcribed.

3.5 Procedure of Data Collection

The respondents were briefed about the purpose of the research and were assured of confidentiality. With the assistance from the administration and some members of staff of the schools, the students were made to fill the questionnaires on the spot. Some follow up interviews were done with some of the respondents to seek expatiation on some of the answers given. Responses were written and checked for correctness and accuracy where there seems to be inconsistencies. Again, to check for accuracy and completeness of data and ensure quality, questionnaires and interview guides were numbered serially. Completed questionnaires and interview guides were checked thoroughly.

Some teachers were interviewed on their views on the English curriculum and their assessment on the language situation in their schools; they also answered questions as to whether they engage in explicit teaching of grammar and vocabulary to students to enhance language performance. The researcher analyzed some marked end of term English language essays. The teachers showed some samples in the course of the interview to buttress their point on the English language performance of the students. Again, they answered questions on their teaching methodology in ensuring that students do well in English language. Basically, it was about their roles in the classroom and outside the classroom as far as guiding students to language competence is concerned. They also responded to questions on community influence and parental attitudes and interests in students' learning of English, students' background vis-à-vis

their performance in English, as well as issues on the teachers' own motivation that influences the learning outcomes of their students.

3.6 Method of Data Analysis

The researcher statistically analyzed and interpreted the data by using tables, graph, frequency distribution, and pie chart. All of these are, however, presented in tables to streamline the presentation. The analysis deployed inferential statistical analysis techniques to assess the factors that highly affect the students' performance in the English language.

3.7 Limitations

The research had wished to include students from all forms. However, it was envisaged that as of the time of administering the questionnaire, the S.H.S. 4 students would not be available because they would either be busy with their West African Senior Secondary Examinations (WASSCE) or might have completed school. It did happen that the S.H.S. 4 students were out of school as of the time of administering the questionnaires. Thus, the population of students was limited to the three forms. This, however, did not negatively affect the study since the three forms still gave the population an appreciable representation.

CHAPTER FOUR

ANALYSES AND DISCUSSIONS

4.0 INTRODUCTION

This chapter consists of presentation and analyses of data from the field work to investigate the influence of motivation and socio-cultural factors on students' English language performance. The schools used were Kumasi Anglican Senior High School and Achinakrom Senior High School. Using Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) statistical tool of presentation, the data is represented in tables. In all 151 questionnaires were administered to the respondents. The respondents were given adequate time to fill the questionnaires and where there was the need for clarification, explanation was given out to respondents. With the assistance of members of staff of both schools, the questionnaires were collected where all the 151 were received. However, some of the items on the questionnaires were not answered and were treated as no response. The valid percentages were used; that is, percentages excluding no response values.

4.1 SOCIO-DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION

Table 1 Gender

Gender		Name of School		Total
		KASS	Achinakrom	
Male	Count	66	30	96
	% within Name of School	66.0%	58.8%	63.6%
Female	Count	32	20	52
	% within Name of School	32.0%	39.2%	34.4%
No Response	Count	2	1	3
	% within Name of School	2.0%	2.0%	2.0%
Total	Count	100	51	151
	% within Name of School	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Of the total population of 151, 3 students representing 2% did not indicate their gender. The rest were 66 males from KASS making up 66% of the KASS population and 30 from Achinakrom making up 58.8% of its population. The total population that responded as males was 96 making up 63.6%. There were 32 females representing 32% from KASS, who responded to gender and 20 representing 39.2% from Achinakrom. The total population that responded as females was 52 making up 34.4% (see **Table 1**).

Table 2 Age of Respondents

Age of Respondents	Name of School		Total	
	KASS	Achinakrom		
13-15 Years	Count	12	1	13
	% within Name of School	12.0%	2.0%	8.6%
16-18 Years	Count	80	40	120
	% within Name of School	80.0%	78.4%	79.5%
19-21 Years	Count	4	5	9
	% within Name of School	4.0%	9.8%	6.0%
No Response	Count	4	5	9
	% within Name of School	4.0%	9.8%	6.0%
Total	Count	100	51	151
	% within Name of School	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

9 students comprising 4 from KASS and 5 from Achinakrom did not indicate their ages. 13 students representing 8.6% were between ages 13 and 15; 120 students representing 79.5% were between ages 16 and 18 while 9 students making up 6% were between 19-21. Details of the breakdown are shown in **Table 2** above.

4.1.1 Programme of Study

Table 3 Programme of Study

Programme of Study			Name of School		Total
			KASS	Achinakrom	
Gen. Arts	Count		30	29	59
	% within Name of School		30.0%	56.9%	39.1%
Gen. Science	Count		35	0	35
	% within Name of School		35.0%	.0%	23.2%
Gen. Agric.	Count		0	5	5
	% within Name of School		0%	9.8%	3.3%
Business	Count		16	9	25
	% within Name of School		16.0%	17.6%	16.6%
Home Econs.	Count		9	4	13
	% within Name of School		9.0%	7.8%	8.6%
Visual Arts	Count		8	4	12
	% within Name of School		8.0%	7.8%	7.9%
No Response	Count		2	0	2
	% within Name of School		2.0%	.0%	1.3%
Total	Count		100	51	151
	% within Name of School		100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

On the programme of study of respondents, 59 students representing 39.1% studied General Arts in their school, 35 students representing 23.2.9% studied General Science, 5 students representing 3.3% studied General Agriculture, 25 students representing 16.6% studied

Business, 13 students making up 8.6% studied Home Economics and 12 students making up 7.9% were Visual Arts students. 2 students representing 1.3% did not respond to this. KASS does not offer General Agric and Achinakrom does not offer General Science. Details of the breakdown are shown in **Table 3** above.

4.1.2 Basic School Type

Table 4. Type of school of basic education (Private or Public)

Basic School Type	Name of School		Total	
	KASS	Achinakrom		
Private	Count	71	31	102
	% within Name of School	71.0%	60.8%	67.5%
Public	Count	28	20	48
	% within Name of School	28.0%	39.2%	31.8%
No Response	Count	1	-	1
	% within Name of School	1.0%	-	.7%
Total	Count	100	51	151
	% within Name of School	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

The study looked at the basic school type that respondents graduated from. It showed that 102 students representing 68% graduated from private schools while 48 students representing 32% came from public schools. Details of the breakdown are shown in **Table 4**.

4.1.3 Academic Qualifications of Parents

Table 5a. Highest Academic Qualification of Mother

Highest Academic Qualification of Mother			Name of School		Total
			KASS	Achina-krom	
Q2a. What is the highest academic level of your parents-Mother	Middle Sch/JHS	Count % within Name of School	5 5.0%	18 35.3%	23 15.2%
	Secondary	Count % within Name of School	25 25.0%	8 15.7%	33 21.9%
	Tertiary	Count % within Name of School	35 35.0%	0 .0%	35 23.2%
	No Formal Education	Count % within Name of School	0 .0%	12 23.5%	12 7.9%
	No Response	Count % within Name of School	35 35.0%	13 25.5%	48 31.8%
Total	Count % within Name of School	100 100.0%	51 100.0%	151 100.0%	

The survey looked at the academic qualifications of parents of respondents to see if they could influence the performance of the students. For the mothers, for the 23 whose academic qualification was up to the MSLC/BECE, KASS had 5 with Achinakrom 18. 33 had up to the secondary level and of these, KASS had 25 with Achinakrom 8. All the 35 mothers who had tertiary education had their wards at KASS and all the 12 who did not have any formal education

had their wards at Achinakrom. A total of 48 students did not respond to this (**Table 5a** has the breakdown).

Table 5b. Highest Academic Qualification of Father

			Name of School		Total
			KASS	Achinakrom	
Q2b. What is the highest academic level of your parents-Father?	Middle Sch/JHS	Count	1	4	5
		% within Name of School	1.0%	7.8%	3.3%
	Secondary	Count	69	31	100
		% within Name of School	69.0%	60.8%	66.2%
	Tertiary	Count	18	0	18
		% within Name of School	18.0%	.0%	11.9%
	No Response	Count	12	16	28
		% within Name of School	12.0%	31.4%	18.5%
Total	Count	100	51	151	
	% within Name of School	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	

On the fathers, for the 5 whose highest academic level was up to the Middle school/JHS, KASS had 1 with Achinakrom 4. 100 fathers had gone up to the secondary level and of these, KASS had 69 and Achinakrom 31. All the 18 fathers who had tertiary education had their wards at KASS. Every student's father had some level of education so there were no indicators for No Formal Education. A total of 48 students did not respond to this (**Table 5b** has the breakdown).

4.2 Provision of Learning Materials

Table 6
Frequency of Parents or Guardians' Provision of Necessary Materials for Learning English

		Name of School		Total
		KASS	Achinakrom	
Always	Count	64	28	92
	% within Name of School	64.0%	54.9%	60.9%
Sometimes	Count	35	22	57
	% within Name of School	35.0%	43.1%	37.7%
Never	Count	-	1	1
	% within Name of School	-	2.0%	.7%
No Response	Count	1	-	1
	% within Name of School	1.0%	-	.7%
Total	Count	100	51	151
	% within Name of School	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

The study also assessed the provision of the necessary materials for students by parents or guardians to aid them in their learning of English. 92 students representing 61.3% said their parents or guardians always provided the necessary materials, 57 students representing 38% said sometimes their parents provided the necessary materials and 1 student representing 0.7% also said the parent or guardian never provided the necessary materials needed. **Table 6** presents details of the breakdown.

4.3 Students' Performance in English

Table 7. Grade in English at the B.E.C.E.

			Name of School		Total
			KASS	Achinakrom	
Q4.What was your grade in English at the B.E.C.E?	1-2	Count	85	11	96
		% within Name of School	85.0%	21.6%	63.6%
	3-4	Count	10	27	37
		% within Name of School	10.0%	52.9%	24.5%
	5-6	Count	5	8	13
		% within Name of School	5.0%	15.7%	8.6%
	Above 6	Count	-	5	5
		% within Name of School	-	9.8%	3.3%
Total		Count	100	51	151
		% within Name of School	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

The study also revealed that 96 students representing 63.6% of the respondents obtained either grade 1 or 2 in English in the B.E.C.E. Of these, KASS had 85 students representing 85% of its population in this category while 11 students were from Achinakrom making up 21.6% of its population. 37 students making up 24.5% obtained grade between 3 and 4. Out of these KASS is represented by 10 students making 10% of its population while Achinakrom had 27 students 52.9% of its population. 13 students representing 8.6% of the respondents obtained grade 5 or 6. Of these, KASS had 5 students representing 5% of its population whereas Achinakrom had 8 students representing 15.7% of its population. 5 students representing 9.8% of Achinakrom, but 3.3% of the total population, obtained above grade 6. KASS had no student here (see **Table 7**).

Table 8. General Performance in English at the S.H.S.

		Name of School		Total
		KASS	Achinakrom	
Excellent	Count	21	5	26
	% within Name of School	21.0%	9.8%	17.2%
Very good	Count	43	10	53
	% within Name of School	43.0%	19.6%	35.1%
Good	Count	19	19	38
	% within Name of School	19.0%	37.3%	25.2%
Satisfactory	Count	11	11	22
	% within Name of School	11.0%	21.6%	14.6%
Bad	Count	3	4	7
	% within Name of School	3.0%	7.8%	4.6%
No Response	Count	3	2	5
	% within Name of School	3.0%	3.9%	3.3%
Total	Count	100	51	151
	% within Name of School	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

The study also assessed the respondents' recent general performance in English at the Senior High School (S.H.S.). They were asked to look at the average performance in relation to the past four terms' examination in English language. The results showed that 26 students making up 17.2% perform excellently at the S.H.S. level, 53 students representing 35.1% rated their performance as very good, 38 students representing 25.2% rated their performance as good, 22 students making up 14.6% believe their performance was satisfactory and 1 student representing 0.7 % rated the performance as bad. **Table 8** presents the breakdown of the performance of students from the two schools.

