UNIVERSITY OF EDUCATION, WINNEBA

THE ROLE OF LITERATURE (PROSE) IN THE WRITTEN COMPOSITION

OF FIRST YEAR STUDENTS AT ASUOM SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL

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A dissertation in the Department of Applied Linguistics, Faculty of Foreign Languages Education and Communication, submitted to the School of Graduate Studies in partial fulfillment of the requirement for the award of the degree of

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SEPTEMBER, 2019

DECLARATION

STUDENT'S DECLARATION

I, Korotoum Bakayoko declare that this dissertation, 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 not been submitted, either in part or whole for another degree elsewhere.

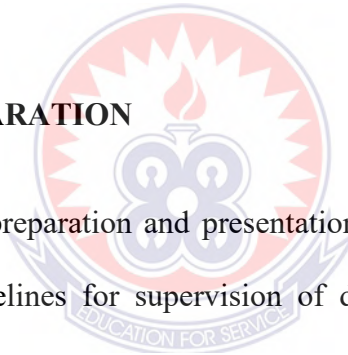Signature: ………………………………………………….

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SUPERVISOR'S DECLARATION

I hereby declare that the preparation and presentation of this work was supervised in accordance with the guidelines for supervision of dissertation as laid down by the University of Education, Winneba.

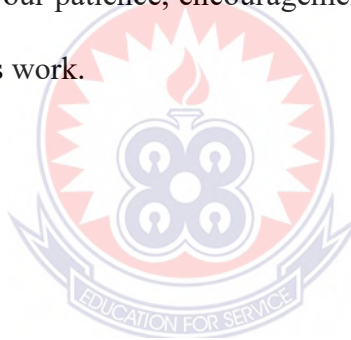NAME OF SUPERVISOR: Dr. Rebecca Akpanglo-Nartey

Signature: ………………………………………………….

Date: ………………………………………………….

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to my husband Safianu Moro and my two daughters Munaya and

Salma

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ABSTRACT

This research is a case study in Asuom Senior High School in the Kwaebibirem Municipality, Eastern Region. The objective of this study was to identify the role of learning prose in the written compositions of first year students in ASEC. It also sought to see the impact of the literature-based approach in the composition writings of students. To achieve this, the researcher employed the qualitative design and the instruments used to collect data were; interviews, lesson observations, pre-test and post-test after an intervention treatment. Sixty students took part in the study, thirty students as experiment group and thirty students as control group, together with four teachers of English language. The findings of the study indicated that majority of teachers used traditional approaches to teach written composition and students' performance was low. The findings also revealed that the literature-based approach was effective in the teaching of written composition to students. In light of these findings, the researcher recommends that teachers employ approaches that are learner-centered and process-oriented like the literature-based approach to improve on their students' writing skills.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.0 Introduction

This chapter deals with the background of the study, statement of the problem, purpose of the study, significance of the study, research questions, objectives of the study, limitations, delimitations and organization of the study.

1.1 Background of Study

In a multilingual country as Ghana, English Language is a lingua franca for the educated population. Hence, it is the principal medium for teaching, learning and official work. In the field of education, English Language plays an important role and the success or failure of formal education, to a large extent, depends on the level of competence of learners in English Language. Aside the fact that English language is a core subject that students must pass to further their education from the secondary level to the tertiary level, it is used to answer questions in all other subjects. It is therefore important to strengthen students' competence in English Language.

The study of English language in Ghana according to The Ministry of Education Ghana (2010) covers four skills which are:

1. Listening comprehension -   10%

2. Reading Comprehension -   30%

3. Speaking   -   30%

4. Writing   -   30%

The writing, reading comprehension and speaking aspects all have equal percentage. This shows that they are equally important. However, among all these skills, writing is

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considered the most important skill that students require in order to enhance their personal development and academic performance, (Mukulu et al. 2006 as cited in Nyasimi, 2014). Writing can be defined as a process of "thinking to invent ideas, exploring and arranging them into statements and paragraphs, rather than a mere production of graphic symbols" (Nunan, 2003, p. 88). We see that write is more done just putting down words on a paper. It is an art that needs to be studied and developed, because, some students may be good at expressing themselves orally but will struggle to put their thoughts down in writing.

 Kroll (2003) argues that writing is a complex process that involves the mastery of multiple skills which contributes to the overall difficulty of writing for any language user. We see that writing can be a difficult skill for both native and non-native speakers of the English Language. It is also an aspect that is inevitable once you are a student because in school it is used as a tool for learning. Again, students are asked to submit written assignments and all examinable subjects have a section that requires writing of answers. This is the reason why curriculum developers and teachers of the English language must employ effective teaching approaches to help students write well.

 The focus of this study is on the role learning of prose plays in the written compositions of students which is also referred to as essays. Written composition involves building relations among words and sentences in paragraphs and paragraphs in texts (Wittrock, 1983). Composition writing is an area where most students in Asuom Senior High School (ASEC) struggle with. This is why it is necessary that teachers find interesting and effective ways of teaching composition. One of these ways is mentioned by Ho and Henry (2014), they mention that in teaching writing, students should be encouraged to explore how the structural, textural and textual aspects of language work

together in a particular type of text to effectively improve their written communication skills. The study of prose can expose students to the structural, textural and textual aspect of the English language. Teachers could therefore consider such an approach to help improve their students writing skills.

Teaching English language through literature-in- English is one effective way to teach the English language, especially, writing. Literature can be defined as "a body of written works related by subject-matter, by prevailing cultural standards of merit, by language or place of origin" (Baldick, 2001, p. 141). Base on this definition, we can have examples such as literature depending on the content like literature of computing, language or science. We can also have Ghanaian literature, French literature or American Literature depending on the literature's origin. Literature that is written in English Language by writers who are not English natives is referred to as literature-in-English. Again, literature may include oral traditions of a people that have not be documented. Through the learning of literature-in- English texts, learners can be enlightened about many things including the skills of composition writing.

Literature-in-English texts play major roles in improving the writing skills of ESL students. Literature texts are genuine linguistic materials that provide meaningful context for language learning, not artificial textbook of linguistic items (Duff & Maley, 1990). Students may relate better with the literary text because the language is used in a more natural way than that of the text book. The various literature-in- English texts recommended for students to study in core English Language at the senior high level are carefully selected. This is due to the important role they play in the language acquisition of students and their lives in general.

Literature-in-English books enrich students' vocabulary and expressions effortlessly. Instead of going to the dictionary to learn new words and expressions, students are exposed to a variety of words in novels, poems and drama books. Apart from new words they acquire, students also understand that a word can have different meanings. Through reading, they learn that a word can have different meanings depending on the context in which it is used. They also come across the formal and informal ways that words and expressions are used in literary text. This exposure helps them to enrich their essays and be mindful of their language use.

Also, students come across different types of sentence structures, punctuation marks and paragraphing styles in literature texts. For an essay to be coherent, sentences must be constructed well into paragraphs. The sentences must also be correctly punctuated to make the essay readable and clear. The teacher may not be able to give a lot of examples in class to illustrate the use of all types of sentences or punctuation marks but through the reading of short stories the students will be exposed to them. For instance, when teaching narrative essays the students can read a short story in class to learn how to use punctuation marks such as quotation marks, exclamation marks and ellipsis which can make their essays interesting. They also see how events are arranged in a chronological order to make an interesting plot.

In addition, literature books teach students social and cultural values. They expose students to real life experiences and events that they can relate to and learn from. The themes in the various literature texts studied at the senior high level are mostly on issues that the youth can relate to. Some themes discussed in the novel *No Sweetness Here* by Ama Ata Aidoo are: irresponsible parenting, prostitution, imitation of foreign culture, education, corruption, friendship and love. The authors try to portray their

culture through the characters and themes in their books. Through the analysis of these themes students are able to express their opinions and make constructive contributions in class. The knowledge they acquire from these stories will help them develop their own ideas and give illustrations when writing their own essays.

Furthermore, activities like reading a short story with discussion on it during a composition lesson will encourage students to like writing. It is difficult to get the attention of adolescent students in class at all times because they are easily distracted and bored (LaVille, 1989). Keeping the class lively with activities based on the literature books to teach composition can help students focus in class. It will encourage team work among students. They will be motivated to contribute more in class and be creative. This will gradually help develop their love for reading which will improve on their writing skills.

Due to all these advantages of literature, the Ghana Education Service as one of the measures to help students improve their performance in English Language incorporated the study of literature-in-English in the study of English language at the senior high level. The rationale behind this combination was to improve students' poor performance in English language caused by inadequate vocabulary, difficulty in understanding comprehension and summary passage, poor reading habits and inability to make inferences from themes (Oppong-Agyei, 2006). In the study of literature-in-English in core English Language, students are introduced to the genres of literature, their importance and some literary devices. They also study prescribed books and set of poems, where they identify and analyse the literary devices and themes they contain. It was therefore anticipated that students will perform better in English language if they studied the literature-in-English text books correctly.

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After all these years of this merger, there has not been much improvement in the performance of students in English language. In ASEC, the performance of students in English language is not encouraging. Students are particularly having problems with essay writing, they make a lot of grammatical and lexical mistakes in their essays. Some students are so limited with vocabulary that; it is common to see some of them copy a whole comprehension passage to answer an essay question during examinations.

There is no doubt that literature plays an important role in the study of English language. literature-in-English books will not only help students enrich their vocabulary and sentence construction as stated earlier but can also serve as a meaningful material to improve the language skills of learners in general. Teachers and students of ASEC need to take a critical look at how literature will enhance the writing composition skills of students and improve on their English language.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

The ability to write well is important for effective written communicative competence among students at all levels of the education system. However, there is evidence of poor standard of English language in our Senior High School, especially, in the written composition aspect of first year students of ASEC. It is common to come across errors such as spellings mistakes, wrong use of words, misuse of tenses, concord problems and wrong sentence constructions in their written composition. The cause of these problems could be attributed to student's poor attitude towards writing and some teachers approach in teaching essay writing to their students.

In an attempt to improve students' writing skills in the country, the study of literature-in- English was made an aspect in core English. It was anticipated that the study of literature texts will better expose students to the English language and help them enrich

their essays. However, this has not yielded enough improvement in students' performance in writing essays. Over the years, teachers of English language have been teaching composition separately from literature-in-English. It has also been observed that, the literary texts studied in class are not analysed into details to bring out elements in them that could be useful to students in their writing. Again, the role that literature plays in improving students' essays is not emphasised enough by teachers when teaching it. This approach of teaching could be the reason why the impact of learning literature to improve on the English Language especially writing skills is minimal among students of ASEC.

Many researches have been carried out on various ways to improve composition among secondary level students in Ghana but the use of literature text, an already existing approach, to improve composition has not been deeply observed. The lack of adequate research in this area to better educate teachers is a contributing factor to the writing problem among secondary school students.
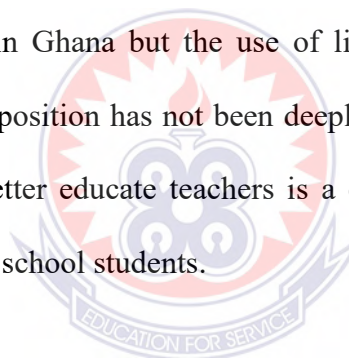
1.3 Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to identify how the study of prose during composition lesson could improve the composition writing skills of first year students of ASEC. It seeks to identify approaches already used by teachers to teach composition and their impact. In addition to that, this study seeks to build up, and strengthen students' proficiency level in English writing through the medium of literature-in-English texts. Though literature is already taught in English language, this study seeks to provide teachers with useful activities in teaching composition through the study of prose.

1.4 Significance of the Study

This study reveals the importance of literature in the teaching and learning of English writing. Firstly, it will help students understand that English language and literature are interrelated, that literature-in-English plays an important role in perfecting one's language skills. Secondly, it will make students appreciate the language structures and themes used in literature texts and encourage them use them as models to develop their writing skills. Thirdly, the findings of this study will guide the researcher and other teachers of English language on the best approaches that can be used in teaching written composition to our students. Finally, it is hoped that this study will help increase the love for reading and writing in students, because, it will expose them to the benefits they can gain from literature books.

1.5 Objectives of the Study

This study sought to achieve the following objectives:

i. To identify the role of learning literature-in-English in the written composition of first year students in ASEC.

ii. To find out the approaches used by teachers in the teaching of English written composition in ASEC.

iii. To identify the impact of using the literature-based approach in teaching written composition to first year students in ASEC.

1.6 Research Questions

i. What role does learning literature-in-English play in improving students' written composition in ASEC?

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ii. What approaches are used by teachers in the teaching of written composition to students in ASEC?

iii. What is the impact of the literature-based approach in written compositions of students in ASEC ?

1.7 Limitation

The researcher had to change initial plans of using form two students for this study to form one students. Changes in the academic calendar of senior high school in the 2018/ 2019 academic year made the form two students unavailable that the time of the study. This situation prevented the researcher from having sufficient time with the form one students because they were in their revision week at the time of the research.

The lack of sufficient time to conduct the research also affected the collection of data, especially with the observation of lessons and conducting the test. The students were in their revision week as stated earlier and teachers had already treated narratives with them at the time of the research. Finding the appropriate time for them to go back and teach afresh and getting the students to take part in the test was a little problematic.

Again, due to the relatively small scale of this study, only two form one classes from ASEC were studied, caution must be applied in generalizing findings to other senior high schools in Ghana. Despite all these limitations, it is hoped that the results of this study would significantly contribute to the improvement of students writing skills in ASEC and beyond.

1.8 Delimitation

The content of this study was limited to first year students of Asuom Senior High school, in the Kwaebibirem Municipality of the Eastern Region. I choose the school and

the form one General Arts students as a case study because they were accessible at the time of my research.

Moreover, the study discusses the role that teaching of prose plays in written compositions of the students. Other genres like poem and drama were not included in the study.

1.9 Organization of the Study

This study is divided into five chapters. Chapter one deals with background of the study, statement of the problem, purpose of the study, significance of the study, objectives of the study, research questions, limitations, delimitations as well as the organization of the study. Chapter two reviews the related literature on the role of literature in students' written compositions. In chapter three, it describes the methodology used in conducting the study. Then, chapter four presents and discusses the data presented. Finally, chapter five gives a summary of the study and makes recommendations and suggestions for future study.
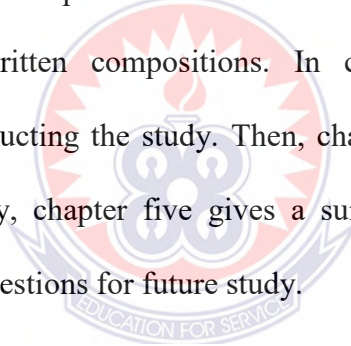
CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

2.0 Introduction

This chapter covers a review of literature related to the role literature in English plays in improving students writing skills. It first starts to give views on literature-in-English and the role it plays in composition writing. Then, it goes on to explain some approaches effective in teaching composition writing but focuses on the literature-based approach and its benefits.

