Compulsory adoption of language culture appears to heighten controversy and tension in schools. This phenomenon seems like a ‘dilemma’ judging from the way of policy and practice in schools. Language culture at the foundation stages seems to be strictly monolingual in some schools contrary to the dynamics of the education curriculum. This indeed seems to be a cultural idiosyncrasy that underpins cultural practices in some schools. Ghana Education Service recommends the speaking of English as medium of instruction at the early stages in schools, and so, English as official language is largely used at the foundation level. This investigation is looking at how a holistic approach could create a greater impart rather than applying a ‘restrictionist’ theory in a school. This adherence calls for inquiry into ‘Speak English don’t speak vernacular in the school.’ The study employs a qualitative case study for the textual analysis. Two language teachers from ‘Kikako’ M.A. primary school in the Central region of Ghana were selected for the study. In-depth interview was the main instrument used. Analysis of data was by thematic sequencing using discursive, narrative and interpretive paradigms. The realisation of the study was that, the use of English only in schools was a controversial practice. Claims were that the use of vernacular also provided emergent and integrated literacy, which enhanced communication networking in the classrooms and school activities. It is absolutely useful to adopt English and vernacular in the school curriculum.

**Keywords:** Language culture, policy implications, English, vernacular.

**INTRODUCTION**

Language culture is perceived much more than the external expression and communication of internal thoughts in schools. It is formulated independently according to the context in which it occurs. In demonstrating the inadequacy and inappropriateness of such a view of language, observations have been made on how children’s language or vernacular has intimately been affected in school life due to compulsory adoption of only a particular language in all forms of the school’s activities. This argument is instigated by a monolingual factor, thus, the use of English-only discourse in school. An absolute denial of language use against other potential languages in vernacular is seen as a threat to linguistic values (Benson, 2000).

At the foundation stages of the Ghanaian child, language is transmitted culturally. It is learned and also taught, when parents, for example, deliberately encourage their children to talk and to respond to communications, and the correct use of language structure to widen vocabulary. The
underlining factors denote that, children largely acquire their first language by ‘grammar construction’ from exposure to a random collection of utterances and interactions that they encounter. What is classed as language usage in schools is the blending that relates to second-language acquisition and the pupils’ first language directed towards emergent literacy.

This development takes both formal and informal features. By this, language is used for routine purposes such as in games, entertainments and outreach programmes. Another dimension language takes mostly in the classrooms is; reading and writing, the study of literature, formal grammar, alleged nuances of standards of correctness and integrated links with other subjects. What goes under the concept of language usage at the foundation stages at school presupposes and relies on the prior knowledge of a first language in its basic vocabulary and essential structure acquired before school age (Taylor, & Sorenson, 1961). Therefore, if the use of vernacular is dramatically opposed and restricted its worthiness automatically affects the school curriculum in many ways.

Understanding of how to mitigate this language barrier or controversy is becoming increasingly important for stakeholders in Ghana’s education. This is because language barriers adversely appear to affect children in their access to adequate information in schools and their immediate environment. Invariably, comprehension, adherence and quality language curriculum are important for the universal development of children’s personality. Just as National Literacy Accelerated Programme in Ghana (NALAP) (2009) made provision for English and Vernacular, National Language Policy promulgated the use of English only as the medium of instruction at all levels of schooling. This underpinning rather engenders some mixed-feelings among stakeholders. From the policy perspectives and notions carried out, most parents and school administrators/proprietors assertions suggest that children would rather be advantaged when English is largely used in schools. This debate raises unstable guidelines which result in cultural ramifications in schools. These matters constitute the prima facie of the investigation upon which this paper interrogates actions in a school’s environment pertaining to this ‘restricted’ phenomenon, thus, ‘speak English, don’t speak vernacular.’ Precisely, it is to examine the impact assessment on a language culture in a school as part of our textual analysis.