Table 9a. Factors Accounting for Students' Impressive Performance

FACTOR	NAME OF SCHOOL	RII	RANKING
Extra Class	KASS	69.79	2nd
	ACHINAKROM	66.13	2nd
Adequate learning materials	KASS	65.21	3rd
	ACHINAKROM	53.76	3rd
Competition from classmates	KASS	39.96	6th
	ACHINAKROM	44.09	6th
Motivation from Parents	KASS	50.00	4th
	ACHINAKROM	42.74	5th
Personal determination	KASS	91.35	1st
	ACHINAKROM	91.94	1st
Dedication of teachers to teaching English	KASS	45.57	5th
	ACHINAKROM	48.85	4th

Table 9b. Factors Accounting for Students' Unimpressive Performance

FACTOR	NAME OF SCHOOL	RII	RANKING
No Extra Classes	KASS	64.71	3rd
	ACHINAKROM	72.55	2nd
Inadequate learning material	KASS	73.53	2nd
	ACHINAKROM	82.35	1st
Lack of competition from classmates	KASS	46.08	4th
	ACHINAKROM	50.00	4th
Lack of motivation from parents	KASS	38.24	6th
	ACHINAKROM	28.43	6th
Lack of personal determination	KASS	41.18	5th
	ACHINAKROM	48.96	5th
Lack of dedication from teachers of English	KASS	86.27	1st
	ACHINAKROM	69.61	3rd

Respondents were asked to rate in order of the highest factor responsible for their impressive or unimpressive performance in English at the SHS. The relative importance indexes were

calculated for the two categories of people: those who were satisfied with their current performance in English and those who were dissatisfied with their current performance in English and the factors responsible for such performances. These are represented in **Table 9a** and **Table 9b** above respectively. For those who were satisfied with their performance, students from the two schools ranked personal determination as the highest factor: KASS with 91.4% and Achinakrom with 91.9% ; extra classes was second on the rank in both schools with KASS having 69.8% and Achinakrom 66.1%. Third on the rank in both schools was the presence of adequate teaching materials with KASS coming in with 65.2% and Achinakrom 53.8%. KASS had 50% ranking motivation from parents as the fourth while Achinakrom with 48.9% ranked dedication of teachers to teaching English as the fourth. Meanwhile, Achinakrom put motivation from parents at fifth with 42.7% while KASS put dedication of teachers at fifth with 45.6%. The two schools ranked competition from friends at sixth with KASS having 40% and Achinakrom 44.1% (see **Table 9a**).

For students who were dissatisfied with their performance, KASS with 86.3% ranked lack of dedication from teachers as first; Achinakrom with 82.4% rated inadequate learning materials as the highest factor. For the second highest factor responsible for their poor performance KASS with 73.5% attributed it to inadequate learning materials while Achinakrom with 72.6% blamed it on lack of extra classes in English. Third on the rank was lack of extra classes at KASS with 64.7% whereas Achinakrom put no dedication of teachers as the third factor. Both schools put lack of competition from classmates as the next factor with 46% and 50% for KASS and Achinakrom respectively. The fifth factor for both schools was lack of personal determination with KASS 41.2% and Achinakrom 49%. The least factor was motivation from parents where KASS came in with 38.2% and Achinakrom 28.4% (see **Table 9b**).

From the results above, students from both schools seem to suggest that when they are doing well, it is due to their personal effort. On the other hand, for those who are not doing well, as high as 86.3% from KASS blamed it on the lack of commitment from the teachers. Extra tuition in English was also seen as significantly influencing performance. At Achinakrom, those who were not doing well rated lack of extra classes as the second factor, and those who were doing well in both schools also put extra classes as the second factor responsible for their performance. Adequate learning materials is also quite influential in students' performance as in both schools the lack of enough learning materials is seen as the second highest factor for poor performance. Students from both schools whether performing impressively or not saw the parents' motivation not very significant in their performance.

Table 10 General Performance in English at the S.H.S * Type of Basic Education (Private/Public) * Cross tabulation**a: KASS**

B. what is your general performance in English at the S.H.S?		In what type of school did you have your basic education?			Total
		Private	Public	No Response	
Excellent	Count	17	4	-	21
	% within B	23.9%	14.3%	-	21.0%
Very good	Count	30	13	-	43
	% within B	42.3%	46.4%	-	43.0%
Good	Count	12	6	1	19
	% within B	16.9%	21.4%	100.0%	19.0%
Satisfactory	Count	8	3	-	11
	% within B	11.3%	10.7%	-	11.0%
Bad	Count	3	-	-	3
	% within B	4.2%	-	-	3.0%
No Response	Count	1	2	-	3
	% within B	1.4%	7.1%	-	3.0%
Total	Count	71	28	1	100
	% within B	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Table 10b: ACHINAKROM

B what is your general performance in English at the S.H.S?		What type of school did you have your basic education?			Total
		Private	Public	No Response	
Excellent	Count	-	5		5
	% within B	-	25.0%	-	9.8%
Very good	Count	5	5		10
	% within B	16.1%	25.0%	-	19.6%
Good	Count	14	5	-	19
	% within B	45.2%	25.0%		37.3%
Satisfactory	Count	8	3	-	11
	% within B	25.8%	15.0%		21.6%
Bad	Count	3	1	-	4
	% within B	9.7%	5.0%		7.8%
No Response	Count	1	1		2
	% within B	3.2%	5.0%	-	3.9%
Total	Count	31	20	-	51
	% within B	100.0%	100.0%		100.0%

At KASS, 71 students came from private JHSs. Of these, 59 were performing between excellent and good; 11 of them performed between satisfactory and bad; 1 student did not respond to performance. 28 students came from public schools and of these, 23 students rated their performance between excellent and good, and 3 had satisfactory performance. No student

performed badly. 2 students did not respond to performance. At Achinakrom, 31 students attended private JHSs. Of these, there was no excellent student. 15 of the students were performing between very good and good, 4 were between satisfactory and bad, and 1 did not respond to performance. 20 students came from public JHSs. Out of these, there were 5 excellent students; 10 doing between very good and good; 4 between satisfactory and bad, and 1 did not respond to performance. **Tables 10a** and **10b** present the breakdown.

10c Chi-Square Tests

Name of School	df	p-value	Cramer's V
KASS	10	0.542	0.211
Achinakrom	5	0.059	0.457

The author uses cross tabulation method to see if recent performance of the students is influenced by the type of basic school the student attended at 10 degrees of freedom at KASS and 5 degrees of freedom at Achinakrom. The p-value in both cases is > 0.05 . This proves that the recent performance of the students in both schools is independent of the type of basic school the student attended, which is in favor of the null hypothesis. The Cramer's V statistics show the extent to which the recent performance of the students is related to the type of basic school the student attended. It was found to have a low association with effect size of 0.211 at KASS and 0.457 at Achinakrom. **Table 10c** presents the results of the cross tabulation.

We see here that the type of basic school, whether private or public, did not reflect in the current performance of the students. Thus, students may have come from different backgrounds but once they congregate at the SHS with equal opportunities like same teachers and same facilities and virtually on a level playing field, their performances in English language are no longer determined by their basic school type. Many other factors could also account for improved or deteriorated performance. Some students may change their attitude towards learning English

when they encounter the huge challenges that confront them at the SHS. Comparatively, it is easier to score grade 1 in English at the JHS than to score A1 at the SHS. Complacency may also contribute to a student's deteriorated performance. If the student did well at the basic level, he may carry the wrong impression about the relatively easier basic level English to the SHS English. And this will negatively affect the current SHS performance. Another factor is that some schools may have the tag private school and may claim the usual status of high standards, especially in English language, but in reality they may not be doing that well. In the same manner, some may have the tag public school but may be performing better in English than a private school. Good Shepherd JHS, KNUST JHS in Kumasi and other university JHSs across the country are typical examples of schools tagged public yet perform better than most private schools.

Table 11 General Performance in English at the S.H.S * Grade in English at the B.E.C.E ***Cross tabulation****a: KASS**

What is your general performance in English at the S.H.S?		C. What was your grade in English at the B.E.C.E				Total
		1-2	3-4	5-6	above 6	
Excellent	Count	21	-	-	-	21
	% within C	24.7%	-	-	-	21.0%
Very good	Count	43	-	-	-	43
	% within C	50.6%	-	-	-	43.0%
Good	Count	11	6	2	-	19
	% within C	12.9%	60.0%	40.0%	-	19.0%
Satisfactory	Count	9	1	1	-	11
	% within C	10.6%	10.0%	20.0%	-	11.0%
Bad	Count	-	3	-	-	3
	% within C	-	30.0%	-	-	3.0%
No Response	Count	1	-	2	-	3
	% within C	1.2%	-	40.0%	-	3.0%
Total	Count	85	10	5	-	100
	% within	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	-	100.0%

Table 11b: ACHINAKROM

What is your general performance in English at the S.H.S?		What was your grade in English at B.E.C.E?				Total
		1-2	3-4	4-5	Above 6	
Excellent	Count	3	2	-	-	5
	% within C	27.3%	7.4%	-	-	9.8%
Very good	Count	2	6	1	1	10
	% within C	18.2%	22.2%	12.5%	20.0%	19.6%
Good	Count	3	11	4	1	19
	% within C	27.3%	40.7%	50.0%	20.0%	37.3%
Satisfactory	Count	2	4	3	2	11
	% within C	18.2%	14.8%	37.5%	40.0%	21.6%
Bad	Count	1	2	-	1	4
	% within C	9.1%	7.4%	-	20.0%	7.8%
No Response	Count	-	2	-	-	2
	% within C	-	7.4%	-	-	3.9%
Total	Count	11	27	8	5	51
	% within C	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

At KASS 85 students had between aggregate 1 and 2 at the B.E.C.E. Out of these, 75 were performing between excellent and good; 9 students had satisfactory performance with no student performing badly. There was 1 no response. 10 students came in with between aggregate 3 and 4. Of these, there were no students between excellent and very good; 6 students were good, 1 was satisfactory and 3 had bad performance. 5 students had between 5 and 6, and of these, there were no students between excellent and very good; 2 were good, 1 was satisfactory with no bad

student; 2 did not respond to performance. There was no student with aggregate above 6. At Achinakrom 11 students had between aggregate 1 and 2. Of these, 7 were performing between excellent and good; 4 students had between satisfactory and bad performance. 27 students obtained between aggregate 3 and 4. Of these, 19 students were performing between excellent and good; 6 students were between satisfactory and bad performance. 2 students did not respond on their performance. 8 students had between 5 and 6, and of these, there was no excellent student; 5 were between very good and good performance, 5 had satisfactory performance with no bad student. There were 5 students with aggregates above 6. There was no excellent student; 1 each at very good and good; 2 were satisfactory with 1 student whose performance was bad. **Tables 11a** and **11b** present the details.

11c Chi-Square Tests

Name of School	df	P-Value	Cramer's V
KASS	10	0.000	0.610
Achinakrom	15	0.0676	0.280

The null hypothesis is that the current performance of students at the SHS is independent of the grade they had at the BECE. Cross tabulation method was used to see if there is a relationship between recent performance of the student and the grade the student obtained at BECE at 10 and 15 degrees of freedom for KASS and Achinakrom respectively. At KASS the p-value is .000 which is <0.05 . This is in favour of the alternative hypothesis. This means that the recent performance of the students is dependent on the students' grade from BECE. On the hand, at Achinakrom, the p-value is >0.05 which is in favour of the null hypothesis. This means that here, students' current performance is independent of the grade they brought from JHS.

KASS, like all grade A schools, usually admits the best students, with impressive grades. In most cases these students go ahead to perform well. On few occasions do we see such students dropping sharply at the SHS probably due to other factors that may set in. We compare that to Achinakrom and we see that the situation is different. Like all grade C schools, it admits students of all grades and it takes a lot of effort on the part of the student and the teacher to push them up to perform well; the environment has the potential of even retrogressing a student who comes in with a good grade, if utmost care is not taken to mitigate the negative effects.

