

# **Ghanaian University Students' Attitudes towards English**

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## **Abstract**

As language of education, English is taught and is the medium of instruction at all levels of education – basic to tertiary – in Ghana. A pass in English is a necessary requirement for a student's progression from one educational level to another. Even though there seems to be a general likeness on the part of Ghanaian students for the study of English, may be because it is the language of modernity and utility, little is known about the attitudes of Ghanaian students towards English. Using representative samples from two universities in Ghana, the University of Ghana, Legon, and the University of Cape Coast, Cape Coast, this paper makes an attempt to gain insights into the needs and feelings of Ghanaian university students towards English. The paper also attempts to find out the range of factors that motivate the students to study English. This is considered necessary because learner attitudes towards a target language and its speakers as well as the use to which that language will be put play a central role in determining levels of success for the learning and acquisition of that language (McKenzie, 2008; Spolsky, 1989). The study finds that the motivations for studying English are more instrumental/utilitarian than integrative; however, students expect to see English becoming integrative in future. The paper has some implications for language policy, curriculum planning and the teaching of English in Ghana.

**Keywords:** Language attitudes, instrumentality, integration, language policy, curriculum planning.

## **1.0 Introduction**

### **1.1 Language Policy in Ghana**

In multilingual contexts and the co-existence of languages, governments usually make conscious efforts to select and choose one language or another for official and/or national purposes. In such instances, an explicit language policy is adopted (Coulmas, 2006).

In Ghana, since the introduction of formal education, English has been the official language (the language of education, law, media, government and administration). However, since 1951, various language policy reforms have taken place (Edu-Buandoh, 2006). In 1951, the language-in-education policy made local vernaculars languages of instruction and English taught as a course at the lower primary, and from the upper primary level English was made the language of instruction and local languages taught as courses (Accelerated Development Plan for Education, 1951). The policy, among other things, stated that "As soon as possible,

there will be a transition from vernacular to English as medium of instruction, and upper classes will receive all instruction through the medium of English except that throughout the whole course the vernacular will receive special study". It was not clear what 'As soon as possible' and 'special study' meant. Thus the Language Policy of 1957 sought to make the statement clearer by saying "In the first three years of primary education, the Ghanaian language prevalent in the local area is to be used as the medium of instruction, whilst English is studied as a subject. From Primary Four, English replaces the Ghanaian language as medium of instruction, and the Ghanaian language is then treated as just another subject on the timetable" (Language Policy, 1957). In 1966, however, some changes were made by saying "... in the metropolitan and other urban areas where children are generally more exposed to spoken English than in the rural areas, the change to English as a medium of instruction may commence earlier than the fourth year of the course" (Education Review Committee, 1966).

Over the years, the argument as to whether or not to change the policy continued. Educationists, politicians and laymen alike argued and offered suggestions (Dolphyne and Boateng, 1998; Bodomo, 1996; Andoh-Kumi, 1997). Subsequently, in 2002, the government of Ghana modified the policy and made English as the medium of instruction at all levels of formal education (Daily Graphic, May 17, 2002). This reform, as usual, received a lot of criticism. Owu-Ewie (2006, p.81), for instance, after criticising the policy, suggested a Late-Exit Bilingual Education model, a model that calls for the use of mother tongue "as the medium of instruction from Primary 1 to Primary 4 while English is gradually introduced into the system as the medium of instruction from Primary 5 and finally becomes the medium of instruction from Primary 6 onwards".

In April 2007, the Government launched a New Education Reform whose aim was to prepare children to become functionally literate and numerate by the end of basic education. Thus, the Ghana Education Service was tasked to develop a National Literacy Acceleration Programme (NALAP). NALAP involved developing a literacy approach based on learning to read first in Ghanaian languages in order to better learn to read and write a second language – English (source: [www.equall.com/ed/default.asp](http://www.equall.com/ed/default.asp)). It has a bilingual approach. The argument still rages on, with some calling for a referendum on language policy.

It must be noted that, at the upper primary and above, the policy does not seem to draw any misunderstandings. The contention has been about the lower primary level; that is, which of the two, English or a local vernacular as medium of instruction at the lower primary, allows the pupil high levels of academic achievement throughout his/her educational career? Some people have attributed the falling standards of education to poor English language learning and acquisition on the part of students, with others blaming it largely on the educational system.