**CONTEXTUALIZING THE MAIN CONCEPTS**

**Language culture**

A language culture is learned by many members of other speech communities for the sake of access to the culture of which it is the vehicle (Ludi, 2013). With respect to communication, two views emerged here. Example, one propounded by philosophers like John Locke and Bertrand Russell, espouse that language is essentially for communicating thoughts. The other view claims that language is part and parcel of thought, i.e. language plays cognitive, affective and psychomotor functions.

Language culture in this context is one of the most important parts of any language. It is a way by which people communicate with one another, build relationship, and create a sense of community (Douglas, 2000). As language culture develops in schools, children put together collective understandings through sounds. Overtime, these sounds and their implied meanings become common place and language is formed. In such circumstances, children pick different languages simultaneously either as common or unfamiliar language.
Language culture is therefore unique and facilitates learning experiences in schools. Its usage can be articulated in ways such as monolingual, bi-lingual and multi-lingual. A language culture in Ghana situates itself in English and vernacular and denotes a form of intercultural communication and a symbolic process whereby social reality is constructed, maintained, repaired and transformed. More importantly, it incorporates social functions and fosters feelings of group identity and solidarity. In schools, it is imperative to know that language culture is a power concept (Allison & vining, 1999). This is because it has the ability to completely shape one's personal identity and promoting cultural diversity.

By these assertions, appropriate language culture is significant for all learners in schools because of its integrated dimensions that permeate all activities. In specific terms, the use of English and Vernacular in schools are important communication tools for children’s language acquisition skills. This notion is another school paradigm for curriculum enrichment and expansion.

**Policy implications**

By policy implications, one needs to be sure of where policies come into play. It needs a setting where any entity, organization or individuals' responses to situation or methods to achieve targets and which are important for them, without which the targets may not be achievable or scaling up (Cummins, 2000). The science strategy requires a circumstance, certain tactics and certain policies to achieve the target required. Tactics require roles and policies to regulate it so that responses to circumstantial responses are hardwired through policy boundaries and roles to achieve the targets. Contextually achieving targets in language culture will depend on the dynamics of how monolingual, bi-lingual and multilingual modes are structured to enhance literacy growth and development in schools. Literacy empowerment harnesses human resource potential in diverse ways of children's progress and therefore curriculum expansion in language culture is required in schools.

**English:** The method of human communication, either spoken or written, consisting of the use of words in a structured and conventional way (European Committee on Culture, 2006). To those using English in certain parts of Europe, Australia, Canada or the USA, the language is used as a mother-tongue, thus, the lingua-franca. The non-English speaking countries adapt it as 'foreign' language. In some countries English has become a linguistic value and adopted as official language over centuries and decades. English can be expressed informally according to the nature of cultural distinctiveness and specifically for sign language within specific cultures for particular purposes, values, norms and expectations. Contextually, English is ‘a study of the official language in all Ghanaian schools.’

**Language policy and practice in Ghana**

Language, a part of culture, defines a group of people. Language is one of the avenues through which a society's culture is displayed thus, making it an integral part of the culture of a people of a given society. In Ghana, there are over 70 indigenous languages (Bemile, 2000) all stemming out of unique cultures. Ghana is therefore rich in diverse cultures, but it becomes a huge issue when a language of instruction must be selected especially for the lower level of education (foundations level). The reason is that, selecting a language for instruction out of the many others may be misconstrued as upholding a language over others. At the same time, when an unfamiliar language is selected for use as medium of instruction, it could spell doom for the
country (Obanya, 1999). In juxtaposition to the selection of the suitable language, preference is given to its effective use and the performance of pupils especially those at the lower primary level. The right language of instruction for the pupils could result in better understanding of concepts thus, bringing about good performance.

The issue of a language of instruction for Ghana as a policy, since the introduction of formal education has not been a stable one. There have been back and forth struggles between using English language and the mother tongue. At a point in time, it was the mother tongue (vernacular) and at another time it was English. Infact, it appeared as if the selection of the language of instruction was the preserve of the government in power, thus politicising the language policy which in Brock-Utne’s (2001), statement suggests is based on political choice in Africa.

