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Teaching French as a Foreign Language in Multilingual and Anglophone Contexts: The Experiences of Teachers in Nigeria and Ghana

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Teaching French as a Foreign Language in Multilingual and Anglophone Contexts: The Experiences of Teachers in Nigeria and Ghana

Michael Akinpelu and Stella Afi Makafui Yegblemenawo

Abstract

Nigeria and Ghana are two Anglophone countries in West Africa that have adopted the teaching of the French language in their education systems because of their proximity to francophone countries and the necessity for regional integration. Whereas the language has gained some official status in the national curriculum (National Policy on Education) in Nigeria and made a required subject at some levels of education, French continues to enjoy a privileged status in Ghana but without an official status yet. Using a comparative approach, this paper explores the language policy in favour of the French language and its teaching at the secondary and post-secondary levels in both countries. The analysis of primary data collected with teachers at both levels in these countries show that, although French does not enjoy the same status in the two geographical spaces, similarities abound in terms of the policy regulating its teaching and the challenges impeding the full implementation of the policy. Country-specific solutions are offered to existing challenges.

Keywords: Anglophone setting, language policy, French, teaching, Nigeria, Ghana, multilingualism.

Introduction

Although Africa is home to 30% (2,158) of the 7,168 languages spoken in the world (Eberhard et al., 2023), languages such as English, French, Portuguese, and Spanish inherited from colonization continue to enjoy privileged status in practically all African countries more than six decades after gaining independence. These languages are used for official and administrative functions, including education. Some countries with a different inherited language have even adopted another foreign language in their educational curriculum for geopolitical, diplomatic, and economic reasons. This is the case of Nigeria and Ghana, two West African countries that are officially Anglophone where the French language has attained a privileged status due to their proximity to francophone nations with which they share their borders and work together to facilitate sub-regional relations, including economic partnerships (e.g., ECOWAS). These realities have influenced language-learning decisions in these Anglophone countries, particularly in the sectors of education and human resource development.

Using a comparative approach to highlight similarities and differences in the teaching of the language in both countries, this paper aims to offer a portrait of the teaching of the French language in Nigeria and Ghana, drawing on the experience of teachers of the language. The study also seeks to determine the impacts of the language-in-education policies in both countries

on the future of the language and offer possible solutions where necessary. This aim gives rise to the following research questions:

- How is the teaching of the French language being done in Nigeria and Ghana, two multilingual and Anglophone countries?
- How do French teachers in both countries view their profession? And what challenges do they face?
- How do language-in-education policies differ in Nigeria and in Ghana? And how do these policies affect the teaching of French in these two countries?

To accomplish this, we examine the language policies and the historical overview of the teaching of French in Nigeria and Ghana. This is followed by a presentation of the language policy implementation framework which forms the theoretical framework of this paper. Research methodology and results/interpretation are introduced in the sections titled accordingly. We end this paper with a discussion of the results and issue country-specific recommendations.

Literature Review: Language Policies and French Language Teaching in Nigeria and Ghana

With a population estimated at over 211 million, Nigeria remains Africa's most populous country. It is also considered the most linguistically diverse nation on the continent, with 520 living indigenous languages (Eberhard et al., 2023) with Hausa, Yoruba, and Igbo being considered the major languages. On the other hand, Ghana has a population estimated at approximately 31 million and has 73 living indigenous languages of which Akan is considered the most widely used (Eberhard et al., 2023).

With reference to language intervention, activities related to language promotion in Nigeria can be traced back to the colonial period. In its early stages, these efforts were mainly centred on the English language in order to secure the national interests of colonial masters. After the nation's independence in 1960, Nigerian political leaders at the time did not make major changes to the language provisions, having made the choice to simply perpetuate the language policy already in place, thereby reinforcing the use of English in the public and formal sectors (Adegbija, 2004). Later on, the production of the first national curriculum in 1977, called the *National Policy on Education* (NPE), would coincide with the adoption of the Mother Tongue Medium Policy (MTMP) and the Multilingual Policy (MT), following the realization by the stakeholders of the profoundly diverse nature of the Nigerian society and the benefits associated with primary education in the mother tongue: "At this point of our development as a nation, it is unacceptable to make English the only language of business of our National Assembly and to proceed even further to enshrine it permanently in our Constitution" (*New Nigerian*, 22 September 1979, p. 13, cited in Adegbija 2004, p. 213). This decision would be followed by concrete actions. First, the revision of the 1979 Constitution would make provisions for the three major Nigerian languages, Hausa, Igbo, and Yoruba, to be used along with the English language for business in the National Assembly and the House of Assembly (see Articles 55 & 97 of the official document). Second, the NPE would make provision for the first three years of formal education to be carried out in the child's mother tongue or in the language of the immediate environment, if the child's mother tongue does not possess a written form. The document also requires every child, whose mother tongue is not one of the three major languages in the country, to learn one of these languages as a

means for promoting national unity and preserving cultures. In the fourth year of formal education, English takes on the role of the language of instruction while the indigenous languages are to be offered as mere subjects. In addition, since 1998, the NPE has made provision for the French language to be added to the primary and secondary curricula:

For smooth interaction with our neighbours, it is desirable for every Nigerian to speak French. Accordingly, French shall be the second official language in Nigeria, and it shall be compulsory in primary and junior secondary schools, but [a] Non-Vocational Elective at the Senior Secondary School. (National Policy on Education, 2004, Section 1, 10b)

In Ghana, despite the number of languages found in the country, a deliberate effort to promote all these languages has been non-existent at the policy-making level. Ghana's national language policies permit the use of English for official activities including the documentation of proceedings in the law courts or at the various levels of jurisprudence. Ghanaian languages are used as an alternative means, such as interpreting any information written in English to people who do not speak or understand the English language. Some selected languages, however, have enjoyed some support from the government, having been considered the most spoken in their respective regions of origin at the time. This led the then post-colonial government to establish the Bureau of Ghana Language to promote their study in Ghanaian schools. These languages include *Akuapem Twi*, *Asante Twi*, *Dagaare*, *Dagbani*, *Dangme*, *Ewe*, *Fante (Mfantse)*, *Ga*, *Gonja*, *Kasem*, and *Nzema*.

Language-in-education policy keeps changing in Ghana since independence. The Objective-Based Curriculum was implemented in 2007 following the works of the Anamuah-Mensah Review Committee in 2002. The committee recommended the use of a Ghanaian language and English as the media of instruction at the Kindergarten and Lower Primary levels (Primary 1–3). From the Upper Primary levels (Primary 4–6) through the Junior High Schools, Senior High Schools to the tertiary levels, it was proposed that the English language shall be the only medium of instruction. Currently, the standards-based curriculum called the *Common Core Programme-2019* (CCP) is to be implemented in phases until it completely replaces the Objective-Based curriculum. It, however, proposes Ghanaian languages are taught as subjects, English language as both a medium of instruction and a subject, and French as a subject in the Upper Primary levels only (Primary 4–6). The new Common Core Programme curriculum developed by Ghana's National Council for Curriculum and Assessment (NaCCA) was scheduled for implementation in September 2020 but was delayed as a result of the COVID-19 Pandemic (Ghana Education Service online, 3rd November 2020).

In relation to the introduction of the French language in both countries, the teaching of French started in 1859 in Nigeria with the founding of the first secondary school in Lagos, although formally introduced into the Nigerian education system in 1956 (Omolewa, 1978). The teaching of the French language would flourish two decades following the country's independence in 1960 and then deteriorate due to the socio-economic crisis in the 1980s (Ojo, 2006; Akinpelu, 2020). The declaration by the former president Sani Abacha in 1996 to make French an official language in Nigeria would rekindle interest in the language. Today, French language learning can be achieved through the Nigerian education system or the language learning centres. The teaching of French in the Nigerian education system is essentially based on provisions contained in the National Policy of Education which also stipulates its official status. To implement this

policy, French was included as part of basic education; it became a required subject from the fourth year of primary education, and it is to be learned for six consecutive years until the end of the lower secondary level (junior Secondary School 3). Unfortunately, this policy has yet to be fully implemented in the public primary schools, as students in the public sector are generally only able to learn the language at the three-year lower secondary level (JSS 1–3). At the senior secondary level (SSS 1–3), the language loses its required status and becomes an optional subject. The syllabus at this level was essentially conceived to reinforce the skills acquired at the junior level and broaden the student’s knowledge of the language. Despite the optional status of learning French at this level, studies have shown that enrolments in the final year French examination grew from 1,566 in 2000 to 7,066 in 2013 (Ajiboye, 2013). Overall, it is estimated that French is taught in 4,000 secondary schools in Nigeria, with approximately 6 million pupils enrolled in lower secondary schools (JSS 1–3) alone in 2016 (Adjeran, 2014; Ajikobi, 2018).

At the postsecondary level, the teaching and learning of the language is mainly done in the various colleges of education and the universities where it is not mandatory. Recently, the teaching of French has been introduced in some professional institutions (polytechnics), particularly in the fields of secretarial studies, Mass Communication, Fine Arts, and Catering & Hotel Management. Colleges of education are essentially in charge of training future educators, including French teachers. They are under the managing authority of the National Commission for Colleges of Education (NCCE) formed in 1989, with programmes at this level typically lasting three years. As in the secondary schools, the French programme in the colleges of education was conceived to develop communication skills, employing various techniques such as oral and written comprehension and expression. At the universities, French programmes are designed by each institution following guidelines put in place by the National Universities Commission (NUC). In most universities, French units do collaborate with the Faculty of Education in training future French teachers. In addition, although not yet fully implemented by all institutions, the NUC has recommended since 2005 that French be offered to every university student, irrespective of their programme of study. The French Language Village in Badagry should also be included in this category, having been founded in 1991 to serve as a location for the Year Abroad Programme for students studying French in the colleges of education and the universities.