It is the view of this paper that in our attempts at promulgating language policies, implementing them and teaching English in our various institutions, we have not taken into consideration Ghanaian students' attitudes towards English - we have been paternalistic (Ladefoged, 1992).

## 1.2 Language Attitudes

It has been identified that learner attitudes towards a target language and its speakers as well as the use to which that language will be put play a central role in determining levels of success for the learning and acquisition of that language (Holmes, 1992; McKenzie, 2008; Spolsky, 1989). Language attitudes and how they affect language learning have been studied variously by different scholars, including: Feifel (1994), Harlech-Jones, (1990), Ihemere (2006), Pennington (1994), Roos (1990), Smit (1996), Thorburn (2005). Due to the focus of this paper, the following studies need special reference.

In his book, *Language Attitudes in Sub-Saharan Africa*, Adegbija (1994) says that attitudes of superiority towards European languages such as English and attitudes of low esteem and inferiority towards indigenous African languages are the result of the acceptance of

Europeans as the conquerors of Africa. According to him, the situation was worsened as a result of the aggressive educational policies that were pursued by the European countries in their colonies, which sought to portray that European cultures and languages were superior to those of Africa, leaving the indigenous African languages underutilised and undeveloped. Thus, because of its powerful influence, education became the major tool for the cultivation of negative attitudes towards indigenous African languages. In most African countries, except in the few years of primary education, European languages became (and still in independent Africa are) the media of instruction in schools, which created the impression that African languages were inferior and less suitable for higher education. Adebija's book provides suitable information for the current paper as it gives some background of how European languages, including English, became dominant in Africa. Such information will help us to situate African students' attitudes towards English in the right context. It must however be noted that people naturally have loyalty to their language; the issue of inferiority towards one's own language comes as a result of non-development of such languages for 'utility' and 'economic force' (Coulmas, 2005)

Buschenhofen (1998), in a survey study, assesses the attitudes of year 12 and final-year university students in Papua New Guinea towards English. The study finds that the students generally have positive attitudes towards English even though between the two groups there are some significant attitudinal differences in terms of specific English language contexts. Buschenhofen attributes the patterns of differences to "the changing social, educational, and linguistic conditions which characterise the transition from year 12 to university education". According to Mukhuba (2005), language is the means by which the identity and pride in a culture of a group is expressed, and so if a group is proud of its culture, that group will normally have a positive attitude towards its language. He cites the Zulus of South Africa as an example, a group that is so uncompromising in their positive attitudes towards their own language. He goes on to say that opinions about languages are not held in a vacuum; such attitudes reflect sometimes their views about the speakers of those languages. The attitudes towards a language and/or its speakers affect people's success or otherwise in acquiring the language.

In a study that sought to compare the University of Cape Coast students' attitudes towards English, Pidgin and Ghanaian languages, Kwofie (2001) finds that the students had 'favourable' attitudes towards English and 'unfavourable' attitudes towards Pidgin and Ghanaian languages. She thinks that English was favoured because of its communicative, instrumental, integrative and educational values. Even though the study reports of a favourable student attitude towards English, it does not offer the specific reasons why the students favoured English more than Pidgin and the Ghanaian languages. Kwofie recommends that "in the era of globalisation it would be prudent to build on Ghana's present advantage in favourable English language attitudes or usage by promoting its standard of usage and developing classroom teaching and learning" (p.55) because any attempt at choosing one local language as national or official language of Ghana might create unforeseen difficulties, a position shared by Sarfo (2011). By drawing views and responses from students from two Ghanaian public universities, the current paper makes an attempt to find out the specific student attitudes and motivations for the study of English.

Guerini (2007), in a study done in the University of Ghana to survey attitudes towards language use in education among students of the University of Ghana, concludes that the introduction of a local language (for example Akan) as the teaching medium in various levels of the local educational system would be opposed by students who think that the local languages are unfit for use in formal, technical and specialised domains, and value a command of English as one of the most important skills needed for formal education.

