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A Quantitative Approach to the Study of Deviant Usage of Mood and Modality in Argumentative Essays of Second Year Students of Berekum College of Education

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Abstract

The aim of the study was to find out the quantitative approach to the study of deviant usages of mood and modality in argumentative essays of second year students of Berekum College of Education in the Ashanti region of Ghana. The main objectives of the study were to investigate the causes of Berekum College of Education students' inability to use mood and modality features appropriately to write good argumentative essays, identify the specific challenges the students are confronted with and the main causes of their lack of interest for argumentative essays. Data were collected from a purposive sample of 150 second year students of Berekum College of Education by way of questionnaires, an in-class essay test, summary test and objective test. These were analysed using Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS). The findings reveal that there was no exposure to the appropriate use of mood and modality as well as argumentative essays at the pre-college level of their education. The findings also indicate that students were simply of the view that their tutors must serve as role models in the use of the features of mood and modality in all their discussions and deliberations to enable students learn the practicalities of the usage of the concepts from them. It also discloses that second-year students of Berekum College of Education lack interest in writing argumentative essays, and are unable to make appropriate use of mood and modality to be successful in the writing of such essays. It is therefore recommended that students should practise the concepts they are taught to

enhance their understanding of mood and modality and their usage in argumentative essays while English tutors avail themselves for in-service training, workshops and seminars to abreast themselves of new trends of teaching language classes, especially in dealing with mood and modality in argumentative essays.

Keywords: Argumentative essays, mood and modality, students, writing, English

Introduction

One's ability to make an informed argument depends, to a large extent, on his or her ability to make effective use of certain linguistic features, such as the appropriate use of mood and modality in his/her deliberations to enhance effective communication. According to Canale and Swain (1980), writers at least need grammatical competence (a knowledge of grammar, vocabulary, and semantics), discourse competence (a knowledge of genres and the rhetorical patterns that create them), sociolinguistic competence (the ability to use language appropriately in different contexts), and strategic competence (the ability to use a variety of communicative strategies) to make cohesive communication. Kuhn (1991) considers argumentation to be a thinking skill essential to idea formulation, problem-solving, and good judgment. Mood and modality express the speaker's attitude or opinion regarding the contents of the sentence or what the sentence proposition entails (Palmer, 1986). According to Greenbaum and Nelson, (2002), mood is concerned with the speaker's attitude towards a proposition, and this is reflected in the form of the verb.

Writing plays a significant role in the writer's expression of opinion and ideas. One of such writings is argumentative essays. An argumentative essay is a text that explains a writer's opinion toward some issues of concern which needs to be addressed. The main function of this form of essay is to persuade or to convince the readers about certain issues (Hyland, 2008) and requires a special skill that can only be gained during school years (Nippold 2000). Hooks (2010) is of the view that students learning English as a second language face numerous challenges in writing argumentative essays. The situation is further compounded when we have students coming from different backgrounds and are most likely to face multiple challenges in the classroom.

Mastering writing is the most difficult skill for first and foreign language learners. It is a complicated process since it involves a series of ideas being juggled by the writer in his/her mind and the final product which is the written text (Harries and Cunningham, 1994) and requires a level of language control, (Murcia & Olshtain, 2000). Writing is, therefore, a complicated task for most learners of the English language, especially foreign or second

language learners. Argumentative Essays, particularly, seem to pose a lot of problems for second year language students of Berekum College of Education. The students either do not have the requisite techniques or skills, as well as, the needed vocabulary to be used in writing such essays. Most of the students therefore, often choose to answer essay questions other than the argumentative when they are given an assignment to write essays or in examinations when they have the opportunity of making choices.

Argumentation is the main component of an assignment, and the quality of argumentation significantly affects the scores an essay will receive (Clark, 2009). In fact, the skills of argumentation, involving reasoning, evaluation and persuasion, start developing very early in a child's life. In spoken language at least, children are seen to employ the genre of arguing, for example, in explaining their choice or in persuading their parents. In this sense, the resources used in argumentation can be said to be "a part of a child's everyday life" (Knapp & Watkins, 1994, p118). It is also argued that in both informal and formal contexts, taking up a position and supporting it remain basic components of arguing. For example, students' informal arguments in online forum postings were observed to have moves in taking up a position and supporting it similar to those moves in academic writing (Chandrasegaran 2008). Therefore, Chandrasegaran claims that "most students have some ability in argument construction even if they have not been formally taught" (2008, p13). Past studies have revealed that some discourse behaviours in EFL students' expository essays are different from the essays written by native speakers of English. These include a different way of presenting counter-arguments (Hinkel, 1999), postponement of the position or thesis statement (English, 1999), and the over-use of topic knowledge to develop an essay (Cai, 1999; English, 1999; Hinkel, 1999).