During the 2007 curriculum review in Ghana, the language of instruction became the mother tongue for the first three years of the basic school whereas English was taught in English (MOE, 2007). The government white paper that was issued following the report of the review stated that, due to the multilingual nature of the country, there could be children from diverse language backgrounds in the same class especially in the city centres, thus, using a particular mother tongue might not be feasible in the class. This statement also meant that, for areas where there was uniformity in the language, that language could be used in instruction. Thus, in rural and peri rural areas, the pupils tend to have similar or mutually intelligible languages (Owu Ewie & Eshun, 2019), making it easier for a teacher to instruct pupils in a particular mother tongue. In such schools, pupils are to be taught in their mother tongue or in a common language so as to ensure concepts are well grasped. That is education policy considering language inclusivity as part of the school curriculum.

The National Literacy Acceleration Programme (NALAP) which was introduced in 2009 also buttressed the mother tongue instruction whilst bridging the gap between the mother tongue and English. This programme used the code switch approach where teachers used both the mother tongue and English at different percentages, to teach literacy lessons. A plethora of research conducted brought to the fore the bright side of using the code switch in the lower primary. In addition to the fact that, code switch aids pupils to understand concepts better whilst at the same time learning some English vocabulary, it is a way of instilling in pupils, their cultural identity and heritage. Pupils get to learn their culture in the right context, while getting a formal education.

Some stakeholders of education however kick against the use of the mother tongue in whatever its percentage, in schools. Stakeholders who advocate for the use of the English language claim that, English is a global language and Ghana is part of that globalisation, apart from that, children come from diverse linguistic backgrounds so teaching them in a particular mother tongue would be doing them a dis-service (Opoku-Amankwa, 2009). These stakeholders again argue that, since children speak the mother tongue at home, they should be made to speak and learn in English at school. To them, all examination questions are set in English and they need to be very conversant with English for future academic work. What these stakeholders fail to realise is that, these young learners need to grasp the content well in order to progress in their academic work, and this progression could be possible if they are taught in a language, they are very familiar with.
The stakeholder's idea of using the English only as medium of instruction has caused many school supervisors and managers to strictly instruct the pupils to speak English even outside the classroom but on the school premises as a way of ensuring that, pupils speak English all the time to perfect their competence. This belief has resulted in restricting the language of play and instruction to English. In some schools, one would find 'Speak English Only' boldly written on the walls of the school buildings and also in classrooms. These stakeholders posit that, the purpose of schooling is to learn English which will make children's future brighter. Again, there is the need to introduce pupils to the speaking of English earlier in order to learn the language 'effectively and to take part in global commerce, industry, and technology' (Opoku-Amankwa, 2009). Teachers who teach these pupils are themselves second language speakers of English, who may have limited space in English language competence.

Since the language policy says the Ghanaian language should be used in addition to English in teaching all subjects at the early primary; except in Ghanaian language lessons, it becomes problematic when these same pupils are asked to speak English on the school compound. Pupils tend to speak the language they are very familiar with, which is their Ghanaian language, when communicating with one another. They go out for break and it is their familiar language they speak. If these pupils also study a Ghanaian language as a subject, how then do they practice the speaking of the language if they are to strictly speak English everywhere on the school compound? Again, schools in the rural areas tend to have homogeneous languages; however, the lack of study materials can impede successful learning and grasping of some vocabulary in the target language which must serve as a language reservoir for pupils who will later use it for communication outside the classroom.

Analysing this situation reveals the conflicting nature of the language policy with the school’s language culture. If pupils could learn in both languages, why then should they be restricted to just one language which happens to be an unfamiliar language, where their culture is concerned? It therefore becomes pertinent to find out from both pupils and other stakeholders, their views on the issue. Thus, what type of language experience and methodology will be required at the foundations level by all stakeholders?

