Teaching of civic education in the classroom- a model for reading and writing

Stephen Ohene-Larbi

University of Toledo

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Teaching of Civic Education in the Classroom-A Model for Reading and Writing
Stephen Ohene-Larbi
Submitted to the Graduate Faculty as partial fulfillment of the requirements for the
Master of Arts, Degree in
English

Douglas W. Coleman, Committee Chair

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The University of Toledo

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An Abstract of

Teaching of Civic Education as a Model for Reading and Writing in the classroom

by

Stephen Ohene-Larbi

Submitted to the Graduate Faculty as partial fulfillment of the requirements for the

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The University of Toledo

December 2015

Ghana was the first country in the sub-Saharan continent of Africa to gain independence from the British, in 1957. Between 1550 and 1872, other European nationals abandoned their occupation, giving the British full control over this area (Anderson). In an attempt to promote trade with the local natives, the British traders trained some locals to serve as interpreters (p. 60). To consolidate the use of English within the area, they established schools in the forts and castles where some local people were given formal training for various reasons (p. 60) such as the inculcation of civic virtues and awareness to ensure that local urban educated elite with western values and hybrid cultural sophistication would ascend to power (Djite, 2008) and manage the day to
day business of the local people under the crown colony. After more than half a century, the policy to create and sustain awareness amongst the people through the integration of civic virtues in the Ghanaian schools has failed. I will examine the failed policies and offer a new approach to inculcate multimodality strategies such as the use of gaming, blogs, wikis, and peer-reviews in the classroom as a model for reading, speaking and writing.
To the lovingly memory of Rose Evelyn Attuah, and Nicholas Ohene-Larbi, you gave me love, hope, and above all a future to hold up to and to live it with faith.
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<th>Abbreviation</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CEC</td>
<td>Centre for Civic Education</td>
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<td>EAP</td>
<td>English for Academic Purpose</td>
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<td>EFL</td>
<td>English as a Foreign</td>
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<td>ELL</td>
<td>English Language Learners</td>
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<td>ESL</td>
<td>English as a Second Language</td>
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<td>NCCE</td>
<td>National Commission for Civic Education</td>
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<td>NDC</td>
<td>National Democratic Congress</td>
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<td>PNDC</td>
<td>Provisional National Defense Council</td>
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<td>TBLT</td>
<td>Task-Based Language Teaching</td>
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<tr>
<td>TPR</td>
<td>Total Physical Response</td>
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<td>USAID</td>
<td>United States Agency for International Development</td>
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Chapter 1

Teaching of Civic as a Model for reading and Writing

Introduction

Ghana was the first country in the sub-Saharan continent of Africa to gain independence from the British in 1957. Ghana’s contact with the British dates back to 1872, prior to this period, the Portuguese, Danish, and the Dutch were already dealing with the Ghana originally known as the Gold coast through trade (Anderson). Anderson notes that these Europeans built forts and castles to serve as trading posts in the area. Between 1550 and 1872, these European nationals abandoned their occupation giving the British full control over this area (p. 60). In an attempt to promote trade with the local natives, the British traders trained some locals to serve as interpreters (p. 60). To consolidate the use of English within the area, they established schools in the forts and castles where some local people were given formal training for various reasons (p. 60) such as the inculcation of civic virtues and awareness to ensure that local urban educated elite with western values and hybrid cultural sophistication would ascend to power (Djite 2008) and manage the day to day business of the local people under the directive of the crown colony.

The role of language in societies, according to Djite, is to serve as a vehicle for the transfer of knowledge (p. 75). In pursuit of this goal, civic education became an important means for Ghanaians to acquire literacy skills on issues relating to governance, rule of law, good citizenship and sustainable development. Civic education is defined by the Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy as the processes that affect people's beliefs, commitments, capabilities, and actions as members or prospective members of
communities. The use of civic education to create awareness among the people was an effective tool to create a civil society according to the British standards because formal education at the time was beginning to take shape and the British took advantage of the multilingual nature of the colony to use English language for the purpose of education and administration (Anderson 60) which later became the basis for the imposition of English as the official language throughout the entire colony. The imposition in part, was to encourage and educate the citizenry to engage in civic discourse at both the local and national levels through the acquisition of English as the medium of instructions in schools. Civic engagement as noted by Allison & Jason is the cornerstone of every democracy and that political scientists have found that civic education improves the democratic capacity of students (p.956). However, students and young people in general are more often than not disconnected from politics (Manning & Edwards 2014). The authors indicate that research from numerous countries finds young people lack knowledge and interest in politics and the political systems of their countries and Ghana is no exception. In their view, this raises an increasing concern over an apparent gulf between young people and politics, young people they said are disinterested in politics and poorly prepared for political participation as adults (p. 22).

Civic Education in Ghana

Civic education in Ghana is intriguing; it started as a campaign to raise and sustain awareness among the people by engaging them to be active participants in the social-cultural and political life of the people. Consequently, the process was marred with frequent interruption of power by military and powerful political leaders to use the process to consolidate their legacy and to impose their will on the people. The intent of
civic education was to facilitate the process of engaging the people in civil discourse but unfortunately; the process to instill civic awareness rather became the basis for Ghanaians to stay away from civic issues. Afriyie notes, in the post-independence era, governments put in efforts to establish various civic education bodies, such as Centre for Civic Education (CCE) by the National Liberation Council under the chairmanship of Dr. K.A Busia. The Provisional National Defense Council (PNDC) government also set up the Peoples/Workers Defense and later National Commission for Democracy (NCD). Subsequently, the Consultative Assembly of the Fourth Republic, made provision for the establishment of the National Commission for Civic Education (NCCE) under the 1992 Constitution (p. 150). The underlying objective of these institutions were all affiliated with political parties and this raised objections from the populace who perceive this move as politically motivated groups with the aim of creating jobs for their followers. This perception has grown and any attempt to establish a credible civic education entity has always been received by the people with doubt. This gap has created a vacuum and prevented the people from actively taking part in politics and other local and national issues. The result has been the youth became social and political by standers, seeing nothing good in politics, and considered active participation as useless. A cursory appraisal of the different policies suggests after half a century, the policy to create and sustain awareness amongst the people through the integration of civic education in the Ghanaian schools/communities have failed and there is the need to re-introduce civic education by adapting a new and practical learning methods that will help students to achieve their learning goals. I believe the introduction of a curriculum to include learning
strategies such as the use of gaming, blogs, wikis, and peer-reviews in the classroom as a model for reading, writing and speaking.