Shaw (1980) investigates the attitudes of Singaporean, Indian and Thai final year Degree students' attitudes towards English. After analysing data "collected by means of closed format questionnaire" (p.21), he concludes that the said students had positive attitudes towards English and that their motivations for studying English were mostly instrumental. The present study is a replication of Shaw's study and therefore adapts his methodology.

From the literature, three main issues occur. First, it is observed that attitudes affect language learning; second, we in Sub-Sahara Africa have given too much positive attitudes and attention towards/to English other than our local languages. Third, positive attitudes towards English language have been the result of its instrumental power. Thus, this study is based on the assumption that attitudes and motivational factors affect language learning.

## **2.0 The Present Study**

### **2.1 Purpose**

The purpose of this study was to survey a representative sample of Ghanaian university students, making an attempt to gain insights into and obtain information about the needs and feelings of Ghanaian university students towards English. The paper also attempted to find out the range of factors that motivated the students to study English.

### **2.2 Population/Sample**

The population of the study included students of the University of Ghana, Legon, and the University of Cape Coast, Cape Coast. The two universities were chosen because of easy access to the students and the similarities (as well as differences) in most of the programmes of the two institutions. Using stratification in multistage sampling technique (Babbie, 2005; Frankel & Wallen, 2000; Kumekpor, 2002), the study sampled 150 students from each of the universities to respond to a questionnaire, making a total of 300 respondents. First, by purposive sampling, the study focused on 150 students each from the humanities and the sciences. Among the humanities, I chose 100 students each from the faculties of arts and social sciences. Out of the 100 students from the faculties of arts, 50 were students of English. After that stage, all the specific samples, including those from the sciences, were randomly selected to fill the questionnaire. The stratification into science, humanities and arts was necessary because the specific programme of a student has a considerable influence on his/her attitude to linguistic choices.

The choice of final year university students for the study was informed by the assumption that they could be aware of the implications of the linguistic choices they made since at that stage they were thought to be independent minded. Thus, information gathered from such students could be authentic as it might have resulted from their own personal experiences.

### **2.3 Research Instrument and Data Collection**

Data were collected using a closed-ended format questionnaire adapted from Shaw (1983), with some modification to reflect the Ghanaian context. The questionnaire directly asked students for some demographic information and their feelings about some aspects of English, including: Demographic information (age, sex, level, former senior high school) of the students, why they studied English, the people with whom they used English, what they wanted to learn and what they felt about English. In all 217 of the questionnaire were retrieved out of which 134 were from UCC and 83 from UG. Of the 217, 115 were male and 102 were females. The respondents, also, comprised 72 Arts students, 68 Social Science/Business students and 77 Science students. Of the number of respondents, about 78.5% of them had studied English for at least 15 years, which was the minimum number of years Ghanaian students were expected to have studied and/or used English before reaching Level 400.

The data from the questionnaire were analysed quantitatively using frequencies, percentages and cross-tabulations and one way analysis of variance (ANOVA) by means of the computer soft-ware Statistical Product for Service Solutions (SPSS, version 16).

### 3.0 Results and Discussion

#### 3.1 Reasons for Studying English

This part of the questionnaire was to ascertain the factors that motivated students to study English. A list of fourteen possible reasons for studying English were listed and the students were asked to rate them on a Likert's scale of one to five, 'definitely my reason', 'my reason', 'not my reason', 'definitely not my reason' and 'not sure'. The following were the responses, in order of magnitude, that is, from the reason with the highest percentage to the one with the lowest. The left figure in each pair of figures affirms the statement while the other rejects it. The first ten statements are affirmed while the last four are rejected as reasons for studying English. The responses for 'not sure' are not included in the analysis because they were insignificant and could not affect the implications of the other responses.