Mood and Modality in Argumentative Essay Writing

Modality is typically seen as a complex multifaceted phenomenon, leading to various viewpoints on its nature in a scientific literature (Depraetere & Reed, 2006). The term "modality" is used in linguistics to describe a wide range of occurrences with variable meanings, grammatical properties, and formal representation. Modality has traditionally been defined as a way of expressing one's attitude regarding a statement's content or its link to objective reality. To indicate whether an action suggested by the sentence's verb is doable, impossible, required or desirable, the speaker uses several modes of language.

Mood is frequently characterized as a collection of limited linguistic forms that express the speaker's connection to action and reality (Auwera & Aguilar, 2016). Classical grammar has three moods: indicative, imperative, and subjunctive or conditional. The indicative mood conveys activity. Urgent

mood expresses urgency. It indicates an action that is probable, desired, or characterized. When choosing a mood, the speaker considers the action's realism, possibility, attractiveness, and so on (Palmer, 1986; Bybee, Joan & Fleischman, 1995). Mood is usually related with the indicative, subjunctive, and imperative categories. Lyons (1995) defines mood as the linguistic manifestation of subjective modality. He also claims that English modal verbs have been acquiring subjunctive mood functions since Old English. Aarts (2012), like Allan (2001) and Huddleston and Pullum (2002), finds that mood is a subjunctive clause type. Berry (1975) and Strang (1969) respectively suggest there are two terms in the system of mood (imperative and indicative), although some grammarians recognize a third, the subjunctive mood (Greenbaum, 1996).

Modality in English is not restricted to phrase types or modal verbs. Modal adjectives and adverbs, as well as non-referential nouns, have been proposed as modal exponents in English (Traugott, 2010; Ziegeler, 2012). Hoyer (2005, p.1495) questions the "apparent unassailability" of modal verbs in English, pointing out that corpus studies show that modal verb-adverb collocations create modal synergy by combining two independent modal expressions; e.g., might just possibly catch on, almost certainly will be, etc (Hoyer 2005, 1492). Traugott (2010) investigated the diachronic grammaticalization of epistemic functions in modal verbs.

Argumentative Essays

Writing argumentative essays is seen as a critical educational objective and a popular activity among university students (Asterhan, 2018; Noroozi, Biemans & Mulder, 2016). In social constructivist learning paradigms, learners engage in conversations with their peers, argue and negotiate meaning with them in order to gain knowledge about the topic, (co)create knowledge, and/or solve complex issues (Noroozi, Weinberger, Biemans, Mulder & Chizari, 2012). A persuasive essay often attempts to evaluate students' ability to form judgements and justify their preference for one option over another. Occasionally, the writer is restricted to a particular point of view (Yemeh, 2007, p. 40). For a college student, writing high-quality argumentative essays is a demanding task. Teachers often express dissatisfaction with students' general argumentation quality in their papers (Graham & Perin, 2007; Pessoa, Mitchell, & Miller, 2017), and as a consequence, they note that majority of students struggle with essay writing (Kellogg & Whiteford, 2009).

The primary objective of an argumentative essay is to persuade others to change positions they do not want to change (Ozagic, 2004). There are several techniques to essay writing, but experience has shown that some approaches are more effective at helping you get higher marks in composition than others. When delivering an argument, one method is to begin with the

arguments made by the opposing party (Yemeh, 2007, p.41). The form of the argumentative essay has been linked to socio-constructivist and socio-cognitive theory (Coffin & O'Halloran, 2008).