In response to these concerns, Manning and Edwards (2014) assert that various forms of civic and citizenship education have been suggested as a means of increasing young people’s knowledge and awareness of the political system in which they live, as a way of bridging the “civics deficit” (p 23). The authors reiterate that in the last decade, civic education have undergone a process of rejuvenation, becoming a top priority of governments and educational institutions and returning to the school curriculum with strength (p. 23). They cited Australia where the “Discovering Democracy Curriculum” was implemented in 1998, in a non-compulsory form and in England with the compulsory “citizenship education” which was implemented in 2002. Civic education programs in Ghana in particular and Africa and other developing countries in general, are designed and used as leverage for instituting democratic values to promote political knowledge, engagement, and support for democratic norms and values among ordinary citizens Finkel (2014). Finkel notes this has become a mainstay of international donors’ democracy assistance efforts around the world (p. 168). Finkel indicates that Institutions such as the US Agency for International Development (USAID) Democracy Strategic Framework 1998, donors from a majority of Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development countries and multilateral organizations such as the United Nations Development Program and the World Bank have devoted considerable resources to these programs in order to foster democratic attitudes and behaviors among ordinary individuals in emerging democracies (p. 168). Among such programs are voter education, instruction about the social and political rights of women, neighborhood problem solving,
resistance against election violence and vote buying, the cultivation of tolerance, and promotion for the peaceful resolution of political disputes (p. 168). These are critical issues and a challenge facing democracy in Africa and the best resources available is to refocus resources and attention to the youth through the implementation of civic education program centered on student engagement in the classroom.

Civic Education and the Way Forward

Even though, the expectations of implementing a sustainable civic education in Ghana have not been successful, there are numerous studies and research indicating that adaption of rigorous and student driven curriculum would help encourage and enhance student participation. One way to do this would be to formulate a civic education curriculum that takes into consideration the interest of students; educational gaming programs would encourage students to engage in civic learning in the classroom to improve reading, writing and speaking of the target language – English as a Second Language (ESL). As indicated earlier, English is the medium of instruction in schools and the goal of introducing civic education is to prepare high school students to obtain fluency to pursue college degree/career. “In many schools, reading is not even part of the curriculum; we have departmental, discipline-based instruction and students in classes for short periods of time each day. Using good instructional materials and strategies makes a great difference” D’Arcangelo (2013). Lacour recognizes the need to inculcate such activities that will harness student learning. He asserts that “the child's first experience with school, both positive and negative, has been shown to have a lasting effect, therefore, in order to meet the needs of English Language Learners (ELLs), educators must provide the most conducive environment for learning as possible” (p. 166).
There have been various efforts over the years to teach civic education as a way to create and sustain awareness among the youth. However, research has shown that the implementation is flawed and shredded by political interference, cultural norms, and over ambition, therefore negating the positive role the idea of civic education plays into the background. Examples of countries that have witnessed these processes are Japan, where civic education has always been clouded in controversy due to issues of national identity (Cogan 2005). In Taiwan, an attempt to introduce and reform civic education curriculum has been criticized by scholars and parents who believe that the process seeks to recruit individuals to endorse their current education reforms to present a false impression that a so-called consensus has been reached among the majority of the people to embrace the concept Shiowlan & Liu (2002).

Global issues of Civic Education/Literature Review

The history of civic education across the globe is fascinating. It is characterized with struggle, denial and the lack of political will to find the right method to teach and to disseminate knowledge to the citizenry. Developed countries such as the United States of America have had issues with civic education and like many developing countries Ghana is no exception. In a study published in the Yale Law Journal, Tom Donnelly discuss the expectation and role of civic education in the political socialization of Americans with targeted literature on the ways in which schools shape the people's views of various governmental institutions (p. 966). He indicated political scientists concluded in the 1960s and 1970s that other factors surpass the importance of civic education in shaping Americans' views about their government (p. 966). According to him this perception was followed by inactivity period of scholarship on civic education and political socialization
(p. 966). He reiterates that for years, political scientists did not believe that civic education played an important role in the political socialization of young people. He asserts that even though political scientists discovered years ago that education in general is a key factor in shaping political behavior, participation, and knowledge, they were unable to separate the effects of civic education from education in general (p. 966).

Donnelly went further to indicate that political scientists were also unable to isolate the impact of civic education from the influence of the many other institutions, associations, and demographics that help to form and reform lives, and thoughts of the citizenry (p. 966). In his view, these were among reasons why civic education did not play a major role in the 60s, 70s, and the 80s in the American political system. The concept of civic education requires constant nurturing and the ability of the people to develop interest and active participation will make it work. It is interesting that political scientists from the United States of America, often referred to as the mother of democracies at the time, were grappling to accept the reality of civic education in its political discourse. However, the study conducted by Donnelly was able to shed light on a recent study showing that political scientists have discovered "important links between basic civic information and civic attributes" and that the new evidence suggests that "political stances shaped during the mid-to- late teen years persist throughout adult life" (p. 967).

Like the United States, Ghana has had its share of rejection and denial. Ghana is at a crossroad of finding the right method and approach to solidify the teaching of civic education in schools. The study also found out individuals socialization experiences are most likely to encourage political engagement and are most likely to seek out
information, and in the long term will develop a more general political knowledge to process new information. Donnelly is of the view that the recent consensus of civic education recognizes best practices, can increase student knowledge of government and politics, increase interest in these subjects, and lead to greater student involvement in the community and politics (p. 967). Donnelly placed particular reference to Textbook content, and how it has contributed in building curricular and instructional choices in shaping the views of students (p. 967).

Veldt and Ponder indicate “The classroom is a perfect microcosm of society in which to give students the opportunity to prepare for their role as global citizens of this Earth” (p. 50).

Veldt and Ponder argue civic learning comprises a variety of teaching and discovery methods that enable citizens to participate in and sustain democracy. They indicate that this is evident in most schools today, and some even have mission statements that list civic education as a top priority. The setback to the inculcation of this noble mission is the requirement for higher test scores, and civic education often is left behind (45). Since independence from the British in 1957, different political entities have attempted to institute the concept of civic education and none of them succeeded. In part, this resulted into lack of support and understanding of the processes involved because policy implementation was characterized by vindictiveness and political means of providing employment for party members. This created lack of trust and interest from the people to fully participate in civic engagement, and the outcome was political instability, corruption, low morale of the people to take active part in governance. Veldt and Ponder cite a report by The National Alliance for Civic Education (2008) indicating it is time that
people come together to support future generations understanding of democracy. Their report identified schools as the logical place for students to learn about civic participation and responsibility (p. 45). The call is important not only to the American society but the world community of nations at large. Ghana needs to learn from these experiences to shape its destiny in transforming the teaching of civic education in the classroom to be inclusive and to provide the foundation of building a better and informed society.

