

**LEARNERS' AND TEACHERS' PERSPECTIVES ABOUT CAUSES OF
POOR ARGUMENTATIVE ENGLISH ESSAY WRITING: A CASE OF
FORM D STUDENTS IN THREE SELECTED HIGH SCHOOLS**

By

PHENYANE G. TLALI

(200303415)

A DISSERTATION

**SUBMITTED TO THE DEPARTMENT OF LANGUAGES AND SOCIAL EDUCATION
IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE AWARD OF
MASTER OF ARTS IN EDUCATION DEGREE IN THE NATIONAL UNIVERSITY OF
LESOTHO**

SEPTEMBER 2018

CERTIFICATION

This is to certify that this dissertation has been read and approved as having met the requirements of the Faculty of Education, National university of Lesotho.

.....

Supervisor

.....

Head of department

.....

Dean of faculty

.....

External Examiner

DEDICATION

It is my genuine gratefulness and warmest regard that I devote this study to my mother 'M'e 'Mamontseng Tlali for her tireless support she offered towards this study. Finally, I sincerely dedicate the study to my son Malefane Tlali for his loyal support and understanding.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Studying while still working was not an easy task. I therefore frankly give my gratitude to my supervisor Dr. L. M. Matsoso who devotedly guided me throughout the study. Her dedication, encouragement and generosity helped me conquer every obstacle towards this study.

I wish to extend my warm thanks to Dr. Kolobe for language editing my work.

I owe a special vote of thanks to St Michael's High School for granting me permission to enroll for part-time study. I finally express my deepest thanks to Hleoheng High School, Maputsoe Community High School and St. Boniface High School for granting me permission to conduct this study in their school premises.

To all participants who really dedicated much of their energy and resources, God bless you.

ABSTRACT

The study aimed at understanding the causes of poor argumentative essay writing at LGCSE. The study was guided by Weiner (1972) Attribution theory of Success and Failure. The study followed a qualitative approach in which a case of three schools was employed. Data was collected from sample drawn from Form D students and their English language teachers using questionnaires and a focus group with teachers. The students also wrote an essay under the supervision of their teachers for reliability of the findings. The essay was written to help the researcher identify possible causes that might contribute to poor argumentative English essay writing.

The findings for this study revealed that most students fail to perform argumentative English essay writing well due to failure to argue their points convincingly. Additionally, the study indicated that students fail to use language accurately. On this note, the study proposed that students be exposed to various situations where they can learn or observe how other people state and defend their arguments.

Table of Contents

CERTIFICATION	i
DEDICATION	ii
ABSTRACT.....	iv
CHAPTER ONE	1
INTRODUCTION.....	1
1.0 INTRODUCTION.....	1
1.1 BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY.....	1
1.2 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM	5
1.3 RESEARCH QUESTIONS.....	6
1.3.1 Main research question	7
1.3.2 Subsidiary research questions	7
1.4 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY	8
1.5 METHODOLOGY	9
1.5.1 Design.....	9
1.5.2 Population.....	10
1.5.3 Sample and Sampling criteria	10
1.5.4 Data collection tools	10
1.5.5 Data collection procedure.....	11
1.5.6 Data analysis	12
1.6 DELIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY	12
1.7 TRUSTWORTHINESS	13
1.8 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS	13
1.9 ORGANIZATION OF STUDY.....	14
1.10 SUMMARY	14
CHAPTER 2	16
REVIEW OF THE RELATED LITERATURE	16
2.0 INTRODUCTION.....	16
2.1 OPERATIONALIZATION OF KEY CONCEPTS.....	16
2.2 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK	17
2.3 LITERATURE ON KEY CONCEPTS.....	19
2.3.1 Writing	19

2.4	ARGUMENT	30
2.5	LITERATURE ON RESEARCH QUESTIONS.....	34
2.5.1	Challenges facing teachers and students towards the teaching and learning of argumentative English essay writing	35
2.5.2	Possible causes of challenges facing the teaching and learning of argumentative essay writing 37	
2.6	SUMMARY	45
CHAPTER THREE		46
METHODOLOGY		46
3.0	INTRODUCTION	46
3.1	RESEARCH DESIGN	46
3.2	POPULATION	48
3.3	SAMPLE	48
3.4	METHODS OF DATA COLLECTION	50
3.5	RATIONALE FOR ADOPTION OF THE DATA COLLECTION TOOLS	51
3.6	PROCEDURE FOR DATA COLLECTION.....	53
3.7	DATA ANALYSIS	54
3.8	TRUSTWORTHINESS OF THE STUDY FINDINGS	54
3.9	PILOTING	55
3.10	ETHICAL CONCERNS IN THE STUDY.....	56
3.11	SUMMARY	56
CHAPTER FOUR		57
DATA PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION		57
4.0	INTRODUCTION	57
4.1	CHALLENGES FORM D STUDENTS FACE IN ARGUMENTATIVE ENGLISH ESSAY WRITING	57
4.1.1	Findings on marked students’ essays.....	57
4.2	CHALLENGES TEACHERS FACE IN THE ARGUMENTATIVE ENGLISH ESSAY WRITING.....	73
4.2.1	Findings from teachers’ open-ended questionnaire.....	73
4.3	CAUSES OF CHALLENGES FACED IN ARGUMENTATIVE ESSAY WRITING	79
4.3.1	Findings on teachers’ questionnaire.....	79
4.4	MEASURES TO ENHANCE THE TEACHING AND LEARNING OF ARGUMENTATIVE ENGLISH ESSAY WRITING.....	93

4.5	SUMMARY	100
CHAPTER FIVE		101
CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS.....		101
5.0	INTRODUCTION	101
5.1	CONCLUSIONS.....	101
5.1.1	The first research question	101
5.1.2	The second research question	102
5.1.3	The third research question.....	102
5.1.4	The fourth research question	103
5.1.5	Summative perspectives	104
5.2	RECOMMENDATIONS.....	105
5.2.1	Summary	106
REFERENCES:.....		107
LIST OF APPENDICES		121

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ATSF	Attribution Theory of Success and Failure
ESL	English as a Second Language
MOET	Ministry of Education and Training
JC	Junior Certificate
LGCSE	Lesotho General Certificate of Secondary Education
ECOL	Examinations Council of Lesotho

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.0 INTRODUCTION

This chapter features the background to the study, the statement of the problem, research questions, significance of the study, methodology, delimitations of the study, organization of the study, trustworthiness and ethical considerations.

1.1 BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

English is spoken and used as a medium of teaching and learning in many countries of the world. According to Wallwork (2016), English Language is estimated to be spoken by over one billion people from all over the world. Sharifian (2009) adds that it is an international language. It is in former British colony countries such as India, the Philippines, and Ghana where the language assumes the role of a second language and a medium of instruction in education (Munduku, Nyawara & Kosgey, 2017). Lesotho, as a former British protectorate, has also adopted English as the second official language (Laitin, 1977). This is endorsed in the Language Bill of Lesotho which states:

The official languages of Lesotho shall be Sesotho and English and, accordingly, no instruction shall be invalid by reason only that it is expressed or conducted in one of those languages. (USA International Business Publications, 2009)

The language situation imposes challenges particularly to learners and teachers of English as a second language (ESL) (Yong, Mei & Chee, 2015). Munduku, Nyawara and Kosgey (2017) emphasize that ESL learners in countries such as Nigeria and Ghana, at secondary schools, do not perform it well. They add that this happens to secondary schools which take learners from

lower primary schools where the foundation is not well laid. Web, Beach and Thein (2003) and Clifford (2013) postulate that this becomes more challenging in writing an argumentative essay.

Lesotho uses English as a medium of instruction throughout all levels of education except in grades one, two and three (Ministry of Education and Training (MOET), 2009). It is further noted by Khati and Khati (2009) that English is also given an added advantage of being a passing subject. This is evident at Junior Certificate (JC) level where learners who fail English Language do not pass the JC examinations. Argumentative essay writing forms part of learners' assessment at this level (Junior Certificate Pass list, 2016).

The Integrated Primary Curriculum Grade 6 Syllabus (2016) indicates that at the completion of the seven years of primary education, learners should have acquired communicative skills of listening, speaking, reading and writing in English. The syllabus further states that the purpose of teaching English is to learn and use the language. Learners at primary schools are taught, among others, how to oppose other people's opinions in a debate and how to write argumentatively in English (Integrated Primary Curriculum Grade 6 Syllabus, 2016).

The four basic skills are further emphasized at JC level (Junior Certificate English Language (101) Syllabus, 2001). The syllabus continues to pinpoint that, among other objectives, it aims at developing English Language skills to address topical issues of national and international interests and to develop confidence and communicative competence to use English in appropriate situations. Learners learn how to construct sentences and write different types of essays including English argumentative essay.

At Lesotho General Certificate of Secondary Education (LGCSE), English is no longer a passing subject. It does not determine how a learner passes. Every subject is independent (Examinations

Council of Lesotho, 2014). Regardless of this situation, tertiary institutions continue to regard English Language as a requirement for admission. This implies that learners at LGCSE need to work hard to obtain a good grade in English Language where argumentative essay forms part of such assessment. For example, a learner is expected to have a credit pass in English at LGCSE to study a graduate program at the National University of Lesotho (NUL Prospectus 2013/2014).

