

Full Length Research

Significance of the Use of English as a Medium of Instruction and Its Effects on Employment-In Ethnographic Perspective

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Accepted 27 January 2020

Colonization of Africa by the European giants has both negative and positive implications. Even though many African countries claim to have gained independence, the sovereignty of these nations raises a lot of concerns. One area is language. To date, colonial languages play significant roles in the socio-economic development of these countries. In Ghana, English is the official language. As an official language, it is the language of the three arms of government- the executive, legislature and judiciary. The media, the fourth estate of government also uses English in its reportage. It is also the medium of instruction. As a medium of education, English is the language used to prepare students as the labor force of the country. Since English is the language used to prepare the labor force in the country, it has a direct consequence on the employment opportunities in the country. The research was conducted using qualitative and quantitative means to find the impact of English language on the employment of school graduates from various Ghanaian institutions. All the schools –basic, secondary and tertiary in the region were used. Information gathered was interpreted using tables. With the use of a questionnaire, interview and observation. Forty-five percent (45%) of tuition in Ghanaian schools go waste because of lack of understanding of students. The consequence of this is reflected in poor attitude to work, poor management, inadequate supervision and reduced general output among Ghanaian school graduates. This has a serious implication on the socio-economic lives of the people.

Keywords: Colonization, official language, medium of instruction

Cite This Article As: Frimpong D (2020). Significance of the Use of English as a Medium of Instruction and Its Effects on Employment-In Ethnographic Perspective. *Inter. J. Eng. Lit. Cult.* 8(1): 15-32

INTRODUCTION

English plays a significant role in Ghanaian societies. This includes in the media, politics, administration, formal education, arbitration, and trade, among others. Its effects are numerous and far -fetching. One research obviously cannot study every bit of its scope and effects in such a country as Ghana. Thus, the research is to examine the extent to which the use of this language in the Ghanaian classroom affects the livelihood of the

people of Ghana.

This paper is an attempt to investigate the effect of colonialism Ghana in particular. The paper takes cognizance of the use of English language as a medium of instruction and how this affects employment in traditional societies. The reason is that language is the engine of growth and the key to national development. One of the end products of colonial imperialism in Ghana is the use of English as official language. It is also the medium of instruction in the classroom. This research

finds out the effects this may have on job placement among the people of Ghana. The study will be done in the perspective of the culture of the people and how the imperialist's move has affected the socio-economic lives of the people.

The study looks at the dichotomy between language and culture. The two are bedfellows. Language is the means through which views, thoughts, ideas and emotions are expressed. It is the brain of culture and the vehicle that directs the mood and aspirations of a particular group of people. It is a medium of change and can transform the thoughts and actions of an individual and society. One issue of national concern in Ghanaian communities in recent times is the maintenance of culture. The nation believes that the acculturation of Ghanaian system hurts the people. Western cultures have dominated such areas as food, dressing, and trade. The level of acculturation is instead a social canker.

BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

Since language and culture are mutually dependent, the research will look at the culture of the people and the level of acceptability of the English language in Ghanaian societies. The study will bring together all stakeholders in Ghanaian education- the government, teachers, students, the West African Examination Council and many graduates of the Ghanaian educational system. This is significant because many school leavers in Ghanaian societies fail to further their education due to English, either as medium of instruction or as core subject. The fact that English plays a diamond role in Ghanaian societies cannot be overemphasized (see Melinda 2007). It is indubitable that the ultimate goal of every educational curriculum is personal and national development. The development of the national workforce, therefore, depends largely upon the quality of education the people receive. The research will, therefore, study the employment situation in Ghana and the role the imperial language plays in this regard.

Language contributes immensely to the development of every country. This makes language planning and the use of language very essential for nation-building. In Africa and for that matter Ghana, the choice of language for official activities is always problematic (Owu-Ewie 2006; Spring 1998). This is due to the multilingual nature of the country. Many believe that this accounts for the under-development of most African countries.

Ghana is blessed with many languages and different ethnic groups that use these languages (see Melinda 2007; Mfum –Mensah 2005). At independence, the nation, after considering the potent nature of language in its governance, sought to find a lingua franca for its operations. Parliament, upon further considerations, maintained 'the status quo' i.e. preserve the use of

English which was already used for official business in the country.

As the official language, English was considered as a medium of instruction in Ghanaian schools. It is also a core subject at all levels of Ghanaian education now. The research whether this foreign language has an impact on the economy and the general development of the nation or not. This is because apart from the language being used as a medium of instruction, it is also indispensable in the day-to-day activities in this multilingual nation. Teachers, government officials, students in the various levels of Ghanaian education system and other corporate bodies will be used in the study.

PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

This research aims to find out the impact of colonial rule in Ghana and its implication on employment opportunities for the people. The language factor is the focus of this study. By studying carefully, the various cultures of the people especially those relating to employment. This study explores the impact of the use of English language in the classroom on the workforce of the people of Ghana. The study also looks at the perception of the people on the use of English as the medium of instruction in Ghana. The study finds out whether the use of English language as medium of instruction has any effect on the general well-being of the people of Ghana.

RESEARCH METHODS

Observation

Observation is one of the instruments used in collecting data in support of this research. This was used as a secondary source of information. This involves the use of students' exam results, both internal and external. The Analysis was made in finding out the number of students who pass their English paper and those who became 'casualties' as a result of the English language and the results used in support of the research.