Table 12 Programme of study * General Performance in English at the SHS

12a: KASS

Programme of study		General performance in English at the S.H.S (Y)						Total
		Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Bad	No Response	
Gen. Arts	Count	4	14	6	5	0	1	30
	% within Y	19.0%	32.6%	31.6%	45.5%	.0%	33.3%	30.0%
Gen. Science	Count	7	16	6	2	2	2	35
	% within Y	33.3%	37.2%	31.6%	18.2%	66.7%	66.7%	35.0%
Business	Count	5	6	3	2	0	0	16
	% within Y	23.8%	14.0%	15.8%	18.2%	.0%	.0%	16.0%
Home Econs	Count	3	3	1	2	0	0	9
	% within Y	14.3%	7.0%	5.3%	18.2%	.0%	.0%	9.0%
Visual Arts	Count	2	2	3	0	1	0	8
	% within Y	9.5%	4.7%	15.8%	.0%	33.3%	.0%	8.0%
No Response	Count	0	2	0	0	0	0	2
	% within Y	.0%	4.7%	.0%	.0%	.0%	.0%	2.0%
Total	Count	21	43	19	11	3	3	100
	% within Y	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

12b: ACHINAKROM

Programme of study		General Performance in English at the S.H.S (Y)						Total
		Excellent	Very Good	Good	Satisfactory	Bad	No Response	
Gen. Arts	Count	3	7	9	6	3	1	29
	% within Y	60.0%	70.0%	47.4%	54.5%	75.0%	50.0%	56.9%
Gen. Agric	Count	1	1	2	1	0	0	5
	% within Y	20.0%	10.0%	10.5%	9.1%	.0%	.0%	9.8%
Business	Count	1	1	6	1	0	0	9
	% within Y	20.0%	10.0%	31.6%	9.1%	.0%	.0%	17.6%
Home Econs	Count	0	0	1	2	0	1	4
	% within Y	.0%	.0%	5.3%	18.2%	.0%	50.0%	7.8%
Visual Arts	Count	0	1	1	1	1	0	4
	% within Y	.0%	10.0%	5.3%	9.1%	25.0%	.0%	7.8%
Total	Count	5	10	19	11	4	2	51
	% within Y	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

At KASS, from the students who rated their performance as excellent to those who said they were good, 24 offered General Arts, 29 were General Science students, 14 Business students, 7 from Home Economics, and 7 Visual Arts students with 2 students not indicating their programmes. Between satisfactory and bad performance, 5 students offered General Arts, 4 did General Science, 2 from the Business class, 2 Home Economics students, and 1 Visual Arts student with 3 students not showing their programmes. At Achinakrom, from the students who said their performance was excellent to those who said it was good, 19 offered General Arts, 4 were General Agric students, 8 Business students, 1 from Home Economics, and 2 Visual Arts students. Between satisfactory and bad performance, 9 students offered General Arts, 1 did General Agric, 1 Business student, 2 Home Economics students, and 2 Visual Arts student with 2 students not rating their performance. Details of the breakdown are shown in **Tables 12a and 12b.**

12c. Chi-Square Tests

Name of School	df	P-Value	Cramer's V
KASS	25	0.826	0.192
Achinakrom	20	0.721	0.279

The hypothesis here is that the recent performance of the students is independent of programme of study. The author uses cross tabulation method to see if recent performance of the students is influenced by the programme of study at 25 degrees of freedom at KASS and 20 at Achinakrom, the p-value in both cases is >0.05 . Hence it proves a point that recent performance of the students is independent of the Programme of study which is in the favor of the null hypothesis. The Cramer's V statistics show the extent to which the recent performance of the students is related to the programme of study. It was found to have a low association with effect size of 0.192 at KASS and 0.279 at Achinakrom. **Table 12c** presents the result of the cross tabulation.

The performance of students in English, according to the test here, did not depend on the programme of study. There is the notion that students whose programme of study involves a lot of reading are more inclined to do better than those whose courses are calculation biased or technically or vocationally inclined. Thus, General Arts students will most likely do better in English than other students. There is, however, the contention that mostly students who get to do science at the SHS are those who get the best aggregates at the BECE. So the student may be a science student alright but he may perform better in English than other students doing General Arts. The second best are usually sent to the other classes and in most cases it is the least performing ones who go to the vocational and technical classes. However, in some cases, especially for the grade A schools, some people enter with 7 ones and 8 ones and yet do vocational courses. Certain tertiary science courses like Nursing and Food Science allow

students to come in with a combination of some vocational subjects and Biology or Chemistry.

Students will therefore find such routes much safer than maybe doing pure science.

Table 13a. General Performance in English at the SHS * Parents or Guardians' Provision of all the necessary materials for learning English* Cross tabulation

What is your General Performance in English at the S.H.S?		Did your parents or guardian provide you with all the necessary materials (X)				Total
		Always	Sometimes	Never	No Response	
Excellent	Count	21	5	0	0	26
	% within X	22.8%	8.8%	.0%	.0%	17.2%
Very good	Count	30	22	0	1	53
	% within X	32.6%	38.6%	.0%	100.0%	35.1%
Good	Count	21	17	0	0	38
	% within X	22.8%	29.8%	.0%	.0%	25.2%
Satisfactory	Count	13	9	0	0	22
	% within X	14.1%	15.8%	.0%	.0%	14.6%
Bad	Count	4	2	1	0	7
	% within X	4.3%	3.5%	100.0%	.0%	4.6%
No Response	Count	3	2	0	0	5
	% within X	3.3%	3.5%	.0%	.0%	3.3%
Total	Count	92	57	1	1	151
	% within X	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

13b Chi-Square Tests

	df	P-Value	Cramer's V
Pearson Chi-Square	15	0.023	.248

The null hypothesis here is that the recent performance of the students is independent of the parents' or guardians' provision of the necessary educational material. The author uses cross

tabulation method to see if recent performance of the students is influenced by the parents' ability to provide the necessary educational materials needed for the study of English language at 8 degrees of freedom, the p-value is < 0.05 . Hence it shows that recent performance of the students is dependent on the parent's ability to provide the necessary educational materials needed for the study of English language, which is in favor of the alternative hypothesis. The Cramer's V statistics show the extent to which the recent performance of the students is related to the parents' or guardians' provision of the necessary educational material. It was found to have an association with effect size of 0.248. **Table 13b** presents the result of the cross tabulation.

Parents and guardians' ability and willingness to support their wards with adequate materials are important elements in the students' performance. This is related to Zou et al (2006:10) when they said "economic conditions determine both quantity and quality of language exposure for a learner through outsourcing extra opportunities of language exposure and contact in commercial programs". It is not enough for parents to provide the materials; the students must learn them for ability to provide alone does not guarantee the student's ultimate performance. It can be described as catalytic to eventual positive performance.

Table 14a Highest Academic Qualification of Mother * General Performance in English at the SHS * Cross tabulation

What is the highest academic level of your parents-Mother?		What is your general performance in English at the SHS (A)						Total
		Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Bad	No Response	
Middle Sch/JHS	Count	2	8	5	5	2	1	23
	% within A	7.7%	15.1%	13.2%	22.7%	28.6%	20.0%	15.2%
Secondary	Count	7	12	10	2	1	1	33
	% within A	26.9%	22.6%	26.3%	9.1%	14.3%	20.0%	21.9%
Tertiary	Count	5	17	5	7	1	0	35
	% within A	19.2%	32.1%	13.2%	31.8%	14.3%	.0%	23.2%
No Formal Education	Count	1	2	7	2	0	0	12
	% within A	3.8%	3.8%	18.4%	9.1%	.0%	.0%	7.9%
No Response	Count	11	14	11	6	3	3	48
	% within A	42.3%	26.4%	28.9%	27.3%	42.9%	60.0%	31.8%
Total	Count	26	53	38	22	7	5	151
	% within A	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Between students who rated their performance as excellent and good, 15 of them had mothers whose qualification was the MSLC/BECE, 29 of them had up to the secondary level, 27 had up to the tertiary level, 10 did not have any formal education while 36 did not have any response. Between students who rated their performance as satisfactory and bad, 7 of them had mothers with MSLC/BECE, 3 of them had up to the secondary level, 8 with tertiary education and 2 with no formal education. 12 students did not respond to this.

14a.1 Chi-Square Tests

	df	P -Value	Cramer's V
Pearson Chi-Square	20	0.335	.191

Table 14b Highest Academic Qualification of Father *General Performance in English at the SHS * Cross tabulation

What is the highest academic level of your parents-Father		What is your general performance in English at the SHS (B)						Total
		Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Bad	No Response	
MSLC/BEC E	Count	0	1	2	1	1	0	5
	% within B	.0%	1.9%	5.3%	4.5%	14.3%	.0%	3.3%
Secondary	Count	18	37	22	15	4	4	100
	% within B	69.2%	69.8%	57.9%	68.2%	57.1%	80.0%	66.2%
Tertiary	Count	3	11	3	1	0	0	18
	% within B	11.5%	20.8%	7.9%	4.5%	.0%	.0%	11.9%
No Response	Count	5	4	11	5	2	1	28
	% within B	19.2%	7.5%	28.9%	22.7%	28.6%	20.0%	18.5%
Total	Count	26	53	38	22	7	5	151
	% within B	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Between students who rated their performance as excellent and good, 3 of them had fathers whose qualification was the MSLC/BECE, 77 of the fathers had up to the secondary level, 17 had up to the tertiary level while 20 students did not have any response. Between students who rated their performance as satisfactory and bad, 2 of them had fathers with MSLC/BECE, 19 of these students' fathers had up to the secondary level, and 1 with tertiary education. 5 students did not respond to this.

14b.1 Chi-Square Tests

	Value	Df	P- value	Cramer's V
Pearson Chi-Square	17.913 ^a	15	.267	.199

The null hypothesis is that the recent performance of the students is independent of the academic qualifications of their parents. The author uses cross tabulation method to see if recent

performance of the students is influenced by the parent's academic qualification at 20 degrees of freedom for mothers and 15 degrees of freedom for fathers. The p-value in both cases is > 0.05 . This proves that the recent performance of the students (in the case of both parents) is independent of the level of education of the parents, which is in favor of the null hypothesis. The Cramer's V statistics show the extent to which the recent performance of the students is related to the level of academic qualifications of parents. It was found to have a low association with effect size of 0.335 for the mothers and .199 for the fathers. **Tables 14a.1** and **b.1** present the results of the cross tabulations.

4.4 Dominant Language Spoken

Table 15a. Frequency of English Language Usage in Conversation in School

			Name of School		Total
			KASS	Achinakrom	
How often do you use the English language in your conversation in school?	Very often	Count	20	7	27
		% within Name of School	20.0%	13.7%	17.9%
	Quite Often	Count	42	10	52
		% within Name of School	42.0%	19.6%	34.4%
	Occasionally	Count	38	34	72
		% within Name of School	38.0%	66.7%	47.7%
Total	Count	100	51	151	
	% within Name of School	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	

On the issue of the frequency of the usage of English Language in school by students, at KASS, 20 students representing 20% said they used the English Language very often in their conversation at school, 42 students representing 42.0% said they used the language quite often while 38 students making up 38% said they used the language occasionally. At Achinakrom, 7 students representing 13.7% used English very often in school, 10 students representing 19.6%

used English quite often and 34 students representing 66.7% used English occasionally (see **Table 15a**).

At KASS, 20% said in school they speak English very often while 42% speak English quite often. That should be relatively impressive as compared to Achinakrom where 13.7% said they speak English very often with only 19.6% speaking it quite often. It is curious that the same percentages are maintained by Achinakrom on the frequency of English usage in and outside school (see Table 15b below). The percentages in KASS decrease outside school with 21% using it very often, 29% quite often and 50% occasionally (see **Table 15a**). As we saw earlier, in the grade A SHSs, we usually have most of them coming from grade A JHSs where “Speak English” has been imprinted in their psyche; this phenomenon is normally perpetuated by the girls and a few of the boys and that may account for why at KASS English speaking is higher than Achinakrom.

For the grade C schools, most of the students in their regular conversation, regardless of gender, speak mostly the vernacular and speak English only when the occasion demands it. In some of these schools, if one endeavours to speak English all the time, that student may be branded as odd or tagged as being a know-it-all or, in the Ghanaian parlance, ‘too knowing’. The culture in such environments is not to be speaking English all the time, and a deviation from this norm is usually frowned upon. The motivation for speaking English in these schools is very low and this has the tendency of affecting the confidence level of such students in speaking English even after school. If the students are not careful, this may translate into their eventual performance in their written tests. Though there may not be a direct correlation between speaking good English and writing good English, the students need good spoken English to integrate well among speakers of English, more importantly in their career life.