**METHODOLOGY**

The study adopts phenomenology as paradigm to direct analytical procedures (Cohen, Manion & Morrison). We employed phenomenology to find out how learning experiences affect language culture in a school using English as socially constructed language culture in the classrooms and other school activities and engagements. It is also to find out the existing language experiences of pupils and how it affects their capabilities and academic performance in school. The accounts of value judgement about what children can do in their own world of thinking and acting (Woods,1979) is the basis of this argument to generate answers. Consideration is also given to the philosophical view of stakeholders regarding ‘positioning of self’ contentment to particular language culture and its implications for policy and practice.

The method is a textual analysis using 2 language teachers of ‘Kikakor’ M/A primary 3 in the Central Region of Ghana to provide answers to why ‘speak English only in a school and not vernacular’ or both. The main paradigm was a qualitative case study. In-depth interview was the instrument employed and analytical procedures were by discursive, narrative and interpretive texts. Data sets were tools developed from themes that constituted participants
views. Relevance and trustworthiness of data were verification strategies applied to ensure appropriateness of evidence.

**DISCUSSION**

**Speak English, Don’t speak Vernacular**

The analytical procedures highlighted key reasons attributed to why children were made to speak English-only at school. The investigation placed in two contexts was instigated by children’s imaginative competencies from assertions made by Teacher A (English Teacher) and Teacher B (Vernacular Teacher). These were based on the ‘language use’ in the school’s environment and the classrooms. Participants’ narratives were information generated from the data. The first participant was the primary 3 English teacher.

**English Teacher, P3**

1. Why are children made to speak only English at school?

Children are made to speak only English at school to improve their imaginative skills and also build their vocabulary, for instance when a learner speaks only English, he or she gets to know and learn some vocabulary spoken by them.

The emphasis by the teacher is English providing intellectual skills and more words to build their profile dimensions for literacy development. Effective instructions and public support to learn and write at the foundation stages are considered as innovative ways for pupils, parents and school administrators. From the philosophical point of view, the use of English in schools appeared to be a universal acceptance. This is also in agreement with the government of Ghana policy where English is adopted at all levels of schooling including the early childhood level (MOE/USAID, 2012). This alignment indeed may be seen as a discontentment to bi-lingual and multilingual approaches in schools (Kwao, 2017).

2. What do you notice in pupils’ expressions when they speak English at school?

Children become fluent in speaking the English at school and also build up their confidence level, particularly when speaking in school, classroom and outside classroom setting including the community.

This narrative is about children who not only improve in communicative skills but also in community engagements. Using English both at school and home is seen to foster enhanced communication of children, and also affords continuity, internalisation and reinforcement of children’s linguistic and skills or gains. English therefore becomes a common language at school and within the community as well as medium of instruction, enabling children to further use, practice and understand it well. This supports the assertion that English as ‘commonest’ language in Ghanaian schools is also a motivating factor for its usage as official languages (Kraft, 2003). English becomes the key and all-round mode of communication, ensuring children put across their development thoughts and information (Ackah-Jnr, Appiah & Kwao, 2020)
3. How does English affect their medium of instruction?

English serves as the only medium of instruction in class. It is the official language which all children are required to learn. Also, it is a cultural value which demonstrates sharing of ideas at home and at school.

Teacher A identified the cultural value of information sharing as the key effect of English-only as medium of instruction. It is clear from the text that English has become the commonest language at a particular school but it raises concerns about cultural integration with classroom instructions and school activities. The English-only instructional practice however may not facilitate wider medium of expression or create extended learning opportunities for children who are not skilled, proficient, and good users of English. This could further limit the flexibility, creativity and innovation or inclusion of children in the school cultures or teaching and learning process (Ackah-Jnr. et al., 2020). In this case, many children could be excluded from school tasks which can lead to a ‘culture of silence’ or nonresponse during teaching and learning as children may want to escape ridicule that comes with inappropriate use of English or the articulation of certain words.

4. Why not speaking English in the classroom only and throughout the school’s sessions?

That is a culture the school has adopted to avoid the fear of making mistakes and when speaking. Example is speaking at home and public speaking which is the duty of both the teacher and children.