2.1 Scope of literature-in-English

There are several definitions of literature from different views and perceptions. The term literature can broadly be referred to the collective body of literary productions scattered all over the world, apparently written in not just one language, but many languages (English Literature vs Literature in English , 2014). Though literature can be in many languages, this study will focus on literature-in-English. The difference between English Literature and Literature-in-English is that the former is a collection of written works produced in English language by the habitants of the British Isles from the 7th century till date (kemp, 2019), on the other hand, literature-in-English includes literary works from all over the world written in English language and portrays diverse cultures. The research is targeted at helping ESL students therefore using literature-in-English texts by Ghanaian authors will help them relate better with the text.

Also, Ansari (2013) states that the study of literature can be viewed in at least three ways: literature as text, literature as message, and literature as discourse. He further explains that Literature as a text is whereby it is used by linguists as an example of the language system. literature as a message and discourse deal with the significance and

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function of the language respectively. All these angles of literature are beneficial to the ESL learner and can be exploited to improve on English language, especially, with the writing.

Contrary to this idea, Amase, Tsavmbu and Kaan (2014) talk about only the "how" of literature to improve language and not the "what" of literature. The "how" referring to the way that the literature text is presented and the "what" refers to the message or subject matter of the text. They agree with Widdowson (1975) who believes that literature is fundamentally a study of language, because literature is an example of language in use and a context for language use. The emphasis here is more on the style of the literature works affecting English language study rather than its message or content. This study will not only exploit the "how" or structure of the text but will also consider the "what" or the message of the text to help students.

A more suitable definition of literature-in-English for this study is when "literature is defined as one of the valuable authentic materials that can be used in both language teaching and learning", (Elhabiri, 2013, p. 31). literature texts can be adopted as a powerful and motivating resource for teaching English (writing in particular) in an ESL class. The use of literature text as a model where students try to imitate the content and style of the writer and, also, as a subject matter is what this study wants to consider. The choice of literature text is very crucial to the success of this process, therefore, we need to know the various forms in which literature materials are presented.

2.1.1 Forms of literature in English

There are three forms or genres of literature. This is summarized in a figure below
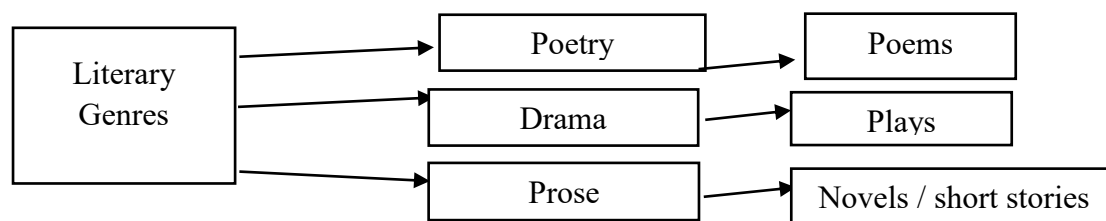
Figure 2.1: Literary Genres from Elhabiri, 2013.

The figure illustrates the general literary genres that consist of: poetry (written in verse; in rhythmic patterns and lines), prose (could be fiction such as short stories, or nonfiction such as autobiographies), and finally, drama (plays, they could be tragedy, comedy, or tragic-comedy). All these genres provide valuable materials effective for language learning. Shazu (2014) argues that English language learning that is mainly language-based without any aesthetic value happens to be a boring and monotonous task for the students. It is therefore important for teachers to find innovative ways of teaching the language so as to keep students interest in the subject.

Many researchers have conducted studies on how the various genres of literature can help students improve their language skills. Tomlinson (1985) states that literature can be used as a resource in the teaching of language because it exposes authentic English and gives the learners opportunities to develop communication skills by involving them into poems, stories, plays, novels and autobiographies. Inauthentic material could be found in English text books written by expects in the language who will focus on correctness of the language.

Chalikendy (2015) demonstrates how literature is a natural source for teaching English in ESL/ EFL classroom through poems. Poems are a natural source or a material to develop English language and integrate the four language skills (speaking, listening,

writing and reading) through certain activities. Again, Zyoud (2016) mentions that "Through drama, a class will address, practice and integrate reading, writing, speaking and listening" (p.2). Drama can also foster and maintains students' motivation, by providing an atmosphere which is full of fun and entertainment (Zyoud, 2016). The class becomes lively when students are introduced to interesting activities based on a play or poem that involves them.

2.2 Features of Literature Texts that Help in Writing

The structure of literature-in-English texts has elements that students can learn from and use to improve their writing skills and language learning as a whole. The two features of literature text that can help in language learning are the internal coherence and conscious patterning (Gajdusek, 1988)

2.2.1 *Internal coherence*

The internal coherence of a literary text means that each line has a relationship with the next and paragraphs are also connected to each other in order to make meaning. Coherence is one of the key features of a good paragraph and essay as a whole. A paragraph is said to be coherent when all the sentences are related to the idea presented in the topic sentence and when each sentence follows the other in a logical order by using some transition (Elhabiri, 2013). Even though English text books will also teach students to write coherently, literature text will provide them with a more natural and meaningful context.

The study of literature-in-English texts will help learners understand important features of writing that they can use when writing their essays. The internal coherence of a literary text includes important text features such as format, organization, and genre, as well as spelling and syntactical combinations of words that are accepted in a particular

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language or culture (Graham, 2016). In order for students to understand the internal features of a text and use them in their own writing the teacher must guide them through activities that will facilitate the discussion of these features. Graham (2016) suggest that explicitly stating the connection between what students just learnt from reading and how they can apply it in their own writing elevates their knowledge about the connection between the literature text and their writing. This can be achieved through activities where the teacher leads students to discuss the internal features of the text.

The study of the internal coherence in the literature text will guide learners organise their ideas clearly in an orderly manner and stay focused on the topic they are writing on. To support this, Bartan (2017) found that there was a statistically significant difference in the pre-test and post-test achievement of the experiment group based on their study of the literature texts' internal coherence (language, content, and organization). This proves that studying the internal coherence of a literature text can help improve the writing skills of learners in terms of language, content, organization, and mechanical accuracy.

2.2.2 Conscious patterning

Conscious Patterning is when the literary text is characterized by recurring patterns, structures and sounds. The primary aim of literature is not for teaching, it is a piece of writing that expresses the writers thoughts, feelings and experiences, however, " it provides meaningful context for language learning through its natural, original content and authentic language" (Chalindendy, 2015, p. 2). The language of literature is creative; through the use of symbols and other literary devices the writer creates a real or imaginary world that a reader can relate to.

The literary devices used in certain texts make them a good source of model for students to learn from. Students will be motivated to also manipulate the English language to create expression that will make their essays interesting and rich. In this respect, Maley (2001) states that the language in literary texts may be used as an example of certain types of pattern and structure that the learner can acquire for personal growth, enjoyment and emotional gain. The students will not only learn patterns and structures to improve on their writing skills, they will always enjoy and appreciate the English language. The teacher will have to help students identify and understand those structures and literary devices. For example, the sentence structures used in poetry lines are different from those they will see in prose or drama, the students need to appreciate the features of each genre and the style of the writer. They must also understand that poets have the poetic license which allows them to manipulate the English language. Students must be taught the type of sentence structures and literary device that will be appropriate for the various types of essays they will be taught.

There are some contrary views to how the pattern of literature text can help students improve their writing skills. Some researchers have argued that literary texts are loaded with complex structures sometimes miles away from Standard English (Khatib, Derakhshan & Rezaei 2011). This is true to some extent considering the fact that English language has evolved over the years. Examples of these irregularities of syntax are particularly evident in old literature texts such as that of Shakespeare. For the purpose of improving students writing skills, I think these problems can be solved if teachers select modern literary texts by authors who are familiar to the learners.

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2.3 The Role of Literature-in-English Texts in Teaching English Language

Literature-in-English and English language are interrelated and the close relationship between them should be explored and exploited in order to enhance effective teaching and learning of both subject at the secondary school level (Ihejirika, 2013). Literature-in- English texts are a good source of classroom activities which will help improve on student's English language. Collie and Slater (1990) state four main reasons why literature texts play important roles in the teaching and learning of English Language. These are: valuable authentic material, cultural enrichment, language enrichment and personal involvement.

2.3.1 Valuable authentic material

Brumfit and Carter (1985) support the use of literary texts for teaching English Language. They argue that literary texts are authentic texts with real language in context, to which we can respond directly. Though some stories are fictional, they give the reader a sense of learning about real situations in people's lives. Alam (2015) argues that conventional texts used in English Language Teaching are usually only information based with no context where learners are only supposed to take the role of a passive learner while literary texts encourage the students to identify with or react against the characters who attract their attention. Often, texts from English language textbooks simulate dialogues at a limited level and sound quite unnatural. But, literature-in-English texts will provide a wider range of situations that will provoke natural and interesting conversations students need.

The findings of Ketema (2012) son the views of EFL teachers and students towards using literary text in the classroom further supports the idea that literature is a valuable material for teaching English language. A summary of the research findings revealed

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that "Some teachers and students were positive and strongly supported the integration of literary texts. However, they lacked the knowledge to effectively integrate them" (Ketema, 2012, p. 62). It will be difficult for a teacher with no background on the literature-based approach to effectively use literature text to teach students English Language.

There are some researchers who hold contrary views to the use of literary texts as authentic materials to teach English Language. Richards (2001) points out that authentic materials often contain difficult language, unneeded vocabulary items and complex language structures, which makes it difficult for students at lower level classes. This argument is valid because some students in the secondary school are not capable of reading the literature books meant for their level. Ohia and Adeosun (2002) as cited in Ajiko &Shapii (2017) are also of the opinion that no single text can satisfy the needs of a group of students from different socio-linguistic background. Literature may talk about real life experiences but some students may relate better to a text than others because they all have different backgrounds.

I believe the literature text will be valuable when it is selected to suit the learners appropriately. The teachers must consider the learners' level in the English language before selecting the text and make sure the text is not above their understanding. The text may not be able to contain element from each students' socio-linguistic background but the students should be able to relate with it or it should be familiar to them. Lazar (1993) talks about three different criteria for texts' selection; readability (level of language difficulty), suitability of content (relevant to the topic under study) and exploitability (facilitation of learning using different activities). When the teacher pays attention to these criteria, the learners can fully benefit from the literary texts.

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2.3.2 Language enrichment

Literature texts are rich in vocabulary and expressions that students can learn. Students become more productive and adventurous when they begin to discover the richness and diversity of the language they are trying to learn and begin to make use of some of that potential themselves (Shermila, 2011). It is very important for students to explore the English language themselves through reading. It will be easy for them to remember vocabularies they learnt themselves than the ones their teachers will give them. Nina and Violeta (2012) argue that the inclusion of literature in language teaching materials will provide students with the opportunities to experience and use the language more creatively and develop greater awareness of the language they are learning. They add that literature "improves the vocabulary, syntax and structure of the English Language." (Nina &Violeta p. 1184). Through literature-in-English texts students are exposed to variety of words used in different context. This can significantly improve on their English language skills.

Aside the vocabulary and expressions, students learn variety of language structures, writing skills and how ideas are connected. This is backed by Povey (1967) who states that "literature will increase all language skills because literature will extend linguistic knowledge by giving evidence of extensive and subtle vocabulary usage, a complex and exact syntax" (p. 40). Literature will help them examine and learn the rules of language usage in context. learners will also come across different sentence constructions that they can emulate when writing their own essays. Literature books are a good source of acquiring English expression that students can use in their essays instead of relying on other sources which may not be authentic.

2.3.3 Cultural enrichment

A piece of literature can help students understand other people's culture. It portrays the social and cultural values of a people. Reading literature-in-English texts can provide second language learners with opportunities to implicitly and influentially promote their understanding and awareness of the culture and the people in the target language (Kim W. , 2009). I believe the leaners can go beyond the culture of the target language and also learn about different cultures through the literature-in-English books. These books are written in the English language but also reflect the culture of the authors who are not native speakers of English.

When studying literary texts, students do not only interact with the language system (words and structures), but also with the language that carries a community's ideas and practices, (Elhabiri, 2013). This will be achieved through the use of words, metaphors, proverbs and forms that are common to this community. Ghanaian authors for instance will want to promote the rich culture of Ghana and also condemn the bad practices in their books. Learners will therefore be exposed to the English language and how they can use it to express their culture.

Gasinova (2018) adds that readers realise that their own personal, social and historical context has been influenced by a foreign language and a foreign culture and how this foreign culture has been influenced by the learners' own culture. The possibility of a blend between the learner's culture and that of the English language makes the learners more attracted to the study of English Language. Non-native speakers of the English language will understand that they can translate the proverbs and expressions from their native language to English when writing their own essays because they have seen such

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examples in literature-in-English books. This will make writing easier for learners because their writings will reflect who they are and where they come from.

2.3.4 Personal involvement

As students read literary texts, they get involved in the content of the text. Through certain activities, they discuss the content and structure of the text by appreciating and criticising the text. Then, students become enthusiastic to find out what happens as events unfold in the text and feel close to certain characters to share their emotional responses (Ketema, 2012). Students may relate the ideas, events and things found in literary texts to their own lives. This will help "to stimulate the imagination of our students, to develop their critical abilities, and to increase their emotional awareness" (Lazar, 1993, p. 19). Students will be more creative and imaginative when writing their own essays, especially in narrative.

Butler (2002) states that themes and plots of literary works provide stimuli for meaningful debates, discussions and other language tasks which develop the learner's linguistic and communicative skills. This encourages students to be creative and to contribute in class. Jose (2013) indicates that when we combine language learning with creative products of language like dramas, prose and poems; it adds variety to learners' learning. Thus, learning becomes interesting and fun. The primary aim of literature is not to teach composition writing; therefore this innovation can be fascinating to students. Another benefit is that literature promotes learner-centred activities which are useful in their own right (Brumfit & Carter 1986). It is more beneficial for students to get involved in the teaching activities so that they make contributions from the knowledge they have acquired than relying solely on the teacher. This makes the learning of English language fun and interactive.

2.4 The Role of Prose in Composition Writing

Prose can be used as a tool to foster the learning and teaching of English. The role of prose in English Language has been studied by a host of researchers. LaVile (1989) observed that "Teaching writing to adolescents through the reading of adolescent novels will more fully develop proficient writers who write with honest voices" (p7). This study dates back to 1989 but it is very relevant to us in 2019. Instead of relying solely on grammar text books we can use novels or short stories that are of interest to our students to teach them what they need to improve on their writing skills. This will enable students speak with "honest voices", in other words, they will be original. Through the study of literature-in-English texts, the learners become more actively involved and engaged while learning to write in English language.