At LGCSE, English Language (0175) comprises Paper 1 and 2. Paper 1 contains two sections of Creative Writing and Directed Writing. Each section carries 30 marks and together they contribute 50 % which is added to 50 % from Paper 2 to determine the learners' final mark in English Language. Paper 1 requires learners to develop ideas coherently at word level, sentence level and at whole text level. They need to use accurate spelling, punctuation and grammar and lastly communicate creatively using a varied range of vocabulary, sentence structures and linguistic devices (LGCSE English Language (0175/1) Syllabus, 2012). This is where learners write down an essay of two to two and half pages. They choose a topic from a variety of five topics on narrative, descriptive and argumentative topics (LGCSE English Language (0175/1) Question Paper, 2016). The 30 marks on Creative Writing is allocated on language and content while in Directed Writing 15 marks is allocated for task fulfillment and the other 15 marks for language. (English Language Marking Scheme (0175/1), 2012). Paper 2 has three sections namely Section 1 (Reading For Ideas), Section 2 (Reading For Meaning) and Section 3 (Language Usage) (LGCSE English language (0175) Syllabus, 2012).

It is, therefore, important to ensure that English as a subject is well taught, especially the skills of writing. Writing skills need to be more emphasized because it is where learners' ability is assessed. Scott (1996) warns that this becomes more challenging in situations where English is taught as the second language especially in composition writing. The learners are assessed in

different types of English essay writing inclusive of argumentative essay (LGCSE English Language Syllabus (0175/1), 2012).

It is essential to teach argumentative essay writing because it develops critical thinking in learners. Zheng, Meng and Zhou (2017) assert that argumentative writing has been acknowledged as a core objective of tertiary education in China. Although argumentative English essay writing is taught and examined from Primary School Leaving Examination (PSLE), it is still performed poorly at LGCSE. Studies have been conducted in different countries to find out how learners can be helped to perform argumentative essay writing well. For example, WeiZhu (2001) and Hirose (2003) conducted their studies on the difficulties brought up by the use of second language in argumentative essay writing in Canada and Japan respectively. Anthony and Zulkifli (2013) also conducted a study on the use of prepositions of time 'on' and 'at' in the argumentative essays of Form D and Form E Malaysian secondary learners. Sara (2017), in his study conducted in Australia, further points out that though argumentative essay is a popular form of university assessment, learners still struggle to meet key intended learning outcomes. To address this, Jangarun, Kamolplan, Luksaneeyanawin and Sudaporn (2016) carried out a study on differences and similarities in the use of discourse connectors in argumentative essays of American undergraduate students. The study was meant to show the importance of conjunctions in argumentative essay writing. Amandla and Christine (2017), also, investigated a related study on the use of evidence to support and develop arguments from high schools to the universities in Spain, all in the name of addressing the challenges learners face in the teaching and learning of argumentative English essay writing.

There were also studies carried out in Lesotho. For example, Moji (2014) investigated on how the cohesive devices are used in the writing of English essays. She used a qualitative case study

of three schools in Berea district. Her study revealed that learners' essays are not cohesive enough due to their failure to use cohesive devices correctly. Mpoi (2014) also conducted her study on the factors that influence learners to commit errors in English Language acquisition. In her study, she showed causes of errors in spelling, its impacts and importance on the learners' work. The studies seem to focus only on the language aspects pertaining to argumentative English essay writing even though there can be other challenges except language usage. It is, therefore, important to find out why learners fail to perform well in argumentative English essay writing.

1.2 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The statement of the problem is defined as what is being investigated (Lunenburg & Irby, 2008). A number of research studies have been undertaken in various ESL countries or regions on different language aspects relating to argumentative essay writing. The studies revealed that most learners find it challenging to write argumentatively. Regardless of all efforts to find out why learners fail to perform well in argumentative English essay writing, to date, argumentative English essay writing still appears challenging to ESL learners. This is further endorsed by the Examiner's Report on English Language (0175/1) (2015) which reveals that learners at LGCSE who choose to write on argumentative topics do not perform well. This probes questions such as: What is the major cause for poor argumentative essay writing? Is it the learners' inability or attitude? Or are learners not well taught?

Kafela (2010) states that the problem of negative attitude and lack of motivation is pervasive among learners. The author explains that it is all over and does not affect a certain age, gender or nation only. It affects all learners in the same manner. Weiner (1972) adds that problems learners face in their academic work emanate within themselves. Similarly, Mpoi (2014)

advances that any discussion of teaching and learning centers around one important element-the role of a teacher. These postulations suggest that if teachers are not capable of teaching argumentative essay, the learners' requisite abilities may be compromised. To prove the amply documented claim that argumentative essay writing is challenging to learners, the researcher embarked on a pilot study in 2016 where he gave a class of fifty three (53) Form D learners a test on English Language Paper 1. The test included narrative, descriptive and argumentative essay writing topics for learners to choose from. Learners were expected to choose a topic and write essays of two to two and half pages long. Thirty three (33) learners chose a narrative topic, sixteen (16) learners chose a descriptive topic while only four (4) chose to write on an argumentative topic. That smallest number of learners who chose to write on an argumentative topic performed poorer than learners who chose other types of essays. This points to the possibility of a challenge regarding argumentative essay writing. Drawing from the literature and the researcher's ten years of experience teaching English Language, the problem seemingly continues to exist. However, in the absence of research on what specially causes the challenge, it is important to emphatically establish the causes of the demise in Basotho ESL learners' argumentative essay writing at LGCSE Level. Hence the proposed study focuses on the causes of poor argumentative English essay writing among Form D (Grade 11) learners in Lesotho secondary schools.

1.3 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

According to Maree (2016), a research question binds all aspects of the research together. Every part of the design aims at answering that research question. One can explain this as a question that enables enquiry into a problem. Maree, further, indicates that a good research question provides focus for data collection. It prevents the researcher from drifting away from his

purpose. The author categorizes research questions into main and subsidiary research questions, as presented below.

1.3.1 Main research question

The main research question is the formulation of the statement of purpose so that it forms a question (Maree, 2016). The main research question for this study is:

1. What are the challenges faced by teachers and learners in the teaching and learning of argumentative English essay writing at Form D level?

1.3.2 Subsidiary research questions

Maree (2016) further asserts that subsidiary questions are more specific and give added focus to the main research questions. The following are the specific research questions that unpack the main research question of the study:

1. What challenges do teachers face in the teaching and learning of argumentative English essay writing at Form D level?
2. What challenges do learners face in the teaching and learning of argumentative English essay writing at Form D level?
3. What are the causes of these challenges?
4. What teaching and learning strategies should be employed for addressing the challenges in the teaching and learning of argumentative English essay writing at Form D level?

1.4 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

Significance of the study illustrates how different people and/or entities will benefit from the study. According to Asten (1997), significance of the study refers to how the study can benefit different individuals and/or groups. This study will benefit teachers, learners and textbook writers.

Behrman and Stacey (1997) establish that research helps teachers learn which pedagogies to use in their teaching. This implies that based on the recommendations from this study, teachers will have different pedagogies for improving learners' functional understanding of argumentative essay writing. They will be exposed to skills necessary for the teaching and learning of argumentative English essay writing. They will also know how learners feel about the teaching and learning of an argumentative English essay in terms of their learning needs. This will assist teachers plan towards addressing any challenges and motivations which learners have towards argumentative English essay writing. Furthermore, teachers will be abreast with challenges faced by other teachers and how such can be solved. Gillies, Ashman and Terwel (2007) assert that research in education helps teachers find solutions to particular problems arising in their classrooms. The findings from this study will be shared in the district workshops for English Language teachers (LETA). This will hopefully help them improve their teaching of argumentative English essay writing.

Learners who will have access to the study will be equipped with knowledge of how they can overcome the challenges faced in the teaching and learning of argumentative English essay writing. This knowledge will help them improve their grades in essay writing.

The textbook writers also stand to benefit from the findings of the study. They will be informed on gaps that exist in the literature on argumentative English essay writing. The writers will hopefully write not only to fill the gap but also to address the challenges faced in the teaching and learning of argumentative English essay writing.

In a nutshell, causes of poor argumentative English essay writing will be put to light and both teachers and learners will be equipped on how to overcome such. Possible teaching methods will also be exposed to teachers for better teaching and learning of argumentative English essay writing.

1.5 METHODOLOGY

This section briefly looks at how the study is conducted and the contents discussed here are fully expanded in Chapter Three. Howell (2013) claims that methodology is the general research strategy that outlines the way in which research is to be undertaken. The section deals with research design, population, sample and sampling, data collection methods, data collection procedure, data analysis, access issues used in conducting the study and the summary.

