UNIVERSITY OF EDUCATION, WINNEBA

INVESTIGATING THE PROBLEM OF PUNCTUATIONS AND CAPITALISATION IN THE WRITINGS OF BASIC SCHOOL STUDENTS: THE CASE OF NANGALIKINIA JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL

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DECLARATION

Student's Declaration

I, ANTOINETTE WEJA ABURIYA, declare that this thesis, with the exception of quotations and references contained in published works which have all been identified and duly acknowledged, is entirely my own original work and it has been submitted, either in part or whole, for another degree elsewhere.

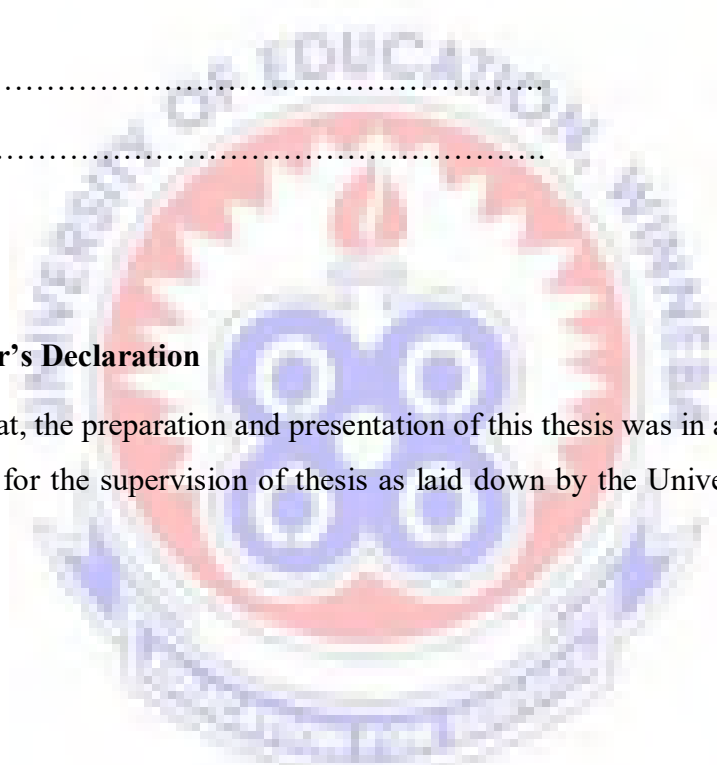Signature ………………………………………………..

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Supervisor's Declaration

I certify that, the preparation and presentation of this thesis was in accordance with the guidelines for the supervision of thesis as laid down by the University of Education, Winneba.

Name of Supervisor: DR. OBREMPONG KWAKU OFORI

Signature…………………………………………………………

Date…………………………………………………………..

DEDICATION

To my husband, Mr. Joseph Nabaarese Aloa, and my sons, Wekea Austin Aloa and

Awelana Maurice Aloa.

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I will first of all thank God for His abundant blessings given me, He has made it possible for me to begin and finish this program, taking a step once again on the mountain of learning and thus making me a better teacher and a professional.

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ABSTRACT

This study investigated the problem of punctuation and capitalization among students of Nangalikinia Junior High school. The purpose of the study is to find out some of the errors basic school students commit when punctuating their writing. It is also to find out some of the causes of the punctuation problems among students and how to address them. This was done through pen and paper survey and through interview. The sample size used includes thirty (30) J.H.S students and five English teachers from Kasena-Nankana West (A) Circuit. The study confirmed that students at the basic school commit various punctuation problems. Some of them do not punctuate their writings at all. Others punctuate where they ought not to punctuate while others use one form of punctuation mark for another or use a small letter in place of a capital letter. It was discovered that these problems exist because there is limited time allocation for teaching punctuation. Teachers do not use appropriate teaching strategies to teach the concept and students are not also encouraged to study it. Therefore, this study revealed that there is the need for enough time allocation in the syllabus for teaching punctuation and capitalisation. Teachers need to adopt modern teaching strategies for teaching the concept. Students should also be encouraged to study the concept. The study has contributed to the existing literature on the problem of punctuation and capitalisation.

CHAPTER ONE

1.0 Introduction

This chapter takes a look at the following elements of the study: Section 1.0 introduces the chapter. Section 1.1 gives the background of the study. Section 1.2 Looks at the statement of the problem. Section 1.3 states the purpose of the study whereas section 1.4 states the research questions; significance of the study is discussed in section 1.5. Section 1.6 is the limitations of the study. Whiles delimitations of the study is presented in section 1.7, and section 1.8 is the organisation of the rest of the study.

1.1 Background to the Study

The purpose of this study is to investigate the problem of punctuations and capitalisation among basic school students. The problem of using correct punctuation and capitalisation in the writings of basic school students cannot be underestimated. It is observed that many students in Ghanaian public schools do not appropriately punctuate their writings. Some of these students do not also use capital and small letters in their writings appropriately. It is common for a student at the basic school to construct a sentence without a full stop. In some instances, such students can even write a whole length of paragraph without a single punctuation mark. Even where the student attempts to punctuate, he or she may end up placing a punctuation mark wrongly or using a wrong punctuation mark where it is not needed. For example, a student may use a comma when the construction demands a full stop or place a punctuation mark in the construction where there is no need for punctuation at all. Again, it is commonly the case that some students use only one punctuation mark in the entire writing and disregard other forms of punctuation marks that are required. That is, the student may

use only full stop throughout the writing but does not use comma, colons, question marks and other punctuation marks that are also required to be used in the writing.

In the case of capitalisation, some students misuse both the lower and upper case letters of the alphabet. In a situation where the upper case letters of the alphabet is required, some students use the lower case and vice versa. For instance, the writing convention demands that we use upper case letter for the initial letter of a word that begins a new sentence. But some students employ the lower case letter to begin a new sentence. Others also use lower case letters for special words which required the use of the upper case letters. This practice is indeed very common among students of Nangalikinia Junior High School (J.H.S) which greatly affects their performance in the English language.

For students to perform well in their writing there is the need for them to use punctuation marks appropriately. This is because punctuation marks play a very important role in writing. They "are like the mortar that the builder uses to hold bricks together" (Boateng & Hylton-Lartey, 2015, p.5). Inappropriate use of punctuation marks or wrong placement of punctuation marks according to Singh (2015) has the tendency of changing the meaning of a sentence completely and sometimes even convert the entire sentence to nonsense. Unfortunately, nothing much is being done to help students at the basic level to improve upon their punctuations and capitalisation. Many language teachers at the basic level do not attach importance to the teaching of punctuation marks and capitalisation.

It is against this background that this study is being conducted to find out the problems that are associated with students' use of punctuation marks and capitalisation in the Ghanaian basic schools. The study is conducted in Nangalikinia Junior High

School to specifically investigate some of the causes of students' wrong use of punctuation marks and capitalisation in the basic school and to find remedy to these problems.

1.2   Statement of the Problem

The problem of correct use of punctuation marks and capitalisation among students of Nangalikinia J.H.S has become very alarming. This is clearly shown in their writings. Some students punctuate where they do not require punctuating. Others also do not punctuate where they ought to punctuate. This makes it difficult for one to read the students' exam scripts and make meaning out of what they write. But this issue has not been given much attention.

Some aspects of punctuation errors among students of different levels of education have been investigated. Awad (2012) investigated the most frequent punctuation errors among An-Najah National University TEFL and English Major Students. Similarly, Ahmad et al (2016) studied the most frequent punctuation and capitalisation errors made by EFL learners. Kure (2008) also looked at the state of punctuation strategies among SS3 students in Jigawa State. But much has not been done on punctuation errors among the Ghanaian basic schools although the problem persists. The focus of this study therefore seeks to fill this gap by looking at some of the problems associated with punctuation and capitalisation among students of Nangalikinia Junior High School.

1.3   Purpose of the Study

This study is aimed at investigating the problems associated with punctuations and capitalisation by students of Nangalikinia J.H.S in the Kasesna-Nankana Municipality of Navrongo in the Upper East Region of Ghana. It specifically examines

some of the errors committed by students when punctuating their writings and when using both the upper and lower case letters of the English alphabet. The study also looks at the causes of students misused of these punctuation marks and capitalisation and recommends a solution

1.4   Significance of the Study

The study will serve as reference for future researchers who will want to conduct research in the same subject. It will also contribute to the existing literature on the problem of punctuation and capitalisation.

1.5   Objectives of the Study

The objectives of the study are to:

1. identify the problem of punctuation and capitalisation in the writings of students.
2. examine the causes of wrong punctuation and capitalisation in the writings of students.
3. propose solutions to the problems of punctuation and capitalisation among students.

1.6   Research Questions

The following questions serve as a guide to the study.

1. What are the problems of punctuation and capitalisation among students?
2. What are the causes of the problems of punctuation and capitalisation?
3. How can students improve upon their punctuation and capitalisation in writing?

1.7   Limitations

This study suffers the following limitations and challenges. First, the study did not offer the opportunity for every student to be studied. There is the likelihood that those students sampled may have majority of them being good or weak academically. It is therefore difficult to know exactly how serious the problem is. The sampling technique did not also allow every participant the exact equal chance to be selected. The data collection process was done during the normal school hours. It was difficult getting time on the time table for the data to be collected from students. Therefore the researcher has to conduct the exercise after the normal classes' hours. The interview used may also result to different responses by the interviewees due to the wording.

Again, there maybe an interview bias on the part of the interviewer. Due to the large number of students involved in the class, it was difficult to ensure total class control when conducting the pen and paper survey. It is possible some of the students copied from their friends. This may therefore mar the validity of the exercise

1.8   Delimitation

This study is conducted exclusively in Nangalikinia J.H.S. There are a good number of Junior High Schools in the Kasena-Nankana Municipality. The researcher would wish to extend the study to all these Junior High Schools. But time and other resources needed did not make this possible. The researcher therefore limited the study to only Nangalikinia J.H.S. because that is where the researcher teaches. This enabled the researcher to regularly visit the school to conduct the study. The study was also conducted in only J.H.S two class. The sample size was thirty (30) out of fifty-two (52) students. This number was sampled out of the entire class to enable the researcher have control of the exercise so that the findings could be reliable.

This topic was selected to be studied because punctuations and capitalisation is very fundamental in writing. The ability of the learner to appropriately punctuate his or her writing would help him or her communicate well in writing to the reader.

1.9   Organisation of the Study

The study is organized into the following chapters. Chapter 1 entails the introduction, background of the study, statement of the problem, purpose of the study, objectives of the study, and research questions. Other areas covered in chapter 1 include limitations and delimitations of the study and ended with the organisation of the study.

Chapter 2 covers the literature review. It reviews literature on related works on punctuations and capitalisation in writing. Chapter 3 covers the methodology and research design adopted for this research. This chapter entails an introduction, research design, population, data analysis methods, and finally concluded with data presentation and discussion. In Chapter 4, I discuss the findings of the study. Chapter 5 concludes the study. It comprises an introduction, summary, recommendations and conclusion of the study.
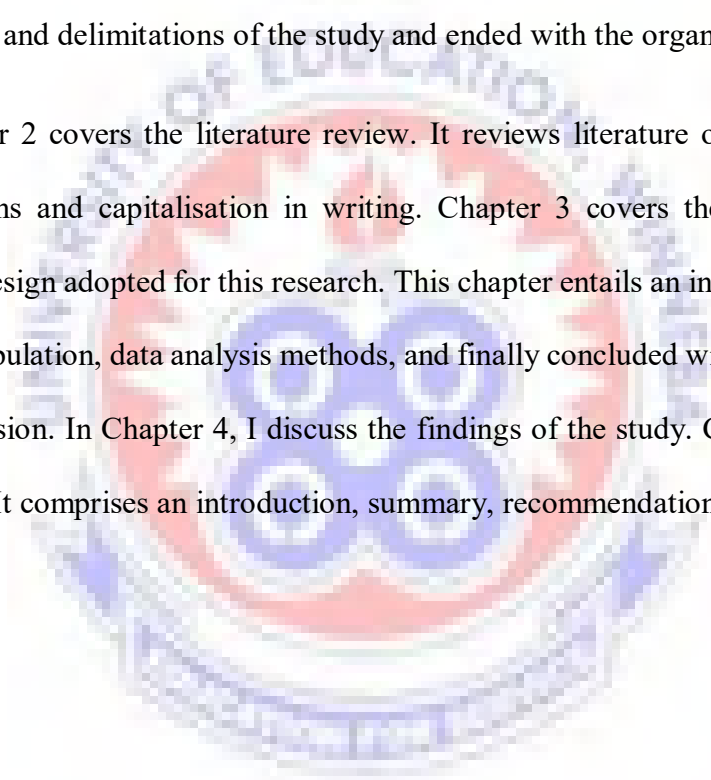
CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0   Introduction

This chapter reviews literature on what other researchers have done on punctuations and capitalisation. It specifically looks at what other researchers say about the meaning and functions of punctuation and capitalisation. The chapter also looks at some previous works done on punctuation and capitalisation and finally concludes with the theoretical framework used in the study.

The chapter is organised under the following headings; section 2.0 introduces the chapter. Section 2.1 looks at some definitions and explanations of the terms punctuations and capitalisation. Section 2.2 examines some types and functions of punctuations. In section 2.3, I review literature on previous works done on punctuations and capitalisation. Section 2.4 presents the theoretical framework adopted for the study and section 2.5 summarises and concludes the chapter.

2.1   Definition of the Terms Punctuations and Capitalisation

This section looks at the definition and explanation of the terms punctuation and capitalisation as discussed by other writers in the literature.

2.1.1   Punctuation

There are various definitions and explanations attributed to the term punctuation by different writers. For example, Wiredu (1998, p. 123) defines punctuation marks as device "used to show where we are pausing, or where we want to ask questions, or even where we want to emphasise". He explains that the punctuation may not be as effective

as we want the information to be presented, but it goes a long way to contribute to the interpretation of the message.

Ataman (2002, p. 76) observes that punctuation "is the art of indicating pauses and stopping points in writing". He explains that when we talk, we mostly pause for a breath or rest and when we finish talking, we stop. Therefore when we are writing, we use punctuation marks to indicate all these periods in communication. In similar view, Patridge (1964) sees punctuation as a way of dividing a writing composition into sentences, or parts of sentences, by points or stops, for the purpose of making the different pauses which the sense and accurate pronunciation requires. Patridge further explains that through punctuations the reader is able to know where his voice should go up or go down or even pause when reading.

This therefore implies that in a composition if a paragraph or sentence is written without these stops then the reading of that piece of writing will be affected, the reader will not be able to read correctly. Woods (2001) also indicates that punctuation functions to clarify the meaning of a piece of writing. Each punctuation mark in a sentence should have a reason for being there.

Namre and Smith (1981, p. 165) indicate that "punctuation is a device used by a writer to help his readers understand the meaning of his words, by conveying in print or writing, the tones, inflexions and pauses of spoken words…" In the view of Chapman (1990), punctuation involves the use of spacing, conventional signs and certain conventional typographical devices as aids to understanding. These typographical devices are the ones referred to as punctuation marks. Metcalf and Astle (1980, p. 76) mention that, "punctuation literary means, pointing, and in grammar it is the name given to the division of statements, or collections of words, into sentences, clauses, phrases,

questions and exclamations." Elliot (2006) however sees punctuation marks to do the same work as road signs do for a highway. Punctuation marks according to Elliot tell the students when to speed, when to slow down and when to stop during reading.

