The Construction of Poetry Teaching in Ghanaian Senior High School English Language Core Textbooks

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ABSTRACT This paper attempts to find out how poetry teaching is constructed in Ghanaian senior high school English language core textbooks. Qualitative analysis was used to analyse twenty lessons on poetry teaching in three English Language core textbooks. It was found that the poetry lessons in the textbooks were underpinned by a multimodal pedagogy of poetry teaching. In terms of the literature teaching approach, it wasrealised that poetry teaching was constructedin the textbooks predominantly as a way of learning about literary terminology, of promoting interactive and exploratory learning, and of drawing on students' experiences. It was also observed that various identities for both teachers and students were constructed by the poetry lessons in the textbooks. The paper suggests that poetry teaching in Ghanaian senior high school English language core textbooks should be more multimodal and student-centered in order to minimise the apathy associated with it.

INTRODUCTION

In a turbulent age, our schools and colleges must prepare the student to meet unprecedented and unpredictable problems. He needs to understand himself; he needs to work out harmonious relationships with the other people. He must achieve philosophy, an inner center from which to view in perspective the shifting society about him; he will influence for good or ill its future development. Any knowledge about man and society that schools can give him should be assimilated into the stream of his actual life (Rosenblatt 1978: 3).

The statement above holds true today as it did over three decades ago when it was made. In her work, Rosenblatt encourages teachers of literature to perceive literature as an integral part of their lives and to embrace it as such. She maintains that teachers of literature should make it their aim to make literature lively and meaningful to their students. In addition, they should create opportunities for their students to explore literary texts, so that they would be able to think independently and critically. In this way, they would be able to apply that critical thinking to other aspects of their lives and thereby enjoy the benefits of literature.

Poetry is one of the three main genres of literature, with prose and drama being the other two. It is however sad that although many books have been written and published over the years on the teaching of poetry, especially for high schools and colleges, poetry teaching and learning continues to be received with much apathy by both teachersand students. One reason for thiscould be the way poetry is taught in schools and colleges. In many cases, some teachers of English, more often than not, lack the skills and abilities needed to teach poetry effectively (Adomat 2012). Moreover, many teachers of poetry think that it is the technical aspects of poetry rather than the meaning thatis more important. For example, they think that students should be made to understand figures of speech such as metaphors, oxymorons, synecdoches and iambic pentameters which are often embedded in poetry, in order for them to assimilate the lesson. However, some leading theorists of poetry teaching such as Iser (1978) and Hayhoe-and Parker (1990) have argued that poetry is meant to be enjoyed and understood by students or learners in different ways.As such, teachers of poetry should create more opportunities for students to exhibit their talents in this respect. Indeed, a study conducted by Jackson

(2005: 1) posits the view that the study of poetry 'provides a way for young people to develop critical writing and thinking skills, gain confidence and become empowered citizens in their communities and beyond'. How teachers of poetry achieve this is largely dependent on their abilities to make poetry enjoyable and to minimize the negative views that students often have of it. In Ghana where this study was conducted, a number of problems arise regarding the teaching and learning of poetry (see also Kress 2010).

Although poetry forms an integral part of the Ghanaian Senior High School English language curriculum, not much attention has been given to its teaching. In most cases, both students and teachers of English in some Ghanaian Senior High Schools consider poetry as a "monster" which cannot be tamed. This perception of poetry buttresses Adam's introductory statement in Dias and Hayhoe's (1988) work entitled *Developing Response to Poetry* in which he laments how the teaching of poetry continues to pose a challenge to both teachers and students in secondary schools:

There is a considerable unease in the case of many teachers of English, especially at secondary school level, about what exactly to do with poetry in the classroom and that, in consequence, relatively little poetry is used, particularly in the first threeyears of secondary schooling (Dias and Hayhoe 1988: vii).

This observation is quite true in the case of Ghanaian Senior High Schools where some teachers of English are unwilling to teach poetry, giving the excuse that it is full of figures of speech which are difficult to teach and difficult to assimilate by students. Somestudents refer to poetry as "a monstrous and dreadful subject", and thus display a lack adaisical attitude towards it.

The problem surrounding poetry teaching is partly due to the minimal attention given to it in Ghanaian Senior High Schoolcore English language textbooks, as well as the English language curriculum. For example, in the textbooks for Year 1, Year 2 and Year 3, which were used to collect data for this paper, there are only 20 lessons on poetry. To make things worse, final-year high school students are merely asked to answer 10 multiple choice questions on the five selected African poems which have been studied for the three-year period. It is in response to these realities around the teaching of poetry in

Ghanaian Senior High Schools that this research was conducted.