Jotia (2011) calls for a genuine approach to institute civic education. He notes, for democracy to be sustained in any country, it is fundamentally important that the educational system should teach citizens about democracy and how to participate in the democratic process (p. 135). Active participation in the socio-political process should be the foundation of democratic engagement by citizens (p. 135). He reiterates the need for educational institutions to be the platforms for social justice where the learner is given a chance to be heard and that schools are supposed to educate the citizens so that they can participate in all matters affecting them (p. 135).

Jotia further discusses recent trend and interest developed by many African states to discuss the concept of civic education which is gaining grounds. There is a shift to revisit educational policies with a view to factoring into the school syllabi, the teaching and practicing of democracy. He admits that even though the concept of democracy may appear fascinating, it remains a challenge especially among most developing countries (p. 136). The author believes active engagement in the democratic process can only be legitimizied through education. He asserts that liberal democratic political theory on education suggests citizens should be educated so that they can develop a love for their country (p.137). He indicates that this can be realized through giving them a voice in the
learning process. He also advocates for a form of education that values learner-centered pedagogies which nurture participatory, democratic, and inquiry-based and discovery methods as well as promoting constructive ways of learning (p. 137).

Jotia believes that adapting this method of education will offer learners intellectual independence and the freedom to apply their minds to situations so as to find solutions and in so doing, the learners will develop higher levels of creativity to become reflective thinkers, and to develop high degrees of tolerance and also cooperatively engage in a dialogue (p. 137). These among others have culminated in the need to pursue this study to address the core issue of using civic education as a model to improve reading and writing in the Ghanaian schools. It is important to acknowledge that there is increasingly a debate going on internationally amongst governments, academics, curriculum leaders and educators, about the scope, purpose and enactment of citizenship education in schools (p. 35).

Smith and Finkel (2011) in the study finds evidence that there is attitudinal change in places where democratic values are projected and according to the authors presents a shift in elite political culture, ideology, and attitudes toward civil liberties (p. 147). The authors also cite other recent studies suggesting civic education in new democracies can have a significant impact on a variety of democratic orientations, especially basic knowledge and political participation (p. 419). They referenced high school students who receive civics instruction on at least a weekly basis are far more likely to identify correctly key South African political leaders and to possess basic knowledge of the South African constitution than students who receive civics instruction less often or not at all (p. 419). Smith and Finkel suggest the effects of civic education in
the studies on democratic attitudes and values such as tolerance, efficacy, and institutional trust are typically more modest (p. 419). They also acknowledge that civic education may change even difficult democratic orientations under certain conditions, especially in instances where exposure to civics training is more frequent, and when training makes greater use of participatory teaching methodologies such as role playing, group problem solving activities, including open discussions (p. 420). The journey to sustain civic education continues to be a long process which requires a concerted effort to empower students to reach their maximum potential in the era of technological advancement. The teaching of civic in our classroom, in the 21st century,

Civic Education in Practice

McLaughlin (2010) underscores a number of values needed to help students in the 21st century to achieve their learning goals in the competitive and global world. In her view, best practices based on current research-based theories and beliefs have proven to be effective in the classroom (p. 2). There is the need for making connections between the best practice and national standards in our teaching and to engage students in learning. Embracing motivation and to make it part of our classroom discourse is also important. It is also necessary to expand the perception of context and view curriculum, activity, classroom environment, teaching, talk, text as a social context (p. 2). These issues can effectively be discussed in the context of instituting civic education learning in the classroom to encourage the development of young people through reading and writing.

Students do well in class when they engage the text, to unravel a mystery, or they are interested in learning more about the world around them D’Arcangelo (2002). “It's
hard to learn a language when you don't use that language” Ross & Fisher (2009). Ross & Fisher believe students should be encouraged to talk and engage in activities tailored around civic awareness to enable students to master not only civic skills but also to develop their skills in speaking, reading, and writing. The authors discuss methods to help improve student’s fluency in the English language. Vocabulary can be used depending on the content and the needs of students in the class and this call for teachers to use specialized or technical words to help students comprehend the text (p. 10). During civic lessons, words like citizenship, rights, responsibilities and referendum all have fixed meanings that can broaden student understanding and the use of terms during reading and writing. Language structure is another concept students can adapt to understand academic literacy to focus on the ways in which words work together to convey ideas (p. 10). The use of words that provide readers and listeners with advance notice is an example to engage students during reading and writing. The authors suggest the need to incorporate regularly signal sequence such as (first, next, then, finally), problem/solutions (because, consequently, despite, dilemma is), cause/effect (because, begins with, consequently, effects of, for this reason, if, then), and comparisons (although, as well as, as opposed to, both, but, by contrast), (p. 10). Most of the class activities in civic education classes are based on shared knowledge and in most cases, regarded as extra-curricular activities. The use of these learning strategies would help students not only to be conscious about civic issues, but also learn how to read, write, and to speak fluently in the target language. Donna & Fisher note that in a given class meeting, students may express opinions, sequence information, summarize what they have read, persuade, or ask questions. These,
and a host of other functions, provide students with practice in using academic language (p. 10).

D’Arcangelo is of the view that to get the best out of students, we can spend more time observing and listening to students, diagnosing the strategies that students need to learn and what engages them (p. 13). D’Arcangelo believes teachers can analyze how to use resources to build students’ background knowledge on vocabulary. She argues that a lot of high school students struggle in their reading classes and calls for the need to lay out some strategies that help them think about content during and after reading (p. 13). Civic education lesson should be used to help students to activate their background knowledge, and to connect what they already know with what they are learning (p. 12-13). The author notes helping students to learn how to identify the structure and to organize ideas in the text will be necessary in language acquisition (p. 13). Reading is a recursive process that requires active engagement (p. 14), and civic lessons should be designed to involve active participation of students. She posits that students can consolidate ideas and find reasons for the sequence of information during reading by adapting strategies such as the use of graphic organizers, creation of semantic maps of the reading, making marginal notes and drawing pictures.

Another important value to gain from civic learning is to help students to reflect on societal values through reading and writing. Schools are intended to provide curricular and civic spaces that should offer opportunities for students to learn about diversity and enlightened political engagement Blevins et. al (2014). The authors acknowledge that one of the best practices to motivate students to learn is through simulation- gaming activities (p. 64). The use of this activity to facilitate civic learning will be useful resources to serve
the needs of Ghanaian students. The emergence of technology has made it possible for students to have access to different simulation- gaming devices and apps that can be used instantly on their phones, IPad, tablets and computers. Instead of using these games for fun, civic education teachers can help students to download free games apps for educational purposes to improve their skills in reading, writing and speaking. In a Pew Internet Research, video games were cited to provide the means of engaging students to reflect on societal values. The authors note that video games parallel the kinds of civic learning opportunities to promote civic engagement for simulated civic and political activities by exploring controversial issues and group participation (p. 62). Higginbottom & Romano (2006) argue that a successful civic education program will ensure foundational literacy, skills in reading, writing, critical analysis, and discursive skills (p. 26). Accounts of good practices presented above, opens the door for the Ghanaian classrooms to replicate such examples to fully engage students learning using civic education.