In many situations, the researcher observed the discourse among groups of people. In most cases, he joined in their conversation. Discourses were recorded and glossed after that, and used in support of the analysis. This was done on several occasions. The researcher aimed to find out what people say, what they mean, what style do they employ in their use of language and what language do they use for what particular purpose. But his primary aim was on the use of English language and the function it plays in the conversation. This led him to many places and also conversed with many people.

Areas where he mostly visited were the classrooms. He

also used his students a lot. There are many people from diverse cultures with different speakers on the school campus and he really made use of them. Listening to radio programs became the hobby at the time of collecting the data in support of the research. Much of the information used was also collected from various television programs. He mostly relied on radio and television news. Here is where most of the ministers of state and other corporate bodies express their views concerning such pertinent issues as the use of the English language in the classroom and its effects on economic development in the country. He mostly listened to current affairs programs on radio *Gold*, *Radio BAR*, *Joy FM*, *Radio Atlantic*, *Savanna Radio* and *Ghana Television's Matters Arising*.

The study also relied on printed media. The *People's Daily Graphic* feature stories and job advertisements were very supportive. This is because it is a national paper and has credibility in terms of its reportage. Other papers such as *The Statesman* and *Daily Guide* also contributed so much in the collection of data.

Interview

Another strategy that used in the collection of data was an interview. This was used to find out the opinions and perceptions about the subject from respondents. Another group of people interviewed and workers and the people on the street. People who failed to further their education for one reason or the other were also interviewed to find out their experiences and opinions. The interviews and conversations transcended through many ethnic groups and dialects of many languages in Ghana. In all, 86 respondents were interviewed. The response was either recorded or written down and later glossed and used to support the analysis.

The study finds out from school dropouts and those who have passed through the various levels of education and are employed in the Ghanaian economy how they see English as the medium of instruction. The researcher also concentrated on those who have completed school but could not get the opportunity to further their education or could not be employed because of the problem relating to English language. The following were the responses from respondents:

- i. I just found it challenging to comprehend the English language.
- ii. The teacher liked big words so I hardly comprehended what he usually said.
- iii. Because of that (English) I mostly missed classes
- iv. English is the bane of all my life.
- v. I did not like schooling because of English.
- vi. It is not good to use English as a measure of someone's intelligence.
- vii. I could not understand the question so I deviated

viii. I just did not know English.

- ix. I was good in most of the subjects but because of English...
- x. Had it not been English, I would have been somebody by now.

The next target group was students. The idea was to find out their side of the issue of using English as the medium of instruction in Ghanaian schools. The researcher's major concentration was on those in the SHS and the tertiary institutions. Students were selected at random. Some were interviewed in school while others were interviewed outside their school compounds. They are considered to be the middle class workforce of the country.

In most cases, a simple question would be posed; 'Do you think the use of English language as the medium of instruction has any effects on placement of the products of Ghanaian schools?' After responding either in affirmation or disagreement, the next set of questions continued. Almost every one of those interviewed believed that there are some effects. The following are some of the responses respondents gave:

- i. The language is not ours why do we worry ourselves like that?
- ii. I had wanted to go to the University of Ghana. It is because of English that I came here
- iii. Ghana, when our leaders are making decisions, they don't consider certain things
- iv. I am not the only person. There are a lot of people in Parliament who cannot say anything because of English.
- v. I diverted from doing this course because of English.
- vi. I wrote several times but could not get it.
- vii. English is killing many people in this country
- viii. Yes. English has come to stay
- ix. Of course, but what else can we say?
- x. English accounts for all my woes. But God is in control
- xi. I have written English several times before getting through to this level

Teachers were also interviewed. The researcher also talked to most of the teacher associations in the country such as the National Association of Graduate Teachers (NAGRAT), Ghana National Association of Teachers (GNAT), Teachers and Education Workers Union (TEWU), and the Concerned Teachers Association (CTA) members. There was a mixture of responses from members of these groups. Ernestina Nyaani from Sunyani Senior High School in an interview bemoaned the use of English language as medium of instruction as a decision that Ghana mistakenly took, which has affected her life so negatively. She is of the view that she

couldn't just comprehend instructions given in English language when she was in school. She instead attributed her woes to the fact that she did not get a good English teacher at the primary school to teach her English. She also believed that she attended a government school (referred to in Ghana as *Psyto*) where local language was used at the basic primary level. She said if she had gotten the opportunity to be schooled in a private school where English was the medium of instruction throughout the school curriculum, her life shouldn't have remained the same. She added that she would not allow her daughter to be schooled in any government school where an indigenous language is used as a medium of instruction at any level of the school curriculum.

The Regional Chairman of the National Association of Graduate Teachers (NAGRAT) in an interview said 'No matter what, education in one's language is the best option'. He further admitted that 'English has rather come in to save the heterogeneous country and nothing else'. The responses of most of the teacher respondents were no different. However, after admitting that the use of English has adverse effects on employment in Ghana, they also outlined the problems associated with the use of indigenous languages as the medium of instructions.

Questionnaires

Another research method used in collecting data in this study was a questionnaire this was used to collect data from opinion leaders, teachers, students, and educationists. All in, 86 respondents were sampled. This instrument was used to find out two primary information-English as an instructional language and its correlation with employment.

