

**UNIVERSITY OF EDUCATION, WINNEBA**

**THE INFLUENCE OF L1 (TWI) ON ENGLISH LANGUAGE USAGE-  
TRANSLITERATION  
A CASE STUDY OF THE STUDENTS  
IN THE  
POKUASE COMMUNITY BASIC SCHOOLS**

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**GIFTY EMMA QUAYSON**

**2017**

**UNIVERSITY OF EDUCATION, WINNEBA**

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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,  
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THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE AWARD OF MASTER OF EDUCATION  
(TEACHING ENGLISH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE) DEGREE.**

**AUGUST, 2017**

## **DECLARATION**

### **STUDENT'S DECLARATION**

I Gifty Emma Quayson, declare that this thesis, with the exception of quotations and references contained in published works which have all been identified and duly acknowledged, is entirely my own original work, and it has not been submitted, either in part or whole, for another degree elsewhere.

SIGNATURE: .....

DATE: .....

### **SUPERVISOR'S DECLARATION**

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

NAME: DR. KWAKU OFORI

(Supervisor)

SIGNATURE: .....

DATE: .....

**DEDICATION**

TO MY FAMILY



## ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

This thesis has been successful with the assistance of many individuals, not all of whom are mentioned here. I am specially thankful to my dear family-the Gyima-Aboagye family for all their support and encouragement throughout this project work. In addition, my sincere gratitude goes to the Micah family, the Atto Hope family, Sister Elizabeth Mensah, Mr Freeman Mugabe, and Madam Mercy Kessie my immediate headmistress for supporting me diversely throughout this project work in their various capacities as friends, and colleagues.

Again, I am deeply indebted to Dr. Kwaku Ofori, and the department administrative staff for their support, guidance and encouragement throughout the different stages of this project. Though I attribute any strengths that this work may have to their meticulous supervision, I accept full responsibility for its weaknesses.

This acknowledgement could not be complete without special thanks to the authorities, staff and students of the sampled schools and all other respondents for their co-operation and support during this research exercise.

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## ABSTRACT

This research investigates the causes of transliteration errors among the pupils/students from Basic Four to Seven in the Pokuase Community of the Greater Accra Region of Ghana. It unravels why the Twi language has such a strong influence on the English language usage among the basic school children even in a cosmopolitan community. The research employed a mixed method approach which was executed through the use of questionnaire, interview, essay writing and picture description to arrive at a valid conclusion. The study unearthed a number of causative factors. These include overgeneralization; where learners tend to assume that all languages are similar in structure and have similar rules; the problem was also found to be partially teacher induced, the Ghana Education Service Pupil Teacher Ratio (PTR) which enjoins each teacher to teach more than one subject was equally to blame, since it has resulted in some square pegs in round holes. Other causative factors included the electronic media, lack of community and school libraries, the NALAP programme, social media among others. The data were analyzed using the Contrastive Analysis and the Error Analysis as the theoretical frameworks. The Contrastive Analysis theory was only used for analytical and not predictive purposes to enable the researcher identify areas of similarities and differences between the languages involved, whereas the Error analysis was employed to assist the researcher identify errors other than the error of transliteration. The research concludes with some corrective suggestions and recommendations to enable educators remedy the canker.

## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

Most often, a person's quality of scholarship is literally determined by his/her ability to demonstrate clear knowledge on a particular subject. In Ghana, most people associate brilliance with one's ability to express themselves very effectively, especially, in the Queen's language. To buttress this assumption is what Prophet (1990) cited in Adiko (2016) argues that "competence in English is important for ensuring access to high status job and upward social mobility". That is, one's ability to have good command over the English language even serves as a guarantee for him/her to secure a good job which propels him/her to a higher pedestal in life. This notwithstanding, Ghana, being a multilingual state, has adopted the English Language as its lingua franca. It is the medium of communication at all official gatherings. For this reason, it becomes imperative for anyone aspiring to any official position or aiming at securing any clerical work, in other words, anyone dreaming to join the formal sector in the country to learn to be able to use Standard English language as acceptable internationally.

According to the National Syllabus for English Language (Primary 1 - 3), the status of English Language and the role it plays in national life are well known. As the official language, it is the language of government and administration. It is the language of commerce, the learned professions and the media. As an international language, it is the most widely used on the internet and in most parts of the world. English is the medium of instruction from Primary 4 in the Ghanaian school system. This means that success in education at all levels depends, to a very large extent, on the individual's proficiency in

the language. It is for these and other reasons that English Language is a major subject of study in Ghanaian schools (MOE, NSEL, P.1-3, 2012: ii).

From the foregoing, it is clear how Ghana as a country places a very high premium on the study of the English language. As a result, it is given the highest number of periods on the timetable so as to give learners and teachers ample time to interact with it for effective proficiency acquisition.

Basically, a language user is considered very proficient or an effective communicator when he/she has a high command and greater control on the language and is able to choose appropriate vocabulary to communicate his or her ideas clearly to his or her audience. Language learning like any other learning comes with its own challenges. These challenges if not properly handled, has the potential to negatively affect the learner's communication skills. As learners go through instructional periods from lower primary through upper primary to the Junior High School in the Ghanaian basic education system, it is an obvious expectation that one would have acquired adequate vocabulary for expression and effective communication both in speech and writing.

It however becomes quite disappointing when the time of accountability comes and the learner is unable to demonstrate this competence to an appreciable level. This phenomenon is quite rampant in recent Basic School Certificate Examinations (BECE) where the chief examiner's reports have mostly featured the abysmal performance of candidates in especially the English language. Stakeholders and interested parties as well as people in academia have assigned various reasons for this recent developments.

Adiko (2016) attributes this poor performance or even a total failure of learners in the various examinations to the difficulty in writing the English language. In addition, are the effects of one's native language (L1), environment and the kind of company they keep; being in the company of peers who virtually use Pidgin for example would in most instances have a very grave effect on a learner's competence with respect to standard English language acquisition. In other words this phenomenon will naturally have a negative influence on the person's written and spoken communication skills.

Beyond the peer influences, a learner's first language L1 is believed to have a very great influence on one's effective acquisition of a new language; in most instances, this leads to issues of transliteration. According to Gass and Selinker (1994), it has always been assumed that second language learners rely heavily on their native languages (the L1), therefore, in writing or speaking the target language (L2), they tend to depend on their native language (L1) structures to produce a response. A problem therefore arises if the structures of the two languages are dissimilar. In a case like this, one could expect a high frequency of errors to occur in the L2, which constitutes an interference of the L1 on L2 (Dechert, 1983 and Ellis, 1997). Typical examples are the Twi and English languages. Sentences deemed very correct in Twi will not necessarily constitute good sentences when translated directly into the English language and vice versa. This happens as a result of the dissimilarity between the structures of the two languages.

Referring to *Procedia - Social and Behavioral Sciences* 47 (2012 pp. 656 – 664), positive transfer is unlikely to occur when the two languages do not share a specific linguistic

feature or from a language with a simpler or less salient linguistic structure to the other; instead, interference, or negative transfer, may occur, especially in the less-dominant language when the dominant language is the one with a simpler or less salient linguistic feature (Li-Jen and Richard, 2010, p.368).

Additionally, Selinker (1994), asserts that two types of inhibitions occur, *retroactive inhibition*--where learning acts back on previously learned material, causing someone to forget (language loss) and *proactive inhibition*--where a series of responses already learned tends to appear in situations where a new set is required. This is more akin to the phenomenon of second language learning because the first language in this framework influences/inhibits/ modifies the learning of the L2 (p.55).

Furthermore, a second language learner's environment cannot be exempted from the influential factors to the committing of errors. The situation even becomes more pronounced in a cosmopolitan environment or an area where the learner has no access to adequate material or frequent opportunities to use the target language apart from the contact hours with the instructor. This, Pokuase, a rural community in the Ga West Municipality of the Greater Accra Region of Ghana is no exception.

## **BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY**

It is becoming a common phenomenon in the Pokuase community basic schools that one could hardly hear a school child communicating in the English language without the introduction of one or two local language, particularly, Twi vocabularies or doing a direct

translation of what they intended to communicate from the Twi language into the English language. Common examples include expressions such as “~~e~~limb the car” meaning get on board the car, “~~I~~ will drop here” to mean I will alight here, “~~p~~ick a car” instead of join a car; “~~l~~et me show my mind on the issue” instead of let me express my opinion, “~~I~~’m going to remove my head” to mean I’m going to barber or cut my hair, “~~if~~ you are bathing and you talk, soap will go your mouth” instead of if you talk when bathing soap may enter your mouth, “~~t~~he car was going slow slow” instead of the car was moving slowly, “~~w~~alk fast fast” to mean hurry up, “~~t~~he money will not reach” to mean the money is not enough, “~~e~~hange me” instead of give me my change, “~~I~~ can hear the scent” to mean I can smell the flavour and things like that. The situation even becomes more serious when it comes to giving directions, describing a given situation and or narrating an incidence. The expressions eventhough ungrammatical in the English language, they are very correct and very grammatical when translated to Twi.

Additionally, Pokuase being a rural cosmopolitan community, most of the students in the basic schools in the community have either completely illiterate or semi-literate parents, who are completely handicapped when it comes to helping the children in the acquisition of the English language. This means, those children of such parents have no exposure to the L2 outside the normal school hours. Moreover, the high demand for proficiency in the English language of late is also seen as an influential factor responsible for this transliteration phenomenon. Virtually every parent is attempting to speak some form of English with their children at home and hardly care about the appropriateness of the choice of words or the structure used.



## **STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM**

Among the pupils/students in the Pokuase Community basic schools, the error of transliteration has become a canker as far as the usage of the English language is concerned. This literal translation phenomenon is highly influenced by the L1 (the Twi Language) even though Pokuase is a cosmopolitan community. It is this condition that this study sets out to investigate the reasons behind the strong influence of the Twi on the usage of the English language in the community among the basic school pupils/students especially from basic four to seven.

Admittedly, learning English as a second language comes with its own difficulty, but could that be the sole cause for the weakness in the usage of the language? Brown (2000 cited in Adiko, 2016), posits that in order to master the English language, learners have to be adequately exposed to all the four basic skills which are listening, speaking, reading and writing. Brown's opinion much as is valid and has been emphasized by most scholars and academic sources including the teaching syllabus, if it was adequate in itself, why then should this problem even rear its head in the first place, let alone to gain root? This suggests a fundamental problem which goes beyond just the learner's ability to use the English language correctly or the areas the learner is introduced to.

Going forward, Owu-Ewie & Lomotey (2016) point that their findings were consistent with Mahmoud (2000) who found traces of transliteration of grammar and vocabulary in the composition writing of Sudanese University students. L1 students do this because their knowledge of L1 is most readily available as a linguistic resource they use to solve

L2 communication problems; meanwhile, when Turkish university students learning English are writing compositions, they sometimes confront difficulties related to proper word choices, grammatical structures and other aspects of the language due to the differences of these two languages. (Elkilic 2012).

It therefore becomes clearer at this point that the problem of transliteration goes beyond the introduction of the learner to some specific areas of study in the L2. That is if exposing learners to the four basic skills was just enough then least would one expect this problem to have arisen at a university level. Richards (1971), has noted that, in general, L2 acquisition errors may emanate from sources which might be psycholinguistic, sociolinguistic, epistemic or residing in the discourse structures.

Another factor identified to be responsible for this phenomenon is the students' inability to revise their notes after school or to do any form of remedial learning on their own due to too much TV watching, their relationships as house helps and stuffs like that with their parents or guardians. Also, another outstanding causative factor in this transliteration issue is the Ghana Education Service (GES) policy of Pupil-Teacher –Ratio. Even though the education directorate and school authorities do not make the document available to teachers, in their enforcement process, they insist that every teacher should teach more than one subject and here competence and background or one's specialty are not to be considered. Hence a high possibility of putting square pegs in round holes. In other words, a teacher may accept to teach a particular subject irrespective of his/her

background and competences because he/she needs to protect his/her salary, after all, workload is only measured by number of periods covered in a week.

Again, the primary school teacher is a jack of all trade; he/she teaches everything including English therefore if they have any weaknesses in the language they are surely transferred to the child. That is to say the problem is fundamentally partially teacher induced since learners copy the language their teachers use in class; obviously what students use and write in class is a replica of what they hear and see in class. (Owu-Ewie & Lomotey, 2016).

It is this fundamental problem of transliteration and its suspected plausible causes as mentioned above, that this study sought to investigate for a possible redress. It becomes even more mind boggling when the dominance of the influence of one particular language (Twi) in a cosmopolitan community becomes so prominent. According to Elkilic (2012), it has always been assumed that in a second language learning situation, learners rely extensively on their native language (Gass and Selinker 1994, p. 53), therefore, when writing or speaking the target language (L2), second language learners tend to rely on their native language (L1) structures to produce a response. If the structures of the two languages are distinctly different, then one could expect relatively high frequency of errors to occur in L2, thus indicating an interference of L1 on L2 (Dechert, 1983 and Ellis, 1997) (cited in Bhela 1999, p. 22). Thus, positive transfer is unlikely when the two languages do not share a specific linguistic feature or from a language with a simpler or less salient linguistic structure to the other; instead

interference, or negative transfer, may occur, especially in the less-dominant language when the dominant language is the one with a simpler or less salient linguistic feature (Li-Jen & Richard, 2010, p.368). That is, when the learners experience gaps in their L2 syntactical structures, they adjust the form of their L2 written responses by using syntactical items which are part of their L1 (Bhela, 1999, p.30). In corroboration, Krashen (1988) states that such interference is more common in foreign language situation than second language situation. It is a problem in a second language acquisition and even becomes more complex in a cosmopolitan environment.

The school children in the Pokuase community come from various backgrounds as far as languages are concerned. If the above assumptions were absolutely right, then for any reason at all, one would have expected that Ga, which is the native language of the community should have exerted greater influence on the learners' L2 acquisition in the community, or better still their respective mother tongues which was not the case. The more reason why this study sought to investigate the situation to unravel the possible causes of the strong influence of the Twi language on the usage of the English language in the community among the basic school pupils/students, and suggest appropriate solutions to remedy the situation.

#### **PURPOSE OF THE STUDY**

It is the researcher's wish that readers find this study a very useful material and a good stepping stone to conduct further investigations into other specific errors committed by learners in the Ghanaian basic schools and to devise appropriate strategies to mitigate

them. Virtually, it is the utmost desire of every teacher to see their students excel in their very subject areas. It however becomes quite disappointing after teaching to the best of one's ability only to see one's students let him/her down on the day of reckoning. The language teacher even becomes more devastated realizing that their students are unable to measure up to the task expected of them.

All students in Ghana are expected to be able to speak and write good English fluently and appropriately; having been through the school system. Unfortunately, students in the basic schools, especially basic Four to Seven in Pokuase, a rural but fast developing community in the Ga West Municipality of the Greater Accra Region of Ghana hardly complete few sentences either in speech or writing without the introduction of some local language vocabularies from especially the Twi language. It is this phenomenon of transliteration that this study sought to investigate in order to establish the possible causes and the plausible reasons for the strong influence of the Twi Language on the usage of the English Language in the community.

### **OBJECTIVES**

The objectives of the study are to:

- a. Investigate the extent to which transliteration especially from L1-Twi, has influenced the pupils' usage of the English language at the Basic School level in Pokuase.
- b. Identify the causes for the phenomenon.
- c. Make suggestions for possible corrective measures.

### **SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY**

It is hoped that the outcome of the study would be of a great value to both learners and teachers as possible corrective measures have been suggested to help ameliorate the phenomenon. That is, it will help the L2 teachers to design appropriate teaching aids and methodologies that will help them better address the problem.

### **RESEARCH QUESTIONS**

The following research questions were used to help generate the needed outcome to satisfy the objectives of the study:

- a. What are the possible major causes of transliteration in the community?
- b. How can learners be helped to overcome this challenge?

### **LIMITATION OF THE STUDY**

The research being purely academic, involved very extensive reading, coupled with delay of some of the school authorities in responding to the letter introducing the researcher and seeking their permission to conduct the research in their schools. In addition was the cost of preparation and distribution of research materials, acquisition of recording equipment, movement from one school to the other, respondents' delay in returning the questionnaires, questions not answered as honestly as expected sometimes, some respondents leaving out some questions completely unanswered.

Again, some copies of the questionnaire were reported lost and had to be replaced along the way, causing the researcher to supply more questionnaires to be filled in than what was planned thereby adding to the cost of production and distribution.

In addition, the researcher had to combine normal classroom teaching with the research work which really became a very daunting task to say the least. However, the researcher was not intimidated by any of the aforementioned, she became rather toughened and more poised to see this research through to its successful and logical conclusion.