As stated earlier, French is also offered by language centres. These include the French Language Institute, created in 1999 and currently located in Abuja (the capital), the 10 *Alliances françaises* strategically positioned in different regions of the nation, and four French schools located in Abuja, Lagos, Kano, and Port Harcourt. They are mainly owned and operated by the French government or affiliated with it and offer the learning of the language for all ages. They also offer their services to individuals and international corporations seeking specific certifications in French. In 2017, the French Language Institute and the *Alliances françaises* trained 2,142 and 5,390 French learners, respectively. These were the highest recorded numbers for a single non-francophone country according to the *Organisation Internationale de la Francophonie* (OIF, 2019).

There appears to be a varied historical background as to when the teaching and learning of French began in Ghana. Two accounts stand out. According to Amonoo (1988), the teaching of French started in Cape Coast in 1879 in Adisadel College and Mfantshipim School. Lezouret

(2002), on the other hand, states that the teaching of French rather started earlier in 1873 in Adisadel College, Cape Coast before spreading to other schools across the country. However, the teaching and learning of the language were elevated to a significant place under a former Ghanaian president, John Agyekum Kufuor (2001–2009), who noted in his State of the Nation's address to the Ghanaian parliament on February 13, 2003, the importance of French in the sub-region and in the socio-economic lives of Ghanaians. This became the turning point in promoting the teaching and learning of French across the country. Ghana joined the Organisation Internationale de la Francophonie in 2006. With regard to the teaching of the language, it became compulsory at the Junior High School (JHS) level on condition that a French teacher is available or at post. At the Senior High School (SHS) level, the medium of instruction is English, while French and the Ghanaian languages are taught as elective subjects (Government's White Paper, 2004). Unlike the SHS level, the tertiary level has varying policies regarding the teaching and learning of French. The language is mainly studied as an elective subject in the Colleges of Education (formerly *Teacher Training Colleges*). These colleges of education offer a 3-year Diploma in Basic Education French (DBE). However, a 4-year Bachelor of Education (B.Ed.) programme was approved by the National Accreditation Board in July 2018, and it is expected to improve learning outcomes and ensure students are motivated to be lifelong learners beyond their time in school (University of Ghana, 2019).

Since the 2019-2020 academic year, the teaching of French has been introduced at the Upper Primary level (last three years of primary education), in accordance with the provisions made in the new Standards- Based curriculum developed by Ghana's National Council for Curriculum and Assessment (NaCCA). The teaching of French in the Nursing and Midwifery Training Schools or the Public Health institutions is compulsory. It is assumed these health workers may come across patients who may speak only French and may need medical assistance when they go to hospitals or health posts in Ghana. Student nurses and student midwives are taken through a semester-long curriculum in French, while students from the Public Health institutions usually study it for an academic year. French is offered as a programme of study in most public universities in Ghana which are accredited to provide Bachelor, Master, and Doctor of Philosophy degree programmes in French. The University of Media, Arts and Communication, (formally called Ghana Institute of Languages or GIL) which is home to the teaching and learning of foreign languages for instance, offers French as a compulsory course in all of its three schools: School of Languages (SOL), School of Translators (SOT), School of Bilingual Secretaryship (SOBS).

There are other institutions in Ghana which promote the teaching and learning of French. These include the *Alliance Française* centres, *Institut français*, and the *École Française Jacques Prévert* in Accra (Yegblemenawo, 2012, 2018). French is still not taught at the nursery and kindergarten levels (except in most private schools), as the language-in-education policy does not make provision for it. This is similar for the Early grade level (the first years of primary education), where provision has not yet been made for its teaching and learning at that level. Today, the French language continues to enjoy a privileged status in Ghana. In a recent interview with the French Ambassador to Ghana on July 16, 2021, the current president of Ghana, Nana Addo Danquah Akuffo-Addo, anticipates that the French language would soon become a key requirement for employment as Ghana's export potential grows within the Africa Continental Free Trade Agreement (AfCFTA) space (myjoyonline.com, 2021).

The above discussion shows more similarities than differences with the two countries. With reference to similarities, French was first taught in these countries in the second half of the 19th century, although earlier in Nigeria. In addition, Nigeria and Ghana give a significant place to the teaching and learning of the French language due to their proximity to francophone countries and the predominance of French-speaking countries within the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS). This is reflected in the official declarations by former presidents in both countries. With respect to the teaching of French, both countries seem to pursue a similar language-in-education policy which aims to provide six years of French learning to students—French is required from the fourth year at the primary level until the third year at the secondary level—although this policy is yet to be implemented at the primary level in public schools.

Two main differences can be identified. The first one is related to the status of the language. Although not fully implemented, in theory, French is considered the second official language in Nigeria, and this status is preserved by including it in the Nigeria National Policy on Education, the national curriculum. In Ghana, the official status of French is yet to be determined. In addition, Ghana has joined the Organisation Internationale de la Francophonie since 2006, while Nigeria has yet to become a member of the organization. In summary, over the years, Nigeria and Ghana have felt the need to adopt the French language into their linguistic landscapes, having taken cognizance of the importance of the language because of their geopolitical position, and a decision was made to implement this policy through formal education. Hence, the significance of educators and teachers, whose role in the acquisition of knowledge cannot be underestimated, and the importance of language-in-education policy guiding the entire language acquisition project. This study seeks therefore to examine how the language policy in favour of French is being implemented in the two countries from the perspective of teachers.

Theoretical Framework: Language Policy and Implementation Framework

Studies in language policy and planning (LPP) usually entail understanding—but also influencing—policies and their practices. As noted by Hornberger (2015, p. 17), “The goal of LPP research is, at its most fundamental, to understand, inform, and transform policies and practices of language (in) use, learning, and teaching.” The notions of language planning and language policy were introduced in the 1950s and 1960s to take into account any activity related to the optimal use of languages in a given setting, since language policy and planning matters could arise in all aspects, including in the media, in human daily encounters, in the workplace, in government activities, multilingual settings, and in education (Hornberger, 2015). By definition, language planning refers to a deliberate activity intended to influence the linguistic behaviour of a group of speakers. Language policy, on the other hand, is a set of rules, regulations, and practices believed to help realise the expected change in a particular group or community (Kaplan & Baldauf, 1997; Djité, 2008; Halaoui, 2011). These efforts are intended to manage bilingual or multilingual societies, in which two or several languages are in contact. They include activities that usually revolve around three areas: status planning (choice and establishment of a language over others), corpus planning (codification of a language, production or modification of an existing orthography, grammar, and lexicon), and acquisition planning (language spread or language-in-education). Contrary to general language planning, which involves activity at the macro level (usually involving several sectors), language-in-education planning is rather geared

toward one aspect of the society (e.g., education sector), although it could also occur as part of a national activity as in several postcolonial nations. Kaplan & Baldauf (1997) consider language-in-education planning as “a subset of national language planning” as well as part of “human resource development planning” (p. 126).

In addition, in the development of a language-in-education policy, the authors suggest a series of relevant stages to a successful implementation, taking into account the contextual realities of the nation’s education system:

1. *Curriculum policy* denotes what has to be taught (content), when and how long to introduce the language, how the teaching is to be organised, including the specification of outcomes and assessment instruments. Content should also include practical and vocational subjects that allow learners to find employment at the end of their programme.
2. *Personnel policy* refers to teacher recruitment, their pre-service or in-service training in order to maintain a high level of proficiency, and providing them with great incentives (e.g., monetary rewards).
3. *Materials policy* is concerned with the appropriate methodology to be used for content delivery and adequate course books for language learning. In essence, “Language-in-education planning must select an appropriate methodology, must guarantee that the materials to be used are consonant with the methodology [...]” (Kaplan & Baldauf, 1997, p. 134).
4. *Community policy* relates to the general attitude of the community (i.e., parents, students, etc.) toward the education of the language chosen and the provision of adequate resources for languages in the education system. The objective is to achieve a positive attitude toward the suggested change.
5. *Evaluation policy* entails how the impact of language-in-education policy will be measured, including the effectiveness of the policy implementation itself (Kaplan & Baldauf, 1997, pp. 123–136).

The above conceptual framework guided the present study—including the methodology and the collection of data—as it offers instruments to assess how the teaching of the language is being carried out in the two countries.

Research Methodology

The approach adopted in this study is essentially comparative, since it seeks to establish the relationship between two or more phenomena on the basis of patterns of similarities and differences. According to Coccia & Benati (2018, p. 1), “Comparative studies are investigations to analyse and evaluate, with quantitative and qualitative methods, a phenomenon and/or facts among different areas, subjects, and/or objects to detect similarities and/or differences.” In social sciences, this approach is useful to study similarities and differences between various structures and systems, including policies at the macro or micro levels (local, national, or international). More specifically, this research utilised a focused comparison, which normally involves investigating one sector of public administration in two or three countries or institutions. As in case studies, focused comparisons, as a method, require sensitivity to particular details and historical data of each country or institution under study. Another important factor in focused comparison is “to select countries/institutions/processes/etc. which, although differing in the

factor under study, are otherwise similar” (Coccia & Benati, 2018, p. 3). Descriptive statistics are also used in this paper to give an in-depth understanding of the demographics and professional background of teachers, their utilisation of instructional resources, as well as their perspectives on the language policies. By examining all these factors, we seek to shed light on the current state of French language teaching in Ghana and Nigeria and to draw attention to crucial policy and practice considerations.

The study is also qualitative, as it seeks a deeper understanding of a social phenomenon within its natural setting. According to Busetto, Wick & Gumbinger (2020), “Qualitative research can be defined as the study of the nature of phenomena and is especially appropriate for answering questions of why something is (not) observed, assessing complex multi-component interventions, and focusing on intervention improvement” (p. 1). The phenomenon of interest in this study is the French language in two non-francophone and multilingual settings, Nigeria and Ghana. The focused comparison method was used to study the similarities and differences of the language policies as well as the teaching of French in both Nigeria and Ghana. Data that focused on obtaining a deeper understanding of the observations, perceptions, and points of view of teachers of French across two different levels of the educational ladder in both Ghana and Nigeria were collected and analysed using a qualitative approach.