Question 1: What language do you use as medium of instruction?

This question was posed to find out whether respondents are aware of the language policy in the country. All the respondents responded that they use English as the medium of instruction. This indicates that all the respondents were aware of the policy that English is the medium of instruction. This shows also that teachers may not adhere to the policy that the child's immediate language should be used in teaching at the lower primary school levels. This is because the policy states that English language should be used to teach from Primary Four.

Question 2: In question two, the researcher finds out the level of students' acceptability and responsiveness in the use of English Language as medium of interaction. This was to find out the extent at which students understand and accept English as a language in the classroom. No respondent believed that students have an excellent understanding of the use of English language in

teaching and learning. This was 90-100 percent on the grading system. 43% of the respondents indicated that the level of understanding with the use of English is very good. This is from 70 –to 80 percent. Fifty-seven (57) percent of the total number of respondents indicated that the level of understanding, acceptability and the rate of absorption in the classroom interaction with the use of English is between 60 and 69 percent.

In Question 3, the researcher finds out the opinions of respondents on whether the use of indigenous language throughout the primary school level is recommended. Respondents, who responded in affirmation, were of the view that it will promote better understanding of the concepts taught. They contend that because English is used in the teaching and learning, most important points in the interaction are missing. This is because students don't understand the concept because they don't understand the English language properly. They maintain that the use of a local language throughout the primary level of education will go a long way in making them better citizens in the societies. They also indicated that using a local language in that respect will let the students appreciate their mother tongue. A good number of the respondents also responded that the local languages are dying, thus, by using the indigenous language in teaching up to that level, it will help maintain the indigenous languages. The responses of respondents were grouped into two categories. These are:

- i. For better understanding
- ii. Maintenance and promotion of culture

On the other hand respondents who answered NO were of the view that English has come to stay in Ghana and there is no way indigenous language can be used in teaching the whole of the primary school levels. In addition, some claim that it will be very difficult to use a local language to teach certain technical topics that do not have local translations. They are also of the view that the introduction of English language will delay and that will delay the mastery of the official language in the educational curriculum. This also has negative effects on students' use of English at their work place after graduation. A good number of the respondents indicated that there are not sufficient learning materials on the local language so it will undermine teaching and learning. Three groups of responses were identified:

- i. There is the lack of teaching learning materials
- ii. It will be difficult to use a local language in teaching technical courses.
- iii. It will be ethnically difficult to select an indigenous language as medium of instruction

Thus, respondent's responses, revealed that even though the use of indigenous language has great deal of

importance, the time to do that is past. Opinions about which indigenous language to be used as the medium of instruction, there were varying answers. This ranges from Akan through Dagbani and Ga to Hausa. Others were of the opinion that maintaining the status quo is the way forward.

Question 4 finds out the indigenous language respondents would have wished to be used as a medium of instruction in Ghanaian schools. The respondents were grouped into the following categories:

- i. It has the greatest number of speakers.
- ii. It is the lingua franca.
- iii. It is language of the greatest prestige.

Those who responded that the child's immediate language should rather be used in teaching and learning are of the view that it will promote understanding. Respondents who responded that Gonja should be used as an instructional language also said:

- i. It is spoken nationwide.
- ii. It is easy to understand.

On the part of the use of Hausa, respondents indicated that it is the major international language in the country. Hausa is mainly spoken in Nigeria. It is a language spoken in

Part three of the questionnaire sought to find out the correlation between the use of English and assessment of students. Thus, the research sought to find out whether the English has negative effects on the performance of students in the various examinations. This is one of the areas of great concern to the researcher. This is because assessment and evaluation is integral part of the student's socio-economic lives. There are various techniques through which the performance of students can be assessed. These include observation, writing test, class and home assignment, project, research, presentations and oral examinations. In any of these, English plays a major role in determining how far the objective of a curriculum or course of study has been achieved. There are different forms of educational evaluation. These are formative, prescriptive and summative. In Ghanaian school curriculum, all these are employed and are done mostly in English language. The purpose of assessing or evaluating the performance of students in Ghanaian curriculum among others is for instructional purpose, selection, guidance, certification, and placement. This determines the kind of job one stands to get after school. Thus, assessment of student's performance has direct bearing on the employment opportunity of school graduates.

Question 13 of the questionnaire finds out the possible

causes of students' failure and non-performance in examinations. The following options were provided and respondents were asked to select the three most possible causes of students' failure and non-performance in school.

- It is the language
- It is due to the teachers' attitude
- Due to the unsupportive nature of parents
- Lack of logistics
- Due to short course duration
- It is due to the nature of questions
- It is due to students' own attitudes.
- The students don't learn these days
- It is the language factor
- They don't read so they don't understand
- English is the problem
- Some of the questions are tricky
- Nowadays, the questions are not easy
- There is the lack of commitment on the part of the teachers nowadays

The various reasons and causes of students' poor performance in school were grouped into three major categories. These are:

- The language factor
- The content and nature of questions
- Attitudes of students, parents and teachers

The researcher also sought the opinions of the respondents about the course(s) that students mostly fail in examination. This was done to find out whether there is a correlation between the language used in teaching them and the performance of the students. Most of the answers provided indicated that English, Mathematics and Science are the most failing subjects in the Ghanaian school system. These are core courses at all levels of Ghanaian education. Other subjects mentioned include Physics, Chemistry, Elective Mathematics and Elective English. Greater number of the respondents saw the use of English as a contributing factor to the abysmal performance of students in the various examinations they write. They contend that most of the students do not get the concept taught well because of the difficulty in understanding the English very well. One respondents wrote 'All the questions are asked in English language so if the students do not understand the language, it would be difficult to answer the questions'.