1.5.1 Design

The study followed a qualitative case study design. In a case study, a case or several cases are studied (Maree, 2007). This is found suitable because the study sought to understand the causes of poor argumentative essay writing from teachers and learners of three selected high schools. Qualitative data can be collected through open-ended questions including focus group discussion (Wilkinson, 2003). This study will therefore use essay writing, open ended questionnaires and focus group discussion to collect data.

1.5.2 Population

Population is a group of individuals with similar characteristics liable for a study (Maree, 2007). The population for this study included all form D learners in three selected Leribe high schools as well as their English Language teachers.

1.5.3 Sample and Sampling criteria

The schools were sampled through convenience sampling procedure. They were chosen based on their proximity. The schools happen to be closer to the researcher's work place and that eased the data collection in terms of time and costs. Out of seven accessible schools, the researcher randomly chose three schools. After schools were sampled, Form D learners wrote an argumentative essay. Only fifteen (15) scripts from each school were randomly selected for marking. In the same manner, fifteen students were picked out to answer the questionnaires. The total sample population for this study was forty-five (45) which is a normal class size in Lesotho. (United Nations Education, Science and Cultural Organization, 2010).

1.5.4 Data collection tools

Maree (2007) defines data collection tools as instruments and tactics used for gathering all the information needed for the study. This study used a questionnaire, class test and focus group discussion to collect data on the learners and teachers' perceptions about poor performance of argumentative English essay writing.

(a) A questionnaire

A questionnaire is a research instrument consisting of questions prepared for gathering information for a study. It should be a natural, ready- to- use instrument to elicit information (Maree, 2012). This study used a semi structured questionnaire for collection of qualitative data from learners and an open ended questionnaire for teachers.

(b) A test

A test is an assessment aimed at measuring test-taker's knowledge, skill or aptitude (Hornby, 1995). The test was given to learners to measure their knowledge on English language argumentative essay writing. This was anticipated to collect a qualitative data. The test and the questionnaire were therefore the main tools for data collection for this study.

(c) A focused group discussion

A focus group discussion refers to gathering people of similar backgrounds together to discuss specific topic. Nyumba, Wilson and Derrick (2018) define focus group discussion as a qualitative approach to gain an in- depth understanding of social issues that use data from a purposely selected group of individuals. This study aimed to use focus group discussion to gain an insight understanding of the causes of poor argumentative English essay writing.

1.5.5 Data collection procedure

Arrangements were made from schools to collect data after the researcher had been granted permission to do so by the National University of Lesotho (NUL) through the Department of Languages and Social Education in the Faculty of Education. The test was written under the supervision of Form D English Language teachers and marked by the researcher while the

questionnaires for learners were supervised by the form D English Language teachers after they had filled their own questionnaires.

1.5.6 Data analysis

Data was analyzed using Attribution Theory of Success and Failure (ATSF) designed by an American psychologist called Bernard Weiner (1972). The theory gives four reasons why learners fail or succeed namely ability, effort, task difficulty and luck or chances (Weiner, 1972). Weiner explains that learners claim to fail because some do not have ability to succeed. He further claims that effort that learners put into their work is central to their performance. Those who do not put adequate effort do not normally perform well. He argues that learners fail because they complain about the difficulty of the task or luck/chance. Weiner's reasons for learners' failure were used to group the causes for poor performance of argumentative English essay writing at LGCSE.

1.6 DELIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

Delimitations of the study refer to self imposed boundaries set up by the researcher on the purpose and scope of the study (Gonzales, 2004). This section comprises the geographical area and participants of the study. Geographical area is a region or locality in which the study takes place (Casasus, Rogosic & Rosati, 2012). Ritter, Kim and Morgan (2012) define participants as the people or subjects of the study. The researcher used only three schools within Maputsoe area in the Leribe district. The researcher chose to use the three schools because the number was found to be representative to investigate the phenomenon within the available time of the study. This draws from Gravetter and Wallnan 's(2016) and Sreejesh, Mohapatra and Anusree's (2013) position that factors such as time and effort need to be considered when conducting a research. The issue of accessibility also delimited the choice of the schools. The schools were closer to the

researcher's residential and work place, and so cost effective during data collection. This convenience sampling of schools scoping is advocated by the National Research Council and Education Commission on Behavioral and Sciences (1996) which emphasizes that it is important to consider the costs and scope of the study prior to the research.

The study focused only on the Form D learners in the three schools. The learners were assumed to have enough time to allow the researcher to conduct this study because they were not under pressure of the end of the year LGCSE external examinations. The study purposely used only Form D English Language teachers because of their knowledge on the issue under discussion. Maree (2012) informs that purposive sampling is likely to generate rich information on the type of phenomenon under study. The focus for this study was on the argumentative essay writing only because it is an area that appears to be more challenging as reflected by the literature.

1.7 TRUSTWORTHINESS

Although issues of trustworthiness are considered as part of Chapter Three, Maree (2016) contends that it is important to consider them at the planning stage. Shanton (2002) explains trustworthiness as certain practices that need to be observed to ensure that the results of the study are not tempered with. The section expounded on what the researcher did to ensure that issues of trustworthiness were maintained.

1.8 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

There are ethics that govern every research. The researcher therefore had to observe such ethics. Maree (2007) argues that it is essential to highlight the ethical considerations in regard to the research.

1.9 ORGANIZATION OF STUDY

Organization of the study provides a map that aims at guiding readers throughout the study. Kenjale (2017) indicates that it gives what each chapter contains or deals with. This section gives a blueprint of how the study is organized.

Chapter One provides the background to the study, the statement of the problem, research questions, significance of the study, brief outline of the methodology, delimitations of the study, trustworthiness, ethical considerations, organization of the study and the summary of the chapter.

Chapter Two embarks on the review of related literature. It contains the operationalization of the keywords, the theoretical framework, the literature review on the key terms, the literature review on the research questions followed by a brief summary of the chapter.

Chapter Three expands on the research design, population, sample and sampling criteria, methods of data collection, data analysis, ethical considerations, how trustworthiness of the findings would be maintained, piloting and summary of the chapter.

Chapter Four presents findings and interpretations, while Chapter Five deals with conclusions and recommendations made in relation to the findings.

1.10 SUMMARY

Chapter One provided an extensive background to the study drawing from the position of English globally to nationally. It also showed how English appears to be a problem especially in argumentative English essay writing to ESL learners at LGCSE. The chapter further provided the research questions towards addressing the problem of argumentative essay writing. The other objective derived by the chapter was to show the significance and delimitations of this study. The chapter further provided the highlights on how data was collected and analyzed. A plan of how

the study was organized was briefly provided and lastly, trustworthiness and ethical considerations were highlighted to show how issues of validity and reliability were maintained.

The next section presents literature review as chapter two.

CHAPTER 2

REVIEW OF THE RELATED LITERATURE

2.0 INTRODUCTION

This chapter is a review of the literature pertinent to the study. It features operationalization of key concepts, the theoretical framework, writing as a concept, argument as a concept, challenges faced by learners and teachers in the teaching and learning of argumentative English essay writing, possible causes of challenges faced by teachers and learners in the teaching and learning of argumentative English essay writing, measures to enhance the teaching and learning of argumentative English essay writing and summary of the reviewed literature.

2.1 OPERATIONALIZATION OF KEY CONCEPTS

When writing a research study, it is necessary to indicate how one will interpret certain key concepts that guide the study. The following concepts guide this study: writing, argument and poor performance.

(a) Writing

Writing refers to putting down ideas into words (the visible form). The notion of writing draws from Taylor and Olsen (1994:1) who conceive of the term as, "...a system of representing the spoken language into visible form."

(b) Argument

An argument is a statement said against or for a certain idea. Crusis and Channell (2003) define it as mature reasoning. The study perceives argument as a claim that is reasonably supported by evidence.

(c) Poor performance

There can be a number of reasons for poor performance in any activity (Stephen et al; 2007). Hornby (1995) describes 'poor' as not good or satisfactory according to what is expected or usual. For the purpose of this inquiry, poor performance suggests that for different reasons, some learners may not perform as expected by the Examinations Council of Lesotho (ECOL).

2.2 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

It is important to use a theoretical framework to situate one's study (Maree, 2016). Theoretical Framework emanates from the word 'theory'. According to Maree (2007), theory is like a lens through which one views the world, it positions the study in the discipline or subject one is working in. This study is guided by Attribution Theory of Success and Failure (ATSF), a theory developed by an American psychologist named Bernard Weiner (1972). It explains the causes of academic failure or success. These include ability, effort, task difficulty and luck (Weiner, 1972). The theory focuses on the reasons that learners give for their success and failure. It benchmarks the researcher's grouping of the causes discovered by this study under the reasons outlined by Weiner above. Weiner further states that the theory analyzes these reasons in terms of locus of control, stability and controllability of causality as causal dimensions. According to the author, locus of causality depicts the origin of the cause examining whether the cause emanates within or from outside the learner. The theory also provides for analysis of the cause in terms of stability of causality. Weiner claims that stability of causality refers to whether the problem can change or not. Lastly, the theory caters for analysis of causes in terms of controllability, it looks at whether the cause can be controlled or not (Weiner, 1972).