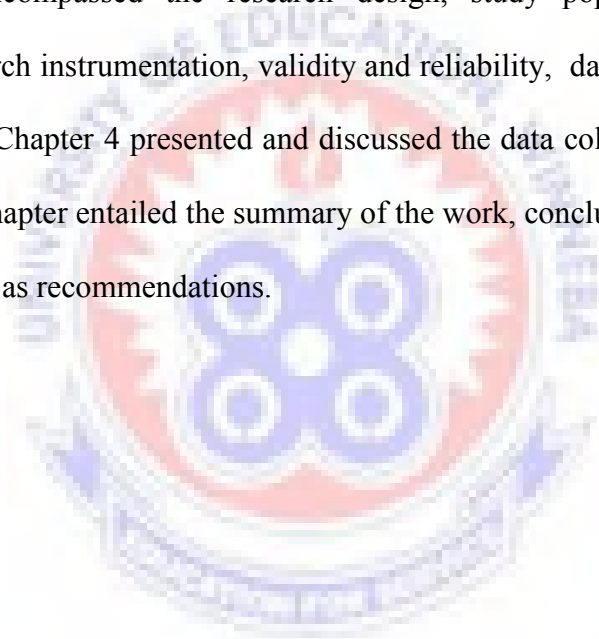
### **DELIMITATION OF THE STUDY**

Learner errors in the usage of the English Language are numerous such that they cannot all be covered in one study. For that matter this study has chosen to focus on the error of transliteration among the basic school pupils/students in the Pokuase Community which is greatly influenced by the Twi Language in spite of the place being a cosmopolitan community.

Even though the researcher's main focus is to establish the extent to which the Twi Language has influenced the usage of the English Language especially among the Basics Four to Seven pupils/students of the Pokuase Community Basic Schools, as far as the transliteration error is concerned, other basic school pupils/students and teachers in the community were randomly selected for the purposes of comparison and generalization. It also granted the researcher the opportunity to identify other types of errors in the pupils'/students' usage of the English Language despite transliteration being the main focus of the study.

## **ORGANISATION OF THE STUDY**

The study has been segmented into five chapters in all. Chapter 1 discussed the introduction which comprised background to the study, statement of the problem, purpose, objectives, research questions, significance of the study, limitation of the study, delimitation of the study and organisation. Chapter 2 reviewed the related literature to the study and how it impacts the study; as well as the theoretical and conceptual framework upon which the study was conducted. Chapter 3 also dealt with the methodology of the study which encompassed the research design, study population, data collection procedure, research instrumentation, validity and reliability, data analysis, ethical issues, and conclusion. Chapter 4 presented and discussed the data collected whereas Chapter 5 being the final chapter entailed the summary of the work, conclusions and implications of the study as well as recommendations.





## CHAPTER 2

### LITERATURE REVIEW

#### 2.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter reviews relevant literature in relation to this research. It has been organized as follows: the relevance of error analysis, counter opinions, appreciation and application of the literature reviewed, theoretical framework and conclusion. Each section, deals with specific issues as outlined. The study acknowledges the general importance of error analysis, zeros in to the analysis of specific errors, assesses the counter opinions of other scholars in the field of Apply Linguistics as far as error analysis is concerned and outlines the relevance of the literature reviewed to the study. Scholars in Applied Linguistics have attached great importance to error analysis with regard to second and foreign language learning. For reasons such as follows, a great deal of research have been conducted into why students especially make certain errors in the process of acquiring a target language. For varied and diverse reasons, researchers have conducted their research. Some see this area of study as a systematic way to analyze learners' errors. To some, errors are not always bad in themselves, rather they are crucial parts and aspects in the process of learning a language. A phenomenon which provides insights into the convoluted processes of language development and acquisition as well as a systematic way to identify, stratify, describe and explain students' errors. With this, it becomes imperative to note the significance of the error analysis to all parties involved; thus the teacher, the learner and the researcher; in what ways does error analysis benefit each of them.

## 2.2. THE RELEVANCE OF ERROR ANALYSIS

James (1998, p.77) defines error as what arises when there are no intentions to commit one. Cunningsworth (1987, p.78) also defines error as the systematic deviations from the norms of a language being learned. In addition, Norrish (1987, p.7) defines error as systematic deviations, when a learner has learnt something and consistently gets it wrong. For Lennon (1991), an error is "a linguistic form or combination of forms which in the same context and under similar conditions of production would, in all likelihood, not be produced by the speakers' native speakers' counterparts". The error is what takes place when the deviation arises as a result of lack of knowledge whereas the mistake comes up when learners fail to perform their competence. (Corder, 1971).

Given the various definitions above, a learner's inability to use a target language correctly or appropriately is an unconscious phenomenon. This makes it more explicit that language learning comes with its own problems which if not well attended to, has a higher potential to affect the learner's communication. Whether in speech or writing, one is expected to have sufficient command over the new language and more especially writing. Writing is a highly complex task and writing in a second language makes the task further complicated as it requires sufficient command over the L2 to fulfil all the formalities; composing, developing logical ideas which are essential for written text to be comprehensible (Sarfraz,2011). Selinker (1972) defined errors as "red flags" that provide evidence of the learner's knowledge of the second language. Researchers are, therefore, interested in errors because errors are believed to contain valuable information on the

strategies that people use to acquire a language (Richards, 1974; Taylor, 1975; Dulay and Burt, (1974).

According to Corder (1967) errors are visible proof that learning is taking place. He believes that errors, if studied carefully and systematically, can provide valuable insights into how a language is actually learned by a foreigner. He further subscribes to the idea that studying students' errors in the usage of their language has immediate practical application for language teachers. To him, errors give a quick and reliable feedback to the teachers, he adds that the study of errors draws the teachers' attention to the effectiveness of their teaching. This is a very good observation. Often time, teachers believe they have actually delivered in their lessons which in fact might not be the case. When learners' errors become glaringly visible and evidential, they serve as an outward sign to the teacher which can then guide and direct the formulation of strategies to assist the learner overcome the said difficulties. Moreover, studying the errors of the student, affords the teacher the opportunity to strategize and adopt the most appropriate teaching methods suitable to the needs of the student. Again the errors prompt the learner on which areas they are lacking in their studies in order for them to strengthen those areas. Still sharing in Corder's opinion, engaging in linguistic error analysis comes with a great deal of opportunities which in effect become an asset to all the stakeholders in the language learning process.

To buttress the aforesaid, Vahdatinejad (2008) reiterates that error analyses can be used to ascertain what a learner still needs to be taught. That is engaging in error analysis enables the teacher to understand his/her student better and know which areas to

strengthen. The error analysis serves as a tramcar which conveys the student's linguistic needs to the teacher for the appropriate redress. It furnishes the teacher with the required knowledge about what is lacking in the competence of the learner. Admissibly, for the teacher to be able to fashion out the most suitable strategy, and come out with a didactic pedagogy to aid the learner overcome their challenges with regard to the errors, he/she must obviously and as a matter of necessity do a critical study to get an in-depth understanding of the nature of errors committed in order to come up with appropriate methodologies which will serve as a corrective measure to the learner.

In addition, Candling (2001) considers Error Analysis as a means of monitoring and analyzing the learner's language. He however agrees that an error is a deviation. He further intimates that the L2 learners' errors are potentially important for the understanding of the processes of a second language acquisition (SLA). In corroborating Candling's assertion, Olasehinde (2002) states that learner errors are inevitable. He quickly adds that errors are unavoidable and a necessary part of the learning curve. In other words proper understanding of learner errors helps the teacher to measure and monitor the progress of the learner in the process. That is, the teacher uses the error analysis as a tool with which he/she measures the needs of his/her learners in the course of the learning.

Furthermore, Mitchell and Myles (2004) posits that the study of learner errors could reveal a developing system of the students L2 language and this system is dynamic and open to changes and resetting of parameters. It guides the teacher in defining his/her

scope of teaching, determine the pace at which he/she has to go in order for it to benefit the learner and by which method that the best of results could be achieved. In sum, the above mentioned writers share in the view that errors are not bad in themselves and analyzing them leads to the crave to improvement on the parts of all stakeholders.

Stark (2001, p.19) also maintains, that, the teachers need to view students' errors positively and should not regard them as the learners' failure to grasp the rules and structures but view the errors as process of learning. Going forward, and sharing in Stark's view, one's perception about learner errors should not be negative or learner errors should not be considered as a weakness but a way of assessment in order for the teacher to be able to help him/her better. He emphasizes that errors are normal and inevitable part of learning. Thus by implication, for learning to take place effectively, there must be errors to measure the rate of absorption and not as an opportunity to look down on the learner. By this, Stark highlights the necessity for teachers and other educators to be interested and engage in the analysis of the errors committed by their students. Thus, when all educators perceive errors in this way, that is, viewing learners' errors as a necessary part of the learning process; they could understand their students better and would be able to help them better in their efforts to acquire the target language.

Also according to Richards and Sampson, (1974, p.5), –At the level of classroom experience, error analysis will continue to provide one means by which the teacher assesses learning and teaching and determine priorities for future effort.” By this assertion, teachers who make conscious efforts to research into the specific errors their

students commit, stand a better chance of developing the most appropriate support for the learner to be able to overcome their learning difficulties. To Weireesh (1991) learners' errors are of particular importance since the making of errors is a device the learners use in order to learn. The errors committed by learners' grant them the encouragements to learn more because they help them to recognise their weaknesses and strive to have them corrected which eventually culminate in an improved learning. Weireesh adds that Error Analysis is a valuable aid to identify and explain difficulties faced by learners. He further adds that Error Analysis serves as a reliable feedback to design a remedial teaching method. This emphasises the fact that in spite of the nature of the errors so committed, when they are identified, learners get helped and teachers find it easy to do remedial work.

Nevertheless, as mentioned earlier, researchers have various and diverse perception about and opinion on why they conduct their research into the errors committed by learners. Sometimes, these perceptions influence and pre-empt the deductions made in such researches. Whereas some view errors as a better and necessary means to understand the process of second and foreign language acquisition others on the other hand view errors as a weakness or flaw which must be eliminated. Errors used to be 'flaws' that needed to be eradicated. However, systematically analysing errors made by language learners makes it possible to determine areas that need reinforcement in teaching (Corder 1967). By Corder's claim, a teacher's effort to analyse his/her student's errors grants him/her the opportunity to modify his/her teaching strategies to be more beneficial to the learners thereby assisting them to overcome their learning difficulties which eventually results in

the reduction in the learner errors and an improved learning. Therefore learner errors could not be said to be completely bad in itself but rather a necessary part of the foreign language acquisition processes.

Additionally, language learning is actually a process of trial and error in which a learner forms a hypothesis and later proves it, abort it or adjust it. The Error Analysis study, therefore, is to examine a learner's errors in a longitudinal way in order to study the individual learner's hypothesis and locate the progress s/he is making; by analyzing these errors, we teachers can gain some insight into future course design or type of remedial instruction. Also, through proper treatment to the errors, we can make the errors work for learners, rather than frustrating them. (Huang, 2002).

### **2.3 CAUSES OF TRANSLITERATION ERROR**

Maicusi et al, (p.168), state that, the behaviorists viewed errors as a symptom of ineffective teaching or as evidence of failure and they believed that when they occur they are to be remedied by provision of correct forms; that is to say, use of intensive drilling and over-teaching. A situation Holley and King (1974) as cited in Huang (2002) cautions against; that, students will be greatly discouraged when correction of errors in the classroom is unduly done, as when the instructor insists upon strict grammatical accuracy and when he often overcorrects. Much as I agree that teachers need to do remedial lessons to enable learners correct the errors committed, errors cannot be conclusively said to be a symptom of ineffective teaching or as evidence of failure. That is the more reason most of the scholars cited earlier in this literature review agree that the nature or type of

error should be investigated and analysed to guarantee the most appropriate solution. Again, I strongly share in the view of Holley and King that over-teaching and over-correction in the classroom has the potential to discourage learners and to retard their rate of absorption since they would feel intimidated when it comes to practicing the target language.

The above notwithstanding, other scholars such as the structuralist or the descriptive linguists shared in the view of the behaviourist. Chiang 1981, P.10 as cited in Huang (2002) has observed that the structuralist (descriptive) linguist took the philosophy that language was a set of mechanistic habits from the behaviourist psychologist and put it into practice in his audio-lingual classroom, where errors were carefully avoided right from the very beginning and banned from every learning stage. This actually explains the degree of seriousness these groups of scholars viewed and desired to frown on errors and the approaches adopted to avoid them. The question is, did they commit errors themselves during their learning stages, and how possible it was to completely avoid the errors committed by learners in the process of their acquisition of the target language. Nonetheless, thanks to the opposing force that led to the change in perception. Thus with the emergence of the generative-transformational theory in linguistics and the cognitive movement in psychology, the attitude towards errors has changed almost overnight. Students' errors are thus treated as a surface phenomenon and are sometimes the learner's own system to approximate the real system of the target language. (Chiang 1981, P.10).



As Oyedokun-Alli (2014) cited; Richards (1971) identifies sources of competences errors; L1 transfers results in interference; incomplete or over generalized application of languages rules resulting in intra-lingual errors; construction of faulty hypotheses in L2 resulting in developmental errors, ignorance of rule restrictions, incomplete application of rules, and false concepts hypothesised. Again, Richards (1974) cites additional sources of error in a learner's language acquisition process. These include interference, overgeneralization, performance errors, markers of transitional competence, strategy of communication and assimilation and teacher-induced errors. Richards and Sampson (1974) advocate the learner's approximate systems and identify seven factors characterizing second-language learner systems, namely: language transfer, intra-lingual interference, which is also noted by Brown (1980), sociolinguistic situations, modality, age, succession of approximative systems and universal hierarchy of difficulty. Schumann and Stenson (1974) also mention three major causes of errors which are incomplete acquisition of the target grammar, exigencies of the learning/teaching situation and errors due to normal problems of language performance such as the difficulties, both inter-and intra-lingual ones which are normally expected. Politzer and Ramirez (1973) adds that errors might result from a number of sources such as L1 interference, improper application of rules of L2, regional differences, etc. Brown (1980) cites context of learning as one source of error which he refers to the various ways other authors call it, such as "false concepts" -Richards (1971), induced errors - Stenson(1974), which includes misleading explanation from the teacher, faulty presentation of a structure in a text book, improperly contextualized pattern, confused vocabulary items because of contiguous presentation, inappropriate formal forms of

bookish language and errors emanating as a communication strategy that is, in order to get the message across, a learner may use some techniques like word coinage, circumlocution, false cognates and prefabricated patterns which can all be sources of error. All the above are a confirmation of the inappropriateness in a generalised conclusion that errors are indication of ineffective teaching or a failure.

Furthermore, Spillner (1991) intimates that errors are information in contrastive linguistics which are thought to be caused by unconscious transfer of mother tongue structures to the system of the target language and give information about both systems. Also, in the inter-language hypothesis of second language acquisition, errors are indicative of the different intermediate learning level and are useful pedagogical feedback. In both cases, error analysis is an essential methodological tool for the diagnosis and evaluation of the language acquisition process. (Oyedokun-Alli 2014)

#### **2.4 APPRECIATION AND APPLICATION**

From the aforementioned, error analysis may be engaged in for diverse objectives, based on one's perception and purpose. Critical assessment of all the literature reviewed in this study shows that most scholars in the Applied Linguistics have tackled error analysis in general terms. I am yet to come across any literary work that has dealt with a specific or a particular error as an aspect or its prime objective of the study and particularly the error of transliteration. It is this gap that this study seeks to address. That is focusing attention on a specific error and finding the causes will help in prescribing the most appropriate remedy for it. It is also hoped that dealing with a specific error as in this work will pave

the way for other scholarly discourses in an attempt to investigate the causes of other errors committed in the process of acquiring a target language.

This study researched into the error of transliteration with the object of elucidating the reasons why the Twi language exerts so much influence on the usage of English among the basic school pupils/students of Pokuase in the Ga West Municipality of the greater Accra region of Ghana. According to Crystal (2003), transliteration is the conversion of one writing system into another where each item in the source language is given an equivalent item in the target language. Various scholars have discussed various forms of errors in diverse ways as far as the usage of the English language is concerned with the plausible causes and recommendations as to how those errors could be overcome. Transliteration in this work has been used to mean expression(s) used by students of the basic schools which are direct translations from the local language (L1) especially the Twi into the English language.

In spite of the fact that most scholars have dealt with errors in general, their works have served as an eye opener and a big encouragement to the success of this research.

In their article *–L1 (Akan) Interference Errors in L2 (English) Writing: The Case of Three Junior High School Students in Ghana*”, Owu-Ewie & Lomotey (2016) identified transliteration as the highest error committed among basic school children in the Winneba town of the central region of Ghana, a condition which is also prevalent among the basic school pupils/students in the Pokuase community. This is an error most learners commit unconsciously once the intended meaning makes adequate sense and it is acceptable in

their native language, L1. It can also be attributable to Second language learners' desire to master the target language hence the assumption that certain features of the native language are universal and can be applied to the L2 situation indiscriminately.

Through error analysis, Applied Linguistics attempts to prescribe possible solutions to the problem of errors and issues relating to language as far as teaching and learning are concerned. According to Corder (1974) error analysis has two objects: one theoretical and another applied. The theoretical object serves to elucidate what and how a learner learns when he studies a second language. And the applied object serves to enable the learner to learn more efficiently by exploiting our knowledge of his dialect for pedagogical purposes.

Erdogan (2005) posits that Applied error analysis, concerns organizing remedial courses and devising appropriate materials and teaching strategies based on the findings of theoretical error analysis. By implication, error analysis is of no essence if it is done for its own sake. It rather becomes useful when its findings are applied in devising means and strategies to help the learner overcome those scholarly flaws or weaknesses. Corder (1967) in his article, *“The significance of learner errors”* intimates that errors are ~~important~~ *“important in and of themselves”* as stated in his article, for him, analyzing errors made by language learners will determine the areas that need reinforcement. Candling (2001) also considers Error Analysis as ~~the~~ *“the monitoring and analysis of learner’s language”*. According to James (2001, p. 62), Error Analysis is ~~the~~ *“the study of linguistic ignorance, the*

investigation of what people do not know and how they attempt to cope with their ignorance”.