This response reveals that, speaking English at school is a cultural dimension which is strictly followed by pupils, parents, teachers and school administrators. This philosophical view also shows a universal acceptance of a language culture rather than any other language, to suggest that English as a language culture is a top priority of a particular school.

5. How does English speaking affect academic performance?

The teacher says, it improves the listening skills of children and keeps them very active for lessons, during games and sports and all forms of entertainment at school and public activity.

It also helps children to identify word recognition, speech development, and use of phonics, and in role play, demonstrations and group activities in classroom including fieldwork.

By this assertion, English enhances competences in classrooms, the school and in public places. Another fact-finding argument of this is supported by the assertion that, English should be used to ensure the best practices in schools (Garcia, 1995; Luckett, 1994). The implication of this is the acquisition of adequate content knowledge and pedagogical knowledge in early childhood education.

6. What are the effects of speaking English?

This response can be placed in two contexts, thus positive and negative effects. By positive effects, children learn to speak the language more competently, confidently and frequently. It
also enhances their creative skills and serves as internal culture since it becomes a way of life that establishes the understanding of other language cultures.

The dominance of English-only however creates limited room for understanding, difficulty in responding to questions and inadequate skills in problem solving.

From the two assertions, speaking English only at school has its advantages and disadvantages. These notions are real in the classrooms, the school as a whole, homes as well as the public are impressed about the way children articulate the English language (Kraft, 2003). Conversely, the reliance on English-only rather becomes problematic. If submersion into English, ‘foreign language’ in such environment is having adverse effects on children, the pupils may either swim or drown in the new language (Benson, 2005a). Among stakeholders in education these might be matters arising between policy and practice in schools.

7. What do you think are the key challenges in the use of English only in schools?

In teaching English grammar, the whole structure becomes complex, difficult and typically the understanding in both written and oral exercises. Other aspects include pronunciation, word variation, speech training and children’s feelings associated with interaction.

Several challenges of using English-only in teaching and learning were identified which include the complexity and difficulty in understanding written and oral task. Other challenges related to pronunciation, word variation and children’s feeling about communication exchanges and reactions.

The issues in the school about the use of English- only have their own complexities and challenges to learners and teachers. There are cultural connotations and undertones that border around tacit knowledge, effective communication and instructional pedagogy. It has been established that use of English and its interconnections with cognitive, affective and psychomotor skills may create a defused system where scope for learning will be limited. Its implication for policy and practice is the conflict of interest situation when it comes to content and pedagogical strategies for transferring knowledge to other subject areas and school activities. This calls for the need for to use a bi-lingual or multicultural approach to teaching and learning in schools. Overdependence in the use of specific language to teach at the foundation stages may create controversies and cultural boundaries, and render teaching and learning to many challenges (UNESCO, 2015)
**USING VERNACULAR AS COMPLIMENTARY TOOL TO ENGLISH**

**Vernacular Teacher, P3**

In this section, we present and discuss key findings of textual analysis from the interview of teacher B on vernacular as complimentary language in teaching and learning at the school.

1. Why is it important to speak Vernacular alongside English at school?

Children are made to speak vernacular alongside English at school because vernacular helps to express language patterns in many forms such as plays, songs, stories, proverbs and class interactions.

Vernacular is primarily based on the mother–tongue and facilitates the transfer of learning in schools. From the participant’s view, using vernacular in schools is a language culture showing diversity in all aspects of the teaching and learning experiences. According to UNESCO, (2015), learning outcomes become better when children are taught in vernacular or the mother–tongue. These are propositions raised about vernacular to have competitive and comparative advantages over the use of English (Luckett, 1994; MacWilliam, 1994). In Ghana the most common ones in the early childhood curriculum are the: Akan, Dangme, Ewe, Nzema, Dagaarba, Ga, Guan and many others which have linguistic values equally compared to English. Using vernacular together with English is more likely to widen the scope of children’s expression and learning opportunities. This would promote flexibility, creativity and innovation or inclusion of children in the school cultures (Ackah-Jnr et al., 2020). Subsequently, many children be included in school tasks which can promote a ‘culture of voice’ and participation as children may not have to content with fear or ridicule associated with mistakes or inappropriate use of English.