Numerous studies have been conducted on the significance of students' essay writing and the effects of peer feedback on essay writing and learning (Bayerlein, 2014; Gabelica, Van den Bossche, Segers, & Gijsselaers, 2012; Asterhan, Schwarz, & Gil, 2012; Erkens & Janssen, 2008), but one issue that has remained unexplored is the extent to which female and male students write argumentative essays differently. Argumentative essays are challenging to write because they need you to take a stance on a certain issue. Many students are used to defending or opposing a point of view. Writing an essay on one of the argumentative essay topics requires you to be well-armed with strong and persuasive arguments concerning the argumentative essay subject you have chosen. According to Kuhn (1991), argumentation is a cognitive ability required for idea generation, problem solving, and sound judgment. In contrast to other areas of education, however, few empirical studies have concentrated specifically on learning pupils to write argumentative language (Lukomskaya, 2015; Nussbaum & Schraw, 2007). At their heart, effective arguments have two components: assertions and counterclaims (Nussbaum & Schraw, 2007). Crowhurst (1990) noticed in a study that young writers begin their articles with an argument but quickly devolve into mostly descriptive narratives. Similarly, Toplak and Stanovich (2003) observed that native English-speaking undergraduate students had the tendency to ignore evidence against a position the person favours. L2 students often have greater difficulty with argumentative writing than L1 students (El-Henawy, Dadour, Salem, & El-Bassuony, 2012). In both L1 and L2 contexts, many teachers' preferred strategy is explicit or direct instruction in argumentation (Cho & Jonassen, 2002): establishing lexical standards and tone, arranging argumentative writing, and analyzing arguments. However, research investigations have produced contradictory findings.

Numerous studies have shown that direct instruction enhances argumentative writing (Nussbaum & Schraw, 2007; Sanders, Wiseman, & Gass, 1994). Others said that there was no effect (Knudson, 1994; Reznitskaya, Anderson, & Kuo, 2007). Similarly, education in argumentative essay writing is mostly based on direct instruction from instructors, with a focus on appropriate lexical components and essay structure. While students are encouraged to do preliminary study on their assigned topics, they often depend on the teacher's comments. The question of whether second-year students at Berekum College of Education are aware of all of these facets of argumentative essays and incorporate them into their writing is a significant one. Many students articulate the problem accurately but fail to organize their ideas in a way that enables them to effectively argue the argument. As a

consequence, the researcher seeks to understand why students struggle to organize their ideas in order to write meaningful and well-organized argumentative essays, as well as how they might be aided in overcoming their obstacles.

Statement of the Problem

Argumentative essay writing, in spite of its relevance across the globe, appears to be one of the most dreaded and the least attempted by second year students of Berekum College of Education. This unfortunate development could be linked to either their lack of appropriate skills for argumentation, or their ineffective acquisition and application of the needed skills to be successful in the use of the English Language as a second language for the desired results. Various students around the world are likely to face one kind of challenge or another as far as the use of appropriate linguistic features and the writing of argumentative essays are concerned (Yemeh, 2007). The situation is not different with second-year students of Berekum College of Education who happen to encounter certain challenges with the appropriate use of some linguistic features and the writing of essays or compositions with particular reference to appropriate use of mood and modality in argumentative essay writing.

In the past two or three years, for instance, most of the second-year students of Berekum College of Education who are required to tackle argumentative essays in their End of Second Semester Examination, have often done all they can to avoid them as long as they can attempt other options both in assignments and in their End of Semester Examinations. The few who attempt such questions lack the needed details or facts to support their stance accordingly, and are equally unable to use the appropriate mood and modal expressions to present their arguments in a more persuasive and convincing manner. Such a development is quite unfortunate since the second-year students happen to be those preparing to go out for their internship programme when they will be expected to teach all subjects taught in the basic schools including all aspects of the English Language.

A variety of studies have been undertaken in mood and modality in argumentative essays (Yuyun, 2010; Heydarnia and Aidinlou, 2015; Biber, Johansson, Leech, Conrad, & Finegan, 1999; Coates, 1983; Coffin, 2004; He, Y., & Wang, 2013). It was found that under normal circumstances, students are not expected to experience such challenges in dealing with any aspect of the language after having been subjected to two years of tuition. Meanwhile, the deviant usage of mood and modality in argumentative essays has not been widely investigated in the field of language education in colleges of education in Ghana so this study investigated some causes of Berekum College of

Education students' inability to use mood and modality features appropriately to write good argumentative essays

Research Questions

1. What are the causes of students' inability to use mood and modality features appropriately to write good argumentative essays?
2. What are the peculiar challenges identified with the students and the main causes of their lack of interest in argumentative essays?