The purpose of the research was to investigatethe ways in which poetry teaching was constructed in Ghanaian Senior High School English language core textbooks, through an analysis of the poetry lessons in the textbooks. The study was guided by the following research questions:

(i) How is poetry teaching constructed in the Ghanaian senior high school English language core textbooks?

(ii) What teaching pedagogies underpin the activities that help to construct poetry teaching in these textbooks?

(iii) What theories of literature teaching underpin the construction of poetry teaching in these textbooks?

(iv) What identities are constructed for teachers and students with regard to the activities which accompany the teaching and learning of the poems in these textbooks?

The research findings are discussed in the sections that follow, but it is important first to outline the methodology that was employed in the collection of data for this study.

METHODOLOGY

This study utilized a combined methodology of qualitative and quantitative approaches to data collection and analysis. The ideas of Patton (1980) as well as Denzin and Lincoln (1998) were considered particularly relevant to this study. Patton (1980) defines qualitative research as that which involves analysis and evaluation of data. He adds that qualitative research embraces data collection and thoughtful analysis of the materials involved in the research. Denzin and Lincoln (1998) assert that in a qualitative research there is no uniform judgment or assessment, but rather there are many approaches which are used by the individuals to arrive at the outcome of the research. In this paper, the lessons on poetry teaching in the Ghanaian Senior High School English language core textbooksare examined or analysed in detail and the results are the independent findings of the researchers. Content analysis of the poems is however the subject of a forthcoming paper. The purpose of doing the analysis is to find out what literature teaching theories, as well as teaching

pedagogies or approaches, underpin the poetry lessons, and how the poetry lessons in these textbooks construct poetry teaching.

As a qualitative study, this study is mainly a textual analysis of the selected textbooks. Klein (1996: 228) argues that textual analysis involves 'the identification, examination and evaluation of various techniques and tools used by the creator of a text'. In line with this argument, this paper seeks to identify and examine the various techniques adopted by the writers of the textbooks in the teaching of poetry. This process involves the identification of pedagogical theories that have influenced the teaching and learning of the poems in the textbooks. It is throughthis analysis that the ways poetry teaching has been constructed in the textbooks have been identified.

The textual analysis also considers if the lessons in the textbooks are influenced by the multimodal pedagogy of teaching poetry. Cope and Kalanzis (2000: 187-188) argue that … all texts are multimodal… and no text can exist in a single mode, so that all texts are always multimodal although one modality among these can be dominant; and there are texts and objects of a semiotic kind which exist predominantly in a mode or modes other than the multimode of language…

This means that any evaluation of the poems in the textbooks should take into consideration the application of multimodal pedagogy.

Finally, this study involved a quantitative analysis of the activities or exercises in the various lessons. The activities accompanying the poems in the textbooks were counted and grouped according to the type of literature teaching approaches they fall under, such as formalist approach, exploratory learning, interactive learning, creative writing skills and language learning. This exercise then provided the researchers with a fair idea of the percentage of activities whichwere dominant in constructing poetry teaching in a particular way.

Description of Data

The data analyzed in this paper was collected from Ghanaian Senior High School English language core textbooks.The three textbooks are the Senior High School Book One, Senior High School Book Two and Senior High School Book Three. The textbooks were written by the same

authors, namely, Aloysius et al. (2000) and published by Unimax Macmillan Limited under the auspices of the government of Ghana. The textbooks consist of unit lessons on language, reading comprehension, vocabulary and poetry. It is relevant to mention that although multiple choice questions in poetry are important for Ghanaian senior high school English language students during their final examination, which is usually-organised by the West African Examinations Council (WAEC), the textbook producers have not been able to make enough provision for this type of questions.