More recent studies on this issue have also stressed on the benefits of using stories to teach and learn composition writing. Adam (2015) explored the significance of teaching short stories in developing EFL learners' narrative writing. The instruments used to collect data for his research were a pre-test and post-test. The sixty students selected for the research were divided into control and experiment group. According to his research findings, there was a significant difference between scores of the pre-test and post-test of the experiment group. "The mean in the pre-test is 9.50 while in the post-test 15.00." (Adam, 2015, p. 5). On the other hand, the test results of the control group showed no clear significant differences. The mean of their pre-test was 9.50 and that of the post-test was 10.50 (Adam, 2015). This indicates that the intervention measures employed with the short stories had a positive impact on the performance of experiment group of students.

Another recent study on the role of learning prose in composition writing stressed that literature-in-English texts can be considered as the most valuable resource one can use in learning composition because they offer learners a world of supported meaning that they can relate to (Khaleel, 2017). In order to develop paragraphs in the body of an essay very well learners will have to provide concrete supporting ideas and illustrations. The findings from questionnaires administrate to teachers and students proved that (50%) of students strongly agreed that stories are a good source of ideas, 40% of students agreed that stories are a good source to enlarge their vocabulary, 70% of teachers agreed that stories helped them in teaching English, 20% strongly agreed and only 10% disagreed (Khaleel, 2017). Khaleel concluded by adding that "All skills, functions and structures may be taught by stories. Vocabulary, pronunciation and creativity may be developed" (Khaleel, 2017, p. 392). This study proves that both teachers and students appreciate the importance of studying prose to improve on students' writing skills. This current study will equally consider the views of teachers and students in regard to the role of prose in improving on students' writing skills.

These researches discussed so far have all demonstrated that the study of prose helps improve students writing skills. More benefits of prose in students' writing are explained in an article by Erkaya (2005). She explains four benefits of short stories which are necessary to improve students' writing skills. They are reinforcement of skills, motivating students, introduction to literary elements and teaching culture.

2.4.1 Reinforcement of skills

Stories are a good source of material for teaching the four language skills (reading, speaking, listening and writing) to different levels of language learning. A literary text provides students with a much clearer idea about the syntactic structure of a written text

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and to what extent written language differs from spoken language (Gasimova, 2018). This is important because aside the classroom environment students have the chance to learn the English language at other place. They may learn certain words or expressions that will be inappropriate to use in their academic writings. Lazar (1993) states that short stories facilitate language acquisition by providing meaningful and memorable contexts for processing and interpreting new language. The study of prose will expose learners to the various ways of using the English language and reinforce they their knowledge in the use of formal language and informal language.

Paquette (2007) states that teachers can strengthen children's writing skills through discussions and analysing how authors use various qualities of good writing such as ideas, organization, voice, word choice, sentence fluency, and conventions. Teachers can encourage their students to model their essays after the experts and learn their styles. This can apply to young adult in the secondary school but the text selected for discussion should correspond to their level.

The selection of text plays an important role in helping students reinforce their writing skill. This is because "short stories can, if selected and exploited appropriately, provide quality text content which will greatly enhance ELT courses for learners at intermediate levels of proficiency" (Murdoch, 2002, p. 9). For the text to be relevant to the students the teacher must select carefully, length and content is crucial to the success of the learning process. Kim (2009) points out those students may have a negative assumption that reading in English; especially longer passages are a boring and difficult process. The choice of text can either reinforce the writing skills or discourage students from enjoying the process. It is also important that the teachers design learning activities that

are dealing with the writing topic under studies. For example, using short stories which are examples of fictional prose to teach narratives to students.

2.4.2 Motivation of students

Learning prose during composition lessons is a good source of motivation for students and the idea of trying a new approach can be exciting for them. Elliott (1990) affirms that literature motivates students and is "motivationally effective if students can genuinely engage with its thoughts and emotions and appreciate its aesthetic qualities" (p. 197). Students will effectively engage with the story through certain activities designed by their teacher. These activities could be carried out individually or in groups. Bobkina and Dominguez (2013) add that students usually get engaged in the plot of the story, commonly feeling close to their favourite characters which create a positive general effect on the learning and language acquisition process. Stories that have interesting plots can captivate students' interest and make them enjoy the lesson.

According to Sakthivel and Kavidha (2010) "when a reader reads a piece of literature, he actively participates in the story and he questions, wonders, gets angry, cries during the process of reading, all these feelings exemplify the readers' participation"(p. 229). This feeling is what will motivate the learner to completely get involved in the learning process. This will also encourage the learner to participate in all activities involved with the story like writing an essay with a similar theme in the story or writing about a character familiar to the ones they read about. In this way, literature motivates the learners and involves them in the learning process.

2.4.3 Introduction to literary elements

Students are encouraged to use idiomatic and literary expressions in their essays. However, it is difficult for teachers to teach most expressions in class, stories are rich in

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literary elements and devices that students can learn and use in their essays. Erkaya (2005) suggests that students at the beginning, low and intermediate levels can be taught simple elements, such as character, setting and plot, then, the same and more complex elements, such as conflict, climax, resolution, etc., can be introduced to students in more advanced levels. These literary elements will guide students in organising their narrative essays and other types of essays.

Alam (2015) adds that literature exposes the learners to complex themes and fresh uses of language. For example, a good novel or short story will introduce leaners to various literary devices. Aside the literary elements (plot, setting, subject matter, characters) that form part of a story, prose is a genre that exposes students to several literary devices. Literary devices such as metaphor, simile, hyperbole, oxymoron and irony just to name a few are important in composition writing. The addition of such literary devices in an essay can enrich it and make it interesting. One of the greatest strengths of literature consists in its imaginative and suggestive power, which is beyond the scope of the written part of the text (Bobkina & Dominguez, 2013). This makes literature an ideal tool for improving the writing style of students and helping them generate ideas for their essay topics.

2.4.4 Teaching culture

The study of prose can make learners culturally enriched which will in turn reflect in the content of their composition writings. Through the reading of stories students are exposed to their own culture and that of the target language, English Language. Collie and Slater (1987) opine that though language learners cannot visit the country where the language is spoken they can discover the literary text character's thoughts, feelings, customs and ideologies. Characters in stories are drawn from various spheres of the

given culture and by just reading the story the learners will be aware of different cultures. Though most stories are fictional, they still provide learners with the feelings and concerns that structure a real society.

Moreover, learning a foreign language is not limited to learning its grammar, learning a language includes getting familiar with the culture, geography and socio-economic structure of the targeted language (Erdem, 2016) . Once students are exposed to all these aspects, "they will know the reasons for using particular words in certain situations and they will be able to discern nuances between meanings of similar words" (Erdem, 2016, p. 158). Some idiomatic expressions thought to students will make sense to they only if they understand the culture of the target language. The exposure to various cultures can also cause learners to start comparing their culture to that of others to see whether they find similarities and, or differences between the two cultures. In literature-in-English where the English language is just a medium through which writers from different backgrounds write their books, the learners go beyond the culture of the target language and learn how they can express their own culture through English language.

In writing, blend of cultures can confuse learners if they are not guided appropriately. Gajdusek (1988) points out that misinterpretation may occur due to differences between the two cultures. She adds that to avoid misinterpretation, instructors should introduce books with the culture familiar to the students' or ask them to find relevant information about it in the text they are reading. I think that the more knowledge learners have about their culture and that of others, the better equipped they are to express ideas and give illustrations to explain their points when writing. The most important way that culture

can influence the writing skills of students is to use literary texts suitable for the level of students in the target language.

2.5 Some Approaches to Teaching Composition Writing

Approaches to teaching English language have evolved over the years to suit the growing needs of learner. Traditionally, writing was viewed as a tool for the practice and reinforcement of specific grammatical and lexical patterns, thus, the focus was on accuracy and little attention was paid to content and self-expression (Elhabiri, 2013, p. 21). In our time a lot has changed the focus is equally on the content and the organisation of the essay. Teachers will have to employ the approaches that will to help students in their written composition.

2.5.1 The traditional approach

Traditionally, the teaching of writing has been language focused; the emphasis was on correctness, "a correctness based on the adherence to and the copying of models" (Tuffs, 1993, p. 701). This approach focused on form of the language; syntax, grammar, mechanics and organization rather than content. The emphasis was on the correctness of the final product based on grammatical and linguistic accuracy. This is very similar to what is also known as product-oriented approach. This approach also mainly focuses on the written product rather than the process the learner should undergo to produce a good written text (Nyasimi, 2014). Badger and White (2000) add that this writing approach is concerned with the knowledge about the structure of a language, also writing development is a result of the imitation of input, in the form of texts provided by the teacher.

One important aspect of this approach is learning how to write through imitation. This is not a bad practice since students can use the sample text as a model to reproduce their

own piece. Myles (2002) confirms that if students are not exposed to written model texts, their errors in writing are more likely to persist. It is therefore necessary that students are exposed to sample of text to use as models.

However, limitations of this approach are seen where there is less attention on the content and more emphasis on the grammar, syntax and mechanical accuracy. This approach is likely to produce learners with great writing skill who are not creative or original especially with the subject matter of their essays. Even though this approach is helpful, attention is being moved gradually moved from it to suit our current objectives of studying English Language stated in the Teaching Syllabus for Senior High School.

2.5.2 The modern approach

The modern approach is a shift from the traditional style. The teaching of writing is no more concentrated on written product but there is emphasis on the process of writing. The process includes the generation of ideas, and the writing of multiple drafts to present writings that communicate learners' ideas (Elhabiri, 2013). The modern approach is also known as process approach. Hyland (2002) describes the process approach as one that focuses on how a text is written instead of the final outcome. We see that this approach is more learner-centred; the learner is allowed to contribute to the writing process. Jordan (1997) adds that, process writing enables the students to make clear decisions about the direction of their writing by certain procedures such as discussion, drafting, feedback and revision choices. The activities involved in this approach prepare the student before writing and also guide them through the process.

Tribble (1996) explains that to help students generate ideas before they start writing, they should first brainstorm in small groups the topic to be discussed in writing during the process writing. He adds that this should be followed by an outline of the essay.

Then, students revise their first drafts and give them to other students for pre-reviewing and commenting on. The final stage is editing the essay by the writer himself or herself to eliminate any language errors. We see that, this approach focuses on process rather than product. Because students are allowed to take part in the teaching activities, they are able to easily remember the things they contribute. The class is also interesting and lively when everyone is involved.

Clearly, this approach is an improvement on the traditional approach because not only does it cover all the aspects of composition writing, it also pushes learners to brainstorm and to give their own ideas. This promotes creativity and originality among students. Although these benefits are very helpful, the process approach has its own limitations. Some important ones are raised by Badger and White (2000). First, they argue that learners have to spend quite a long time to complete one particular piece of writing in the classroom. Secondly, they point out that this may decrease students' learning motivation and prevent them from learning other types of writing. Teachers of English language in ASEC can relate to the first point. Writing is only one of the aspect to teach in English language and in the scheme of work prepared for the term we allocate a maximum of 8 periods (8 hours) to writing, which is not enough to engage students effectively in the process writing activities.

2.5.3 The genre approach

The genre or eclectic approach is considered as the most effective and successive in the teaching of writing skills (Badger & White, 2000). This is because it combines process theories with genre knowledge and also emphasizes on the social context in which writing is produced. Another reason why this approach is successful is given by Tuffs (1993). He stated that this approach gives insights to students on how to replicate

successfully particular genres because rather than relying on prescriptive model-based advice, a genre approach attempts to identify the features of successful writing within a defined genre and then teach these features to students. For instance, using short stories to teach narrative composition to students, students will learn the features of storytelling and will be able to apply it better when writing their own stories.

The genre approach supports the studying of all authentic library texts. Nunan (1999) notes that the genre approach to writing emphasizes the need for studying different types of texts. The various types of texts referred to include texts such as novels, poems, plays and autobiographies. These genres of writing contain various structures and grammatical forms that learners can imitate. We see that the genre approach has features of both the traditional and the modern approach. In addition, Tangpermpoon (2008) explains that the focus of writing in this approach aims to integrate the knowledge of a particular genre and its communicative purpose. Although the focus is on a particular genre, it is possible to use the knowledge acquired in it to improve on all types of essays. The knowledge of form and language at the same time helps the student to understand how a particular form functions in a specific context; in this way, learners' writing proficiency can be enhanced (Kim &Kim, 2005). In this approach, the writer pays attention to context; he or she is guided to apply the knowledge from a particular text to fit any context, be it formal or informal.

Despite the fact that this approach is considered the most effective by some researchers, it has also been criticized for some reasons. Tuffs (1993) points out that each genre will have its own internal logic and language, therefore, the insights we gain from the analysis of one particular genre may have little or nothing to tell us of the organisation of a different genre. This situation may occur when the teacher makes the wrong choice

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of text to teach a particular type of writing. For instance, a teacher who treats a poem with the aim of helping students with their narrative essay may be limited in terms of the structures the students may acquire since pomes are written in lines. Even though some poems are like narrative (epic poems), it may not have the key features needed in a narrative essay. Another important point is that the genre approach limits learners' creative thoughts about content which overlooks natural processes of learning and learners' creativity (Badger & White, 2000). This is an important concern because some students may rely solely on the literature text.

2.5.4 The literature-based approach

The literature-based approach or literature-based instruction is where original narrative and expository works are used as the core for experiences to support learners in developing literacy (Torres, 2016). This approach exposes students to real or fictional stories in a setting that is natural and efficient to teach reading and writing. The literature-based approach often consists of the following elements: the use of natural text, discussion and collaboration with students on books, reading aloud, sustained silent reading, teacher modelling as a reader, emphasis on changing attitudes, self-selection of reading materials, meaning orientation, process writing and other output activities around literature (Turnell & Jacobs, 1989).

The literature based-approach is not a new concept, especially in the elementary level, (Custodio & Sutton, 2018). Even at the secondary level, English text books contain a lot of literary texts. However, Kim (2009) argues that the problem lies in the way literature is dealt with by teachers in class. For instance, literature is not introduced in a complete piece as an authentic language text; it is used primarily only for comprehension exercises; and it is just read rather than studied or analysed, (Kim, 2009). This way of

treating literature does not expose students enough to the benefits it has in improving their writing.

In general, the role of the teacher in literature-based instruction is one of decision maker, mentor, and coach (Torres, 2016). The teacher guides students by helping them in activities such as reading, discussions, team work and presentations. Through the reading and discussion, the teacher can help students identify aspects of writing like syntax, punctuation, and spelling. These roles further include planning themes, helping students activate the appropriate prior knowledge, and supporting students in reading and responding to the literature in appropriate ways (Martinez & Roser, 1991as cited in Torres, 2006).

