

Assessing Sign Language Competency of Teachers of the Deaf in Ghana

KUMEDZRO, Felix Kwame, *PhD*

Department of Education College
of Distance Education University
of Cape Coast, Ghana

&

VANDERPUYE, Irene, *PhD*

Department of Education and Psychology
College of Education Studies
University of Cape Coast, Ghana

Abstract

In Ghana, all Special Schools for the Deaf have been directed by Ghana Education Service to use sign language as the major mode of communication and instruction as opposed to the use of total communication which hitherto was the main philosophy. Therefore, it became necessary for training institutions to review their curriculum to include sign language as a major component of the teacher development programmes. This study was a descriptive study that assessed the sign language competency of teachers of the Deaf in Ghana. Simple random sampling technique was used to select the schools and the teachers while the six head teachers were purposively selected. Questionnaire and observation guide were employed to establish the competency level of the teachers in sign language. Reliability coefficients of the head teachers' and teachers' questionnaires were 0.72 and 0.78 respectively while the inter-rater reliability of the observation guide was 0.86. The study found that pre-service and in-service training were inadequate and that the competency level of the teachers was found to be lower than the expected level for specialist teachers. It was recommended that the training institutions should review the training curriculum of teachers of the deaf in Ghana to make their training more effective.

Keywords: Sign Language, Teacher Competency, Special Education, Teacher Training, Deaf Education.