The total number of lessons on poetry in the three textbooks is 20. These 20 poetry lessons embrace all categories of poems, ranging from African to European to American. The breakdown of the poetry lessons in these textbooks is as follows:

Book One (six poems)
i) 'Superstition'
ii) A Plea for Mercy'
iii) Oral Poetry
iv) 'When You Are Old'
v) Follower'
vi) Criticizing Poetry

Book Two (eight poems)
i) 'All Men Come to the Hills'
ii) 'Mother to Son'
iii) 'The Charge of the Light Brigade'
iv) 'The Target'
v) 'The People Went to War'
vi) 'White Shadows'
vii) 'Naming of Parts'
viii) 'In Memory of a Poet'

Book Three (six poems)
i) 'Broad Daylight'
ii) 'Letter from a Contract Worker'
iii) 'Telephone Conversation'
iv) 'Curve Me Up When I Die'
v) 'Sonnet'
vi) 'Certitude'

The poems, the poets, the poets' nationality and their birth dates are illustrated in the table below.Where there is a dash after a particular year, it shows that the poet is still alive (at least at the time of the writing of this paper). It must be noted that there were no dates of publication for some of the poems at the time of conducting this research. In addition, some of the poems in the textbooks are not existing poems but mere activities to illustrate the teaching of poetry in these textbooks.

From the Table 1, it is obvious that there are no contemporary Ghanaian or African poems in the textbooks. This means that there are no poems written within the last ten years in these textbooks. In all, the textbooks have nine African poems and ten non-African poems, which make up 19 poetry lessons. There is one lesson that does not fall under any specific type of poetry; it is merely a lesson on how to critique poetry. In terms of the themes of the poetry lessons, there are seven poetry lessons on social issues, five on war, one on colonialism and suppression, two on love, two on political issues, and two on traditional beliefs.

In the Senior High School Book One, which is made up of 207 pages, only nine pages are allocated to poetry teaching and learning. Book Two has eight pages dedicated to poetry teaching out of 243 pages, and Book Three has 10 pages for poetry lessons out of 183 pages. From the statistics shown above, it is apparent that poetry teaching has not been given much space in these textbooks, given that poetry forms an integral part of the English language curriculum in Ghanaian Senior High Schools. In fact, for textbooks with such a high number of pages to have less than ten pages allocated to poetry teaching and learning in each book shows how poetry as a genre of literature has been undermined at the high school level of education in Ghana.

Analysis of the Poetry Lessons in the Textbooks

This section is an analysis of the 20 poetry lessons in the textbooks to ascertain the theories of teaching as well as literature teaching approaches that underpin the lessons, and how they contribute to the construction of poetry teaching. In all, there are 60 activities which accompany the 20 poetry lessons in the textbooks. What follows is an analysis of the activities in the various lessons to ascertain which particular approach of teaching poetry is most prevalent and why.

Exploratory Approach to Poetry Teaching

This approach involves activities that encourage students to participate in poetry learning by coming up with their own views on the poem being discussed. In the textbooks, seven activities out of sixty, which represents 12% of the total number, follow this approach. The exploratory learning takes different forms, such as independent thinking on the part of students, critical thinking, drawing on students' general knowledge, and sometimes eliciting their opinions on the issues under consideration. In the case of independent thinking, an example is found in poetry lesson one where students are asked whether they consider themselves 'lucky

Table 1: Details of poems in the three textbooks

C.No.	Poem	Poet	Nationality/Date	
1	Superstition	Karibo Mayi	Nigerian	(1947-
2	A Plea for Mercy	Kwesi Brew	Ghanaian	(1928-2007)
3	Oral Poetry	No Poet	Ghanaian/Traditional	
4	When You Are Old	W.B. Yeats	Irish	(1865-1939)
5	Follower	Seamus Heaney	Irish	(1939-
6	Criticizing Poetry	No Poet	No Poet	
7	All Men Come to the Hills	Roger Mais	Jamaican	(1905-1955)
8	Mother to Son	Langston Hughes	American	(1902-1967)
9	The Charge of the Light Brigade	Alfred Tennyson	British	(1809-1892)
10	The Target	Ivor Gurney	English	(1890-1937)
11	The People Went to War	Antonio Jacinto	Angolan	(No date available)
12	White Shadows	James Kirkup	American	(1918-
13	Naming of Parts	Henry Reed	English	(1914-1986)
14	In Memory of a Poet	Joe de Graft	Ghanaian	(1918-
15	Broad Daylight	James Kirkup	American	(1918-
16	Letter from a Contract Worker	Antonio Jacinto		No date available
17	Sonnet	William Shakespeare	English	(1564-1616)
18	Certitude	William Shakespeare	English	(1564-1616)
19	Telephone Conversation	Wole Soyinka	Nigerian	(1934-
20	Curve Me Up When I Die	Gerda Mayer	German	(1923-

C.N. = Corresponding Number

to be in Senior Secondary School'. This type of question requires students to think on their own and then provide the answer. Their answers are likely to be different, because although they come from the same country (Ghana), their experiences might be different.