Christensen et al (2001) identifies punctuation marks to include comma, colon exclamation mark, question mark, semicolon and quotation marks. However, most of these marks occur in error and are quite difficult to insert. Most of the English teachers do not focus on them which have higher frequencies. In a similar view, Jowitt and Nnamonu (1985) explain that punctuation involves the use of printed signs other than letters. According to them, some of these signs include: full stops, colons, semi-colons, commas, inverted commas, apostrophes, questions and exclamation marks, hyphens, dashes and brackets.

This study adopts Jowitt and Nnamonu (1985) definition to define punctuations as the use of printed signs and symbols in writing to help readers understand what is being written by the writer. The punctuations serve as a means by which the writer communicates well in writing. Without punctuations, the information written down by the writer will not be understood by the reader.

2.1.2   Capitalisation

Capitalisation in writing involves the writing of a word with initial letter in capital letter and the rest of the words in small letters. Kirkpatrick (2007) explains that technically, the use of capital letters in writing is not the same as punctuation marks, but their use is closely associated with the use of full stop and question marks or exclamation marks. Mohammed (2018, p. 73) indicates that capitalisation "refers to the act of writing of any word with its first letter in uppercase and the rest of the letters in lower case". Zahid and Raja (2013) found that capitalisation, vocabulary, grammar and

organisation are the errors that showed in their study encountered by undergraduate students. Also, Sawalmeh (2013) indicates that capitalisation error is one of the most errors in 32 written essays in his study which was conducted for preparatory students. The study identifies these errors to be caused by the influence of the students' mother tongue.

Kirkpatrick (2007) mentioned that a capital letter can be used in a number of situations. It can be used as the initial letter of the first word of a sentence or a direct quotation as in the following sentences.

They left this morning.
He said, "I will leave this morning".

The capital letter is also used as the initial letter of the days of the week and month of the year and religious festivals e.g. Monday, October and Easter. The initial letters of words such as God, Allah, Jesus Christ and similar words are capitalised when writing. Kirkpatrick (2007) further indicates that the capital letter is also used as the initial letter of proper nouns, titles of people, places or works of art. It is also used as the initial letter of a noun that is a trade name of an organisation or entity among others. Wiredu (1998) classifies the use of the capital letter into two.

a. The capital letter is used to mark the beginning of a sentence. In such instances, the first word of the sentence is made to begin with a capital letter as in the following examples.

Study hard for the exams.
Girls are found of their hair.

b. The capital letter is also used to specify proper nouns such as names of persons, geographic names, names of institutions, festivals and nationalities, races and religions among others.

This literature on the use of capital letter is relevant to the study because students were made to re-write an unpunctuated passage and punctuate where they needed to punctuate. They were also made to use a capital letter to re-write some words in a given passage involving most of the instances discussed above to ascertain their understanding on the use of the capital letter.

2.2   Some Punctuation Marks and their Functions

Punctuation marks that are used in writing come in various forms to perform different functions. Some of them occur in the end of the sentence to indicate a pause, emphasise a point or to indicate the writer's feelings or attitude towards the message. Other punctuation marks occur in between words and clauses to separate one item or utterance from the other or to perform other related functions. This section identifies and discusses five major punctuation marks namely: full stop, comma, colon, semicolon and the question mark. These punctuation marks are selected because they appear to be the common punctuation marks frequently used in writing. It is therefore important that students in the basic level are made to understand how each of them is used in order to help them in their writing. The section looks at where each of these punctuation marks occurs in the sentence and the role it plays to help convey the message to the reader.

2.2.1   The full stop (.)

The full stop which is also known as *the period* (Kirkpatrick 2007, p. 179) is one of the most important and frequently used punctuation marks. It typically occurs in the end of the sentence and between letters to perform two basic functions (Wiredu 1998, p. 128) as shown below.

a. The full stop may be used to indicate an abbreviation. Words which have been abbreviated or a group of words whose letters have been omitted are indicated by the full stop.

Mr. *— Mister*
Dr. *— Doctor*
B.Sc *— Bachelor of Science*
Rt. Rev *— Right Reverend*

However, it is important to mention that in modern usage, certain abbreviations of well-known names, institutions and organisations are written without the full stop e.g.

ECOWAS *— Economic Community of West African States*
WAEC *— West African Examinations Council*
TV *— Television*

b. The full stop is used to indicate the end of a declarative or imperative sentence as shown in the following sentences.

Albert is a good friend of mine.
Please, keep quiet.

The full stop may also be used in group of words such as postal addresses and email addresses and websites. Kirkpatrick (2007) mentions that, the inclusion or omission of the full stop and also its placing is very important in emails and websites addresses. Therefore failure to place the full stop right can prevent the successful sending of an email or the accessing of an email.

2.2.2   The comma (,)

The comma is also one of the punctuation marks that are frequently used in writing. It however been identified as one of the most misused of the common punctuation marks. Kirkpatrick (2007) indicates that the comma is an extremely

common punctuation mark and yet its use causes a great deal of concern and confusion among many writers. She explains that this is partly because the use of the comma has changed quite a bit in recent times. Therefore, there is the need for writers to pay particular attention to the use of this important punctuation mark.

The comma is mostly placed between words, phrases and clauses to perform different grammatical functions. Wiredu (1998), Kirkpatrick (2007) and Amoako (2010) among others have outlined the different grammatical functions performed by the comma. Kirkpatrick (2007) for example identifies two major functions of the comma. These are linking and separating of items.

One of the common separating functions of the comma according to her has to do with lists. Individual items within a list of items are separated by the comma e.g.

We need to buy Milo, milk, sugar and bread for breakfast.
The students are studying English, French, Spanish and Latin.

In a situation where there is a list of adjectives before a noun, the comma can be used to separate the adjectives from the noun.
My friend wore a long, blue sequined dress.

The second function of the comma is that it may be used to enclose certain elements in a sentence. Some phrases, clauses and expressions may require comma to set them apart from the rest of the sentence. For instance, the comma may be used to set off a noun or noun phrase in apposition. A noun or noun phrase is said to be in apposition "when it is placed next to another noun or noun phrase and provides further information about it, especially by saying something that identifies or describes them" (Kirkpatrick 2007, p.195). In such situations, a comma is placed after the first noun or noun phrase to separate it from the other noun or noun phrase as

Dan Jones, the well-known racing driver, has been involved in a serious car accident.

The comma may also be used to enclose parenthesis and transitional expressions. These expressions consist of words, phrases or clauses which break into sentence to explain or emphasise or qualify a point (Wiredu 1998, p. 127).

We shall complete the work, I'm sure, by Friday.
Most of these people, as you know, are very poor.

The comma may be used to separate the main clause from a relative clause which is not required to identify the person or thing that the speaker is referring to, but which simply providing additional information.
My father, who lived in London, died early last year.

Also, if a subordinate clause precedes the main clause, it is sometimes followed by a comma as

Although we stopped and thought of it, we still made the wrong decision.

The comma is often used to separate an adverb or adverbial phrase at the beginning of a sentence from the rest of the sentence. For example, the use of the word *however* in the following sentence explains this.

It rained a lot. However, we had an interesting and enjoyable holiday.

Kirkpatrick (2007) however observes that the use of the comma nowadays in such situations is sometimes considered optional by some writers. The comma also plays a very important role in writing addresses, in question tags, in writing interjections and in writing a number that is made up of four or more figures among others. For example, 12,000 kilometers.

2.2.3 The colon (:)

The colon also appears to be one of the punctuation marks that are mostly misused by students. This could be attributed to the fact that most teachers do not consider it to be so important to the learners. Others do not even know how to use the colon. So such teachers tend to ignore this important punctuation mark when writing.

Wiredu (1998) describes the colon as an arrow which points forward to a list of items from an introductory statement. This is shown in the following example.

The following numbers won this week: 15, 74, 93 and 80.

Sekyi-Baidoo (2003) indicates that the colon functions to separate general statements from their specific. Similarly, Kirkpatrick (2007) observes that the colon is a punctuation mark that is used to separate two parts of a sentence when the first part leads on the second part. The colon according to her is also used to explain, interpret or classify what has gone before it as in the following sentences.

The standard of school work here is extremely high: it is almost university standard.
We have some new information: the allies have landed.

The colon may also be used in writing numerals and in writing titles of books. Kirkpatrick (2007) however observes that the colon is not mostly used in informal writing. It is mostly used in formal writing. The dash sometimes used in informal writing instead of the colon.

2.2.4 The semicolon (;)

The semicolon, according to Amoako (2011) is a difficult punctuation mark to use correctly. But it is one that needs to be studied carefully. Similar to the comma, the semicolon is used to link clauses or sentences together. However, the semicolon appears to be stronger than the comma but not as strong as the period (Wiredu 1998). The

semicolon is used to separate one independent clause from another which is closely related.

Some students like the principal; others disliked him.

Sekyi-Baidoo (2003) explains that a semicolon should not be used to unite unequal sentence elements but it can be used to separate items in a long list within a sentence especially when the list calls for a list within list. Kirkpatrick (2007) agrees with Sekyi-Baidoo (2003) by indicating that the semicolon is used to separate items in a long list or series of things so that the said list seems less complex and easier to understand as shown below.

> *The young man who wants to be a journalist has applied everywhere. He has applied to The Times in London; The Globe and Mail in Toronto; The Age in Melbourne; The Tribune in Chicago.*

The semicolon is also used in a situation where we are using sentence connectors such as: besides, moreover, nonetheless, so, yet etc.

It is observed that the use of the semicolon is not really common especially with students of today. Students often confuse this mark with other punctuation marks such as comma, colon and even with the full stop. This therefore calls for teachers to consciously guide students to use the semicolon appropriately when writing.

2.2.5 The question mark (?)

The question mark which is also known as the **query** (Kirkpatrick 2007) is used basically to mark the end of a question. As the name implies, whenever the question mark is used it indicates that the sentence is a question (Wiredu 1998; Kirkpatrick 2007;

Amoako 2011). Wiredu (1998) further indicates that the question mark functions in giving direct speech as indicated in the following examples.

How often should we visit you?
Will it matter if I don't come?

Sekyi-Baidoo (2003) explains that the question mark is also used to indicate echoes and rhetorical questions. This question mark is very peculiar such that whenever someone uses it even children can identify that a question is being asked.

The above discussion has identified some common punctuation marks used in writing by writers. The discussion clearly shows that while some of these punctuation marks appear in the middle of the sentence, others appear in the end of the sentence. It is also worth mentioning that the various punctuation marks or symbols appear in different forms and play different functions in writing. It is therefore important that students and writers take note of how each of these marks is used in writing so as to be able to use them appropriately.

The literature on the above punctuation marks is relevant to this study because students of Nangalikinia Junior High School also implore these marks in writing. The study therefore looks at how students of this school use each of these marks appropriately in their writing as well as some of the common errors they make when using each of these punctuation marks.

2.3   Previous Studies on Punctuation Marks and Capitalisation

There are some previous studies carried out by some researchers on punctuation marks and capitalisation. Shweba & Mujiyanto (2017) carry out a research on errors of spelling, capitalisation, and punctuation marks in writing encountered by first year college students in Al-Merghib University, Libya. The study examines the errors of

writing skills that first year English college students of Al-Merghib University face in the above mentioned punctuations and spelling.

Thirty participants of different genders participated in the study. These included thirteen males and seventeen females who study in the first year of English college in Al-Meghib University. To achieve the objectives of the study, Shweba & Mujiyanto (2017) implored qualitative design for the study. The data was collected using two methods: 1) questionnaire to check the participants' knowledge about the punctuation, capitalisation, and spelling usage and 2) a test to analyse these errors in the respondents' written language. To analyse the data, simple statistics description was used.

The result of the study found that capitalisation error was the most committed one, followed by the punctuation error, and spelling error was the least error committed by the first year English college students. The study concluded that most of the respondents committed some errors because of their lack of knowledge, lack of balance in the curriculum and the influence of mother tongue. The study therefore recommended that writing classes must engage students with more practices than ask them to deliver lectures.

Muhammad (2010) carried out a research on punctuation marks and effective written communication on the higher national diploma students of school of technology of the Bayero University of Kano. Muhammad (2010) used a population sample size of all the 380 HNDII students from seven departments of the University to gather the data. The researcher used essay writing, dictation and questionnaire to gather data from the students for the study. The essay writing and the dictation test given to the participants were used to test how the participants use punctuation marks correctly. The findings of

Muhammad (2010) indicate that students' performance was good because they did not commit many errors observed in the two separate writing tests.

Though the instruments used by the researcher to gather the data to some extent helped achieve the goal of the study, the use of dictation should not have been used. The use of dictation as a means of gathering data should not be encouraged because it is possible that some of the participants might have hearing impairment. It is also possible that the voice of the researcher might not be audible enough for the participants to hear clearly which words are being pronounced. This therefore could affect the reliability of the test. As a result, this study did not use dictation as an instrument to collect data for analysis. It however used interview and pen and paper survey to collect the data.

Kure (2008) also investigated the state of punctuation strategies among SS3 students in Jigawa state. The study used essay questions and oral interview to collect data for analysis. Teachers and students were randomly selected from the sample population. Kure (2008) used a government secondary school with a total number of two hundred and forty (240) as the population and sample size.

The results of this study reveal that there was more incorrect usage of punctuation marks than their correct usage. Results of the study also reveal that many of the students could not use punctuation marks appropriately due to the fact that some of the teachers were not qualified teachers to effectively teach the language. As a result, these teachers skipped the teaching of punctuations to the students. Similar to Shweba & Mujiyanto (2017), Kure's (2008) findings also indicate that there was mother tongue interference on the students' essays thereby affecting their writing.

Samhon and Abdall (2016) conducted a similar research on the topic, "Common Punctuation Errors Made by Secondary Schools Students in English: A Case Study at Secondary Schools, Nyala Locality". The focus of this study was to investigate the common punctuation errors made by students of secondary schools in writing at the Nyala Locality of the South-West Sudan. The sample size was 80 students from secondary schools who were given two tests (pre-test and post test) as tools for collecting data. The researcher used descriptive analytical method to analyse the data collected. Test and retest were also used to ascertain the reliability of the test.

Results of the study showed that the common punctuation errors committed by the students were: the use of comma in place of full stop, the incorrect uses of the comma, and the wrong uses of the quotation marks. The study further showed that exclamation mark, comma and quotation marks were more difficult among the entire marks, besides the misuse of some punctuation marks.

The results also revealed that there were significant differences in the number of punctuation errors committed by secondary school's students due to insufficient exercises and insufficient explanation to all types of punctuation marks, their uses and functions through examples as well as lack of sufficient practice among students.

The study therefore recommends that, the syllabus designers should take punctuation exercises into consideration by introducing them into the syllabus. It also recommends that teachers should encourage students to take punctuation elements into consideration when writing because wrong use of punctuation marks will change the meaning of the sentences. Teachers are also advised to explain the uses and functions of punctuation marks using examples and rules for clarification.