Based on the foregoing provisions of the (ATSF), this study analyzes causes of poor argumentative English Language essay writing in terms of their locus of control, stability and controllability of causality. Weiner connects the reasons and causal dimensions to form the table below:

Table 2.2.1:

Reasons for failure or success	Locus of control	Stability of causality	Controllability of causality
Ability	Internal	Stable	Can change
Effort	Internal	Unstable	Can change
Task difficulty	External	Stable	Cannot change
Luck or chance	External	Unstable	Cannot change

The table indicates that ability emanates within the learner. Ability is dependent on the learner and can change anytime. It is stable but can change. An effort that learners put in their learning is internal and unstable. Task difficulty appears to be external and stable. If the task is difficult, it cannot change to suit the understanding of the learner. It is the learner who needs to ensure that he or she gets it right. Lastly, Weiner talks about luck or chance. The table shows that luck is external, unstable and cannot change. If a learner is lucky, no one can change that. However such situation is very unstable. No student is lucky all the time. The results for each research question were analyzed in terms of the table above. The findings were classified under ability, effort, task difficulty or luck. The causes were then analyzed and interpreted in terms of locus of control, stability and controllability of causality.

2.3 LITERATURE ON KEY CONCEPTS

The aim of this section is to explore literature around concepts that ground this study namely writing, argument and poor performance.

2.3.1 Writing

The literature under this section is sub-divided into definition of writing, types of writing and types of essay writing.

(a) Definition of writing

Writing refers to the production of a text. Coulmas (2003), Sampson (1985) and the National Post Secondary Education Cooperative Student Outcomes Source Book on Assignment (2000) define writing as a form of communication. Kirkman (1989:1) adds that, “writing is a skill, like other skills, it can be learned, it is not inborn.” This implies that learners need to be taught how to write since no one is born with such a skill. However, teaching learners how to write appears to be challenging to both teachers and learners. Pumfrey and Elliot (2013) state that reading and writing appear challenging to learners at primary level. Fareed and Ashraf (2016) admit that writing is still found challenging even at secondary level. The authors insist that learning how to write is an ongoing process; writers always have to develop the skill or learn more about it. This implies that teachers are continually faced with writing as a pedagogical challenge. Writers do not usually have preconceived ideas which they then express in language, rather, they find or transform ideas as they write (Nielsen & Markey, 2012).

(b) Types of writing

Hammand (2010) states that writers express their ideas differently and this is regarded as creativity. In the same way, learners are expected to write creatively. Mukitiri (2016) states that sometimes learners are given guided points to expand as they write. In the context of this study, this section is regarded as a guided essay at JC (Junior Certificate English Language (101) Syllabus, 2001). At LGCSE, it is called directed writing (LGCSE English Language syllabus (0175/1), 2012). The section below reviews the literature related to both directed and creative writing.

(i) Directed writing

Directed writing is a task-based writing intended to produce functional pieces in relation to the concerns of a given situation (Mukitiri, 2014). It is where learners are given points to guide their writing (LGCSE English Language (0175/1), 2012). This writing requires learners to understand the setting, purpose and audience in order to situate the directed writing. According to Mukitiri (2016), setting is described as a situation one writes or talks in while audience refers to one who is targeted for in writing. Mukitiri further describes purpose as the intention or aim one has to fulfill in writing the essay.

(ii) Creative writing

Creativity is the ability to use one's imagination to produce new ideas. Martin (2008) and Kelly (2012) understand creativity as the ability to make something new while Jenicek (2014:2) defines it as, "a piece of writing based on the writer's point of view." This means that one's ability to write one's own imaginary story is regarded as creative essay writing. According to Ekstrom and Hook (1953), there are six steps in writing creatively that offer logic and

workmanlike method. These are deciding upon the point of view towards the subject, eliminating irrelevant points, deciding upon the most logic and effective order of presentation, writing and revising a written draft. These steps still hold even to date. If not well planned, creative writing may not satisfactorily appeal to the reader because proper planning precedes proper writing.

When writing a creative essay, one needs to avoid tautology, pleonasm and clichés (Cheng, 2005). Cheng describes tautology as unnecessary repetition and pleonasm as unnecessary inclusion of words. Douglas (2001) and Morreal (1991) report that clichés refer to the traditional form of human expression which has lost its power due to repetitive use. This refers to worn-out words or expressions. Clichés can also be called platitude, bromide or commonplace. Morreal (1991) adds that creative writing is segmented into paragraphs.

(c) Parts of a paragraph

A paragraph is a series of sentences that work together to develop one idea (Mutikiri, 2016). In addition, Sarada (2008) contends that sentences must link together to form a paragraph. A good paragraph includes topic sentence, supporting sentences and concluding sentences.

(i) Topic sentence

According to Kelly (2012), Null (2011) and Gadd (2006), a topic sentence or a beginning sentence is a sentence that tells what the paragraph is about. Null (2011) asserts that a topic sentence is the first sentence in the paragraph and is supported by Shewan and Garry (2005:33) that “It is advisable to place the topic sentence at the beginning of a paragraph, especially if one wants to inform or argue his position” . Gadd (2006) endorses this statement but further states that it does not always have to be the first. It can be the second, third even the last. Shewan and Garry (2005) add that the other forms of writing, with other goals in mind may allow for the

possibility of placing the topic sentence elsewhere in the paragraph. It is agreeable then that there is no specific position for a topic sentence. A paragraph should support and connect with the topic sentence. He adds that details expand the paragraph and help the reader understand the topic sentence. He is strongly supported by Smilkstein (2013) that writers use supporting details to illustrate or explain their topic sentences. Alexander and Jarrell (2012) hold the opinion that there are major and minor supporting details. They explain that major supporting details include examples, facts, reasons or descriptions that the writer uses to support the topic sentence while the minor supporting details refer to more information on the explanation, more examples to illustrate the major supporting details and more specifics to make the writing more interesting. It is sensible, therefore, to conclude that supporting sentences build on the topic sentence to create a logical and unified piece of writing that can easily be understood.

(iii) The concluding sentence

Null (2011:4) names the concluding sentence ‘the end’. He states that this is the last sentence which reminds the reader of what one has been writing on. Concluding sentences summarize the topic sentence (Lambert et al., 2015). These authors add that concluding sentences restate the topic sentence without using the exact words in the topic sentence. According to Checkett (2013), a concluding sentence summarizes the whole idea and repeat the words or phrases from the topic sentences. One, therefore, posits that the role of concluding sentences is to summarize the topic sentence and restate it in a different fashion. Putting all these types of sentences together, a paragraph is formed. There are elements to consider in a paragraph. A good paragraph has the following elements unity, cohesion and coherence for its clarity (Saranda, 2008). These elements are explained below.

(i) Unity

Paragraph unity refers to a situation whereby all supporting sentences in the body paragraph explain, clarify and are directly related to the topic sentence (Checkwell et al., 2012; Lepionka, 2008 & Ekstron and Hook, 1953). Lepionka emphasizes that unity is the quality of centrality and relevance or belongingness. This tells that all sentences in a paragraph should work towards expanding the topic sentence. Ekstron and Hook (1953) determine that every sentence in a paragraph must make its contribution to the meaning.

(ii) Coherence

A paragraph maintains coherence when sentences connect well. Cheney (2005) and Gadd (2006) state that a paragraph has coherence when its sentences are logically connected. Gadd adds that sentences are connected through transitional words, pronoun reference and repeated keywords. Hasan and Halliday (2013) further assert that coherence occurs where the interpretation of some elements in the discourse is dependent on the other. On this basis, coherence refers to the relations of meaning that exist within a paragraph.

(iii) Cohesive devices

Cohesive devices ensure that the message is clearly conveyed. Carol (2008) adds that even a young child uses cohesive devices to connect successive sentences in their narrative. He further states that as children develop, they become better conversationalists and story tellers. This indicates that without these connectives, communication becomes difficult as logic is completely lost. Cohesive devices establish a cross-reference to earlier or later parts of the text (Abdul-Raof, 2001). Thomson (1992) supports this by adding that language items referring to things earlier

mentioned is called anaphoric reference while those that refer to things not yet mentioned is known as cataphoric reference.

Abdul-Raof (2001) and Thomson (1992) mention three types of cohesive devices namely elliptical cohesive devices, conjunctive cohesive devices and lexical cohesive devices. They claim that elliptical cohesive devices refer to the omission of noun phrase, verb phrase or clause. For instance, 'I do not think so'. 'So' has replaced a clause. The sentence could have been 'I do not think that I will make it', in this sentence, the subordinate clause is omitted. They explain that conjunctive cohesive devices or coordinating conjunctions establish cohesion while lexical cohesive devices refer to the restatement of the previous item.

(iv) Cohesion

Cohesion refers to the unity between and among paragraphs in a text. Hassan and Halliday (2013) define it as the relations of the meaning that exist within the text. Cohesion occurs when the interpretation of one sentence is dependent on the other. This suggests that one sentence presupposes the other. Sentences link to form paragraphs and paragraphs connect to form a text or an essay.