Research Instruments. This research used a questionnaire as an instrument of research to collect data in both countries. The questionnaire consists of closed questions as well as open questions that allow respondents to freely provide their responses. As for the disposition of the questionnaire, the first part of the questionnaire was made up of demographic information about participants. The second part focused on finding out the perceptions of teachers of French concerning the attitudes of students toward the learning of French in both countries. It also collected information on the teaching materials at the disposal of teachers in both countries, what their views were concerning the current language-in-education policy, as well as the making of French as a compulsory subject in the curriculum in both countries. By assessing all these factors, we seek to shed light on the current situation of French language teaching in Nigeria and Ghana, as well as draw attention to critical policy and practise considerations and the perspectives of the teachers. The participants of the study were teachers of French at two levels of the educational ladder: Secondary/High School and Tertiary/Postsecondary levels teaching in Ghana and Nigeria. The Postsecondary level includes institutions such as the universities and colleges of education. In all, 179 teachers from the Senior and Junior Secondary/High Schools participated in this research, while 30 were from Tertiary/Postsecondary institutions. The research was conducted in English based on various factors, including the target population’s linguistic preferences and proficiency.

Sampling Procedure. Data collection activities took place between October 2021 and February 2022. An electronic questionnaire was prepared and administered using Google Forms. An anonymous link was sent to participants via email and social media platforms such as Facebook pages or groups and WhatsApp old school or professional groups where tutors and lecturers of French are members. All responses were submitted electronically and compiled. The data collected from the participants was then analysed following the steps for a thematic analysis proposed by Braun & Clarke (2006, p. 79) who define thematic analysis as “a method for identifying, analysing and reporting patterns (themes) within data. It minimally organises and

describes your data set in (rich) detail.” The authors further disclose that, “A theme captures something important about the data in relation to the research question and represents some level of patterned response or meaning within the data set” (p. 82). Deciding what is classified as a theme can be challenging. Using Braun & Clarke’s (2006, p. 82) definition of what constitutes a theme, “The ‘keyness’ of a theme is not necessarily dependent on quantifiable measures, but rather on whether it captures something important in relation to the overall research question,” researchers classified the responses into five categories in accordance with the objectives of the study.

Results and Interpretation

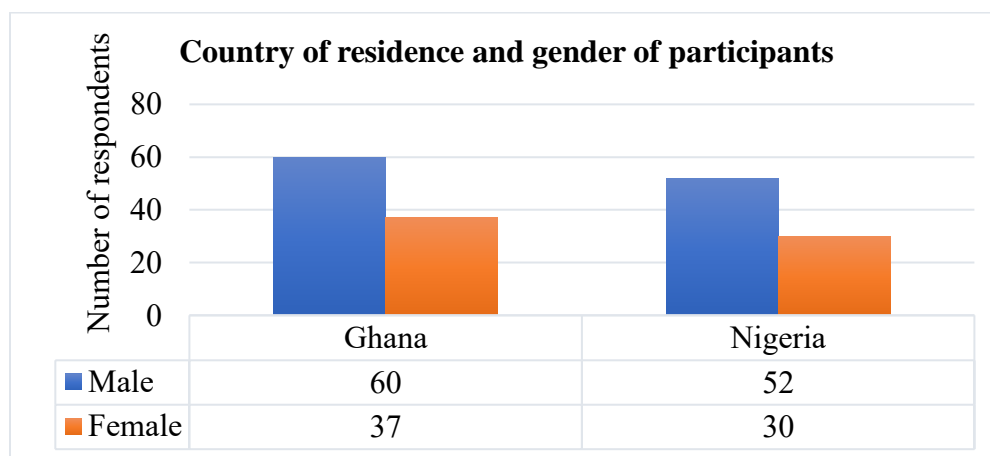
For better presentation, the two data sets will be presented separately and are organised under six themes: respondents’ data, career choice and competence, teaching experience, challenges, and policy evaluation. Data from teachers at the Junior/Senior Secondary/High Schools are first presented, followed by data from tutors and lecturers in the Tertiary/Postsecondary institutions.

Respondents in the Pre-Tertiary Schools.

Participants’ Gender and Country of Residence. In all, a total of 179 respondents teaching 46% French in various Senior Secondary/High Schools in either Ghana or Nigeria participated in this survey: 97 respondents in Ghana and 82 in Nigeria, making up 54% and 46%, respectively. In regards to participants’ gender, out of the 97 participants in Ghana, 62% are male, while females represent 38%. This is very similar to Nigeria, where 63.4% of the 82 respondents are males and 36.6% are female. Overall, 112 respondents (62.6%) are males and 37.4% are female. This is shown in the Figure 1 below.

Figure 1

Country of Residence and Gender of Participants



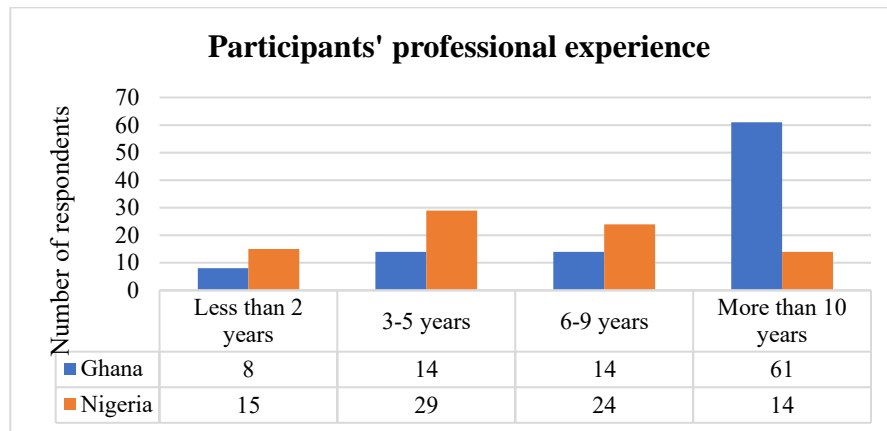
Professional Experience. The participants of this survey indicated that they teach either at the Junior Secondary/High School only, Senior High School only, or in both the Junior and Senior High Schools at the same time. It was observed that most respondents (54%) teach at the Junior Secondary/High School level. This could be due to the fact that the language policy in both countries makes the teaching of French compulsory, and hence it is normal to find more teachers

at that level as compared to the Senior Secondary/High School level, where French is an elective subject and which makes up only 28% of the respondents. Those who teach French at both levels only represent 18%. This situation is more pronounced in Nigeria than in Ghana, per the data compiled. Also, while only 6 out of the 97 Ghanaian respondents indicated that they were teaching at both levels, in Nigeria, 27 (33%) out of the 82 respondents teach French at the junior and senior levels. One of the major reasons for this is the tremendous lack of qualified teachers to teach the language. Data collected in 2010 revealed a ratio of one teacher to 260 students (1:260) at the junior secondary level and one teacher to 140 students (1:140) at the senior level (Causse & Idousoro, 2013).

In terms of the duration within which the participants have been exercising the profession, most teachers have taught French for more than 3 years, with 42% teaching French at these levels for over 10 years. This is mostly true for Ghana, where 63% of the 97 participants have been teaching the language for more than 10 years. In Nigeria, however, the experience of teachers ranges between 3 and 9 years, accounting for 65% of the 82 participants.

Figure 2

Duration of Teaching French



This implies that most respondents are experienced teachers of French and, hence, are able to share their experiences when it comes to the impact of language policies in relation to French as well as the teaching and learning of French in both countries.

Professional Qualification in French. Teaching at these levels depends on specific qualifications. In Ghana, a minimum qualification of a Diploma in Education is accepted at the Junior Secondary /High School level, while a minimum of a Bachelor’s degree is required to teach at the Senior Secondary/High School level. The National Certificate in Education (NCE) was previously the minimum qualification required to teach in secondary schools in Nigeria (National Commission for Colleges of Education, 2012), but the federal government proposed in 2015 that a university degree be the minimum qualification to teach at these levels (The Guardian Nigeria, 2015).

Many of the respondents (approximately 60%) hold a bachelor's degree (Bachelor of Arts French or Bachelor of Education French). This group is closely followed by 42 holders of a Diploma in Basic Education French degree or Certificate in Education, making up 23.4% of the respondents. Only 29 respondents (16%) hold a Master's degree. A look at the level at which these respondents are teaching shows that all of the Diploma in Basic Education French degree holders teach in the JHS or JSS. Seven of them, one from Ghana and six from Nigeria, affirm they teach at both the JHS and SHS (JSS and SSS) levels. It should be noted that, because the minimum level required to teach at the SSS level is a bachelor's degree, none of the diploma holders is teaching at that level only. Data collected also show that there are three M.Phil. holders in French who are currently teaching in the JHS only.