Samhon and Abdall (2016) did their possible best to find out the common punctuation errors that students commit by using the pen and paper survey (pre-test and post-test) to collect data for the study. But they failed to gather views from teachers to ascertain causes of the punctuation errors made by the students. Therefore, apart from the pen and paper survey, this study used questionnaire to illicit views from teachers who handle students at the basic schools to find out some of the causes of punctuation errors among students so as to recommend a remedy.

In a related study, Salamin et al (2016) investigated into punctuation and capitalisation errors made by Hebron University EFL students of Palestinian. The purpose of the study was to investigate the most frequent punctuation and capitalisation errors made by EFL learners and to ascertain whether there were significant differences in the frequency of such errors due to the learners' academic level, major, and / or gender.

The researchers used a sample size of 157 students from the English Department of Hebron University/ Palestine. These participants of the study were randomly selected from all EFL Hebron University undergraduate and graduate students enrolled in the second semester of the 2014/2015 academic year in the English Department. They included 136 females and 20 males. Specially designed test was administered by the researchers whereby the students were asked to fill in necessary punctuation marks and to correct capitalisation errors.

The results of Salamin et al (2016) clearly revealed that the most frequent punctuation errors that were committed by students were capitalisation, comma, semicolon, period, quotation, hyphen, apostrophe, and the question mark respectively from the highest to the lowest occurrence. However, there were no significant

differences in the frequency of the punctuation and capitalisation errors made by the students due to their academic level, major, or gender. This indicates that the level of the student including his or her gender had no significant influence on their punctuation errors.

Salamin et al (2016) therefore recommends that students should be adequately taught the rules of punctuation and capitalisation of the target language at an early stage of learning. It also recommends that there is the need for writing practice and sufficient exposure to English language input to develop learners' writing skills. Again, the study recommends that instructors need to probably reconsider their teaching techniques and strategies. They need to continue focusing on capitalisation and punctuation in classroom activities as well as in exams. In other words, instructors need to give more weight to the punctuation and capitalisation errors whether the course is a writing one or not. Finally, the study recommends that instructors need to be able to draw the attention of their students to areas of similarities or differences between the mother tongue and the target language to help them avoid interference.

In summary, this section looked at some previous studies done on punctuations marks and capitalisation errors among students and makes the following observations. First, it is observed that many of the works done previously focus on investigating the problem of punctuation marks at the secondary and tertiary level. Second, it is also observed that some of these works focus on investigating the common punctuation marks misused by students but does not consider finding out some of the causes of these punctuation errors made by students. For example; Shweba & Mujiyanto (2017), Samhon and Abdall (2016) and Salamin et al (2016) all focus on finding out the common punctuation errors made by students at the highest level of education. Again, many of the researchers only rely on students to illicit data for their respective studies

without considering the views of teachers who handle these students in the various institutions of learning.

This study however adopts the recommendations of Salamin et al (2016) that the problem of punctuation errors should be addressed at the early age of learning. The study therefore investigates some of the punctuation challenges students face at the basic level specifically in Nangalikinia J.H.S and how these punctuation challenges can be addressed. The researcher believes that if the problem of punctuation errors should be addressed then it must start from the basic level and not from the second cycles and tertiary levels. This study does not also look at only common punctuation marks errors made by students as some of the previous studies did. The study also looks at some of the causes of punctuation errors among students at the basic level so as to recommend appropriate solution to this problem.

In terms of method of data collection, the researcher uses pen and paper survey in addition to a designed questionnaire to collect primary data from both students and teachers for the study. The pen and paper survey is administered to students while the researcher interviewed some teachers who handle English at the basic level which was not the case with most of the above previous studies conducted on the same subject.

2.4   Theoretical Framework

The theoretical framework used in this study is the Error Analysis Theory. Brown (1987, p. 17) defines error analysis as "a process by which researchers observe, analyse and classify learner errors in order to elicit some information about the system operating within the learner. Error analysis investigates all possible sources of error." Gass and Selinker (2008) see errors as 'red flags' that provide evidence about the knowledge of second language learners. Richard (1974) indicates that researchers are

interested in identifying errors because errors provide valuable information that would be used to develop strategies towards better language acquisition. In the view of Littlewood (1998), language learners' errors derive from systematic and non-systematic sources. Systematic sources include interlingual errors deriving from the native language and intralingual errors related with the target language. Non-systematic sources cover the sociolinguistic context of communication, cognitive strategies and innumerable affective variables. Bryant (1984) identifies two types of errors in language learning. These are interlingual errors (L1) and intrallingual errors (L2). Interlingual errors according to Bryant are errors resulting from first language; while intralingual errors are from learner's misinterpretation of grammar rules. Corder (1985) makes a distinction between errors of performance and errors of competence. Corder attributes errors of performance as mistakes and errors of competence as errors. James (1998) agrees with Corder (1985) by describing the term, 'mistake' as a random slip of the tongue. According to James, a mistake is a performance fault that a learner is able to correct when his attention is drawn to it. But an error is believed to be not self-corrigible since the learner cannot correct it when his/her attention is drawn to it.

Corder (1985:20) observes that errors are "an inevitable and indeed necessary part of the learning process." Corder (1985) further explains the significance of learners' errors and their systematic nature. To Corder, errors must be viewed positively since they reflect the learners' systematic attempts to master the new system of the target language. Errors assist teachers by revealing how far the learner is progressing in the learning process. Again, Corder (1974) indicates that errors help the learner to discover the language that is being learnt. Through errors, the learner is able to understand the target-like forms of the target language and this can largely facilitate the learning progress of the learner. Corder (1967) identifies three steps of analyzing errors.

They include: (a) collection of samples of the learners' language, (b) identifying the errors in the sample and (c) classifying and describing them according to their nature and causes.

This study therefore adopts Corder (1967) steps on error analysis to collect data on sample learners' language, identify the errors and describe them accordingly.

2.5   Conclusion

This chapter has reviewed literature on a number of issues relating to punctuations and capitalization. First, the discussion looked at some definitions and explanations of the terms punctuation and capitalization. It was observed that many of the definitions given to punctuation point to the fact that punctuations are used as a means by a writer to help the reader understand what is being written. Without punctuation, the reader will not be able to read and make sense out of what he or she read. Hence, punctuation plays a very important role in writing. Most of the authors also view capitalisation as the writing of words with an initial capital letter. The writing convention indicates that the initial letter of the first word of a sentence among others should be capitalised. However, the discussions in the literature clearly point to the fact that capitalisation errors happened to be one of the common error committed by students when writing. Therefore capitalization needs to be consciously taught to students at the basic level.

The chapter also looked at some punctuation marks used in writing and their respective function. These punctuation marks include: the full stop, comma, colon, semicolon and question mark. The discussion specifically examined where each of these marks occur in sentence and the role it plays in sentence. It was revealed that the full stop and the question mark are typically used at the end of the sentence. But the

comma, colon and the semicolon are mostly used within the sentence. They may occur between letters, words, phrases and clauses to perform some grammatical functions.

The chapter also looked at some previous studies done on punctuation and capitalisation. It was observed that most of the various studies conducted on this subject were conducted mostly at the secondary and tertiary levels of education, but not at the basic level. Again, it was observed that most of the studies looked at the common punctuation errors committed by students as well as the frequency at which these errors were committed. Most of these studies did not consider the causes of the punctuation errors committed by the students.

The chapter finally ended with the theoretical framework used in this study. The chapter indicated that the Error Analysis Theory was the one used in the study. The various discussions on punctuation and capitalisation in the literature indicate that students at various levels of education commit errors on this subject. This study therefore adopted Corder's (1967) error analysis framework to collect data on sample learners' punctuation and capitalisation, identify the errors, describe the errors and recommend solution to these errors on punctuation and capitalisation. I discuss the method used to carry out this exercise in chapter three.

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CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

3.0   Introduction

This chapter discusses the methodology; research design, and procedures used to gather data for the study. It looks at the techniques used to sample the participants for the study; the instruments used to collect the data and the procedure used to analyse the data gathered from the participants. The entire chapter is organized in the following sections. Section 3.0 introduces the chapter. Section 3.1 looks at the population for the study. Section 3.2 discusses sample for the study. Sampling in research is discussed in section 3.3. I discuss the research design used for the study in section 3.4. Data collection instruments are looked at in Section 3.5. The research site for the study is also presented in Section 3.6. Section 3.7 discusses data collection protocol Section 3.8 looks at data presentation procedure while Section 3.10 discusses the ethical issues while Section 3.11 summarises and conclude the discussions in this chapter.

3.1   Population for the Study

Taherdoo (2016) defines population as the entire set of cases from which the research sample is drawn. The population for this study is the students of Nangalikinia Junior High School in the Kasena-Nankana Municipality. The population of the school is made up of J.H.S one to three (1-3) students. The total number of these students is one hundred and fifty-seven (157). Out of this number, there were a total number of seventy-six (76) boys and a total number of eighty-one (81) girls in the school. The age of these students ranges from twelve (12) to fourteen (14) years. The number of teaching staff of the school is nine (9) including the headmaster.

The target group for the study is J.H.S two students and the one other English teacher of the school. The J.H.S two students of the school were going to progress to form three and write their Basic Education Certificate Examination (BECE) yet they could not use punctuation marks and capitalization appropriately in writing.

3.2   The Sample for the Study

A sample is defined by Webster (1985) as a finite part of a statistical population whose properties are studied to gain information about the whole. Sample can also be explained as a group of people who are selected from a large population for the purpose of a study. In this research, the group of respondents selected to participate in the study is the J.H.S two students of Nangalikinia Junior High School.

The form two (2) class of students was sampled because they had stayed in the school for at least one full academic year unlike the first year class. The form two (2) class still had the opportunity to stay in the school for the rest of the period within which the study would be conducted unlike the form three (3) class that was preparing to write their Basic Education Certificate Examination (BECE) to be admitted into Senior High School (S.H.S).This was to ensure that the researcher would have the opportunity to administer the instruments for the study to these students to collect data on their punctuation and capitalisation errors before they leave the school. Another reason for selecting the form two students was that, the class was being taught by the researcher, so she would   have the opportunity to be with the students frequently as she conducts the study.

3.2.1   The sample size of the study

A sample size of a study is the total number of respondents selected out of a sample to participate in a study. The sample size of this study is thirty (30) out of fifty-

six (56) students in the J.H.S 2 class. The population of the class was the total number of students within the class. The number was fifty-six (56) in all. But the sample size was thirty (30).

However, it is worth mentioning that since the J.H.S 2 class was selected from the three different classes in the school, it is the one that forms the sample of the study. The thirty (30) out of the fifty-six students were selected because it would enable the researcher control the data collection exercises especially the pen and paper survey so that the findings could be reliable. In addition to the thirty (30) students, five (5) English teachers within the Central West Circuit in the Kasena-Nankana Municipality were also sampled to be interviewed. There were a total of six (6) J.H.S English teachers including the researcher in the Central West Circuit. The number of Junior High Schools in the Circuit was four (4) with a total number of six English teachers. Therefore, with the exception of the researcher, the remaining five English teachers in the Central West Circuit were sampled to participate in the study.

3.3   Sampling in Research

Wedster (1985) define sampling as the process of selecting a suitable sample or a representative part of a population for determining parameters of the whole population. Sallant and Dillman (1994) indicate that the purpose of sampling is to draw conclusions about populations from samples. They explain that we must use inferential statistics to enable us determine a population's characteristics by directly observing only a portion of the population. According to them, we obtain a sample rather than a complete enumeration (census) of the population for many reasons. It is obviously easy to observe a part than a whole. According to them, one needs to be prepared to cope with the dangers of using a sample. Sallant and Dillman (1994) however observe that

there is no difficulty at all in sampling for study because every member of the class has automatic qualification to participation.

3.3.1   Sampling technique for the study

Sampling technique involves the processes and procedures that are used to sample participants for a study. Patton (1990) observes that multi-sampling procedure combines the characteristics of all the sampling techniques. For example, all the backgrounds and characteristics of participants in terms of gender and culture are taken into consideration when selecting the participants. According to Patton (1990), this type of sampling can also be classified as stratified cluster or sub-groups as well as quota sampling. Sallant and Dillman (1994) explain that sampling procedure can also be classified as non-random sampling as it is based on convenient rather than rigorous selection procedure involving participants of the same class from the same school.

The sampling technique used to select the participants for this study is simple random sample. Simple random sample is "a random sample selected by a method which ensures that all possible samples, of a given size, are equally likely to be chosen" (Finch & Gordon, 2013, p.6). In other words, simple random sample is a sampling process which gives equal chance for every participant in a population to be selected for the purpose of study. This technique was adopted because it provided equal and independent chance for each individual in the class to be selected as a member of the sample. The technique is also independent because the selection of one individual did not affect the selection of the other.

With the simple random technique, the researcher provided pieces of papers with either YES or NO inscription on them for students to pick. A choice of YES indicates that the student is sampled to participate in the study. But a choice with NO

inscription shows that the student is disallowed to participate in the study. This was done according to gender to get equal number of boys and girls to participate in the study.

There were twenty-nine (29) boys and twenty-seven (27) girls in the class. Therefore, twenty-nine (29) pieces of papers comprising, fifteen (15) YES inscriptions and fourteen (14) NO inscriptions were wrapped and given to the boys to randomly pick. So, fifteen (15) boys were sampled to participate in the study. In the case of the girls, twenty-seven (27) pieces of papers were given to them to randomly pick. They were fifteen (15) YES papers and twelve (12) NO papers wrapped and given to them. Therefore, fifteen (15) girls were also sampled to participate in the study while twelve (12) were disallowed. In all, thirty (30) students comprising fifteen (15) boys and fifteen (15) girls were sampled for the study. Therefore, gender equality was observed in the sampling.

3.4   Research Design

Research design is the conceptual blueprint within which a research is conducted (Inaam & Islamia 2016). When designing a research, it is important to recognize the type of evidence required to answer the research questions in a responsible way.

The research design adopted for this study is qualitative approach. The approach is employed in this study because it is the type that is flexible as far as sampling technique is concerned. It is also a holistic approach that gives a complete description of the problem and therefore deals with reality (Owu-Ewuie, 2012).

A qualitative research is the type of study in which the researcher develops knowledge by collecting verbal data and subjecting it to critical inductive analysis and using the information to generalize it for participants.

In this study the researcher used an interview questions to illicit views from teachers to ascertain the causes of poor punctuation and capitalization among students in the basic schools. The interview entails semi-structured questions. The semi-structured questions allow the researcher to ask certain relevant questions that may be deemed necessary during the interview. They also allow the respondent to freely express his/her opinion about the causes of poor uses of punctuations and capitalization by students at the basic schools. Through the quantitative approach, exercises were given to students, marked and assessed quantitatively using frequency tables and charts. This was to enable the researcher find out the problems associated with students' punctuations and use of the capital and small letters of the English alphabets. This approach was participative in the sense that it allowed the students to be directly involved in carrying out the research. This therefore helped the researcher to actually identify some of the errors students commit when using punctuations in writing.