Promotion of civic education in the classroom will also seek to emphasize on essential knowledge and skills required of every students. LaCour & Tissington (2010) indicate English language learners (ELLs) are one of the largest groups to struggle with literacy. The authors call for focus of instruction and the need to place attention on learner's ability to comprehend the lesson content and not on the learner's language proficiency (p.166). To achieve these learning goals, they suggest infusing physical experiences such as drama and movement in reading instruction because this method has shown to be fun for children. In their opinion, this strategy has proven a useful learning tool in helping students with decoding, fluency, and vocabulary (P. 168). Music
according to the authors can be used to motivate and stimulate ELLs who are struggling with language development (p. 168). Basic music concepts can be taught through games such as Musical Follow the Leader. Another strategy to help ELLs learn through music activities to engage students can be done through the use of instruments, such as drums. In the African contest in general and Ghana in particular, drums and music play an integral role in the socio-cultural life of the people and this strategy can serve a useful learning process for students.

Another learning tool is the use of role play and the Four Comers game for navigational words and skills to teach social studies (p. 169). The method includes shared language experiences to read, talk, listen, or write about social studies content for ELLs (p. 168). Graphic organizers such as Venn diagrams, series of events chains, compare and contrast matrices, and T-charts to reinforce the language was also suggested by the authors to help students acquire essential language skills. To buttress their point, the authors cite a research to argue that vocabulary which affected reading fluency as well as comprehension for ELLs can be predicted by a student's level of vocabulary knowledge and also suggest vocabulary can be enhanced by learning words in context and providing opportunities for oral response (p. 169).

Well prepared and motivated students stand the chance to pursue higher academic excellence. Encouraging students to improve reading and writing is necessary because reading is an important part of language proficiency that affects academic literacy (Sidek et al., 2012). Sidek and his coauthors assert that within the tertiary academic context, “the ability to read academic texts is considered one of the most important skills that university students of English as a Second Language (ESL) and English as a foreign
language (EFL) need to acquire” (p. 109). The institution of the civic education curriculum targeting secondary school students will help facilitate a learning process to enhance student participation. Citing a study conducted in Malaysia, Sidek et al. (2012) indicate that lack of emphasis on reading curriculum in most schools resulted into the poor performance of students to achieve fluency at the tertiary level of education (p. 109). To avoid such pit holes, emphasis on content based learning can serve as a useful tool in ESL learning environment. In a related study on language awareness, Sidek and his co-authors posit that instruction that integrates particular content with language-teaching has the tendency to model instruction drawn from different types of contexts which includes themes, academic subject matter, vocational skills, and professional knowledge. According to the authors, these are often situated in schools, colleges, and universities; workplaces; and adult education programs (p. 126). Modeling this idea in school in Ghana will not only help shape students ability to adapt the right learning approach to achieve fluency, but also to become active participant in national discourse. Technology permeates education, and incorporating it into our content area teaching will provide a variety of benefits McLaughlin (2010).

Learners in the 21st century are confronted with the use of technology to approach civic education from social perspective through technology and good practices to ensure our students are not only living in the era of emerging technology, but they are actually taking part and using it to improve and develop their learning skills. McLaughlin (2010) recognizes the need for information and communication technology as a means to provide exciting new ways to teach and learn. Even though the process is evolving, we must keep the pace to ensure that we are capable of providing students access to
innovative practices (p. 178). She outlines a number of benefits to increase student’s socialization through learning. Civic education classroom needs to engage student’s in real topics, the need to link disciplines, and promoting collaborations. In addition, lending immediacy to inquiry and data sharing, promoting higher level of thinking and deepening students’ understanding of research is an important area to set a positive agenda to help students to achieve their learning objectives. She concludes by advocating for helping students learn that content areas involves question, not answers, promoting inquiry, encouraging learning in social context and promoting discussion at multiple levels (p. 179). One of the goals to introduce the learning of civic for reading and writing is to embrace the notion that learners in this era need to be fluent in multiple literacies that require us not only to be able to read and write, but also to understand a variety of disciplines, navigating different information sources, examine the authors intent, and comprehend beyond the printed pages (McLaughlin, 2010). These models provide a perfect fit into the Ghanaian educational system and the review of the language policy will highlight the need to incorporate civic education into the curriculum.

Language Policy in Ghana

The language policy in Ghanaian education has fluctuated between English only as the medium of instruction in classroom on one hand, and a Ghanaian language for the first three years of schooling on the other hand (Kristin et al., 2012). However in recent years, language policy has shifted emphasis to the English-only policy for all grade levels, including early childhood. Secondary and tertiary education in Ghana has always been in English Kristin et al., (2012). Textbooks and majority of educational materials are printed in English to serve as vehicles for transmitting knowledge and provision of
information and congruent activities (Opoku-Amankwa, Brew-Hammond & Kofigah, 2011 p 292). Textbooks, according to Opoku et al, 2011, p. 292) should stimulate the pupil’s interest, develop creativity and interactive learning, and create cultural awareness. The motive of the imposition of L2 was to strengthen the course of establishing English as the official language of the country. In many classrooms around the world today, many individuals are learning and teaching English (McKay 2004), whereas the approach differs, the ultimate goal is to achieve fluency and our goal of instituting the civic education curriculum is to provide the basis for learning that will harness this objective.

McKay argues that today many are learning and studying English because English provides access to global communication. Whereas many are required to study the language for immigration purposes and educational requirements, others study the language for business and leisure. There are many contexts in which English is currently being learned (p. 29). In Ghana, English constitutes the medium of instructions in schools, government administrative businesses, the parliament and the judiciary system. In class, subjects such as Ghanaian language, culture and moral education are given minimal teaching hours of about ninety minutes per week. It consists of learning about the language and respective culture rather than learning to speak the language (Kristin et al, 2012). The concept of exit model, a decision to combine Ghanaian language and English is one of the means to increase the time children spend to learn their language. Children learn native language (L1) for communicative purposes for the first five years of education beginning with 90% of their time in kindergarten and 70 % in first grade. The time of English is gradually increased until the balance is reached at 50 % in the third grade and 100% by 6th grade. In junior high, the medium of instruction is in English.
Students without a strong foundation in English more often than not struggle to read and write English and this has become a major problem hindering students to go to college. It is important however to intensify civic education in the classroom to equip students to know their rights and responsibilities, and at the same time to provide them with tools to help improve reading and writing by adapting a curriculum that will address the learning needs of such students.