I do wholeheartedly agree with James on his assertion since it strengthens the basis for this study which investigated the causes of transliteration a phenomenon among the basic school pupils/students in the Pokuase community of the Ga West Municipality in the Greater Accra Region of Ghana. As it most often happens, one could hardly hear a student complete a few sentences in the English language without the introduction of a direct translation of one or two word(s) from the Twi language. This situation also reflect in their written works. Brown (as cited in Ridhs, 2002 and referenced by an anonymous author) defines error analysis as “the process to observe, analyze, and classify the deviations of the rules of the second languages and then to reveal the systems operated by learner”.

From the fore-going, Error analysis has great significance to both teachers and learners. Dullay (1986), intimates that errors can be a useful feedback for the teachers. To buttress, Sercombe (2000) outlines the three purposes error analysis serve. That is first of all, to find out the level of language proficiency the learner has reached. Secondly, to solicit information about common difficulties in language learning, and thirdly, to find out how people learn a language. Corder (1967) views errors as valuable information for three beneficiaries: for teachers, it gives the clue on the progress of the students as far as learning is concerned; for researchers, it provides evidence as to how language is acquired or learned; for learners themselves, it gives them resources in order to learn.

This helps the teachers in three ways, firstly to correct their errors, secondly to improve their teaching and thirdly to focus on those areas that need reinforcement (Al-haisoni, 2012). And to Cristal (1999) Error analysis in language teaching and learning is the study of the unacceptable forms produced by someone from learning a language, especially a foreign language.

As mentioned earlier, one of the purposes of Error analysis is to gain deep insight for the understanding of the process of language learning. Researchers over the years have attempted a great deal to better understand the process of language acquisition and learning; mention can be made of Richards, 1971, 1974; James, 1989, 1998; Norrish, 1983; Ellis, 1995; Ziahisseiny, 1999; Keshavarz, 2003, 2006; Darus, 2009 among others in this regards. In their efforts, some deductions and generalisations are made. The behaviourist learning theory of language, believes language learning is a habit formation and the errors in the second and foreign language learning are caused by the hindrance of the rules and habits formed in the first language learning, L1. These learned and formed habits of the first language are perceived to resist and interfere in the process of forming the habits of the second and foreign language. Thus, by implication, the assertion by the behaviourist theory that errors of the learners are the result of the interference of their first language has been endorsed by (Corder, 1967, 1971 & 1974; James, 1989, 1998; Ziahosseiny, 1999). In their study, Braham and Mohammad (2015) also agree with the behaviourist theorists a great deal, that, at the end of their analysis of the written performance of the university students in *Gujrat, Pakistan* and some intermediate

students in the Tabriz *Unique Language Centre* in Iran, the study concludes that they are highly influenced by the rules of their first language (L1).

From the above paragraphs, the researchers cited have all worked in communities that are primarily dominated by with people of one particular linguistic background which makes it easier for conclusions to be drawn. Their findings however, would serve as a good basis for this research which is based on a rural community, where inhabitants come from various linguistic backgrounds yet one particular local language dominates and exerts so much influence on the usage of the English language in the community among the basic school pupils/students especially from basic four to seven.

Moreover, most of the literature reviewed have extensive work on errors such as, Spelling, Pronoun Use, Wrong Word Use, Additions, Omission, Selection, Ordering, but works on Transliteration especially among typical Ghanaian communities remain quite moderate. Owu-Ewie and Lomotey (2016) did some work in the Winneba town in the Central Region of Ghana. A very good stepping stone since it bears some similarities with this study. As the Owu-Ewie and Lomotey's research focused on mother tongue interference on the learning of the English language, the research was based on a town that is basically dominated by only one Ghanaian language-Akan, it once again became quite easier to draw conclusions. This study however focuses on the error of transliteration and the research is based on cosmopolitan rural community where yet one Ghanaian language (Twi) exerts so much influence on the usage of the English language among the basic school students despite the numerous languages surrounding them.

In addition, scholars who have conducted research into errors seem to disagree on the issues regarding the underlying causes of the errors of transliteration. Whereas some such as Owu-Ewie and Lomotey, Latiff & Bakar (2008) cited in (Owu-Ewie and Lomotey), among others endorse the behaviourist theory, that, errors are committed as a result of the influence and interference of the learner's L1. They actually believe the L1 interference is a crucial factor which require a lot of attention in order to overcome a greater part of the L2 writing difficulties. Beardsmore (1982) intimates, many of the difficulties a second language learner has with the phonology, vocabulary, and grammar of L2 are due to the interference of habits from L1. Hashim (1999), adds that L1 interference refers to the influence of native language structures on students' performance and development in the target language; thus when L2 learners are writing in the target language, some, of their L1 characteristics show up in their writing. This actually reflects in many sentences that L2 learners write.

Krashen (1998) however has divergent opinion and believes that L1 interference is one of the several sources of errors learners make in learning the L2 even though the use of L1 in L2 classroom is found to be facilitative. Richards (1971), found out that transliteration is a linguistic problem which does not exist in isolation. It may be a psycholinguistic, sociolinguistic, epistemic or residing in the structure. Selinker (1972) also noted a learner's interlanguage and assumed that there is a latent psychological structure in the brain of the learner, which is activated when he/she attempts to learn a second language.



Per these observations, it actually becomes quite unrealistic when one talks about language related issues particularly errors without reference to psychological and social factors. These are important, since every language is a communal possession, although an abstract one. Individuals have access to it and constantly show that they do so by using it properly. The divergent views espoused above also makes this research more imperative and significant as they strengthen the basis for the research. It will help confirm the extent to which one's L1 can influence his/her acquisition of a target language and also unearth other factors which influence how the learner acquires the target language as far as errors are concerned. That is the English language for that matter as is the focus of this study.

Wardhaugh (2006) indicates that some forces in society are stronger than others and produce real effects, among the linguistic effects that have consequences for the lives we live. Bourdieu (1991) conceives of languages as symbolic marketplaces in which some people have more control of the goods than others because certain languages or varieties have been endowed with more symbolic power than others and have therefore been given a greater value. We must acknowledge that a language is essentially a set of items, called linguistic items, such entities as sounds, words, grammatical structures, and so on (Hudson1996, p. 21).

Wardhaugh, Bourdieu and Hudson are confirming the fact that language belongs to the people in a given society who own and have absolute control over its usage. It is only

good as it makes much sense to consider all the psycho-socio-cultural factors when dealing with language in a particular situation especially in aspects considered to be errors. This would give a better understanding as to whether they are actually errors as perceived as well as the typology of errors identified. Since communication or linguistic issues usually have psychological or cognitive elements, Richards refers to the psycholinguistic issues which must also be dealt with in order to gain a better insight into what is perceived to be an error and type of error committed in order to devise an appropriate remedial corrective measure to that effect.

Psycholinguistics is the study of cognitive processes that underlie the comprehension and production of language, and the way the cultural environment interact with these two (Harley, 2005, p.13). Barekat (2011) also defines psycholinguistics or psychology of language as the study of the interrelation between linguistic factors and psychological aspects. It is again defined as the study of psychological and neurobiological factors that enable humans to acquire, use, and understand language (*Psycholinguistics*, 2006). From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia, sociolinguistics is the descriptive study of the effect of any and all aspects of society, including cultural norms, expectations, and context, on the way language is used, and the effects of language use on society. Thus sociolinguistics focuses on the society's effect on language.

Again, Wiley (2012) explains sociolinguistics as a tour through the major issues that define the field, such as region, status, gender, time, language attitudes, interaction, and style, while also exploring the sociolinguistics of multilingualism, culture and ethnicity,

language contact, and education. Also according to an anonymous author, sociolinguistics is concerned with language in social and cultural context, especially how people with different social identities (e.g. gender, age, race, ethnicity, class) speak and how their speech changes in different situations. Wardhaugh (ibid) also intimates that there are several possible relationships between language and society. One is that social structure may either influence or determine linguistic structure and/or behaviour. He also adds that studies which show that the varieties of languages that speakers use reflect such matters as their regional, social, or ethnic origin and possibly even their gender; and other studies which show that particular ways of speaking, choices of words, and even rules for conversing are in fact highly determined by certain social requirements.

From the foregoing, Richards advocates a thorough study into the errors committed by learners in order to draw the appropriate conclusions and prescribe the right corrective measure since the errors could be emanating from multifaceted sources. As such it is very good and quite logical for the teacher and or the researcher to avoid drawing hasty conclusions. Similarly, most of the authors named in this study have corroboratively indicated that errors committed as far as language learning is concerned stem from a wide array of causes which call for a very thorough examination before conclusions are drawn.

Ancker (2000), reiterates that making mistakes or errors is a natural process of learning and must be considered as part of cognition. Ancker believes that errors are part of the thinking process and should be considered as part of the natural process of knowing and should not be seen, dealt with nor considered in isolation. This goes to buttress the above

points raised and substantiates the fact that errors could not simply be a symptom of ineffective teaching nor an evidence of failure but a situation which could also be facilitated by factors other than methodology or ineffectiveness of teaching, nor the student's inability to learn and grasp the correct thing.

## **2.5 THEORETICAL / CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK**

The study uses the Contrastive Analysis and the Error Analysis approaches as the main framework upon which the analysis in this research is conducted. The Contrastive Analysis (CA) principle will be used as a guide in the comparisons of the languages that would feature in this research, that is the English, the child's mother tongue and the Twi languages. According to Lennon (2008) The main idea of contrastive analysis, as propounded by Robert Lado in his book *Linguistics Across Cultures* (1957), was that it is possible to identify the areas of difficulty a particular foreign language will present for native speakers of another language by systematically comparing the two languages and cultures. Where the two languages and cultures are similar, learning difficulties will not be expected, where they are different, then learning difficulties are to be expected, and the greater the difference, the greater the degree of expected difficulty.

Additionally, Lado contends that individuals tend to transfer the forms and meanings and the distribution of forms and meanings of their native language and culture to the foreign language and culture — both productively and when attempting to speak the language and to act in the culture and receptively when attempting to grasp and understand the language and culture as practiced by natives. (as cited in Gass and Selinker 1983). The

Error Analysis approach, (EA) would guide the researcher to identify the errors the learners commit generally in their L2 acquisition process. Sawyer (1965) explains Error Analysis as the analysis of the test scores of the students in a given area. In order to establish that a learner is really translating directly from the Twi into the English language; but not their native languages, a comparison would be made between the meaning of the given sentence(s) in the learner's mother tongue and the Twi. This is the point where the CA becomes very useful. In this work, the CA is only used for comparative but not predictive purposes. As Manthata (1990) cites Ellis and Tomlinson (1980, p. 274), CA states that useful information about learning problems can be discovered by comparing the learners' mother tongue and the learners' target language to discover ways, in which they are the same, similar and different.

To Owu-Ewie and Lomotey (2016) Contrastive Analysis (CA) is the study and comparison of any two languages. And to Richards & Schmidt, (2002) Contrastive Analysis, is the primary approach to the study of L1 interference, focuses on the comparison of the linguistic systems of the two languages, especially the sound and grammar systems of L1 and L2 to find solutions to L2 instruction problems. In addition, the Error Analysis will form the main conceptual framework for this research analysis on the errors committed by the pupils/students of the Pokuase Community Basic Schools in their usage of the English Language in both the private and public schools. It is important to know and identify the types of errors committed by the pupils/students as to assess in which areas they are lacking and for which further strengthening is necessary, with special emphasis on the error of transliteration. The details of the reasons, causes or

sources of these errors especially the transliteration error would be established and thoroughly discussed in chapters three and four respectively.

## 2.6 CONCLUSION

To conclude, error analysis is an invaluable source of information to teachers. It provides information on students' errors which in turn helps teachers to correct students' errors and also improve the effectiveness of their teaching. As Richards et al., (1996, p.127) contend, error analysis has been conducted to identify strategies which learners use in language learning, to track the causes of learners' errors, obtain information on common difficulties in language learning or on how to prepare teaching materials. Similarly, Michaelides (1990, p.30) states that the systematic analysis of student's errors can be of great value to all those concerned, i.e., teachers, students and the researchers. For teachers it can offer clear and reliable picture of his students' knowledge of the target language.

Willcott (1972, p.73) conducted an error analysis to discover some of the problems that native speakers of Arabic had with the syntax of written English. Corder (1981, p. 112) also held the same view regarding the function of error analysis and that there are two justifications for studying learners' errors: its relevance to language teaching and the study of the language acquisition process.

Ellis (1994) explains Corder's definition of an error when he says it takes place when the deviation arises as a result of the lack of knowledge. A mistake occurs when learners fail

to perform their competence. That is, it is a result of processing problems that prevent learners from accessing their knowledge of a target language rule and cause them to fall back on some alternative, nonstandard rule that they find easy to access. The language teacher, therefore, has to deal with these errors by devising some strategies after he or she has done error analysis. In other words, language teachers could not draw conclusions unless they have thoroughly scrutinize the errors so committed by their students and known the nature and sources or causes.

From the Contrastive Analysis Hypothesis, errors occur as a result of interference when the learners transfer native language habits into the L2. It was also believed that interference takes place whenever there is a difference between native mother tongue and the target language. (Lado, 1957). Boss (2005) admits the interference of one's mother tongue, as one of the reasons for learner errors, which he described as the negative and positive transfer between the mother tongue and the target language. The negative transfer occurs when the forms of the target language and those of the learner's mother tongue are different from each other, in other words where the learners mother tongue does not help him/her to make correct or good constructions in the target language whereas, the positive transfer occurs where the mother tongue and the target language share similar structures. Ferguson (1965) pointed out that one of the major problems in the learning of a second language is the interference caused by the structural differences between the native language of the learner and the second language.

However, as referenced in Owu-Ewie & Lomotey cited above; ~~the~~ learner undisputedly transfers skills in the L1 to the L2. In the 1970s and 1980s, language transfer theory postulated that L1 has negative effect on L2 learning (James, 1980; Lado, 1957; Liu, 2002). However, this assumption has changed over the years; there has been corrective movement in recent years arguing that L1 can have both positive and negative influence on L2 learning (Selinker, 1983). Positive transfer refers to the process where the L1 knowledge facilitates the acquisition of an L2, while negative transfer involves the process whereby L1 knowledge interferes with and thus negatively impacts L2 acquisition". To substantiate, Nation, (2003); acknowledges that the use of L1 in L2 classroom helps learners acquire the knowledge needed to reach a higher level of L2 performance. Naturally, it makes a lot of sense for the learner to learn from the known to the unknown. So the employment of L1 to facilitate the learning of L2 cannot be underestimated. It is also established that, the L1 is the central mechanism in the acquisition of the L2 vocabulary (Jiang 2000). Though the use of L1 to facilitate the learning of L2 cannot be underestimated, it admissibly becomes a real problem when its usage propels the learner to commit errors in their usage of the L2.

Nevertheless, Brook as cited in Yankson (1994) states that, it is unrealistic to reckon on language learning without errors as to reckon on existence without sin. This confirms the view of some writers that it would be unusual to learn a second language without committing errors.

Though some scholars and writers consider errors as a necessary part of learning or acquiring a new language and a necessity for better proficiency, others have a counter opinion.



In their quest to identify the causes of these errors, writers have ascribed the learner's inability to write or speak Standard English to various factors such as teaching methodology, the teacher's competence of the language before teaching (Hicks and Words 1985 cited by an anonymous author) and the attitudes of learners. Others have also attributed the situation to the changing trends of teaching. As Maicusi et al (p.171) point out, it is well known, that in the last years the approach to language learning has changed substantially. Nowadays, language teaching basically focuses on the communicative competence. The communicative approach is different from the previous teaching methods even where error correction is concerned.

In Communication Language Teaching there is a minimal focus on form including a lack of emphasis on error correction. If it occurs it is likely to be meaning focused. Thus notwithstanding, learners profit from mistakes by obtaining feedback to make new attempts that successfully approximate the desired goals. Through errors the teachers can get improvement in learning. The errors can be used in order to help teachers evaluate the students' cognitive development. And not only that, as mentioned earlier, the errors committed, helps the teacher to devise appropriate remedial lessons and a very didactic pedagogical approach to provide what the learner is lacking.

Error analysis actually have a very significant benefit to all stakeholders especially when it is done holistically. Analyses of learner errors provide insight into the nature of language, especially into the innate nature of the learner's system, they provide even more insights into the process of language teaching and learning. As such, concrete

conclusions may usually be drawn from the results of the analyses regarding how a second or foreign language can be more effectively taught and learned or how existing methods of teaching and learning can be improved. (Huang 2002)



## CHAPTER 3

### METHODOLOGY

#### 3.1 INTRODUCTION

The central focus of this chapter is to describe and explain the methods and procedures used for data collection in this research. It outlines the research design of the study, the sampling techniques, and also the data collection and analysis procedures. The data described in this chapter were personally collected by the researcher. This made it possible for the researcher to *ensure* reliability in the data collected and also to ensure that scientific procedure for data collection was followed. Again, it afforded the researcher the opportunity to be able to control all variables which might have affected the research adversely. The approach also enabled the researcher to explain portions of the instruments used especially the questionnaire to respondents who needed further clarification; it again ensured correct and systematic as well as prompt responses from the respondents. This technique in effect minimised the possibility of respondents holding back most of the questionnaire which would have had adverse implication on the analysis of the data collected.