2.5.4.1 Benefits of the literature-based approach

Research shows that students become better readers, writers, and thinkers when literature-based instruction is used in the classroom because literature-based is a natural activity that allows the students to do what they normally do when reading (Green, 2018). The research focused on positive effects that the literature-based approach has on student's reading achievement, but the benefits of this approach can be extended to writing. LaVile (1989) confirms that "Students who read well will write well, and students who write well will read well. They are so interrelated that often times it is difficult to even separate the two" (p. 58). Since reading and writing are closely related, the literature-based approach improves on students' writing skills as well as their reading skills.

The literature-based approach serves as a language model, "most researchers in L2 acquisition now agree that language should be taught in context and in a holistic manner not as a set of discrete skills" (Custodio & Sutton, 2018, p. 20). This can best be

achieved when students are exposed to good reading materials instead of always using the English text books. Literature exposes them to a wide variety of style and genre that the teacher may not teach in class. Perles (2017) adds that the focus of the literature-based instruction is on authentic literature, instead of a variety of textbook excerpts and other programs. For instance, an appropriate choice of short stories will provide learners with different features of a narrative like a good plot, sentence structures and themes. This will further improve on their language skills.

Dhillon and Mogan (2014) mention that "Literature is a very rich source of genuine subject matter" (p64). The themes raised in literature text books meant for senior high students cut across almost every aspect of their lives as teenagers. Through the discussion of these themes, students are made to express their own feelings and ideas about an issue. The research findings of Elhabiri revealed that "after involving students in writing after reading a literary text, a difference was found in their scores…some of them wrote adequate essays with a mastery of content and linguistic knowledge, despite some spelling mistakes that did not hamper the meaning." (Elhabiri, 2013, p. 106). This proves that students can be inspired by their reading materials to write good essays.

It is not enough that the students give points in an essay; they must be able to develop those points well. The literature-based approach promotes critical thinking skills. Students are able to gain a deep understanding of a text through activities in this approach. This helps students understand their position and that of others, they can even apply these gained knowledge to their own world (Hişmanoğlu, 2005). Again, students formulate their own meanings and develop their overall abilities to construct meaning through personal transaction with the text (Literature-Based Instruction , 2018). This

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gives students the chance to relate with the text and it brings out their creativity when writing their own essays.

All the approaches discussed so far make us realise that teaching writing skills to L2 students is a challenging task, which needs commitment from the teacher and students. Also, we notice an over- lapse among all the approaches. Nyasimi (2014) suggest that using a single teaching approach may not achieve the desired learning outcome, because the weaknesses of each approach tend to impede students' writing development, therefore, it is better to incorporate more than one approach. This study seeks to adapt the literature-based approach, which has more similarities with the modern and genre approaches explained above, to help improve the composition writings of students in Asuom Senior High School

2.6 Conclusion

This chapter has reviewed the literature around the two key elements of this study: the role of literature and composition writing. The first part looked into views about literature and its genres. Then, it reviewed the role of literature in the teaching and learning among ESL. It also expressed views on the role prose plays in students' composition writings. It further mentioned some teaching approaches that are effective in teaching writing to secondary school students but focused on the literature-based approach and its benefits.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

3.0 Introduction

This chapter is concerned with introducing the procedures and methods that were used to collect and analyse data. It deals with the research design, the research location, the targeted population and sampling. In addition, it discusses the data collection procedures used in gathering and analysing data.

3.1 Research Design

Any particular research design chosen should be adequate for the problem being address, in this study; the qualitative research design was suitable for conducting the study to achieve the stated objectives. According to Creswell (2014), research designs "are types of inquiry within qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods approaches that provide specific direction for procedures in a research study" (p 295).

Qualitative research can be defined as "a type of social science research that collects and works with non-numerical data and that seeks to interpret meaning from these data that help us understand social life through the study of targeted populations or places." (Crossman, 2019, p. 1). In the field of Applied Linguistics both quantitative and qualitative approaches have being used in conducting research, however, the qualitative research is ideal for providing insights into contextual conditions and influences (Dornyei, 2010). The researcher opted for this research design because it explores and helps to discover issues about the problem on hand inductively. Myers (2009) mentions that qualitative research is designed to help researchers understand people, and the social and cultural contexts within which they live. Again, the data collected is genuine, detailed and takes into consideration contextual conditions such as social, cultural, and

situational factors that may affect the researched. It also enables the participants provide their own explanations in a participatory exchange through interviews.

3.2 The Research Location

Asuom Senior High School also known as ASEC is located in Asuom near Kade in the Kwaebibirem Municipality of the Eastern Region of Ghana. The school was initially a private community school but it was later converted into a public school (Government Assisted). It started in 1968 by the Chief, Elders and people of Asuom who saw the need to have a Secondary School. Philanthropists offered their properties and labour to make the secondary school come to life. It was jointly managed by the Presbyterian Church of Ghana-Asuom, and the community. In 1970, this school was absorbed into the public system by the Busia Administration and the first headmaster was Mr. D. K Asiedu. The school has a population of about 1,187 students and a teaching staff of 82. It is a mixed school with more than 50% of the students being day-students. Most of the students admitted to the school are from Asuom and its environs. The major occupation of the people is farming and palm oil production.

3.3 Population

A research population is defined as a complete set of elements (persons or objects) that possess some common characteristic defined by the sampling criteria established by the researcher (Population and Sampling, 2018). All individuals or objects within a certain population usually have common binding characteristics or traits. Best and Kahn (2006) state that a population is a group of people that have similar characteristics and that group is of interest to the researcher. Thus, it consists of all the subjects one wants to study.

The population for this study is the 250 form one General Arts students of Asec and the four teachers teaching in form one. Predominantly, students of Asec have a poor educational background. Most of the first year students admitted in Asec for the 2018/2019 academic year performed poorly in their BECE. Most of them had difficulties with the English language, especially the writing aspect. Finding a good approach to teach the language at this early stage will go a long way to improve their writing skills.

3.4 Sampling and Sample Size

Sampling according to Fraenkel and Wallen (2000) is the process of selecting a portion of the population to represent the entire population which enables the researcher to study and obtain data that are representative of the entire population. Owu- Ewie (2011) also defines sample as a small population that is selected for observation and analysis. This selection is done based on the needs of the study from the population and it consists of the units or elements that will be closely examined for the research. In this study, the population is the form one General Art students and their teachers. The General Arts students are divided into 7 classes based on their electives subjects.

The non-probability sampling method also known as non-random sampling was used for this research. Under the non-probability sampling method, the researcher used the purposive sampling technique to select 60 students from 2 classes among the form one General Arts students in Asec. One of the classes, 1A1, made up of 30 students was used as the control group. The second class, 1A7, made up of 30 students was used as the experiment group.

Fraenkel, Wallen & Hyum (2012) mention that the choice of the purposive method is based on previous knowledge the researcher has of a population, the specific purpose of

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the research and personal judgment. This method was suitable for this research because the sample selected is a fair representation of students struggling with their composition writing. These two classes were chosen because the students in both classes were equivalent in term of their socio-cultural and academic performance. Helmenstine (2019) states that the control group and the experiment group must be identical in every aspect except the independent variable which changes in the experiment group but remains the same in the control group. In this case, the independent variable is the intervention treatment that the experiment group will go through. The purposive sampling technique also permitted the researcher to involve all four teachers teaching English language in form one.

3.5 Data collection procedures

This involves the whole process of going to the field to get the required information from the selected population. In collecting data, the researcher must decide which data to collect, how to collect it, who to collect it and when to collect data. This decision should be based on the following factors: the identified hypothesis or research problem, the research design and the information gathered about the variables (Nalzaro, 2012).

In this study, the researcher sought permission from the head of department of languages in Asuom Senior High to carry out the research. The researcher further explained to the respondents (teachers) the purpose for the research emphasizing that their information would be used for research purpose only. The students who took part in the research were also briefed on the purpose of the study.

3.6 Data Collection Instruments

Data-collection instruments allow researchers to systematically collect information about the objects of study and the settings in which they occur (Nyasimi, 2014). The

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various instruments employed in gathering the necessary data in this research were interview for teachers, observation of lesson and tests for students.

3.6.1 Interview

An interview is a method of gathering information through oral quiz which resembles everyday conversations, although they are focused to a greater extent on the researcher's needs for data (Patton & Cochran, 2002). The researcher used interviews because it is conversational and establishes a good rapport between the interviewer and the interviewee. Also, it was appropriate for this study because many respondents are more willing to communicate orally than in writing and thus provide data more readily in an interview (Best and Khan, 1993).

The semi-structured type of interview was used to permit me ask further questions for clarification during the interview. Four teachers were selected for the interview. All selected teachers were teachers of English Language in form one. The interview was meant to find out the kind of approaches that teachers employed in teaching composition writing. The researcher was also interested in the response teachers got from students when teaching composition and students' difficulties. Again, the researcher wanted to investigate how teachers perceived using literary texts as a resource in teaching written composition. Finally, the researcher sought their views concerning the importance of using literary texts to the development of students' writing skills.

The level of language used in the interview was simple and clarifications were made when the need arose. In order not to miss the objectives of the interview which were linked to the purpose of this study, the researcher outlined 11 questions based on four areas of interest to the study (see appendix 1).

The first part had three questions meant to know the teachers' level of experience in teaching and the response they get from students when they teach composition skill. The second part consisted of two questions. The aim of the researcher was to find out the various approaches teachers knew and the one they use in teaching composition writing skills. The next part was made up of three questions. It sought to find out their knowledge of the literature-based approach in teaching written composition and its benefits. The last part of the interview had three questions. They were meant to find out what role they think literary texts plays in improving writing skills and how the literature-based approach can achieve it.

3.6.2 Lesson observation

The researcher chose to include observation as another instrument to collect data because it is a powerful research instrument which validates data gathered in an interview. Patton and Cochran (2002) state that observational data is very useful in overcoming discrepancies between what people say and what they actually do and might help discover behaviour which participants themselves may not be aware of.

In this study, the researcher observed the composition lesson of two teachers who had already been interviewed. Although qualitative observers may engage in roles varying from a non-participant to a complete participant role, the researcher chose to be present and non-participant. The non-participating approach in observation kept the researcher concentrated on recording and jotting down useful information. It was also to avoid any interference during the lesson.

The researcher was able to observe carefully the approach that the teachers used in teaching their students composition writing skills. It also enabled the researcher discover how the students react and respond to the topic that was being treated.

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Through the observation, the researcher further discovered certain difficulties about students that were not mentioned in the interview. Instead of relying solely on what the teachers said the observation gave the researcher direct evidence of what actually happens.

3.6.3 Tests

Tests refer to a group of mental tasks performed by a group of people, in order to measure their skills, aptitude and behaviours (Elhabiri, 2013). In this study, the researcher used the test as a source of data collection to measure the learners' writing performances. The test also enabled decision making about the students' progress. Two different tests were used to collect data by the researcher, a pre-test, then, a post-test after an intervention treatment.

The pre-test was conducted on the control group and the experiment group after their teacher had ended the lesson on narratives. A post-test was then conducted on both groups after the researcher went through the intervention treatment with only the experiment group. It is important to note that the control group was included in the post–test because their results would be crucial to this study. It would enable determine whether there had been any significant improvement in the experimental group or not.

3.6.3.1 The Pre-test

The pre-test was the first test conducted on the topic "write a story which ends with the expression cut your coat according to your size". This was a one-hour class test given to students in class after the teacher had ended the lesson on how to write a narrative. The approach used was the traditional approach. The teacher did most of the talking trying to explain all features of a good narrative, both in its organisation and content. The

teacher gave an example of a narrative from a text book to use as a model. The test was schedule for the next time they had English Language.

The objective of this test was to discover students' abilities in expressing their ideas and thoughts in a coherent manner. This test was also to compare students' performance before and after they had gone through with the intervention. It was administered as a class test to the two classes at different times. Students were not under any form of pressure from the teacher. The scripts were marked by their teachers and given to the research to scrutinize before recording.

3.6.3.2 The Post-test

After taking the experiment group through the literature-based approach, a second class test was conducted for both groups. The question for this test was: narrate a story to your classmates which ends in the saying "…it pays to be hardworking". The two groups were made to write the same question, under the same conditions that they wrote the pre-test. The control group was included in the post-test in order for the researcher to have a clear picture of the effect of the literature-based approach before and after the intervention treatment.

The scripts from the second test were all marked by the researcher and were further scrutinised by a colleague teacher who is a WAEC examiner for his comments. The marking scheme for WASSCE English Language paper 2, section A has four aspects: Expression- 20 marks, Content- 10 marks, Organisation-10 and Mechanical Accuracy- 10 marks, this sums up to a total of 50 marks for written composition. However, the marking scheme used for the pre-test and post-test was modified to suit a class test standard, thus, Expression- 10, Content- 10, Organisation-5 and Mechanical Accuracy- 5, making a total of 30 marks.

3.7 Intervention Treatment

In an attempt to achieve the purpose of this study which is to identify the role of literature in students' composition writing, the researcher had to develop activities based on the literature-based approach to teach written composition. The literature text used was the novel "No Sweetness Here" by Ama Ataa Aido. This novel is a collection of 11 short stories and it is one of the recommended literature books used in English language.

This novel was appropriate for the study because it was accessible to all students. Again, it has a Ghanaian setting which students could relate with. Also the stories are interesting and the themes discussed are social issues that teenagers are interested in. Above all, this novel is rich in terms of sentence constructions, language function and vocabulary. Hismanoglu (2005) states that "while selecting literary texts to be used in language classroom, the students' language proficiency, interests, age and sex, etc. should be taken into account in order not to bore students with inappropriate materials" (p. 13). The novel selected is one of the recommended books students use in the English language subject.

Out of the 11 stories, one story entitled "In The Cutting of a Drink" was selected for discussion. In this story, the narrator whose name is not mentioned goes to the city in search of his younger sister who has been away from the village for 12 years. He comes back to narrate to his family members all what happened during his journey and how he accidentally met Mansa, his sister. I selected this story particularly because the narrator employed good narrative techniques that students can emulate. The themes were also suitable because it supported the topic of their composition exercise which was: narrate

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a story to your classmates which illustrates the saying "A good name is better than riches".

During the treatment with the experiment group, I explained to the class that we were going to undertake some activities on the story they had read. The types of activities done with the literature-based approach are the natural types of things children and adults would do when reading and responding to any good literature book (Torres, 2016). For example, it is natural to share and talk about a good book after reading it; rather than answering several questions about the book. These activities were divided into three: pre-reading activities, while- reading and post-reading activities. They were designed based on some useful instructional strategies for literature-based instruction: Scaffolding instruction, self-initiated reading, cooperative learning, activation of prior knowledge, and students' responses to literature.