3.5   Data Collection Instruments

Data collection instruments are the ways and means by which a researcher gathers data or information from participants for a study. In this study, the researcher used two different instruments to collect data for the study. These include; pen and paper survey and interview. Both instruments were basically used to collect primary data for the study. The pen and paper survey was used first and was followed by the interview.

3.5.1 Pen and paper survey

With the pen and paper survey, the researcher engaged the participants in written activities in the classroom. The researcher administered unpunctuated sentences and a short unpunctuated passage to the participants for them to punctuate where necessary. These activities were done to enable the researcher find out some of the problems associated with punctuation and capitalization among students at the basic level. The materials were taken from the students textbooks for the study. Others were taken from some English books that treat punctuations such as full stop, comma, colon, semi-colon, question marks and capitalization. The performance of students in each activity together with the responses on the interview was quantified and used as data for analysis.

3.5.2 The interview

Interview is an interaction in data collection process where one person asks another person questions on a particular topic or issue, and the other responds to the questions (Edwards and Holland, 2013). Owu-Ewie (2012) indicates that interviews are purposeful conversations with subjects in order to obtain information to answer a research question.

Interview can be classified as structured, unstructured and semi-structured (Edwards & Holland, 2013; Kusi, 2012; Owu-Ewie, 2012). The structured interview is mostly used to collect data for qualitative study. According to Kusi (2012), the questions in structured interview are pre-determined, leaving the interviewer little or no chance to divert. The set of questions to be asked are written down by the researcher before the interview commences.

The unstructured interview has no definite structure as the name implies according to Kusi (2012). It involves free-style interaction between the interviewer and the interviewee. The interviewer is allowed to frame his own questions as the interview unfolds to illicit further information from the interviewee. Because of the flexibility nature of the unstructured interview, the researcher can be able to unearth detailed and relevant including sensitive information from the interviewer through probing (Kusi 2012).

With the semi-structured interview, the interviewer sets some questions on the topic to be studied but is also allowed to ask certain questions which may be deemed necessary in the course of the interview. The questions are flexible to the extent that they offer the interviewee opportunity to express his or her feelings and experiences freely on the topic. In this study, the interviewer used the semi-structured interview to gather the data.

The interview was conducted for five (5) English teachers within the Central West (A) Circuit. The interview was conducted to find out views from teachers who handle the subject concerning the causes of poor punctuation and capitalization among students of the basic schools so as to recommend a remedy.

3.6   The Research Site

The study was conducted at where the researcher teaches, that is Nangalikinia Junior High School. The school is under the Kasena-Nankana Municipal Directorate of Education within the Upper East Region of Ghana. It is one of the schools that constitute the Central West Circuit (A) in the Municipality. The school is specifically located in Korania – a suburb of Navrongo.

Korania is predominantly a farming community. Due to the community's closeness to the Tono Irrigation Dam, majority of its inhabitance engage in year round irrigation farming. Hence, some school children sometimes absent themselves from school to assist their parents on the farm. Others also join the parents on the farm after the normal school's session. This therefore goes a long way to affect the students' academic performance in school. Students of this school cannot correctly punctuate their writings and use both the upper and lower case letters of the alphabet appropriately. This turns to affect the essays they write and how the answer questions and other assignments.

3.7   Data Collection Protocol

Data collection protocol was observed before data for the study was collected. Stakeholders such as the headmaster, teachers and students were duly informed before data was collected. The researcher first and foremost had a discussion with the headmaster of the school about her intention to conduct the study. As a follow –up, the researcher officially wrote to the headmaster of the school and the circuit supervisor requesting for permission to carry out the study in the school. The researcher also explained the purpose of the study to both teachers and students of the school. She subsequently had a discussion with the English teachers of the circuit on when and how the study would be conducted.

3.8   Intervention Design and Implementation

After the pretest was conducted and evaluated, the researcher carried out some interventional activities to help the students improve upon their punctuations and capitalization. Students were taken through how to identify the various punctuation marks and use them appropriately in sentences and in passages. The following are the

step by step procedure used to guide students to use punctuation marks and capitalisation correctly in writing.

3.8.1   Step by step method of teaching punctuation and capitalisation

Three different punctuation lessons were taught to students on the following sub-topics: They include punctuation recognition and capitalisation, punctuation production and punctuation application. These sub-topics were taught in three separate lessons. The primary idea of the lessons was to enable students identify the various punctuation marks and capital letters of the alphabet and use them appropriately in writing.

Some steps were taken to teach each lesson. At the introduction stage, I reviewed students' previous knowledge through questioning. The concept of punctuation or the sub-topic was explained to students by the teacher through discussion among students. The next stage was the development stage. This was when the core aspect of the concept was taught using variety of drills and examples to aid understanding. When all these were done, then the next stage of the lesson which is evaluation followed. The evaluation mostly involved discussions and activities by students either in pairs or individually.

3.8.2   Punctuation marks and capitalisation recognition

The researcher used flash cards with punctuation marks drawn on each of them to help students recognize the punctuation marks. All the flash cards were put into a container and placed on the table. The researcher then removed a flash card, showed it to the students and asked them to identify the punctuation mark on the card. After that, students were asked to come forward one after the other and pick at least two different

flash cards at random and identify the punctuation marks on them. This exercise was done until every student had his or her turn.

The next activity was organized for students to work in pairs. Students were made to select their partners to work in pairs. Each pair of students came in front of the class; one student picked a card for the other to identify the punctuation mark on the card. After that, they exchanged roles were the other student also picked the card for the other college to identify the punctuation mark on it. This activity also went on until all the students got their turns.

The same strategy was used for the recognition of the upper case and the lower case of the alphabet. Students were made to identify various letters of the alphabet on flash cards. The students were asked individually to randomly pick a letter first, identify the letter and indicate whether the letter is an upper case letter or a lower case letter. Students also worked in pairs where one picked and the other identified the letter and vice versa. Other cards contained both the upper case and the lower case of the alphabet. Students were made to pick the card and identify both the upper and lower case letters on the card. Students who had challenges were assisted by the researcher where necessary.

3.8.3   Production of punctuation marks and capitalization

In this lesson, students were guided to produce the selected punctuation marks symbols. They include: full stop, comma, colon, semi-colon and question mark. They were also guided to write both the upper and lower case of the English alphabet.

First, the teacher demonstrated to students how to write the selected punctuation marks on the chalk board. Students were also guided to write them on the board. Second, teacher displayed all the selected punctuation symbols written on a card-board

for students to view. Students were asked to copy the punctuation symbols from the card-board into paper cut cubes and later transfer them into their note books. Similar activities were used to help students write the upper case and lower case letters of the alphabet.

3.8.4 Application of punctuation marks and capitalization

The purpose of this lesson was to help students used punctuation marks and capitalization in sentences and in passages. The researcher wrote unpunctuated sentences on the board and asked students to provide the missing punctuation marks and capital letters. Students were called in pairs; one student was made to read a sentence for the other to pick the mission punctuation mark or capital letter from the container. This was repeated until students got to know how to apply the punctuation marks and capital letters appropriately. After this activity, the teacher wrote a short unpunctuated passage on the board for students to read aloud and apply punctuation marks and capital letters were necessary.

When all these activities were done, the researcher provided unpunctuated sentences and short passage for students to provide the missing punctuation marks and capital letters. The exercise was collected and marked afterwards. The questions and sample of the students' performances are shown in the appendixes.

3.9 Data presentation

The data collected from the interview and from the pen and paper survey were presented for analysis. The researcher analyses the data through inferences, deductions, charts and descriptions from frequency tables of the results and the responses given by the respondents. From this, a conclusion was drawn and recommendations made.

3.10   Ethical Considerations

Ethical issues involved in collecting data, conducting research, and reporting the results were taken into careful considerations. The selection of participants was purely based on their willingness and interest to share their class activities with the researcher. Early in the interview, the researcher informed all the potential participants of the purpose of the research and also informed them and their respective schools that their identity would be kept concealed through use of pseudonyms. Assurance was given that the confidentiality of participant's intellectual property and privacy would be maintained throughout the study. The participants' name, identity and their comments were handled with due importance and care.

3.11   Conclusion

This chapter looked at the methodology of the study. It discussed the population for the study. It was shown that students of Nangalikinia Junior High School constituted the population for this study. The chapter also revealed the sample size of the study as well as the procedures and techniques used by the researcher to gather data for the study. It also indicates the research design used for this study. It was shown that the researcher used both quantitative and qualitative design for the study. The instrument used for data collection was also looked at in this chapter. It was revealed that the researcher used both interview and pen and paper survey to collect data for the study. The chapter also looked at the research site, how data collection protocol was observed and how data for the study was presented and analysed by the researcher.

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS

4.0   Introduction

In this chapter, data gathered for the study is presented. The data consist of results of students' performance on punctuation and capitalization at both pre-intervention and post-intervention stages. The data also entail the interview responses from five English teachers in the Kasena-Nankana West (A) Circuit. The data is presented by using frequency tables and bar charts. The framework adopted for this study is Coder (1967) Error Analysis Theory to identify the errors, analyse them, and describe them. The data is analysed based on the following research questions.

1.   What are the problems of punctuation and capitalisation among students?
2.   What are the causes of the problems of punctuations and capitalisation?
3.   How can students improve upon their punctuation and capitalisation in writing?

The chapter is organized as follows. Section 4.0 introduces the chapter. Section 4.1 discusses results of students' performance in the pen paper survey. Interview responses from English teachers are presented in section 4.2. Section 4.3 summarises and concludes the discussion in this chapter.

Research question 1

What are the problems of punctuation and capitalisation among students?

4.1   Results of Students' Performance at pen and paper survey

This section presents results of students' performance on punctuation and capitalization before the intervention of the researcher. The data involves students'

performance in sentence punctuation and capitalisation. It also entails students' performance in paragraph punctuation and capitalization to ascertain the problems of students in punctuation and capitalisation. The errors committed by students in both tests are identified and discussed in consonance with Coder's assertion on error analysis.

4.1.1   Students' results in sentence punctuation at pre-intervention stage

The researcher provided a number of unpunctuated sentences for students to re-write them and punctuate or use capital letters where necessary. The exercise was marked and recorded from students' English exercise books. Below are some of the sentences students were to punctuate and how they went about it. The whole samples of students' scripts on the sentence punctuation are attached in appendix (G) for further scrutiny.

Examples

Punctuate the following sentence. Put in a full stop, comma, capital letter, semi-colon, question mark and colon were appropriate.

1. (w)esoamo bought the following items() a pen() a book () a bag and a calculator()

2. (t)he officer from the (ges) came to our school today()

3. (n)avrongo is a (t)own in (g)hana()

Expected answer:

(w)esoamo bought the following items; a pen, a book, a bag and a calculator.

The officer from the G. E.S. came to our school today.

How different students punctuated the sentence above.

1. (w)esoamo bought the following items(.)(A) pen, a book, a bag and a calculator.

2. Wesoamo(,) bought the following items(,) a pen, a book, a bag and a calculator.

3. WeSoamo bought the following item(!) a pen, a book, a bag and a calculator()

4. The (O)fficer from the (ges) came to our(S)chool today.

5. (t)he o(FF)icer from the (ghana) (education) (servy) came to our (S)chool.

6. The (O)fficer from the GES came to our school (T)oday.

7. Navrongo (I)s a town(.) (I)n Ghana.

Table 1 presents the results of the students' performance.

Table 1. Results of Students' Performance

Scores	No. of students	Percentage (%)	Performance level
0-2	10	33.3	Below average 21 (69.9%)
3-4	11	36.6	
5-6	7	23.3	Average 7 (23.3%)
7-8	2	20	Above average 2 (20.0%)
9-10	0	0	
Total	**30**	**100**	**30 (100 %)**

The results on table 1 indicate that students did not perform well in sentence punctuation and capitalization. The results indicate that majority of the students performed below average. A total number of 30 students took part in the exercise. Out of the number, 10 students which represent 33.3 percent of the students obtained 0-2

scores. 11 students representing 36.6 percent of the total number got 3-4 scores. A total of 7 students which constitute 23.3 percent of the students got 5-6 scores, while only 2 students representing 20 percent of the students came out with 7-8 scores. None of the students got 9-10.

In terms of performance level, the data on the table show that a total of 21 (69.9%) students performed below average, 7 (23.3%) students performed averagely while 2 (20%) performed above average. This therefore indicates that majority of the students performed below average in the exercise. The following bar chart presents results of the students' performance discussed on table 1.
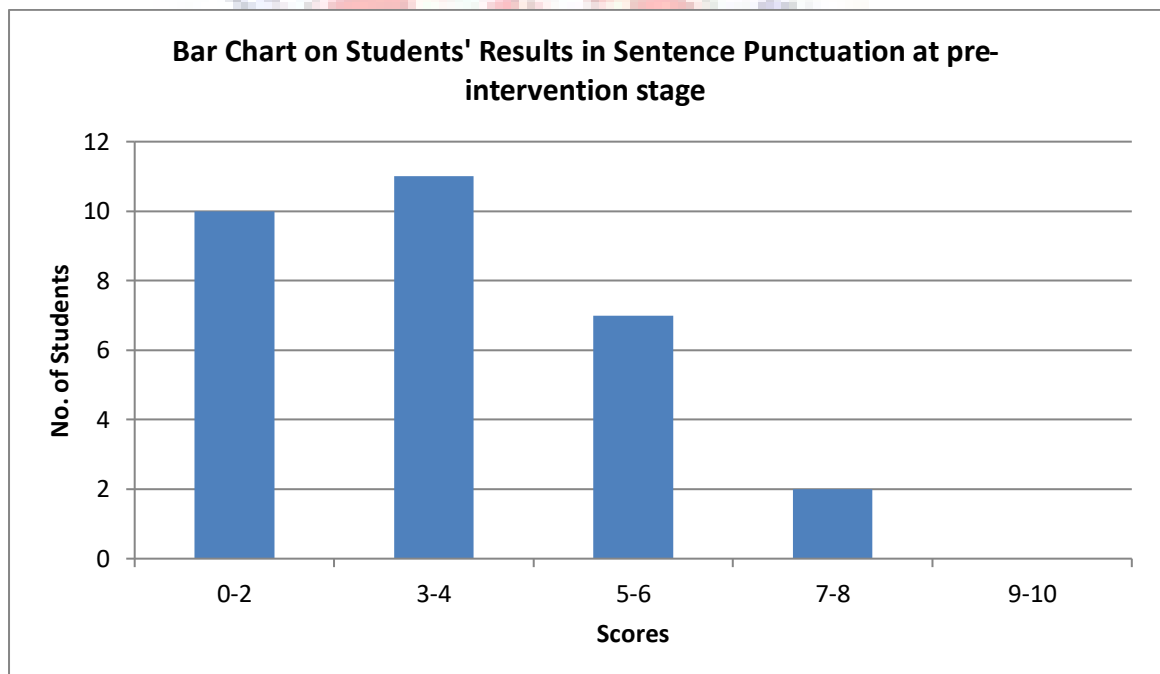

Figure 1. Bar chart on students' results in sentence punctuation at pre-intervention stage

The data on figure 1 clearly indicate that a high number of students performed below average in the sentence punctuation. The figure show that 10 students got 0-2scores and 11 students also scored 3-4 marks. This gives us a total of 21 students out

of the 30 students performing below the average score of 5-6. Only 7 students got average score while only 2 students scored above average.