According to Welman et al. (2005), research has shown that questionnaires posted to respondents either do not come back, are not filled in correctly or they delay in coming back. Also the researcher has the least control over the conditions under which posted questionnaires are completed. There is a high possibility that some questions may not to be responded to in the order presented, or even that someone else may complete or censor some of the questions. They go on to say that when a respondent leaves a single question

unanswered, it may mean that the remainder of his or her responses cannot be used for purposes of analysis. The researcher's lack of control over the completion of the questionnaires also may result not only in poorly completed questionnaires, but also a poor response rate (the percentage of questionnaires handed back, returned or posted back.) Postal surveys accordingly tend to have the lowest response rate of all survey methods (Welman et al. 2005).

In this study, with the error of transliteration as its main focus, it is considered very appropriate to employ the Contrastive Analysis (CA) and the Error Analysis (EA) approaches. The Contrastive Analysis (CA) approach to the study of errors is used because it limits itself to providing didactic information which will be useful in generating the possible causes of the transliteration phenomenon and also help in providing solution to addressing the central aim of the study, which is the influence of the L1 (Twi) on the usage of the English language L2 among the basic school students of the Pokuase Community. The Error Analysis approach is also used for its ability to deal with analysis of errors in general.

This descriptive research, analyzed errors of transliteration made by the basic school students particularly from the upper primary to basic seven of the Pokuase Community schools in the Ga West Municipality of the Greater Accra Region of Ghana. Its aim was to answer the following research questions:-

- a. What are the possible major causes of transliteration in the community?
- b. How can learners be helped to overcome this challenge?

The research was conducted between October 2016 and February 2017 and had the objective of analysing the errors made by the students in their written composition as well as in their speech work; particularly, the errors of transliteration. Seventy minutes was used to conduct each of the English lessons which consisted of the four components namely listening, speaking, reading and writing. The objective of the research was to collect written compositions by the students to analyse the errors and also to have audios of live recordings of some of the English lessons to be able to note the errors of transliteration made by them and the possible causes. The data was tabulated according to various types of errors as categorized with much focus on errors of transliteration. This research also helped to identify causes of the transliteration, how to address them, and the areas teachers need to focus on teaching grammar and vocabulary aspects as well as speechwork which students need to master in order to overcome a greater part of the errors of transliteration in the usage of the English language.

### **3.2 RESEARCH DESIGN**

This study is a cross-sectional research which made use of qualitative and quantitative data which basically comprised primary data. Richards et al. (1992, p. 302) defines quantitative research as “research which uses procedures which gather data in numerical form.” Quantitative research uses statistics and controlled measurement. As a result the quantitative approach is regarded as objective and reliable. Quantitative approaches use methods in which an idea or hypothesis is tested or verified by setting up situations in which the relationship between different subjects can be determined” (Richards et al. 1992, p. 133). Maree et al. (2007, p. 145) also posit that quantitative research refers to

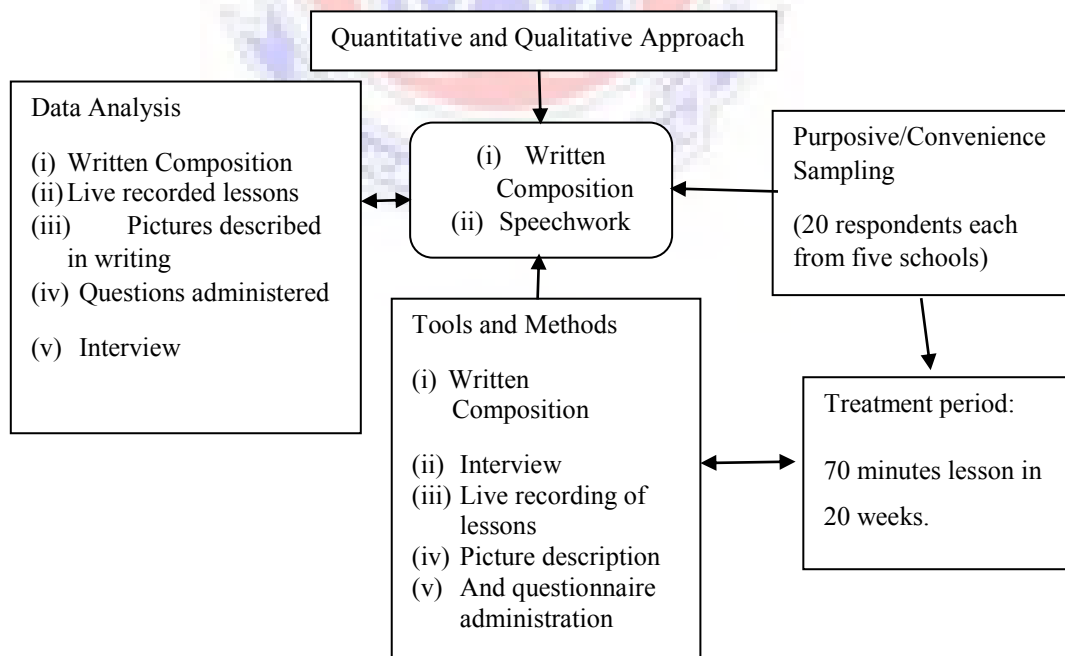
processes that are systematic and objective in its ways of using numerical data from only a selected subgroup of a universe (or population) to generalise the findings to the universe that is being studied. They add that the three most important components in this assertion are: objectivity, numerical data and generalizability. On qualitative research, Owu-Ewie (2012) posits that “ordinarily, qualitative research involves detailed verbal descriptions of characteristics, case and setting by using interviews, observations and documents as the data collecting procedure.” Creswell (1998) explains qualitative research design as an enquiry of process of understanding, based on a clear methodological process that uses a social or human problem by building a complex, holistic picture, analyses words, report detailed views of informants, and conducted in the natural setting.

Research design has been defined variously by scholars. According to Parahoo (1997, p.142) a research design is a plan that describes how, when and where data are to be collected and analysed. Baines et al (2003, p.195 cited by an anonymous author) defines research design as a blueprint for conducting a study with maximum control over factors that may interfere with the validity of the findings. Also as Owu-Ewie (2012) contends, a research design provides the most valid and accurate answers possible to the research questions stated.

In this study, the research instruments used for data collection were essay writing, live recording of lessons, picture description, interviews and questionnaires.

The data collected through writing and interviews as well as all other research instruments were processed for discussion that is classifying, tabulating, analysing and summarizing in chapter four of this study. The data collected were tabulated and analyzed in order to understand the errors made by the basic school students of the Pokuase Community schools particularly with regard to the errors of transliteration in writing compositions and in speech which is the central focus of this study. Again, through the analysis of the responses from the various instruments used, the researcher was able to establish some possible causes for the strong influence of the Twi Language in this transliteration menace. The Figure below gives a summary of the research design employed for this transliteration error analysis among the basic school students of the Pokuase community Schools in the Ga West Municipality of the Greater Accra Region of Ghana.

The diagram below summarizes the methodology employed in this research work.



### 3.3 STUDY POPULATION AND SAMPLE

According to Welman et al. (2005), the population encompasses the total collection of all units of analysis about which the researcher wishes to make specific conclusions. Blanche et al. (1999 referenced by an anonymous author) define population as the larger pool from which our sampling elements are drawn, and to which we want to generalise our findings. In this study, the population is drawn from five Basic Schools in the Pokuase Community, comprising three public and two private basic schools. This was done to enable the researcher draw appropriate conclusions as to whether the error of transliteration phenomenon was prevalent only among the students in the public schools or not. It was also done to find out if there was a significant difference in terms of the errors committed both by learners from the public and the private schools. It was again to enable the researcher find out the extent to which the phenomenon was endemic in the community schools; possible influence of factors such as media, availability or non-availability of teaching and learning materials and the like have on second language teaching and learning especially in environments where strict enforcement on the usage of the English language and where there is some laxity in the enforcement.

Teachers and students/pupils in the selected Basic Schools in the Pokuase Community constituted the study population. The sample size was One Hundred (100) participants comprising sixteen students and four teachers from each of the five selected schools in the community. That is four students from basics four, five, six and seven respectively and a teacher of each of the classes mentioned. The researcher used the purposive random sampling technique described by Parahoo (1997) as a method of sampling where the



researcher deliberately chooses who to include in the study based on their ability to provide necessary data” to arrive at the sample size.

The population was carefully sampled to ensure gender balance and a fair representation of students from diverse linguistic backgrounds. Representation from each class was composed of pupils/students from Ga, Ewe, a Northern Ghana language and Akan backgrounds, as are dominated in the community. Each sampled group had two males and two females, this was also done to ascertain which gender was more culpable of the error of transliteration.

According to Mulder, (1989, p. 55) a sample is “a group which is selected from the population while remaining as representative as possible.” The selected subjects represented the overall population. Blanche et al. (2006) view sampling as a process of selecting research participants from an entire population, and involves decisions about which people, settings, events, behaviours and / or social processes to observe. Maree et al.(2007) say that sampling refers to the process used to select a portion of the population for study. The knowledge of the scholars cited in this section has greatly influenced the sampling technique in this research work. Eventhough the focus has been on the pupils/students from basic four to seven, there were occasional random but convenient sampling from among basic eight and nine students.

### **3.4 DATA COLLECTION PROCEDURE**

Using the purposive sampling technique, the researcher collected four essays from each of the four children across the five basic schools selected in the Pokuase community for

analysis. The three hundred and twenty essays were collected from eighty pupils/students selected from Basic four to seven of the sampled schools. These classes of pupils/students were selected for the fact that they have had the opportunity to learn the language for at least four to seven years and will be facing their final examinations soon. The essays were based on various composition topics in the English language syllabus especially narrative and descriptive essays.

Beyond the essay topics, given in respect of this exercise, students were also made to write on specific topics as giving direction, and picture description. These essays afforded students the opportunity to express themselves freely which eventually exposed the errors they committed after the essays had been marked and thoroughly analyzed to establish the extent to which the L1 particularly Twi has influenced their usage of the English language. Furthermore, the study also attempted to find out why the Twi language has such a strong influence on the students' usage of the L2 (English) language even though the community is a cosmopolitan one.

For the benefit of doubt, the researcher did live recording of some lessons in the classrooms to ascertain whether the error of transliteration particularly was teacher induced and how to remedy the situation after the concerned teachers had consented. Again the researcher employed the use of interview and questionnaire to engage other relevant bodies such as teachers other than those interacted already with, educated parents/guardians, media practitioners in and around the community on the possible causes of this error and why the strong influence of the Twi language.

### 3.5 RESEARCH INSTRUMENT

A research instrument, is ~~a~~ “a tool used to collect data.” (Parahoo 1997), an instrument is a tool designed to measure knowledge, attitudes and skills. He further contends that research instrument ~~is~~ a systematically prepared form of document purposely designed through compilation of questions to elicit responses from respondents with the aim of collecting data”. The data for the study were basically obtained from primary sources. Primary data were gathered through essay writing, picture description, interviews and administration of questionnaires. The instruments used for data gathering included composition questions, selected scenes for picture description, an interview guide and questionnaire to be analysed.

Babbie (2007) contends that ~~Q~~ “questionnaire is a document containing questions designed to solicit information appropriate for analysis”. Questionnaire may contain open-ended and/or closed-ended questions. Open-ended questions give the respondent the chance to supply his or her own answer to a question. On the other hand, the respondent is asked to select an answer from among a list provided by the researcher in closed-ended questions. The study employed both types of questions to ensure uniformity of responses for easy processing on one hand and also to allow the respondents enough room to express their opinions on specific issues at stake. For example, the causes of the error of transliteration which is also strongly influenced by the Twi language. As Sarantakos (1997) explained, unstructured interview guide as an instrument that has no restrictions in the wording of the questions or the interview schedules. He asserts that ~~the~~ researcher acts freely in this context, on the basis of certain research points, formulating questions as and when

required and employing neutral probing”. The unstructured interview guide was employed to enable the researcher probe for more information as and when required especially the errors of transliteration and the possible causes.

Picture description and the essays were employed to enable pupils/students to express themselves freely in writing so that the researcher would have the opportunity to analyse the specific errors committed in the writing, juxtaposed with the errors committed orally and how to address them; more especially the error of transliteration which is the main pitfall this study sought to address.

### **3.6 VALIDITY AND RELIABILITY**

Maree et al. (2007), observed that, reliability has to do with the consistency or the repeatability of a measure or an instrument (e.g. a questionnaire). High reliability is obtained when the measure or instrument will give the same results if the research is repeated on the same sample. This is the more reason why the researcher had to ensure that the process was scientifically carried out and in a controlled environment. The instruments were tested and evaluated with a preliminary pilot test, administered to two pupils/students who were randomly selected from each of the target classes within two of the five sampled schools to ascertain their validity and reliability. According to Polit et al. (2001), reliability is the degree of consistency with which an instrument measures the attribute it is design to measure.

The pupils/students so selected for this purpose were made to write similar essays and picture descriptions under similar conditions, to enable the researcher have a fair idea of how the instruments would work. The pupils/students used for the testing and evaluation did not take part in the actual study. On validity, Polit et al. (2001) state that it is the degree to which an instrument measures what it is intended to measure. The final results from the two schools were very similar and close to each other which confirmed the validity and reliability of the research instruments. The instruments were found to be reliable since they produced similar results under similar conditions and they were also found to be valid since they measured the skills of speech and writing. The questions of the pretest were comparable to those used for the actual research work. The researcher was the instructor and facilitator of the experimental and control groups during the pretest whereas the various class teachers gave the scores of the pre-test and final essays.

### **3.7 DATA ANALYSIS**

Data on error analysis involves various activities and stages which James (1998) calls the ‘broad trawl’. The initial analysis assisted the researcher ‘to gain a first impression of the learner’s capacities and limitations to identify the areas of TL competence where they are most susceptible to error’. The researcher’s ability to properly assess or examine the learner’s errors enables him/her to appreciate the learner’s difficulties which also leads to a change of perception about the learner and leads to a genuine needs assessment and the way forward which also eventually results in genuine deductions. James (1998) further outlines three reasons for describing data: thus, the need for labels so that intuitions can be compared with those of other people; secondly the need to count errors; and thirdly,

the need to create categories of errors which can be compared intralingually and crosslingually (Hobson, 1999 as referenced by an anonymous author).

In addition, data analysis will assist the researcher to discover patterns and trends in the data sets, and by means of data interpretation, s/he explains those patterns and trends. Error analysis may be employed both as theoretical framework or a method of data analysis. It is a technique for identifying, classifying, and systematically interpreting the forms of language writing and speaking. (Richards et al. 2002) In view of this, Data so far collected in respect of the topic at stake, were analyzed using the content approach which is also referred to as qualitative content analysis. Hsieh & Shannon (2005) define qualitative content analysis as: “a research method for the subjective interpretation of the content of text data through the systematic classification process of coding and identifying themes or patterns” (p.1278). Qualitative content analysis accentuates a combined view of discourse/writings and to the specific contexts they are in. Qualitative content analysis “allows researchers to understand social reality in a subjective but scientific manner” (Zhang & Wildemuth, 2009, p.1). Hence, employing this approach also facilitated the researcher’s efforts to demystify the high influence of the Twi Language on the English language acquisition and usage among the pupils/students of the Pokuase Community Basic Schools in the Ga West Municipality of the Greater Accra Region of Ghana.

Here, various errors suspected to be transliteration, were reduced to meaningful units after the errors had generally been identified and categorised, examined the intended

meaning of the particular sentences in the light of the English language structures and the Twi language to ascertain which one it best satisfied. This was compared with the student's linguistic background, area of residence and the type of company he/she usually keeps. Since all were possible factors which could influence their ability to acquire the L2 which is the English language properly. By this, appropriate deductions were made.

### **3.8 ETHICAL ISSUES**

The research was conveniently conducted in the selected schools with all sampled participants fully participating in all the English language lessons, as well as subjects other than English language which were randomly selected to confirm the suspicion of the error being teacher induced. The researcher enjoyed a good co-operation of virtually all selected schools and teachers since the issue of transliteration has been their bane as well. To majority of them held the view that the research came at an opportune time and they looked forward to some useful critiquing and corrective suggestions to enable them overcome the canker.

However, the initial words of some of the class teachers by way of introducing the researcher nearly dampened the spirit of some of the pupils/students. As a result, some students were not keen in the writing of the essay and more especially the speechwork for fear of committing errors. That is, at the initial stages, on the part of the weaker ones, due to the fact that they felt intimidated, especially for the fact that their teachers selected them and also by their counterparts who were seen to be capable of writing essays and speaking with minimal errors or without any problems. That is to say that as those who

were tagged the smart students were confident and ready to participate their weaker counterpart were trying to shy away. I dare say it was an obvious expectation at the initial stages of the study. But for the encouragement of the researcher nerves were calmed down for successful exercise.

A few were writing the essay but could not complete it due to time management as the allotted time of forty-five minutes for an essay and fifteen minutes for speech work, to them was not adequate enough. The situation however improved as the study progressed and especially at the occasions when the researcher facilitated the lessons and instructed them. The conditions/factors were considered to be mild and less intimidating since it could be rectified in due course. They actually minimized when the participants realized they were still part of their normal classes and nothing special was happening to them. Biasness took place between the smart students and weaker students who sought the researcher's attention to aid them in their essay writing which was not encouraged as it might have affected the result of the study.