3.7. 1 The "Pre-reading" activities

The Pre-reading activity was a 15-minute activity meant to introduce students to what we were about to do. The researcher reminded students that the lesson is a continuation of the lesson on how to write narratives. It was a warming up activity to help relax students before other activities. The strategies I employed during this activity were the Scaffolding instruction, activation of prior knowledge, and the self-initiated reading. The Scaffolding instruction strategy is based on the idea that at the beginning of learning, students need a great deal of support; gradually, this support is taken away to allow students to try the approach independently (Literature-Based Instruction , 2019). Activation of prior knowledge makes sure students have the opportunity to think about what they already know before the task of incorporating new information into existing structures of knowledge which activates long-term memory (Watt-Taffe &Truscott,

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2000). The self-initiated strategy is an important instruction in literature-based approach that encourages students on the need to love reading.

The researcher started the lesson by explaining to students the benefits of reading wide. The emphasis was on the advantages that reading literature has on their writing skills and English language as a whole. Students were allowed to ask questions and make contributions on how literature can improve their writing skills. I also explained to them certain literature elements such as plot, themes and characters that they must try to identify in the story they would read. This was necessary because these students had not started studying literary elements and devices in Senior High School but had treated literature at the Junior High School. Finally, I advised students to initiate reading on their own and not always wait to be instructed to read before they do so. They were also cautioned to choose their reading material carefully to meet their own individual needs and avoid any material that would influence them negatively.

3.7.2 The "While Reading" activity

After conditioning the students' minds for the next activity to what we were going to do next, they were divide into six groups to undertake the next activities. The strategy employed by the researcher for this activity was co-operative learning. Co-operative learning is where learning occurs in a group and individuals are able to have meaningful engagements with their more experienced people or usually their peers (Sharan, 1990).

Students worked in six different groups with each group made-up of five students. The while- reading activity was done in groups to foster team work and enable students learn from one another. The grouping was done randomly to avoid favouritism and also have a blend of students who were academically strong and weak.

Students were instructed to read the story "In The Cutting of a Drink" in their various groups and look out for certain items. In their various groups, students were asked to summarize the story and discuss the plot. They also had to write out some new words, idiomatic and literary expressions they came across in the story. Finally, students were asked to identify the themes and choose who their favourite character was in the story. This was a 1-hour interactive session among students done under the supervision and guidance of the researcher.

3.7.3 The "Post-Reading" activity

The last activity was also done in their various groups. The strategies employed by the researcher for this activity were activation of prior knowledge, and students' responses to the text. These strategies required that students use related elements from the story they read to develop new ideas for their exercise. The essay topic: Narrate a story to your classmates which illustrates the saying "a good name is better than riches" was then written on the board for discussion.

A member from each group made a 5-minutes presentation on what they had gathered from the story they read. After the presentations, students learnt from each other by exchanging the information each group gathered. We first discussed all the elements of the story that was useful to make the plot of a narrative interesting (exposition, rising action, climax, falling action and resolution) and identified those that were relevant to include in the essay they will try at home. Then, those words and expressions that could be used in their essays and when speaking the English language were explained. They were reminded that some words and expressions are informal, thus it would be inappropriate to use them when writing formal essays like articles or formal letters.

The themes from the story were to trigger a discussion that will bring out responses with more points from what they already knew about the topic. Students were asked the following questions for interpretation:

1. What do you think lead to Mansa's current faith?

2. Do you agree with Mansa when she said "many kind of work is work"?

3. Who do you blame for Mansa's situation?

The discussion of these questions was to help students develop new ideas for their essay. It also gave them the chance to express their opinions about the characters.

After a 40-minute discussion, all the points made that will be useful for narrative essays and the topic under treatment were summarised. The researcher mentioned that students could adapt this approach on their own to help them write any type of essay. The researcher concluded the lesson by asking students if they had any questions or contributions and instructed them to try their hands on the topic individually at home as a preparation for another test.

3.8 Validity

Validity of a research is the concept which establishes whether the data collected is a true picture of what is being studied (Walsh, 2001). According to Saunders (2009) the validity of an instrument is improved through expert judgment. To establish the validity of the data collection instruments: interview, observation and test were discussed with some experienced teachers and researchers to go through and offer their suggestions.

The opinions of experienced researchers and the researcher's supervisor's recommendations were considered in structuring questions for the final interview. The question for the test was based on the researcher's instructions after deliberations with

colleague teachers who were part of the study. Inputs from experts helped in the validation of the data since it enabled the researcher do the necessary corrections and modification which helped in acquiring the needed data.

3.9 Reliability

Joppe (2000) as cited in Golafshani (2003) defines reliability as "…The extent to which results are consistent over time and an accurate representation of the total population under study" (p.4). This means that a study is considered reliable when the results of that study can be reproduced under a similar methodology.

It is important to note that unlike the questionnaire the test as an instrument for collecting data may not provide the same scores due to some characteristic of the respondent or researcher, which may lead to errors of measurement. Therefore, it is the researchers' responsibility to make sure that high consistency and accuracy of the tests and scores are recorded (Golafshani, 2003). To ensure reliability, the researcher took into consideration advise and suggestion from other researchers who have more experience in post graduate study. Also, the test scripts were carefully marked and recorded and useful information from the interview and observation were carefully recorded.

3.10 Ethical Issues

To ensure that, the result of this study is accepted, the researcher followed some ethical issues. First, the researcher sought permission for everything she did. I sought permission from the headmaster of the school, the head of the English Language Department, and the sampled students. The researcher further assured teachers and students that, their information will be protected.

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3.11 Data Analysis

Data analysis is the process of data classification, data coding, data entry and analysis in order to make interpretation possible (Nyasimi, 2014). The data analysed in this study were purely qualitative. Cohen et al (2007) mention that "qualitative data analysis involves organizing, accounting for and explaining the data; in short, making sense of data in terms of the participants' definitions of the situation..." (p. 462).

The data from interviews and observation was analysed using thematic analysis. The responses from teachers' remarks from the observation were discussed according to the objectives of the study. The results from tests were first recorded and then they were interpreted, and conclusions were made.

3.11 Conclusion

In this Chapter, the researcher has presented the method employed to conduct this research and given a brief history of the research location. Data collection procedures as well as research instruments have been discussed. The strategies used in the intervention treatment were also discussed. In addition to that, methods of analysing data have been identified.
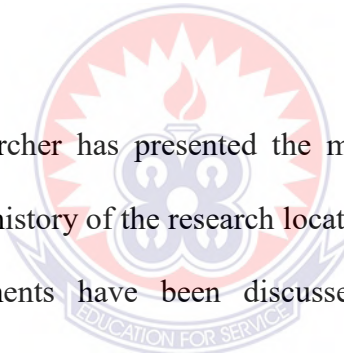
CHAPTER FOUR

PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

4.0 Introduction

This chapter presents, interprets and analyses the data collected for this study. The instruments used in collecting data included: an interview for teachers, observation of lesson and tests. The data was analysed based on the three research questions of this study. The results from the tests (pre-test and post-test) are also presented using descriptive statistics such as tables and graphs.

4.1 The role of Learning Literature in Improving Students' Written Composition in ASEC

The role of literature in improving students' writing skills was seen clearly in the result from interviews with the teachers. It was further demonstrated during the intervention treatment and in the results from the pre-test and post-test conducted for the students.

4.1.1 The view of teachers and students on the role of Literature in written composition

The first question that the teachers were asked during the interview was "how long have you been teaching English Language?". This question was asked to know teachers' experience in the teaching field. Two teachers answered that they had taught English language for almost one year. The other two, were referred to as T.I 1 and T.I 4 had taught for eleven years and ten years respectively. The big difference in years of teaching between the first two teachers (T.I 2 and T.I 3) and the last two did not affect their opinions on the role of literature in students' writing. All four teachers answered "yes" to the question "do you think that learning literature plays a role in students writing skills and language use?" It was obvious from their answers that all teachers

teaching form one students in ASEC, no matter their experience in teaching, believed that literature plays an important role in improving students writing skills.

Elhabiri (2013) interviewed six teachers at the Tlemcen University, Algeria, her findings recorded that "all teachers confirm that reading and writing complement each other. Thus, integrating reading in the EFL writing classroom will help learners develop, and improve their writing skills" (p. 105). This proves that teachers acknowledge the importance of literature in writing. Teachers acknowledging the role of using literature texts is important because once teachers are aware of the good impact of a material on the learning progress of their students, they will be willing to use it. However, this conviction will be insignificant if teaches do not engage their students in activities based on literature texts during their composition lessons.

During the intervention treatment with the experiment group, I observed that students were also aware of the important role of literature. We discussed some benefits of reading during the "pre-reading" activity. Students mentioned a lot of benefits that reading has. Some of their responses were; "it makes us learn new words", "it helps us learn more about our culture and history" and "literature helps us to be creative". They mentioned that they learnt some of these benefits in Junior High School during their introduction to literature lesson. Ketema (2012) revealed that in an interview with students "they stated that literary texts are reflections of life, literature is an art and it helps people to broaden their horizons" (p. 37). This proves students understand that studying literature plays a key role in the development of their writing skills in English language.

4.1.2 Literature as a source of motivation

The second question I asked teachers during the interview was "do your students enjoy their composition lesson?" Out of the four teachers only one said "yes" and the other three teachers stated that only few students enjoyed the class. From their answers, we can say that according to their teachers most of the form one students in ASEC do not enjoy the composition lessons. One way that teachers can determine whether students are enjoying a class will depend on the students' participation during the class.

My observation of two lessons indicated that students are motivated to contribute in class when they are involved in the learning process. The class where the teacher used the traditional approach was boring. Yet, during the intervention treatment with the experiment group where I used the literature-based approach students' attitude was very positive. They were excited to learn composition through literature. The class was interactive because the students did most of the talking. The team work also created a competitive environment where every group wanted to provide more points.

Research on teaching writing had shown that students' achievement was higher when the teaching approach emphasized writing as a process rather than writing as a product (Parson, 1985). Jacobs and Farrell (2003) add that the use of small groups in teaching language promotes learner autonomy because it gives learners control over their own learning, both in terms of the content of learning and processes they might employ. The students were motivated to contribute in class because the intervention treatment provided activities such as group discussions, team work and presentations that involved them.

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4.1.3 Students develop critical thinking

The study of literature did not only motivate students to contribute in class, they were equally stimulated to think critically. The literature-based approach employed during the intervention treatment involved activities which were student-centred. The students worked in groups and made presentations of their work in class. After the presentation, there was a discussion where students expressed their views on all the findings we gathered. They also expressed their views about the themes and characters in the story. This exercise demanded that student analysed the issues based on facts from the story and their own experiences.

I observed that they made good contributions. For instance, there was a heated argument on one of the questions for discussion. The question was "who do you blame for Mansa's situation?" Instead of just giving their reasons based on emotions, one student made an important remark and I quote "Mansa is to be blamed because nothing shows that she was forced into prostitution from the story". Being able to support one's idea in an essay is crucial and the discussion on the literary text pushed students to provide answers with evidence. This finding is supported by Butler (2002) who claimed that themes and plots of literary works provide stimuli for meaningful debates, discussions and other language tasks that develop the learner's linguistic and communicative skills.

The majority of students were involved in the discussion and they made important contributions on the topic. Duncan (2017) stated that when students are engaged in discussions it will develop them naturally, even the most unimaginative ones amongst them. I noticed that students who were not so bright had the chance to express themselves among their peers. Even the intelligent but timid ones had the courage to contribute in class when they were in their groups. The students did not only exhibit

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critical thinking orally during the intervention, it also reflected in their essays during the post-test as well.

4.1.3 Student's Performance during Tests

In addition to the opinions of teachers and students, the results from students' pre-test and post-test demonstrated the role of studying literature in their written composition. The results of the two tests from the control group, did not show much improvement, the difference in their scores was small and insignificant see figure 4.2. On the other hand, the two tests conducted for the experiment group showed great improvement in their performance after the intervention treatment see figure 4.3. These findings are similar to those of Elhabiri (2013), Adam (2015) and Bartan (2017) who all recorded that the post-test scores of the experiment groups they used were higher than the control group's post-test scores after they employed intervention measure with a short story. The findings of the students' tests in this study are presented and discussed below.

4.1.3.1 Performance of students' essays during pre-test

Results of the pre-test for the control and experiment group showed low performance. The pre-test for both groups was conducted after their teachers had taken them through a lesson on narrative essays to test their abilities in writing after the lesson. According to my observations, during the lesson the students were taught the features and techniques of a narrative essay. One teacher went further to read out a sample of narrative essay from an English test book to the class. This sample essay was to serve as an illustration to the points the teacher explained earlier but the content and form of that essay were not discussed into details.

The approach employed by the teachers I observed was centred on the final product which is the essay (what it should look like). Students were given certain steps to follow

to write a good narrative, however, the teachers did not take them through enough activities to enable them understand the process or steps before writing their essay. This approach of teaching is what I believe accounted for the poor performance of both groups in the pre-test.

Table 4.1 shows the result of the pre-test conducted for both the Control and experiment group and their performance were similar. In both groups, just about ten students representing 33.3% were able to get marks from 16 to 25. The majority, twenty students representing 66.6% were students who scored average to poor marks (6 to 15). No student had below five in the control group but two students from the experiment group did. Seven students from the control group and six from the experiment scored marks ranging from 6 to 10. Thirteen students from the control group and sixteen students from the experiment group scored marks ranging from 11 to 15. Then, eight students from the control group and six students from the experiment group had marks ranging from 16 to 20. No student scored between (21 to 25) from the experiment group but only two did from the control group. None of the students scored from 26 to 30.

It could be said that the performance of the control group was a little better than that of the experiment because two students had good marks, but generally the performance of both groups was not encouraging. The findings are presented in Table 4.1 and better illustrated in the bar chart in Figure 4.1 below.