From the data in table 1 and the sample sentences of students shown, there is a clear indication that, students use punctuation wrongly. Their performance is very poor in the exercise. This affirms that wrong use of punctuations really exists in the class and demands a quick intervention to resolve students' punctuation problems.

4.1.2 Students' results in paragraph punctuation

The researcher also made students to re-write an unpunctuated short paragraph and punctuate it appropriately to ascertain the challenges they have on punctuation. They were also made to provide capital letters for words in the paragraph where these capital letters were needed. Results of the students' performance in this exercise are presented on table 2.

The exercise below was use to test students on the application of punctuation in paragraphs.

Provide the appropriate punctuation marks to fill the space and letters in the brackets.

(it) seemed that(joe) had just had it with his wife of three years() (h)e no longer thought her attractive or interesting() (h)e considered her a poor housekeeper who was overweight() someone he no longer wanted to live with() (j)oe was so upset that he finally decided on divorce() (b)ut before that() he made an appointment with a psychologist for the specific purpose of finding out how to make life as difficult as possible for his wife()

Expected answer

(I)t seemed that (J)oe had just had it with his wife of three years(.) (H)e no longer thought her attractive or interesting(.) (H)e considered her a poor housekeeper who was overweight(;) someone he no longer wanted to live with(.) (J)oe was so upset that he finally decided on divorce(.) (B)ut before that (,) he made an appointment with a psychologist for the specific purpose of finding out how to make life as difficult as possible for his wife(.)

How three different students punctuated the above paragraph. (Sampled students' scripts provided in appendix (G).

Student 1

(I)t seemed that (J)oe had just had it with his wife of three years(?) (H)e no longer thought her attractive or interesting(,) (h)e considered her a poor housekeeper who was overweight(.) Someone he no longer wanted to live with(,) (J)oe was so upset that he finally decided on divorce() (b)ut before that() he made an appointment with a psychologist for the specific purpose of finding out how to make life as difficult as possible for his wife(.)

Student 2

(i)t seemed that (j)oe had just had it with his wife of three years(?) (h)e no longer thought her attractive or interesting(,) (h)e considered her a poor housekeeper who was overweight(.) Someone he no longer wanted to live with(,) Joe was so upset that he finally decided on divorce(?) (b)ut before that() he made an appointment with a psychologist for the specific purpose of finding out how to make life as difficult as possible for his wife()

Student 3

(I)t seemed that (j)oe had just had it with his wife of three years(?) (h)e no longer thought her attractive or interesting(,) (h)e considered her a poor housekeeper who was overweight(.) Someone he no longer wanted to live with(,) (j)oe was so upset that he finally decided on divorce(?) (b)ut before that (?) he made an appointment with a psychologist for the specific purpose of finding out how to make life as difficult as possible for his wife(,)

Table 2. Students' results in paragraph punctuation at pre-intervention stage

Scores	No. of students	Percentage (%)	Performance level	
0-2	9	30	Below average (70%)	21
3-4	12	40		
5-6	6	20	Average (20%)	6
7-8	3	10	Above average (10.0%)	3
9-10	0	0		
Total	**30**	**100**		**30 (100 %)**

The data on Table 2 represent the performance of students in paragraph punctuation and use of capital letters of the alphabet at the pre-intervention stage. Out of 30 students, 9 students representing 30 percent of the students obtained 0-2 scores. A total of 12 students representing 40 percent of the number also had 3-4 scores. Only

6 out of the 30 students got 5-6 scores representing 20 percent while 3 students also obtained 7-8 scores. This figure represents only 10 percent of students who participated in the exercise. No student from the table got 9-10 scores.

In terms of performance level, the results on the table indicate that 21 (70%) out of 30 students performed below average, 6 (20%) students got average scores while 3(10%) students performed above average in the paragraph punctuation at the pre-intervention stage. These results are presented on the following bar chart.
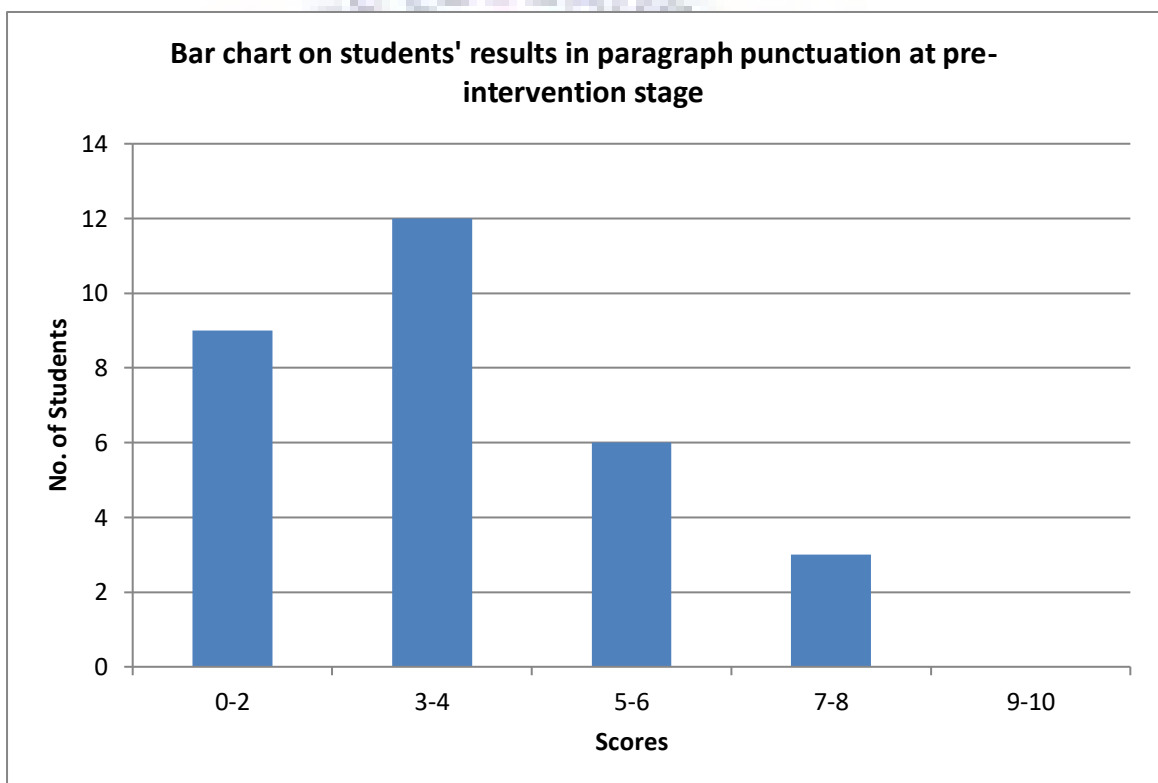
Figure 2. Students' results in paragraph punctuation at pre-intervention stage

In figure 2, it is shown that majority of students also performed below average in the paragraph punctuation. The figure indicates that 9 students scored 0-2 marks while 12 students scored 3-4 marks. In all, 21 out of the 30 students performed below the average score. But 6 students had the average score of 5-6 marks while only 3 students got 7-8 scores. No student got 9-10 scores

It will be observed from the tables and graph above and samples of students' scripts on paragraph punctuation at Appendix G that students performance at the paragraph punctuation was worse off than indicated in the sentence punctuation. Students only punctuate when the feel like or do not punctuate at all. However, as Woods (2001) puts it, each punctuation mark in a sentence or paragraph should have a reason for being there. The implication of these indications in students' sentence and paragraph punctuations is that, there is the need for appropriate measures and methods to be employed in addressing student's punctuation problems so as to help students' write meaningful sentences and compositions.

4.2   Results of Students' Performance at intervention Design

The intervention design is the stage after which punctuation and capitalisation have been taught to students. The researcher used some strategies such as students working in pairs and punctuation and capitalization games to teach students how to recognize punctuations marks, how to write punctuation marks and how to apply punctuation marks in sentences and in paragraphs. Detailed description of how these activities were carried out is discussed in chapter 3 section 3.8.1. After these activities were carried out, the researcher conducted exercise on both sentence punctuation and paragraph punctuation. Results of the students' performance in the exercise are presented and discussed in sections 4.2.1 and 4.2.2

4.2.1   Students' results in sentence punctuation at post- intervention

Students were made to punctuate a number of unpunctuated sentences given to them. They were also asked to provide capital letters for some words in the sentences appropriately. This exercise was marked and recorded. Table 3 presents the results of the students' performance in the test.

Table 3. Students' results in sentence punctuation at post-intervention stage

Scores	No. of students	Percentage (%)	Performance level	
0-2	0	0	Below average	2
3-4	2	6.7	(6.7%)	
5-6	7	23.3	Average 7(23.3%)	
7-8	12	40.0	Above average	21
9-10	9	30.0	(70%)	
Total	**30**	**100**	**30**	**(100 %)**

The students' results on table 3 clearly indicate that majority of students performed well in sentence punctuation and capitalization at the post-intervention stage. This was as a result of the numerous intervention strategies employed by the researcher as discussed in details in section 3.8.1. Only 2 students representing 6.7 percent of students obtained 3-4 scores. A total of 7 students which represent 23.3 percent of the students got 5-6 scores. A total of 12 out of the 30 students representing 40 percent got 7-8 scores while 9 students out of the number came out with 9-10 scores. This number represents 30 percent of the students. No student obtained 0-2 scores.

In all, 2 (6.7%) students performed below average while 7 (23.3%) students got average scores. However, a total of 21(70%) students performed above average. This shows that there is great improvement of the students' performance over their previous performance at the pre-intervention stage. Figure 3 below presents the students' performance in sentence punctuation and capitalization at post-intervention stage.

Bar chart on Students' results in sentence punctuation intervention stage
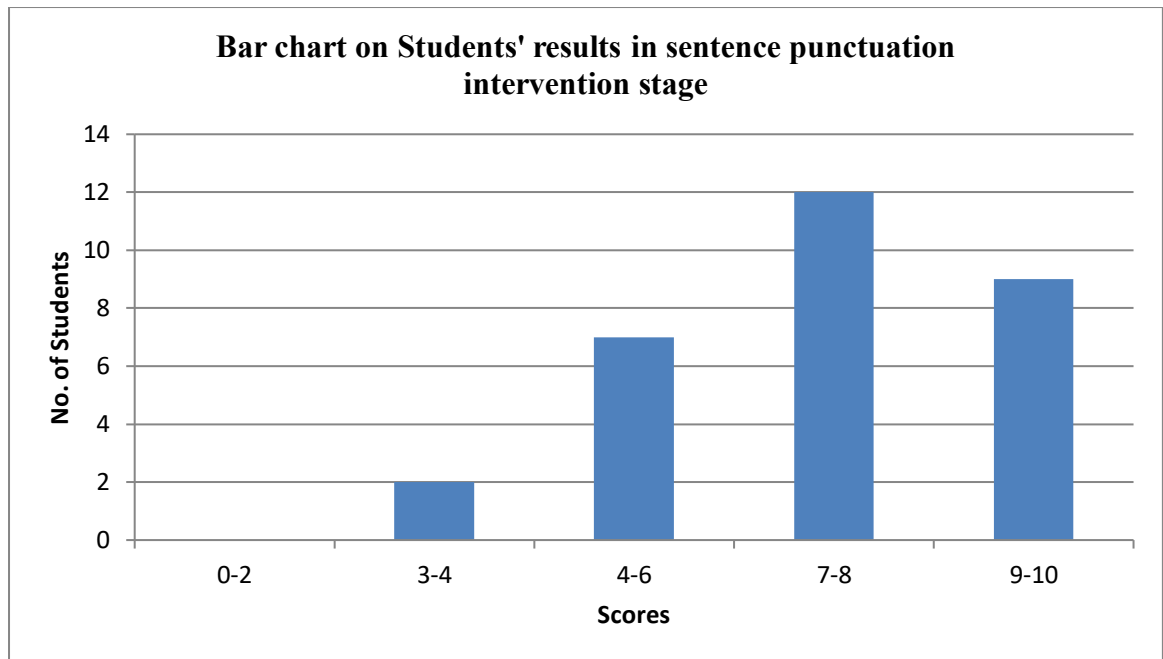
Figure 3. Students' results in sentence punctuation intervention stage

Figure 3 above shows that a high number of students performed well in the sentence punctuation exercise at the post-intervention stage. The figure shows that none of the students got 0-2 score; only 2 students got 3-4 scores while 7 students had an average score of 5-6 marks. However, 12 students had 7-8 scores while 9 students also got 9-10 scores. In total, 21 students performed above average while 7 and 2 students had average score and below average score respectively. The sentences below were used at the post intervention implementation. Sampled scripts provided at appendix(H)

Punctuate the following sentences correctly using capital letter, full stop, comma, colon, question mark, and semicolon.

1. (h)e brought the following items() a pen() a book() a bag() and a calculator()

2. (a)ll of them passed the exam()therefore() they are in the (shs)

3. (n)avrongo is a town in (g)hana()

4. (w)here is your (e)nglish teacher()

Sampled sentences from students' scripts.

1. He bought the following items: a pen, a book, a bag, and a calculator.

2. All of them passed the Exam; therefore, they are in the S.H.S.

3. Navrongo is a town in Ghana.

4. I have one pair of shoes, three school uniforms, and one school bag.

5. Where is your English teacher?

From the data above, there is a great improvement in students' performance in the sentence punctuation at the post-intervention stage implying that, when the right strategies, as described in detail in section 3.8.1 are employed in the teaching of punctuation and capitalisation, students will be able to use the right punctuation at the appropriate place to convey meaning and understanding in their writings to their readers. . Lal (2014:p160) asserts that child centered approach "allows freedom for children to think, experience, explore, question and search for answers". This approach gives room for the learner to freely interact with the environment to enhance learning.

Research question 2

What are the causes of the problems of punctuations and capitalisation?

4.2.2 Students' results in paragraph punctuation - intervention stage

After the post-intervention, students were also given an unpunctuated short paragraph to punctuate and use capital letters appropriately in the paragraph. Again, this exercise was marked and recorded. Table 4 below shows results of the students' performance in this exercise.

Table 4. Students' results in paragraph punctuation intervention stage

Scores	No. of students	Percentage (%)	Performance level

0-2	0	0	Below average	3
3-4	3	10	(10%)	
5-6	10	33.3	Average	10
			(33.3%)	
7-8	10	33.3	Above average	17
9-10	7	23.3	(56.6%)	
Total	**30**	**100**	**30 (100 %)**	

The scores on table 4 indicate that none of the students obtained 0-2 scores after the exercise. But 3 out of the 30 students which represent 10 percent of the students got 3-4 scores. A total of 10 students representing 33.3 percent had 5-6 scores. There were also 10 students which represent 33.3 percent that got 7-8 scores while 7 students representing 23.3 percent of the students obtained 9-10 scores.