Methodology

The study adopted the descriptive survey approach and this design was chosen because the focus of the study was to study the deviant usage of mood and modality in argumentative essays of second year students of Berekum College of Education. Again, the design lends itself to gathering information from a larger population in order to provide descriptive and inferential information on variables related to the study. It also helps to obtain information that concerns the current status of phenomena, in this case, mood and modality in argumentative essays of second year students. Fraenkel and Wallen (2006) have stated that the purpose of descriptive survey is to observe, describe and document aspects of a phenomenon as it naturally occurs. Owing to this, the design involved the collection of data from all participants captured for the study by administering a questionnaire that gathered the views of participants on mood and modality in argumentative writings.

The target population for the study included all second-year pre-service teachers of Berekum College of Education in Ghana. The total number of students was 531. Malhotra and Birks (2007) stipulate that a sample is the sub-group of the population selected for participation in a study. An estimated sample size of 150 second-year pre-service teachers were selected out of the accessible population of 531 from the school. A multistage approach was used to select the sample. In all, the purposive sampling and proportionate stratified sampling technique were used to select the sample. The purposive sampling method was used to select second years because they happen to be the appropriate population that the researcher could access the needed information on the study from the students' point of view since they have a considerable level of knowledge and experience with regards to the issue of study. Purposive sampling method was used to ensure that the elements which satisfy some predetermined criteria, (for instance, possessing certain characteristics relevant to the study) was selected (Nworgu, 2006). Again, the proportionate stratified sampling technique was used to select students from each programme of study in the College. This is because proportionate stratified random sampling technique ensures greater representation of the sample

relative to the population and guarantees that minority constituents of the population are represented in the sample (Nworgu, 2006).

Data was collected from respondents using a questionnaire. The questionnaire had a number of statements that elicited information on demographic information and variables that determined respondents' career indecision. Demographic information from the questionnaire was analysed using descriptive statistics where data were organised into frequency counts and converted into percentages while means and standard deviations were used for the research questions.

Though the present study revealed a number of interesting findings, it encountered some limitations. The current research focused on only student-teachers at Berekum College of Education, hence limiting the generalisability of the findings. As such, not all the year groups were involved, and therefore, the findings may not represent the deviant usage of mood and modality in the writing of argumentative essays of the other year groups that form the same category of students. Again, the instrument used in gathering data was a self-reported instrument which may lead to biased responses. This is because the results were based on the perceptions and insights of the participants and also, the researcher could not have a means to check whether participants were responding truthfully since there is the probability of some participants falsifying their responses. Using the Likert Scale, participants were restricted to only the options provided and thus, had no chance to add any other comments about the issue under investigation. Quantitative approach was used to obtain information, however, not all the options of the questionnaire were completed by participants. According to Zutshi, Paris and Creed, (2007) incomplete questionnaires negatively impact the research results as it may reduce the usability of the study.

Results and Discussions

This study sought to identify deviant usage of mood and modality in argumentative essays of second year students of Berekum College of Education

Table 1: Means and Standard Deviations of Causes of Students’ Inability to Make Use of Appropriate Mood and Modality Features in Argumentative Essay

Statement	Mean	Std. Dev.
I hardly put to practice the features of mood and modality.	2.63	1.80
I lacked good grammatical foundation at my pre-college level.	2.93	1.65
It takes a lot of effort to concentrate when the tutor teaches argumentative essay.	2.40	.89
I just don’t like mood and modality, and I think it has affected my writing of argumentative essays.	2.43	.91
There was no exposure to the appropriate use of mood and modality as well as argumentative essays at the senior high school level. Everything is so new to me.	3.46	.88
I lack the requisite skills and vocabulary to develop argumentative essays.	3.50	.93
The concept of mood and modality is too difficult to understand and use.	3.82	.93
Mean of Means	3.02	1.14

The respondents exhibited an inability on all the items put forward to elicit their responses on the causes of their inability to use mood and modality features in argumentative essay writing. Their major cause of inability was on “The concept of mood and modality is too difficult to understand and use” (M=3.82, SD=.93). This was followed by “I lack the requisite skills and vocabulary to develop argumentative essays, (M=3.50, SD=.93). Furthermore, the respondents agreed (M=3.46, SD=.88) that “There was no exposure to the appropriate use of mood and modality as well as argumentative essays at the pre-college level of their education. Everything was, therefore, so new to a lot of them, and for that matter, was another cause of their inability to use mood and modal features in writing argumentative essays. the mean of means scores (M=3.02, SD=1.14) is more than the cut-off score of 2.5. This, therefore, implies that the students lack the ability to use mood and modality features in argumentative essay writing. It can, therefore, be concluded from this finding that the main cause of the students’ inability to use mood and modal features in their argumentative essays is that they lack the required knowledge of the concept. The cause of their lack of knowledge in the concept could also be traced to various factors including little or no exposure to the concept in their earlier stages of education and their own perceptions about it.