Table 1

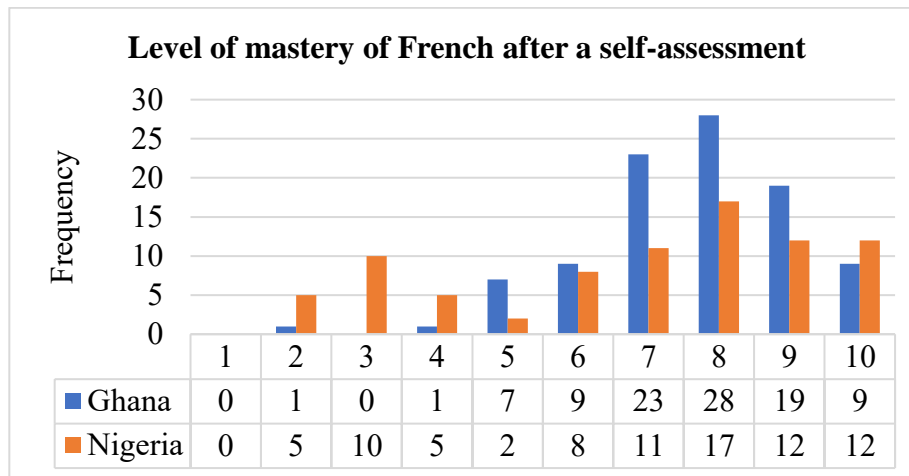
Highest Degree in French

Highest degree in French	Level being taught								Grand Total
	Ghana				Nigeria				
	JHS / JSS only	SHS / SSS only	JHS and SHS (JSS and SSS)	Sub-total (Ghana)	JHS / JSS only	SHS / SSS only	JHS and SHS (JSS and SSS)	Sub-total (Nigeria)	
Diploma in Basic Education French	24	0	1	25 (26%)	8	3	6	17 (21%)	42 (23%)
B.A. French	15	16	1	32 (33%)	22	2	8	32 (39%)	64 (36%)
B.Ed. French	14	11	1	26 (27%)	6	6	6	18 (22%)	44 (25%)
M.A. French	2	1	0	3 (3%)	2	3	5	10 (12%)	13 (7%)
M.Ed. French	0	0	2	2 (2%)	0	0	1	1 (1%)	3 (2%)
M.Phil. French	2	6	1	9 (9%)	1	2	1	4 (5%)	13 (7%)
Total	57	34	6	97	39	16	27	82	179

When asked to self-assess their language proficiency—on a scale of 1 to 10, where 10 is the highest—responses provided by participants showed that most teachers (73%) rated their level of mastery of the French language that they teach between 7 and 10. 17 respondents (10%) rated their level of mastery at 6 on the scale, while 5% think they are on average by rating themselves at 5. However, it should be noted that 22 participants (12%), after a self-assessment, felt they were below the average range. No one rated himself or herself a zero (0) on the scale.

Figure 3

Level of Mastery of French after a Self-Assessment



Reasons for the Choice to Teach French. As for the choice of a career in French, participants gave various reasons. The main ones have been grouped into themes and subthemes and discussed below.

1. Geographical location of the country.

Respondents expressed a willingness to teach the French language because of the geographical location of their countries of residence and the international status of the language. Both Ghana and Nigeria are surrounded by francophone countries, and this makes it necessary for communication to be done without any difficulty, since language is an important tool to promote coexistence among neighbours. Some respondents from Nigeria and Ghana put it this way:

Ghana:

“I like the French language, and besides, our country is surrounded by French speakers. Teaching French will put my country in a good position to be able to interact with the neighboring in business wise.”

“Because I want to help the younger ones to communicate with French, because Ghana is surrounded by francophone countries.”

Nigeria:

“There’s a vital need to raise more speakers in West Africa, as many of the countries speak French, so to further relate with them, there is a need to learn.”

“I choose to teach French because French is an international language. I developed interest in the language since my primary school.”

2. Passion for the language and to share it with others.

Approximately half of the participants decided to teach and propagate the French culture in these two English-speaking countries out of passion, which, according to some, has been developed since childhood. They affirmed that French is an international language; hence, speaking it brings them or other speakers a lot of advantages. Some of these responses are represented below:

Ghana:

“I have a passion to teach the French language as well as encourage others to develop an interest in learning French culture.”

“First, I am passionate about languages, so I want everyone to know a minimum of two languages. It is with drive and zeal that I choose to teach and coach in the French language.”

Nigeria:

“I love the language and it helps me build myself the more on the language.”

“I love French language and my desire is to share my experience and knowledge of this language with others particularly the young ones.”

3. Income or income opportunity.

Knowledge and skills in French bring job opportunities, making these teachers earn some income. This is a good reason to learn and teach French in an Anglophone country, especially in an era when unemployment is high. Some of these responses include:

Ghana:

“French offers better job opportunities.”

“To earn a living.”

“The prospect of teaching French is great.”

Nigeria:

“Because I studied it and can make a living teaching it.”

“To encourage bilingualism and give edge to in job opportunities.”

4. Past experience.

For some respondents, contact with the language in their early days influenced their choice to teach French. This is the case of two respondents born in a francophone country who, upon returning to their country of residence, decided to pursue a career in French.

Ghana:

“I chose to teach French because I offered French at the undergraduate level and I needed to maintain and build on the knowledge I have acquired. I would also further my studies in French so I needed to remain in the domain.”

“I learned it from childhood. And I also want others to also benefit from it due to the numerous benefits they will get in trade in politics and in other social life situations.”

Nigeria:

“Because I was born in a French country and grew up there during my adolescence, and circumstances made me study French when I came to my country. But I chose to study French here also to know how the French language is being taught and to nurture my curiosity. But the language is not well taught by secondary school teachers who are 100% Nigerian and I want to make a change about that.”

“I came from a French country. I am fluent in the French language.”

It should be noted, however, that not all responses sounded positive, as revealed below. This indicates to researchers that the participants learned and are teaching French because they have no choice. They could therefore move on to other fields of work if new opportunities arise.

Ghana:

“I have no option.”

Nigeria:

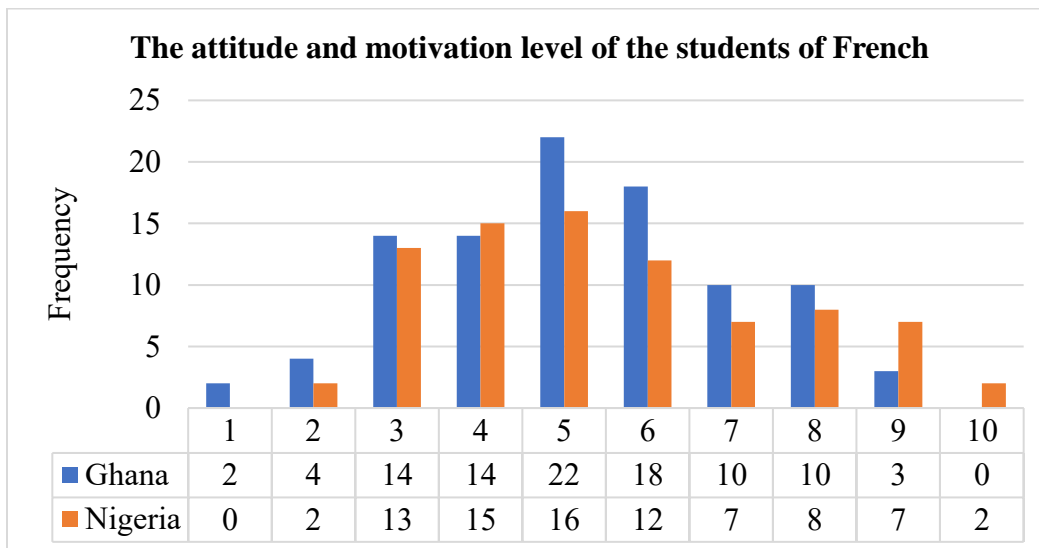
“I couldn’t find a better job.”

“I didn’t choose to. I couldn’t find another course, so I reluctantly accepted French.”

Students’ Attitude and Motivation. On a scale of 1 to 10, where 10 is the highest, respondents were asked to rate their students’ attitude and motivation toward the learning of the French language in class. Measuring the attitude and motivation level of the students of French from the point of view of teachers is necessary as it gives researchers a first-hand opinion from those who have worked closely with students for several years. Most students’ attitude/motivation level, from the respondents’ point of view, lie between 3 and 6 in both countries. Level 5 has the highest frequency (38) at 21%, followed by levels 6, 4, and 3 which have 30 (17%), 29 (16%), and 27 (15%), respectively. This means, most of their students are average and their attitude and motivation toward the study of French in both countries are not strong enough.

Figure 4

The Attitude and Motivation Level of the Students of French



Professional Skills and Practise. A series of questions were asked to determine the teacher’s whole experience in teaching the French language. This includes advance preparedness, teaching resources used, and the language employed to teach French.

1. Advance Preparedness.

Apart from 18 respondents who did not indicate their level of preparedness, data gathered from both countries show that a large majority (71% or 127 out of 179) of respondents feel that they

are adequately prepared before going to teach. The reasons given have been classified into themes and presented below with a few examples.

A. Advance lesson preparation.

Ghana:

“Yes, because I take my time to prepare well for my lesson before going to class.”

“Yes, because I always prepare my notes and PowerPoint for effective teaching.”

“Yes. I know the needs of my students, so I prepare adequately to meet those needs.”

Nigeria:

“Yes, because I want to have a hitch-free class. Moreover, I prepare my slides, so while preparing the slides, I have to go [the] extra mile in giving my students the best.”

“I prepare before going to class to avoid mistake[s] in the spelling of the words.”

B. Getting the necessary teaching resources ahead of time.

Ghana:

“Yes. Most times I prepare myself using textbooks and browse through the Internet.”

“Yes, because I have all the resources available to teach.”

Nigeria:

“Yes, with the aid of good books and audio-visual material.”

“Yes! I always get my lesson plan and instructional materials ready before teaching.”

C. Professional training and experience.

Ghana:

“Much as my flow in the language orally is 70%...I am skilled with appropriate methodology to impart to students learning French. My training at Mount Mary Training College (Momaco) and University of Education, Winneba (UEW) has equipped me.”

“Yes. This is because I’ve been teaching the French for a very long time, and I’m used to it.”

Nigeria:

“Adequately prepared in term of training, yes. Also, as a good teacher, I try my best in term[s] of preparing my lesson before going to class.”

“Yes, because there is nothing challenging. It’s always the same thing year in [and] year out.”

There were also 34 respondents who indicated that they were *sometimes, not always, not at all, or most of the time* prepared. The main reason given for this is related to some challenges associated with the lack of needed teaching materials/aids, especially in rural areas.

Ghana:

“Most of the times, but if I am not well prepared for that lesson, I go in for a reading comprehension.”