Nonetheless, they became more participatory and enthusiastic in the speech work which was done in a more friendly and informal manner. The researcher engaged some of them in conversations other than interviews, played back their recorded voices to them which attracted most of them since they found that part of the exercise a fun. The researcher also created writing competition in an informal manner among participants. In this writing competition, students were asked to say and write any sentence of their own and translate into Twi and vice versa. There were also occasions where participants were



made to translate and write given sentences from the Twi Language into English. In such situations, participants felt they could do it better than their colleagues. These kinds of intervention alleviated fear and intimidation among participants and ensured a successful research programme.

### **3.9 CONCLUSION**

To conclude, the chapter has outlined the methodology used in this research to ascertain causes of the error of transliteration among the basic school pupils/students from basic four to seven in the Pokuase community. It highlighted the data collection procedure, the sample size, research design and the ethical considerations as well as the period within which the research was conducted. The methodology employed a multiple approach which utilised questionnaires, interviews, picture descriptions, etc. in order to achieve the maximum outcome for data processing and analysis. To ensure authenticity and credibility of the deductions made through the analysis, the validity and reliability of the instruments were piloted through a pre-test exercise which yielded results similar to the expected. The chapter has also outlined the strategies used to encourage participants to give off their best which eventually made the research a huge success.

## CHAPTER 4

### RESEARCH FINDINGS AND DATA ANALYSIS

#### 4.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents the results of the study and discusses them. Both qualitative and quantitative analyses were done. The study employed a mixed method approach that used questionnaires, interviews, essay writing and picture description to identify and stratify the learner errors among pupils/students of the Basic Schools in the Pokuase Community in the Ga West Municipality of the Greater Accra Region of Ghana. The main focus of the research has been to establish the causes of transliteration from the Twi Language into the English irrespective of the pupil's/student's linguistic background. In all, a population of 100 was used for this study. It comprised 20 teachers and 80 pupils/students from across three public and two private schools.

The discussions and analysis of this research findings were based on the data collected and the research questions set out to be answered in this work. The findings have generally been drawn from the essays written by the pupils/students from Basic four to Seven of the sampled schools in Pokuase and the interviews granted as well as the questionnaire given out to respondents. The live recording of lessons were used to assist the researcher in confirming her suspicion on some possible causes of the transliteration error; they were also used in the analysis.

The errors were identified basically in the essays which were descriptive and narrative in nature. The tables below show the total number of errors made by the students in both

their compositions and speech work. The results were tabulated and categorized into public and private schools and also male and female genders. The comparison between public/private schools and male/female gender was used to draw some deductions in the analysis.

#### 4.2 PRESENTATION OF RESULTS OF THE DATA COLLECTED

The following tables show the categories of errors and the frequency of their respective occurrences in the data examined. Preceding the tables are examples of some of the errors noted in the research, and following each of the tables is a graphical presentation of the analysis.

<b>Errors of transliteration</b>	
✓ Water is not inside	✓ .... I told him my problem and he did it for me.
✓ I hear some everywhere I go	✓ ....wat to go to the large park
✓ We in this area....	✓ ... the is a road between the bridge
✓ Talk a little of speed	✓ ... school uniform has tired...
✓ Chicken meat and cow meat	✓ ...let us perform the program...
✓ ...I telling to my friend	✓ My house near the church
✓ .... I go my way	✓ ...next day morning we cook tea with bread and egg.
✓ .... the he came back	✓ There was many traffic on the road
✓ ....going on the road	✓ It take lots of hours on the road
✓ ....ate some food and some drinks	✓ ...scot me till I get a taxi and go
✓ ....on the way going	✓ We played and talked together
✓ ...when it is holyday the food was sweet	✓ ... I was play with my friend...

✓ The places is I go called...

✓ We take two cars

### **Error of Omission**

❖ Ester omission of a in Easter

❖ Fech omission of t in fetch

❖ I telling omission of am/was

❖ Sped omission of e in speed

❖ Questin omission of o in question

❖ My house near... omission of is

❖ Chuch omission of r in church

❖ Churh omission of c in church

❖ Methodis omission of t in Methodist

❖ ...the is, an omission of re in there is

❖ ... you se, an omission of e see

### **Spelling Errors**

➤ Cafe instead of curve

➤ Fryed instead of fried

➤ Problam instead of problem

➤ Holyday instead of holiday

➤ Ni instead of in

➤ Stuate instead of straight

➤ Dat instead of that

➤ De instead of the

➤ Poand instead pound

➤ Oker stew instead of okro stew

➤ Rich instead of reach

➤ Questing instead of question

➤ Potteto instead potato

➤ Mission instead of missing

➤ Rison instead of reason

➤ memerable instead of memorable

➤ sew instead of saw

### **Article**

▪ ... a old man instead of an old man

▪ ... an mango tree

▪ ... an town

▪ ... a sellers

▪ ... an woman

### **Error of Addition**

• tommorrow, addition of m in

tomorrow

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The name off... an addition of <u>f</u> instead of the name of</li> <li>• ....supper market, addition of <u>p</u> in super market</li> <li>• .... Some drinkes an addition of <u>e</u> in drinks</li> <li>• closed, an addition of <u>s</u> in closed</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>... she told <b>his</b> father ...</li> <li>... Alex were the with <b>her</b> brother</li> <li>He introduced <b>her</b> friend to us</li> <li>...he asked <b>her</b> mother...</li> <li>Grace and <b>his</b> brother</li> <li>Vero and <b>his</b> brother</li> </ul> |
|---|---|

**Subject-verb-Agreement**

- .... boys and girls **was** playing and dancing
- ....most of my friends **has** come...
- ...only the boy **have** drink and biscuit
- .... his father I **has** come...
- ...my friend **were** going
- The two of them **is** still going
- The places **is** I go called...

**Tense**

- ✓ ... when I meet him ask where he went
- ✓ ... we get lost on the way
- ✓ ....we cook banku with okro stew
- ✓ when I reached there I see many people
- ✓ I travel to my hometown
- ✓ In holidays I went to shopping I thoght someting like shoe
- ✓ ...anything I went I also go with my sister....
- ✓ I get there I fell happy
- ✓ .....went to the beach and swim

**Pronoun-use errors**

Just to cite some few examples. Further examples will be cited in the course of the discussion.

It must be emphasized here that not all the types of errors here cited will be discussed since that is not the focus of this study. Some of them may be cited briefly but much attention will be devoted to the main subject matter, which is the error of transliteration.

**Table 1 General analysis (public/private schools –males & females together)**

SERIAL NUMBER	TYPE OF ERROR	FREQUENCY/NUMBER OF ERRORS	PERCENTAGE (%)
1.	Transliteration/Literal Translation	149	36.3
2.	Pronoun-Use Errors	37	9.0
3.	Omission	23	5.6
4.	Addition	15	3.6
5.	Spelling	33	8.0
6.	Wrong-word Use	18	4.4
7.	Subject-Verb-Agreement	29	7.1
8.	Tense	57	13.8
9.	Preposition	29	7.1
10.	Article Errors	21	5.1
<b>Total</b>		<b>411</b>	<b>100.00</b>

The above information can be graphically represented as follows

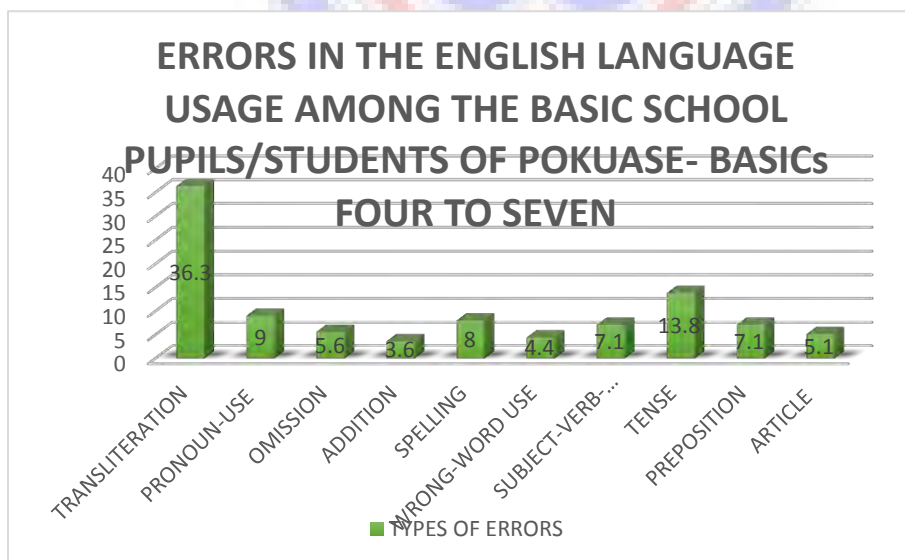


Fig. 1 types of errors identified

The table presented the total errors identified in the research and how they occurred across the works of all the pupils/students who were sampled for the research. The results encompasses the errors found from both the public and private schools. For a clearer and better understanding, they were also presented graphically below the table as shown above. From the table, it is quite clear how the error of transliteration has gained root in the community. As a result, it forms the highest percentage among the errors identified followed by the error of tense, pronouns, spelling and so on. A thorough discussion mainly on the causes of the transliteration and a few of the errors identified have been presented in the subsequent discussion of this chapter. Graphical representations are also made in the order of how the errors have been tabulated and analysed.

**Table 2. Public schools**

<b>SERIAL NUMBER</b>	<b>TYPE OF ERROR</b>	<b>FREQUENCY/NUMBER OF ERRORS</b>	<b>PERCENTAGE (%)</b>
1.	Transliteration/Literal Translation	89	36.2
2.	Pronoun-Use Errors	22	8.9
3.	Omission	14	5.7
4.	Addition	9	3.7
5.	Spelling	20	8.1
6.	Wrong-word Use	11	4.5
7.	Subject-Verb-Agreement	17	6.9
8.	Tense	34	13.8
9.	Preposition	17	6.9
10.	Article Errors	13	5.3
<b>Total</b>		<b>246</b>	<b>100</b>

Tables 2 above and 3 below, present a comparison between the private and public schools. This was done to confirm the perception that private schools do better academically, particularly in the English language usage than public schools. Unfortunately this assertion could not be proven since the statistics, presents a different

picture. The private schools committed 40.1% of the total errors identified, which is higher than that of the public schools put together 59.9%. The conclusion drawn in this research has at least confirmed that the errors committed by pupils/students are not too different whether in public or private school once the prevailing conditions are not too different.

**Table 3 Private schools**

<b>SERIAL NUMBER</b>	<b>TYPE OF ERROR</b>	<b>FREQUENCY/NUMBER OF ERRORS</b>	<b>PERCENT AGE (%)</b>
1.	Transliteration/Literal Translation	60	36.4
2.	Pronoun-Use Errors	15	9.1
3.	Omission	9	5.5
4.	Addition	6	3.6
5.	Spelling	13	7.9
6.	Wrong-word Use	7	4.2
7.	Subject-Verb-Agreement	12	7.3
8.	Tense	23	13.9
9.	Preposition	12	7.3
10.	Article Errors	8	4.8
<b>Total</b>		<b>165</b>	<b>100</b>

Again most private school pupils/students would perform worse if left on their own to study without necessarily being coached. That is to say, a private school that operates under the same conditions as a public school can never match the standard of the public school. This comparison is being made, because the quantum of errors committed comparatively is quite overwhelming. One would least expect that number of errors from a private school. The major course identified is the lack of facilities such as library which is properly stocked, and standard books.



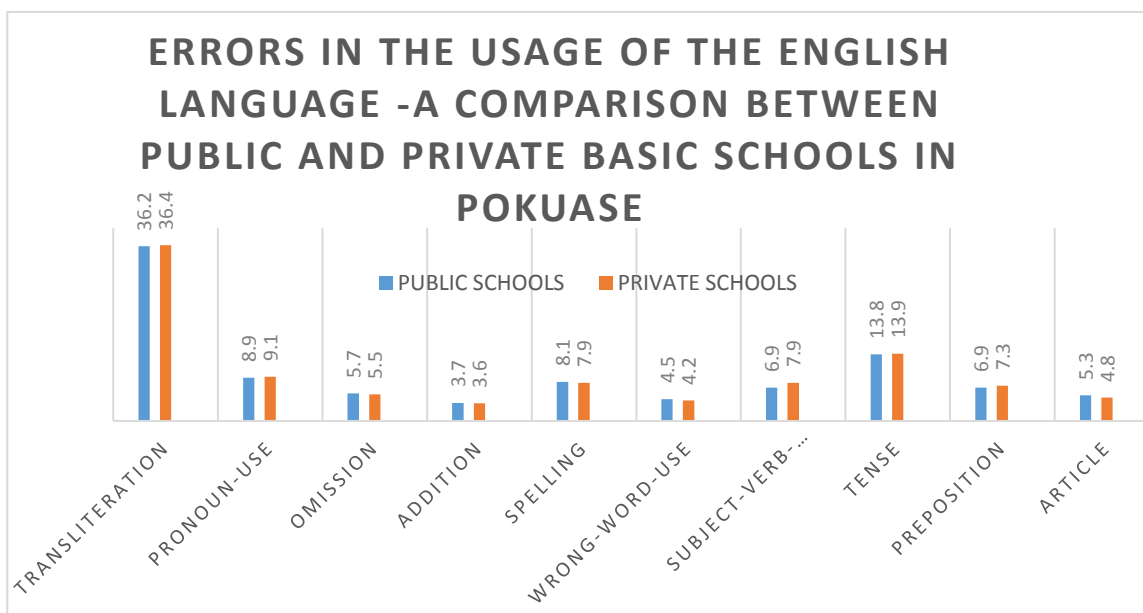


Fig. 2 comparison between public and private schools

Table 4 Males

SERIAL NUMBER	TYPE OF ERROR	FREQUENCY/NUMBER OF ERRORS	PERCENTAGE (%)
1.	Transliteration/Literal Translation	92	36.4
2.	Pronoun-Use Errors	23	9.1
3.	Omission	14	5.5
4.	Addition	9	3.6
5.	Spelling	20	7.9
6.	Wrong-word Use	11	4.4
7.	Subject-Verb-Agreement	18	7.1
8.	Tense	35	13.8
9.	Preposition	18	7.1
10.	Article Errors	13	5.1
<b>Total</b>		<b>253</b>	<b>100</b>

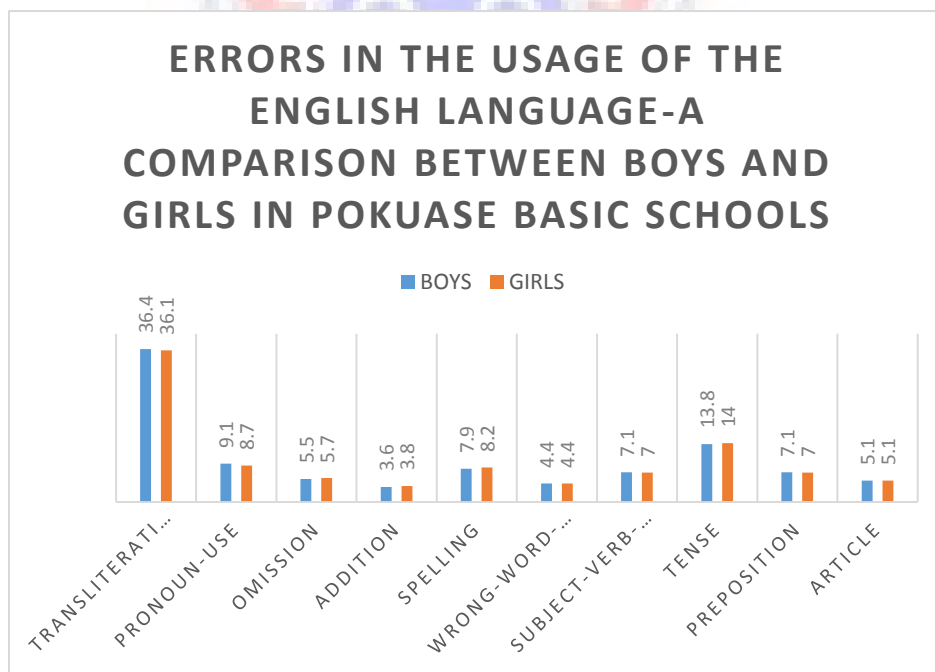
Tables 4 and 5 also compare and present the gender that commits more errors especially transliteration, in their quest to acquire and use the English language. It is evidential that the boys committed 62% of the total errors more than the girls. This is so because the girls are encouraged to read more than the boys. Again, most of the boys engage in

Pidgin language and social media communication, such as Facebook, palm chat, WhatsApp and the like, more than the girls even though they are not expected to own phones at that level.

**Table 5 Females**

SERIAL NUMBER	TYPE OF ERROR	FREQUENCY/NUMBER OF ERRORS	PERCENTAGE (%)
1.	Transliteration/Literal Translation	57	36.1
2.	Pronoun-Use Errors	14	8.7
3.	Omission	9	5.7
4.	Addition	6	3.8
5.	Spelling	13	8.2
6.	Wrong-word Use	7	4.4
7.	Subject-Verb-Agreement	11	7
8.	Tense	22	14
9.	Preposition	11	7
10.	Article Errors	8	5.1
<b>Total</b>		<b>158</b>	<b>100</b>

Below is a graphic representation of the data from tables 4 and 5



**Fig. 3** comparison between boys and girls

#### 4.2.1 DISCUSSIONS

According to Adams and Keene (2000) most students face difficulties in writing skills especially proper use of grammar, conventions, punctuations, capitalization, spelling and the basic aspects of writing. Pak-TaoNg (2003) also emphasises that writing comprises many activities involving understanding like thinking of the topic, gathering information, collecting data, etc. which makes a reflective thought for students at the end. Lim Ho Peng (1976) believes that students make mistakes mainly on spelling, inappropriate use of prepositions, and confusing use of structural verbs, concord and tenses. Vahdatinejad (2008) reiterates that students make mistakes in tenses, word choices and prepositions. Whereas James (1998) in corroboration, states that students tend to make mistakes in grammar. All the scholars mentioned above, have acknowledged the difficulties students generally face in their quest to acquire the English language. The pupils/students of Pokuase have not been an exception. Almost all the problems students face in writing have manifested with the addition of the transliteration which is the subject matter of this study.