Table 2: Means and Standard Deviations of the Causes of Lack of Students' Interest in Argumentative Essay

Statement	Mean	Std. Dev.
I don't understand argumentative essay when I'm taught.	3.04	.83
The time/period the tutor uses to teach it too short to help me to understand.	3.00	.85
It takes a lot of effort to concentrate when the tutor teaches argumentative essays.	2.81	.90
Your grammar should be good to write any meaningful argumentative essay.	2.70	1.75
I find it very difficult to explain my thoughts in argumentative essays.	2.68	.98
I find it challenging to consider points for and against when writing argumentative essays.	2.66	.92
I am able to decide on which topics to use for practice.	2.64	.93
I find it challenging writing argumentative essays without anyone's direction.	2.63	1.01
Mean of Means	2.77	1.02

Out of eight (8) items, the respondents agreed that they had challenges with all the items. They agreed (M=3.04, SD=.83) that "I don't understand argumentative essay when I'm taught". When they were asked whether the time/period the tutors used to teach argumentative essay results in the lack of interest in the subject matter, the respondents agreed that the time is too short to help them to understand argumentative essays well, (M=3.00, SD=.84). Furthermore, the respondents agreed (M=2.81, SD=.90) that it takes a lot of effort to concentrate when the tutors teach them argumentative essays. This had a mean of means score of (M=2.77, SD=1.02) which is more than the cut-off score of 2.5, therefore, implies that the students lack interest in argumentative essay writing. Also, the errors commonly identified in the students' written text suggest that they are very much challenged even in the use of modal auxiliary verbs and for that matter epistemic modality. Thus, confirming the finding of Hu and Li (2015) that the manipulation of epistemic modality is particularly problematic for the L2 students.

Table 7: Means and Standard Deviations of How Students can be Assisted to Make appropriate Use of Mood and Modality in Their Writing of Argumentative Essays

Statement	Mean	Std. Dev.
I believe tutors should endeavour to constantly make appropriate use of such features in the way they speak, write and express themselves in all things to motivate students to learn from them.	3.43	1.07
Tutors should engage students with lots of argumentative discussions, and provide sample argumentative essays which should be discussed to enable students know how mood and modality can be used in them.	3.50	1.01
Tutors should give students intensive grammar lessons and have them taken through the appropriate use of mood and modality in context.	2.61	.96
Tutors should teach students how to use appropriate registers in writing to attain the desired results.	3.35	.89

Tutors should engage students with lots of exercises and direct interaction by means of arguable topics and any other activities that would expose them to the appropriate use of mood and modality.	3.73	.99
Tutors should create some kind of contest among students in the form inter-class or inter-hall debates to enable them to develop students' interest in debating and for that matter argumentation.	2.77	.99
English Language tutors should modify their teaching strategy to make it student-centred and suit the interest of students in the use of mood and modality.	2.87	1.02

What most of the students suggested will assist them make appropriate use of mood and modality in writing and also develop interest in argumentative essays was that “Tutors should engage students with lots of exercises and direct interaction by means of arguable topics and any other activities that would expose them to the appropriate use of mood and modality” (M=3.73, SD=.99). This certainly is workable or appropriate since students, through such engagements, would be exposed to various ways of using such devices and also have the opportunity to practise their usage.

This is followed by “Tutors should engage students with lots of argumentative discussions, and provide sample argumentative essays which should be discussed to enable students know how mood and modality can be used in them” (M=3.50, SD=1.01). This is a view expressed by quite a good number of the students as well who felt that should their tutors engage them with lots of argumentative discussions and provide them the needed coaching about appropriate usage of such features, they would be in the best position to use mood and modality appropriately in their writing and also develop interest in argumentative writing. Obviously the students who expressed this view cannot be faulted since practice in any concept makes one familiar with it and eventually gets one better placed in its application than the person who has not been introduced to the concept.

Another major factor they believed could enable them solve the problem was “I believe tutors should endeavour to constantly make appropriate use of such features in the way they speak, write and express themselves in all things to motivate students to learn from them” (M=3.43, SD=1.07). By this view expressed by another good number, the students were simply of the view that their tutors must serve as role models in the use of the features of mood and modality in all their discussions and deliberations to enable students learn the practicalities of the usage of the concepts from them. Here again, one cannot but side with the students since language, arguably, is learnt better through exposure to it and same could be applied to the proper acquisition of various features in it.