“Not fully due to inadequate learning material.”

“Somehow because the needed teaching and learning materials are not available especially in the rural areas.”

Nigeria:

“Nope, nope, Nope. No access to good text books and other attractive documents.”

“No, no corresponding materials for the classes.”

2. Choice of French Textbook(s) Used as a Teaching Resource.

For this question, respondents were required to state at least three titles of resource materials and indicate the name of the author(s), date of publication, and publishing house. Data on the resources being used are classified according to countries and the levels at which these books are being used. Only resource materials that are mentioned more than five times are included below in Table 2.

Table 2

Teaching Resources Used in the Junior & Senior High Schools in Ghana and Nigeria

Country	Title of textbook	Author & Publisher	Frequency
Ghana	La source: A French Course for Junior High Schools. Textbooks 1, 2, and 3	Antoine Kossi Togome, Ambrose Koku Essiomle, Gle Kofi Amenyó, Augustine Yeboah; Martmag Publication (2008) <i>(Local Publisher)</i>	11
	Aki- Ola French for J.H.S	Victor Afari, Isaac and Wireko-Ampem; Aki-Ola Series <i>(Local Publisher)</i>	12
	Bonjour Amis	Dominic S. Y. Amuzu, and P K Geraldo; Adwinsa publications (GH)Ltd. <i>(Local Publisher)</i>	17
	New Practical French course for JHS; Book 1–3.	Kwame Odame and Theresa Agyeman; PK Kwadwoan publishing (2008) <i>(Local Publisher)</i>	10
	Voilà Nouveau	Enyonam Keteku; SEDCO publications; 2008 <i>(Local Publisher)</i>	14
	Manuel Pour l’enseignement /apprentissage du Français, Niveau Lycée	CREF, 2015; 2019, <i>(Local Publisher)</i>	11
	Soleil, French for JHS 1	Adjetey & Gminguole; Edkap Publishing 2010 <i>(Local Publisher)</i>	6

Nigeria	Pixel, Méthode de français, Livre de l'élève, Cahier d'activités	Sylvie Schmitt and John Iliya kim; CLE International /Spectrum books Limited (<i>Collaboration: Foreign and local Publisher</i>)	6
	Nouvel Horizon	Ajiboye Tunde; Ibadan: Bounty Press, 2012 (<i>Local Publisher</i>)	7
	C'est ici -méthode de français	Eric Kana / Vycky Merveille; Learning solutions (<i>Foreign Publisher</i>)	6
	On y va ! Méthode de français (Livre de l'élève et cahier d'exercices)	Catherine Mazauric, and Evelyn Sirejols; Avec la collaboration de: John Iliya Kim, Jummai Makpu, Mohamed Tijani; Spectrum books Limited Ibadan 2011; 2014; 2018 (<i>Local Publisher</i>)	12
	Ça y est	Eric Kana and Rigobert Motouo; Learning Solutions (<i>Local Publisher</i>)	6

From the overall list compiled, it was observed that teachers at both levels of secondary education use several textbooks or reference materials that are locally or internationally available. Some of these books were not supplied or approved by the government but rather bought as a result of personal recommendations by teachers of French. In Ghana, the Government board responsible for approving books to be used in the Basic and Senior High Schools is the National Council for Curriculum and Assessment (NaCCA). A visit to its website, as of February 2022, shows only a list of books approved based on the new Standards-Based Curriculum (SBC) for Kindergarten and Primary Schools as well as a list of Supplementary Learning Materials for the same levels. It implies that no book has been approved to be used at both the JHS and SHS levels.

This observation by researchers has been confirmed by the National Coordinator for CREF-Headquarters, Accra, Ghana. He indicated, however, that work was ongoing to make available a list of approved books for the Junior and Senior High School levels. In Nigeria, the Nigerian Educational Research and Development Council (NERDC) is responsible for basic education (Primary 1 – JSS 3) and senior secondary education (SSS 1–3). There does not seem to be a definite list of books for the teaching of French at these levels. For instance, the NERDC (2007) recommends the use of newspaper articles, advertising materials, etc. as didactic and teaching aids in lieu of recommending a textbook for teaching French at Junior Secondary 1–3. However, the list of textbooks provided by the Joint Admissions and Matriculation Board for the French examination in 2022-2023, offers a general idea of the textbooks used at these levels—most textbooks are produced and published locally, and some are quite dated (JAMB, 2022):

Written language:

- Ajiboye, T. (2014). *Companion to French grammar* (4th Edition), Ibadan: Cleavoketa Books.
- Ajiboye, T. (2012). *Nouvel horizon*, Book 4, New Revised Edition, Ibadan: Bounty Press.
- Byrne and Churchill. (1980) *A comprehensive French grammar*, Blackwell.
- *Le Nouveau Bescherelle : L'Art de Conjuguer*, Hatier.
- Maice, G et Merlo, G. (1998). *Grammaire progressive du français (Niveau intermédiaire)*, Paris : Clé international.
- Mazauric, C, et Sirejols, E (2004). *On y va ! Méthode de français*. CLE International.
- Ojo, S. A. (2000). *A comprehensive revision handbook of French grammar*, Ibadan: Agoro Publishing Company.
- Any other relevant materials on French grammar.

Oral:

- Ajiboye, T. (2010). *An introduction to practice in oral French*, Ibadan: Bounty Press.
- Leon, M. (1978). *Initiation à la prononciation du français*, Standard.
- Any other materials that emphasise oral practice.

3. Language(s) Used for Teaching.

Data analysis shows that 5 (3%) of the respondents in Nigeria use French only, and only 1 (1%) of them in Ghana uses French and a local language for teaching. Most of the respondents (117 or 65%) use French and English equally, while 56 (31%) use mostly French and some English.

Their choice of using English and French in a French class is mainly motivated by the desire to help the students understand the subject matter in French, because of their linguistic background.

Some comments are as follows:

Ghana:

“The students are comfortable with the English language as compared to the French language. It will not be advisable to speak only the French language during French lessons. The students will not comprehend the lesson.”

“Because most of the students started learning the French in JHS. So, using both language[s] will help them understand the course.”

“I used both French and English because my students are able to participate easily when I explain certain concepts in English and let them relate it to the French language.”

Nigeria:

“I use the two language[s] because in Nigeria our official language is English, and this help[s] the students understand what they are taught.”

“Since they have a mastery of English, you teach from known to unknown. It makes them understand and remember easily.”

Challenges Related to Teaching French in an Anglophone Setting. Even though most of the teachers in both countries affirm that they enjoy teaching French and are adequately prepared for class, they face several challenges in their quest to get their students to learn and speak French. The major challenges identified from their responses include: lack of interest and motivation from pupils; problems of policy; inadequacy of learning tools (computer, projector, etc.); teachers’ challenge with oral proficiency in the language; attitude of parents toward the learning

of the language – not considered lucrative; insufficient time allocation in the curriculum for language learning; pupils at the junior level are not taking language seriously because it is not compulsory at the senior level; lack of motivation from administration and management; teacher’s workload – some teach too many classes; lack of adequate facilities.

One of the respondents in Ghana summarises the challenges associated with teaching materials this way:

The most challenging aspect has to do with teaching and learning materials. The curriculum demands the use of documents, audio, and videos. But the materials that are needed for these purposes are lacking. Computers, projectors, and loudspeakers, among others, are not available for use. When you find a way to get such items, you realise the sockets that will serve as a power source in the classrooms are not working.

Review of the Language-in-Education Policy in Favour of French. Respondents were asked about the necessity of reviewing the language-in-education policy in favour of French. Apart from 11% of respondents (10% in Ghana and 11% in Nigeria) who do not see the need for a review of the language-in-education policy in favour of French, a high percentage of respondents in both countries are in favour of the language-in-education to be reviewed. When asked to comment on aspects of the policy that need to be reviewed, the participants offered responses presented below in Table 3. These responses are essentially solutions to the challenges that the teaching and learning of the language currently face.

Table 3

Aspects of the Policy in Favour of French that Need to Be Reviewed, According to Respondents.

Ghana	Nigeria
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ “French should be made compulsory at all levels.” ▪ “Make it a requirement for some employment.” ▪ “Hire teachers with [a] university degree because they spend one year in Benin or Togo rather than the 2 weeks for colleges of education.” ▪ “Time allotted for teaching of the language should be increased.” ▪ “Make provisions for more periods in the syllabus or on the timetable.” ▪ “Making French language teaching more practical – emphasise oral aspect – communicative/oral competencies should be made central, ultimate goal of learning.” 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ “Make French a compulsory language at all levels.” ▪ “Commitment to really make French a second official language.” ▪ “Status of French to be redefined.” ▪ “Help people see the need for the language.” ▪ “Make sure of enough efficient French language teachers.” ▪ “Better pay and compensation for teachers. ▪ “Massive creation of awareness.”

For the respondents in both countries who do not believe the language-in-education policy in favour of French should be reviewed, the main reason evoked is the need for full implementation of the current one, as some of the comments below indicate:

Ghana:

“The current policy in favour of the French is okay. It is the implementation that I have a problem with.”

“We don’t need new policy except that teachers should be given the appropriate teaching learning resources like computers and recorders to do the work.”

Nigeria:

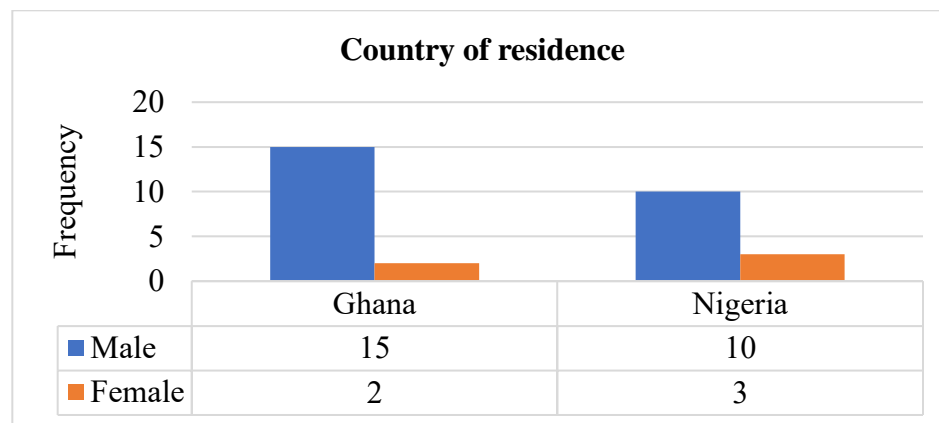
“Let us apply the current one effectively first.”