Syllabus/Civic Education Classroom

Language teachers are constantly faced with which method to choose from (Brown 2005). In an attempt to solve the issue, Brown cites the work of Anthony, Richards, Rodgers and McKay to present a model that can help teachers to practice and present language. First, the approach takes into consideration all points of view on the nature of language, learning and teaching. Second, method/design is used to describe different plans for presenting language to students in an orderly manner/specification of content and the role of learners, teachers and materials. Third, technique defines as what actually happens in the classroom/tactics, practice exercises, and activities of instructional system (2). In order to make teaching of civic education part of the Ghanaian educational curriculum, it is necessary to critically examine all available curricular that has been tested and proven to enhance student learning and making the right decision to implement a program that will help academic success. Brown presents the work of Anthony in the creation and design of syllabus that can be used in ESL setting and this modified version can serve the civic education of students in Ghana.

According to Brown, every teacher enters the classroom with an idea of what students need to learn and that this preconception more often than not changes after they
enter the class and begin to work with students (4). Students in civic classroom come with diverse background and expectations and the responsibility lies on the teacher to bring the best out of each student. This calls for dialogue, the need to find balance between teacher-student expectations to achieve results and ways of organizing instruction to meet those needs, irrespective of the approach teachers adapts (p. 6). Brown explains ways to organize courses and materials in terms of structure, situational, tropical, function, notional, skills, and task. According to him, materials based on structural syllabus are easy to identify because of the table of content organized around grammar points. Brown presents different approaches with the aim of making the language class interesting, helping students to learn more effectively, easily and enjoyable (p. 17).

Focus of learning/content area in civic education environment

In a study, English for Academic Purposes (EAP), (Scott Roy & Marcia 2014), designed a program to meet postsecondary English language proficiency requirements as a common pathway to higher education for students from non-English-speaking backgrounds (p. 1). The authors note that the inability of the program to yield desirable expectation resulted into the implementation of content-focused task-based teaching that mirrors authentic tasks (p.2). Under the (EAP), students will carry out in their mainstream studies. In this approach, the EAP classroom is seen as a natural fit for task-based language teaching (TBLT) because it allows the students to use language and skills in situations they will face in their academic lives (p. 2). The effective use of this approach is confirmed in an interview with Korean secondary school teachers, the results revealed that the teachers felt a task-based approach motivated students and was appropriate for
group work (p. 2). In a related interview, EFL teachers at a university in Thailand also reported that the students became more independent in their learning and that the students gained academic skills they could use in other areas of endeavors (p.2). The authors define (TBLT) as an approach to language teaching that gives equal opportunities to students to engage in the authentic use of the target language through tasks. The goal in TBLT is that the task provides the main context and focus for learning, and it also encourages language use similar to the way language is used outside of the classroom. Students learn language and develop skills as they work toward completing the task, which motivates them to stretch their available language resources (p.3).

Implementation of a good reading program does not come with ease; it takes a great deal of work and energy on the part of teachers and students as well. It requires personnel development, time away from other things which are also top on the agenda in the learning process (D’Arcangelo 2002). Considering the challenges civic education has gone through over the years taking into account the Ghanaian experience, it is necessary to access available resources and alternatives to adapt better learning strategies to achieve results. D’Arcangelo suggests there is nothing more important than preparing and equipping students with the tools they will need to think, learn and use multiple literacies in their lives (p.15). The objective of using civic education as a model for reading and writing is not just to prepare students for high school but to prepare them for life (p. 15). If students cannot read and write well, if they cannot speak well, we have not done our job of imparting knowledge students deserve (p. 15). The goal of transitioning from civic education being used as a tool for political expediency can be tailored to cater for the reading and writing needs of our students. Instituting civic education as an extra-
curricular activity will be a perfect fit to address the growing needs of students to achieve fluency. The question to ask is “can we be sure that we will achieve a result that is worth investment?” (D’Arcangelo 2002). She believes that adapting a reading program that takes into account the learning needs of students coupled with collaborative effort, objectives would be met. This, she asserts, will demand well trained and committed leaders in the reading and learning process (p. 16). She suggests there is also the need for all in the school to make the commitment to support student learning and the need to go beyond curriculum to use basic strategies regularly with students. Doing this will call for an all-inclusive attitude to sustain the process (p. 15). Another important feature is to reward teachers through the provision of learning tools, incentives such as the institution of best teacher’s award and teacher’s appreciation month and others. Teachers have the responsibility of seeing that their students are using effective and innovative means of learning that in the past. Seeing results from students is the best experience and important which makes the goal significant and worth the effort (p. 15). We need to rethink approaches of helping students to achieve the desired results by implementing a program that will incorporate diverse learning needs of students.

Civic education classroom will serve as the basis for students to engage in “critical thinking, problem solving and reading comprehension” (McLaughlin 2010). Since the emphasis is placed on reading and writing, much attention would be put in place to help students to make connections among what they read, what they understands, and what they think (p. 158). McLaughlin suggests making connections between texts will enable students to activate prior knowledge and make variety of connections to the text there are reading (p. 55). She discusses three kinds of connections: text-to- text, text-
to-self, and text-to-world. Greater part of issues discussed in civic education classrooms are based on social, cultural, economic, political and practical issues. These dominate discussions among students in their everyday conversations and by adapting these strategies would help students to think about content and find the words to explain what they comprehend, reflect on how they understand the content, and consider what their own process of learning involve (p. 158). Civic education raises renewed interest in teaching and reading strategies. What is driving this interest to engage students in civic education? And what can teachers do to help students to use the strategies discussed above to improve reading, speaking and writing?
Chapter 2
Research Method

Research Context

The Bekwai SDA Secondary School was selected due to the school’s commitment to engage students in civic education as part of extra-curricular activities to instill in the students the concept of good citizenship, good governance, and other democratic tenets to shape their understanding of rights and responsibilities, and to apply these ideals of civic education in their daily lives. To achieve this objective, the school and the district branch of the National Commission for Civic Education (NCCE) entered into a partnership to provide resource personnel to establish and manage civic education clubs in the school. The clubs engaged in different activities such as mock parliament, excursions to observe legislative proceedings, inter school debate/quizzes with themes centered on current affairs, the 1992 Ghanaian constitution, rights, freedoms, responsibilities, rule of law and others. Over the years, this working relationship has been overshadowed by other extracurricular activities and lack of logistical support from the NCCE to commit personnel and resources has hindered the effectiveness of the institution and this has resulted in the lackadaisical attitude of students to engage in civic education. This study will seek to re-introduce civic education curriculum in the classroom to help students to achieve fluency through reading, writing and speaking. I believe the 21st century learner has all the tools needed to harness student’s development but the problem is how best can these tools be used effectively to address the problem? The study will seek to find out students’ reaction to the use of learning activities such as peer reviews, blogs, wikis, and students’ background knowledge of civic education in a classroom environment.
Research Framework

This study is explorative in nature (Sidek 2012). The purpose of the study is to conduct a survey to find out the possibility of re-introducing civic education curriculum at Bekwai SDA Secondary school to be replicated in other schools in Ghana with the objective of teaching civic education in the classroom. It is designed to help understand the process of learning civic education in the classroom settings to improve reading, speaking and writing. The study will also seek to find out students’ interest in learning civic education and how to apply the concept to their daily lives. The goal to provide a curriculum according to Sidek should have a coherent instructional framework in line with the intention of the curriculum to ensure effective implementation and without alignment, as such; the expected instructional outcomes might not be achieved (p. 114).