Following from the data presented, it is quite clear how the error of transliteration has become so endemic in the Pokuase Community among the Basic School pupils/students. The phenomenon is not only prevalent in the public schools but also among the private schools. As indicated above, students in their usage of the English Language, committed a number of errors which came about as a result of various causative factors. Spelling errors for example were mainly committed due to mispronunciation of words. Most of the teachers in their attempt to be more phonetical in their pronunciation, that is during speech work, mispronounced most of the words which eventually registered on the

pupils'/students' minds and they spelt them as such. Words such as *meals*' were pronounced as *mills*', *seat*' as *sit*', *feel*' as *fill*', and so forth. In this situation, the errors being committed, can conveniently be termed as an induced one which are attributable to their teachers. Besides the induced spelling errors, there were also errors of transcription which are also attributable to the children's incomplete acquisition of the target phonetics and sounds of the alphabet. E.g. *problam*, instead of *problem*, *dat* to mean that, *dis* in place of this, *de* instead of the, and so forth. On subject-verb-agreement, some of the pupils had not properly formed the concept of suffixes, as well as parts of speech. They knew some words add *\_es*' in their plural forms; for instance, *mango* becomes *mangoes*, *tomato* becomes *tomatoes* to mention a few. The assumption or the concept formed here is that if *\_es*' indicate plural form and we are talking about plural nouns agreeing with plural verbs then boys should agree with *\_goes*', girls with *\_dances*' and the like. In order not to deviate from the central focus of this study, which has transliteration error as the subject matter, the few errors briefly commented on would suffice for now while attention is diverted to the main subject.

The study was conducted based on the two main research questions which are stated as follows:

- c. What are the possible major causes of transliteration in the community?
- d. How can learners be helped to overcome this challenge?

To begin with, transliteration in this work has been defined as the literal translation of sentences from a local language precisely Twi into the English language. What then can be said to be causing this and what can be done about it even though the pupils/students come from diverse linguistic backgrounds?

**a. What are the possible major causes of transliteration in the community?**

This question sought to find out the major causes of the transliteration phenomenon among the basic school children in the Pokuase Community. In the course of doing this other errors were also identified and categorised as indicated above. However, not much attention was paid to the errors other than the transliteration since they were not the main focus of the study. The following were identified as the causative factors of the transliteration menace. They are overgeneralisation, transition from the lower primary to the upper primary (the NALAP programme), teacher induced errors, the Twi being the most widely spoken language in the community, the Twi being most widely used language on most electronic media stations, semi-literacy/half-baked scholarly activities, and the desire of parents to help their wards acquire fluency in the English Language. Other factors are unavailability of libraries in the community and schools, parent-child relationship, lack of personal remedial plans, lack of parental control and the social media.

#### **4.3 CAUSES OF THE TRANSLITERATION MENACE IN DETAIL**

The factors outlined in the paragraph above have been expanded below.

##### **4.3.1 OVERGENERALISATION**

This refers to the situation where learners assume that all languages have the same or similar structures and can as such apply the knowledge of one that they are familiar with to any other one they intend to acquire. Scholars have generally categorised students' errors into various forms according to the four basic language skills, listening, speaking, reading and writing with writing forming the majority. According to James, (1988) in

writing, learners mostly commit errors such as tenses, prepositions and weak vocabulary. They may be clearly visible in the learners' written performance (Nik Safiah 1978). Bartholomae (1980, P. 07) also argues that "all language learning is based on continual exposure, hypothesizing and, even with the correct hypothesis, testing and reinforcing the ideas behind them". Learner errors may occur in many forms which may be attributable to a number of factors including mother tongue interference, transfer of training, overgeneralisation, to mention a few. It is quite evidential that Learners tend to overgeneralise some grammatical rules especially from the L1. A situation which has been identified in this study as one of the main factors which influence the pupils/students to do literal translation from the Twi language into the English language in spite of they living in a cosmopolitan community.

Let's consider the following phrases in the Twi Language

a. <i>Metɛ nne bi</i> → I hear a voice	<i>Fa akonnwa</i> → Take a chair
b. <i>Metɛ bre</i> → I feel tired	✓ <i>Fa ha</i> → Pass here
c. <i>Metɛ hua no</i> → I smell the flavour	✓ <i>Fa abɔfra no</i> → Carry the baby
d. <i>Metɛ duaba no</i> → I pluck the fruit	✓ <i>Fa no</i> → Have sex with her
	▪ <i>Ka biribi</i> → Say something
	▪ <i>Ka ho yie</i> → Paint it well
	▪ <i>Ɔka kaa</i> → He drives a car
	▪ <i>Ɔka ho</i> → He is part
❖ <i>Mebɔ mpaɛɛ</i> → I pray	➤ <i>Gyedi</i> → believe
❖ <i>Mebɔ bɔɔlo</i> → I play football	➤ <i>Gyeto m'</i> → Accept
❖ <i>Mebɔ nkɔmmɔ</i> → I chat	➤ <i>Gye akyɛdɛɛ yi</i> → Collect this gift
❖ <i>Mebɔ sotorɔ</i> → I slap	➤ <i>Gyɛɛ woba</i> → unless you come
• <i>Yɛdi asem</i> → We arbitrate	
• <i>Yɛdi fufuo</i> → We eat fufu	
• <i>Yɛdi nkɔmmɔ</i> → We converse	
✓ <i>Yɛdi agorɔ</i> → We play	

From the illustrations above, the verbs **te**, **ba**, **di**, **fa**, **ka**, and **gye** in the Twi Language give different meanings in different contexts. It stands to reason therefore, that the child having been familiar with this linguistic structure finds it easier applying it to all other languages. Additionally, Owu-Ewie & Lomotey (2016) point out that their findings were consistent with Mahmoud (2000) who found traces of transliteration of grammar and vocabulary in the composition writing of Sudanese University students. L2 students do this because their knowledge of L1 is most readily available as a linguistic resource they use to solve L2 communication problems.

As Owu-Ewie & Lomotey and Mahmoud confirm the aspect of overgeneralisation, using the L1, in the above paragraph, Elkilic (2012) gives the other side of the coin, which is the negative aspects of such generalisations. Thus, the differences in structures actually brings about the errors committed in diverse forms. For this reason, one can hear sentences like “**Ɔ** can hear its scent” meaning “**mete ne hua no**”, “**Ɔ** climb the car” meaning “**foro kaa no**” “**Ɔ** was sitting my somewhere” ; “**na mete me baabi**” and so forth. All these sentences are perfect in the Twi Language but incorrect in the English Language. Again the idea of overgeneralisation also affected the choice of pronouns. In Twi, there is only one pronoun form for both sexes as far as the third person singular is concerned. “**ɔno**” sometimes contracted to be “**ɔ**” depending on the sentence. For example, “**ɔnni ha**”, that is “**ɔno nni ha**” meaning s/he is not there. “**ɔka/ɔno ka**” to mean s/he is gone etc. The same idea is carried into the English language. So the student is not much concerned about what gender is being spoken about in the sentence and s/he just settles on any pronoun at all whether appropriate or not. To corroborate, Selinker,

(cited in Richards 1974), mentions overgeneralization as one of the five causes of errors as far as acquisition of the Target Language is concerned. However, in doing so what these learners fail to remember is that, much as there are some universalities in languages, there are also variabilities. This is what Elkilic (2012) stated that, Turkish university students learning English, when writing compositions, they sometimes confront difficulties related to proper word choices, grammatical structures and other aspects of the language due to the differences of the two languages. Maniam (2010, P. 4) also reiterates, “although human languages have a great deal in common, which enables us to translate from one language to another without much difficulty, they are also very different from one another in many aspects”. This many second language learners fail to realise.

Moreover, the students’ idea of generalisability of languages even makes them write sentences without due consideration for the words they choose and the order in which they occur in the sentence(s). Hence the construction of sentences like “...if I eat finish” which in Twi makes a perfect sense. It translates as “**sɛ medidi wie a...**”; “...I was sitting my there”, “**..na mete me hɔ**” “... if you talk, put sense by side”, “**sɛ wokasa a fa nyansa to ho**” “... madam, me I was not there some”; “ **...madam, me, na menni hɔ bi**”, “... we are climbing the car and the driver fly and went” “**..na yɛreforo kaa no na drɔbani no tu kɔɛɛ**” “we are playing and I chop him a, she say no” “**...yɛredi agoro na sɛ madi no a, ɔse daabi**” and the like. Further interaction pupils/students on sentences such as above, revealed that, most of them were not aware of their correctness or otherwise because they have been hearing such sentences most often around them. That is within the community or in their various homes. However, to a few of them, it



was their desire to master the English language as quickly as possible hence they assumed that certain features of the native language are universal and can be applied to the other language situations indiscriminately.

#### **4.3.2 TRANSITION FROM THE LOWER PRIMARY TO THE UPPER PRIMARY (THE NALAP PROGRAMME)**

NALAP is the acronym for National Literacy Acceleration Programme. It is a bilingual programme in which pupils learn to read in a Ghanaian language and learn to speak English at the same time (Agboada & Akubia 2011).

As a Ghana Education Service policy, teachers handling Kindergarten 1 to Primary 3 are required to teach their students using a local language prevalent in the locality. Pokuase being a cosmopolitan community, the teachers concerned resort to the use of the Twi Language for teaching these classes. They actually do not care much about whether it is grammatical or not. Further interaction with the teachers revealed that, in their own estimation, even though the children come from diverse linguistic background, majority of them understand the Twi compared to the other possible languages such as Ga, Ewe, and the Northern languages available in the community. That aside, the Twi is the language most of the teachers in question can themselves manage better. Hence their preference for the Twi. Nevertheless, in as much as, they are enforcing a national policy, which is good in its own right, switching completely and suddenly to the usage of the English Language during the transition to the upper primary and beyond, becomes a bit of a problem so they still carry some traces of some Twi elements along.

### 4.3.3 TEACHER INDUCED CAUSE

Observing other teachers in their lessons delivery, some of the teachers themselves used certain expressions which can be said to be more acceptable in the Twi language other than in the English. Imagine a teacher's explanation to a child where he says –.assuming your mother sent you and the money did not reach what you will do?" another questions, –. hey! How many cars do you pick to come to school that you are always sleeping in class?" , –.when you grow plants, it is not the big water that fall on it which make it grow but the small small water that pour early in the morning" and the like. At this juncture, it becomes clearer that the problem is partly teacher induced since learners copy the language their teachers use in class. This is what Owu-Ewie & Lomotey, (2016) say, –obviously what students use and write in class is a replica of what they hear and see in class".

Another reason for this situation is the Ghana Education Service (GES) policy of Pupil-Teacher –Ratio. In enforcing this policy, every teacher is expected to teach more than one subject and here competence and background are not to be considered. Hence a high possibility of putting square pegs in round holes. To confirm, interaction with some of the English teachers revealed backgrounds such as follows:- HND-Marketing, WASSCE/SSCE/SHS (in the case of private schools), Dip. –I.C.T., Bsc-Admin, Bsc-Banking, just to mention a few. Most of the teachers accepted to teach a particular subject, especially the English language irrespective of their background and competencies because they needed to protect their salaries and to maintain their stations; whiles others accepted because they believe they have the passion and the necessary

competencies irrespective of their backgrounds. Whichever the case, majority are impacting negatively on the learners' ability to acquire the right language in school.

Again, Mawasha (1996, P. 21) outlines three realities, which he argues that most practising educators in African education are aware of; this presents another dimension of the above situation which have pre-empted the situation in Pokuase. He noted as follows: in practice, many African educators code switch routinely from English to an African language in routine content-subject presentation to facilitate comprehension and to speed up progress through the syllabus. This was quite glaring in most of the lessons observed. Teachers may not only engage in codeswitching but sometimes do a literal translation of whatever was being said for want of the appropriate expressions. Though for a good cause, its impact on the learners has not been the best. The students have been imitating the teachers wrongly which is impacting adversely on their learning. That is in their conversation, they do this direct translation for want of better words to make an appropriate sentence to carry an idea across to their listeners. Secondly, Mawasha asserts that many African teachers often find it necessary to resort to an African language where their personal facility in English as classroom language teachers falters. This kind of practice is quite real among Basic school teachers who are either not qualified or less qualified to handle the teaching of the English language. This situation of having square pegs in round holes have actually led to this teacher induced kind of error which is almost becoming a canker among learners in the community.

To confirm, Buthelezi (1995), observes that in most cases, teachers in the rural areas are either unqualified, or under qualified in English as a subject, or else they do not have

linguistic knowledge to be able to deal with learner errors. A clear situation is the revelation above. As a result they concentrate more on literature and poetry because these do not consider grammatical or linguistic rules. Thirdly, Mawasha, adds that teacher code-switches to deal with what he considers practical educational problems bearing on the understanding of a particular subject content or concept, as a matter of need. This is what the other subject teachers also engage in which has contributed adversely to the general transliteration phenomenon in the basic schools within the community.

#### **4.3.4 THE TWI BEING THE MOST WIDELY SPOKEN LANGUAGE IN THE COMMUNITY**

The Twi Language was found out to be one of the fast spreading languages across the country. As it stands currently, in virtually every part of the country Ghana, Twi is spoken there. And some respondents were of the view that it is currently an unofficial national language which is most often used at a number of gatherings such as churches in the community, P.T.A. meetings, town hall meetings, SPAM, community durbars, etc. This has been so, because, it is the language majority of the people in the community can manage with. Again it is the most patronized Ghanaian language taught in the community basic schools in spite of the fact that other languages are also taught in the schools.

Generally speaking, the Ghanaian languages taught in the community basic schools are Twi and Ga, but the ratio is about 9:1 respectively. That is in each of the schools, an average of about 90% of the students population offer Twi to the final examination

(BECE). In the best of situations, one can find about 10% of the remaining student population offering the Ga language to the final examination, which in most cases, the Ga students are less. Coupled with the fact that the schools are not boarding, logically, parents are not expected to communicate with children in English. Majority will obviously do that in Twi. So the child naturally gets more familiar with the linguistic structures of the Twi language which they tend to depend on as the most readily available linguistic facility any time they are handicapped.

#### **4.3.5 THE TWI BEING THE MOST WIDELY USED LANGUAGE ON MOST ELECTRONIC MEDIA STATIONS**

In the efforts to unravel the causes of the strong influence of the Twi Language on the usage of the English Language among the Pokuase Community basic school pupils/students, the electronic media came up strongly. It was identified as one of the main reasons for this transliteration phenomenon. This error of literal translation from the native language (Twi) into the English is also presumed to emanate from or influenced by factors such as Technology-television advertisements, soap operas to mention but few which influence the language used by children.

As it is, of late, a good number of the electronic media stations resort to the use of the Twi Language in airing most of their programmes ostensibly to attract a good audience. They are however not mindful of the correctness of the sentences and advertisements they churn out on air to their audience. For this reason, national and other stations that were noted for good English speaking in terms of pronunciation, grammar and other

aspects as far as the usage of the English language is concerned no longer enjoy the patronage they used to.

A good number of respondents could not remember the last day they tuned in to either BBC or Uniiq FM, GTV and any of the stations associated with the Ghana Broadcasting Corporation. Almost all respondents either listen to stations such as Peace FM, Ok FM, Montie, Adom, Oman FM, and the like. Respondents do tune in to these FM and their associated TV stations because they use Twi in airing their programmes and also their African movies particularly Ghanaian movies which are staged in Twi. Beyond these programmes, their telenovelas are also in Twi so it is always pleasurable to them to tune in to such station.

From the foregoing, it becomes quite evidential that quality is compromised for huge audience. It seems to me that, they care little about the quality and the proficiency levels of their discussants they invite to their studios. I have personally heard with my own ear, the expression –she was sitting her somewhere and the man was also sitting his somewhere”..., from a panelist discussion on some people who were allegedly accused of having a hand in the murder of the Northern Regional chairman of the New Patriotic Party. This expression is no less than a direct translation from the Twi language... **“no ote ne baabi na obarima no nso te ne baabi”**. That expression is more acceptable in the L1, Twi for that matter. Another instance, was when a host on one of the stations asked his guest in the studio whether they should code-switch the discussion from English to the Twi language, ostensibly to enable both the host and the guest to get the right vocabularies to express themselves appropriately. Moreover, listening to their news

casters interviewing others on phone during news time leaves much to be desired in most cases. Most at times, the expressions used and the tonation employed actually confirms why some of them have most of their programmes in Twi.

Obviously, a child having listened to a number of such expressions over and over again, finds it appropriate to use them in his/her speech or composition.