**Table 1:** All three groups of students put together

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I study English so/because:	
1. I can talk to native speakers of English for business/educational purposes	: 81.6/17.9
2. I can talk to other foreigners for business/educational purposes	: 80.4/16.8
3. It is required in our educational system	: 80/19.1
4. I study English because I will need it for my work/job	: 78.4/20.2
5. I can talk to native speakers of English about general issues	: 73.2/23.9
6. I can talk to other foreigners about general issues	: 71/25.2
7. It is the language of social advancement and mobility	: 68.1/26.8
8. It is prestigious and a mark of an educated person	: 63.7/33.5
9. I can study in a foreign country	: 57.8/40.3
10. It is the language of modernity	: 49.1/47.6
11. It will make me a better/famous person	: 37.8/58.4
12. It will help me think and behave as native speakers do	: 22/71.3
13. I like the countries in which it is spoken	: 18.5/77.2
14. I like the native (mother tongue) speakers of English	: 18.4/76.4

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When responses of all three groups of students were combined, the reasons that were affirmed were all instrumental/utilitarian while those that were rejected were all integrative (Kachru, 1983; Shaw, 1983). The first four top-most ranked are reasons related to business and educational purposes. Thus, the motivations for the students' studying English language are 'access', 'utility', 'economic force', social mobility/advancement (Coulmas, 2005).

It must be noted, however, that the programme-based rankings exhibited some differences across the three programmes (see Table 2 below). The reasons as arranged are the rankings for

the Arts students, while those of the Social Science/Business and Science students are indicated by the numbers in bold type).

**Table 2:** Reasons according to programmes

	Arts	SSB	Science
I study English because/so:			
1. I will need it for my work/job	: 83.8/11.7	79.4/17.6 <b>(5)</b>	72.8/27.2 <b>(4)</b>
2. I can talk to native speakers of English for business/educational purposes	: 82.4/17.6	86.7/13.2 <b>(1)</b>	76.3/22.4 <b>(3)</b>
3. I can talk to other foreigners for business/educational purposes	: 78.3/17.3	82.4/16.1 <b>(3)</b>	80.6/16.9 <b>(2)</b>
4. It is prestigious and a mark of an educated person	: 75.7/21.2	43.7/30.9 <b>(11)</b>	50/46.2 <b>(9)</b>
5. It is required in our educational system	: 75.7/22.7	77.9/22.1 <b>(6)</b>	85.5//13.1 <b>(1)</b>
6. I can talk to native speakers of English about general issues	: 73.2/25.4	85.3/11.8 <b>(2)</b>	62.8/33.3 <b>(6)</b>
7. It is the language of social advancement and mobility	: 67.1/29.8	80.9/13.2 <b>(4)</b>	60.5/36.8 <b>(8)</b>
8. I can talk to other foreigners about general issues	: 64.2/31.4	76.2/19.4 <b>(7)</b>	72.3/25 <b>(5)</b>
9. It is the language of modernity	: 54.6/44	52.9/42.7 <b>(9)</b>	41/55.1 <b>(10)</b>
10. I can study in a foreign country	: 47.7/50.7	64.7/33.8 <b>(8)</b>	60.5/36.8 <b>(7)</b>
11. It will make me a better/famous person	: 31.8/60.2	44.8/52.2 <b>(10)</b>	36.8/61.9 <b>(11)</b>
12. I like the native (mother tongue) speakers of English	: 21.2/72.7	23.6/72.1 <b>(12)</b>	11.6/83.3 <b>(14)</b>
13. I like the countries in which it is spoken	: 20/73.3	22.4/73.1 <b>(13)</b>	13.6/85.1 <b>(13)</b>
14. It will help me think and behave as native speakers do	: 15.5/73.8	15.5/73.8 <b>(14)</b>	18.2/76.7 <b>(12)</b>

The responses above indicate that the first five consecutive (that is, 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup>) reasons for the Arts students become 5<sup>th</sup>, 1<sup>st</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup>, 11<sup>th</sup>, and 6<sup>th</sup> for the Social Science/Business

students while they become 4<sup>th</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup>, 9<sup>th</sup> and 1<sup>st</sup> for the Science students. The reasons/motivations for studying English are more related than they differ, in terms of instrumentality, among the three groups. The differences in terms of priority, even though are not very strong, offer some useful insights into the priority areas of these three groups. While the Arts students top-ranked job acquisition followed by business/educational purposes, the SSB students top-ranked business/educational purposes, followed by talking about general issues, and the Science students saw it as being a requirement in the educational system, followed by business/educational purposes.