Respondents in the tertiary institutions.

Gender and Country of Residence. A total of 30 respondents teaching French in postsecondary institutions participated in this data collection. A total of 17 respondents indicated they reside in Ghana, while the remaining 13 reside in Nigeria. In terms of gender, there were 25 male respondents (15 from Ghana and 10 from Nigeria)—making up the majority—and only 5 female respondents (2 from Ghana and 3 from Nigeria), as Figure 5 below shows.

Figure 5

Country of Residence and Gender of Participants in Tertiary Institutions



Reasons for the Choice to Teach French. When asked to provide reasons for choosing to teach French as a professional career within an Anglophone environment such as Ghana or Nigeria, respondents gave several reasons, which have been grouped into themes and are presented as follows, in the order of their importance and supported by a few examples.

1. Love and passion for the language.

Ghana:

“Because I love teaching, and French is my area of specialisation. I love the language.”

“Feel fulfilled by that passion for languages.”

“Because I love the language.”

Nigeria:

“Teaching for me is a passion, and French being one the most spoken language[s] in the world is needed especially in English speaking counties, so doing it as a profession and to be useful to the world.”

“I love French language, and I’m passionate about imparting it to my learners so that they can enjoy teaching French to others by communicating with French and earning with it anywhere they find themselves.”

2. Professional purpose.

Ghana:

“It is my preferred profession.”

“To get daily bread.”

“For professional purposes.”

Nigeria:

“For me, languages are passports, so teach someone to speak French fluently as he/she does in English, it is a help which consists to augment the probability to obtain a job, or to develop his/her skills in both francophone and Anglophone countries.”

“To make students complete and competitive professionals in the future.”

3. Geographical location and national development.

Ghana:

“Because it is so important to my country’s development agenda.”

“Desire to help in the regional integration drive by the government.”

Nigeria:

“Also given is the fact that Nigeria’s contiguous neighbours are all francophone countries.”

“To reduce communication barriers.”

Level Currently Taught and Duration of Teaching.

All the participants in this study indicated that they teach either at the College of Education or at a university, with no one from the Polytechnics/Technical Universities and the Technical Schools. 13 respondents (43%) teach in a College of Education while 17 (57%) teach in a university. Regarding the duration within which the participants have been teaching, it can be observed that, overall, a majority of 43% of the participants have taught French for more than 12 years. This group is closely followed by 20% who have been teaching for less than 5 years and 20% who have been teaching French between 9 and 12 years. Another 17% have been teaching between 5 and 8 years. A close look at the data by country shows that most of the Ghanaian respondents have been teaching French for over 12 years, making up 65% of the total participation in the country. In Nigeria, however, the experience of participants lies between 5 and 12 years. All in all, with most of the respondents confirming that they have been teaching for

more than 5 years, it is assumed they have a great amount of teaching experience to share with researchers. These are shown below in Figures 6 and 7.

Figure 6

Institution Where Participants Currently Teach

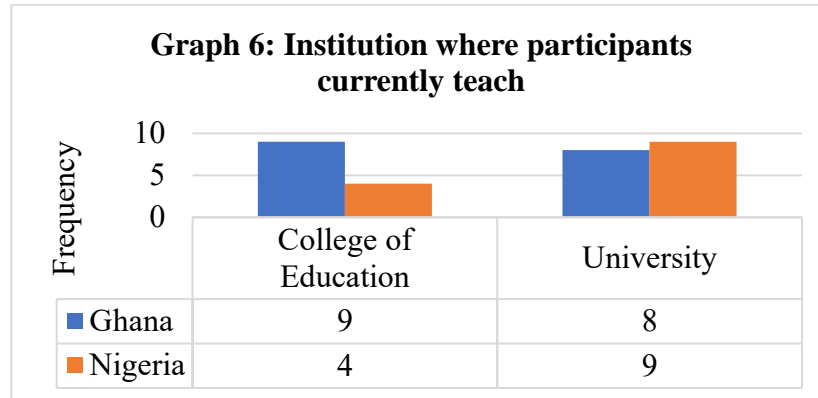
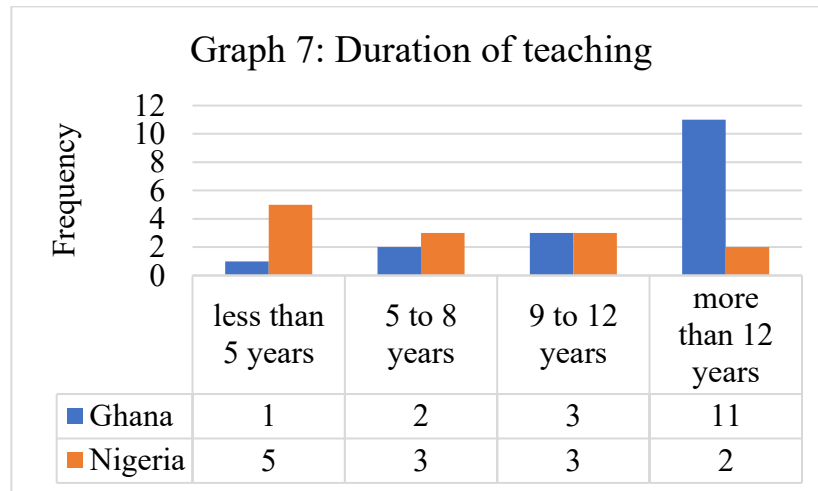


Figure 7

Duration of Teaching



Professional Qualifications. Teaching at the tertiary level also requires specific qualifications. A master’s degree with a research component (M.Phil.) is the minimum requirement in Ghana, but after being hired by tertiary institutions, teachers are encouraged to start working toward a Ph.D. as soon as possible. A master’s degree, such as a M.Ed. or M.A., is therefore discouraged. In Nigeria, a doctorate is typically preferred for university professors; however, similar to Ghana, teachers may be hired with the understanding that they will enroll in postgraduate programmes as soon as they are hired. The minimum qualification required to teach in colleges of education in Nigeria is strictly a master’s degree. To teach French, however, the minimum requirement is a bachelor’s degree, due to the dire need for French teachers (National Commission for Colleges of Education, 2012). From the data collected, a majority of the respondents (14 out of 17 or 82%) in Ghana, confirmed having a master’s degree, while 1 (6%) and 2 (12%) have a bachelor’s

degree and a doctorate degree, respectively. This is different from that of Nigeria, where 6 out of 13 participants (46%) have a bachelor's degree and only 4 (31%) and 3 (23%) hold a master's degree and a Ph.D., respectively. The reason for these numbers in Nigeria could simply be that these teachers have not yet completed their graduate studies, based on the arrangement and conditions of recruitment mentioned earlier. This further confirms why in Nigeria, 5 respondents (39%) have been teaching French for less than 5 years, compared to Ghana, where there is only one. Details of the exact degree they possess and the level at which they are teaching is represented below in Table 4.

Table 4

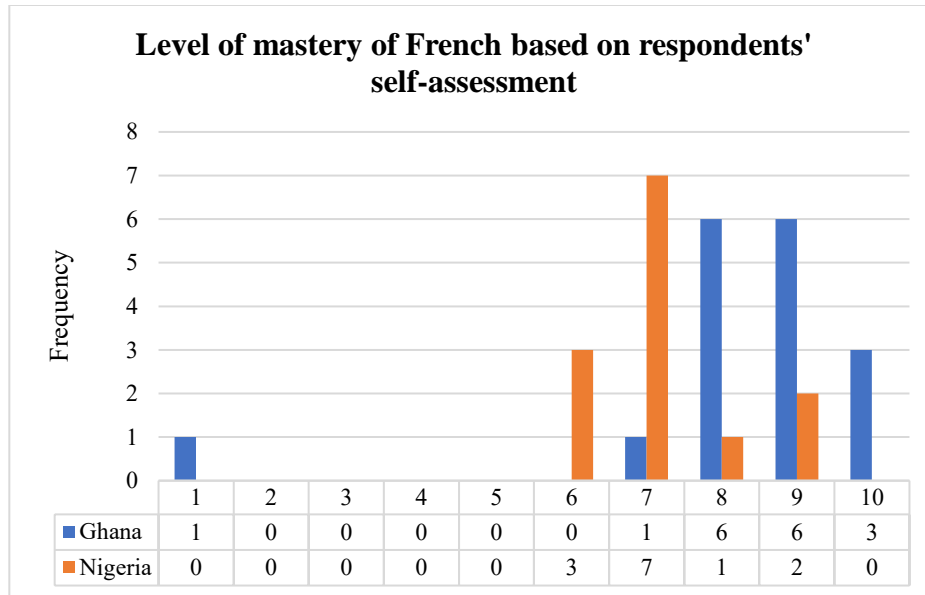
Highest Degree in French and Level Being Taught

Highest degree in French	Level being taught						Grand Total
	Ghana			Nigeria			
	College of Education	University	Sub-total (Ghana)	College of Education	University	Sub-total (Nigeria)	
B.A. French	0	0	0 (0%)	1	3	4 (31%)	4 (14%)
B.Ed. French	0	0	0 (0%)	1	0	1 (8%)	1 (3%)
M.A. French	1	0	1 (6%)	2	3	5 (38%)	6 (20%)
M.Ed. French	1	0	1 (6%)	0	0	0 (0%)	1 (3%)
M.Phil. French	6	6	12 (70%)	0	0	0(0%)	12 (40%)
Ph.D. French	0	2	2 (12%)	0	1	1 (8%)	3 (10%)
Other qualifications	1	0	1(6%)	0	2	2 (15%)	3 (10%)
Total	9	8	17 (100%)	4	9	13 (100%)	30 (100%)

Level of Mastery of French Based on a Self-Assessment. When asked to rate their level of proficiency in French—on a scale of 1 to 10, where 10 is the highest—most teachers (97%) rated their level of mastery of the French language they teach between 6 and 10. Only one respondent (3%) rated his/her level of mastery at 1 on the scale. This is shown below in Figure 8.