Why are science and mathematics courses difficult for students in Ghanaian School?

Most of the subjects mentioned were Science related. These include Core Science, Chemistry, Physics, Core and Elective Mathematics. The study finds out why

students fail in Mathematics and Science? The study revealed that this is because of the technical nature of the Science courses. Thus, students find it difficult to comprehend some scientific terms which otherwise be well understood in when a local language is used. Respondents also advised that such terms be explained in a local language.

The question was posed to find out the reasons why candidates of WASSCE mostly find it difficult to answer mathematical and scientific questions. This was a follow up to questions. The following are the answers provided by respondents:

- i. They are tricky
- ii. They are very technical
- iii. It is the nature
- iv. Such questions are difficult
- v. It is the language; they don't understand the language
- vi. The terms are mostly the problems
- vii. They don't understand the terms

These answers were grouped under the three study-areas as:

- The language factor
- The attitude of corporate bodies
- The content and nature of the paper/exams

The study also revealed that despite the use of English as a medium of instruction, the performance of students in the English Language course has not been encouraging. This shows how difficult students find the use of the language.

In Question 19 and 20, the respondents were asked 'Do you see any correlation between the use of English language in the classroom and employment opportunities of school graduates'? Ninety-six percent of the respondents answered YES to the question. This means that there is great correlation between English and employment in Ghana. The following are some of the responses given by respondents: 'Most employers conduct their employment interviews in English language and speak the language mostly at workplaces'. This means that if one does not have competence in English language one cannot get some particular job to do in Ghana.

Despite the answers provided in questions 12 and 13, most of the respondents see some benefits of using English language in Ghanaian classrooms as medium of

instruction. Most of the respondents were of the opinion that 'English is an international language so its usage as a medium of instruction has numerous advantages including being able to communicate with foreigners'. Others stated that the use of English also makes students become proficient in the language which in effect promotes international trading.

With respect to the respondent's opinion about the link between English as a medium of instruction and employment, It was recorded that:

- i. Good command of English is a panacea to getting a good job to do
- ii. English proficiency promotes one's opportunity to get employed.
- iii. English serves as lingua franca for people at the various work places.
- iv. One's ability is measured with one's competence in the use of English.

The responses were grouped under three main categories for better analysis. These are;

- i. English proficiency is a measure of one's competence
- ii. English is a unifier language at work places
- iii. Promote job opportunity.

Only one respondent responded that there is no relationship between English and employment opportunity in the country. He is of the opinion that one's use of English language is independent of one's ability to work.

Question 23 of the questionnaire finds out about the importance of the use of English language in Ghanaian school and the general socio-economic lives. Responses from respondent indicate that:

- i. It has promoted international trade.
- ii. It is the language that unites the working population at their work place.
- iii. It prevents one ethnic group to lord over another.
- iv. It helps people to be employed.
- v. It has brought civilization to the people.

Out of the eighty-eight (86) respondents used in the study, eleven (11) representing 40.74 percent attribute the abysmal candidates failure due to the language used in asking questions; fourteen (14) representing 51.85 percent attribute it to the nature of the question and two (2) representing 7.41 percent attribute the problem to students own attitude to the exams. This is represented on the table 1.

Table 1. *causes of students' failure in scientific and mathematical questions*

Areas of Difficulty	No. of Resp.	Percentage
Content and Nature	15	17.44
Attitudes	37	43.02
Language Factor	34	39.53
TOTAL	86	100

Field work, 2017

Analysis

The research revealed that 15 respondents representing 17.44 percent attribute the poor performance of students in Mathematics and Science to the nature of the courses. They are of the opinion that some of the scientific and mathematical terms are not familiar to students hence their failure in these subjects. There is an element of language difficulty in this area of students' difficulty. Most of the teachers interviewed explained that they mostly use other strategies such as intra and inter-sentential codeswitching to explain unfamiliar words to students.

From the table 1, it is seen that 37 representing 43.02 percent attribute poor performance of students to attitudes and conducts of stakeholders. This includes, teachers, students and parents. Respondents are with the opinion that most of the students have the belief that such subjects are difficult. Thus, there is a kind of psychological effects on them before and during their period of study. This has negative effects on them and it affects their performance also.

Parents' failure to provide the necessary support to their wards is another contributing factor. For fear of failing in such courses, most parents advise their wards against doing Science even if the children have abilities and interest in the area. The attitudes of some teachers also affect students in Science and Mathematics study tremendously. Many are of the opinion that teachers of Mathematics and Science do not make the subject practical enough to attract the interest of the students.

Language used contributes 39.53 percent to the success or failure of students in Ghanaian classroom.

Out of the total number of 86 respondents, 34 of them indicated that medium of instruction is rather the major contributing factor to the success of failure of students in school. This is in view of the fact that most of the students do not comprehend the topics treated fully because they do not have enough vocabulary in the English language that will make them understand the concept taught. English is the medium of instruction. It is the language for assessment and evaluation. English is the language of communication outside the classroom in most of the Ghanaian schools. The findings therefore suggest that even though the language contributes immensely to the development of the country, it has its own challenges when it comes to being used as a medium of instruction.