Table 4.1 Pre-test for the Control Group and Experiment Group

Scores	Control Group	Percentage	Experiment Group	Percentage
0-5	0	0	2	7
6-10	7	23	6	20
11-15	13	43	16	53
16-20	8	27	6	20
21-25	2	7	0	0
26-30	0	0	0	0
Total	**30**	**100**	**30**	**100**
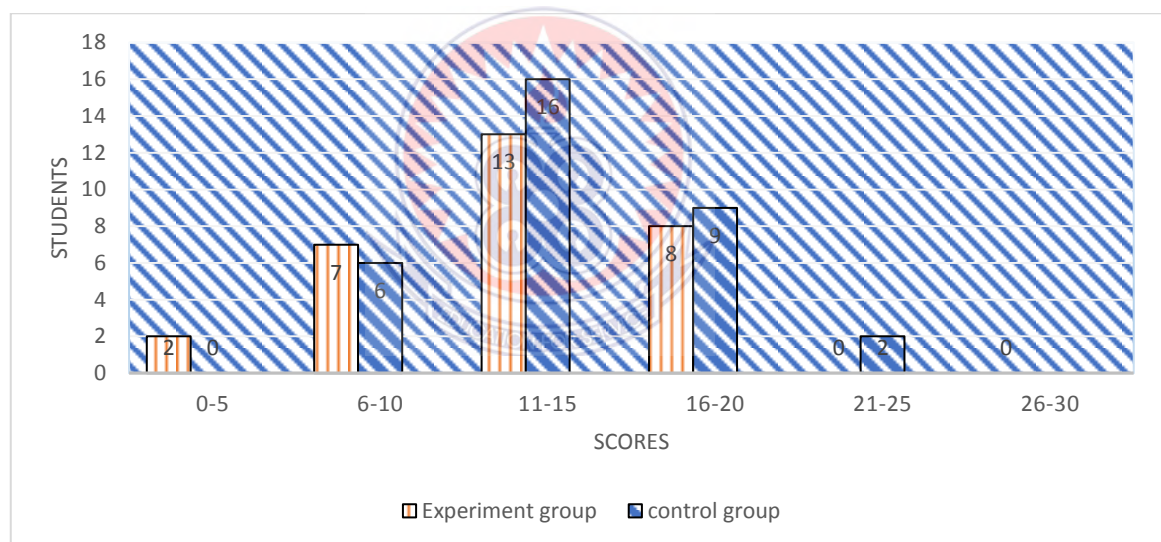
Figure 4.1 Pre-test Bar Chart for Experiment and Control Group

4.1.3.2 Performance of control group in essay during post-test

The result of the post-test conducted for the control group after the pre-test was still not encouraging. It is presented in Table 4.2. Five students scored marks ranging from 6 to 10 and none had below 5. Fifteen students scored between 11to 15, that is 50% of the

class scoring fair to average marks (6-15). Then, seven students scored from 16 to 20 and three scored from 21-25.

A minimal improvement in their performance was recorded when I compared their pre-test to their post-test. This slight improvement could be attributed to the fact their teacher discussed the marked pre-test essays with them and they made their corrections before writing the post-test. However, this result was still not encouraging because it was only 10 students out of 30 representing 33.3% who scored good marks (16 to 25). Also, those who scored between (11 to 15) increased from thirteen students (43%) to fifteen students (50%) and the seven students (23%) who scored between 6-10 in the pre-test decreased to five students (23.3%). A comparison of their pre-test and the post-test is outlined in Table 4.2 and illustrated in the bar chart in Figure 4.2 below.

Table 4.2 Post- Test Scores for Control Group

Scores	Pre-test frequencies	Percentages	Post-test Frequencies	Percentages
0-5	0	0	0	0
6-10	7	23	5	17
11-15	13	43	15	50
16-20	8	27	7	23
21-25	2	7	3	10
26-30	0	0	0	0
Total	**30**	**100**	**30**	**100**
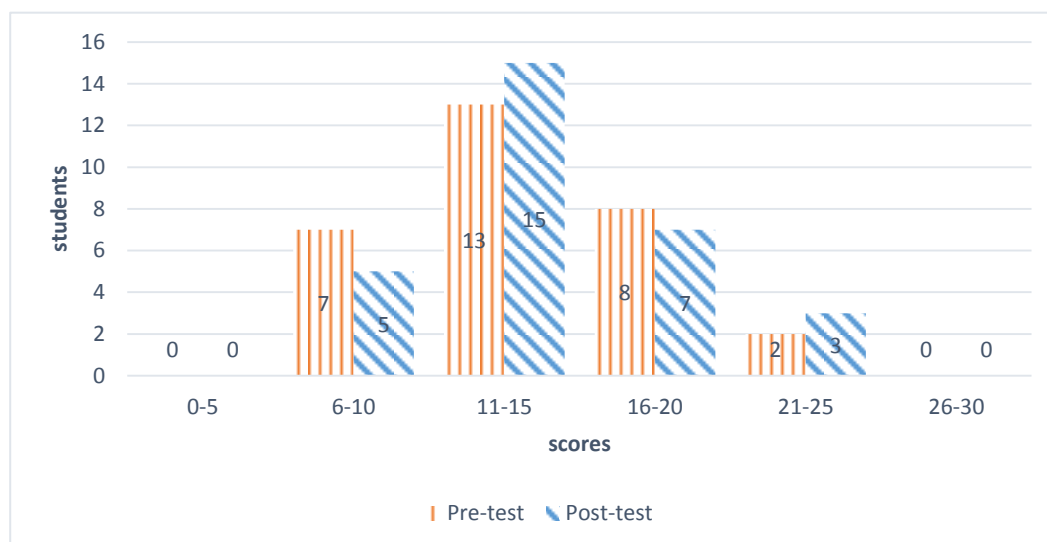
Figure 4.2 Pre-Test and Post-Test Bar Chart for Control Group

4.1.3.3 Performance of experiment group before and after intervention

The post-test was conducted for the experiment group after I took them through an intervention treatment and gave them a-take-home exercise meant for their revision. Instead of just correcting their pre-test essays, these students discovered how to write a narrative essay by learning its features in a context during the intervention. This made it easy for them to apply all they learnt during the intervention in the post-test because they were involved in the learning process through discussion and team work.

The result of this test presented in Table 4.3 shows a significant improvement in the performance of students. Only two (2) students scored marks from 6 to 10 and none scored less than 5. Also, ten (10) students representing 33.3% scored marks ranging from 11-15. Then, thirteen (13) students which is 43% scored from 16-20 and five students representing 17% scored from 21-25. However, no student scored more than 25.

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Compared to the scores they had in the pre-test, the post-test showed that the intervention treatment was helpful. Especially, with the number of students who scored marks between (21 to 25). No student had more than 21 in the pre-test but five students scored from 21 to 25 in the post- test. Again, in the pre-test two students had very poor marks ranging between 0 to 5 but none of them had below 5 in the post-test. Six (6) students scored between 6 to 10 but the number decreased to two students in the post-test. The number of students who scored from 11-15 also decreased from sixteen in the pre-test to ten in the post test and those who scored 16 to 20 increased from six in the pre-test to thirteen in the post-test. None of them scored more than 25 but I believe the general performance was good. This is an indication of the intervention having worked. The findings showing some improvement in the post-test compared to the pre-test are presented and illustrated in the Table 4.3 and bar chart in Figure 4.3 below.

Table 4.3 Post- Test and Pre-test Scores for Experimental Group

Scores	Pre-Test Frequencies	Percentages	Post-Test Frequencies	Percentages
0-5	**2**	7	0	0
6-10	6	20	2	7
11-15	16	53	10	33
16-20	6	20	13	43
21-25	0	0	5	17
26-30	0	0	0	0
Total	**30**	**100**	**30**	**100**
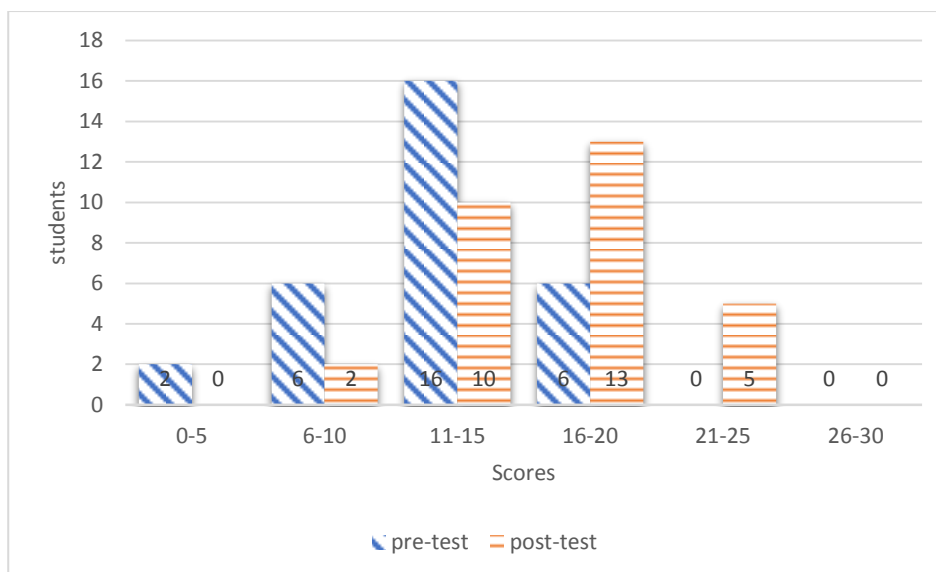
Figure 4.3 Pre-Test and Post-Test Bar Chart for Experiment Group

4.1.3.4 Comparison of Performance of Control Group and Experiment Group

There was noticeable improvement in performance of the experiment group in the post-test compared to that of the control group. After the pre-test, the experiment group went through the intervention treatment while the control group only made corrections of their pre-test essays. The control group was included in the post-test to compare their performance with that of the experiment group.

No student had below five in both groups. Five (5) students from the control group and only two (2) students from the experiment group scored marks ranging from 6 to 10. Fifteen (15) from the control group and ten (10) from the experiment group scored marks ranging from 11 to 15. Then, seven (7) students from the control group and thirteen (13) students from the experiment group had marks ranging from 16 to 20. Again, three (3) students from the control and five from the experiment group scored between 21 to 25. However, none of the students scored from 26 to 30.

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It was observed from the result that twenty-one (21) students representing 70% of the students from the control group scored poor to average marks that is from 6 to 15. Only nine (9) students representing (30%) out of the 30 students had marks above 15, of which only three (10%) had very good marks that is between 21 to 25. On the other hand, twelve (12) students representing 40% from the experimental group had marks from 6 to15 of which only 2 had from 6 to 10. 60% of the students had marks above 16 of which five students had from 21 to 25. This is a remarkable improvement considering the fact that none could score in that range during their pre-test. The findings are illustrated in Table 4.4 and the Bar Chart in Figure 4.4 below.

Table 4.4 Post-test for the Control Group and Experimental Group

Scores	Control Group	Percentages	Experimental Group	Percentages
0-5	0	0	0	0
6-10	5	17	2	7
11-15	15	50	10	33
16-20	7	23	13	43
21-25	3	10	5	17
26-30	0	0	0	0
Total	**30**	**100**	**30**	**100**
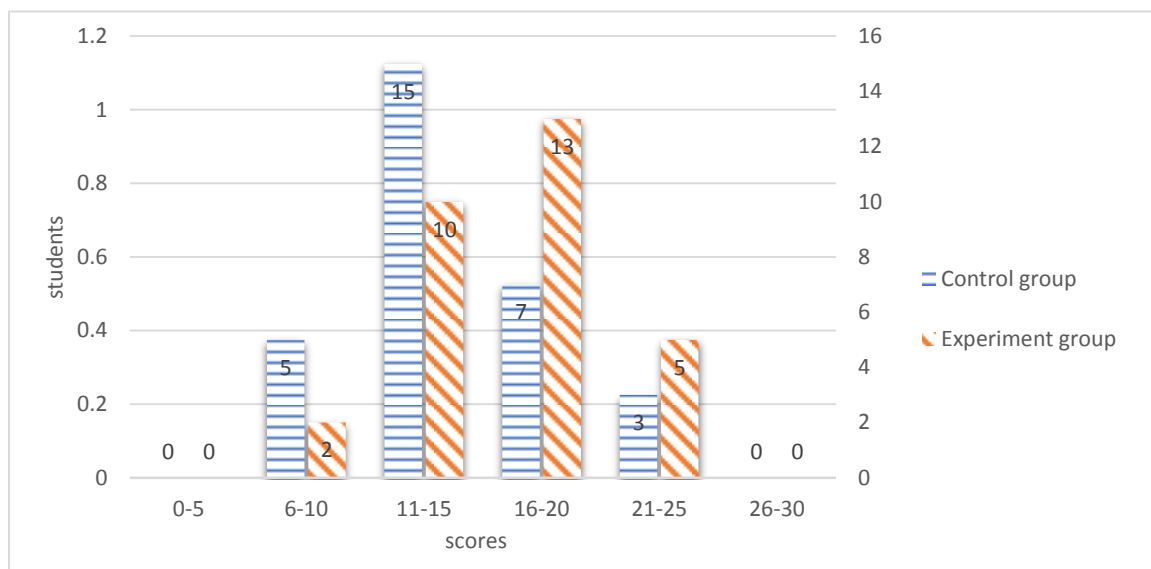
Figure 4.4 Post-Test Chart for Control Group and Experimental Group

4. 2 Approaches Used by Teachers in the Teaching of Composition Writing in ASEC

The second research question for this study was to find out the approaches that teachers knew and used in teaching composition to the form one students in ASEC. The answer to this question was seen in the findings from the interview with teachers and further demonstrated in the findings from the observation of lessons.

The aim of the researcher was to find out the different approaches that teachers knew could be used to teach composition and those that they employed when teaching their students. There was the need to briefly explain to the teachers four different approaches to teaching written composition because they were not familiar with the different approaches. They were: the traditional, modern, genre and literature-based approaches. Some teachers had been using some of them but did not even know the name of the approach they employed.

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4.2.1 The traditional approach

The findings revealed that all four teachers knew the traditional approach but only three teachers used it to teach. The traditional approach is one that is product-oriented. Here, the teacher is concerned with the knowledge about structures of the language and the writing development is a result of an imitation in the form of a text provided in class (Badger& White, 2000).

In one of the lessons I observed, the teacher gave detailed notes to students on features of a narrative and a sample from a textbook. The teacher did most of the explanation on the story and students were not eager to respond to questions they were being asked during the class. The class was not interactive because the teacher was only reading a story to them as a model but students were not involved in any activity to discuss the story.

These findings concur with those of Nyasimi (2014) who showed that the methods teachers frequently used to teach composition were lecture, demonstration and question and answer; the ones which were not frequently used were, group work, role play, debate, peer teaching and oral presentations. The ones that teachers preferred were mainly traditional methods and those they avoided in class were process-oriented methods which are considered effective to teaching second language writing skills. One reason stated for their preference was "students remained passive during the lesson and could only contribute when asked questions to respond to in class and this made us to resort to lecturing," (Nyasimi, 2014, p. 66).