Figure 8

Level of Mastery of French after a Self-Assessment from Respondents in the Tertiary Institutions



Teaching Resources and Language of Instruction. Respondents have made a list of a variety of textbooks used to teach in either the Colleges of Education or the Universities and these are represented below in Table 5.

Table 5

List of French Resources in Nigeria and Ghana

Ghana		Nigeria	
Alter Ego; Bonjour amis; Business French, ed. 2000; Collins Dictionary ; Dictionnaire de linguistique ; Easy Approach to French; Echo; Expression française Morsel ; Français facile ; France Afrique; Arc-en-ciel; Grammaire du français Grammaire en dialogue; Grammaire Méthodique;	Je me débrouille en français; Le monde professionnel en français Methods of Teaching French as a Foreign Language III, IV, V and VI; Nouveau sans frontière; Objectif Express 1; Quartier d'affaires Salut les Amis; Soleil; Studio 60; Tout va bien!; TransAfrique;	Alter Ego 1&2; Collins conversation Collins grammar; Collins verbs; Colloquial French; Complete French All- in-One Cosmopolite; Edito; En Avant 1&2; Federal College of education series; French Grammar Drills; French Language Course Introduction à la traduction	Je démarre; La passerelle; Larousse difficultés grammaticales; Larousse grammaire Lattitudes; Le français au Nigeria; Nouvel Horizon 4; Oral en Situation; Practical French for Anglophone learners; Techniques of French composition; Texto; The Complete Course for Beginners

Introduction à la linguistique française, 2008	Voilà (nouveau)		
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A close look at the lists in the above table shows that the teaching resources used for the teaching of French vary greatly. Some are intended for French beginners, while others are for more advanced levels and more specific courses. This is because some French units do accept beginners into their programmes. Some teachers seem to use whatever they are able to lay their hands on, such as materials retrieved from Wikipedia or any materials available in the library of their institutions. In Nigeria, the National Commission for Colleges of Education recommends the use of *On y va*, *Nouveau Sans Frontières*, *Panorama*, *Nouvel Espace*, *Café Crème*, and *Tempo* to promote the communication and pronunciation skills of future teachers. For universities, the NUC (National Universities Commission)—the body responsible for academic programmes in Nigerian universities—does not offer any guide. This is usually decided locally by each academic unit.

In addition, regarding language(s) used for teaching, data from respondents on the language used as a medium of instruction in the French classroom shows that most of the teachers at the tertiary level use either *French and some English* or *French and English equally* in teaching the French language. None of them affirmed using a local language and French as a medium of instruction in the classroom. This could be because both countries are multilingual countries, and there is the likelihood of having a diversity of speakers of local languages present in the class in the tertiary institutions. It is also because, at that level, most students have acquired a higher level of proficiency in English, and hence, are able to comprehend any information the teacher gives. It is interesting to note one respondent in Ghana indicated using *French only* in the French language classroom. Another observation between the two countries is that, while 12 respondents (71%) indicated using mostly French and some English, and only 4 (23%) French and English equally in Ghana, this tendency is reversed in Nigeria. The data show that 9 (69%) of the respondents use French and English equally, and only 4 (31%) use mostly French and some English in teaching French.

The reasons given for the choice of the medium of instruction in the French language classroom vary. The respondent who uses *French only* does so to create an immersive francophone environment for the students, since learning French in an Anglophone country comes with a lot of disadvantages. For the choice of *French and English (equally)*, varying reasons given for the choice, show teachers at these tertiary institutions want their students to better understand what is being taught, and to ensure that instructions are better understood. Consequently, they choose to use both English and French equally, since the proficiency level of the students is low, with some studying French for the first time as adults. Some respondents also think it helps to sustain the interest and attention of students. The reasons given for the choice of *mostly French and some English* are similar to that of the choice of *French and English (equally)*. The only difference is the use of more French than English.

Challenges Facing the Teaching of the French Language. In Ghana and Nigeria, the attitude of students towards learning French dominates the challenges teachers face in teaching French in the tertiary levels. Recurring themes found are represented below in Table 6.

Table 6

Challenges Faced while Teaching French in Ghana & Nigeria

Ghana		Nigeria	
Themes	Examples	Themes	Examples
Attitude of students / low level of motivation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>Poor attitude of students toward French.</i> ▪ <i>The need to constantly change the perception of students about the language.</i> ▪ <i>Most students do not readily see the need for French.</i> ▪ <i>Attention of students/their motivation as well.</i> 	Low interest level of learners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>Low interest in learners.</i> ▪ <i>Lack of motivation and appreciation.</i> ▪ <i>Students learning the language as a formality and not making extra effort.</i>
Low level of proficiency in French	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>Reading, construction of sentences by the students.</i> ▪ <i>Lack of vocabularies by students.</i> 	Heterogeneous class	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>Having to explain a very difficult topic to set of intelligent students.</i> ▪ <i>Having a highly heterogeneous class where some have a francophone background while others just have their first experience.</i>
No teaching / learning resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>Lack of teaching materials/Aids.</i> ▪ <i>Also, difficulty in assessing the prescribed textbooks (they are not available).</i> 	Lack of support from authorities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>Lack of motivation from the government toward staff welfare and lack of scholarship for both staff and students in the advancement of the “Teaching of French as a Foreign Language” in francophone countries.</i>
No support from authorities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>Lack of government involvement and motivation.</i> ▪ <i>Lack of adequate Institutional support.</i> 	Inadequate teaching learning resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>Resources and infrastructure.</i> ▪ <i>Lack of facilities like language lab to adequately teach and learn.</i> ▪ <i>The complications and difficulty encountered by students in some of the textbooks used.</i>

Insufficient learning time	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>Not sufficient time allotted for the study of French among others.</i> ▪ <i>Students' inability to revise and do extra research or advance learning.</i> 	First time adult learners of French	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>Teaching adults is very challenging, their levels of assimilation are not as rapid as kids.</i> ▪ <i>Adult students without background knowledge.</i>
Low level of interest on the part of students	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>Lack of interest.</i> ▪ <i>Lack of interest on the part of the students.</i> 	Supervisors not adopting modern ways	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>Old supervisors with draconian laws.</i>
Internet connectivity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>Internet stability.</i> ▪ <i>Students find it difficult to assess the Internet due to lack of funds to buy data.</i> 	Internet connectivity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>Lack of internet facilities.</i>
Anglophone environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>Students not using the language at all after lectures.</i> ▪ <i>Sociolinguistic environment challenge.</i> 	Poor remuneration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>Poor salary.</i>
		Mother tongue influence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>Conflicting mother tongues.</i>

Review of the Language-in-Education Policy in Favour of French. Except for one respondent in Ghana who does not agree that there is a need for a review of the language-in-education policy in favour of French, a high percentage of respondents in both countries are in favour of the language-in-education to be reviewed (94% in Ghana and 100% in Nigeria). Aspects for the language in education policy to be reviewed, include making the study of French compulsory at all levels of the educational ladder. The table below gives details of major responses which were advanced.

Table 7

Aspects of the Policy in Favour of French that Need to be Reviewed, According to Respondents.

Ghana	Nigeria
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>Teach English students the need of learning other languages in order to expand their thinking ability.</i> ▪ <i>The weight placed on oral should be made Higher than the written components.</i> ▪ <i>Compulsory across Basic levels and SHS. It should be core.</i> ▪ <i>French should be taught at all levels.</i> ▪ <i>BECE examination should be reviewed.</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>Language immersion programme in Nigerian Universities.</i> ▪ <i>Cause it is old now, we need a new one.</i> ▪ <i>Not only making French compulsory in the document but be active in real situation.</i> ▪ <i>The aspect that speaks of it being used as a second national language.</i> ▪ <i>The curriculum. It should be designed in a way to improve the communication skills of the students.</i>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>The training of our French teachers in the Colleges of Education should be looked at.</i> ▪ <i>Contact hours should be looked at seriously.</i> ▪ <i>French has always been an afterthought in the Ghanaian Educational setup.</i> ▪ <i>Promotion of the language must cut across all levels of education and the economy.</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>Scholarship for both staff and students in a francophone country...</i> ▪ <i>Development and proper financing of the teaching of the language as well as improving the skills of lecturers by sponsoring them to conferences local and international.</i> ▪ <i>More Access to free trainings for the teachers.</i> ▪ <i>The French language should be made compulsory in all schools in Nigeria from the elementary level.</i> ▪ <i>Students should have more practical sessions as opposed to theory.</i>
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Discussion and Conclusion

From the analysis above, it is safe to say that these two West African English-speaking countries share more similarities than differences with respect to the teaching of the French language. First, both countries consider French as an essential language to acquire because of their proximity to francophone countries, and therefore, have made it part of their education systems. This is also reflected in the data collected in this study. French teachers at the secondary and tertiary levels chose this career path because of the professional opportunities the adoption of French by both countries create.