Still in lesson one, the question on whether students are superstitious or not demands critical thinking. The students need to first of all understand what the word "superstition"means before they can convincingly say whether they are superstitious or not. An additional example of exploratory learning which draws on students' knowledge can be seen in the same lesson where students are asked to identify other forms of superstition that they are likely to find in the poem and in their communities. For students to provide responses to this question, they need some knowledge of beliefs and practices in their local communities which they consider to be superstitious. Based on this foreknowledge about superstition, they can then identify similar forms of superstition in the poem.

Another example of exploratory learning which involves eliciting students' opinions is seen in poem number eightwhere students are to discuss the poem and come up with views on the kind of metaphors and similes used in it. Such an activity gives students a chance to deliberate on the task before presenting their answers. Their answers may be right or wrong in this case, because the metaphors and similes in this lesson are not explicit, and more importantly they are extended metaphors. Eliciting students' opinions can also be seen in poem number two which requires students to indicate what the poem is about and whether they consider the poem to be a successful one. Such an activity demands students' individual responses, based on their level of understanding and degree of literary exposure.

All these examples indicate that students' active involvement or participation in poetry lessons is crucial to their success in the study of literature. However, this type of approach to the teaching and learning of poetry is not widely used in the textbooks.

Construction of Poetry Teaching through Interactive Learning

This type of learning takes the form of a conversation among a group of students or between pairs of students during the teaching and learning process. It can also be defined as collaborative learning among a group of students or pairs of students. During this type of learning, genuine discussion of issues takes place as students are allowed to express their views on the poem or poems in their various groups. Eight activities out of sixty, representing 13%, demonstrate this approach. Interactive learning allows students to plan their own learning strategies, such as areas to focus on, the duration the discussion would take, and the kind of role each student or group member would play. This approach to teaching and learning poetry can be helpful to some introverted students since they would be given a chance to talk, especially when the group does not involve many members.

Some poetry lessons in the textbooks that followthe interactive approach to poetry teaching can be seen in lessons 7, 8, 9,10, 11 and 19. In lessons 10 and 11, students are expected to be in groups and discuss their views on war. This can be seen as interactive learning because it involves group work and students would certainly talk with one another. The activity may even involve students talking about some of the war films they normally watch at home andat the cinemas. They can also talk about the wars in Africa and in neighbouring countries and how this has affected them. For example, they can share their views of Liberian and Somalian refugees in Ghana. The interactive approach can sometimes involve independent and critical thinking on the part of students, depending on the kind of activity involved. In lesson 19, the activity requires students to engage in role play as they act out a part of the poem. The acting activity is an interactive approach to poetry learning because students have to organise themselves into groups and discuss the poems for detailed understanding and the role each student should play, and how best these roles can be played in order to depict exactly the ideas portrayed in the poem.

Although there are other forms of interactive learning activities on poetry in the textbooks, such as reading the poem aloud in pairs, we do not consider them as real interactive approaches of constructing poetry, for they do not require genuine interactive activities such as discussion and acting parts of the poems. Moreover, although this approach to teaching and learning poetry can instill confidence in the stu-

dents since they have to organise themselves well in order to perform their respective roles effectively, not enough activitiesfollow this approach in the Ghanaian Senior High School English language core textbooks. This approach of learning poetry represents 12% of the total activities, and constructs poetry teaching as a way of enhancing students' writing skills.

Construction of Poetry Teachingby Drawing on Students' Experiences and Knowledge

This approach embraces the situation where activities meant to teach poetry are linked to students' experiences or draw on their knowledge of the poems. Two activities in the textbooks, representing 3% percent are based on this approach. The activities under lessons 1 and 2 illustrate the approach with the poem 'Superstition' and the oral poem. One of the activities which draw on students' prior knowledge and experience is seen when students are asked to link the exercise to their traditional beliefs about superstition. Such an exercise enhances the students' comprehension of the poem under discussion, because the belief in superstition is an open secret in many Ghanaian cultures.

The lesson on oral poetry is another example of drawing on students' experiences and knowledge about traditional Ghanaian art forms. The artifacts used in this poetry lesson are symbols of history, tradition and culture in the Ghanaian context. Therefore, using them to construct poetry teachingis a way of endorsing or promoting Ghanaian cultures.