In Ghana, one's ability to communicate effectively in English is an essential requirement for the acquisition of jobs. It is not surprising therefore that the Arts students rate it as the topmost reason for studying English. However, the Social Science/Business and Science students do not see it that way. For the Science students, studying English for job acquisition

is rated 4<sup>th</sup> while it is rated 5<sup>th</sup> by the Social Science students. This probably goes to confirm Afful's (2007) view that Communicative Skills teaching in Ghana must be need-based.

At the bottom half of the reasons, except for the SSB students who ranked English as being 'prestigious and a mark of an educated person' 11<sup>th</sup>, there seems to be a co-incidence in the last four rankings among the three groups. And once again, the issue of instrumental/utilitarian motivation for the study of English is reiterated.

### 3.2 What Students Want to Learn

In order to find out what the students wanted to learn, they were asked to rank the following skills (the four main skills we learn in studying a language) in order of importance to them, where 1 represented the most important skill and 4 represented the least important. First, we consider the responses of all the three categories of students put together. Speaking was ranked the most important, with 83 (38.2%), followed by Reading, which received 78 (35.9%). Listening and Writing received the same ranking with 19.8%; however, listening appeared to be the least ranked as it received 99 (45.6%), the highest number of responses considering it as the least important of all the four skills.

**Table 3:** Rankings of the four skills by all three groups of students

	Reading		Listening		Writing		Speaking	
	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%
1.	78	35.9	43	19.8	43	19.8	83	38.2
2.	40	18.4	34	15.7	77	35.5	41	18.9
3.	65	30	20	9.2	49	22.6	38	17.5
4.	15	6.9	99	45.6	27	12.4	34	15.7

The above rankings appear to correlate with the rankings of the detailed skills needed by the students as represented on Table 4 below. In the rankings of the detailed specific skills, the students gave 'speak and communicate in it' as the most important skill they wanted, which corresponds with the rankings of the skills in Table 3 above. However, while Listening appeared to be the least important in the rankings in Table 3, it rated second in the rankings of the specific details. Also, while Reading appeared second in the above rankings of the skills, it appeared third in the below rankings. This is a bit contradictory.

**Table 4:** Rankings of detailed skills by all three programmes

I study English so I can:

- |  |             |
|--|-------------|
| 1. speak and communicate in it                   | : 96.8/2.8  |
| 2. listen and understand those who speak it      | : 94.3/5.2  |
| 3. read textbooks, reports, articles, etc. in it | : 92.0/8.0  |
| 4. write papers, reports, business letters in it | : 92/7.1    |
| 5. read story books, magazines, etc              | : 81.9/17.6 |

6. write letters to friends and family members	: 61.7/36.9
7. speak it with friends and family members	: 60.2/39.8
8. listen to radio stations	: 50/47.2

It is quite clear from both Tables 3 and 4 that, generally, the students see speaking as the most important skill.

However, when the rankings were made by programmes, the following responses were received. The Arts students ranked Speaking as the most important skill, followed by Writing, then Listening and Reading (even though the difference between Listening and Writing did not appear to be significant). The Social Science/Business students also ranked Speaking as the most important, followed by Reading, then Listening and Writing. On the other hand, the Science students ranked Reading as the most important skill, followed by Speaking, Writing and then Listening.

**Table 5:** Rankings of the four skills by programme

Arts			SSB			Science		
Skill	Most %	Least %	Skill	Most %	Least %	Skill	Most %	Least %
1. Speaking	40.3	11.3	1. Speaking	49.2	14.8	1. Reading	47.3	8.1
2. Writing	34.9	19.0	2. Reading	37.3	5.1	2. Speaking	38.4	24.7
3. Listening	32.8	45.3	3. Listening	20.0	58.3	3. Writing	14.8	12.5
4. Reading	32.3	9.2	4. Writing	14.8	9.8	4. Listening	13.9	48.6

These rankings appear quite interesting as there are differences in rating based on the specific programmes. The reason(s) for these differences may be due to specific programme needs. On the other hand, when the students were asked to rate the specific and detailed skills needed, the following responses (see Table 6) were received.