Table 15b. Frequency of English language usage in conversations outside school

			Name of School		Total
			KASS	Achinakrom	
How often do you use the English language in your conversations outside school?	Very often	Count	21	7	28
		% within Name of School	21.0%	13.7%	18.5%
	Quite often	Count	29	10	39
		% within Name of School	29.0%	19.6%	25.8%
	Occasionally	Count	50	34	84
		% within Name of School	50.0%	66.7%	55.6%
Total	Count	100	51	151	
	% within Name of School	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	

At KASS, on the frequency of the usage of the English Language outside school by students, 21 students representing 21% said they used English language very often in their conversation outside school, 29 students representing 29% said they used the language quite often while 50 students representing 50% said they used the language occasionally. At Achinakrom, 7 students representing 13.7% used English very often outside school, 10 students representing 19.6% used English quite often and 34 students representing 66.7% used the language occasionally (see **Table 15b**).

Table 16a Dominant Language Spoken at JHS

FACTOR	NAME OF SCHOOL	RII IN JHS	Ranking
English language	KASS	89.33	1st
	ACHINAKROM	83.66	1st
Twi language	KASS	74.73	2nd
	ACHINAKROM	78.91	2nd
Other local language	KASS	37.68	3rd
	ACHINAKROM	36.20	3rd

RII Variance in Twi and English Language KASS (JHS): 14.60%

RII Variance in Twi and English Language ACHINAKROM (JHS): 4.75%

Table 16b Dominant Language Spoken at SHS

FACTOR	NAME OF SCHOOL	RII SHS	Ranking
English language	KASS	88.67	1st
	ACHINAKROM	87.58	1st
Twi language	KASS	77.89	2nd
	ACHINAKROM	78.91	2nd
Other local language	KASS	33.33	3rd
	ACHINAKROM	33.33	3rd

RII Variance in Twi and English Language KASS (SHS): 10.78%

RII Variance in Twi and English Language ACHINAKROM (SHS): 8.67%

In the area of relative importance index on the scale of which language students preferred to use at the JHS more often as against other languages, the survey shows 89.3 and 83.7 for KASS and Achinakrom respectively on the scale of preference for English language, meaning that the students rated English highest on the scale. Twi was the next commonly used language with 74.7 for KASS and 78.9 from Achinakrom with other local languages being third with KASS at 37.7 and Achinakrom 36.2. The RII variance in English and Twi at KASS is 14.6% while the variance at Achinakrom is 4.8%.

At the SHS English language was still highest with KASS at 88.7 and Achinakrom 87.6. Twi was second on the scale at KASS and Achinakrom with 77.9 and 78.9 respectively while other local languages are least used in both schools at 33.3 each. The RII variance in English and Twi is at 10.8% at KASS and 8.7 at Achinakrom.

Though English usage is still ranked highest at both stages, the rate is reduced at the SHS in preference for Twi. The use of other languages is also reduced with only Twi gaining preference at the SHS. The RII variance between English and Twi with regard to students from KASS when

they were at JHS suggests that more students spoke English than Twi. The percentage is, however, reduced from 14.6% to 10.8%. A number of factors could account for this. The socio-cultural and environmental factors in the schools cannot be discounted. This can be due to the fact that most of them attended private basic schools where the rules on strictly speaking English is highly enforced but somehow relaxed at the SHS. Again, because Twi is the most dominant language in the region, students may have come from different regions with their local languages but may tend to gravitate towards the commonly spoken language thus reducing the variance between English and Twi.

At Achinakrom, the variance between the usage of English and Twi at the JHS is 10.8% and at the SHS, it is 8.7%. Here, we see the gap is not that significant. This is as result of the fact that the pattern at the JHS is not too different from what pertains at the SHS because most of the students who go to the school are from the communities around and so the tendency of replicating what pertained at the JHS is high.

Generally, the rules for English speaking are seen to have been relaxed at the SHSs as the researcher encountered teachers who were even addressing students in Twi in both KASS and Achinakrom. Also, the students who came from schools where English speaking was not strictly enforced could have influenced the other students to speak Twi and other languages. The socio-cultural disposition of most of the students exposes them more to speaking Twi than English. This means that for most of the students, if they were not compelled to speak English, they would speak Twi.

On several occasions that I was in both schools, the general language I could hear was Twi spoken amongst the students, especially among the boys. Among girls, you could hear more English than Twi being spoken. In the course of my initial informal conversation with the students, I realised that the confidence level of students from KASS in terms of English speaking

was high. The students were willing to engage in conversation and ready to share information. You could tell that they had mastery over the language and did not suffer with articulation. This was better displayed, especially, among the girls.

At Achinakrom Senior High School, a similar interaction took place. It was break time the language spoken amongst the students was Twi, regardless of gender. The willingness to communicate was there, the confidence in delivery was lacking. Most of the students I spoke with lacked vocabulary to give direction so gestures complemented the words. They were jerky in their speaking and struggled to string only a few decent sentences together.

Table 17. Comparison of the Quality of English Language spoken at the JHS to that of SHS

			Name of School		Total
			KASS	Achinakrom	
How do you compare the quality of English language spoken in your JHS to that of your SHS	JHS better than SHS	Count	32	14	46
		% within Name of School	32.0%	27.5%	30.5%
	SHS better than JHS	Count	45	24	69
		% within Name of School	45.0%	47.1%	45.7%
	Virtually the same	Count	22	13	35
		% within Name of School	22.0%	25.5%	23.2%
	No Response	Count	1	0	1
		% within Name of School	1.0%	.0%	.7%
Total		Count	100	51	151
		% within Name of School	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Students were to compare the quality of English spoken at their JHSs with that of the SHSs. At KASS 32 students representing 32% said their JHSs spoke better English than their SHSs; 45 students representing 45% said their SHSs' was better than the JHSs' while 22 representing 22% believed the quality was virtually the same in both stages. 1 person did not respond to this. At

Achinakrom, 14 students representing 27.5% said their JHSs spoke better English than their SHSs; 24 students representing 47.1% said their SHSs English was better than the JHSs while 13 representing 25.5% thought the quality was virtually the same in both stages.

In total 45.7% saw their SHS English better than their JHS as against 30.5% who saw the reverse. It is expected that students would have improved on their English as they progressed from one level to the next. 32 % of students from KASS having come from grade A JHSs where English speaking is strictly enforced will consider the quality of English at the JHS better than the SHS, where the rules might have relatively relaxed. Achinakrom may have fewer students coming from a similar environment hence the 27.5%. At the SHS the percentages are tilted in favour of Achinakrom. This suggests that the majority of Achinakrom students who might have come from rural public schools will see the English at their SHS much better than the JHS because their JHSs hardly spoke any better English.

4.5 Subject of Preference

Table 18. Scale of Subject of Priority

FACTOR	NAME OF SCHOOL	RII	Ranking
English language	KASS	37.98	5th
	ACHINAKROM	27.84	5th
Core mathematics	KASS	72.12	2nd
	ACHINAKROM	62.35	3rd
Integrated Science	KASS	57.55	3rd
	ACHINAKROM	71.76	2nd
Social Studies	KASS	42.02	4th
	ACHINAKROM	47.06	4th
Elective Subject	KASS	88.60	1st
	ACHINAKROM	90.20	1st

In the area of relative importance index on the scale of which subject area students paid more attention to, the survey showed that students in both schools paid more attention to their elective subjects. At KASS 88.6 % rated their elective subjects highest on the scale while 90.2% from Achinakrom did same. Mathematics was the next preferred subject of concentration at KASS with 72.1% while Achinakrom put Integrated Science at second with 71.7%; Integrated Science was third at KASS with 57.6%. KASS and Achinakrom both put Social Studies at fourth with 42% and 47% respectively. English language was the last on the scale of importance with 38% and 27.8% from KASS and Achinakrom respectively.

The reasons given for the scaling in the manner above are varied. After collating the written responses on this question, the author had a one-on-one informal interview with a cross section of the respondents to have a better understanding of the responses. The written responses were therefore grouped according to their relatedness and have been expatiated for clarity.

Of the 128 students who gave reasons for their choices, 49 believed that the elective subjects were more important than all the subjects. To them, it was the elective subjects that determined their future careers hence the priority given them. 21 suggested that their electives, integrated science and mathematics were voluminous and more difficult to learn than English thus those needed more concentration. 23 suggested that English had always been difficult to score A1 and they knew that no matter what they did they could never get A1 so why waste time on it, when they could score better in the other subjects. 5 stated that they wished that they would pay more attention to English but they did not know how to study English and that it looked too abstract. 25 of them blamed their teachers for not making them develop interest in English language. To them, their English teachers did not make lessons attractive enough. For those who took English more seriously, who were in the minority, the main reason stated was because

they needed it in order to get their course of choice at the university. Only 5 people preferred English language to the other subjects because they just loved English language.

From the results above, English language as a subject is not the favourite or the priority of most of the students as compared to the other subjects. The reasons given by the students could be as a result of a certain orientation that they have about the other subjects in relation to their university education, or their perception of English as a subject and as a language. The perception in some students is that English as a subject is not learnt, and that ability to speak the language is equivalent to ability to scoring higher in it. The reality for some in such cases is that they do not know how to study it like they do in the other subjects. As a rule, people who feel they cannot succeed at a task do not make the effort to do so. Conversely, those who feel they can succeed usually expend the necessary effort (Crowl et al 1997). It is erroneous for students to also accept that they may never score A1 in English so they would not spend time on it.

However, the issue with the teachers of English in both schools raises some concerns since 25 had problems with them. We then zoom into the problems with the teachers.

Table 19. Impact of Teaching Style on Students' English Language

			Name of School		Total
			KASS	Achinakrom	
Q 14.Does your teacher's teaching style help you to enjoy English language?	Yes	Count	36	14	50
		% within Name of School	36.0%	27.5%	33.1%
	No	Count	64	37	101
		% within Name of School	64.0%	72.5%	66.9%
Total		Count	100	51	151
		% within Name of School	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

As to whether the teaching style of the English teacher helps in the student's enjoyment of English lessons, 50 of the students, of which 36 were from KASS and 14 students from

Achinakrom, said yes. 101 students answered in the negative. Of these, 64 were from KASS with 37 coming from Achinakrom. **Table 19** above has the percentage breakdown.

The students were given the open option to give their reasons for choosing yes or no. The reasons collated were grouped into broad categories as in the **Table 20a** and **20b**.

Table 20a Reasons for Positive Response

If yes to Q14, what is your reason		Name of School		Total
		KASS	Achinakrom	
The teacher is interesting because he adds funny stories and scenes	Count	21	9	30
	% within Name of School	21.0%	17.6%	19.9%
Teacher allows for more questions during lessons	Count	11	1	12
	% within Name of School	11.0%	2.0%	7.9%
No Reason	Count	4	2	6
	% within Name of School	4.0%	3.9%	4.0%
The teacher gets the entire class along with him when teaching	Count	0	2	2
	% within Name of School	.0%	3.9%	1.3%
NA	Count	64	37	101
	% within Name of School	64.0%	72.5%	66.9%
Total	Count	100	51	151
	% within Name of School	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Of the students who were satisfied with the teaching style of their teachers, 30 said their teachers make lessons interesting because they incorporate funny scenes and stories in their teaching; 12 students attributed their satisfaction to the teachers allowing more questions to be asked during lessons; 2 of them said the teachers get the entire class along when teaching; 6 students did not give any reason. The details are presented in **Table 20a** above.

The number of students who saw their teachers motivating them in their English language learning is far less than that of those who saw them otherwise. 66.9% not approving of their teachers' style should be a matter of concern. Motivation from teachers to students in the

language learning classroom is of utmost importance. We interrogate the reasons the students assigned for their stands in **Table 20b**.

The fact that teachers infuse their lessons with funny stories dominates the reasons given for the students' enjoyment of the lessons. What we are uncertain about is whether the jokes are relevant to the understanding of the lessons or they are just to keep the classroom lively. The reasons that have a direct bearing on the learning outcome seem to be on the low side, especially the teacher getting the entire class along when teaching.