2. Do you consider a mother-tongue as a type of vernacular and why?

Further textual analysis revealed the mother tongue as a common and key language used in schools within a locality with English from the text of teacher B.

Children in geographically defined area who speak common indigenous language as vernacular are made to speak it in school since it is the commonest local language they use to expresses themselves even without help of the teacher in some instances.

The use of vernacular as a language culture in most schools is considered as complimentary form of communication to English and not an alternative. It shows areas of language commonality in learning. However, a teacher may not have adequate knowledge or proficient when such indigenous language is adopted. An alternative could be multilingual translation or a teacher conversant with that particular language. Before the advent of formal education in Ghana, according to Spring, (1998), traditional education was conducted in indigenous languages. Tracing this historical antecedent, the use of vernacular in schools’ curriculum is appropriate and relevant.

In the analyses, the realisation is that, English must be integrated with vernacular which most importantly is a blended approach to widen the horizon of language culture. It is also necessary that code-switching is employed to enhance children’s intellectual, attitudinal and...
psychomotor skills (MOE/NALAP, 2015). Another realisation is that the blended or bi-lingual approach has absolute advantages.

3. What do you notice when pupils speak vernacular at school?

Further, I have come to notice that when children use their mother tongue or the vernacular, their critical thinking and literacy skills develop faster. They also enjoy the school’s environment better because their local language becomes a way of life.

The assertion is that, vernacular or local language accelerates literacy development. Its usage is a demonstration of culture which could create diversity in schools, that is, use of vernacular in school must be a practice and as stable policy initiative.

4. How does oral and written vernacular affect school life?

As to whether oral and written vernacular affected school cultures, teacher B reported a mixture of interactions and ways it were impacted.

There is always a mixture or different types of language usage at assembly, games and classroom interaction.

The implication here is that, vernacular provides multiple functions in the form of its use for many learning and social activities. It provides effective instruction and public support to read and write in their mother-tongue (MOE/USAID, 2008). Another implication is that when children are brought up by parents or other people speaking different languages, they acquire several languages simultaneously (Ludi, 2013).

5. To examine the effect of using both English and vernacular in schools participants answered the question: How do the use of English and Vernacular affect the school environment? Both teachers identified several advantages using both English and vernacular. It noted that using English and vernacular creates higher level of scaffolding, deeper understanding, and language appreciation. These are universal responses by the participants as evident in these texts.

I think code switching help increase the comprehension and appreciation of English language and vernacular learner (Teacher A’s response). They are language cultures that show identities and learning in similar and different ways.

Both English and vernacular are expressed in a wider scope with greater understanding too in the learning experiences (Teacher B’s response).

Per the responses, using both English and vernacular in classrooms and the school environment is advantageous to children and teachers. Learning English and vernacular is a way of acquiring knowledge in traditional or local setting, and foreign setting. In Ghana, the school curriculum in English provides a form of enculturation which is mostly official language, spread across all learning experiences. Though vernacular can be local or indigenous language, it is recognised
as major language in the Ghanaian setting, schools and also as foreign language being taught as African Studies in certain parts of the world.

Vernacular is a local dialect in schools where children, teachers, parents and communities communicate and understand easily and adequately. Therefore school children are very comfortable with it. It is also inferred that vernacular and English are common languages spoken by children. However, vernacular has more cultural and linguistic advantages than in English as a ‘second language’, thus, having absolute advantage by universal acceptance. An isolated case in the assertions is that, proprietors, some school administrators and most parents advocate for the universal acceptance of English-only at school, whiles some parents, teachers and children prefer adequate us of the vernacular at the foundation stages. These indeed are cultural traits associated with policy, practice and management of language culture in schools. Mutual understanding of this phenomenon therefore demands questions of best practices from stakeholders. It appears language policy has greater influence based on choice or preference by stakeholders and so the missing link is the appropriate methodology for language culture.