DATA AND INFORMATION ANALYSIS

The responses given by respondents about how they perceive the use of English language in Ghanaian classroom were grouped under four main headings. The information gathered was analyzed in support of the research.

Part One of the questionnaire sought to look for demographic information about respondents. In all, eighty-six respondents were used in the study. Out of this number, forty-six (46) representing 54.58 percent were female and forty (40) representing 46.51 percent were males. Seven (7) out the total number were heads of school; 31 of them were teachers; 23 of them were students and 25 were parents. This represented on Tables 2 and 3 below:

Table 2 . Gender of Respondents

VARIABLE	SUB- SCALE	NO. OF RESPONDENTS	PERCENTAGE
Gender	Male	40	46.51
	Female	46	53.49
Total			100

Field work, 2017

Table 3. Category of Respondents

VARIABLE	NO. OF RESPONDENTS	PERCENTAGE
Parents	25	29.07
Teachers	31	36.05
Students	23	26.74
Heads of schools	7	8.13
Total		100

Field work, 2017

Question 2 of the questionnaire finds out the level of students' understanding of the use of English language. The results of the findings is table 4.1 below:

Table 4. Level of understanding of English by students

Range (%)	No. of Respondents	Percentage
90-100 (excellent)	-	-
70-89 (very good)	28	31.82
60-69 (good)	29	32.95
50-59 (average)	20	22.73
49 and below (poor)	09	12.5
Total	86	100

Field work, 2017

The information above indicates that the highest level of understanding of students with respect to the use of language is 89%. One can therefore say that 11% of absorption of teaching and learning in the English classroom in Ghana is lost. It can also be said that the receptive level of children in Ghanaian schools with respect to the use English as medium of instruction is 89%. This obviously has adverse effects on the school products' output at their work place. This is to say that all things being equal, a Ghanaian school graduate will be 11% less productive if he is compared to someone who has an excellent level of understanding in the English language.

The table also indicates that 9 percent of students in Ghanaian classroom has poor understanding of the use of English in the classroom. Poor understanding of English language also indicates that the students do not understand or have unsupportive level of understanding in the English language. This put the lost comprehension rate to 20%. This implies that the 20% of English language usage goes unusable.

The table further reveals that the average level of students' receptive level of English is 20%. i.e. $31.82+32.95+22.73+12.5/5$. It stands to reason that Ghanaians have average understanding of English language with

the use of English as a medium of instruction. It is an indication that 49% of students' understanding of concepts taught go waste. This actually may have a reflection on students' academic performance in school and their output of work after school. This is because poor understanding affects one's thought and thought affects competence and competence affects production. Production is seen in all spheres of endeavor such as management and general economic production.

Questions 3 and 4 sought to find out the opinions of respondents about the use of local language(s) or English language in teaching at the primary school level. There were diverse opinions about this subject. A great number of respondents were of the view that the use of a local language in teaching at the basic level has a number of advantages but it would be difficult to be used. The responses of respondents were grouped under two main headings:

- i. It will promote the culture of the people
- ii. It will build the confidence level of the students

Table 5 . Use of Language in Teaching Primary School

VARIABLE	NO. OF RESPONDENTS	PERCENTAGE
Use of Local Lang.	30	65.12
Use of English	56	34.88
TOTAL	86	100

Table 5 shows the opinions of respondents on the language (English or local) that is suitable to be used as a medium of instruction in Ghanaian schools. 65.12% of the respondents believes that indigenous language is more suitable whilst 34.88% of them prefer English language. The bone of contention here is that despite the loss of understanding of students in Ghanaian classroom with the use of English (as discussed above), greater number of students and teachers prefer using English as the medium of instruction. The researcher finds out why. It was revealed that:

- i. Most Ghanaian have not assess the consequence in this respect.
- ii. Most Ghanaian attached much prestige to the use of English language and that they do not consider the consequence thereof.
- iii. Ghanaian know that English in the classroom has adverse effects but they no control over its usage.

Table 6 below shows the indigenous languages respondents proposed to be considered as the medium of instruction:

Table 6. Proposed language to be used as medium of instruction

Indigenous Language	No. of Respondents	Percentage
Akan	25	29.07
Dagbani	12	13.95
Hausa	19	22.09
Ewe	08	09.30
Gonja	06	06.98
Ga	05	5.51
Others	11	12.79
Total	86	100

Field work, 2017

It is seen from Table 6 above that majority of the respondents will wish to use Akan to be the medium of instruction in the country. The reason for their choice was basically due to the greater number of speakers of the language. Akan speakers in the country constitute approximately 50% of the total population in the country. It is unofficial lingual franca in the country. Akan is perhaps the most developing language in Ghana. This is evident with the fact:

- Akan is the language mostly used for commerce and other commercial activities in the country.
- It is the language mostly used in the entertainment industry.
- Akan has the greatest number of speakers
- It is the language which is mostly studied in most of the Ghanaian schools
- The language has the greatest number of written material than any of the local languages in the country.

Hausa is the next preferred language to be considered as the medium of instruction in Ghanaian schools if a local language is to be considered. This is followed by Dagbani, Ewe, Gonja and Ga. Other languages also follow. Even though these proposal were made, earlier responses indicates that Ghana is not ready to accept a local language as medium of instruction. There were people who actually share this view. They were of the opinion that using English language has a lot of advantages.