(d) Parts of an essay writing

An essay is a piece of writing on any subject (Hornby, 1995). It has different parts that make each type unique such as introduction, body and conclusion (Peterson, 2012). Mukitiri (2012) states that each section needs to be treated with all the care as it gives an essay a flow of ideas. The parts of an essay are presented in detail below.

(i) Introduction

An introduction is the first part of the written paper. The purpose of an introduction can be to define keywords, highlight the purpose of an essay, outline the main points or simply arouse interest of the reader. According to Mukitiri (2014), an introduction for a story aims at hooking the reader into the story while in an argumentative writing, it aims at giving an essay some context. He goes further to show that an introduction for argumentative essay must show that there are two opposing ideas from which the writer must take his stance. For example, an introductory paragraph to an argumentative essay may read as ‘There is a heated debate as to whether corporal punishment be abolished at secondary schools or not. I strongly hold the opinion that it should not be abolished’. This introductory paragraph shows the two opposing opinions that build an argument and also reflects the writer’s stance on the topic. The introduction must be appetizing in order to make the reader feel interested in reading the essay further. Peterson (2012) concludes that this section introduces the topic and establishes the focus.

(ii) Body

The purpose of the body is to fully develop the arguments or main ideas outlined in the introduction. Peterson (2012) states that this is where the main content of the essay is dealt with, the topic is discussed and supporting details are given. The body comprises several paragraphs and each paragraph has its own topic sentence. One can infer that a topic sentence works like a tree with several branches called supporting sentences. A paragraph is therefore made up of one topic sentence and its supporting details. In an argumentative essay, this is where both opposing and proposing points are discussed with clear evidence given. The body also features a good use of conjunctions that direct the opposing ideas. For example, however, even though, nevertheless,

contrary to, on one hand...on the other hand..., irrespective of and many others (Mukitiri, 2014). The LGCSE English Language (0175/1) syllabus (2012) reflects that a paragraph should be organized into logical sequences to support an argument. This suggests that the writer can start with the most important argument to the least or vice versa. The syllabus further extrapolates that paragraphs should reflect both sides of the argument using connectives that show changes in the direction of an argument.

(iii) Conclusion

Peterson (2012) defines conclusion as the final section of the essay where the writer reminds the reader what was discussed. The conclusion aims at drawing the reader towards the end of the story. It gives the agreements made or destinations reached. In an argumentative essay, it restates the stance taken in the introduction. This shows that it gives the end of the story. Ruday (2016) concludes that a strong conclusion is an important component of an effective narrative because it completes the story. Ruday postulates that without conclusion, readers would not know when the story comes to an end. It is actually important to conclude the story so as to help the reader know when the story is over. In argumentative essay writing, the writer restates his point of view (Mukitiri, 2016). The following sets as an exemplary, ‘irrespective of the few mentioned opposing ideas, I still hold to the view that corporal punishment should not be abolished’. It is very important to make sure that the conclusion re-emphasizes what is said in the introduction, and never opposes it (Mukitiri, 2014). This tells that if the writer opposes the topic in the introduction, he would not alter his stance throughout the essay.

It is important to pay attention to types of writing and their parts. This helps to shape the writing as expected by the LGCSE English Language (0175/1) Syllabus (2014). An argumentative essay,

like other types, has different parts which need to be mastered by learners in order to write a well-organized argumentative essay. If these parts are not mastered, learners may fail to write a well-structured argumentative essay and this will lead to poor performance. The researcher finds it essential to carry out this study in order to establish whether failure to structure an argumentative essay correctly is a cause for poor performance at LGCSE.

(e) Types of essays

There are four types of essay writing at LGCSE English Language namely narrative, descriptive, informative and argumentative essay writing (LGCSE English Language (0175) Syllabus, 2012).

(i) Narrative essay

Narrative essay forms part of English Language (0175/1) examination. This essay requires learners to develop plot, characterization, punctuate a direct speech and use different types of sentences (LGCSE English language (0175/1) Syllabus, 2012). Genette (1983), Ofori (2011), Skinner et al. (2011) and Rollins (2009) concur that in a narrative essay, learners tell a story. “It is the succession of events, real or fictitious” (Ofori, 2011:43). This informs readers that a story can either be fiction or nonfiction. Fiction stories are based on imaginary events or stories that have not happened while nonfiction story is based on real facts (Mukitiri, 2016). According to Parker (1999), the purpose of a narrative essay is to entertain, to gain and hold the reader’s interest. Narration follows a chronological order of time. There is a start, middle and end (Ofori, 2011). This reveals that details of the story should be told in the order in which they happened.

(ii) Descriptive essay

Like narrative essay, descriptive essay also forms part of English Language (0175/1) examination (LGCSE English language (0175) Syllabus, 2012). Descriptive essay is an account that provides the appearance of something or someone. Rollins (2009:5) defines a descriptive essay as, “a piece of writing that describes or portrays something, someone or some places with enough details to help the reader create a mental picture of it.” It helps learners use their imaginary to create effect and atmosphere as well as to develop and use descriptive vocabulary (LGCSE English language (0175) Syllabus, 2012). The purpose of descriptive writing is to describe a person, place or an object in such a way that a vivid picture is formed in the reader’s mind (McCarthy, 1998; Rollins, 2009 & Winkler and Metherell, 2009).

Ekstrom and Hook (1953) claim that there are two types of description: factual description and imaginative description. The authors point out that factual description provides useful information about shape, colour, material or anything that is pertinent while imaginative description gives the systematic description of something using various figures of speech such as simile, metaphor and personification. For example, ‘Lineo eats like a pig’. This describes how Lineo eats using simile (figure of speech). This is an example of an imaginary description; the writer uses his or her imagination to describe the way Lineo eats.

Rollins (2009) and Ofori (2011) refer to these two kinds of descriptive essays as objective descriptive essay and subjective descriptive essay. These authors point out that in objective descriptive essay, personal feeling is not allowed while subjective descriptive essay writing may allow it. The idea indicates that in an objective description, the writer gives only factual descriptions of the object, place, person or event while in a subjective description, he or she

gives his or her imaginary description of the object, place or person. They further state that the descriptions rely on five senses of the body to paint a picture in the reader's mind. This infers that if the reader cannot see, feel, hear, taste or smell anything as he reads the story, such a story does not appeal to any sense hence no clear mental picture is painted. There is no one sense that is more important than the other, however, a sense of sight is a common feature in vivid description (Mutikiri, 2016). This advocates that in order for the reader to understand what he or she is reading, they need to have a mental picture of what is described.

(iii) Informative / expository essay writing

This is an essay that provides factual information in order to explain, inform or educate the audience about an issue or topic (Mutikiri, 2016). It is explicit that in order for one to write an expository essay, he or she needs to be knowledgeable about the topic under discussion. More and Cassel (2010) add that informative essay provides the reader with a systematic means of transmitting, as objectively as possible, the information known on the subject in order to deepen the reader's knowledge. This is endorsed by Haven (2004) who indicates that informative essay is fact based.

(iv) Argumentative essay writing

Argumentative essay is a piece of writing in which the writer tries to convince the reader over a certain issue (Mukitiri, 2016 & Cheney, 2005). This articulates that in argumentative essay writing, writers reason over their points of view to convince other writers and/or readers. According to LGCSE English Language (0175) Syllabus (2012), an argumentative essay helps learners to organize paragraphs into logical sequences to support an argument. It helps learners present points from both sides of the argument and link all those points in an argument by using

appropriate words. It is important to understand the role of the three parts of argumentative essay writing stipulated as introduction, body and conclusion earlier. Students are, therefore, expected to write creatively on argumentative English essay topics at LGCSE English language (0175) Paper 1 as stated in the LGCSE English Language (0175) Syllabus (2014). It is important to instill argumentative skills in learners in order to build their reasoning.

2.4 ARGUMENT

This section explores the literature related to making sensible argument. It covers the types of arguments, types of reasoning, degree of cogency, types of thinking, the use of persuasive language, logical fallacies and how to avoid biasness in an argument.

(i) Types of arguments

Ekstrom and Hook (1953) state that there are two types of arguments, argument by analogy and argument by causal relationship. They define argument by causal relationship as a situation whereby argument involves cause and effect while an argument by analogy is a suggestive and inconclusive reasoning. This implies that in an argument by analogy, if two things are alike in some respects, they are then alike in others. Furthermore, Freely and Steinberg (2008) state that in argument by analogy, one makes a comparison between two similar cases and infer that what is true in one is true in the other while in causal relationship one infers that a certain factor (cause) is a force that produces something else (effect).

(ii) Degree of cogency

Degree of cogency is the extent to which an argument is intellectually compelling because it is well founded (Hubber & Snider, 2006). These authors posit that it is essential to understand which degree of cogency is best for the kind of argument one is making. Freely and Steiley

(2008) apprise that there are three degrees of cogency namely certainty, probability and plausibility. Certainty is associated with absolute truth (Freely & Steinly, 2008). This designates that if everyone agrees to what the speaker or the writer says, then his conclusion is certainty. Freely and Steinly add that probability is mostly used in courts by advocates or lawyers. They use this kind of cogency to demonstrate that their conclusions have a degree of credibility warranting acceptance. Hubber and Snider (2006) determine that advocates work on probabilities and plausibility. Plausibility refers to the possibility that something is likely to be true (Freely & Steiley, 2008).