Discussions

The study revealed that students are not able to use mood and modality features in argumentative essay writing. The major cause of this inability was the fact that the concept of mood and modality was too difficult for them to understand and use. This is incongruous to the finding of De-Luca (2016) who found in Ferrara, Italy that mood and modality was the aspect students found least difficult ($M=1.01$, $SD=.12$) as compared to the aspect with the highest difficulty; adjectives ($M=3.84$, $SD=1.62$). His finding was made in a study he conducted on 110 students to ascertain students' inability to use English language appropriately.

The finding of the current study is, however, in tandem with the finding of Dourado (2017) in Arusha, Tanzania that students are unable to use mood and modality effectively in their writing of argumentative essays. Out of the 320 students he investigated, 251 (78.4%) students revealed that the concept of mood and modality was difficult and susceptible to their writing skills as well.

The interactions with both tutors and students also revealed that a lack of practice in the use of mood and modality in writing of essays had affected the students greatly. This finding is supported by Schneider (2015) who studied students' ability to write in the English language as expected. Her study was conducted in Cologne, Germany. Her study revealed that there is a strong correlation between practice and perfection of language ($r = 0.83$; $n = 250$; $p > 0.02$). The finding is in line with the finding of Meier and Asiedu (2016) who found in Bern, Switzerland, and Koforidua, Ghana in a cross-cultural study that sought the preparedness of students for polytechnic education. They found that out of the 120 students studied in Ghana, 98 representing 81.6% of them were deficient in Mathematics and English. On the contrary, 6 (5%) out of an equal number of 120 were deficient in the same subjects in Switzerland. It is obvious that such students with the deficiencies will enter tertiary institutions and exhibit challenges of effective writing.

Furthermore, another major theme that arose from the interview with both students and tutors was the fact that there were limited contact hours to help students understand and write meaningful argumentative essays. The finding of the study agrees with the findings of Tanaka (2016). Tanaka carried out his study in Sapporo, Japan on why students in the junior grades show a lack of interest in English language. His interview with students revealed that the time the English teachers use in teaching them was short and hence, it did not foster their understanding and interest in the course. The finding also showed that it takes good grammar to write good argumentative essays. The finding is consistent with the finding of Abate (2017). Abate investigated why students of late are not able to write sound essays. Out of the 175 students he studied, 163 (95.9%) indicated that their major challenge was their poor

grammar. To construct any good sentence, your grammar needs to be sound. Hence students with poor grammar may not be able to formulate good phrases, clauses and sentences which they will put together as paragraphs to make meaning. I think this is an aspect that teachers of English language need to look at with keen interest.

The tutors interviewed indicated that, students' lack of interest in reading is what is hindering the students' interest in argumentative essay writing. The learning of language begins with letter identification and letter sounds. Once a learner gets this concept, he is able to begin reading sentences. The interest in reading will then manifest in the interest in writing. The finding is supported by the finding of Bergman (2017). Bergman conducted her study in Lulea, Sweden and found out that children under 15 years have a lack of interest in essay writing. The results of her study revealed that 119 (88.1%) out of 135 students had little or no interest in reading which affects the way they write.

Conclusion

Based on the finding of the study and subsequent discussions, the major conclusion is that, second-year students of Berekum College of Education lack interest in writing argumentative essays, and are unable to make appropriate use of mood and modality to be successful in the writing of such essays. Furthermore, English tutors of the College need to offer themselves as mentors by providing students with materials, practice exercises and also serve as role models to assist students to overcome their challenges of using mood and modality in writing sound argumentative essays. Furthermore, since the study was conducted in only one college of education, it is, therefore, suggested that future researchers should consider carrying it out in a number of colleges to see how students in other colleges fare in the use of mood and modality.

Also, researchers could also investigate the students' usage of mood and modality in other forms of writing such as formal letters and expository essays since this study was centred on only argumentative essays

Recommendations

It is recommended that students should practise the concepts they are taught to enhance their understanding of mood and modality and their usage in argumentative essays while English tutors avail themselves for in-service training, workshops and seminars to abreast themselves of new trends of teaching language classes, especially in dealing with mood and modality in argumentative essays.

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