Causes of Poor Performance of Students

In all, out of the eighty-eight (86) respondents, twenty (25) of them slammed the blame on the language factor i.e. the nature of the language used; twenty (20) of them believe that the course content and the nature of the course and assessment is mostly above the students' comprehension and that accounts for the poor performance of students. Twenty-nine (29) of them put the blame on the students, teachers and parents' attitudes towards education.

Table 7. Causes of poor performance of students in school

Causes of Poor Performance	No. of Respondents	Percentage (%)
Content and Nature	20	23.26
Attitudes (teachers, parents and students)	36	41.86
Language Factor	30	34.88
TOTAL	86	100

The issue of poor performance of Ghanaian students was crucial in this study. Both teacher based and standard evaluation of students' performance in Ghanaian school curriculum show a low level of performance. The study finds out whether there is a correlation between the medium of instruction and students performance. In all, 23.26% of respondents attributed the non-performing of students to the nature and content of the subjects students offer. This may not be a good measure. This is because most of the courses and topic offer in Ghanaian schools are done across curriculum. Students in other countries also offer similar course as science, social studies, English Language, Chemistry, Geography and Accounting among others. 41% of respondents also said the cause of students' ill-performance is due to attitudes. This is very remarkable. The attitudes in this way can be put in three perspectives: Teacher Factor: The attitudes of most teachers do not support teaching and learning. The research identified the following as the important teachers' attitudes that affect students' academic work:

- Poor supervision of work
- Misuse of contact hours
- Poor preparation and delivery
- Adamant to rules and regulations

Most Ghanaian teachers complain of poor remuneration. There are no incentives to this amount. Teachers are supposed to use this amount to pay for rent, transport and feeding. This makes many of them look elsewhere to look for additional opportunities to complement their take homes. This makes most of the contact hour go waste and academic work suffer tremendously.

Parents Factor:

Due to high illiteracy rate, a good number of Ghanaian parents has little interest in their children's education. Most Ghanaian parents show little or no interest in educating their children. By so doing students suffer greatly when it comes to provision of education materials in promoting their children's education. Major areas of concern include the following:

- Poor supervision
- Poor provision of learning material
- Poor parenthood

Students' Factor:

Students' factor is very crucial in this subject. Areas of major concern include the following:

- Lack of vision
- Lack of self-motivation
- Lack of seriousness

The next factor is language.

Two major languages are used in teaching and learning in Ghanaian classroom. Due to uneven levels of capabilities among others, teachers use other strategies such as borrowing and codemixing to augment the language used. English is the major medium of interaction. This is seen from instruction to evaluation. 34% of poor performance among Ghanaian students is attributed to medium of instruction.

One important area of concern in this study is to find out the subjects that students fail most and the reason behind it. The research revealed that Mathematics, Science and English respectively are the subjects that students don't perform well in the school curriculum. Here, the researcher relied on both summative and prescriptive assessment and evaluation. This is to say that the researcher used information about students' continuous assessments and the end of program assessments. Findings of the study is represented on the Table 8.

Table 8. Subject(s) students mostly fail (SHS)

Course	No. of Respondents	Percentage
Mathematics	29	33.72
English	31	36.05
Science	26	30.23
Total	86	100

Field work, 2017

ENGLISH AS MEDIUM OF INSTRUCTION AND EMPLOYMENT

The effect of the use of English on the graduates of Ghanaian school system was also studied and analyzed. Respondents in this group were school graduates. This was to find out the effects of English in their lives after graduation in the various levels of Ghanaian school system. These were grouped under four (4) categories as;

- i. Those who are doing jobs that they do not like but have been forced to do due to English (Category A)
- ii. Those who say English has affected their lives in diverse ways (Category B)
- iii. Those who say English has caused their delay in their endeavor (Category C)
- iv. Those who have successfully secured jobs they really like despite the challenges the use of English poses (Category D)

Table 9. Effects of English on Ghanaian School Graduates

No.	Description	No. of Respondents.	Percentage
1.	Category A	18	20.93
2.	Category B	22	25.58
3	Category C	15	17.44
4	Category D	31	36.05
	TOTAL	86	100

Field work, 2017

The data above shows that 20.93 percent of Ghanaian school graduates have no job satisfaction with respect to the use of English language. Most of these people were artisans, farmers and businessmen and women. There is so much prestige attached to white color job. Regardless how successful one may be, if one does not have education or a white collar job to do, one seen oneself as unsuccessful. Most of the people from this category are doing so well with respect to employment, they are actually not satisfied. According to them, they do not have the work they are doing at heart but have been forced to do because they do not have any option. Respondent in this category are of the view that even though they may not doing so bad of the work they are doing, they do not have interest in them because they are forced to do because of diverse reasons pertain to English. Ernestina Nyani, a secretary at Sunyani Senior High School responded 'Has it not been English, I would have been a teacher like you'. Other respondents have similar concerns. Job dissatisfaction has numerous effects on national production. This leads to:

- backbiting and envy on the part of those who think the society has not treated them fairly.
- poor attitude to work
- conspiracy
- corruption and nepotism

These have serious implication on national economy and the production of goods and services. This is in view of the fact affected citizens mostly do not put up their best at their work places.