With the reasons given for their preference of the traditional approach, my findings were slightly different from those of Nyasimi (2014). I observed that the preference for the traditional approach was because teachers did not know much about other modern

approaches like the genre and literature-based approaches. During the interview, it was clear that teachers did not know the names of approaches they employed in class. After, I briefly explained the four approaches to them no teacher used the genre approach and two teachers said the literature approach was what they employed. However, the lesson observation proved otherwise. This demonstrated that the teacher did not have a clear understanding of the literature-based approach. The traditional approach, mostly used by form one ASEC teachers, was clearly not producing desired result and this was obvious in the improvement in the experiment's group performance, see Table 4.3.

4.2.2 The modern approach

The modern approach unlike the traditional approach is one that is process-oriented. Instead of just giving rules and a model to students to apply, the students are involved in activities that lead to the final product. All teachers interviewed said they knew the modern approach but only two teachers said they used the approach to teach. Among these two, one used only the modern approach but the other teacher used the modern and traditional approaches to teach. I could not observe the lessons of these two teachers to confirm whether they actually used the modern approach. My focus was on the ones who mentioned that they used the literature-based approach.

4.2.3 The literature-based approach

The literature-based approach is regarded as a modern approach because it is one that also focuses on the process of writing rather than the product. The difference between the two is that this approach exposes students to literature texts as a resource to teach written composition. From the findings, the literature-based approach was known to two teachers. One of them said that the literature-based was the only approach used and

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the other one said the literature-based and the traditional approaches were employed to teach students.

The observation of two lessons proved that only one teacher out of the two who said they used the literature-based approach actually attempted to use it to teach. It was an attempt because I realised that the teacher did not know the right activities to employ with the material that was read in class. I noticed that it was more for a traditional approach with the use of a literary text (short story from a novel) as the model text. The teacher was actively involved in the process instead of just serving as a facilitator to lead the discussion. Even though the themes of the story were discussed students did not contribute much to the discussion. The impact of using that novel in class in teaching a narrative essay did not reflect in the students' pre-test or their post- test because their performance was not encouraging see Table 4.2.

According to the findings, the approach mostly used by teachers when teaching composition to form one students in ASEC is the traditional approach followed by the modern and literature-based approaches. One of the teachers knew the genre approach but none of them used it to teach the students. Generally, it was observed that the approaches employed by from one teachers in ASEC had an impact on students' perception about composition and also their performance. The approach used by the teachers to teach written composition did not yield a desired result as illustrated in Table 4.1. The general performance of both groups was poor during the pre-test. However, that of the experiment group improved after the intervention treatment.

4.3 The Impact of Literature-Based Approach in Written Composition in ASEC

The impact of the literature-based approach in students' written composition was seen in the answers provided during the interview of teachers and the results of student's post-test.

To determine the impact of literature text in students' essay the researcher, first, sought to find out from the teachers some difficulties that their students faced in composition writing. The purpose of this question was to see whether the literature-based approach could help reduce some of the challenges the students faced. The question asked during the interview was "what are the difficulties your students encounter when writing essays?" Teachers stated that their students faced difficulties in the following areas: basic sentences construction, spelling, concord, understanding the topic and coherence in their essays. These problems mentioned by the teachers cover all aspects of the marking scheme of an essay which are expression, content, organisation and mechanical accuracy.

The answers from the next question showed that literature texts could help students in the difficulties their teachers mentioned. The question asked was "how do you perceived using literature texts as a resource to teach composition writing skills to your students". These were some replies teachers gave; "literature texts are a good source for generating ideas and learning the styles in writing", "they give students a fair idea of an ideal text relevant to the topic of discussion", "they serve as sample for writing" and "students learn literary devices, illustrations and examples used to develop main points to build their essays". These were the benefits that using a literature text will have on students according to their teachers. These benefits could also be solutions to the difficulties they mentioned earlier. Even though most of these teachers did not use the

literature-based approach to teach composition, they all agreed to the positive impact learning literature texts has on their students' writing skills.

In addition to the views of teachers, a close analysis of the experiment group's post-test revealed the impact that the literature-based approach in their writing. The findings showed that students had improved on the four aspects of composition, namely: content, expression, organisation and mechanical accuracy. Elhabiri (2013) equally revealed that "the literary text helped students expand new ideas and acquire new vocabularies, hence, help them write effectively" (p. 166). The experiment group were asked to write a one- hour test after they had gone through the intervention treatment. The essay was marked over 30. Content and expression carried 10 marks each and organisation and mechanical accuracy carried 5 marks each. A close analysis of their performance in content, expression, organisation and mechanical accuracy is done below.

4.3.1. Content

In order to get a good mark in content, students were required to write a story relevant to the topic, its specific audience and purpose. They were asked to narrate a story to their classmates which will end with the saying "it pays to be hardworking". Form one students are usually encouraged to write not less than 450 words in their essays during exams as it is required in the WASSCE. However, for the purpose of this test they were required to write not less than 350 words.

The results of this test was an amelioration of the students' performance in the pre-test they wrote, see Appendix C and E. Most of the essays illustrated the saying very well and the majority wrote up to the required number of words. It was obvious most students did not face a lot of challenges remembering the features of a narrative because some of the answers they provided were as a result of their own brainstorming.

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The result from the post -test of the experiment group showed that nine (9) students, 30% out of the thirty (30) had very good mark in content (10 to 8). Fourteen (14) students, representing 47% had good to average marks (7 to 5). This showed that a total of twenty-three (23) students out of the thirty (30) wrote stories that illustrated the saying well and were also mindful of their audience. Five (5) students, 17% had fair to poor marks (4 to 3) and only two (2) (7%) students had very poor marks (2 to 0). The pie chart in Figure 4.5 below illustrates the findings
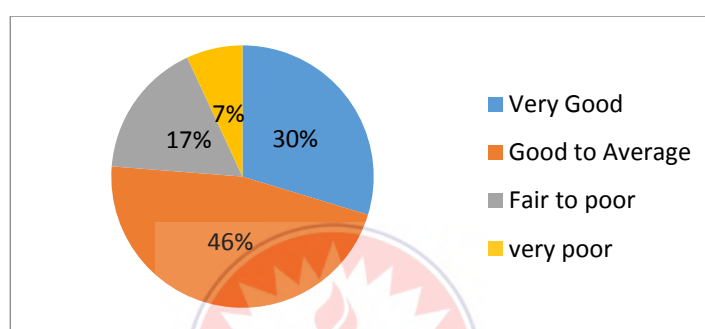
Figure 4.5 Pie Chart for Experiment Group on Content

4.3.2 Expression

In expression, the researcher considered the choice of vocabulary, expression and sentence construction of students in relation to the audience and purpose of the topic. This was where students who demonstrated that they had good control of the English language gained good marks. In their essays students needed to show creativity through the words and expressions they employed.

In the post-test, the students used a variety of vocabulary and expressions to make their stories interesting. Students were often limited in their use of vocabulary and expressions, some of them also felt the need to use complicated words in their essays to impress their teachers. However, through the intervention treatment, students learnt

how to express themselves more creatively and freely in their essays. For example, some used good expressions and narrative techniques like idiomatic expressions, simile and hyperbole in their essays to make it interesting, see Appendix E.

The result showed that eight students (27%) had very good marks (10 to 8) in expression, twelve students (40%) had good to average marks (7 to 5) and ten students (33%) had fair to average marks (4 to 3) but none had very poor marks (2-0). This means a total of twenty students representing 67% out of the thirty had marks ranging from 10-5. The findings are represented in the pie chart in Figure 4.6 below.
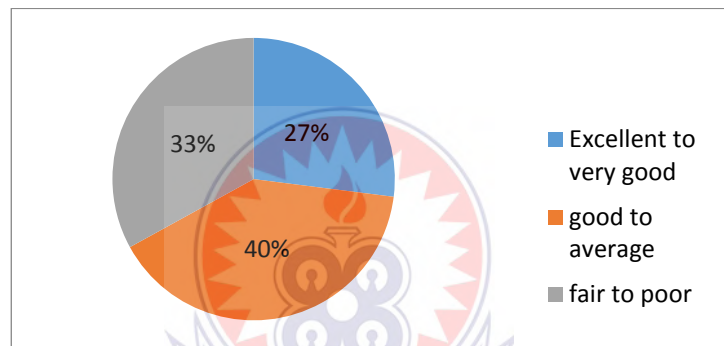
Figure 4.6 Pie Char for Experiment Group on Expression.

4.3.3 Organisation

In organisation, what the researcher looked out for included: a suitable opening, adequate development into paragraphs, links between paragraph, coherence of ideas, and a suitable conclusion. The students showed great improvement in this aspect, most of them arranged the plot of their story coherently as it was discussed during the intervention. Most students wrote suitable introductions and conclusions to their essays.

The advantage of using an authentic material during the intervention was that students learnt the organisation of a story from an experienced writer, Ama Ataa Aido. Stern

(1991) stated that controlled and guided activities on a literature text will help expand and deepen students' writing skills because of the diversity of possible structures and the different ways of linking ideas in the text. This was evident in the essays of most students, the exposure to an authentic material gave them more ideas on how to organise their essays. The result showed that thirteen students (43%) had very good marks (5). Eleven students (37%) had good marks (4) and six students (20%) had average to fair (3 to 2). None of them had very poor marks (1 to 0) in organisation. The pie chart in Figure 4.11 below illustrates these findings.
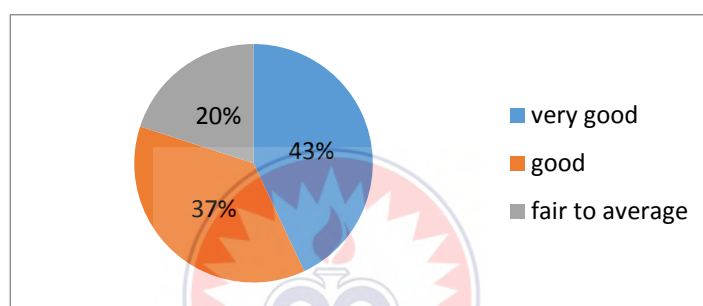
Figure 4.7 Pie Chart for Experiment Group on Organisation

4.3.4 Mechanical Accuracy

In mechanical accuracy, students were penalised for all the grammar, punctuation and spelling mistakes or errors they made. Half ($^1/_2$) mark was deducted for each mistake, until, up to a maximum of 5 marks. Generally, students scored low marks in this aspect because they made a lot of spelling mistakes in their essays. The result of experiment group's post-test did not show much difference compared to that of the control group. I recorded a lot of spelling mistakes from students' scripts, however, there was some improvement in their use of punctuation marks. Most students punctuated their essays correctly and used the right tense in their essays.None of them had a very good mark (5) and only five (17%) students had good marks (4). Nine students (30%) had average to

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fair marks (3-2) and sixteen students (53%) had poor marks (1-0). This is illustrated in the pie chart in Figure 4.12 below:
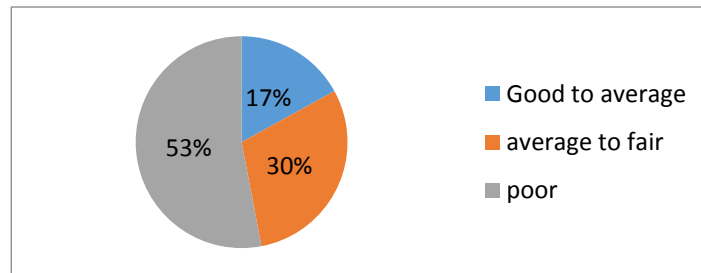
Figure 4.8 Pie Chart for Experiment Group on Mechanical Accuracy

These analyses together with the general scores already discussed in Figure 1 to 4 demonstrated the great impact that the literature-based approach had on students' writing skills.

4.4 Conclusion

This chapter sought to present and analyse findings gathered from the research instruments. The data was discussed in consonance with the three research questions. The data from interview, observation of lesson and pre-test revealed that the approaches used by from one teachers of ASEC to teach written composition were not producing a desired result. The intervention strategies adapted by the researcher showed that students' scores had improved in the post-test.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS AND

RECOMMENDATIONS

5.0 Introduction

This chapter presents summary of the findings, conclusions, recommendations and suggestions for further research. The summary of findings is presented using the research questions as sub-heading. The recommendations suggested will help improve composition writing among students of Asuom Senior high and Ghana as a whole. It also gives suggestions for future research work.

5.1 Summary of Findings

This research was aimed at identifying the role of literature in the composition writings of first year students of Asuom Senior High School. To achieve this, the researcher used the qualitative research design. The findings are summarised and discussed below using the research questions.
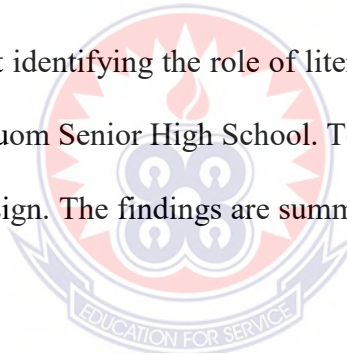
5.1.1 The Role of learning literature in improving students' written composition in ASEC

The data gathered from two research instruments employed by the researcher responded clearly to this question. The findings from the interview with teachers and tests revealed the important role learning of literature had in improving students' writing skills.

The findings from the interview proved that all teachers teaching first year students in ASEC agreed that learning literary texts could ameliorate their students' writing skills and language use in general. The observation of lessons and intervention measure also proved that studying literature could encourage student's participation in class and promote critical thinking. The results of the tests conducted for both the control and

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experiment group further demonstrated the role that studying literature played in the composition of first year students in ASEC. The results from the pre-test conducted for both groups showed no significant difference in their performances while the post-test of the experiment group showed a remarkable improvement compared to that of the control group.

The findings of this study are similar with those of Khaleel (2017) who found out through questionnaires that the majority of EFL teachers agreed that a literature text was a great tool to improve students' writing skills. In that study as in this one also, students agreed that stories helped them enlarge their vocabulary and helped them generate ideas for their essays. In this study, this point reflected in the performance of students during the post-test. These findings also corroborate those of Adam (2015) who recorded a significant improvement between the pre-test and post-test of the experiment group in his study after they went through an intervention treatment with a short story. The improvement in the performance of students from experiment groups who had gone through activities from stories demonstrated the important role that learning literature had in the composition writing students

5.1.2 Approaches used by teachers in the teaching of written composition to students in ASEC

The data gathered from the interview and those from the observation of lessons provided answers to this question. Even though all the teachers admitted that learning literature had a great impact in the improvement of student's compositions, the majority did not use the literature-based approach to teach composition writing. The data showed that teachers preferred using the traditional approach to other approaches. The data also revealed that the main reason for this preference is that most teachers did not know how

to use other approaches like the literature-based approach. Ketema (2012) also revealed that although teachers and students strongly supported the integration of literary texts in the teaching of writing, teachers admitted, they lacked the knowledge to effectively integrate them.