Table 20b. Reasons for Negative Response

If No to Q14, What is your reason		Name of School		Total
		KASS	Achinakrom	
It's always comprehension exercises	Count	30	0	30
	% within Name of School	30.0%	.0%	19.9%
The teacher is boring and one way	Count	10	0	10
	% within Name of School	10.0%	.0%	6.6%
The teacher always concentrates on the few good ones and does not pay attention to the rest of the class	Count	14	15	29
	% within Name of School	14.0%	29.4%	19.2%
The teacher does not teach to my understanding	Count	5	0	5
	% within Name of School	5.0%	.0%	3.3%
No reason	Count	3	4	7
	% within Name of School	3.0%	7.8%	4.6%
It is always grammar	Count	2	12	14
	% within Name of School	2.0%	23.5%	9.3%
The subject is simply boring	Count	0	6	6
	% within Name of School	.0%	11.8%	4.0%
NA	Count	36	14	50
	% within Name of School	36.0%	27.5%	33.1%
Total	Count	100	51	151
	% within Name of School	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Among the students who said their teachers did not inspire their enjoyment of English language learning, 30 of them (all from KASS) said their teachers were always asking them to read comprehension passages; 14 students said their teachers were always teaching grammar; 10 students (all from KASS) saw their teachers as simply boring and not dynamic enough, and 6 saw English as boring; 29 said their teachers always concentrated on the good ones to the neglect of the others, and 5 said they did not understand the subject; 7 students gave no reason. Details of the breakdown are presented in **Table 20b**.

It is interesting to note that 30 students, all from KASS, complained that their teachers concentrated on one aspect, that is comprehension, and 10 students also from the same school said that their teachers did not vary their teaching styles. However, no student in KASS saw English as boring but in Achinakrom 6 students had that opinion. As many as 12 students in Achinakrom said their teachers taught grammar excessively. 8 teachers (3 from Achinakrom and 5 from KASS) admitted that having identified certain weaknesses in the students' performance they are tempted to concentrate on one aspect, but that is not the way to go. Another weakness identified in the styles of teachers from the two schools is the tendency to concentrate on the few good ones to the neglect of the others. In an environment where students are from different backgrounds, the good ones may assert themselves quickly and the teacher stands the risk of always asking those students to answer questions in class, and based on that, move the lesson forward. The 29.4% response from Achinakrom on that issue makes the situation more alarming since the good ones in that school are quite few. Some teachers were accused of reacting in a rather absurd manner when students commit 'unpardonable' errors. It will be appropriate if educators acknowledge that error is a by-product of learning and that different methods give teachers different prescriptions.

It is on this that Hussin et al (2001) suggest that teachers are duty-bound to find creative ways to teach the language and increase the student's motivation to learn the language and to eventually appreciate the language. In order to develop a mutual relationship with their learners, teachers need to understand students who are from different backgrounds, have different interests, future goals, aims for English learning, and most importantly, different personalities. Once teachers understand them better, they are better able to apply specific teaching and communicating strategies tailored to certain groups of students, thereby creating a trusting relationship between a teacher and student.

4.6 Motivational and Socio-cultural Factors in School

Table 21. Influence of Historical Achievement of School on English learning

Does the historical achievement of your school influence your English learning?		Name of School		Total
		KASS	Achinakrom	
Yes	Count	78	5	83
	% within Name of School	78.0%	9.8%	55.0%
No	Count	14	41	55
	% within Name of School	14.0%	80.4%	36.4%
No Response	Count	8	5	13
	% within Name of School	8.0%	9.8%	8.6%
Total	Count	100	51	151
	% within Name of School	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Students were asked if the academic history of their schools had any influence on their English language learning. Of the 83 students that responded in the affirmative, KASS had 78 representing 78% of its population of respondents with 5 from Achinakrom representing 9.8% of its population. 55 said they were not influenced by their school's academic record. Of these, 41

students making up 80.4% were from Achinakrom while 14 making up 14% were from KASS. 13 students had no response on this.

80.4 % from Achinakrom are not motivated by the school's achievement obviously because the achievement there is not encouraging. Thus it will come down to a de-motivating environment. In that case, those who want to succeed should let personal motivation supersede all others. On the other hand, the academic achievement of KASS has a huge influence on the students, and that could spur them on to also emulate such feats. It comes to the issue of living up to the standard set by what you came to meet. The socio-culture of the school which one finds himself usually influences one's performance. In the grade A schools, that is a huge factor for which students and parents will choose as their first choice schools. For the grade C schools, it is usually the case that students there do not get their first choice schools that is why they are there. On rare occasions would you find people choosing them as their first.

Table 22. Current Academic Competition in School as a Motivating Factor for Learning English * Name of School

Is the current academic competition in your school a motivating factor for learning English		Name of School		Total
		KASS	Achinakrom	
Yes	Count	84	12	96
	% within Name of School	84.0%	23.5%	63.6%
No	Count	10	35	45
	% within Name of School	10.0%	68.6%	29.8%
No Response	Count	6	4	10
	% within Name of School	6.0%	7.8%	6.6%
Total	Count	100	51	151
	% within Name of School	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

In looking at the motivational and socio-cultural influence from the learning environment, students were asked whether the academic competitions in their various schools were enough motivation for them to learn English. Of the 96 students who answered yes, 84 students representing 84% were from KASS with 12 students representing 23.5% coming from Achinakrom. 45 students answered no, and of these, 10 students making up 10% were from KASS with 35 students representing 68.6% from Achinakrom. 10 students did not have a response on this.

The academic competition seems to be keen at KASS and that contributes a lot to the students' learning of English. This can be seen in most grade A schools. Since most of them came in with good grades and want to prove their mettle, you find stiff competition in academic work. Those are the environments that on rare occasions you find one person always topping the class or topping in a subject. Even if that happens, the margins in scores are not so wide. You always find students wanting to surpass one another. Here, apart from their personal motivation to reach the top, they are spurred on by the determination to stay on top, or displace the one on top. We juxtapose that with the situation at Achinakrom and we find that 68.6% were not motivated by any competition in the school to perform well in English. Probably, their motivations were from elsewhere but we can also say that the academic contest among peers was not strong enough to motivate one another. This situation too can be found in most grade C schools where most of them go in with not too impressive grades. As a result, if the environment does not have more students with high determination who will challenge them to learn, they may not excel in their academic endeavours.

Table 23. Do you wish to be in another school where you think your English would be better? * Name of School

Do you wish to be in another where you think your English would be better?		Name of School		Total
		KASS	Achinakrom	
Yes	Count	15	42	57
	% within Name of School	15.0%	82.4%	37.7%
No	Count	77	5	82
	% within Name of School	77.0%	9.8%	54.3%
No Response	Count	8	4	12
	% within Name of School	8.0%	7.8%	7.9%
Total	Count	100	51	151
	% within Name of School	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

The students were to tell whether looking at the English learning conditions in their schools they wished they were in another school where their English would be better. 57 students said yes, and of these, 15 students making up 15% of its population of respondents were from KASS with 42 students representing 82.4% coming from Achinakrom. 82 students did not want to leave their schools to another. Of these, 77 representing 77% were from KASS whereas 5 making up 9.8% were from Achinakrom. 12 students did not give any response.

15% of the respondents from KASS feel their learning conditions were not motivating enough but the 82.4% of the students from Achinakrom who want a better environment is rather on the high side. What could make such massive number of students wish to leave is the question. Apart from the teaching styles of their teachers which the students complained about, we can still look at the facilities and the learning atmosphere of the school that can affect the English learning of the school. The 5% who want to stay at Achinakrom probably think the situation could be better. You contrast this with KASS and you see as high as 77% who want to stay in the school in spite

of the complaints some of them made about their teachers' methodology. That means other things are in place that make the environment worth staying in.

Table 24. Other Motivating Factors for Learning English Language * Name of school

FACTOR	NAME OF SCHOOL	RII	Ranking
To meet university requirement	KASS	94.40	1ST
	ACHINAKROM	92.94	1ST
To integrate well among speakers of English	KASS	60.20	3RD
	ACHINAKROM	59.60	3RD
To satisfy parent's expectation	KASS	33.13	4TH
	ACHINAKROM	33.33	4TH
To enable me find a job in future	KASS	82.00	2ND
	ACHINAKROM	84.31	2ND
To help study other subjects	KASS	33.06	5TH
	ACHINAKROM	30.83	5TH

On the aspect of the motivation of students in learning English, students were made to respond to the above reasons and rate them in order of importance as to which of them greatly accounted for their motivation for learning English. On the academic field as shown in Table 24, the survey showed that in both schools, students' desire to meet university requirement is the highest on the scale of relative importance index, with 94.4 for KASS and 92.9 for Achinakrom. The next on the scale with 82 and 84 for KASS and Achinakrom respectively was to enable them find jobs in future. To integrate well among speakers of English was the third factor with KASS on 60.2 and Achinakrom 59.6. To satisfy parents' expectation was the fourth factor at 33.1 and 33.3 for KASS and Achinakrom respectively. The least factor is to enable them study other subjects at 33.1 and 30.8 in the same order.

We see that the two schools rated the factors in the same order. Thus irrespective of the students' socio-cultural background certain preferences are similar amongst them. Worthy of note is the margin between the first two factors and the rest. Students' primary motive of studying English

is basically because it is a core subject and a prerequisite for tertiary education admission. We can infer then that for most students, if they had the option, they would not take it seriously. Again, it is natural that after graduation people will look for a job. In the Ghanaian, and probably global contest, most jobs will require that the applicant express himself (written and oral) in English. It is also not strange that the desire to integrate well among speakers of English is the next reason. Students did not put much premium on the parental influence in their English language learning. Again, knowing English well enough to help study the other subjects has little influence on the students' desire to learn English.

Ideally, the students' interest in the subject itself for the sake of knowing the language is more preferred for effective language competence. Indeed, it is believed that intrinsic motivation, or a genuine interest in the language itself, is more effective over the long-term than extrinsic motivation, as in learning a language for a reward such as high grades. We must also appreciate the student's ultimate goal, which may be different from the long-term effect.

Table 25. Social Factors Influencing English Language Study

Rank in order which of these highly influence you to take English seriously.		RII	Ranking
FACTOR	NAME OF SCHOOL		
Motivation by people outside my family /community	KASS	62.37	2nd
	ACHINAKROM	54.17	2nd
Parents' academic achievement	KASS	57.03	3rd
	ACHINAKROM	51.09	4th
Some people in my family/community attended tertiary institutions	KASS	47.40	4th
	ACHINAKROM	53.13	3rd
Personal motivation	KASS	83.51	1st
	ACHINAKROM	88.59	1st

The survey sought to draw a relationship between students' desire to study English seriously and the reasons in Table 25. Personal motivation was ranked highest in both schools with KASS and Achinakrom at 83.5% and 88.6% respectively. The fact that students are motivated by people outside their family and community was the second factor in both schools with KASS and Achinakrom on 62.4% and 54.2% respectively. For KASS, the third factor with 57 % was motivation from parents' academic achievement while Achinakrom rated that as fourth with 51.1%. Achinakrom with 53.1% rated the fact that people in their families/communities attended tertiary institutions as the third factor while KASS put it as the fourth factor with 47.4%.

Again, in both schools we observe a wide difference between personal motivation and the other factors. The socio-cultural influences are still overshadowed by the students' personal determination. In both schools, students are also influenced by people outside their family and community but KASS has a better percentage of 62.4 as against Achinakrom's 54.2. This can be due to the fact that for most students from KASS because their school churns out more people in academia, they might have taken inspiration from such people as against Achinakrom which may have fewer people in academia. KASS has motivation from parents' academic achievement as the third factor but Achinakrom has that as the fourth. As seen earlier (Tables 5a and b), KASS has relatively more parents with better academic qualification. This may account for why the students at KASS put their parents' academic achievement higher as against Achinakrom. Thus the kind of parents one has in terms of their academic achievement may have an influence in the student's academic life though it may not be that strong as the scale of preference and the percentages show. People from one's family and community being at tertiary institutions was, to the students from Achinakrom, more influential than their parents' academic achievement; KASS students saw it the other way around. The people of Achinakrom take inspiration from the few people in their families and communities who have proceeded from the SHS to the tertiary

level. To the people of KASS, such inspiration was more from their parents' academic life. Another reason may also be that they come from communities where people attending tertiary institutions is a matter of natural sequence and not an exceptional feat that should serve as an influential factor. In all these, the overriding factor still comes down to personal determination.