(iii) Rational and non- rational thinking

Besides reasoning, Ekstrom and Hook (1953) propose that there are two methods of thinking that can be used to influence others. These are rational methods where logical proof is used to convince others to follow their line of argument. With non-rational method, propaganda devices are used to support ones point of view.

(iv) Types of reasoning

As indicated earlier that an argument refers to making claims with well supported evidence, it is essential to consider types of reasoning in building a sensible argument. Reasoning appears to be central to an argument (Hubber & Snider, 2006). Freely and Steinberg (2008) claim that it is a process of inferring conclusions from evidence, propositions and conclusions already made. They show that it aims at achieving something new and make the audience accept it. Moreover, Ekstrom and Hook (1953) pinpoint that there are two types of reasoning which are inductive and deductive. They define inductive reasoning as a kind of thinking which moves from generalization to specific. They further claim that inductive reasoning is an argument that begins

with a broad generalization and move to a more specific conclusion. This is where one uses his or her experience about certain things to draw conclusions about a certain thing. Freely and Steinberg explain deductive as reasoning that begins with a specific case and moves to a broader generalization. For instance, one looks at a certain case and uses it to draw conclusions about other cases.

(v) Persuasive language

Persuasive language also influences one to act in a certain way in an argument. It is the use of precise language in order to create the image of a rational writer (Rozmoarek, 2000). Persuasive language is calm, reasonable and it avoids exaggerations (words that show strong emotions, bias, anger and insults) (Goodridge, 2010). There are several stylistics devices that can be used to help learners to use persuasive language. These are use of rhetorical questions, similes, metaphors and varying sentence lengths (Rozmoarek, 2000). Rozmoarek indicates that in rhetorical questions, writers ask questions to get the reader thinking about the personal experiences related to the topic and thoughts that the reader has about the topic. Similes and metaphors are used to create interesting images in the reader's mind; abstract concepts are compared to concrete images so that the concept can be better understood (Scott, 2009). Rozmoarek further states that varying sentence length creates emphasis. This informs that short sentences used amongst average and long sentences create impact to the reader. Breckler, Erlson and Wiggins (2005) explain that there are also two perspectives that help change people's thinking. These are cognitive persuasion and heuristic persuasion. In cognitive persuasion, one is persuaded through using strong arguments that elicit positive thought from the recipient (cognitive response) while heuristic persuasion uses superficial clues that the recipient assumes valid.

(vi) How to avoid biasness

In trying to be as persuasive as possible, one needs to avoid biasness in an argument. This can be achieved by avoiding the following propaganda techniques: testimonial, bandwagon, opinions as facts, quotation out of context and red herring (Rozmoarek, 2000). This author briefly presents testimonial propaganda technique as statements made by people who claim to have personal experience with the issue used. He claims that Bandwagon technique uses statements intended to make the reader believe that everyone is doing or believing what the author is writing about while a quotation out of context is whereby the writer represents the opinions of the writer as factual information. Lastly, he points that Red herring is about giving information that is intended to mislead the reader.

(vii) Logical fallacies

The other thing to avoid in making an argument is the use of logical fallacies. This refers to the use of false and general statements. It is strongly noted by Winkler and Metherell (2009) that writers in an argument need to avoid some logical fallacies such as “ad hominem”, “ad populum”, false analogy, and hasty generalization. They further indicate that “Ad hominem” is a Latin word meaning “to the man”. Here the writer mounts a personal attack on an individual rather than dealing with the argument under consideration. For example, ‘Mr Tsepo’s idea of punishing learners is such nonsensical; however, let’s not be surprised, he is such a problem even to his family’. If the attack is on the speaker and not on the issue under discussion, it is unacceptable. Winkler and Metherell add that “Ad populum” is also a Latin word meaning “to the public”. They claim that the writer here appeals to the feelings, passion or prejudices shared by large segments of the population. For example, ‘the illegal immigrants crossing borders will

bring in gangs who will eventually ruin our country'. It is not all illegal immigrants that bring gangs into the country. Furthermore, Winkler and Metherell define analogy as a situation where the writer mistakenly compares two things that have some characteristics in common, treating them as if they are alike in all aspects. For example, 'As cigarette smoking is legalized, dagga should also be legalized'. These authors again claim that writers should avoid hasty generalization, meaning that they should not draw conclusions before adequately sampling the situation. For example, 'The morning study helps learners perform well in class, so never vote for those arrogant and selfish people who do not support the morning study'. It does not mean that everyone who does not support the morning study is arrogant and selfish. It is, therefore, wise for all writers to know the dos and don'ts of an argument.

It is evident that learners need to be equipped with necessary reasoning skills in order to support their arguments in writing their argumentative essays but also need to know what to avoid in making sensible arguments. It is important to train them on how to use language persuasively to influence others to think their way as argument appears to be central to the writing of argumentative essay. Learners who cannot put forward their arguments will not perform well in argumentative essay writing. It is on this basis that the role of this study is to find out if learners at LGCSE are able to state and support their arguments with sound evidence.

2.5 LITERATURE ON RESEARCH QUESTIONS

A research question is a broad question to which the researcher seeks answers for (Maree, 2007). This section reviews literature related to the research questions. It looks at challenges faced by both teachers and learners in the teaching and learning of argumentative English essay writing, possible causes of challenges facing the teaching and learning of English argumentative essay

writing, and measures to enhance the teaching and learning of English argumentative essay writing.

2.5.1 Challenges facing teachers and learners towards the teaching and learning of argumentative English essay writing

The challenges faced by students and teachers towards teaching and learning of argumentative English essay writing seem to centre on attitudes and culture.

An old teacher might have good experience, but may not be as active and creative as a young ‘fresh’ teacher. This suggests that the former might use certain old teaching methods that might bore learners in today’s lesson. This may bore learners towards the teaching and learning of argumentative English essay writing. When they get bored, they may develop negative attitude towards the concept because learners learn through observing their role models. They look and examine how teachers interact with concepts in teaching and learning. Teachers are, therefore, expected to portray positive attitudes towards what they teach. Learners who are taught by a teacher who has negative attitude towards argumentative English essay writing, are likely to develop negative attitude towards such writing. Olson and Mitchell (1975) insist that attitude may be acquired through reinforcement mechanisms. They point out that if learners get a positive reward in their learning, they are likely to develop interest in what they learn.

Individual’s attitudes do not exist or develop in a vacuum, the group’s interaction can have a direct impact towards formation of attitudes (Thomas 1980, cited by Rakhoba, 2000). This implies that learners can influence one another towards the argumentative English essay writing. It is reasonable, therefore, to conclude that attitudes originate from a group. A learner studying argumentative English essay writing amongst highly motivated students is likely to develop interest in the concept studied. The opposite happens in a situation whereby a learner studies

amongst learners with less motivation towards the concept. Judy (2010) also states that learners often have a negative attitude towards learning Mathematics. He further points that teachers can however take steps to reverse this. They should provide or create opportunities for learners to develop personal connections to Mathematics so that they value the knowledge acquired. This indicates that English Language teachers need to make learners aware of their strengths in learning argumentative English essay writing since this will obviously develop their interest in learning how to write such an essay. However, this will depend on the teacher's ability to motivate his learners. The teacher's attitude plays a major role in the teaching and learning of argumentative English essay writing because learners who are taught by a teacher who holds negative attitudes towards teaching and learning of argumentative essay writing are likely to fail English essay writing.

Culture shapes the nation (Kieran, 2015). Basotho, as part of their culture, do not allow children to argue with adults. This, on one hand, hinders learners from developing critical skills needed in writing an argumentative essay. It also creates submissive learners who accept whatever they are told even when they should not. It makes learners who cannot air their opinions or feelings about something. This behavior negatively impacts the way learners perceive the teaching and learning of argumentative essay writing. Wyrick (2017) again postulates that history has shown that placement of immoral books and essay topics in schools, is part of an insidious plot to weaken the moral fiber of the youth. Some argumentative topics appear to be against good morals for youth such as this one: 'Euthanasia should be legalized. Do you agree or disagree?' This topic does not advocate for good morals. Learners who are highly religious may feel reluctant to attempt it. It may create negative attitude towards argumentative topics. It is further emphasized by Mueller (2008) that for learners to write a convincing argumentative essay, they need to

possess critical skills in order to argue their points strongly. It is, therefore, advisable to allow learners to develop their critical skills as early as possible. Parents should not stop children from asking questions on what they do not comprehend.

According to this literature, there are a number of possible causes of challenges facing the teaching and learning of argumentative English essay writing. It is important to find out which causes are responsible for poor performance of argumentative English essay writing at LGCSE examinations.