Writing Tasks as Ways of Constructing Poetry Teaching

This type of activity engages students in writing their own poems using the original poem as a model or starting point. Writing tasks can also ask students to respond to parts of the poem through writing. Four activities out of 60, representing 7 percent, focus on this type of exercise,as shown in the activities of lessons 1, 11, 12 and 20. However, the writing tasks appear in different forms and with a different focus in each of the lessons they accompany. In lesson 1 activity'd', for example, students are asked to write their own poems about similar superstitions they know about. This kind of writing task tests students' retentive memory and descrip-

tive skills as they compose poems on issues or events they consider to be superstitious. The activity also requiresstudents to have some knowledge of real experiences of superstition for them to be able to compose good poems on this subject matter. The focus of this kind of writing task during poetry teaching is to make students learn about some cultural beliefs and practices within their community through writing about them. In lesson 11 activity 'c', the students are asked to write a playscript based on the setting of the poem. This demands a high imaginative and creative ability, because the setting of the poem can only be imagined, and it takes students with a creative talent to effectively carry out this assignment.

A similar exercise is given to students in lesson 20 when they are asked to use the poem under consideration as a model to construct their own parody about how they might behave on completion of senior high school. This is an example of Vygotsky's notion that students learn through imitation (Vygotsky 1978). Based on the analysis of the poetry lessons and the activities which accompany them, it is apt to argue that poetry teaching is constructed in the Ghanaian English language core textbooks to enhance the skills of writing as well as creativity in students.

Multimodal Pedagogy or Approach to Teaching Poetry

The New London Group (1996) has argued that teaching and learning, apart from talk or speech, can occur in many other ways such as dramatizing, drawing and gestures. It is, however, disheartening to note in the textbooks that the multimodal pedagogy has only one activity out of the 60 activities which accompany the 20 lessons on poetry. The low representation of this approach in these textbooks is an attestation to the fact that the Ghanaian English Second Language curriculum does not allow students to explore poetry, and we believe this might be one of the factors which contribute to students' negative attitude towards the study of poetry.

Literary Approach to Poetry Teaching

In this case, poetry teaching is constructed predominantly as the identification ofliterary terminology and figures of speech and how they

contribute to the meaning of texts. Such poetry teaching pedagogy requires students to identify rhyme, rhythm, simile, metaphor, etc. in the poems. In the textbooks, 20 activities out of 60 construct poetry teaching in this manner. This represents 33 percent of the total number of activities. It suggests the need for students to study the literary terminology, because they need to understand these terms and be able to identify them in poetry texts in order to appreciate poetry effectively. This approach of appreciating poetry underscores the formalist approach to teaching poetry.

Another approach to teaching poetry, which is evident through the analysis of the poetry lessons, is the structuralist approach. This approach includes activities or questions which demand students' knowledge about the structure, form and techniques of the poems. Five activities out of 60, representing percent, draw on the structuralist approach. For example, activity 'b' of lessons 17 and 18 illustrate this approach as students are asked to identify the differences and similarities in two poems by considering the techniques, structure of the poem, register and subject matter. This approach then constructs poetry teaching from a structuralist point of view.

OBSERVATIONS AND DISCUSSION

From the analysis of the 20 lessons on poetry in the Ghanaian Senior High School English language core textbooks, it is evident that poetry teaching is constructed in many different ways in these textbooks. The following are the findings which answer the research questions of this study:

Research Question 1: How is poetry teaching constructed in the Ghanaian Senior High School English language core textbooks?

From the analysis of the various poetry lessons in the textbooks, it can be said that poetry teaching is predominantly constructed in the textbooks as the identification of literary devicessuch as metaphors, oxymorons, rhythm and rhyme. Evidence for this is that 20 activities out of the 60 in the textbooks, representing 33 percent,construct poetry as such.

In addition, poetry teaching is constructed as interactive learning where by students are given opportunities to work in pairs or groups and share ideas. Eight activities out of the sixty, representing 13 percent , construct poetry teach-

ing in this manner. Poetry teaching is also constructed as exploratorylearning whereby students are offered the opportunity to explore the poem and come up with personal responses. As shown earlier, 7 out of the 60 activities, representing 12 percent, construct poetry teaching in this way. There is also evidence that poetry teaching is constructed as a way of drawing on students' experiences and knowledge. Two activities out of 60, representing 3 percent, are based on this approach. Furthermore, poetry teaching is constructed as a way of encouraging creative writing among students. However, only 4 activities out of 60, representing 7%, focus on this type of exercise.