**Table 6:** Rankings of detailed skills by programme

Skill	Arts	SSB	Sci.
I study English so I can:			
1. speak and communicate in it	: 97.2/2.8	98.5/1.5(1)	94.8/3.9 (1)
2. listen and understand those who speak it	: 97.0/3.0	97.0/3.0(2)	89.6/9.2 (4)
3. read textbooks, reports, articles, etc. in it	: 94.1/5.9	89.5/10.5 (4)	92.3/7.7 (2)
4. write papers, reports, business letters in it	: 89.7/8.8	95.6/4.5 (3)	90.9/7.8 (3)
5. read story books, magazines, etc	: 85.7/14.3	55.9/41.2 (6)	80.8/19.2 (5)
6. speak it with friends and family members	: 65.7/34.3	55.8/44.2 (8)	59/41.1 (7)
7. write letters to friends and family members	: 61.7/36.9	59.7/38.8(5)	61.1/36.4 (6)
8. listen to radio stations	: 50.0/48.6	55.9/41.2 (6)	44.9/51.2 (8)

It is observed from here that all the three groups rated speaking and communicating highest. There is almost a co-incidence between the first four specific skills: All three groups ranked the same four skills at the top, except that the 2<sup>nd</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> skills were in a different order. Thus, we can conveniently say that the first four specific skills are the ones most important to the students. These rankings affirm the instrumental/utilitarian role of English among the students (Kachru, 1983; Shaw, 1983).

### 3.3 Feelings about English Language

English language has often been considered as an imperialist language imposed on us by our colonial masters, the British. There are some who often think that as part of the fight against Western imperialism (Ngũgĩ, 1981), we should avoid using English as an official language in English as Second Language (ESL) situations while others think otherwise (J. T. Yanka, cited in Andoh-Kumi, 1997). Thus, over the years, attitudes towards English language have been mixed. I therefore made an attempt to ascertain the feelings the students had about English language, by asking them to state their opinions about the following statements. The responses received are represented on Table 7 below:

**Table 7:** Feelings about English language

Feeling	SA	A	D	SD	NS
1. Of all the languages I can study, I like					
English the best	%	%	%	%	%
Arts	35.7	45.7	11.4	1.4	5.7
SSB	47.1	35.3	13.2	1.5	2.9
Science	29	46.2	17.9	1.3	5.1
2. I don't like English but I study it					
because it is useful					
Arts	8.5	12.7	52.1	25.4	1.4
SSB	8.8	19.1	45.6	25	1.5
Science	3.8	17.9	52.6	21.8	3.8
3. If English were not taught in our schools,					
I wouldn't try to learn it					
Arts	8.6	8.6	51.4	27.1	4.3
SSB	11.8	11.8	47.1	27.9	1.5
Science	9.1	18.2	41.6	26	5.2
4. English should not be the medium of instruction in our schools					
Arts	5.7	15.7	47.1	30	1.4
SSB	7.4	16.2	32.4	39.7	4.4
Science	7.7	14.1	35.9	38.5	3.8
5. Speaking English does not make me feel Ghanaian					
Arts	12.9	15.7	44.3	24.3	2.9
SSB	10.3	5.9	47.1	30.9	5.9
Science	7.7	12.8	51/3	28.2	0.0

The above responses indicate that the majority of the students have positive attitudes towards English. For the majority to state that even if English were not taught in schools, they would learn it is an indication of their realisation of the usefulness of English. This reaction goes further to affirm the instrumentality of the English language. It may also be an indication of

seeing English as no more a colonial/imperialist legacy that must be done away with (Shaw, 1983) but a language that has something good to offer them.

### 3.4 The People with Whom They Speak/Will Speak English

For this section, an attempt was made to find out the range of people with whom the students spoke/used English, and to what extent. In order to ascertain these, the students were given a list of possible groups of people with whom they could use English. Both current and future uses are considered.