Second, at the policy level—in Ghana and Nigeria—French is not taught in nursery and kindergarten and in the first three years of primary public education, and there are no provisions for this in the national curricula. In addition, although the language-in-education policies in both countries include provisions for the language to be taught from year 4 of primary school until the end of the junior level of secondary school (6 years in total), the policy has not yet been implemented at the primary level. French is still only being offered at the junior secondary level where it is a required subject. At the senior level of secondary school, it loses this status and becomes an elective subject. As data show, this creates a serious setback to enrolments at the tertiary level, since only very few senior secondary students choose to include French in their final examination.

Third, this defective policy has borne several challenges impeding its full implementation in Ghana, as well as in Nigeria where French is said to be the second official language. For instance, participants in this study, who are teachers at the secondary and tertiary levels, reported the attitude of indifference often displayed by students in French classes and their low level of interest in the language because they just do not see the need for it. Reasons for this include: (1) the lack of institutional support or political will from the political leaders who fail to follow their words with concrete actions; (2) lack of public awareness as to the advantages of French; and, (3) the lack of diversified job opportunities. Furthermore, the serious shortage of teaching materials and lack of regular training for teachers continue to have a damaging effect on the quality of French taught and the kind of graduates produced. All these have resulted in most of

our respondents in both countries (94% in Ghana and 100% in Nigeria) calling for a review of the French language policy.

Fourth, both countries experience a serious shortage of qualified teachers of French, due to the lack of political will and underfunding of the programme. Concerns related to the underfunding of education in these countries have been raised in other studies, and its negative impacts on the quality of education have been highlighted. For instance, a study conducted by Kpolovie & Obilor (2013) has shown that, since independence, the Nigerian government has yet to allot 26 percent of its annual budget to education, as recommended by UNESCO, in spite of the growing population of school age children. This also contributes to the concern related to poor remuneration mentioned by some participants.

Fifth, the instructional method promoted in both countries for French teaching is essentially the communicative approach (although the call has been recently made in Ghana for a shift to the task-based approach of teaching which is essentially an extension of the communicative approach). Developed in the 1980s, the communicative teaching approach was designed to promote the use of the target language in meaningful and authentic contexts and focuses on the learner's language proficiency based on listening, speaking, reading, and writing. It seeks to develop communication skills in learners by exposing them to various oral forms and real-life scenarios in the target language (Canale & Swain, 1980; Alrabadi, 2011). In both Nigeria and Ghana, this teaching method was deemed adequate to help learners achieve communicative competence—a functional knowledge in French. However, as indicated by teachers (secondary and postsecondary) who took part in the present study, the lack of adequate teaching materials as well as the failure to provide professional training to the teaching personnel has impeded the implementation of this approach in the classroom.

Sixth, the study also shows without generalising that, in Nigeria and Ghana, both secondary and postsecondary educators have adopted, as the medium of instruction in the classroom, the use of English while teaching French. As shown in the previous section, Results and Interpretation, teachers have had to adopt the use of English within French classes to address the challenge related to the low level of proficiency of the learners, and to promote understanding and interest in the students. In most cases, both languages are used equally, despite the multilingual nature of the environment. Second/foreign language acquisition has been studied extensively and various theories and teaching methods have emerged (Moeller & Catalano, 2015). While discussions about these theories and methods do not fall within the scope of the study, it suffices to mention that, in multilingual settings like Nigeria and Ghana, whenever possible, considerations should be given to the whole repertoire of the learners in foreign language acquisition. This should include the mother tongue, which is usually not English. In turn, it will help to develop in the students the intercultural competence, which according to Moeller & Catalano (2015), “would allow them to see relationships between different cultures, mediate across these cultures, and critically analyse cultures including their own” (p. 331).

Using the theoretical model of a successful implementation of language-in-education proposed by Kaplan & Baldauf (1997)—discussed earlier in the section titled Theoretical Framework: Language Policy and Implementation Framework—the challenges to the successful implementation of the language policy in favour of French in both countries falls within four

aspects: curriculum policy, personnel policy, material policy, and community policy. According to the authors, *curriculum policy* refers to content to be taught, including the appropriate time to introduce the language in the programme and the duration. In Nigeria and Ghana, timing, content, and duration of learning are identified by teachers as impeding their work. The current three-year learning of French (although the policies make provision for 6 years) has been identified as affecting the level of proficiency of learners. According to the participants, making French a required course at all levels of education would be the best way to address this, which will require more human resources. This leads to the issue of *personnel policy* that is related to teacher recruitment, their pre-service or in-service training to maintain a high level of proficiency, and adequate remuneration. The dearth of qualified French teachers, the lack of continued professional training, and inadequate remuneration currently being experienced will be aggravated if the funding issue is not first addressed. As the name implies, *materials policy* refers to the appropriate methodology to be used for content delivery and adequate course books for language learning. Although the curricula encourage the communicative approach, they seem to lack the development of the oral communication skills of learners in French. Also, a lack of adequate teaching materials has resulted in some of the teachers having to choose what is within reach to do their work. The last aspect is *community policy* that relates to the general attitude of the community (including parents, students, etc.) toward the education of the language in question. The objective is to achieve a positive attitude toward the suggested change. Data collected indicate a low level of motivation from learners, which according to participants can be addressed by sensitising learners on the benefits associated with learning another language—and by developing the economic aspect of the learning—through the creation of more diverse career opportunities in French.

In reference to differences, other than those related to the status of French highlighted in the section titled Literature Review: Language Policies and French Language Teaching in Nigeria and Ghana, another divergence that may be raised is attributed to the implementation of the Year Abroad programme, which is part of the curriculum at the postsecondary level and is considered as a way for French students to immerse themselves in the language and culture in a francophone environment. In Ghana, students must choose between *Le Village du Bénin* (UB) in Lomé, Togo or *Le Centre Béninois des Langues Étrangères* (CEBELAE) in Cotonou, Benin to enjoy full financial support from the government. In Nigeria, however, the Year Abroad programme is normally held at The Nigeria French Language Village (Le village français du Nigeria), which was established by the government in 1991 as an alternative to leaving the country. Also, this domestic Year Abroad programme does not enjoy full financial support from the government.

Analysis of the language policies and data collected from teachers have led us to formulate a few recommendations. Ghana's language policy is clear when it comes to the teaching and learning of French. Documents show there is the commitment of making the study of French compulsory in Ghana, but it is observed that the willpower to enforce this policy is almost absent. This is due to the insufficient number of French teachers and a limited number of learning and teaching materials as the main challenges facing the government in pursuit of its policy on the French language (myjoyonline.com, 16th May 2018). With French becoming a compulsory subject in the Primary schools, thanks to the new CCP curriculum in Ghana, it should be noted here that more Colleges of Education would need to get accredited to start training teachers to teach French either in the Upper Primary or JHS levels across the country.

There is the need to create at least a French village in the country as is currently being done in Nigeria. This would give more people the opportunity to study French without necessarily travelling out of Ghana to have a ‘language bath’ (i.e., immersive language experience). Adult learners who could not have the opportunity to study French while in school could also have the opportunity to learn, without having to travel out of Ghana and abandoning their jobs. In addition, the Ghanaian government needs to invest in the publication of more supplementary books written in French. Unlike English, authors of books in French need to be given financial assistance. This is because, since the percentage of people who speak French in Ghana is a minority, investing in publishing books in French does not bring a lot of financial gains to the authors. In fact, this discourages them from investing in this venture. Also, assessing students in French at the end of their studies at the JHS and SHS by WAEC should align with new trends of examining the four competencies in a language. Questions should be focused more on candidates’ ability to carry out tasks than their ability to memorise and answer questions.

Finally, to make people interested in acquiring French as a second foreign language, more job opportunities advertised by the government could make knowledge in French a prerequisite. For instance, before getting employed into the security services, applicants should be required to show a working knowledge in French before getting employed. In Nigeria, the policy in favour of the French language needs to be reviewed. This call was also evident from the teachers who took part in this study. Since the provision to offer French at the primary level will most likely never be carried out, given the current situation after many years, we recommend that the teaching of the language be made compulsory at the senior secondary level to reinforce the knowledge and skills acquired at the junior level. This would also help to resolve the issue of low enrollment at the postsecondary level. Additionally, while the teaching method currently adopted for the teaching of French aims at equipping learners to be able to carry out communication in real-life situations, the eclectic method of teaching, which allows for the mixing of various approaches of teaching, should be encouraged and promoted to optimise learning.

Third, there is an urgent need to re-evaluate the Year Abroad programme which is currently being observed on Nigerian soil. Needless to say, true language immersion is better achieved when the learner is able to live in the environment where the language is used and its culture lived. Reinstating the real Year Abroad programme, as it was before establishing the Nigeria French Language Village in Badagry, would go a long way to positively affect the kind of French graduates the country produces. Furthermore, the persistent underfunding of education should be addressed, as it continues to have grave consequences on the entire system. This goes against the country’s philosophy of education that is supposedly tailored toward “self-realisation, better human relationship, individual and national efficiency, effective citizenship ...” (National Policy on Education, 2004, article 6). Better funding for education and better utilisation of allocated funds would mean better compensation for teachers and a better learning environment for students. Real, sustainable development is achievable by investing in the development of human resources.

In summary, this study has shown that the teaching of French is quite similar in Nigeria and Ghana. These similarities are reflected both in the language policy in favour of French and its implementation. While French teachers in both countries generally love their profession, they

face numerous challenges related to the design and implementation of language policies. The lack of well-coordinated actions and strategies from the governments and education stakeholders also contribute to this situation. Although these entities recognise the importance of the French language for the countries and their citizens, the lack of political will impedes the successful implementation of policies adopted. As a foreign language, French has undoubtedly attained a privileged status in Ghana and in Nigeria, having been first introduced in the education systems of these two Anglophone countries since the 19th century. The interest for the learning of the language continues to grow as Nigerians and Ghanaians take cognizance of the geopolitical location of their countries and the opportunities associated with knowledge of French in the sub-region and at the international level. The ball seems to be in the court of the authorities in both countries to design and implement a French learning programme that meets the needs of the population while taking into account its diverse linguistic landscape.

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