In terms of performance level, 3 (10%) students performed below average. A total of 10 (33.3%) students also got average scores while 17 (56.6%) students performed above average. This is also an indication that majority of students did well in the paragraph punctuation and capitalisation at the post-intervention stage. It is however shown from the data that students generally performed better in the sentence punctuation and capitalisation at the post-intervention stage than the sentence punctuation and capitalisation. This is because in the sentence punctuation, 70 percent of the students performed above average while 56.6 percent of the students performed above average in the paragraph punctuation at the same post-intervention stage. Similarly, in the pre-intervention stage, 20 percent of the students performed above

average in the sentence punctuation while 10 percent of the students also performed above average in the paragraph punctuation. So it is observed that students generally performed better in sentence punctuation than in paragraph punctuation in both pre-intervention and post-intervention stages.

Students performed better in sentence punctuation and capitalisation than in paragraph punctuation. This could be attributed to the fact that, students can easily identify sentence boundaries in sentence punctuation than in paragraph punctuation. The paragraph contains a number of sentences which are written in a continuous form. This makes it difficult for students to identify one sentence from another hence, their punctuation. The students' performance in paragraph punctuation at the post-intervention stage is shown in figure 4.
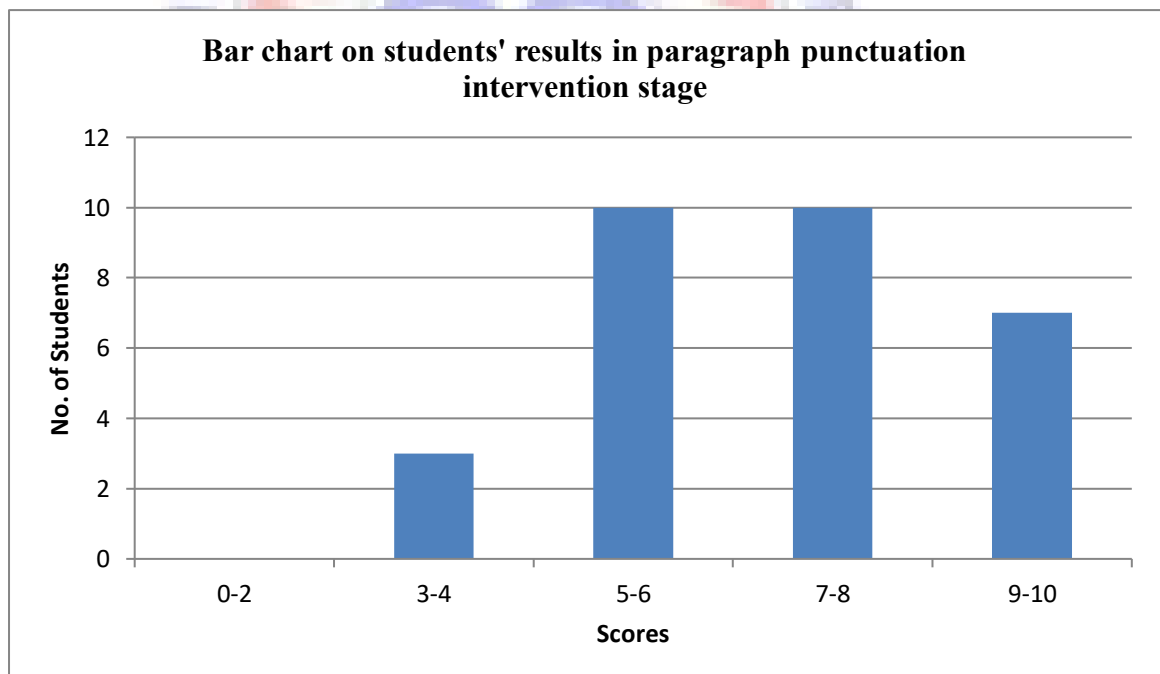

Figure 4. Students' results in paragraph punctuation intervention stage

The students' results in figure 4 also show a great improvement in the students' performance in paragraph punctuation at the post-intervention stage. The figure shows that only 3 students score 3-4 marks and this score is below average. A total of 10

students had an average score of 5-6 marks, 10 students got 7-8 scores while 7 students also got 9-10 scores. The overall figures show that about 17 out of the 30 students performed above average in this exercise indicating an improvement over the pre-intervention stage. The exercise below was use at the post intervention. Sampled scripts of students attached at appendix (H).

Punctuate the paragraph below correctly using capital letter, full stop, comma, colon, question mark and semi- colon.

The Republic of Johns

jerry john rawlings became the first president of the fourth **republic()** he was the leader and founder of the **national democractic congress() john rawlings** was sworn into office in **january** 1993**() after** two terms in office**()** he was succeeded by **john agyekum kuffour** of the **new patriotic party() john agykum kuffour** too had two terms and in **january** 2009**() john evans atta mills** took over from him**() in july** 2012**() john atta mills** died and was succeeded by his vice**() john dramani mahama** who also won that year's presidential elections thus becoming the fourth **john** to rule in the fourth **republic() this** is indeed the **republic** of **johns() who** will be the next **john** to rule the country**()**

Paragraphs from students' sampled scripts as shown in Appendix H.

Student 1 *Punctuate the paragraph below correctly using capital letter, full stop, comma, colon, question mark and semi- colon.*

The Republic of Johns

(J)erry (J)ohn (R)awlings became the first president of the fourth (R)epublic(.) (h)e was the leader and founder of the (N)ational

(D)emocractic (C)ongress(.) (J)ohn (R)awlings was sworn into office in January(,) 1993(.) (A)fter two terms in office(,) (H)e was succeded by (J)ohn (A)gyekum (K)uffour of the (N)ew (P)atriotic (P)arty(.) (J)ohn (A)gykum (K)uffour too had two terms and in January 2009(,) (J)ohn (E)vans (A)tta (M)ills took over from him(.) (I)n (J)uly 2012, (J)ohn (A)tta (M)ills died and was succeded by his vice (J)ohn (D)ramani (M)ahama who also won that year's presidential elections thus becoming the fourth (J)ohn to rule in the fourth (R)epublic(.) (T)his is indeed the (r)epublic of (J)ohns. (W)ho will be the next (J)ohn to rule the country(?)

Student 2   **The Republic of Johns**

(J)erry (J)ohn (R)awlings became the first president of the fourth (R)epublic(.) (h)e was the leader and founder of the (N)ational (D)emocractic (C)ongress(.) (J)ohn (R)awlings was sworn into office in January(,) 1993(.) (A)fter two terms in office(,) (H)e was succeded by (J)ohn (A)gyekum (K)uffour of the (N)ew (P)atriotic (P)arty(.) (J)ohn (A)gykum (K)uffour too had two terms and in January 2009(,) (J)ohn (E)vans (A)tta (M)ills took over from him(.) (I)n (J)uly 2012, (J)ohn (A)tta (M)ills died and was succeeded by his vice (J)ohn (D)ramani (M)ahama who also won that year's presidential elections thus becoming the fourth (J)ohn to rule in the fourth (R)epublic(.) (T)his is indeed the (R)epublic of (J)ohns. (W)ho will be the next (J)ohn to rule the country(?)

The results indicate that students' wrong use of punctuation and capitalization at the pre intervention stage was as a result of inadequate knowledge on the rules of punctuations. Students applied punctuations in their writings without understanding it .However, after a careful lesson plan to deal with the problem, students can even assign reasons why certain punctuation are used in certain places of an organised written piece.

Another contributory factor is opportunity for practice. When the students were made to take part in activities, exercise and test, the result was positive and they have improved in their use of punctuations. Hence, a careful lesson plan that takes the problem of the students into account and the opportunity for practice on the weak part together with motivation, commitment and effective pedagogy can yield good result in similar problems elsewhere. Goodman (2002, p4) indicates that "teaching and learning will change and traditional practices and assumptions must be re-examined".

4.3   Interview Responses from English Teachers

Five English teachers from Kasena-Nankana West (A) Circuit were interviewed. The interview sought to find out from the teachers some of the problems associated with students' punctuation and capitalization and possible ways of addressing them. Some of these teachers offered very relevant information regarding this subject. The researcher presented the data gathered from the teachers qualitatively so as to enable her give a comprehensive description of the findings. The data is analysed based on the following research questions.

4. What are the problems of punctuation and capitalisation among students?

5. What are the causes of the problems of punctuations and capitalisation?

6. How can students improve upon their punctuation and capitalisation in writing?

From the interview conducted, it was realized that none of the five teachers had degree in English Language. One of them had a Post Diploma in Basic Education. The teacher with the degree in Post Diploma in Basic Education taught for 10 years while two of the Diploma teachers taught for three years each. The remaining one Diploma teacher taught for two years. This implies that, the teachers have no or little knowledge on the current and appropriate methodologies to employ in the teaching of English. They therefore result to "traditional" methods of teaching which have over the years been ineffective and teacher centered. This is why in the literature, Goodman (2002, p4) said "teaching and learning will change and traditional practices and assumptions must be re-examined". This is in consonance with Salamin et al (2016) investigations into punctuation errors made by Hebron University EFL students of Palestinian findings that teaching strategies of instructors was as a result of inadequate knowledge on appropriate techniques and strategies employ in the teaching of punctuation and

capitalisation. This implies that adequate knowledge of one's subject area has a correlation with the output of the individual.

Research question 1

What are the problems of punctuation and capitalisation among students?

The responses gathered from the English teachers point to the fact that students commit various errors in their punctuation and capitalization. Three out of the five teachers interviewed indicated that some of the students do not punctuate their writings at all. Others also responded that some punctuate where punctuation is not needed while some use one punctuation mark in place of another punctuation mark. This assessment by teachers about students' writings was evident at the pre- intervention stage as indicated in the sampled sentence from students' scripts attached in appendix (G). Below are some of the sentences from students' sampled scripts.

Punctuate the sentences below correctly

1. he came home though it wasn't time for him to close from school
2. marriage is a union between two families a man and a woman
3. my home is not far from here just a few kilometers away from the school's park.

Expected answers

1. He came home, though it wasn't time for him to close from school.
2. Marriage is a union between two families; a man and a woman.
3. My home is not far from here; just a few kilometers away from the school's park.

How three different students went about punctuating the above sentences (sampled scripts attached in appendix (G)

1. (h)e came home though it wasn't time to close from school.

2. (m)arriage is a union between two families() a (m)an and a (w)oman

3. (M)y (h)ome is not far from here just a few kilometers away from the school's park.

Observation from the above illustrations implies that these are errors and not mistakes because the interview responses indicate that students consistently commit them. They are not able to correct them even when their attention is drawn to them. Corder (1985, p.25) makes a clear distinction between mistakes and errors. He refers to mistakes as errors of performance because the learner has the competence to correct them when his/her attention is drawn to them. Corder (1985) however refers to errors, as errors of competence because the learner has not got the competence to correct them when his/her attention is drawn to them. This is in line with James (1998) assertion that a mistake is a performance fault that the learner is able to correct when his attention is drawn to it whereas an error is believed to be not self-corrigible.

Therefore, the students' punctuation problems can be considered as errors because the interview responses show that the students are not able to correct them when their attention is drawn to them. These punctuation errors of students are discussed in the following sections.

4.3.1 Unpunctuated sentence construction

One of the major problems associated with students' punctuation is that, majority of the students do not punctuate their sentences at all. They also construct

almost all their sentences in lower case letters disregarding the use of the upper case letters where they are required to use these letters.

Findings from my interview with the English teachers revealed that majority of students could construct a whole lot of sentences without punctuating any of them. Out of the five teachers, four (4) of them indicated that it is common for students to write a whole paragraph without using a single punctuation mark. This, according to them, makes it difficult for one to read and understand what the student writes. One of the teachers remarked that, "Sometimes I have to consider what the student interns to write and award marks for him or her and not what the student has written down." Another teacher responded that, "I only mark them correct based on my own interpretation of what students intends to say or write and not that I have perfectly read and understood whatever they are writing." These responses clearly indicate that students' failure to punctuate their constructions does not only affect reading but understanding.

The samples from students' scripts provided in appendix (G) below clearly indicated all the responses gathered from teachers.

Write a short paragraph (not more than three sentences) about your school. Clearly punctuate your paragraph correctly.

1. Nangalikinia jhs is my school it is located inside korania. My school has a beautiful compound decorated with flowers in my school there are enough teachers to teach all the subjects

2. nangalikinia jhs is my school. it is a very beautiful school. it is located inside a town called korania. i like my school because it has a beautiful compound. and the Teachers teach well

3. The name of my school is nangalikinia jhs it is located in korania. a village in navrongo. My school is painted in two colors Brown and Cream. and it has beautiful Flowers planted in the compound.

From the literature, Namre and smith (1981, p.165)   said, "Punctuation is a device used by a writer to help his readers to understand the meaning of his words by conveying in print or writing, the tones, inflexions and pauses of spoken words". The implication of the above responses and students sample scripts is that, the students were unable to convey meaning through their write-ups. This practice if not address quickly will greatly affect students in their essay compositions.

4.3.2   Punctuating where punctuation is not needed

The data gathered from the interview also point to the fact that some students punctuate where they ought not to punctuate. Others also use capital letters in their writing where they need not to use them. In response to how students punctuate their writing, three (3) out of the five (5) interviewees mentioned that some of the students could just place a punctuation mark in the middle of a sentence where there is no need for punctuation. Some could begin a sentence with a lower case letter and later introduce an upper case letter within the same sentence where it is not appropriate for an upper case letter.

Sampled sentences of students scripts provided in Appendix G.

1. (n)angalikinia jhs is my school. (i)t is a very beautiful school. (i)t is located inside a town called korania.(i) like my school because it has a beautiful compound(.) and the (T)eachers teach well()

2. The name of my school is (n)angalikinia (jhs) it is located in korania(.) a village in (n)avrongo. My school is painted in two colors Brown and Cream(.) and it has beautiful (F)lowers planted in the compound.

This therefore implies that, some of the students do not know when to punctuate and when not to punctuate. Some of them just punctuate as and when they want to punctuate.

4.3.3   The use of one punctuation mark for another

Another major finding on the students' punctuation problem is the use of one punctuation mark for another including the use of an upper case letter for a lower case letter and vice versa. All the five teachers interviewed indicated that it is commonly the case that students use one punctuation mark in place of another.

According to them, the common punctuation marks used interchangeably are the comma and the full stop. The respondents explained that students mostly use comma to end a sentence when they need to use a full stop. This practice was very visibly in students' writings before the intervention of the researcher. (Sampled scripts of students' provided in the Appendix G. Comma, according to many writers in the literature occurs between words and letters and not in the end of a sentence. For example, Wiredu (1998) asserts that the comma is mostly placed between words, phrases and clauses to perform different grammatical functions. Unlike the full stop, the comma does not occur in the end of the sentence. It is therefore an error for students to place a comma in the final position of the sentence.

Again, the respondents indicated that certain words which require the upper case letter as an initial letter are not written as such. Some students rather sought to place the upper case letter in the middle of the word or in the final position of the word. This is not also accepted by the writing convention.

Below are sampled sentences from students' scripts provided in Appendix (G)

1. (w)here is your English (T)eacher gone to(!)