**Table 8:** Current Use

Group		Very Often %	Often %	Not Often %	Not Very Often %	Not at All %
1. Family members	Arts	7.1	8.6	47.1	22.9	14.3
	SSB	9.1	21.1	42	18.2	9.1
	Sci.	14.5	28.9	42.1	10.5	3.9
2. Friends	Arts	15.7	58.6	22.9	2.9	0.0
	SSB	37.9	36.4	21.2	4.5	0.0
	Sci.	48.7	40.8	7.9	1.3	1.3
3. Students	Arts	50	44.3	4.3	1.4	0.0
	SSB	63.6	24.2	12.1	0.0	0.0
	Sci.	69.7	28.9	0.0	1.3	0.0
4. English Teachers/Lecturers	Arts	89.7	10.3	0.0	0.0	0.0
	SSB	77.3	18.2	3.0	1.5	0.0
	Sci.	81.4	18.4	0.0	0.0	0.0
5. Other Teachers/Lecturers	Arts	78.3	18.8	1.4	0.0	1.4
	SSB	74.2	24.2	1.5	0.0	0.0
	Sci.	84.2	13.2	2.6	0.0	0.0
6. Government Officials	Arts	62.3	23.2	11.6	0.0	2.9
	SSB	59.1	31.8	6.1	1.5	1.5
	Sci.	68.4	18.4	5.3	3.9	3.9
7. Business Men/women	Arts	20.9	31.3	23.9	17.9	6.0
	SSB	10.8	41.5	33.8	10.8	3.1
	Sci.	41.3	29.3	16.0	12.0	1.3
8. Other Ghanaians whose language I don't understand	Arts	50.7	31.9	5.8	2.9	8.7
	SSB	40.9	43.9	12.1	3	0.0
	Sci.	52.6	31.6	10.5	2.6	2.6
9. Native Speakers	Arts	46.8	21	21	6.5	4.8
	SSB	31.3	29.7	23.4	6.3	9.4
	Sci.	42.1	19.7	21.1	7.9	9.2
10. Non-native speakers	Arts	22.2	39.7	27	6.3	4.8
	SSB	26.6	31.3	25	6.3	10.9
	Sci.	30.3	32.3	18.4	11.8	6.6

Even though there were differences among the students (Arts, SSB and Science), in terms of the ratios, they all exhibited similar trends of the use of English. For instance, they all indicated a high use with teachers. This is, however, not surprising since English is the medium of instruction in our schools. Again, there is a similar trend in use of English with students and government officials. Once again, this is not strange as English is the official language of Ghana. One thing that is worth noting is the use of English as a link language (Shaw, 1983) between Ghanaians of different ethnic groups, affirming English as a lingua franca in Ghana. The least use of English came from use with family members; once again, questioning (or rejecting) the integrative nature of English in Ghana.

After looking at the current use of English, let us consider future use, as represented in Table 8 below:

**Table 8:** Future Use

Group		Very Often	Often	Not Often	Not Very Often	Not at All
		%	%	%	%	%
1. Family members	Arts	19.4	34.3	29.9	13.4	3.0
	SSB	25.4	38.8	28.4	4.5	3.0
	Sci.	27.6	34.2	27.6	7.9	2.6
2. Friends	Arts	25.4	44.8	22.4	6.0	1.5
	SSB	40.3	41.8	16.4	1.5	0.0
	Sci.	44.7	40.8	10.5	2.6	1.3
3. Students	Arts	64.2	31.3	4.5	0.0	0.0
	SSB	73.1	19.4	7.5	0.0	0.0
	Sci.	77.6	19.7	1.3	0.0	0.0
4. English Teachers/Lecturers	Arts	83.6	16.4	0.0	0.0	0.0
	SSB	82.1	16.4	1.5	0.0	0.0
	Sci.	82.9	15.5	0.0	0.0	1.3
5. Other Teachers/Lecturers	Arts	77.3	19.7	1.5	0.0	1.5
	SSB	74.6	25.4	0.0	0.0	0.0
	Sci.	80.3	18.4	0.0	0.0	1.3
6. Government Officials	Arts	64.2	28.4	4.5	1.5	1.5
	SSB	70.1	29.9	0.0	0.0	0.0
	Sci.	73.7	25.0	0.0	0.0	1.3
7. Business Men/women	Arts	40.3	29.9	16.4	9.0	4.5
	SSB	37.3	34.3	19.4	7.5	1.5
	Sci.	50	34.2	13.2	1.3	1.3
8. Other Ghanaians whose language I don't understand	Arts	56.7	26.9	6	7.5	3
	SSB	51.5	36.4	9.1	1.5	1.5
	Sci.	52.6	34.2	3.9	6.6	2.6
9. Native Speakers	Arts	56.9	30.8	9.2	1.5	1.4
	SSB	57.1	31.7	4.8	3.2	3.2
	Sci.	60.5	21.1	13.2	2.6	2.6
10. Non-native speakers	Arts	38.5	38.5	16.9	1.5	4.6
	SSB	36.5	50.8	6.3	1.6	4.8
	Sci.	47.4	31.6	13.2	3.9	3.9