2.5.2 Possible causes of challenges facing the teaching and learning of argumentative essay writing

One of the key causes of poor performance in essay writing is inadequate scrutiny of a question and the demands it makes (Connelly & Forsyth, 2012). My ten years of teaching English Language at secondary level have taught me that once a learner does not understand the question, he or she is likely to deviate from the question and consequently fails. Rajeswari (2008) indicates that the learning environment can also be a contributing factor towards the poor performance of essay writing. It can influence learners' perception of learning. The environment can either motivate them to learn further or discourage them from learning. In order for learners to perform well in argumentative English essay writing, they need to learn in a conducive environment. In a situation whereby they are not able to air their opinions, they will not develop skills needed to write argumentatively. It is argued that any argument made without evidence is difficult to believe or understand. Shields (2010) emphasizes that evidence in an argument seeks to persuade the reader of the point to act, perform or behave in a certain way. It is clear that any candidate who makes claims without evidence will not perform well in the examination. In the same

manner, candidates or learners at the LGCSE examinations are expected to provide clear and well supported arguments (Lesotho General Certificate of Secondary Education Mark Scheme, 2012).

Again, teachers need not only teach elements of a good essay writing but also language usage. English Language (0175/1) Marking Memo (2014) clearly stipulates that the use of tense, grammar and spelling should be marked as serious errors in LGCSE English Language (0175) examination. This states that if these grammatical devices are not well handled, such learners score low marks in the examination. Burstein (2009) adds that proper use of transitional words link ideas and indicates the relationship of ideas within a sentence, paragraph or whole text. It is clear that without transitional words, it may be difficult for the reader to understand the essay writing.

Yates (2011) purports that practice makes perfect. This implies that if learners get good practice, they are likely to perform better. The opposite happens if they do not get good practice in argumentative essay writing. Some teachers claim that it is not only strenuous but also burdensome to mark an essay because it is time demanding (Meersman, Dillan and Herrero, 2011 & Kiestler, 2013). This makes teachers fail to give learners enough practice on the essay writing yet learners finally have to sit for a paper in essay writing. The fact that they might have not had good practice makes them perform argumentative essay writing poorly.

Experience has also taught the researcher that some teachers especially those from Lesotho College of Education, complain that they do not know how to teach argumentative English essay writing at LGCSE. This was, however, found contrary to the Lesotho College of Education

(LCE) English Language Course outline. (English Language (ENG1303S-B) Course Outline 2015/2016).

It is evident that argumentative English essay writing appears to be challenging to both teachers and learners. This is, therefore, an indication that it is important to find out about the causes of these challenges.

2.5.3 Measures to enhance the teaching and learning of argumentative essay writing

According to the behaviorists' theory, one action that gets a positive response is likely to happen again (Carr, Warren & Sexton, 2007). This means that reinforcement encourages one to continue with his or her activity. According to Wringe (1989) cited by Rakhoba (2000), the task of encouraging positive attitudes to language teachers depends largely on successful achievement of providing intellectual stimulation and enjoyment. This is saying that if teachers are interested in teaching argumentative English essay writing, they will strive for positive feedback in learners and such feedback will motivate both teachers and learners to work even harder and achieve more.

Again, if teachers specialize in areas they like and are fit to handle, attitudes towards argumentative English essay writing would improve as it would be handled by positive teachers. Specialization refers to doing a certain type of work all the time. Debeshe et.al (2013) define specialization as dividing people's work according to their training and knowledge. This will only allow the transfer of positive attitudes from teachers to learners. Teachers will choose to teach only what they are capable of teaching and would motivate learners in their teaching. In a case whereby specialization is impossible, workshops should be used to train English teachers on how to teach and mark argumentative English essay writing. There must be workshops in the

schools, regions and across the country to keep teachers fit for their work. Hoeckel (2010) maintains that workshops provide re-training of teachers. This does not only help teachers to improve academically but also psychologically. Teachers get to understand their work better and become interested in the subject that they teach. Once they are interested, so are the learners.

In the same vein, Yalden (1987) adds that in order to enhance positive teacher attitude, team teaching should be practised where teachers can work together. Team teaching must be recognized as a changing, accommodating and flexible form of teaching in order to be responsive to the needs of the heterogeneous group of learners (Anne, 2012). This implies that if what a teacher teaches is not addressed well in class, it might be well addressed by the other teacher since approaches may differ. Learners can, therefore, benefit differently from different teachers. Similarly Kathryn (2012) indicates that team teaching moves beyond the familiar and predictable and creates environment of uncertainty, dialogue and discovery. This emphasizes that there is a lot that can be discovered through team teaching as teachers will be learning from each other.

Moreover, discussion helps learners get motivated in their learning. It allows multiple ideas that arise as learners discuss and learn from one another. Wallwork (2007) defines discussion as examining the pros and cons of something. It is a warranted follow up after a reading task (Germeroth & Hess, 2013). Normally, learners get excited when they have learned something and want to share their feelings with others during the discussion. Discussion can help motivated learners share their motivation to the less motivated learners. If this is emphasized in the teaching and learning of argumentative English essay writing, more learners may gain positive attitude towards the essay writing.

According to Sundem (2006) and Hackett (2005), storage of writing materials, effective use of resource materials, classroom layout, framework for classroom time, direct instructions and writing workshops can immensely help in improving learners' essay writing. This points out that teachers need to have a clear plan of how they approach the teaching and learning of argumentative English essay writing. Vagle (2010) endorses that teachers must be very strategic in their work, by ascertaining what to do, how and when. This will create time for learners to practice what was learned in class and apply such knowledge in the task assigned to them.

Furthermore, teachers should also avoid giving negative feedback all the time. Instead, they must practice giving positive feedback that highlights areas for improvement. To emphasize this, Curriculum and Assessment Policy (2012) clearly stipulates that, "for work where marking is subjective, for example, writing letters, the marking should not always be done on marks but focus can be on what is good and what needs improvement". This designates that errors can be underlined and explained to learners to correct and avoid them in future. The same strategy can be utilized in marking argumentative English essay writing. A well communicated feedback helps learners improve their grades.

Learners must also be engaged in the revision of their work. They must make their own inputs (Parvin, 2011). This will help learners to point out their weaknesses and strengths. Assessment Strategy (2012) advocates for a child-friendly assessment; it suggests that school inspectors and district resource teachers should monitor the quality of feedback given by teachers. It states that teachers need to be clear that good feedback is vital for effective formative assessment. The impact of comments and marks or grades can negatively impact on the learners' confidence and love to learn. Teachers are, therefore, supposed to be as constructive as possible in the feedback

because feedback should serve as a bridge towards improvement (Brookhart, 2008 & Askew 2004).

Teachers should encourage more practice amongst learners and make them value what they write. For example, their work can be published in school magazines. Sundem (2006) proposes that learners should be encouraged to have personal files where they keep their school work. This will help learners to keep good record of their work for future reference.

Kathleen (2007) explains that field trips enable learners to visit places they might have never seen. He adds that field trips might serve as culminating experiences or a catalyst to provoke interest in a new topic. He further advises that learners may also test their ideas and concepts with an expert advice from the people they meet at the site. This is where learners connect with real life. For example, they can visit the parliament. This may motivate them to improve their argumentative skills as it might be everyone's desire to be a member of the parliament. They may have some parliamentarians as their role models. Generally, teachers should expose learners to different places that can enhance their love to argue or debate issues.

In the same manner, Browes (2006) adds that educational trips play an important role in developing young people's minds by bringing the world into the school and thus breathing life into the concepts that are taught in class. He further asserts that they help in building social skills and awareness necessary to make youngsters into whole rounded individuals.

Video tapes can also be played for learners to learn how other people set and present their arguments. This will break the monotony of every day lecturing as variety is the spice of life. Video tapes can be replayed for as many times as learners want to enhance individual learning. They help learners to fill the gap in their background knowledge (John et al., 2000).

Teachers should also understand the needs of individual learners and develop suitable approach for each learner (Reid, 2007; Davis, 2009; Dukes et al; 2007). Ferlazzo (2013) and Dukes et al. (2007) also affirm that teachers can only achieve their best performance if they are patient with their learners and use every possible reward to encourage them learn more.

Harpin (2010) adds that parents are their children's first teachers. They are said to be pivotal in the academic success of their children. Parents should, therefore, know their children's weaknesses and start communicating them with their teachers. They should also encourage their children to write on argumentative English essay writing and submit to their teachers for marking after which teachers would provide feedback as expected. Grove (2008) echoes that insufficient feedback is a major contribution to all problems of low or poor performance. He adds that both positive and negative feedback have an impact on the performance. Parents, therefore, should ensure that their children's feedback is well communicated to them.

Parents should also provide all financial assistance as sometimes learners need to buy books to improve their argumentative English essay writing. James and Hagedorn (1933) explain that it is difficult to work without tools. In the same way, it is clear that it would be difficult to study without proper books. Having books helps learners to practice what they learned in class during their own free time (Germeroth & Hess, 2013). This assists them to develop confidence over their work. Again Hornby (2010) emphasizes that parents must be involved in their children's education.