4.7.0 Teachers' Perspective

Of the 8 teachers who were interviewed from KASS, 6 of them graduated in English and one other subject; 2 of them did not have English at all: one of them graduated in Geography and Sociology and another in Sociology and History. Of the 3 teachers in Achinakrom, 1 graduated in English and Spanish with the other 2 not having English at all i.e. Psychology and Sociology, French and Geography. However, the research did not go into the performance of individual teachers in relation to the courses they graduated in. So we are unable to make a statement concerning the teachers' performance against their academic qualification.

4.7.1 On Language Competence: Grammar or Vocabulary

Table 26. What Constitutes Language Competence

	Grammar	Vocabulary	Total
Number of Teachers	7	5	12
Percentage Breakdown	58%	42%	100%

Teachers were asked as to what, to them, constituted language competence. The answers were varied. Of the total of 12 teachers, 7 believed that knowing the grammar of a language is what language competence is all about. They shared the views of Close (1981), Batstone (1994), and Cook (1996) who see grammar as more crucial to language competence than any other component of language. 5 teachers had a different opinion. To the 7 teachers rooting for

grammar, if students are able to learn how to construct good sentences, they are better able to communicate their thoughts. They spoke of the frustration they go through in marking students' scripts when they are not able to make head or tail out of what the students have written, simply because of poor grammatical structures. None of the teachers from both schools saw effective communication from the cultural use of words and structures. A look at some students' essays at Achinakrom indeed confirmed how poor some students' grammar is. You could read sentences like:

I tauhgt abawt it so I desaided to colled Ama and go wit her, When I whent and I meeted Ama and axe her why she have not wear her school uniform Ama say becaus of yesterday reinfalls is wet her drees so she is werein her haus atar to scholl.

That was a student in SHS 3 writing an essay on the topic: *An Unforgettable Experience*. A lot more essays similarly revealed traces of very weak foundation in the rules of grammar (sequence of tenses, subject verb agreement, and punctuation) and common spelling. Another SHS 3 essay on the same topic had this:

I become use to everything. One faitful day when my aunte got involve in a car assident and lose his life. It hasn't being easy when my ankle always have sex with me with threaths untill one day I had no choice done to ran ^ away the house to no where. I sleep infront of sambody store and samthin get mixing and the shopowner ask me if I taken that samthin and I said no. Still People call me thiev and beaten me. Sambody safed me and send me to hospitol.

Another SHS 2 letter to a friend on *My First Time in the City* read:

As you can bare with me that in the village we luck eletricity powers, here not. We have eletricity apriance. We also have a cooker who cook for as. In the village we waist our time with manual box ion moving from house to house serching for chako fire expersially to ion your school winifom to school. Kofi if not am lieing is true. Injoyment proper is in the city. Trafik lyts were there wen am crossing the road so you don't get assident from car to woman been. But I don't lik onething in the city. The peoples are too much and wen you walk in the croud you hear diffrent diffrent body sents from peoples.

Some of them were simply gibberish. An SHS 3 student writing to illustrate the saying “All that Glitters is not Gold” wrote this:

One day the man was going to famin and he so that ther are same of the gold in the buat he dit not tain and lok that he back and illustrates the saeryin and All views wnespaparing of you and discussing athorty. One day he was on the wary going to the famin so he sick that how was a wesrping auf the gold may the illustrates in was day discuring reisa in the canarty in what to can be the human right of about illustrating the saying “All that glitters is gold”.

At KASS, though the situation was relatively better, you could still see traces of grammatical and vocabulary errors. An SHS 2 student writing on the topic *Had I Known is always at Last* wrote:

Mr Agyare pampered her daughter Yaa too much to the extend that he bought her a brand new car which she takes to school everyday. The car made Yaa not to learn but always riding with her hommies to nite clubs. Her teachers always councilled her that, is better to learn now than to wait till is too late but Yaa will not badge. She became very insolent to teachers and adamant to the numerous advices given her. Herself and her

squad were one day accosted by the school authorities when they were on their chilling spree.

This student obviously knows what she is writing and has the vocabulary to express herself quite well. She has a few problems with her grammar, spelling and the appropriate choice of words. Some of these problems are hardly observed in spoken English and that suggests that her spoken English could be seen as good. For instance, ‘extend’, ‘nite’, ‘councilled’, ‘is’ and ‘badge’ will still sound like ‘extent’, ‘night’, ‘counseled’, ‘it’s’ and ‘budge’ in their respective uses when spoken.

Another essay with similar problems, especially in spelling and concord from SHS 3 on a *Letter to the Headmaster on Indiscipline in the School* had this:

Because we are too many students have grouped themselves into badges wherby, they alternate the attendance of school programmes, so if I don't attend a function in the school you wont see me..... Moreover punishments metted out to indiscipline students is not deterrant enough. Punishments like mobbing, scrubbing and stoning is too fair to mett to a student who have gone to town and caused misbehavior. Also partiality is also a causal factor. Most atimes these students who are recacitrant are those with protocol and those who are tight with some teachers. They think they are above whoever and are untouchables.

Here again, ‘batches’ is spelt ‘badges’, ‘won’t’: ‘wont’, ‘meted’: *metted* ‘deterrent’: *deterrant*, ‘mopping’: *mobbing* ‘recalcitrant’: *recacitrant* and a few other errors are detected.

Some of them were quite impressive with very few problems. For instance, on *Had I Known is Always at Last* at SHS 2, one student wrote:

The defining moment was when the two were caught up in their own web. Obviously, they had schemed enough to disentangle themselves from the calamity that was to befall them, but this time it was not to be. They had being expecting this to come but only God know why they did not take the neccessary precaution. Its ununderstandable why people can be so reckless in planing.

There were also a few outrageous ones seen at KASS such as an SHS 3 student writing on “*The Need to Maintain Discipline on Our Roads*” wrote:

Pedestrains like bicycle riders doesn't observe the trafik lithgt when it is red. They just drive at the top speed wifdin a twinkle of our eyes to bypass and overspeed and overtake other cars. The pot wholes too is too much on the road so when blind drivers get there they cant doge fast and enter into it.

The claims then of Boadi et al (1968:2) on “such faults as ‘weak handling of sentence structure’, ‘inability to control sentences’, ‘frequent misuse of tenses’, ‘errors of agreement’” over four decades ago are still relevant. The teachers from both schools conceded that it would be naïve and inconsiderate on their part to ignore such errors and accept that they would always be with us. For, indeed, other schools go the extra mile with their students in correcting these and they are often successful.

Explicit teaching of grammar topics like subject-verb agreement and sequence of tenses were therefore rigorously pursued in both schools. In fact, such topics that form the basis of sentence structure dominated most of their lessons. They believed vocabulary learning depended on the individual student. The students were encouraged to read story books and other reading materials, identify new words and use the dictionary to find their meanings. Contextual use of the words may not be addressed. Two teachers from KASS and another one from Achinakrom

also adopted contrastive analysis and error analysis in vocabulary teaching where new words are identified in passages and their meanings in the local languages given. Gregg (1995:10) has described these theories as “dead meat in general”, but some teachers still insist that these theories work for them.

The other 5 teachers, one from Achinakrom and four from KASS preferred to teach holistically with no specific schedules for grammar. As they picked a comprehension passage, they treated grammar alongside vocabulary and literary devices. None of the teachers in the two schools spent time on teaching spelling or giving spelling drills such as dictation. Thus, there was little effort aimed at addressing students’ spelling issues, though it was obvious spelling was a problem in both schools.

A critical look at the students’ essays, especially those from Achinakrom revealed in most cases, that the students know what they want to say but lack the construction and adequate vocabulary to express themselves. For instance, in one of the essays which students were asked to describe “a visit to an interesting tourist site”, you could see that some of the students exhibited gross deficiency in vocabulary for description. A student describing a visit to the airport wrote “aeroplane driver” instead of ‘pilot’, “the aeroplane driver place” instead of ‘cockpit’, and many other such descriptions. You could see descriptions like “*the thing that they use for cutting grass*” instead of the actual name, ‘mower’. Another student also described structures like: “*the story buildings that go up up like into the sky.*” This student, obviously, didn’t know the word, “skyscraper”.

In the social communicative style, language is defined as communication between people rather than as texts or grammatical rules or patterns. The aim is to give students the ability to engage in conversation with people. The teaching syllabus is primarily a way of listing the aspects of communication the students will find useful whether functions, notions, or processes. It tries to

develop the students' ability to communicate fluently rather than in grammatically flawless sentences.

The above, notwithstanding, there is also the issue of communicating without errors as prescribed by the English syllabus of the Ghana Education Service and the West African Examinations Council. To these bodies and, by extension, the English examiner, it is not just enough to carry out communication, it is more important to carry your thoughts without errors in grammar and vocabulary. It is expected of the candidate to communicate in his writing a grammatically flawless essay. Sentences must be well structured and varied in essays to warrant marks for expression. Of the 50 marks for the essay section, Expression alone takes 20 marks, and four items are listed to constitute this; and these are:

- a. clarity and general appropriateness of style
- b. variation of sentence structure and type
- c. judicious use of figurative language
- d. skilful and sophisticated use of punctuation

The candidate is expected to express himself in the most appropriate vocabulary such that he can be well understood without any shred of ambiguity. The marking scheme of WAEC in English is such that the students must know their grammar very well. Mechanical accuracy constitutes 10 marks of the 50 marks. The main categories of error which the examiner is expected to penalize are: undeniable errors in grammar, punctuation errors, and spelling errors. It must be stated that every year the majority of students score zero in Mechanical Accuracy. For grammar alone, one can count as many as 13 categories on the list and boldly written under the list is "THIS LIST IS NOT EXHAUSTIVE". Among the list are:

- the omission of an essential sentence element (e.g. subject, predicate, complement)
- wrong tense
- misuse of modal operators (may/might, can/could etc)
- misuse or omission of the article
- confusion or ambiguity in the use of pronouns
- misuse of countable and uncountable nouns
- wrong preposition
- misuse of relatives, subordinators and conjunctions
- errors in concord

(Extracted from the November/December 2011 WASSCE Final Marking Scheme for English Language for Candidates in Ghana.)

If Expression and Mechanical Accuracy take 30 of the 50 marks, then the student who wants to score high in English cannot gloss over his grammatical errors and just communicate. The other 20 marks are distributed as: Content 10 marks and Organization 10 marks. This is to suggest that no matter their knowledge of the subject matter they are writing about and how well organized their presentations are, the students' grammar and vocabulary should be effective enough to attract good marks from the examiners.

Generally, the teachers from both schools complained of large class sizes and the limited period of contact hours. They were therefore not able to have more essays for students to practice. In the very large classes, in most cases, essays were not given at all. They taught features of the essays and let them write the essays during terminal examinations. At best, if the essays were to be practised during the term, students were given guidelines to write certain essay topics. They would then write just the introduction of about four lines; then the teacher would go round and inspect these essays, pass a few comments on them, and that would be it. Full-length essays were

hardly written and when they were, they were written by students in groups of five or eight. This, however, did not bring out the best in the individual students. The weak ones would mostly hide behind the good ones to write the essays.

Traces of L1 transfer and nativization were also seen in students' essays, which were to be expected, anyway. Students in their essays committed grammatical errors that can be attributed to L1 influence. Students wrote sentences like:

I decided to go to market before I go and check if my brother letter has come at post office.

The absence of definite articles before 'market' and 'post office' and the absence of a possessive marker for 'brother' can be attributed to a situation of direct translation from Twi into English. In a sentence like the above in Twi, the definite articles are absent. Again, the possessive is not marked as done in English. Thus *my brother letter* literally translated to Twi sounds perfect.

On nativisation, you could read sentences like:

"My chop box was empty..." "I took dropping from my house to school..." "When the car dropped me in front of my house I saw that there was light off".

These are words you are likely to hear from even the most educated Ghanaian. It has a general reflection of the Ghanaian or, to some extent, the West African environment. It may deviate from British Standard English but it is a kind of variety that is accepted within the socio-cultural environs of its speakers.

4.7.2 Assessment of Students' Performance in English

The results from the students' questionnaire seem to suggest that most of the students are doing well in English at the SHS (see **Table 8**). However, if we are to compare their claim to the responses of the teachers, we see that there is some level of discrepancies. First, we look at what

the students regard as good performance. Most of the students might see B3 in English as good, and indeed, by the grading system, that is good. Then it is possible that the teachers' expectation of their students, particularly at KASS, is high such that when they score B3 the teachers do not see it as good enough. A look at the trend of the results in English over the past five terms in Achinakrom indicated only few people scoring B3 with the majority of them scoring between C4 and D7. At KASS, a look at results of English for four terms showed a few A1s and B2s with the majority in B3 and C4.