The overall objective is to design a curriculum that will be student centered and to adapt different learning goals to achieve its core values of integrating the learning of civic education in the classroom.

In the design of the study, the following learning outline for civic education curriculum would be assessed as a way to help students to create their own voice and to take complete ownership of their learning being equally prepared for the 21st century: discussions of controversial issues and current events, deliberation of public issues, service learning, action service, participation in simulation and role play, and the use of digital technologies (p. 60). The study will provide insights to curriculum developers across English as Second Language (ESL) contexts by assessing the importance of developing a coherent curriculum in terms of approach and design in relation to the
selected instructional framework. Such a process will enable appropriate development of materials development and classroom implementation with regard to the selected instructional method (p. 114).

Participants

Participants were recruited from SDA Secondary School based on members’ volunteering and their willingness to take part in the study. Forty students comprising of 20 males and 20 females agreed to take part in the study. The Table 1-4 show the age, course/grade levels, and years of studying English.

Table 1

Course/Major

<table>
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<th>Count</th>
</tr>
</thead>
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<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Business</td>
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<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General Arts</td>
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<tr>
<td>Science</td>
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<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
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<td>40</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 2
Number of years having studied English

<table>
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<th>Count</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
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<td>5</td>
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<td>14</td>
<td>7.5</td>
<td>3</td>
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<td>7.5</td>
<td>3</td>
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<tr>
<td>18</td>
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<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19</td>
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<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
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<td>40</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3
Educational Qualification

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<th>Count</th>
</tr>
</thead>
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<tr>
<td>2nd Year</td>
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<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3rd Year</td>
<td>42.5</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Response</td>
<td>Percent</td>
<td>Count</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------</td>
<td>---------</td>
<td>-------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1&lt;sup&gt;st&lt;/sup&gt; Year</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2&lt;sup&gt;nd&lt;/sup&gt; Year</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3&lt;sup&gt;rd&lt;/sup&gt; Year</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4

Age

A cut-off point was set to accommodate the first 20 males and females to take part in the survey. Initially, we had over 50 students in the room but after the briefing period those who did not want to participate left the room. Fortunately, 20 males and 20 females remained in the room to the satisfaction of the research team thereby solving the issue of equal representation. The idea of having equal representation of views by sex was necessary to give each group the same amount of influence to compare responses and to analyze the results. It will also serve as the basis to ascertain the learning needs and how to structure the process of re-introducing the curriculum to address the overall needs of the students. It was satisfying to see many girls coming forward to participate in the survey because in the past, girls were often marginalized with the boys taking a front seat in decision making. The survey was conducted in a classroom setting with only participants allowed to be in the room. Prior to the survey, students were encouraged to
take a few minutes to read carefully the questions and give their responses in the spaces provided, and that they were free to opt out of the survey if they changed their mind and did not wish to participate. They were also reminded not to write their names on the questionnaires because the researchers did not want the students’ responses to be known by anybody and that their confidentiality was very important to the research.

Instrument

A lot of researchers in this domain have often used different approaches for data collection. Materials have often consisted of using teacher candidates’ lesson plans from the programs’ practicum courses Baecher el al. (2014) have been used. Some have conducted investigations of awareness and attention carried out within a larger comparative, classroom-based study that used a pre-test, immediate, and delayed post-test design to compare the effects of two different instructional treatments on language and content learning outcomes Valeo (2013). Others have also examined English as a Foreign Language (EFL) curriculum and used key documents such as their EFL curriculum documents, EFL policy-related documents as well as EFL assessments to gather relevant data Sidek (2012). This research used questionnaires to gather information about students’ knowledge and understanding of civic education and how they view the concept as a necessary tool to enhance reading and writing. The goal for using questionnaire in part was to make the survey simple because it was designed for high school students to collect the appropriate data, and to minimize bias in formulating and asking question.

There were a total of 15 questions on the survey. Question 1 was specifically to find out about the age categories of the participants. Question 2 seeks to find out about their level in school: first, second, or third year. Question 3 was to identify the
course/major of students, question 4 focuses on the number of years students have been studying English, and question 8 is a follow up question asking for student’s views on the relevance of civic education. Question 11 was to allow students to suggestions whether the teaching of civic education would serve a useful purpose. Question 14 also was designed to solicit student’s response to the use of additional resource persons to help facilitate the learning of civic education, and finally, question 15 requested for general comments about the teaching of civic education in the classroom. Questions 11, 14, and 15 were all opened ended questions and the rest were closed ended questions. The first four questions laid emphasis on demographic data with connections to education, knowledge of English and their level of education. Questions 5-7 provided the basis for finding out about students’ knowledge and understanding of civic education. Questions 9-14 were priming questions to help the researchers to understand students’ needs in the classroom in relations to the use of technology, extra-curricular, and active learning strategies.

Our goal for equal representation of gender was to get all groups onboard from the beginning and throughout the process to find out their level of interest, participation, and effects on the larger group of the student as a whole. Age was a crucial component in our research because it would offer the team the opportunity to access the level of critical thinking, active participation, experiences, and student expectations. The numbers of years students have been exposed to English will also give researchers an idea of whether colonization and the institution of English as a Second Language (ESL) have made any difference in student’s civic awareness on relevant issues as active participants in the democratic dispensation. On related issues regarding course/major, the purpose was to
find out whether there is correlation between course/majors and the level of understanding of civic issues. Knowledge of civic education will also seek to find out the amount of exposure students have and how they are able to use such knowledge to enhance their learning. Lastly, the introduction of the use of blogs, wikis, clouds and peer review in the civic education classroom is to encourage and help students to integrate the use of visual imagery such as gaming and other computer simulation activities in the classroom to enhance learning.