2. 2.(n)avrongo is a (T)own in(g)hana,

3. All of them passed the Exam(?) therefore. they are in(shs).

4. I have one pair of Shoes, Three School UniForms. and one school Bag.

Research question 2

What are the causes of the problems of punctuations and capitalisation?

4.3.4 Ineffective teaching approach

Ineffective teaching approach by language teachers is one major cause of students' punctuation problem. Some teachers do not use appropriate teaching techniques to teach punctuation and capitalization. Many of these teachers use teacher centered approach which appear not to be effective.

Responses from my interview with the English teachers revealed that teachers use teacher centered approach to teach punctuation and capitalization. Four (4) out of the five (5) teachers interviewed indicated that they use the teacher centered approach in teaching punctuation. In response to a question on how the teachers teach punctuation, four (4) of the teachers responded that, they normally explain to students the meaning of the individual punctuation mark and give examples of how it is used to punctuate. The implication of this method of teaching is that, students' were never given opportunity for practice. This is contrary to new approaches to teaching. Goodman (2002, p. 4) indicates that "teaching and learning will change and traditional practices and assumptions must be re-examined". Teachers need to move away from teacher centered approach to child centered approach. The child centered approach makes the child an active participant to the learning process. Lal (2014, p. 160) asserts that child

centered approach "allows freedom for children to think, experience, explore, question and search for answers". This approach gives room for the learner to freely interact with the environment to enhance learning.

Therefore, language teachers need to engage students individually or in pairs or in groups with learning activities and games that can stimulate them to learn and contribute to the learning process. This was what the researcher used after the pre-intervention stage in this study to improve upon the students' performance at the post-intervention stage.

4.3.5   Limited period allocation for teaching punctuation

One other cause of students' punctuation problem is limited time allocated for teaching punctuation on the teaching syllabus. The English teaching syllabus does not give prominence to the teaching of punctuation and capitalization. The researcher wanted to know how frequently teachers teach the concept of punctuation and capitalization. But the responses from the interviewees indicated that four (4) out of the five (5) teachers taught punctuation only once to the students they were teaching. One of the teachers said he was yet to teach the topic. When the researcher inquired to know why punctuation was not frequently taught, the respondents mentioned that the English teaching syllabus for J.H.S 2 does not make enough provisions for teaching punctuation.

The researcher consulted the syllabus for J.H.S 2 and discovered that punctuation actually occurred only once in the syllabus. This is in page 54 of the syllabus. The researcher also went through the J.H.S 1 and3 English syllabus and discovered that punctuation occurred only once in each of those classes. That is in pages 21 and 26 of the syllabus for J.H.S 1 and 3 respectively. So it is obvious that the J.H.S

teaching syllabus for English did not make enough provision for teaching punctuation and capitalization. This could therefore account for the reason why punctuation is not frequently taught hence, the poor performance of students on the concept. Once the concept of punctuation is not frequently taught, it makes it difficult for students to punctuate their writing appropriately.

4.3.6 Failure to assess students on punctuation

Teachers do not consciously assess students on punctuation and capitalization especially during exams. Other aspect of language such as composition, reading compression and grammar are the ones commonly assessed by teachers. The writing aspect, especially punctuation and capitalization is mostly ignored during end of term exams.

Findings from my interview with the teachers and sampled end of term examination question papers revealed that, none of them assess students on punctuation and capitalisation in their end of term exams. As a result, students do not see the need to learn punctuation and capitalisation. The implication is that, once students don't get examined consciously on this area, they do not make any conscious effort to learn the concept. This attitude leads students to perform poorly in punctuation exercise and composition writings. This affirms Samhon and Abdall study on common punctuation errors made by secondary schools students in English at the Nyale Locality of the South Sudan in which their findings revealed that punctuation errors committed by secondary school students is due insufficient exercise and explanations to all types of punctuation marks their uses and functions through examples as well as lack of sufficient practice among them.

4.4   Conclusion

This chapter presented data on the problems associated with students' punctuation and capitalization and how to solve this problem. The data involved students' performance on punctuation and capitalization at both pre-intervention and post-intervention stages. It also entailed responses from five English teachers on students' performance in punctuation.

In analyzing the data, it was discovered that students could not punctuate correctly as a result of so many issues as discussed in this chapter 4. Section 3,4, 5, and 6. The results of the students' performance at the pre-intervention stage points to the fact that majority of the students performed below average. However, majority of the students performed above average at the post-intervention stage after the researcher took the students through appropriate learning activities on the concept. This therefore shows that if appropriate teaching techniques are used to teach punctuation and capitalisation, students will be able to punctuate their writings appropriately.

The data from the interview also revealed that students are faced with various punctuation problems. It was shown that some of the students do not even punctuate the sentences they construct. Others also punctuate where punctuation is not needed while others use one punctuation mark for another punctuation mark or use a lower case letter in place of an upper case letter and vice versa.

On the question of what causes students' punctuation problems, it was shown that many teachers do not use appropriate teaching methods and activities to teach the concept. It was also revealed that there is not enough time allocated for the teaching of punctuation and capitalisation both in the curriculum and on the teaching timetable. Again, it was discovered that teachers do not assess students on punctuation and

capitalisation. Failure on the part of teachers to assess students on punctuation is what makes the students not to make conscious effort to learn how to punctuate correctly.

In responding to how the students' punctuation problems can be addressed, data available indicated that there is the need for enough time to be allocated in the English teaching syllabus for teaching punctuation and capitalisation. Teachers need to also make effort to honour all lessons on punctuation and capitalisation. The study also discovered that teachers need to use appropriate teaching and learning materials to teach punctuation. They are also required to adopt appropriate teaching methods and activities to facilitate students' understanding of punctuation and correct use of capital and small letters. Therefore, if students are regularly and effectively taught punctuation and capitalisation, it will go a long way to address their problems of punctuation and capitalisation in writing.
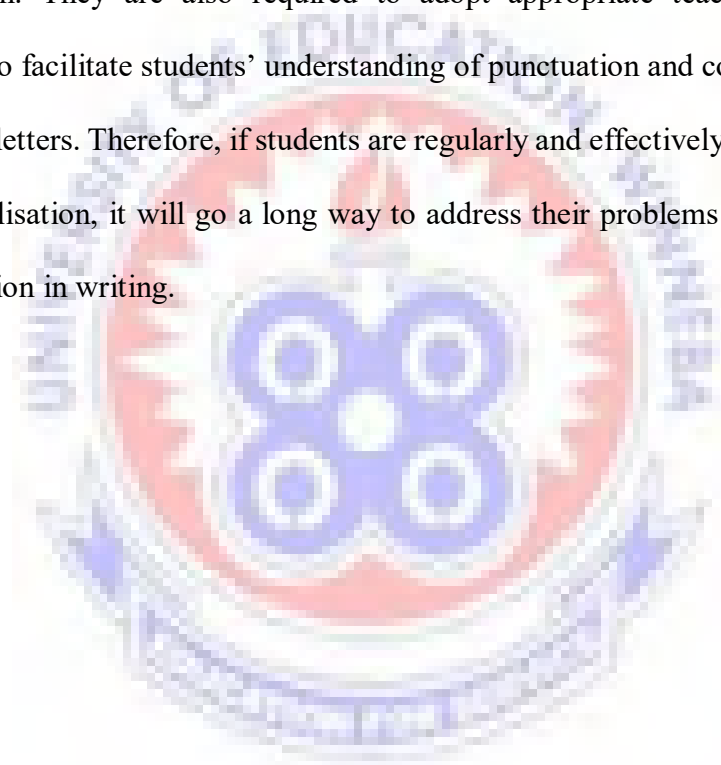
CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, RECONMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUTIONS

5.0   Introduction

The focus of this study was to explore some of the problems of punctuation and capitalization among students at the basic level. The specific objectives of the study were to identify the problem of punctuation and capitalisation in the writings of students, examine the causes of wrong punctuation and capitalisation in the writings of students and to find solutions to the problems of punctuation and capitalisation among the students. In this chapter, I present summary of findings of the study, recommendations and conclusion.

The chapter is organised in the following sections. Section 5.0 introduces the chapter. Sections 5.1 presents summary of methods. Summary of findings of the study is presented in section 5.2. Section 5.3 presents recommendations Section 5.4 presents suggestions for future research while section 5.5 discusses conclusion.

5.1   Summary of Methods

This study was conducted in Nangalikinia Junior High School in the Kasena-Nankana Municipality of Upper East Region of Ghana. The School had a total population of 157 students. The researcher used simple random sample technique to sample 30 students out of 56 students in the J.H.S 2 class to participate in the study. Besides, five (5) English teachers were also sampled to participate in the study. Two data collection instruments were used. They include pen and paper survey and interview.

With the pen and paper survey, students were given unpunctuated sentences and a short unpunctuated paragraph to punctuate. This was to help the researcher find out some of the problems students faced in punctuation and capitalization. After this exercise, students were taken through some interventional activities to help them improve upon their punctuation and capitalization in writing. I discuss summary of the findings of these activities in section 5.2.

The interview was conducted on five (5) English teachers in Kasena-Nankana West (A) Circuit. The researcher used the unstructured type of interview to solicit views from these teachers on some of the problems of students' punctuation and capitalization. The unstructured interview model was used because it is flexible and therefore allowed the researcher to freely interact with the teachers to unearth detailed and relevant information from them regarding this subject.

In analyzing the data, the researcher used frequency tables and bar charts to present the data collected from the students' performance on the pen and paper survey for analysis. The responses from the interview with the teachers were also presented and analysed through descriptions and deductions. I discuss summary of the findings in section 5.2

5.2   Summary of Findings

In this section, I present the major findings of the study based on the data analysed in chapter four. The findings are presented under the following sub-sections. Section 5.2.1 presents findings on the students' performance in the pen and paper survey while section 5.2.2 presents findings on the interview with the English teachers.

5.2.1 Findings on students' performance in the pen and paper survey

With the pen and paper survey, the researcher made some major findings at the pre-intervention stage revealed that, students do not know how to punctuate their writings. Results of students' performance on punctuation indicate that majority of the students performed below average. For example, the results show that over sixty (60) percent of the students performed below average in both sentence and paragraph punctuation and capitalisation at the pre-intervention stage. This is a clear indication that students at the basic school cannot punctuate their writings appropriately.

After the pre-intervention writing exercise, the researcher took the students through some interventional activities. The researcher used some teaching strategies to help the students recognize punctuation marks and apply these punctuation marks in writing. After these activities, similar exercise was given to students on sentence and paragraph punctuation. The results of the students' performance on punctuation after the activities indicate that there was improvement. The results showed that over fifty (50) percent of the students performed above average at the post-intervention stage. It was revealed that majority of the students were now able to recognize and use punctuation marks and capital letters appropriately.

5.2.2 Findings on the interview with English teachers

An interview was conducted to five English teachers. The interview was to find out from the teachers some of the problems of punctuation among students. It also sought to find out some of the causes of the students' punctuation problems and how to address these problems. Findings on the teachers' responses indicate that students at the basic level commit various punctuation errors. Some of the students do not attempt to punctuate the sentences they construct. Other students punctuate where they ought not to punctuate. Yet some of the students use one punctuation mark in place of another

punctuation mark. They also use a lower case letter in place of an upper case letter and vice versa.

On the causes of the students' punctuation problem, it was discovered that there are a number of factors that cause these problems. The findings have shown that the English teaching syllabus does not make enough provision for teaching the concept of punctuation and capitalization. It was also discovered that some of the teachers handling English do not use appropriate teaching strategies and materials to teach punctuation and capitalization. The findings also revealed that teachers do not assess students on the concept of punctuation and capitalization in writing. Therefore, the students do not see the need to learn the concept.

The study also made some findings on the question of how to improve upon students' punctuation and capitalization. It was realized that there is the need for more time to be allocated for the teaching of the concept of punctuation and capitalization. Enough time should be allocated on both the teaching syllabus and on the teaching time table to enable teachers engage students with punctuation and capitalization lessons and exercises. Besides that, it was also discovered that teachers handling English need to make conscious efforts to use variety of activities to effectively teach the concept. Finally, the study also revealed that there is the need for teachers to encourage students to study punctuation. According to the teachers interviewed, if students are made to understand the need to learn punctuation it will go a long way to enhance their punctuation in writing. This will eventually improve the students' academic performance.

5.3   Recommendation

Based on the findings of this study, the researcher presents the following recommendations. The researcher recommends that enough provision should be made in the English teaching syllabus for punctuation and capitalization to be taught. The J.H.S English syllabus needs to be reviewed and given emphasis to the teaching of the concept. If much time is allocated for the teaching of punctuation, it will enable teachers to regularly teach the topic to students to improve upon their punctuation and capitalization in writing.

It is also worth recommending that teachers who teach English language should make conscious efforts to teach punctuation effectively. English teachers should adopt better teaching methods to handle students on punctuation and capitalization. The teachers should make efforts to use variety of teaching and learning materials to enhance students understanding of the concept.

Finally, the researcher recommends that teachers should constantly explain to students the importance of correct punctuation and capitalization in writing. They should also make conscious efforts to assess students on the concept. If this is done, the students will be in a better position to appreciate the relevance of learning how to punctuate their writings. When the students understand the relevance of learning how to punctuate, they will make conscious efforts to study the concept themselves so as to improve upon their writing skills.

5.4   Suggestions for Future Research

This research has contributed to the existing literature on the concept of punctuation and capitalization in writing. It has provided some basic information about some of the problems associated with students' punctuation and capitalization and how

these problems can be addressed. However, there are some lapses in the study that need to be addressed in future study. Some of these lapses are outlined below.

First, the study was conducted only in Nangalikinia J.H.S in the Kasena-Nankana Municipality. Only 30 students out of 56 students in the J.H.S 2 class participated in the study. So the study did not cover a large number of students. It is therefore recommended that future study should be conducted on the same topic and the study should include many students in both public and private basic schools. This will help provide detailed information on the students' punctuation problem and capitalization in writing.

Second, the study has discussed capitalization and only five punctuation marks namely; the full stop, the comma, colon, semi-colon and the question mark. It did not touch on a number of other punctuation marks used in writing. A future study can be conducted to include many other punctuation marks to find out how students perform in those other punctuation marks. This will help provide holistic information on the topic.

Finally, the study did not look at the frequency of errors the students commit in each of the punctuation mark. A further study can be conducted in future to ascertain the frequency at which students commit errors in the various punctuation marks at the basic schools. If this is done, it would help to identify those punctuation marks that are very problematic to students in order to help the students find solution to such problems.

5.5 Conclusion

This study has established that punctuation and capitalization is a major problem that affects students' writing at the basic level. This is largely affecting the students' academic performance. It is important for us to note that there are a number of factors that contribute to this problem. Some of these factors have to do with the nature of the

curriculum and the way teachers handle students on the concept of punctuation and capitalization. Therefore, there is the need for a concerted effort on the part of curriculum designers and teachers to put the necessary measures in place to help students improve upon their writing skills through appropriate punctuation and capitalization. If this is done, it will go a long way to enable the students improve upon their academic performance.