The magnitude of the discrepancies between how the students rated themselves and the evidence on the ground is a matter of concern. The total ratings of excellent, very good and good of the two schools amounted to 77.5% of the valid respondents. Within KASS we have 83% in that category of its population and Achinakrom has 66.7% (see Table 7). Environments like these, especially at KASS, shouldn't give any teacher cause to complain. But it comes back to the issue of credibility and reliability of self report.

Many researchers have questioned the use of self-report questionnaires in studies of L2 motivation on the ground that they do not always elicit true responses from participants and they are vulnerable to extraneous influences. Self-reported attitude measures may also be under the influence of extraneous factors such as the desire to look good in one's own eyes (self-flattery), or in the eyes of others (the approval motive), or simply to be consistent in responding to questions of related content (response set).

Of course, students answering questions about themselves will like to paint a brighter picture of themselves. However, other questions they answered, especially concerning factors responsible for their current performance, their subject preference coupled with their essays which the researcher saw, easily confirm the assertion that self report is usually misleading. Some errors seen in some of the essays were just elementary and rather demonstrate far below average

performance. Again, their results in English, especially for most students in Achinakrom and for some students in KASS, were not that impressive. As we will see from the interview with the teachers, the attitude of the students towards English language learning was not encouraging and that could hardly guarantee such a huge percentage of good students in English language. Thus, evidence on the ground contradicted the students' ratings of their current performance in English.

4.7.3 Students' Attitude towards English Language Learning

Hussin et al (2001) state that six factors influence motivation in language learning and these are: attitudes, beliefs about self, goals, involvement, environmental support, and personal attributes. Students' attitude towards English language learning is very imperative to their success or otherwise. This is in reference to the third component of Gardner's goal of motivation which is the learner's attitude towards the learning situation. Gardner believes that the learner's attitude toward the learning situation is essential. It is for these reasons that Liuolienė and Metiūnienė (2006:96) say "Students' motivation to learn depends on their needs and interests, while the effectiveness of their learning is influenced by motivation."

Since huge demands are made of the students before they can score excellent grades in English, then a positive and determined attitude is what is expected of them. We saw that students paid more attention to other subjects as against English language, and it was a worry to their English tutors. For they believed this had a negative influence on their performance. The passes recorded in the other subjects over the years in the WASSCE attest to this assertion. Excellent passes in English language are fewer as compared to subjects like Mathematics and the other core subjects. There are equally better scores recorded in their electives than English. There could be other factors responsible for this imbalance but from the study results on students' attitude

towards learning English, we can deduce that the students' behaviour towards learning the subject needs a critical interrogation.

4.7.4 Relationship between BECE English Results and Current Performance

On the relationship between the students' BECE results and their SHS performance, all the teachers from KASS said they were not privy to the students' BECE English language results and therefore would not be able to establish a firm conclusion by a comparison of BECE results and the students' SHS performance. Apparently, students from the private schools start speaking English earlier in their lives than those from the public schools. The teachers emphasized, however, that not all those who speak good English write good English. As to why that happens, the consensus was that those who speak good English usually take English for granted and forget that "we do not speak spelling and punctuations," as one teacher puts it. English has certain dynamics and every question has its own nuances and techniques for answering it.

The teachers of Achinakrom confirmed that the students come in with poor grades in English. They attributed the students' poor performance to the poor foundation in the English language. They lacked the fundamentals of the language. Apparently, the kind of JHSs they came from had a huge influence on their spoken and written English. They lacked the confidence of speaking English and as was seen, they reflected such bizarre errors in their writings too. Students' demonstration of weakness in spelling, concord, and sequence of tenses in such outrageous fashion is a matter of concern. The problem of language in this sense was not peculiar to Achinakrom; in fact, you could also find similar situations among a few of the students in KASS. However, Achinakrom had a lot more of such students. Such problems of appropriate vocabulary use and correct syntactic use were on the high side as compared to KASS.

Addressing the concerns of teachers on the weak foundation of students, we may interrogate the

competence of teachers, especially in the lower primary, to offer a solid grammatical foundation to the pupils. The qualification and competence of the teachers at the lower primary are questions that must be addressed with the utmost urgency. We may concede the overwhelming numbers of primary school pupils as against the current number of teachers available such that if we are to go pruning for highly qualified ones, we may be left with a lot of classrooms with no teachers at all. The challenge then is should we allow unqualified teachers to pollute the pupils at the basic level or take those teachers out and leave the classrooms with no teachers at all? The issue of in-service training and regular short courses to sharpen the skills of those teachers becomes vital.

4.7.5 Four Years or Three Years

On the issue of period of contact periods, the consensus from the teachers from both schools was that it would be ideal for the four year system to continue. It was seen that most of the students from the grade C JHSs, because of their weak foundation, need more time to pick up. Some start peaking at SHS 2 second term, and some as late as SHS 3 first term. Such students could do better with the four year system. Comparative results in English language from the two schools for the two systems tilt in favour of the four year system.

4.7.6 The Teaching Environment

Concerning the teaching and learning environment, 5 teachers from KASS were satisfied with library facilities and the availability of textbooks and other teaching and learning materials. Two of them said it could be better. All four teachers of Achinakrom were dissatisfied with the ill-equipped library and the absence of other teaching and learning materials. There was hope as new infrastructure had begun springing up.

4.7.7 Parental Commitment

The teachers of both schools grouped the parents into certain categories. At KASS, they intimated that some parents take the English language of their students seriously to the extent that they hire English teachers to have a one-on-one tuition for their wards. This is rare at Achinakrom. On few occasions such attention is paid to some elective subjects.

In a school where library facilities are not adequate for the increasing number of students, the onus lies on the parents and guardians to provide the needed supplementary materials to enhance students' learning. Even in cases where the library is well-equipped, the students' private ownership of certain reading materials is more preferred. Their unrestricted access to the learning materials as and when they are needed is very important.

Considering what the teachers said, the parents whose wards are at KASS paid more attention to their wards' English language than parents at Achinakrom. The reason could be that KASS as a grade A school has set a standard for itself and parents send their wards there to achieve a feat. Parents are also aware that going to a grade A school comes with a cost that is higher than a grade C school. The reverse impression may be the case for parents from Achinakrom, which might have influenced their behaviour.

As to whether the apparent apathetic nature of most parents and students affected their motivation to teach, the teachers were of the opinion that sometimes the situation could be disturbing and wished it could improve. They did not usually get more A1s in English and they believe attitude towards learning English is a major factor.

4.8 Motivation of Students

We saw various angles from which the students are motivated: Personal motivation, motivation from parents, motivation from the family and community within which the students come from,

and competition from friends. The competition from friends in school with parental, community and family influences form part of the socio-cultural influence which drives the student in wanting to aspire high. Much as such influences were slightly significant, it was seen that most of the students had a personal drive, an internal motivation to do well in English and move forward in their academics (see Table 9a). This goes with Lahey (1995), who sees motivation as an internal state that activates and gives direction to our thoughts, feelings, and action. But we also know that personal drive is not without the influence of the community, family and friends who have gone higher in education. As the results show, integrating well among speakers of English as the reason for learning English was there, but the majority needed English as the means of securing qualification into the university and to read their courses of choice.

People's motivations can be driven by the competitions they have with their fellows. Failure then is not an option. Some of the students from KASS in the informal conversation called it embarrassing not to pass to the university after SHS. Others added it as honouring among one's peers to be offered a good course at the university. Thus, even though they may cite personal motivation as the overriding factor for learning English and seeking to excel in it, there is a tacit admission that the external forces are very influential and, probably, as influential as their personal determination. This is what MacIntyre et al. (2001: 463) refer to when they said motivation should be viewed as a hybrid concept being "an internal attribute that is the result of an external force."

One thing that was missing in the two schools was a reward system for excellence in English language. KASS rewarded students who did well in the Sciences and Mathematics and that had helped them to perform well in the science subjects (They were second in 2007 and third in 2009 in the National Science and Mathematics Quiz). The teachers were of the view that the schools could institute a reward package for excellence in English for both internal and external

examinations and that could motivate the students. More importantly for Achinakrom that is now seeking to rise up in academics, such a reward package could be beneficial.

The most prominent features of motivation are persistence and focused behaviour (Crowl, 1997). People who are motivated exhibit goal-directed behaviour and persist until they achieve the set target. People may be highly motivated to perform extremely well in one task and yet highly unmotivated in another task. That is when motivation represents a specific state or temporary condition that depends on a certain specific situation. We make reference again to Gardner (1985:50) who said “Individuals who are truly motivated not only strive to learn the material but also seek out situations where they can obtain further practice.” Some teachers in KASS believe some of their students could engage in brain racking activities such as football news and history, and wondered why they could not transmit such knowledge to academic work. The point then is they may approach academic work with little drive and less enthusiasm, probably because it is not as exciting as football news.

4.9 Conclusion

There is more to grammar and vocabulary in addressing language competence. How and where these are used is significant. Again, it is not just enough to say one is motivated to achieve language competence; the motivation is seen when the individual is rigorously seen to be gravitating towards achieving the goal. The effort as in willing to expend time, energy and resources to help one in his efficient second language learning is of great importance. The pertaining system within which the student finds himself can also shape his the language learning outcome.

CHAPTER FIVE

FINDINGS, RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSION

5.0 Introduction

This chapter summarizes the research findings on the influence of motivation and socio-cultural factors in students' language competence. It also concludes the study and offers some solutions and recommendations for stakeholders to redress.

5.1 Findings

Upon analyses of the data the major findings are:

- Grammar and vocabulary have equal importance in students' language competence.
- The student's socio-cultural background has an influence in his language learning competence.
- The motivated individual, whether instrumental or integrative, extrinsic or intrinsic has a far bigger chance of successfully learning a second language than the one who is less motivated.
- Personal motivation overrides socio-cultural influences and any other form of motivation in students' language learning.
- There is no correlation between the type of JHS, whether private or public, and the students' SHS English performance. However, students at the grade A SHSs perform better than their counterparts in the grade C SHSs.
- An academically competitive environment, a good English-speaking ambience, and the availability of learning facilities enhance a positive learning outcome.

5.2 Conclusion

The role of motivation and socio-cultural factors influencing students' language competence is very clear. Even though they might have all gone through the same years of tutelage in the language as far as the classrooms are concerned, different students from different backgrounds usually exhibit variant results in language competence.

Consequently, a review of literature was embarked upon to gather views held by certain authors as to what extent these factors influence the language competence and eventual English language performance. The issues of grammar and vocabulary which form the roots of language were looked at. This was done in relation to what constitute language competence.

Some attributed the problems in students' language competence to the teachers' view of grammar teaching and students' inability to master the rules of grammar. Others believed that teachers at the foundation level were mostly not well equipped to inculcate into the students the complexities entailed in the study of grammar. It was again observed that some teachers do not teach vocabulary explicitly but rather see vocabulary as integrated in comprehension lessons such that as passages are read or discussed in class, key words are sifted out and explained.

There was also the possibility of the influence of the L1 interfering in the smooth impartation and acquisition of the L2, which happens to be the general situation in second language learning environments.

The issue of motivation and its influence on second language learning was thoroughly reviewed. The student's socio-cultural background and its effect on English language competence were also discussed. We also touched on the influence of the learning environment on the learning outcomes as far as English language is concerned.

In looking at these issues, the researcher embarked upon this project using methods such as sampling of the population, questionnaires for students, interviews with teachers and other research devices to collate the data to research into the extent to which motivational and socio-cultural factors affect students' performance in English language in senior high schools.

The research established that the need to survive in the competition for university admission is one huge motivation for students to learn and pass English language well. Students who have higher academic aspirations are highly motivated to learn English language and will do everything possible to get a very good grade in the subject.

Students who did not have the basics right also exhibited poor performance. Again, we saw that there is no guarantee that a student with a good spoken language background and comes from a family or community of academicians will automatically do well in English at the SHS. Personal determination was seen as the overriding factor in one's performance in English. Nonetheless, if the learning environment is highly challenged in terms of facilities and motivation, the students really struggle to achieve better grades in English, though personal motivation may exist.