Procedure

Participants in the study were self-selected volunteers who agreed to take part in the study. Prior to the administering of the questionnaire students were given consent form to sign before taking part in the survey. This exercise was done in a careful manner to keep the questionnaire separate from the consent forms. The rationale is to keep the consent forms separate from the survey to ensure individual confidentiality. The purpose of the survey was explained to the students by the researcher who handed out the questionnaires to the students’ one at a time. Participants answered the questions on their own without assistance from either the researcher, school authorities or colleagues. Responses were based on individual understanding. The overall objective of using a questionnaire for the study was to respond to the students’ needs in the area of civic education and the possible ways of implementing a curriculum that will be student centered to enhance their learning and the acquisition of skills in reading, writing, and speaking. The team wanted to use this segment to engage students on issues they consider useful in helping them to achieve their learning needs. The questionnaire is reproduced in an Appendix.
Data collection

The researcher went over some terms and basic concepts and answered few questions from participants before they started to administer the questionnaire. Participants used between 15-20 minutes to answer the questions. Participants responded mostly with a simple Yes/No answer. Some of the questions required one or two sentences to give reasons or to make suggestions to support their answers. Responses were based on students’ understanding and knowledge of the questions provided for the research. Each category would then be coded and interpreted for analysis in accordance with the objective of the study.
Chapter 3

Results/Data analysis

In analyzing the results to re-introduce a curriculum to teach civic education in the classroom, the following categories from the survey will be analyzed to determine student’s perceived knowledge of civic education, perceived relevance of civic education, source of information about civic education, the need for additional resources to help teach civic education in the classroom, and the use of blog, peer review, wikis and cloud during civic education lessons.

Table 5

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Perceived Knowledge of Civic Education</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Code</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Results from the table above shows that 80 percent of the students surveyed report that they have knowledge of civic education and 20 percent have no knowledge of civic education. The overall findings indicate that students have prior knowledge of civic education. This also supports the assertion that the adaption of civic education clubs at Bekwai SDA Secondary School made an impact in creating awareness amongst the students.
Table 6

Perceived Relevance of Civic Education

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>87.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>12.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As indicated in table 3, 87.5 of the students surveyed perceive the relevance of civic education in the classroom as an important aspect of their language learning, and 12.5 percent do not value the relevance of learning civic education in the classroom. The results again proves that majority of the students have some kind of civic education background.

Table 7

Source of information about Civic Education in the Classroom

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>School</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>62.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Radio</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>37.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4 shows the different sources from which students reported hearing about civic education, out of the 40 students surveyed, 62.5 percent said they heard about civic education from the school, and 37.5 percent responded by saying they heard about civic
education over the radio. Overall, the concept of civic education is well known and students knew exactly what they were discussing.

One of the motivating factors that resulted in the conducting of the survey at the school was the previous engagement of outside resources to implement the concept of civic education. The study wanted to know whether the use of such personnel would play any significant role hence the question, “Many groups and organizations work with schools to provide funding for educational programs. Examples are books, resource persons to work with students, student exchange programs, supply of computers and others. Do you think the provision of such additional resources to help the teaching of civic education in the classroom will be a good idea?”

Table 8

The use of additional resources for civic education

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Results from the table shows that students are willing to accept additional resources and to work with others to promote civic education in their school. The forty students who participated in the survey all responded positively in favor of the use of outside resources.

Data Analysis
Scott Roy and Marcia (2014) used qualitative research method of research influenced by a phenomenological tradition to categorize and code the data into emergent themes based on arising patterns in TBLT to capture participant descriptions of TBLT in practice (p. 8). Similar approach was used to gather information for analysis. A representative of coded units of meaning was group into categories that was used as the basis for understanding participant’s perspectives on teaching civic education in the classroom as a model for reading and writing (p. 9).

The study was mindful of the failures and the inability to implement and to sustain a successful civic education program at the school, and to address the problem, the study in its curriculum proposal wanted to find out students perception to the use of blogs, wikis, peer reviews and clouds. The following results were obtained in respect to the question reading and writing is very important for students to achieve fluency. As a student, do you think learning civic education in the classroom will help you to achieve this objective? Students were asked to rank reading, writing and speaking in the order of importance: Very important, Somewhat Important, Not Very Important, and Not Important. Student’s responses were measured against the course/major to find out whether there will be any significant difference. The table below gives the summary of the Kruskal-Wallis rank sum test

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Speaking</th>
<th>Reading</th>
<th>Writing</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Chi-Squared</td>
<td>2.7604</td>
<td>NaN, df =3</td>
<td>1.1423</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P-value</td>
<td>0.4301</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>0.7669</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 9
Importance of Reading, Writing, and Speaking by Major
Kruskal-Wallis showed there is no significant difference in rating of the importance of reading, writing, and speaking by major.

In addition, the survey wanted to find out student’s response to the use of technology in civic education classroom and their response to the question, in the past, being literate required only reading and writing. “Today’s world, we need to be fluent in multiple literacies that require not only being able to read and write, but also to understand and navigate sources. Will you like the use of internet in the classroom to engage in the following activities: blogs, wikis, clouds, and peer review?” Kruskal-Willis test was done to compare the school year of the students with their responses to four categories-Blogs, Wikis, Clouds, and Peer Reviews. Students were asked to rank these in the order of importance: Very important, Somewhat Important, Not Very Important, and Not Important and the following results were obtained:

Table 10
Importance of Blog, Wikis, Cloud and Peer-review
By School Year

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Blog</th>
<th>Wikis</th>
<th>Peer-Review</th>
<th>Cloud</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Chi-Squared</td>
<td>1.5283</td>
<td>3.4859</td>
<td>5.2816</td>
<td>0.6718</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P-value</td>
<td>0.4657</td>
<td>0.175</td>
<td>0.0713</td>
<td>0.7147</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Kruskal-Wallis showed there is no significant difference in rating of the importance of Blog, Wikis, Cloud, and Peer-Review.
Chapter 4

Discussions/Conclusion

The main objective of this study was to find out whether it would be desirable from the students point of view, to re-introduce a curriculum to enhance the learning of civic education in the classroom through the use of a student centered programs that would represent a shift from the traditional learning method to include the use of blog, wikis, cloud, and peer review and other learning strategies to help students to achieve fluency in the target language. Based on the samples collected, students overwhelmingly believed that the teaching of civic education in the classroom can help students to improve and achieve fluency in English. In response to the question: “Reading and writing is very important for students to achieve fluency. As a student, do you think learning civic education in the classroom will help you to achieve this objective?” out of the 40 students who took part in the survey, 40 regard reading as very important, 36 said writing was very important and 38 indicated that speaking was very important.