Respondents in category B indicate that because of the use of English language, their lives have been affected in diverse ways. This constitutes 25.58 percent of the total number. People in this category include marriage, friendship, social lives and associations. Most of the people from this category were hawkers, traders, businessmen, hairdressers and wage workers. These are those who could not make life meaningful to themselves due to English language. People in this category are very diverse. They include drop outs and those who could not write their English papers and could not get any meaningful work to do for that matter. Some of these people performed very well in most of the subjects but could not perform well in English so could not see any progress in their lives. Twenty-two percent of the working populations are in this bracket. It is a common phenomenon in Ghanaian societies to hear someone say I am jobless because he could not pass his English paper and that could not get any work doing. People in this category become drop outs, armed robbers among others

Respondents in category C are those who believe the use of English in Ghanaian schools has cased their delay

in their endeavors. Most of the people in this bracket are those who wrote failed papers severally before getting the opportunity to further their education in the various tertiary institutions. Those who write remedial in Ghanaian societies are said to have faced the world war. Thus, people who fail and write remedial exams twice or thrice are said to have faced the world war twice or thrice. Mathematics English Language and Science are simply referred to as EMS. Most Ghanaian students write these two subject severally before getting the opportunity to further their education to the tertiary institutions. This is because they are all core courses and students need at least a pass to sail through. Most of these people attempted dome trade and later wrote English and passed before pursuing courses of their choice and this accounts for the delay of endeavor of such people.

The last groups of people are those whose lives have not been affected in any way negatively by the use of English. According the respondents in this group, the use of English language as medium of instruction does not have any negative effects on their choice of trade. To them, they are satisfied with the kind of work they are doing because they have their dream trade and planned occupations. People who are engaged in white collar jobs are mostly found in this category. They include teachers, doctors, lawyers and people in executive positions of various institutions in the country. These people are highly respected due to the perception of the people that those in such positions are successful. They mostly have the best of relationships, dressing and general social lives. I fact, Ghanaians measure of success includes one's competence in the use of English language and the kind of job one does.

The research finds out the role English language plays in the lives of Ghanaian working population. Thus, the study looks at how English language is used among the graduate of Ghanaian schools at the job market. Table 10 showcases what employers and employees use English language for on the job market.

Table 10. Purpose of English language in Ghanaian Job Situation

Variable	No. of Respondents	Percentage
As a measure of competence	42	48.84
As a unifier	32	37.21
Job requirement/ promote job opportunities	12	13.95
Total	86	100

Field work, 2017

The data reveals that most employers see those who speak English fluently as good materials for placement. Employers measure the level of one's competence to how effective the person may be. The use of English on the job market as a measure of competence constitutes 48.84%. English is also used to unify Ghanaian workers. Due to the multilingual nature of Ghanaian society, English is used as a common language to promote communication at the work places. 37.21% of the use of English in Ghanaian societies serves this purpose. English is also used as a requirement to job placement in the country. As official language, most employers advertise their vacancies with the demand of English proficiency. This constitutes 13.95% of the purpose of use of English in Ghanaian job market.

CONCLUSION

The research revealed that there are correlations between English as a medium of instruction and job placement in the country. These interrelations are diverse. The following are the key areas of concern:

- i. The average students' level of understanding in English language in Ghanaian classroom is 55%. This means that 45% of instructional concept is lost in Ghanaian classroom due to language barrier i.e. the use of English as a medium of instruction.
- ii. This actually has a reflection on students' academic performance in school and their output of work after graduation. This is because poor understanding affects one's thought and thought affects competence and competence affects production. Production is seen in all spheres of endeavor such as management and general economic production.
- iii. Ghana is experiencing some kind of 'self-post – independence slavery' due to language factor.
- iv. Employment is closely knit with English language in Ghanaian economy due to the role English plays in Ghanaian societies. Many people cannot

get employed because of their inability to use English.

- v. Many are those who have no job satisfaction due to language barrier.
- vi. The highest level of understanding with the use of English language among Ghanaian students is 89%. This means that 11% of students' comprehension of topics and concepts taught is lost.
- vii. Cross-section of Ghanaian graduates who fail to further their education due to their inability to perform well in English or understand classroom instructions perform very effectively in other fields of endeavor.
- v. Ghanaians measure success of the average Ghanaian with the white collar jobs and this has negative effects on the economy of Ghana.
- v. There is job dissatisfaction in Ghanaian economy due to reluctance on the part of students about courses offered.

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APPENDIX 1 QUESTIONNAIRE

Introduction

The researcher is studying the topic: *Examining the use of English Language as a medium of instruction in Ghanaian schools and its impact on employment*. I would be grateful if you could help provide information in this questionnaire to enable the study to be successfully carried out. Your candid responses would help make the exercise successful. You are assured of high level of confidentiality and that the information received will be used purposely for academics and national development.

Please, tick where appropriate.

Part One: Demographic Information

Gender: male () female ()
Age: below 18 years () above 18 years ()

Occupation:

Years at work place: 1-3 years () 4-6 years () 7-10 years () above 10 years ()

Part Two: Perception of English Language as a medium of Instruction

1. What was the medium of instruction from pre-school to Primary Three in the school you attended?

- English ()
- local ()
- mixed language ()

2. What is the rate or level of understanding of the use of English as an instructional language in your subject areas?

- 90-100 percent – excellent ()
- 70-80 percent- very good ()
- 60-69 percent - good ()
- 50-59 percent- average ()
- 49 and below- poor ()

3. Will you recommend the use of a local language as a medium of instruction in the whole of primary school?

- Yes ()
- No ()
- Indifferent ()

4. If you answered YES or NO in question 3, please, state your reasons.

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5. Please, indicate the indigenous language you would have wished to be used as the medium of instruction.