Other factors like the contribution of the parents and guardians were also seen as having a considerable influence in the success of students' language learning. Students who were supported with adequate learning materials mostly performed better than those who did not have them.

The students' negative attitude towards English language learning was seen as a significant factor. Some students had a poor attitude towards the study of English language and that resulted in their abysmal performance. This attitude they developed was due to several factors. The attitude and commitment of teachers and the methodology adopted by some of them were seen as de-motivating to students' learning of English language.

The curriculum might have been tailored to take care of the language needs of the learner, but the English syllabus at the SHS does not necessarily address the needs of students with weak foundation in English. The topics are built upon and this was seen as a disincentive to such students.

5.3 Recommendations

It is a fact that some students perform creditably in English while others flop woefully. We cannot also deny that some students may be intelligent and even highly motivated to perform well, but may find it difficult to excel in English and consequently fail to move up the academic ladder. Such students can perform creditably in other subjects but may not do well in English. Certain factors may militate against the students' performance. Some recommendations are therefore suggested for the various stakeholders in our educational system.

5.3.1 The Role of the Classroom Activity

The goal of language teaching may envisage knowledge, communicative effectiveness, reading comprehension, and so forth. Therefore, we believe that if teachers vary their methods and the language of classroom discourse, a major hurdle can be crossed in this endeavour.

The teacher should help the students to build confidence in the teacher as well as themselves. Furthermore, the teacher must go all length to ensure that students whose backgrounds may not have helped them that much in their English language learning are not silenced by their peers

through ridicule. Again, attention should not be focused only on the few good ones who are always quick to answer questions in class; questions should rather be spread evenly.

More exercises should be given in class, marked and discussed thoroughly. Teachers should allow as many questions as possible to whip up excitement and interest during lessons. Remedial lessons can be given to students with weak foundation to pull them along. The teachers can still employ the strategy of making the students write short paragraphs periodically for assessments. Some essay samples can be picked and errors and positives discussed with total student participation.

Strict turn-taking, display questions, etc are not communicative. These hardly reflect the real world outside the classroom. The classroom must become like the world outside the classroom, where we see people using language spontaneously and communicatively.

Larsen-Freeman (2000) and Robinson and Selman (1986) give us a few guidelines on how educators can help students in achieving communicative competence. Refer to Appendix A.

5.3.2 The Role of Motivation

In the teaching and learning of English in the context of a second language ambience, the acculturation model should be factored in. We can help ourselves better if we understand that learning takes place in a society, and in our case, a society dominated by many external social influences; and learning depends upon motivation and aptitude, which in turn depend on integrativeness and attitude. Teachers will, therefore, be successful if they get personal with their students and actively involve them in their teaching.

Teachers are duty-bound to find creative ways to teach the language and increase the student's motivation to learn the language and to eventually appreciate the language. There are a number of methods that English instructors can use to motivate students in class, and they should flexibly employ the most suitable method for the class. The teachers need to open up to students to enable the latter freely approach the former. Once a relationship develops, the classroom will become comfortable and enjoyable enough for students to learn positively from the teacher without any hesitation. This should start from the basic level through to the secondary level.

5.3.3 The Role of the Learning Environment

Learning English in a second language environment obviously will require the teacher altering the environment to suit the students' needs. In order for language students to become satisfied with a lesson, it is required to produce a stress-free classroom and develop integrated-tasks lesson. The school can also re-orient the students to have a positive outlook of themselves so as to aim high.

Though we may not want to abolish the vernacular outright, it will help if students are encouraged to speak English often. If the environment is saturated with English speaking, the tendency of the inarticulate ones picking up the language is high. Some linguists differ on this opinion but I believe, if the student starts speaking English early and goes ahead to integrate more with speakers of English, his communication skills are sharpened. To improve students' standard pronunciation, we can mitigate interferences that are detrimental to the student's acquisition of the standard forms by tactfully making the necessary corrections.

School administrations, from the basic to the secondary levels, should ensure that qualified English teachers teach English. English teachers need some familiarity with the structure of

English. Where there are constraints and other teachers from other fields are co-opted into English language teaching, regular in-service training should be given to the teachers. Seminars can be organized for both qualified and co-opted members at regular intervals to sharpen their skills.

Teachers should not skew their teaching to certain aspects to the detriment of the others. Where some teachers in a school have certain difficulties with certain aspects, then aspect teaching is recommended. That is, different teachers teach different aspects that they are strong in.

Governments can make less endowed schools more appealing to attract qualified personnel to those areas. The system where less-endowed schools are upgraded should be vigorously pursued.

5.3.4 The Contribution of Parents

Parents have a higher responsibility to ensure that their wards perform well in English language. As we agree that education is now expensive, the parents should set their priorities right and ensure that the needed materials the child requires to be successful in English language learning are provided. It takes an exceptional student to excel even in the midst of serious challenges like the lack of textbooks and other incentives needed for learning.

5.3.5 The Role of the Student

Students at the senior high school can also help themselves if they can change their attitudes towards the study of English language, especially now that an average score is not enough to guarantee them a place at the university. Much as we may plead with the teacher to amend and vary his techniques to make lessons interesting, we also expect the student to rise above the

classroom situation and do more on his own. Students should take advantage of the opportunities they have in their various SHSs and maximise them to their benefit.

In the English language classroom, students should learn to preview materials, ask questions, and discuss ideas with classmates. Even when the materials are limited in the schools, the determined student can still maximize the little available, learn hard and do well in English. The student should overcome his fears and endeavour to speak English and ask questions to boost his confidence in class. When he is able to overcome these challenges, his interest can rise for the stronger one's interest, the greater one's comprehension.

Again, the student cannot excuse himself by reason of his socio-cultural background and fail to perform in English. As we saw earlier, self motivation and personal determination are very crucial in the student's eventual success in English language learning. So regardless of the disadvantages the student may encounter in his environment and background, he is expected to brace the odds and let self-motivation reign.

5.3. 6 The Curriculum

Curriculum developers can also help in enhancing students' interest in English language learning. We should be able to factor the various societal aspirations in our English language curriculum and ensure that educators pursue English language teaching along those lines as established. The curriculum should also make room for attention to be given to disadvantaged students.

We advocate for positive self-concept, high self-esteem, positive attitude, clear understanding of the goals for language learning, continuous active participation in the language learning process,

and the relevance of a conducive environment that could contribute to the success of language learning.

In conclusion, the influence of motivation and the socio-cultural environment for the learning of English language cannot be taken for granted. Where, how and under what condition learning English as a second language takes place are very important. We have established that an enabling environment that provides for the smooth teaching and learning of English is critical for the success of the student. Motivation, whether extrinsic or intrinsic, is also an influential variable in success in second language learning. It is hoped that all stakeholders whose roles have been discussed above will endeavour to address the lapses that inhibit the successful learning of English language in Ghana.

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APPENDIX A**Teaching for Effective Communicative Competence**

Principle	Application
Authentic materials are used	Teacher uses newspaper columns, job advertisements, weather reports, menus, catalogues...
One function can have many different forms	Students can communicate for a specific purpose in many ways
Students need to learn cohesion and coherence	Teacher uses activities such as scrambled sentences
Students should be given the opportunity to express their opinions	Games are useful as are activities where students must communicate and receive feedback (did the listener/reader understand?)
Errors are tolerated to a certain extent	Other students and teacher ignore errors
The social context of the communicative is essential	Teacher uses role-plays
Learning to use language forms appropriately is important	Teacher reminds student of the role they are playing or the particular situation they are in and how that impacts on the communication; teacher encourages students to develop independent learning skills
Teacher acts as advisor/facilitator	Teacher moves from group to group, offering advice and answering questions; teacher collaborates with students to select goals, content and processes
Speakers have choices in communication of <i>what</i> to say and <i>how</i> to say it	Students and teacher suggest alternative forms that could be used
Students should be given opportunities to develop strategies for interpreting language as it is actually used by native speakers	For homework, students are asked to listen to a debate on the radio or watch one on television

5. What is your general performance in English at the S.H.S?

Excellent [] Very good [] Good [] Satisfactory [] Bad []

6. a. If you are happy with your performance, rank in order of importance what you would say accounted for your answer in Question 5 above? (where 1 is the highest and 5 is the lowest).

	1	2	3	4	5
Extra classes	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]
Adequate learning materials in the school	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]
Competition from friends	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]
Motivation from parents	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]
Personal determination	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]
Dedication of teachers to teaching	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]

6b. If you are unhappy with your performance, rank in order of importance what you would say accounted for your answer in Question 5 above? (where 1 is the highest and 5 is the lowest).

	1	2	3	4	5
No extra classes	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]
Inadequate learning materials in the school	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]
Lack of dedication from teachers to teaching	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]
Lack of competition from friends	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]
Lack of motivation from parents	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]
Lack of personal determination	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]

7. How often do you use the English language in your conversations in school?

Very often [] Quite Often [] Occasionally []

8. How often do you use the English language in your conversations outside school?

Very often [] Quite Often [] occasionally []

9. Rank in order of dominance the language which was mainly spoken at your JHS?
(where 1 is the highest and 3 is the lowest).

	1	2	3
English language	[]	[]	[]
Twi	[]	[]	[]
Other local languages	[]	[]	[]

10. Rank in order of dominance the language which is mainly spoken at your S.H.S?
(where 1 is the highest and 3 is the lowest).

	1	2	3
English language	[]	[]	[]
Twi	[]	[]	[]
Other local languages	[]	[]	[]

11. How do you compare the quality of English language spoken in your J.H.S to that of your S.H.S?

J.H.S. was better than S.H.S. [] S.H.S. is better than J.H.S. [] Virtually the same []

12. Rank in order of priority which of the subjects you pay more attention to
(where 1 is the highest and 5 is the lowest).

	1	2	3	4	5
English language	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]
Core mathematics	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]
Integrated science	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]
Social studies	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]
An elective subject	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]

13. What do you think accounts for your answer in 12.

(Please state briefly)

.....

14. Does your teacher's teaching style help you to enjoy English language?

Yes [] No []

15. a. If yes to Q14, what is your reason?

(Please state briefly)

.....

b. If No to Q14, What is your reason?

(Please state briefly)

.....

16. Does the historical achievement of your school influence your English learning?

Yes [] No []

17. Is the current academic competition in your school a motivating factor for learning English?

Yes [] No []

18. Do you wish to be in another school where you think your English would be better?

Yes [] No []

19. Rank in order of priority why you would to take English language seriously (where 1 is the highest and 5 is the lowest).

	1	2	3	4	5
To meet university requirement	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]
To integrate well among English speakers	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]
To satisfy parents' expectation	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]
To find a job in future	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]
To help study other the subjects	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]

20. Rank in order of priority which of these greatly motivates you to study English in order to go higher in your academics (where 1 is the highest and 5 is the lowest).

	1	2	3	4	5
Parents' academic achievement	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]
Most people in my family go to the university	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]
Most people in my community go to the university	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]
Personal motivation	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]

APPENDIX C

UNSTRUCTURED INTERVIEW WITH TEACHERS ON VIEWS MOTIVATION AND SOCIO-CULTURAL INFLUENCE ON LANGUAGE COMPETENCE

1. Which is more important in language competence?
 - a. Grammar
 - b. vocabulary
2. Do you normally pay more attention to any one of these more than the other?
3. What are your reasons?
4. Do you take students through the cultural use of words and structures?
5. What are some of the major language learning difficulties you have observed from your students?
6. What methodology do you adopt to mitigate these problems?
7. Do you have special times for spelling drills and dictations?
8. What are some of the problems that hinder the smooth impartation of English language lessons in your school?
9. To what extent do any of these affect the teaching and learning of English language in your school?
 - Attitude of students towards English
 - Limited period of contact hours
 - Large class size
10. Four years or three years- which of them do you see as effective in successful English language teaching?
11. What is your assessment of the English language teaching environment in your school?
12. How influential is the community where your school is located to the English language learning of your students?
13. Are you satisfied with the level of parental commitment to the English language learning of their wards in your school?
14. Do you have a reward system for English language performance in your school?
15. What do you think account for the impressive/unimpressive performance of your students?
16. What is your view of the school curriculum in addressing the English language needs of the students?