The study also indicated that majority of the students, 80 percent had prior knowledge of civic education, and this knowledge was either acquired in school or heard over the radio. The remaining 20 indicated had no prior knowledge of civic education. In addition, student responses to the question of the relevance of civic education also support the idea re-introduction of civic education. Over 87 percent said civic education was relevant and 12.5 percent said it was irrelevant. In a follow up question to find out the reasons and suggestions, some of the students said “civic education served the interest of politicians” and “I do not trust politicians with issues of civic education” Clearly these students have strong opposing views about civic education because of past experiences,
and this buttresses the point made earlier about political instability and lack of will power to implement the concept of civic education to serve student needs. Politicians instead have used civic education as a channel to pursue political agendas. In order to address their concerns there is the need to introduce student centered activities that would address their learning objectives.

The survey in part, wanted to find out different ways to re-introduce the concept of civic education curriculum that would address concerns raised by students. In this regard, the study wanted to know the level of interest of students in learning strategies using blogs, wikis, clouds, and peer review help improve reading and writing, the overwhelming response supports the notion that students are willing to explore practical learning strategies to meet their learning needs. Results from the study shows that there was no significant difference in their perception about the use of blogs, wikis, peer review, and clouds. The results indicate the need for a shift from the traditional method of learning to a more practical, student-centered form of learning to benefit students. The era of technological advancement in the 21st century offers diverse ways to enhance student learning and development. It is our responsibility to use these technologies to advance the course of human kind and to demonstrate that our generation was given an opportunity and we transformed this dream into a living reality. It is time we bring technology into our classroom and to create the necessary environs to enable our students to compete, and to regain higher academic standards which has eluded them in the past. Technology has become part of our lives and it here to stay.

Another important area the study seeks to explore is the willingness of all the participants to accept the use of outside resources in the form of educational materials,
resource personnel, and other logistics to harness their learning goals. All the forty students surveyed responded “yes” symbolizing their readiness to work with people pursuing the same learning objective. It is also important to acknowledge the student’s level in school and number of years studying English. Out of the forty students surveyed, the number of year studied English ranges from 10 to 19 years. See Table below.

**Table 11**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
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<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>4</td>
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<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>20</td>
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<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>42.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>7.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
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</tr>
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</tr>
<tr>
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The results give an indication that one of the motives for the imposition of English as a second language was to use the concept of civic education to create and sustain awareness amongst the people including the educational institutions. Even though a majority of the students have prior knowledge and perceive civic education as an important aspect of their learning, the policy has not succeeded because there is no direct
impact of the acquisition of the language to the usefulness of civic education in terms of awareness creation and practice.

Furthermore, the results to find out whether a student’s major has any impact on the perceived importance of reading, writing, and speaking shows that there was no significant difference. In both the Kruskal-Wallis tests to compare the relationship between the course major to reading, writing, and speaking, the p-values showed no difference. The results suggests that the notion that business majors will always values reading, and speaking more than science and other majors does not have any basis in this study, since all the students surveyed attached great importance to reading, writing and speaking.

Conclusion

Although the current study portrays interesting results with regards to the students’ prior knowledge and relevance of civic education, it is important to strategize any attempt to re-introduce the concept of civic education into the Ghanaian schools. In pursuit of such a laudable objective, the process should be guided by historical context, student’s interest and the reliance of outside resources to enhance student learning. The re-introduction of the new curriculum should be adapted as a gradual process for a full integration into the other schools. To ensure effective implementation, there will be the need for human resource development for school administrators, instructors/teachers, parents, students and other stake holders in the educational process. The implementation of this policy will also call for transparency and the need to avoid unnecessary interference that would undermine the principles and values of the curriculum.
To ensure effective implementation, logistics will play an integral role in the institution of the program. This will call for high speed internet service, computers both desk tops and lap tops, iPod’s, free computer software application programs such as Gimp, Piktochart, Garage Banner, Prezi, and others that would be easily accessible to students, technical support system would also be required to train and maintain the full operation of such equipment’s. As the study indicates, the students are ready for a new beginning but the question is where, why, how, and what needs to be done? The question as to where to begin, the Bekwai SDA secondary school has opened its doors for the institution of a pilot program to be replicated across the country. The issue of why deserves a lot of attention because the 21st century learner needs support, assistance and the determination to approach the digital age equally prepared and ready to take up the challenge of utilizing available resources to the full. As to how to do this, is not going to be easy, but I believe through collaborative learning, partnership with institutions and businesses, the goal of creating the right learning environment for students to achieve their learning needs would be possible. And finally, what needs to be done? The learning needs of our students puts the responsibility on all stakeholders in education to ensure the learning needs of students become the one number priority.

Students in the study have expressed the desire for pursuit of higher academic excellence by taking a complete ownership of their learning, and to take advantage of emerging technology in the 21st century. Reading, writing, and speaking are synonymous and students need to be empowered with these learning skills to rightfully take their place in society as active
References


Education in Australia? Ethos. 22(4), 35-43.


Appendix A

Teaching of civic education in the classroom-A model for reading and writing

Survey Questions

Civic education is a process of creating awareness on economic, social, political, and other related issues that enables people to be informed about governance, rule of law, rights and responsibilities.

1. Give your age: Circle one: 14-15 16-17 18-20
2. Which year are you? Circle one: Freshman Sophomore
   Junior Senior
3. What is your major? _______________________________________________________
4. How long have you been studying English? _________________________________
5. Have you heard about civic education before? Circle one: YES or NO
   If NO, go to question 7.
7. Do you think the process of helping people to understand civic issues is relevant?
   Circle one: YES or NO
   If YES, go to question 9.
If NO, [8] Do you have any suggestions why it is not relevant to teach civic education?

9. Reading and writing is very important for students to achieve fluency. As a student, do you think learning civic education in the classroom will help you to achieve this objective? Circle 1-4 for each.


10. Do you think students will be better served if civic education is taught as a subject in the classroom? Circle one: YES or NO

If YES, go to Question 12.

If NO, [11] Do you have any suggestions?
12. In the past, being literate required only reading and writing. Today’s world, we need to be fluent in multiple literacies that require not only being able to read and write, but also to understand and navigate sources. Will you like the use of internet in the classroom to engage in the following activities: blogs, wikis, clouds, and peer review? Circle 1-4 for each.

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<th>Very important</th>
<th>Somewhat Important</th>
<th>Not Very Important</th>
<th>Not Important</th>
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<tr>
<td>Wikis</td>
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<tr>
<td>Clouds</td>
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<tr>
<td>Peer Review</td>
<td>1</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
13. Many groups and organizations work with schools to provide funding for educational programs. Examples are books, resource persons to work with students, student exchange programs, supply of computers and others. Do you think the provision of such additional resources to help the teaching of civic education in the classroom will be a good idea?

Circle one: YES or NO

If YES, go to question 15.

If NO, [14] Do you have any suggestions about additional resources?

15. Do you have any suggestions for the teaching of civic education in the classroom?