- Akan ()
- Ewe ()
- Hausa ()
- Ga ()
- Dagbani ()
- The child's immediate dominant language ()
- Other(s) state

6. Please, state your reason(s) for suggesting that the language stated in Question 5 above should be used as the medium of instruction.

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7. Will you recommend that the English language be used for teaching and learning throughout the school curriculum?

- Yes ()
- No ()
- Indifferent ()

8. Please, give reason(s) in support of your answer in question 7 above.

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9. Will you recommend the child's immediate dominant language is used to teach him/her from pre-school to Primary Three as it pertains in our schools now?

- Yes ()
- No ()
- Indifferent ()
- Others (state)

10. What language is used as a medium of instruction in the school where your child(ren) is attending?

- Local language ()
- English language ()

11. Do you see any correlation between the language used (as medium of instruction) and the child's future career?

- Yes ()
- No ()

12. Please, state the benefit(s) that your child(ren) stands to achieve if they are taught in the language in (Question 10) above.

.....

..... 13. Do you establish any correlation between English as an evaluation tool and students' career opportunities?

- Yes ()
- No ()

13. Which of the following do you think is the most possible cause of students' failure in Ghanaian schools?

- It is the language factor. ()
- It is due to students' behaviour. ()
- It is due to the teachers' attitude. ()
- It is due to the nature of the subject(s) ()

14. Currently, students who fail in Core English are not promoted to the next stage of the education system. What is your assertion on this policy?

- It is a good policy. It should be maintained ()
- It is unfortunate policy. Such students must be promoted ()
- I have no idea ()

15. Do you think there is the need to measure school graduates' level of competence in the English language before giving out employment?

- A level of mastery is needed ()
- There is no need at all ()
- Yes, it is needful ()

16. Do you think the English language (as a medium of instruction) contributes to the failure of students in the various internal and external examinations in the school curriculum?

- Yes ()
- No ()
- Indifferent ()

17. Please, if you answered YES or NO in Question 16 above, give reason(s) in support of your claim.

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.....

18. Do you think the use of the English language as a medium of instruction contributes to unemployment situation in the country?

- Yes ()
- No ()
- I am indifferent ()

19. Do you see any relationship between the use of English language and employment?

- Yes ()
- No ()
- Indifferent ()

20. Please, state any link you identify between the two subjects in Question 16 above (i.e. English as a medium of instruction and Employment).

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21. Do you believe that English used as a medium of instruction has made or is capable of making the lives of school graduates worse of in one way or the other?

- Yes ()
- No ()
- Indifferent ()

22. Please, give reason(s).

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23. Do you think that the use of English as the medium of instruction has any importance in Ghanaian societies?

- Yes ()
- No ()
- Indifferent ()

24. If you answered YES or NO to Question 23, please, give reason(s).
 ▪
 ▪
 ▪
 ▪

25. English has been the medium of instruction since the inception of formal education in Ghana. What is your perception of its effect on the development of the country?
 ▪ It has brought negative repercussion on the school graduates ()
 ▪ It has positive consequences on the school graduates ()
 ▪ I am indifferent to this question ()

26. In your view, do you think the English language as a medium of instruction has any positive effects on the academic lives of Ghanaian school graduates?
 ▪ Yes ()
 ▪ No ()
 ▪ Indifferent ()

27. What is your general perception about the use of English language as a medium of instruction in Ghanaian schools?
 ▪ English should be used from pre-school to the tertiary levels ()
 ▪ English should be used throughout the school curriculum ()
 ▪ Indigenous language should be used from pre-school up to class six before using English for the remaining levels (from JHS up to the tertiary levels) ()
 ▪ English should be used from Primary Four to the tertiary level. ()
 ▪ Others.....

28. Do you think that English language contributes to making students dropouts?
 If YES, please, give reason(s).....

 If No please, give reason(s)

29. What language do you use for communication at your workplace?
 ▪ English language ()
 ▪ Local language ()
 ▪ Both ()

30. For what purpose do you use the English language at your workplace?
 ▪ As a measure of competence ()
 ▪ As a job requirement ()
 ▪ As a sign of unification ()

31. What is your general perception or opinion about the use of English language as a medium of instruction in Ghanaian schools with respect to employment?
 ▪ It has made most school graduates' lives unbearable. ()
 ▪ It has been very helpful ()
 ▪ I am indifferent to this question ()

32. Do you think that the use of English as the medium of instruction has any importance in Ghanaian societies?
 ▪ Yes ()
 ▪ No ()
 ▪ Indifferent ()

33. If you answered YES or NO to Question 32, please, give reason(s).

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34. Do you think that if a local language is used as a medium of instruction in the school system, students' performance will be better?

- Yes ()
- No ()
- I am indifferent ()

35. Do you think that if indigenous language is used as medium of instruction in Ghanaian education system, it will promote understanding and will have positive impact on employment?

- Yes ()
- No ()
- Indifferent ()