Research Question 2: What teaching pedagogies underpin the activities that help to construct poetry teaching in these textbooks?

One major teaching pedagogy, which underpins the construction of poetry teaching in the textbooks is the multimodal pedagogy of teaching. This approach, as postulated by the New London Group (1996), considers teaching and learning as activities which can take place in different modes, modes other than the written text, such as dramatizing, drawing and other visual modes. In terms of dramatizing, only one activity out of the 60, representing 0.6 percent, uses this pedagogy. This however makes the lesson student-centered. The low occurrence of this pedagogy in the lessons might be due to the nature of the examination that the Ghanaian senior high school final-year students write. The students are not examined in any multimodal form apart from the printed text. In the same vein, drawing and dramatizing are not modes of examining students in the Ghanaian curriculum as far as official examinations are concerned. The researchers believe these accounts for the low featuring of this type of pedagogy in the textbooks.

Research Question 3: What theories of literature teaching underpin the construction of poetry teaching in these textbooks?

From the analysis of the lessons, it has been noted that the formalist approach to teaching literature, whereby learners are asked to explain literary terms such as oxymoron, synecdoche, rhythm and rhyme, is a predominant feature of the activities which accompany the poetry lessons in the textbooks. This is so because of the type of examination which final year students have to write. As pointed out earlier, students in the final year are made to respond to multiple-choice type of questions which are based on

five selected poems. In most cases, these questions revolve around the identification of literary terms. However, it is pertinent to mention that this approach to teaching poetry which the textbook writers seek to promote might be the major cause of students' apathy to learning poetry (see Bennett 2011).

Research Question 4: *What identities are constructed for teachers and students with regard to the activities which accompany the teaching and learning of the poems in these textbooks?*

It has been deduced from the analysis that teachers are constructed in the lessons as managers and purveyors of knowledge, although students are involved in the activities and sometimes allowed to explore the poems on their own. For example, in the activities which require right or wrong answers, such as identifying poetic devices and explaining figures of speech, there is no doubt that teachers' inputs in this regard would be the overriding factor.

In terms of constructing students' identity in the textbooks, it is deduced that students are constructed predominantly as low-level active learners rather than investigators or exploratory learners. Students are also constructed as examination candidatesthrough the activities which accompany the poetry lessons in these textbooks. An example can be seen in the formalist approach to teaching poetry when students are asked to identify and explain some literary terms and poetic devices in the poems.

Finally, students are constructed as examination candidates who are expected to have knowledge of many aspects of the English Language. Admittedly, the Ghanaian Senior High School English language curriculum is concerned with the appropriate use of language. For example, there are always 100 multiple choice questions in the English language examination paper for the final-year students to respond to. These multiple choice questions comprise aspects such as vocabulary drills, synonyms, antonyms, lexis and structure, literature and the like. This indeed constructs students as people 'who need to be guided by experts to become skill users of language ina range of texts' (Reed 2006: 151; Kempe 2011).

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the researchers suggests that, during the final-year examination, students could be asked to explore particular poems and express their personal responses about these poems, rather than making them respond to a set of multiple choice questions on the poems. This approach is in line with the views of learning theorists who believe that when students are allowed to explore concepts during teaching and learning they are more informed than being taught by teachers Finally, activities which call for language learning should be encouraged in the textbooks because these could be used to sharpen students' language skills as well as to improve their stock of vocabulary as far as the teaching and learning of the English Language is concerned the researchers believe that these proposals, if implemented, would significantly improve the state of poetry learning and teaching in Ghanaian Senior High Schools.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the deliberations outlined above, the researchersrecommend that poetry teaching should be made more flexible in the Ghanaian senior high school English language curriculum to enable students develop keen interest in poetry. Furthermore, Ghanaian Senior High School English language curriculum planners should endeavour to include various approaches to teaching poetry, such as dramatization or visual art, instead of sticking to the prescriptive or teacher-centered approach to teaching poetry. In addition, the researchers recommend that curriculum planners, together with WAEC, should introduce new ways of examining students with regard to poetry, as this would promote students' interest in learning poetry.

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