5.1.3 The Impact of the literature-based approach in composition writing in ASEC

The findings from this study have revealed that teaching writing through the study of prose is important to improve students' performance in composition. The results of the test conducted proved that the literature-based approach to teaching composition to ASEC students is beneficial. There was significant improvement in the performance of students in the experiment group after teaching them how to write a narrative essay using the literature-based approach. The following points summarise the impact this approach had in student's composition:

- It helped students generate ideas for their essay topics.
- It provided them with illustrations which helped them develop their points when writing essays.
- It helped students learn different writing styles such as sentence construction and punctuations.
- It helped them acquire vocabularies and expressions which they used in their essays.
- The activities were student-centred, thus, it motivated students to participate in class.

These findings are not different from what many other studies have found in this area. Many old and current study have proved that literature especially prose can serve as great tool to improve students writing skills. Bartan (2017) showed that using short

stories to teach writing could improve students' writing skills in terms of language, content, organization, and communicative achievement. The literature-based approach to teaching writing had a positive impact in students' essays.

5.2 Conclusion

In all, the aim of this study was to identify the role of learning prose in the written composition of ASEC students. To achieve this, I interviewed teachers, observed lessons and conducted a pre-test and post-test for the students. The post-test was conducted after the experiment group were taken through an intervention treatment based on the literature-based approach. The findings of this study made the researcher arrive at the following conclusions:

The traditional method which does not focus much on the process of writing was the most preferred by teachers and it did not yield good results. The data showed that most students in ASEC did not enjoy the composition lesson and performed poorly in composition writing. Since approaches employed by teachers could influence the performance of students in composition writing, it could be concluded that the ones employed by teachers of ASEC were not very effective.

On the contrary, the literature-based approach to teaching composition employed during the intervention was an approach focused on the process that students must follow to write good essays. The literature-based approach to teaching composition helped students improve some language abilities in their written essays, in terms of mastery of content and form. Again, the feedback from students proved that this method could motivate them to participate during composition lessons. Indeed, the role of studying prose in teaching written composition was obviously a positive one to the form one students in ASEC.

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5.3 Recommendations

Following the summary of findings and conclusions arrived at, I wish to make some recommendations that will help improve the teaching and learning of composition writing in the secondary school.

I suggest teachers adopt process-oriented approaches to teach writing like the literature-based approach. This is because sticking to only traditional approaches may be boring and ineffective. Depending on the type of essay under study teachers could expose their students to suitable literary texts or models of such essays. In addition, teachers should engage the class in activities based on the material they read in class when they adopt the literature based-approach. It is not enough to teach students features of an essay and read an example of that essay in class. There must be activities designed by the teacher to help students understand these features in context. Such activities should also arouse student's interest and encourage them to contribute in class.

Lastly, in order for teacher to vary in their teaching approaches and effectively use the literature-based approach, they must upgrade themselves. I recommend that the Ghana Education Service and the Headmasters of Senior High Schools collaborate and organise regular workshops for teachers of English Language. These workshops should aim at training the teachers on various teaching approaches that will equip them with skills of coping with students' challenges in second language writing. Teachers should also upgrade themselves by pursuing courses on how to teach English as a Second language. They must read on studies and articles that talk about ways to improve written composition among students.

5.4 Suggestions for further Study

This study focused on the role of learning literature in the written composition of secondary school students. I suggest that similar research should be carried out among students in primary and the Junior High Level to see its impact on younger learners. I also suggest that other researchers take interest in looking at the causes of problems students face in composition writing to better help improve their writing skills.

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APPENDIX A

Teachers' Semi Structured Interview Questions

Q1) How many years have you been teaching in Asuom Senior High?

Q2) Do your students enjoy the lesson when you teach composition writing?

Q3) What are the main writing difficulties your students encounter?

Q4) How many approaches do you know can be used to teach composition writing?

Q5) Which approach(es) do you use?

Q6) What is the literature-based approach?

Q7) Do you think reading and writing are interrelated?

Q8) Have you tried using a literary text in teaching composition writing skills?

Q9) Do you think that literary texts play a role in students' writing skills and language use?

Q10) How do you perceive using literary texts as a resource in the teaching of writing?

Q10): Do you have any suggestions on how students can write effectively after reading a literary text?

if yes what?

APPENDIX B

CONTROL GROUP PRE-TEST

Class Test

Write a story which ends with the expression "cut your coat according to your cloth.

There is a man who called Mr Anko and his wife Mrs Anko and they have two children. they life in the Kayase but they stay at damkwa. Mr Anko is a work and his wife selli bends at the market. The name of Mr and misus Anko children's name is Brith and Rodney. This guy where attend school at Brithness International school.

Brith was in basic six and Rodney is in basic five. Brith attend diffrent schools Brith father lost his work so his mother that take care of the education. This children are very serious student to know his father lost his they did not get enough maney to school so Brith became angry his mother. Because he thast receive enough maney again that is way.

Brith have fried called Bukari, this friend parent have enough maney so every they his father drop him at school. This friend is soo tiet so know some of two boys jued them and they are all born in December. so the called the self B.B. for short. because The lether of their group his called Bukari. Every Lunch looks to them like partey.

One day Brith parent where not get maney to them to go to school that day where Brith favourit subject call Math when the lesson is going on Brith maid is not in the class and the leslon goes over.

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'So know Brith called his friend Bukari they goes and sit at under the mango tree discase about their parent problem. so Brith ask Bukari question about his parent. so Bukari who gives you his enough money, is it your father right Bukari reply no it is my mother thuses give me this money. Bright became angry more became sees his father lost his work his moth don't gives them enough money.

After school Bright very soon went home and ask his mother why that you gives as small money to school. ooh! Bright very soon thing will goes on well and you will be receive enough money to school. Bright wadls out without informing his money. One day in school Bright dont attend school early as so when he they where at assemble and he see his friend Bukari at the front beside the headmaster. Then bright hear that the headmaster is saging that I am tell you people don't steel your parent but some tell you people don't steel your parent but some of you refuse know Bukari you are kers I will sack you from the school. Bright weep and think about what his mother told him about past seven day. you mast to be happy about you haves and you mast to take good friend and share good ideas. And yours you mast to cut your coat according to your cloth.

C — 6
E — 4
O — 2
MC — 0

12/30

APPENDIX C

EXPERIMENT GROUP PRE-TEST

Name Mohammed
Musharafa

CLASS TEST

Write a story which ends with the expression " Cut your coat according to your cloth".

On Friday 10th may, 2016 was my mother birthday, and It was very special day for me and family. My mother decided to make party for us, so my father went to town to buy the things which they will use for the programme. He bought a lot of things so my sister who was has completed Senior High School and she is a home economics student decided to prepared the food for the party. So the things where given to her. She went the things to another place which she doesn't want any one to see what she is doing.

My uncle and the rest of the family members to where at the place where the programme is going on. We get to the place ready for the show, when all the things this is going on my sister who was preparing the food was at the place she said she is going to make the preparation. So any one didn't know what she is doing but the things are with her. My mum and members who were arranging the place where done with that, so everyone to to take his or her booth and choice in the appropriate dress for the program and they where settled at there. So they began with the program and every one was enjoying some where dancing and things are going in order, so it was reach where they will give out people food and drinks. But my sister was not there everyone was worry about her. So my mother send someone to go and look what is happen

at there, she came there with my sister, my mum ask her where is the food you where preparing for the program? my siste couldted answer the question not knowing she dicted do the thing. This means that when she was in school, she dicted learn everything she think is easy for her and it brings shame to the family. And you have to "cut your coat according to your cloth".

C - 6
E - 3
D - 1
MC - 0

(10/30)

APPENDIX D

CONTROL GROUP POST-TEST

Candidate's Signature: _____ Date: _____

Subject Title: _____ Paper: _____

Index No.: **Class Test** Class/Form: _____

Narrate a story to your classmate which ends with the saying that "It pays to be hardworking".

A long time ago there was a man called Asamoah he has two wifes and ten childerns they live in a town called "Kokako" Asamoah doesmont like hardworking he depend on his father properties and those days his father was rick man the has a big company and alot of farme land planted with cocoa still with his labours and Asamoah said that he doesnot work and he depend on his father properties.

Asamoah was insult every day by his wife and they childern doesnot go to school. They are in the house and every day there was confict in the house between Asamoah and his two wife and childrons.

And Asamoah go to the shrine for money and when he enter there, he told him to bring one of his wife otherwise bring one of your childron and he told him No. he should chang the option for him and the told him to bring three years baby and he and Asamoah told him he will do it.

And Asamoah run home and search for a

woman give both to a three year baby and he find some woman called "Ascintoa" have his husband called kofi Asante in the even Asamoah was the eo and Asamtoa was bathing and Asamoah hide the back of the house and the baby and his father was in the room and the baby father went out and urinate and Asamoah went in the room and took baby and the baby started craying and the baby father run in the to the room and Asamoa have took the baby and he took stake from the room to hit him and called his wife and to take care of the baby and he told him taking him to the police station. And he with there and they ask them the matter kofi Asante told them the matter and Asamoah was jail to twenty years. And it pays to be hard working.
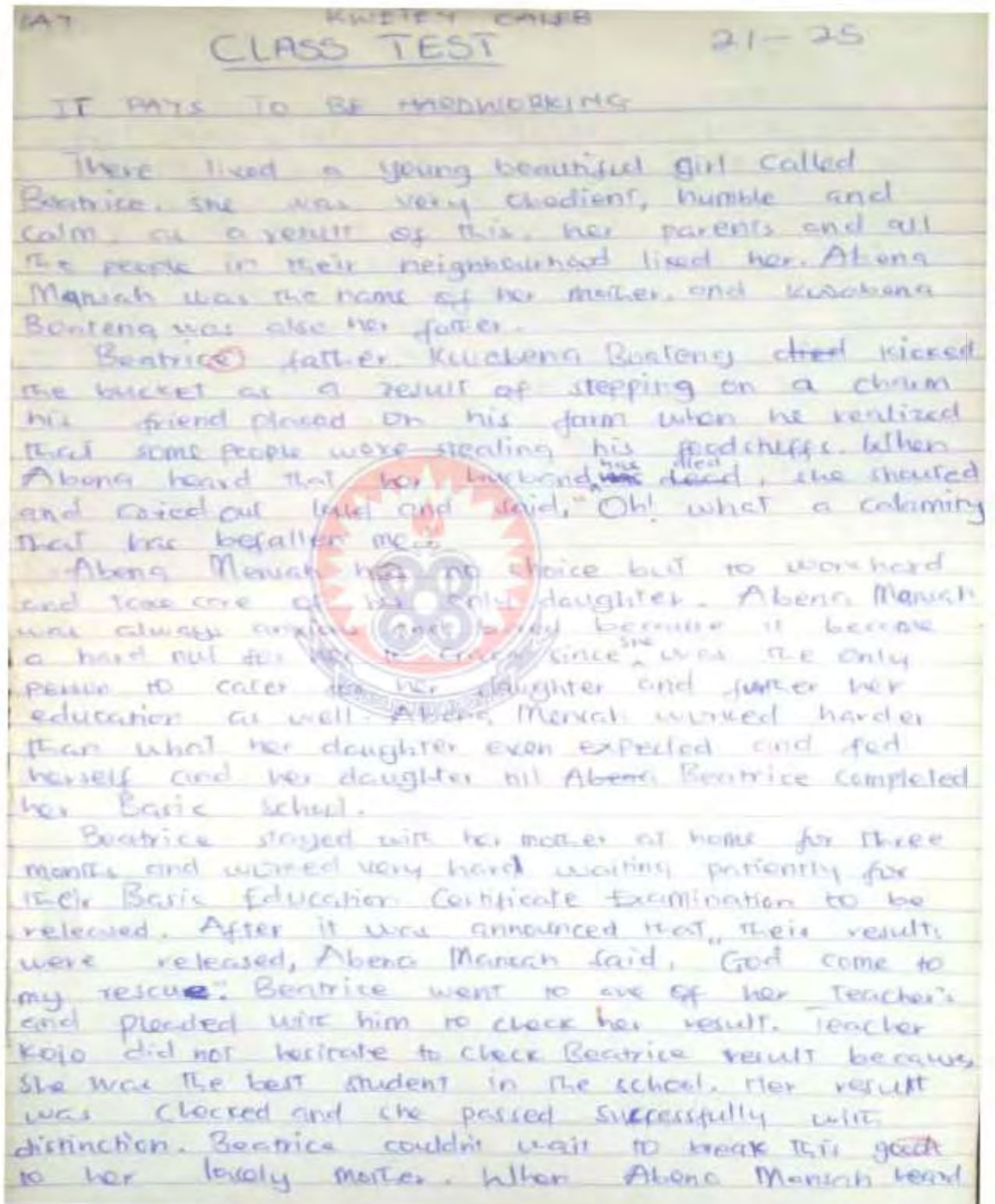
C - 5
E - 3
O - 2
MC - O

10/30

APPENDIX E

EXPERIMENT'S GROUP POST TEST

CLASS TEST KWITEY CALEB 21-25

IT PAYS TO BE HARDWORKING

There lived a young beautiful girl called Beatrice. She was very obedient, humble and calm. As a result of this, her parents and all the people in their neighbourhood liked her. Abena Maniah was the name of her mother, and Kwabena Boateng was also her father.

Beatrice father Kwabena Boateng died kicked the bucket as a result of stepping on a charm his friend placed on his farm when he realized that some people were stealing his food chieffs. When Abena heard that her husband was died, she shouted and cried out loud and said, "Oh! what a calamity that has befallen me."

Abena Maniah has no choice but to work hard and take care of her only daughter. Abena Maniah was always crying and cried because it become a hard nut for her to crack since she was the only person to cater for her daughter and further her education as well. Abena Maniah worked harder than what her daughter even expected and fed herself and her daughter till Abena Beatrice completed her Basic School.

Beatrice stayed with her mother at home for three months and worked very hard waiting patiently for the Basic Education Certificate Examination to be released. After it was announced that, their results were released, Abena Maniah said, "God come to my rescue". Beatrice went to one of her Teacher's and pleaded with him to check her result. Teacher Kojo did not hesitate to check Beatrice result because she was the best student in the school. Her result was clocked and she passed successfully with distinction. Beatrice couldn't wait to break this good to her lovely mother. When Abena Maniah heard

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their good news, she raised up her head and looked up into the sky and said, "God you are great. Beatrice was praised by the people in her neighbourhood and her teachers and friends also praised her and presented alot of gifts to her. She had a scholarship to go and further her education in Aburi Girls. When her pastor heard this good news, he called Aben Beatrice and congratulated her and said " IT PAYS TO BE HARDWORKING "

e - 10   E - 8   23/30
c - 11   C - 8
o   4   O - 4
mc - 3   MC - 3
7   27   T - 23