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APPENDICES

Appendix A: Interview Questions for Teachers

Subject taught:

Number of years of teaching:

What is your academic qualification?

1. Do students use correct punctuation marks and capitalization in writing?

2. What are some of the errors students commit when punctuating their writings?

3. Do you teach punctuation marks and capitalization?

4. If yes, how often? If no, why?

5. How do you teach punctuation and capitalization?

6. What are some of the challenges of teaching punctuation and capitalization?

7. Do you assess students on punctuation and capitalization?

8. If yes, how often? If no, why?

9. In your opinion, how can students' punctuation and capitalization problem be solved?

10. Do you have anything else to add?

Appendix B: Sample of Pre-test Exercises

EXERCISE 1

Punctuate the following sentences correctly. Put in full stops, question marks, colon, capital letters, semi-colon and comma where necessary.

1. (w)esoamo bought the following items() a pen() a book () a bag and a calculator()

2. (t)he officer 1from the (ges) came to our school today()

3. (n)avrongo is a (t)own in (g)hana()

4.(w)here is your English (T)eacher gone to(!)

5.(n)avrongo is a (T)own in(g)hana,

6.All of them passed the Exam(?) therefore. they are in(shs).

7.I have one pair of Shoes, Three School (U)ni(F)orms. and one school (B)ag.

Expected answer:

1. (W)esoamo bought the following items; a pen, a book, a bag and a calculator.

2. (T)he officer from the G. E.S. came to our school today.

3. (N)avrongo is a (t)own in (G)hana(.)

4. (W)here is your English (t)eacher gone to(?)

6. All of them passed the exam(;) therefore(,) they are in(S.H.S).

7. I have one pair of shoes,(t)hree (s)chool (u)ni(f)orms, and one school (b)ag.

Appendix C: Sample of Pre-test Exercises

EXERCISE 2

Punctuate the passage below: put in full stops, comma, colon, question mark, semicolon, and capital letter

(it) seemed that(joe) had just had it with his wife of three years() (h)e no longer thought her attractive or interesting() (h)e considered her a poor housekeeper who was overweight() someone he no longer wanted to live with() (j)oe was so upset that he finally decided on divorce() (b)ut before that() he made an appointment with a psychologist for the specific purpose of finding out how to make life as difficult as possible for his wife()

Expected answer

(I)t seemed that (J)oe had just had it with his wife of three years(.) (H)e no longer thought her attractive or interesting(.) (H)e considered her a poor housekeeper who was overweight(;) someone he no longer wanted to live with(.) (J)oe was so upset that he finally decided on divorce(.) (B)ut before that (,) he made an appointment with a psychologist for the specific purpose of finding out how to make life as difficult as possible for his wife(.)
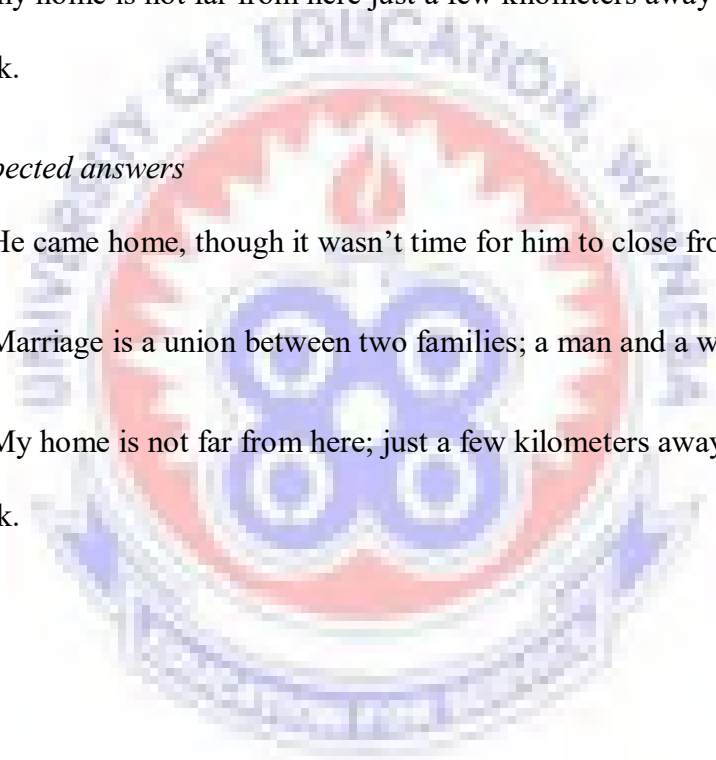
Appendix D: Sample of Pre-test Exercises

EXERCISE 3

Punctuate the sentences below correctly

1. he came home though it wasn't time for him to close from school

2. marriage is a union between two families a man and a woman

3. my home is not far from here just a few kilometers away from the school's park.

Expected answers

1. He came home, though it wasn't time for him to close from school.

2. Marriage is a union between two families; a man and a woman.

3. My home is not far from here; just a few kilometers away from the school's park.

Appendix E: Sample of Post-test Exercises

EXERCISE 1

1. (h)e brought the following items() a pen() a book() a bag() and a calculator()

2. (a)ll of them passed the exam()therefore() they are in the (shs)

3. (n)avrongo is a town in (g)hana()

4. (w)here is your (e)nglish teacher()

5. (a)ll of them passed the exam(;) therefore(,) they are in(S.H.S).

6. (n)avrongo is a town in Ghana()

Expected Answers

1. (H)e brought the following items(:) a pen(,) a book(,) a bag(,) and a calculator. (N)avrongo is a town in (G)hana(.)

4. (W)here is your (E)nglish teacher(.)

5. (A)ll of them passed the exam(;) therefore(,) they are in(S.H.S).

6. (N)avrongo is a town in Ghana(.)

Appendix F: Sample of Post-test Exercises

EXERCISE 2

The Republic of Johns

jerry john rawlings became the first president of the fourth **republic()** he was the leader and founder of the **national democractic congress() john rawlings** was sworn into office in **january** 1993**() after** two terms in office**()** he was succeeded by **john agyekum kuffour** of the **new patriotic party() john agykum kuffour** too had two terms and in **january** 2009**() john evans atta mills** took over from him**() in july** 2012**() john atta mills** died and was succeeded by his vice**() john dramani mahama** who also won that year's presidential elections thus becoming the fourth **john** to rule in the fourth **republic() this** is indeed the **republic** of **johns() who** will be the next **john** to rule the country**()**

Expected Answer

The Republic of Johns

(J)erry (J)ohn (R)awlings became the first president of the fourth (R)epublic(.) (h)e was the leader and founder of the (N)ational (D)emocractic (C)ongress(.) (J)ohn (R)awlings was sworn into office in January(,) 1993(.) (A)fter two terms in office(,) (H)e was succeded by (J)ohn (A)gyekum (K)uffour of the (N)ew (P)atriotic (P)arty(.) (J)ohn (A)gykum (K)uffour too had two terms and in January 2009(,) (J)ohn (E)vans (A)tta (M)ills took over from him(.) (I)n (J)uly 2012, (J)ohn (A)tta (M)ills died and was succeded by his vice (J)ohn (D)ramani (M)ahama who also won that year's presidential elections thus becoming the fourth (J)ohn to rule in the fourth (R)epublic(.) (T)his is indeed the (r)epublic of (J)ohns. (W)ho will be the next (J)ohn to rule the country(?)

Appendix G: Samples of Students' Scripts on Pre-test Exercises

SBA 1

English Language 21/03/19

Exercise 1 - Punctuations

Punctuate the following sentences correctly using full-stop, comma, question mark, Capital letter, colon and semi-colon.

1. Wesoama, bought the following items, a pen, a book, a bag, and a calculator.

2. The Officer from the GES came to our school Today -

3. Where is your english teacher gone to?

4. He bought the following items? A pen, a book, a bag, and calculator.

5. All of them, passed the exam therefore, they are in the shs.

0/5

21/03/19

English Language — SBA1
Punctuation
Exercise1

P.   Punctuate the following sentences correctly using full stop, comma, question mark, capital letter, full colon and semi-colon.

(1) wesoamo bought the following items: A pen, a books, a bag and a calculator.

(2) The Officer from the ges came to our School today.

(3) Where is your english teacher gone to?

(4) He bought the following items: a pen, a book, a bag, and calulator.

(5) All of them passed the exam therefore: they are in the S.h.s

SBA 1

English Language 2/03/19
Exercise 1 — Punctuation.
Punctuate the following Sentences
Correctly Using full stop, Comma,
Question mark, Capital letter,
Colon and Semi - Colon.

1. we Soanko bought the following
items: a pen, a book, a bag and
a calculator

2. the officer from the Ghana
Education Servy came to
our School.

3. Where is your english teacher
gone to.

4. He bought the following items:
a pen, a book, a bag, and a
calculator.

5. All of them passed the
exam; therefore, they are
in the S. H. S.

6. :

0/5

English Language
SBA 1 - Exercise

2/03/19

Punctuate the following Sentences Paragraph
correctly using full stop, comma,
question mark, capital letter, colon
and semi-colon.

It seemed that Joe had just
had it with his wife of three years
he no longer thought her attractive
or interesting he considered her a
poor housekeeper who, was
overweight. Someone he no longer
wanted to live with, Joe was so
upset that he finally decided on
divorce but before that he
made an appointment with a
psychologist for the specific
purpose of finding out How to
make life as difficult as possible
for his wife

01
10

Exercise   28/03/19

SBA1
Punctuate the following paragraph correctly using fullstop, Comma, Question Mark, capital letter, colon and semi-colon.

(i) Seemed that Joe had just had it with his wife of three years? he no longer thought her attractive or interesting he considered her a poor housekeeper who was overweight. Someone he no longer wanted to live with Joe was so upset that he finally decided on divorce? but before that he made an appointment with a psychologist for the specific purpose of finding out how to make life as difficult as possible for his wife.

ENGLISH LANGUAGE

SBA 1 - Exercise 2 \03\19

Punctuate the following ~~Sentence~~ paragraph correctly using fullstop, comma, question mark, capital letter, colon and semi-colon.

It seemed that Joe had just had it with his wife of three years? He no longer thought her attractive or interesting. he considered her a poor housekeeper who was overweight. Someone he no longer wanted to live with; Joe was so upset that he finally decided on divorce. but Before that he made an appointment with a psychologist for the specific purpose of finding out how to make life as difficult as possible for his wife.

4/10

28/03/17

SBA2 — ENGLISH LANGUAGE
Punctuate the below correctly

1. He came home, though it wasn't time to close, from school.

2. Marriage is a union between two families, a man, and a woman?

3. My home is not far from here, just a few kilometers away from the schools park.

4. All of them passed the exam therefore they are in shs

5. He bought the following items a pen, a bag, and calculator

0/5

3BA2

ENGLISH LANGUAGE

EXERCISE — PUNCTUATIONS   26/03/19

Punctuate the Sentence below correctly

1. We came home, though it wasn't time to close from school.

2. Marriage is a union between two families, a man and a Woman.

3. My home is not far from here, just a few kilometers away from the school park.

4. All of them passed the exam, therefore, they are in the sthis.

5. We bought the following items, a pen, a book, a bag, and calculator.

(0/5)

Appendix H: Samples of Students' Scripts on Post-test Exercises

English Language

<u>Punctuation</u>

<u>Exercise</u> 28/06/2019

Punctuation the following Sentences Correctly using Capital letter, Full stop, Comma, Colon, Question mark, and Semi-Colon.

① He is batting.

② Where is your English teacher gone to?

③ I have one pair of shoes, three school uniforms, and one school bag.

④ He bought the following items; a pen, a book a bag, and Calculator.

⑤ All of them passed the exam; therefore, they are in the SHS.

⑥ Navrongo is a town in Ghana.

6/6

Excellent

English Language | 28/06/06/19

Punctuation

Exercise

① Punctuate the following sentences correctly
using capital letters, full stop, comma,
colon, question mark, and semi-colon.

① He is bathing. ✓

② Where is your English teacher gone to? ✓

③ I have one pair of shoes, three school
uniforms, and one school bag.

④ He brought the following things: a pen,
a book, a bag, and calculator.

⑤ All of them passed the exam; therefore,
they are in the S.H.S. ✓

⑥ Navrongo is a town in Ghana. ✓

6/6 Excellent

English Language
Punctuation
Exercise   28/06/2019

Punctuate the following sentences
correctly using capital letters, fullstop
comma, colon, question mark, and semi-
colon.

① He is bathing.

② Where is your english teacher gone to
to?

③ I have one pair of shoes, three
school uniforms, and one schoolbag

④ He brought the following items: a
a pen, a book, a bag, and calculator.

⑤ All of them passed the exam; there-
fore they are in the S.H.S.

⑥ Navrongo is a town in Ghana.

English language   28/06/19

Punctuation

Exercise

Punctuate the following sentences correctly using Each't capital Letter, full stop, comma, colon, question mark, and semi colon.

1 He is bathing.

2 Where is your english teacher gone to?

3 I have one pair of shoes, three school uniforms, and one school bag.

4 He brought the following items: a pen, a book, a bag, and Calculator.

5 All of them passed the exam; therefore they are in the SHS.

6 Navrongo is a town in ghana. Nashongo is a town Ghana.

5/6 V. good

Exercise   28/06/19

Punctuate the passage below correctly
Using Capital letter, full stop, comma,
Colon, question mark, and semi-colon.

In December 1992, Ghanaians adopted
another Republican constitution. It was
the fourth time Ghana had become a
Republic since it had independence from
Great Britain In 1957. Jerry John Rawlings
became the first President of that republic
He was the leader and founder of the
National Democratic Congress. John Rawlings
was sworn into Office in January 1993.
After two terms in office, He was succeeded
by John Agyekum Kuffour of the New
Patriotic Party. John Agyekum Kuffour
too had terms and in January 2009, John
Evans Atta Mills. took over from him.
In July 2012, John Atta Mills passed on
and was succeed by his vice, John Dramani
Mahama Who also won that years Presi-
dential elections thus, becoming the fourth
John to rule in the fourth Republic. Who will
be the next John? Ghanaians admitted: ∧
This is the Republic of Johns.
There is an upcoming election; however,

Ghanaians must decide whether the
want another John or not.

English Language
Punctuation

Exercise   28/06/2019

Punctuate the passage below correctly using capital letter, full stop, comma, colon, question mark and semi colon.

In December 1992, Ghanaians adopted another Republican constitution. It was the fourth time Ghana had become a republic since it had independence from Great Britain.

~~In 1967, Jerry John Rawlings beca~~

In 1952, Jerry John Rawlings became the first President of that republic; he was the leader and founder of the National Democratic congress. John Rawlings was sworn into office in January 1993. After two terms in office, he was succeded by John Agyekum Kuffour who had of the New Patriotic Party. John Agyekum Kuffour too had two terms and in January, 2004 John Evans Atta mills took over from him. In July 2012, John Atta mills passed away on, and was succeded by his vice, John Dramani Mahama, who was also won that year's presidential elections, thus becoming the fourth John to rule in the fourth republic. Who will be the next John? Ghanaians often admitted: his is the republic of johns.

of Johns. There is an upcoming elections; however, Ghanaians must decide whether he want another John or not.