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From the figures above, use of English is expected to increase across the different groups especially with family members in future. With the Arts students, it is expected to increase from about 15.7% current use to about 53.7% future use; SSB, from about 30.3% to about 64.2%; and Science, from about 43.4% to about 61.8%. This means that students expect to see a more educated family whose members can use English. There is no indication that the learning and use of English will drop. Thus, students expect to see English becoming integrative in future.

#### **4.0 Summary/Conclusion/Implications**

The purpose of this study was to find out final year Ghanaian students attitudes towards English language, along the lines of their reasons for learning English, what they wanted to learn, their specific feelings about English and the people with whom they spoke/would speak English. The following were the conclusions drawn from the quantitative analysis of the data collected by means of a close-ended questionnaire.

The reasons the students stated for studying English were more instrumental/utilitarian than integrative (Kachru, 1983; Shaw, 1983). In other words, the reasons that students ranked highly and positively were reasons that showed that English language offered 'access, 'utility', 'economic force', and 'social mobility/advancement' (Coulmas, 2005), as the four topmost ranked reasons were related to business and educational purposes. However, the order of ranking exhibited differences between the three groups of students – Arts, Social Science/Business and Science students. The Arts students ranked 'job acquisition' as the most important reason for studying English followed by 'business/educational' purposes; The SSB students indicated 'business/educational' purposes as the most important followed by 'talking about general issues', while the Science students top-ranked 'English being a requirement in the educational system', followed by business/educational purposes. In Ghana, one's ability to communicate effectively in English is an essential requirement for the acquisition of jobs. It is not surprising therefore that the Arts students rated it as the topmost reason for studying English. However, for the Science students, studying English for job acquisition is rated 4<sup>th</sup> while it is rated 5<sup>th</sup> by the Social Science students. This probably goes to confirm the view that English language teaching (for example, Communicative Skills) must be need-based (Afful, 2007).

Four main skills, Speaking, Reading, Writing and Listening, are acquired in language learning. The students ranked Speaking as the most important (38.2%), followed by Reading (35.9%), while Listening and Writing received the same ranking with 19.8%, but Listening appeared to be the least ranked as it received the highest percentage (45.6%) at the bottom. In terms of the programme-based ranking, the following were the rankings (from the highest to the lowest): Arts – Speaking, Writing, Listening and Reading; Social Science/Business – Speaking, Reading, Listening and Writing; Science – Reading, Speaking, Writing and Listening. In rating the specific detailed skills 'I study English so I can speak and communicate in it' received the highest ranking between the three groups of students. All the three groups ranked the same four skills at the top of their lists even though the ordering was different. The rankings affirm the instrumental/utilitarian role of English for the students (Kachru, 1983; Shaw, 1983).

There is a general likeness for English language (Kwofie, 2001) as indicated by the responses on the students' feelings about English. In other words, it appears from the responses that English language is not considered as a language of imperialism, but rather a language that offers practical opportunities for personal development.

There is affirmation of the status of English as second/official language and medium of instruction in our schools as there was a very high use of English with teachers and government officials, as well as being a link language between Ghanaians of different ethnic backgrounds (Shaw, 1983). However, the integrative motivation for the study of English could not be affirmed as only few used English with their family members. On the future use

of English, the students indicated an increase in use with all the possible groups of people with whom they use English now. Most importantly, they expected to see a very high increase in the use of English with family members, indicating a move towards building more educated families that can use English in future. This may also be an indication of an indigenisation of English in future and so there is no indication of a drop in the learning and use of English language in Ghana.

The implication of the above-mentioned conclusions is that language policies, curriculum planning and the teaching of English in our schools must be geared towards instrumentality with some focus on integration. Some focus on integration will imply an attempt at nativisation of English in Ghana.

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