SKEWNESS IN THE LANGUAGE PATTERN: UNIVERSAL RESPONSES

Both teachers made other observations that indicate a level of skewness in language use in schools. Three language patterns were identified in the textual analysis of participants’ responses.

First, it was evident that:

children are not able to build upon their English speaking and writing level adequately at the foundation stages.

According to the participants, children at the early stages are able to internalise more information in vernacular than in English. This indeed was a universal response by both English and the vernacular teacher.

The second pattern showed vernacular use has limited scope at the foundation stages compared to English-only use. That is:

Behavioural patterns in school indicates that speaking vernacular is a ‘rare case’ at only the foundation stages whiles the scope widens in English.

Within national and international contexts, the texts similarly suggests that English is of a higher priority as official language than the indigenous languages. This is reflected in the limited time allocation for teaching and learning of local languages in schools compared to English. For example, according to the new national pre-tertiary curriculum framework, there seems to be no or minimal time allocation of the 17 periods devoted to language and literacy for teaching and learning Ghanaian language at early childhood (MOE, 2017). This is another policy issue on literacy development and language culture in Ghana’s education.

The third pattern indicated that both English and vernacular affect the academic performance. The participants claim that:

academic performance in sense making is stronger in vernacular due to more familiarisation in with the language in instructional contexts.
It was noted that, emergent literacy and socialisation look stronger when vernacular is used in schools. A few children however from good parental and environmental backgrounds are equally good at English. This is, especially, unique to children whose parents speak English as 'first' language or have identity from the English background. It is important to note that language acquisition and literacy development have much influence on children’s academic performance which is also a key to policy initiatives and best practices. This also suggests that, a ‘restrictionist’ theory is either limiting the scope of vernacular in schools or ignoring its usage at the foundation stages may cause curriculum deficiency in the creation of human capital. Linguistic values are interconnected or integrated with all forms of communications. Therefore, attaching more importance to the use of both English and vernacular implies that elementary school curriculum will be more flexible and accessible to all learners.

CONCLUSION
The textual analysis has presented new knowledge in the school’s curriculum realising the important assertions raised by the participants. The intellectual discourse, ‘speak English’, not vernacular in schools appears to be a philosophical view universally accepted by a school which perhaps might be characteristics of many schools in Ghana. Interestingly this assumption is tied to the language policy in Ghana (MOE, 2012). Contrary to these assertions and observations in the textual analysis, the ensuing ‘restricted’ theory demands key methodological question as to, whether the use of English only at the foundation stages is the best communication channel for all learners in schools. Accordingly, the use of English and vernacular is an important communication tool for all stakeholders in education. The realisation of this ‘forcible stance’ is another school of thought, whether the language policy requires blended approach in schools. This perhaps may be a stable synchronized view regarding policy implications in the use of monolingual, bilingual or multicultural approach in Ghanaian schools.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR POLICY AND PRACTICE
1. Recognising the importance of language as a tool for communication, we recommend that, vernacular as indigenous language must be widely encouraged in Ghanaian schools alongside the English as official language. This will widen the horizon of communication in all subjects and harness the human resource potential in schools.
2. There is the need for restructuring of language policy methodology in early childhood education for the benefit of children’s communication adequacy, quality and creation of talents.
3. Stable language policy in Ghana Education requires best practices and so vernacular as indigenous language must not be restricted. Bi-lingual and multi-lingual approaches to language use are very necessary for curriculum enrichment.
4. The use of vernacular must be seen as project of modernisation for all stakeholders in education. Teaching and learning vernacular should not be undermined in schools. Rather it must be encouraged alongside English to accelerate numeracy and literacy skills development.
5. Both English and vernacular need to be used complimentarily for instructional purposes in early childhood and primary school as this fosters inclusiveness, belonging, participation and engagement of children in routines and tasks at the school, rather that exclude or alienate them.
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