#### **4.3.6 SEMI-LITERACY/HALF-BAKED SCHOLAR ACTIVITIES**

In the cause of the study, it became quite obvious that people who attempted some form of education but did either not go far or even complete the basic certificate level are fond of using most of the literally translated expressions in their daily encounter with the children and most of them have obviously picked such expressions from them. Examples of such semi-literate speakers include the taxi drivers, ‘*tutro*’ drivers and their mates, ‘*some mushroom church pastors*’ among others. One can hear expressions such as ‘*how much are you going*’ that is ‘*worekɔ ne sɛn*’, ‘*where will you drop?*’, ‘*pick ...car*’, ‘*...fa kaa*’ ‘*sit my side*’; ‘*tena me nkyɛn*’ and the like.

As it is nowadays, almost all preachers want to preach in English for it to be translated whether s/he has the capacity or not. Those mostly noted for this are the pastors of the ‘*mushroom*’ churches who sometimes take it as a fashion or a more prestigious way to preach the gospel and to please their audience or congregation. Most of them are however not mindful at all of how they express themselves in the English. Many a time, this kind of pastors happen to be either school drop outs or those who failed their examinations at some point in time and could not continue their education or gain any job in the formal

sector. One may not only hear a bad or wrong expression but also mispronunciation of words and misinterpretation of scripture. They always want to read the bible in English and translate to Twi most of the time. So their impact on the children who hear them in church and on the streets is so strong such that they are likely to pick some of their expressions.

#### **4.3.7 THE DESIRE OF PARENTS TO HELP THEIR WARDS ACQUIRE FLUENCY IN THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE**

In spite of the widespread use of the Twi Language in the community, it is also an open secret that almost all parents desire to see their children become so fluent in the English Language usage with sufficient proficiency. As a result, many are those who do their best most of the times to speak some form of English with their children. They however do not care much about the correctness or otherwise of the expressions used. In such situation, what the child hears, registers on the mind and s/he uses it in their speech or composition work. Much as, the children of the elites are expected to do better in this regard the children of the semi-literate speakers who are usually in the majority will also do worse by replicating what they hear from their parents in the classroom or in school.

#### **4.3.8 UNAVAILABILITY OF LIBRARIES IN THE COMMUNITY AND IN SCHOOLS**

According to Ntombela, (2009, P. 17 cited by an anonymous author) the success of Second Language learners in English is increased by the amount of exposure to English, either spoken or written. Moyo, (2007, P.186 cited in Ntombela) also contends that many



schools, especially in rural areas, are reported to be under resourced in terms of library materials with which learners could enhance their exposure to English, and audio-visual materials like television and radio where learners would be exposed to spoken English by native and educated speakers of English. The absence of the school and community libraries, actually came up strongly as one of the factors affecting learning in the community generally, and the acquisition of the English Language in particular, among the basic school pupils/students. It became quite clear that most of the children only get access to standard reading materials and speech practice during contact hours which are inadequate to equip them enough with the proficiency and mastery they need. Most of them do not get any chance of practicing what has been taught in terms of speech because there is no one to speak with, the audio-visual gadget in the house is often tuned to a local station where the Twi language is used.

The question then is what happens to the library books the government supplies occasionally? Among the public schools, they are kept in boxes and brought to the classroom when the library period is up. The situation is even worse in the private schools, since they don't get any supplies from the government. What happens is that, if a parent is unable to buy a prescribed book for the ward then there is no alternative, as a result, parents are most of the times billed to buy them but are kept in the school after closing. Indeed the role of libraries, cannot be ruled out in the attempt to cut down on the menace of transliteration in the community.

#### **4.3.9 PARENT-CHILD RELATIONSHIP**

Another factor identified to be creating this problem was the relationship between the child and the parent. Here, some children reported that by virtue of their relationship as house helps, they hardly get time for themselves to revise their notes. Right after school it is all work till late night when they have to necessarily go to bed. They would get up early the next day perform their house chores and get ready for school. Even the weekends are worse.

#### **4.3.10 LACK OF PERSONAL REMEDIAL WORK PLAN**

Ironically, most of the children who are not in the same situation as the househelps also refuse to help themselves. Unless a homework, which they even sometimes do on the following day in class before or during the normal classes or collection time, they do not make any personal effort to engage in any remedial activity to help them improve on their English language acquisition. To them when school closes, books have closed, when it is vacation time obviously, their books are also on vacation. So when it comes to practicing the language then they have to resort to the most readily available resource which is the Twi language.

#### **4.3.11 LACK OF PARENTAL CONTROL**

Closely linked to the above is the lack of parental control. Some of the children were identified to be so stubborn that, they decide for the home. The parents are unable to stamp their authority on them for various reasons. In some cases, because they either have to fend for themselves and even support the home financially, they assume they are already adults who should take decisions for themselves and not to be controlled.

Therefore any time they have to use the English, and because they had not learnt, they must go for the most readily available resource, which is the Twi Language.

#### **4.3.12 THE SOCIAL MEDIA**

Most of the children interacted with knew much about the social media, especially the WHATSAPP which some of them already use. They actually learn a great deal of such sentences from their various chats. Those found to be more culpable are the boys, who most often combine the pidgin and the literal translations as they pick them up from the conversations they have with their contacts. Again as they get glued to their phones and engage their chats, they forget about books and revision. So they also end up missing the correct forms taught to them and resort to what has been mustered from the chat or do a direct translation from the Twi into the English.

#### **4.4 POSSIBLE REMEDY**

This section answers the second research question as state below.

##### **b. How can learners be helped to overcome this challenge?**

Generally speaking, before learners would be able to overcome this canker, there is the need for a collaborative efforts which involves all the stakeholders. That is the government, the parent, the teachers and the children themselves. Firstly, the school authorities must do their best to assign teachers who have the requisite background to the teaching of the English language. Where there are no qualified teachers to teach the subject, they should ensure that those they assign the teaching of the English language should at least have some level of competence but not because each teacher has to teach

more than one subject. This would minimize the phenomenon of having so many square pegs in round holes. Moreover, school authorities should also ensure regular in-service training to sharpen the skills of these teachers to enable them give off their best. Furthermore, the school authorities (that is heads of schools) should familiarize themselves with the contents of the English syllabus to enable them mount effective supervision.

Additionally, teachers may combine a number of teaching methods such as the communicative language teaching, communicational teaching methods and the humanistic approach. In the communicative language teaching, the learner is made the centre of the lesson and various activities planned around him/her, by this method the teacher becomes a facilitator, organizer, guide, monitor, manager and counselor to ensure effective communication processes. This method I believe could guide the teacher in the effective use of various teaching learning materials. By employing the communicational teaching method, the teacher controls his/her language and engage the learners in more than one language which may be required for problem-solving activities; whereas the humanistic approach creates a conducive environment where there is minimized anxiety, enhanced personal security and promoted genuine interest through a deeper engagement of the learner's whole self (Roberts, 1975). In effect, the combination of teaching methods would also ensure balance between fluency and accuracy. Simply put, teachers may use combined child-centred activity methods to enhance delivery and assimilation.

School children should be encouraged to involve themselves in the literacy clubs in the schools such as drama club, reading club, and the like so as to create the avenue for them to have more speech practice and more time to interact with their instructors. They should further be encouraged to engage more in extensive reading to improve their vocabulary acquisition and appropriate choice of words. The English teachers should ensure strict adherence to instructions regarding assignments and other exercises.

Parents on the other hand should be sensitized to minimize their patronage of the local electronic media stations for the sake of their wards' education. Better still, they may apportion some time when their wards can have time to watch or listen to educative programmes on stations that ensure the usage of Standard English. Again parents in influential positions may be encouraged to assist the schools with the provision of school libraries. In addition, school authorities and parents are to do their best to lobby the government for the provision of libraries in the schools and the community. At least the Ga West Municipal Assembly to provide the community with one modern library which would be appropriately stocked to serve the needs of the learners. With all hands on deck, I believe the situation would improve.

#### **4. 5 CONCLUSION**

The chapter has explored the possible causes of the transliteration menace among the basic school pupils/students in the Pokuase Community of the Ga West Municipality of the Greater Accra Region of Ghana. The central aim of the chapter was to establish why the L1 (Twi) has such a strong influence on the usage of the English Language among the

basic school pupils/students especially from basics four to seven. In the research a number of causes were identified which were presented graphically and discussed in detail. In addition to the transliteration errors, other types of errors were identified and categorised. Discussions however, centered on the transliteration with a brief touch on a few of the other errors identified since that was the core business of the study. Also in the chapter, the two main research questions were answered in which the second question outlined some possible remedy to address the causes of the transliteration as identified in the study. The basic aim of this research has been to unravel the causes of the strong influence of the Twi language on the speaking and writing of the English language among the basic school pupils/students and to come up with positive suggestions on corrective measures. The study made use of contrastive and error analysis approaches as well as content analysis to digest the data collected through the qualitative and quantitative methods of research. For the purpose of the research, a broad spectrum of instruments were used to collect and analyse the data that was discussed in this chapter. For analytical expediency, the errors identified were stratified and tabulated which obviously had the transliteration error having the highest frequency on the chart.

## CHAPTER 5

### SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

#### 5.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents the summary of the entire study with the key findings, as well as the conclusion and recommendations. The main discussion in the study centered on errors of transliteration among the pupils/students in the basic schools in the Pokuase Community in the Ga West Municipality of the Greater Accra Region of Ghana. The menace is primarily influenced by the L1 (Twi) for that matter even though Pokuase is a cosmopolitan community. The research therefore delved into the causes of the strong influence of the Twi on the usage of the English Language.

#### 5.2 SUMMARY

The research was based on two main research questions as follows:

- a. What are the possible major causes of transliteration in the community?
- b. How can learners be helped to overcome this challenge?

To achieve the objective of the study, multiple research approach was used. The research instruments encompassed questionnaire, interviews, picture description and essay writing to arrive at the causes and possible remedy for the problem stated. Most of the essays written were descriptive and narrative. Besides the above mentioned methodology, the researcher also engaged in critical observation to arrive at some possible conclusions. The sample size involved four children from class four to JHS1 and a teacher from each

of the classes in each of the five selected schools for the study. The theoretical framework of the research was pitched on the Contrastive Analysis and the Error Analysis.

The contrastive analysis helped the researcher in the accurate description of the two languages and also to assist the learners overcome the differences between the two. This also became very useful during the post intervention activities. The error analysis supplemented in the provision of statistics to support the hypothesis of possible errors and their sources. At the end of the research, the data obtained were categorised into various strata of errors for discussion. The errors so identified fell into ten categories of which the discussions centered on the error of transliteration, which formed the majority of the errors committed generally by the sampled group of participants. The other errors were touched on briefly since the main focus of the study was on the transliteration error. In all about twelve causative factors were identified to be behind the strong influence of the Twi Language on the English Language usage in the Pokuase Community among the basic school pupils/students especially from basics four to seven. Appropriate remedies were proposed in the attempt to fashion out a strategy to help the children overcome the canker.

### **5.2.1 KEY FINDINGS**

In the course of the study, it was identified that in addition to the transliteration errors children committed other errors such as induced spelling errors, omission errors, wrong pronoun use, and wrong word use. The study revealed that the most frequently error committed was the transliteration, which formed the core of the study, followed by



tenses, wrong pronoun use, spelling errors, subject-verb-agreement, preposition, omission errors, article, wrong word use and addition errors in that order.

On the error of transliteration, the following were identified as the key causative factors behind the menace. They are overgeneralisation, transition from the lower primary to the upper primary (the NALAP programme), teacher induced errors, the Twi being the most widely spoken language in the community, the Twi being the most widely used language on most electronic media stations, semi-literacy/half-baked scholarly activities, and the desire of parents to help their wards acquire fluency in the English Language. Other factors are unavailability of libraries in the community and schools, parent-child relationship, lack of personal remedial plans, lack of parental control and the social media.

### **5.3 CONCLUSION**

In conclusion, it is quite clear from the study conducted that the error of transliteration has really become endemic in the Pokuase Community among the Basic School pupils/students as far as the usage of the English language is concerned. A number of causative factors were identified in which each and every stakeholder has a role to play in order to mitigate the problem. The errors as they manifested in the written essays and oral interviews as well as observations were discussed with the teachers and heads of the schools concerned. A positive change was promised by the schools if the researcher should visit the time. It is actually the desire of the researcher to see the problem ameliorated in the near future.

Furthermore, though the researcher used four pupil/students from each of the selected classes and schools, the outcome, led her to conclude that it is not always the case that private schools do better in English than the public schools given that the two are operating under similar conditions. Again she could conclude that boys also commit more transliteration errors than girls in their classes due to their much engagement with the social media and the semi-literate friends who usually resort to the use of pidgin and other unstructured forms of the English language.

Finally, it is the researcher's desire that readers find this a useful document in their career engagements.

#### **5.4 SUGGESTED CORRECTIVE MEASURES**

Based on the findings of the research the following suggestions are made. That:

Heads of schools do their best to assign the teaching of the English language to the most qualified teachers on their staffs; where there are no qualified teachers, some level of competency assessment should be conducted before the subject is assigned.

Heads of schools familiarise themselves with the contents of the syllabus in order to mount effective supervision.

- a. All English language teachers receive regular training in the structure of English.
- b. Regular workshops are held for teachers who have not been exposed to the structure of English especially, the unqualified or the underqualified teachers.
- c. After the learners' writing, teachers identify and record errors and discuss them with learners; this may be extended to errors identified through observations and other means.

- d. Teachers pay more attention to writing to help learners to develop skills in producing standard language.
- e. Teachers stick to English as a medium of instruction instead of code switching.
- f. Teachers involved in the NALAP programme be encouraged to give the standard forms of the sentences they make to their learners in English.
- g. Teachers expose learners to Standard English through literacy clubs, newspapers, magazines, and school radio programmes.
- h. Teachers upgrade their qualifications in English as regularly as possible.
- i. Teachers introduce competitions in both writing and reading among different classes of learners so as to improve writing and reading skills.
- j. All schools endeavour to have libraries which are well resourced and modern to be funded by the P.T.A. Municipal Assembly, N.G.O. in partnership, churches worshipping in their classrooms, influential people in the community and the central government.
- k. Learners use most of their spare time in reading English books and newspapers, and minimise their engagements on social media.
- l. Learners make sure that they use English as a medium of communication, especially in the classroom as well as inside the school premises.
- m. Learners listen to English news and watch other programmes in English both on the radio and television from especially stations that are noted for the use of Standard English language like the BBC and GBC.
- n. Learners participate in debates and symposia as often as possible.
- o. Teachers ensure that almost all pupils/students belong to at least one literacy club such as the drama, debate, reading etc. clubs.

- p. Parents be encouraged to minimise their patronage of the local radio and television stations.
- q. Pupils/students to refrain from the use of pidgin and other forms of expressions that are not Standard English.
- r. Learners minimise their association with the companies of people noted to be semi-literates.
- s. Learners minimise the watching of telenovelas and other programmes staged in Twi.
- t. Pupils/student have private study or personal remedial plan to encourage them in their learning
- u. Learners muster the differences in the structures of the English and the Twi languages to be able to use each of them appropriately.

### **5.5 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH**

1. There is the need for further enquiries into the effects of the NALAP programme on the general output of education in the country.
2. There is the need for research into the teaching methodologies and strategies that can best serve the interest of rural and multicultural communities.
3. There is also the need for research into the causes of the other errors and their possible solutions

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## APPENDIX A

A1

METHODIST 2 BASIC SCHOOL  
P.O. BOX  
POKUASE

28<sup>TH</sup> SEPTEMBER, 2016

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

MISS GIFTY EMMA QUAYSON

PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH  
IN YOUR SCHOOL

I proudly introduce the above named person who is an English teacher in the above mentioned school to you. She is currently pursuing a Master of Education degree in English and wishes to embark on a research in your school on the topic THE INFLUENCE OF L1 (TWI) ON THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE USAGE (TRANSLITERATION), A CASE STUDY OF THE STUDENTS IN THE POKUASE COMMUNITY BASIC SCHOOLS.

I would therefore be very grateful if you could grant her the needed assistance.

Thank you

.....

Mercy Kessie  
(Headmistress)

A2

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR HEADTEACHERS AND TEACHERS IN THE POKUASE COMMUNITY BASIC SCHOOLS

Dear participants,

This questionnaire is part of a study designed to elicit information from Basic School headteachers and teachers within the Pokuase Community. The purpose of this questionnaire is to solicit data on the causes of transliteration among the basic school pupils/students within the community. In this study, transliteration is defined as any expression in the English language which constitute a direct translation from the Twi language. The questionnaire also seeks to find out the reasons why the Twi language has such a strong influence on the usage of the English language among the basic school pupils/students within the community. All answers provided in this questionnaire are strictly intended for purely academic purposes. I am therefore urging all respondents to kindly respond to all the items as frankly as possible. Assuredly, your responses will be kept highly confidential. Names of respondents and their school will also not be published.

**SECTION A**

Please answer the following questions

1. Gender

1	2
Male	Female

2. Age

1	2	3	4
Below 30	30-39	40-49	50-59

in years

3. Class/Form

1	2	3	4
Bs 4	Bs 5	Bs 6	Bs 7

taught

4. Years of teaching experience

1	2	3	4	5
Under 5	5-10	10-15	15-20	20+

5. Number of years in current school

.....

6. Subject

taught.....

7. Any experience in the teaching of

1	2
Yes	No

English?

8. How many years of English teaching experience?

1	2	3	4
Under 5	5-9	10-15	Above 15

9. What is your highest qualification in English?

1	2	3	4	5	6	6	7	8	9
SSCE	WASSCE	O LEVEL	A LEVEL	CERT_A'3/4 YR POST-SEC	Dip	BA	BEd	Masters	Other, Specify

10. What is your highest academic qualification?

.....

11. What is your employment

1	2
Full time	Part time

status?

12. Does your school have a

Yes	No
-----	----

library?

13. How does your answer in 12 above affect the teaching and learning of the English language in your school?.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

14. In your personal estimation, can this possibly be one of the causative factors responsible for the transliteration phenomenon?

Yes	No
-----	----

Give a brief explanation to your answer.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

15. Why do you think the Twi has such a strong influence on the usage of the English language in the community than any other local/Ghanaian language found in the community?

.....

.....

.....

.....

16. Do you suspect the electronic media as possible avenue by which this canker thrives?

1	2
Yes	No

b. Please briefly explain your answer.

.....

.....



.....  
.....  
.....

17. What Ghanaian language is most widely used in the community?

1	2	3	4	5
Twi	Ga	Hausa	Ewe	Dangme

18. Any idea why your selected language is widely used in the community? Give a brief explanation

.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....

19. Does the NALAP programme exist in your

1	2
Yes	No

school?

20. What local language is used in the implementation process of the NALAP programme?

.....  
.....

b.

Why?.....

.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....

21. Which Ghanaian language do most students offer in your school?

.....

b.

Why?.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

22. Do you believe social media plays a role in this transliteration menace?

1	2
Yes	No

b. To what extent do you think social media has a role to play in the transliteration menace?

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

23. Can the child's relationship with the parent/guardian have a part to play in the phenomenon?

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Strongly agree	Agree	Not that much	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Not quite	No idea

b. Briefly explain your

answer.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

24. Do you think the activities semi-literates (e.g. mushroom church pastors who usually do their preaching in English irrespective of how correct or otherwise it might be, taxi drivers, trɔtro drivers and their mates-most of whom happen to be school dropouts, wayside carpenters, ghetto boys and the like) also can lead to the menace as witnessed?

1	2
Yes	No

b. Briefly explain your answer?.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

25. Did you personally train as an English teacher?

1	2
Yes	No

26. Why would you accept to teach English if you were not trained for that? Give a brief explanation.

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

26. Do you agree that teachers who are teaching the English language for reasons other than being trained for it, are also part of the problem?

1	2
Yes	No

b .Please explain.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

27. Do you agree that students do copy some of these wrong expressions from their teachers?

1	2
Yes	No

28. Does your school have the requisite materials, such as the appropriate textbooks, teacher's hand book, etc to enhance the teaching and learning of the English language in your school?

1	2
Yes	No

29. To what extent has your answer in 29 above affected the teaching and learning of the English language in your school with particular emphasis on issue of transliteration?

.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....

30. Do you think mother tongue has an impact on English errors made by learners?

1	2
Yes	No

31. Do you think this transliteration phenomenon occurs as a result of poor assimilation?

1	2
Yes	No

32. Do you believe the error of transliteration is caused by inappropriate methods of teaching?

1	2
Yes	No

33. Any other reason(s) why you think the Twi has influenced the usage of the English language so much in the community?

.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....

## APPENDIX B

### B1 INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR RESPONDENTS

This interview is intended to cross check the information that are Provided on the Questionnaire and also to confirm some suspicions of the researcher regarding the topic under investigation.

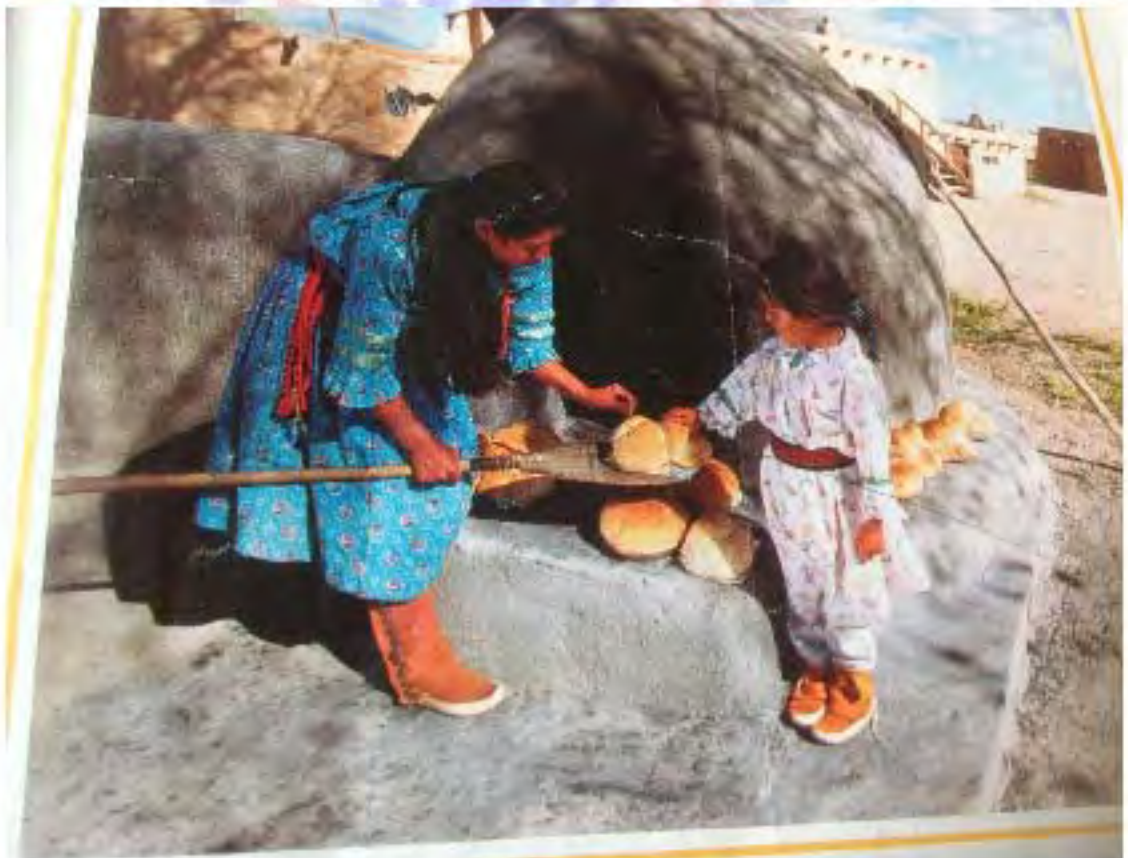
1. Thoughts on the possible causes of the transliteration phenomenon (From your experience as a headteacher, a teacher, an English teacher, etc in the Pokuase Community, (i) what do you understand by transliteration? (ii) do you observe the pupils/student commit this error? (iii) from which local language do you think the pupils/students mostly translate to the English? (iv) what do you believe are the possible causes of transliteration among the pupils/students in the Basic schools within the community?)
2. In your opinion, do you believe one's mother tongue has any influence on one's acquisition of another language particularly the English in this context?
3. Why do you think the Twi language has such a strong influence on the English language usage in the community?
4. Do you think the absence of community and school libraries affect the learning and acquisition of the English language in anyway?
5. To what extent do you believe the problem could also be teacher induced?
6. How does the appointment of untrained English teachers affect the learning and acquisition of the language?
7. Do you think the problem could also be emanating partially from how other subject teachers use the English language in their various classrooms?
8. To what extent do you think the social media contribute to this canker?
9. In your opinion, does the electronic and print media play any role in the transliteration phenomenon?
10. How about supervision, teaching methodology, club activities in the school etc?
11. Any other factors you suspect to be responsible for the menace?
12. Kindly suggest some possible solutions to the problem under investigation.

**SECTION B**  
B2

SAMPLE PICTURES (FOR PICTURE DESCRIPTION)























.....  
 .....  
 12. How often do you listen to or watch radio /TV programmes in English?  
 .....

13. Do you speak English at home?

1	2
Yes	No

14. Are your parents educated?

1	2
Yes	No

15. What do you know about social media? Give examples?  
 .....  
 .....  
 .....

16. How often do you engage on social media?

1	2	3	4	5
Never	Once a while	Often	Very often	Always

17. Write few examples of the expressions used on your social media conversations  
 .....  
 .....  
 .....  
 .....  
 .....

18. Do you have enough time to read yours notes at 

1	2
Yes	No

 home?

19. How often do your parents encourage you to read and to speak English at home?

1	2	3	4	5
Never	Once a while	Often	Very often	Always

20. What is your relationship with your parent/guardian?

1	2	3	4	5	6
Daughter	Son	House help	Nephew	Niece	Grand child

21. What do you normally do after school?.....

.....  
.....  
.....  
22. What time do you mostly go to bed?  
.....

23. At what time do you wake usually in the morning to prepare for school?  
.....

**SECTION B**

**C2**

**ESSAY QUESTIONS TO PUPILS/STUDENT**

Each class is expected to answer the first two questions in class and the last two as home work.

**BASIC 4**

Write an essay of about one page on one of these topics.

- 1) My school team
- 2) My birthday
- 3) Narrate a journey you have made to your friend
- 4) Why I like my parents

**BASIC 5**

Write an essay of about one page on one of these topics.

- 1) At my friend's birthday party
- 2) My school
- 3) My first visit to my hometown
- 4) Give the direction from your school to your house

**BASIC 6**

Write an essay of about one page on one of these topics.

- 1) The day I shall never forget;
- 2) The food I like best and how it is prepared
- 3) The club activity day in my school
- 4) How I spent my holidays



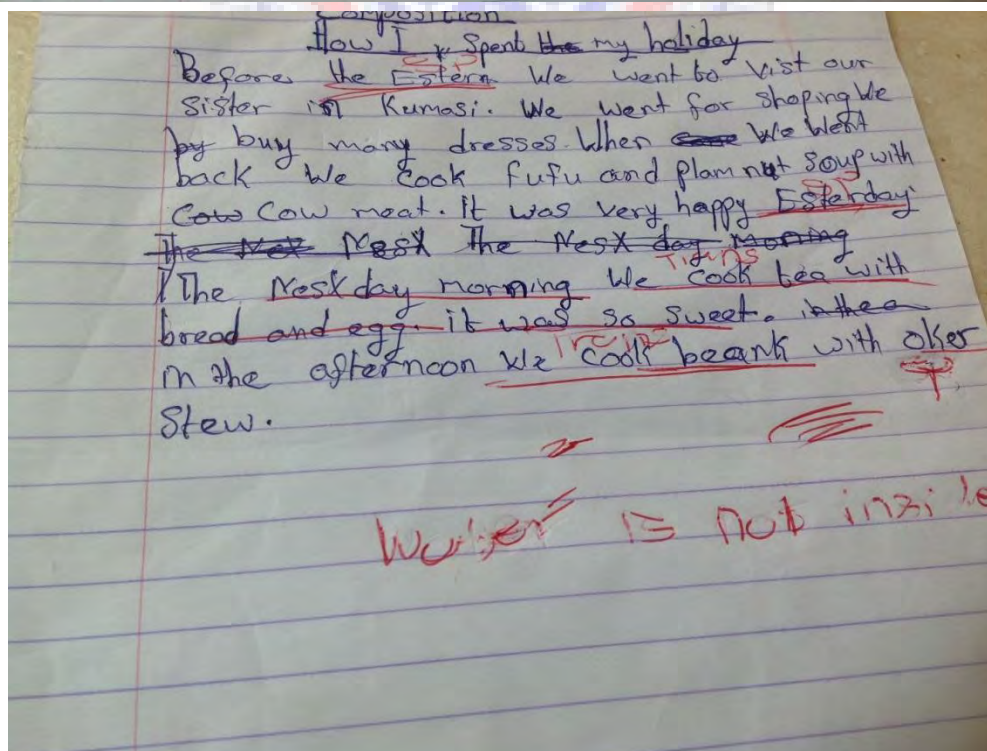
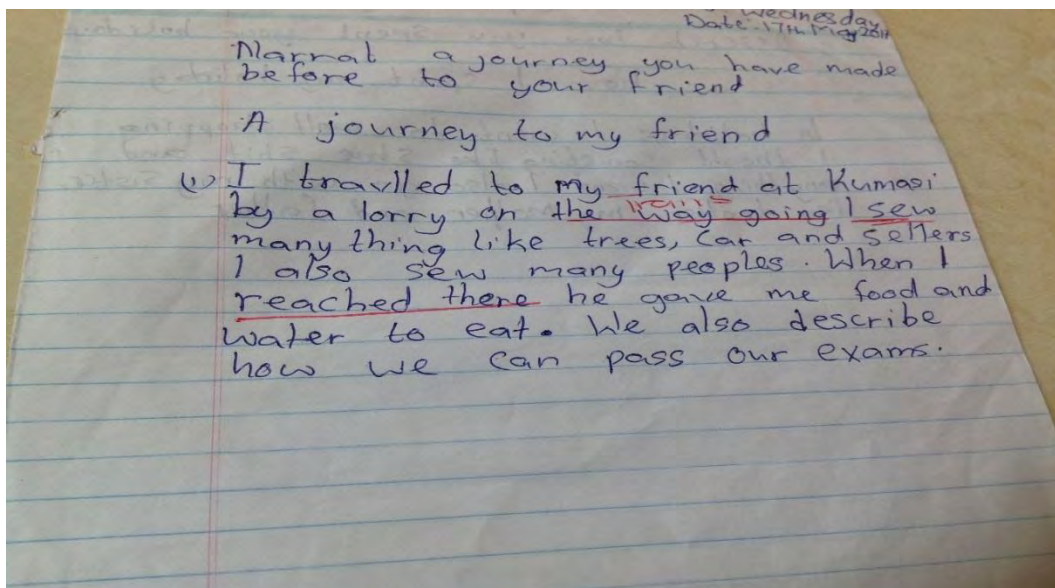
**BASIC 7**

- 1) Describe a fight between two boys in your class
- 2) A sports day in my school
- 3) My future career
- 4) A visit to the market

**SECTION C**

**C3**

**SAMPLE MARKED SCRIPTS**



How I spent the holiday

I spent my Ester holidays at my uncle's place in Kumasi. On the ester Sunday I and uncle went to church, he bought me ice-cream and Drinks. On the ester Monday I and my uncle's family went to Accra to shave. He bought us cakes, Drinks, ice-cream, fruits, toys, Dresses, Shoes, food, stuffs and balls. We went with my uncle's car when we get back home his wife cook Rice and stew with chicken, meat, fish and eggs and we enjoy the ester. I and my uncle's children play with the toys my uncle has bought for us.

A letter to my friend

Hello Hilda Fashua. Asomawa How are you? I hope that you are fine and I am also fine. The reason why I have wrote you this letter is that my uncle has spooned my uncle to perform the program the Jabe Part and let us perform the program the name of the program was "More dancers". So come tomorrow tomorrow at 8 pm in the evening. Thank you for always taking part in the programs.



How I spent the holidays  
~~with~~ I spent my holidays who do not spend  
your holidays with I spent my holidays with  
with my parent it was very good  
I go to ~~school~~ when it is holidays and  
I help my mother to cook and I help my  
father to ~~cook~~ when I eat many food  
when it is holidays the food was very  
sweet I play when it is holiday I go to  
more when it is holiday I go to church and  
they give us food to eat the food they  
give us is rice and meat when it  
is ~~christmas~~ <sup>Easter</sup> holiday I go to church at  
my ~~uncle~~ anti

How I spent my holiday  
Hi Kwame the day we vacate the first  
day of my holiday was very nice and that  
same day I went to the mall with my  
friends.  
The second day of my holiday I and all my  
brothers and sisters with all my friends and  
we went to the beach and ~~swim~~ into the sea  
it was very nice on the Easter Monday  
we went to picnic and on the Easter  
Tuesday we went to the mall with my  
some ice-cream, ~~toy~~ cars and television.  
on the Easter Sunday parents went to  
church and when we came back from the  
beach and my parents went to beach  
and the time we ~~come~~ <sup>came</sup> back from  
beach my mother ~~poor~~ <sup>poor</sup> soup and palm  
out soup and chicken.  
on my last I went to my Grandparent  
to go and visit them.  
DONSOS

make it fine to your friends  
(i) I was Travel in my Village.  
I take two Cars Before.  
I had Rich Thyme.  
I was play with my friend  
the places I go is called  
Kasoa  
I and my sister friend  
when to Church  
I play with my 8 friend  
My friend Name is called  
My friend Name is called ama  
I like the we play is  
Called ama  
the game we like is  
Called ama

When he went on vacation, I went to Sparks to  
visit my friend name, Marked, called on the car here  
was really long on the road, the trip is  
hours on the road, so I get there very late when  
I got there, Call happy and his father said  
said he has gone out to learn, learn so I  
went to look for him him and saw him  
at the front of my old teacher's house,  
so we learn together. That is  
I want to find more (char)  
river  
I hear some  
everywhere I go



15. NEXT I HAVE WITNESSED IN  
CLASS. I like to witness so many things  
in our class, but the one I like to speak  
about is between a boy called Thomas  
and another boy called Lortey.  
It was about 5.30 pm. In the  
morning, when the were class, start  
our first lesson. Thomas remove his  
book and his pen from his bag and  
put all on his table and went out.  
The time he came back his pen was  
missing. In fact, Thomas became  
angry and started looking for his  
pen. He checked his bag, under the  
desk, every where but he couldn't  
find it. So he started asking and  
searching everybody and found out  
that his pen was with Lortey. Accor-  
ding to Lortey Lortey, he also said the  
pen is his. So they started  
quarreling. Unfortunately Thomas pushed