Generally, parents need to take responsibility over their children's education (Hornby, 2010; Gbedawo, 2015; Kong, 2015). They should again create a suitable environment for children to argue any point they do not understand. However, they should be taught how to do it with all the

respect required. This will help them develop their reasoning abilities, hence be able to write good and convincing argumentative essays both in Sesotho and English. According to Robert and Donna (1999), the right to speaking and publishing freely is an essential liberty in a democratic country. It is, therefore, important to allow children to exercise their freedom of expression and develop their reasoning skill. Harpin (2010) emphasizes that educators, families, community members and learners are partners in education. They share responsibilities for children's success in school at all levels.

Similarly, a teacher needs to create a suitable environment for learners to develop their arguments. For example, she or he may use a situation that will make learners to debate issues related to their daily lives. Debate refers to situation in which two parties argue over a certain issue. Oxford Advanced Learners Dictionary (2010) explains it as a formal argument or discussion of a question at a public meeting of parliament with two or more opposing speakers. In a debate, every side will want to win hence it will strive harder. Winning the debate at the class level will build learners' confidence in arguing their points; as a result, they will not fear to write an argumentative English essay. When effective teaching is done, learners' love for learning is increased. A teacher gets motivated when he sees learners interested in his teaching. At the same time, this makes his or her work easier. Mcleod (2015) suggests that positive reward reinforces the behaviour (operant conditioning).

As learners write argumentative English essays, they need to believe that their readers do not agree with their position on the topic discussed. This will motivate them to provide clear evidence in their essays to convince their readers. Teachers need to teach learners to identify the strongest points from the opposition and challenge them on the status of their argument, which in

turn will improve their writing and earn them more marks. This will make learners' essays appear strong and balanced and will earn more marks.

2.6 SUMMARY

The chapter showed the operationalization of all the key concepts of the study. It went further to provide the related literature to both key concepts of the study and the research questions of the study. It again indicated how the Attribution Theory of Success and Failure would guide the study. The next chapter provides a plan of how data in response to all research questions was collected.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

3.0 INTRODUCTION

When one plans to carry out a study, meticulous prior planning is crucial. Issues of methodology must be evidently dealt with. Methodology is a set of principles from which specific methods may be derived. Rose and Irny (2005) define it as a systematic and theoretical analysis of the methods applied to a field of study while Maree (2016) describes it as a philosophical orientation to inquiry. This is a section that deals with the methods and approach to the study. It looks at how the population and sample for the study is organized as well as how ethical considerations are observed. Methodology for this study includes: research design, population, sample, methods of data collection, procedure for data collection, data analysis techniques, trustworthiness, piloting and ethical considerations.

3.1 RESEARCH DESIGN

Research design is a plan or strategy of philosophical assumptions in an inquiry (Maree, 2007). Every study adopts a certain research design and such design needs to be congruent to the kind of data to be collected. This study adopted a qualitative research design. A qualitative research design is an interdisciplinary landscape including different perspectives and practices for generating knowledge (Maree, 2016). Miles and Gilbert cited in Maree (2016) define qualitative research design as a diverse set of ideas encompassing various approaches. This suggests that there is a wide range of approaches to qualitative research that are based on different theoretical understandings and methodologies. Qualitative research design relies on linguistic (words) rather than numerical data. It is naturalistic as it studies phenomena in their natural setting (Maree, 2016). Polkinghorne (1989) adds that qualitative research employs meaning-based rather than

statistical forms of data analysis. It attempts to find answers to questions by looking at different social settings and the individuals who inhabit the settings (Berg, 2007). Despite various types of qualitative research designs, this study adopted a qualitative research design of multiple case studies. Multiple case studies help the researcher analyze a number of settings. According to Serutla (2011), a case study is the study of one or more groups. Maree (2016) adds that a case study is an empirical enquiry about a contemporary phenomenon set within its real world context. It is, therefore, appropriate to use this design as the aim of this study is to explore learners' and teachers' perceptions about poor performance of argumentative English essay writing in their natural context within three selected high schools in Leribe. A case study would benefit the researcher to triangulate data from the three schools to strengthen the research findings and conclusions.

A research is about understanding the world and one's understanding is informed by how he or she views the world (Maree, 2016). This study followed a Postpositivist paradigm. Maree (2007) explains a paradigm as a set of assumptions or beliefs about a fundamental aspect of reality which brings about a particular world view. Postpositivism also known as Postempiricism is a metatheoretical stance that critiques and amends positivist (Maree, 2016). Positivists claim that the researcher and the researched person are independent of each other while Postpositivists maintain that theories, background knowledge and values of the researcher can influence what happens in a study (Smith, 2014). Maree (2016) purports that Postpositivist thinker's focus on establishing and searching for evidence that is valid and reliable in terms of the existence of phenomena. Ritchie and Lewis (2003) insist that epistemology is concerned with ways of knowing and learning about the social world. A similar point is stressed by Wenning (2011) who

states that epistemology is about the way we get to know things. The present study is well situated within the underpinnings of this research design and approach.

3.2 POPULATION

Population is a group of people in a study. Serutla (2011) describes population as a cluster of individuals with common characteristics in which the researcher has interest in learning about. Population helps the researcher to identify the sub-divisions of the population so that the researcher chooses a proper sample to use in the study (Maree, 2016). Maree argues that it is sometimes impossible to include everyone in the study due to time and cost. The Form D learners in all high schools in Leribe and teachers who teach English Language at Form D formed the population for this study. They constituted the right population because both Form D learners and their English Language teachers were directly involved in the teaching and learning of argumentative English essay writing.

3.3 SAMPLE

Sample refers to a group of things or people selected from the population for a particular study. Johnnie (2012) states that sampling is the selection of a subset of a population for inclusion in a study. To draw the sample, the study employed convenient sampling technique in selecting three schools in Leribe. According to Maree (2016), convenience sampling lacks clear sampling strategies; it is used in situations where population elements are selected based on the fact that they are easily and conveniently available. The schools were chosen because they were convenient to access for data collection. Form D learners wrote English Language Paper 1 test and a nested sampling of only fifteen (15) scripts was selected from each school to make a total of forty five (45). Nested sample is a sample that is drawn from another sample (Maree, 2016). This sample was slightly above the normal class size advocated by United Nations Educational,

Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) (2010) that teacher-learner ratio in Lesotho in 2020 should be one teacher to forty (40) learners (1:40). Fifteen (15) scripts constituted one third of a class of forty-five (45).

It is important to consider time and costs when choosing the sample size (Maree, 2016). This happens because if the sample is too big, it might be impossible to complete the study within the given time. Forty-five (45) scripts was a reasonable number for this study as the researcher had enough time to mark the scripts. Maree further adds that qualitative research can use small samples; however, such size should allow for generalization of the study. The scripts were chosen using simple random sampling. Simple random sampling is a subset of the population in which each member has an equal probability of being chosen. Mangat and Singh (1996) assert that simple random sampling is used when every population unit has the same chance of being chosen or selected in the sample. In a case whereby there were more than one streams of Form D class quota sampling was used to choose a proportional quota allocated to each class from where the fifteen scripts were randomly chosen for marking. Maree (2016) argues that quotas may be proportional or non-proportional. The test composed of only argumentative essay topics. It entailed five topics to maintain the LGCSE Paper 1 standard. The standard paper has five questions from narrative, descriptive and argumentative topics (LGCSE English Language (0175) Syllabus, 2012). The narrative and descriptive topics were replaced by argumentative essay topics because the purpose of this study was to find out causes of poor performance of argumentative English essay writing.

Furthermore, random sampling was used to choose fifteen (15) learners from each school to answer the questionnaire. Every learner at Form D was given a number and such numbers were placed in a box. All learners were numbered from 1 to the last number in each class and only 15

numbers were randomly drawn from each school. Each population element had to be numbered sequentially such that each element could uniquely be identified (Maree, 2007). This is an applicable sampling as it gives all learners the same probability of being chosen for this study.

Homogeneous purposive sampling was applied to sample teachers for this study. In this sampling, individuals who belong to the same subculture or have the same characteristics are chosen to provide a detailed picture of a phenomenon (Maree, 2016). Thornhill and Sauders (2012) expound that homogeneous purposive sampling is a sampling based on one particular subgroup in which all sample members are similar, for instance, members in a particular occupation or level in an organization hierarchy. Lacey and Gerrish (2010) add that homogeneous purposive sampling is a sampling in which people from a pre-specified group are purposely selected and sampled. All Form D teachers of English Language in the three schools were sampled through homogeneous purposive sampling. Homogeneous purposive sampling was also used because the purpose was to collect information from people directly involved in the teaching and learning of argumentative English essay writing at Form D level. Maree (2016) stresses that purposive sampling is done on the population that is believed to generate rich information on the phenomenon under discussion. This is done because the subjects supposedly have rich experience-appraised information on teaching argumentative essay writing.

3.4 METHODS OF DATA COLLECTION

This study used a test, semi structured and open-ended questionnaires followed by a focus group discussion as the main data collection instruments. Anderson (1993:109) describes an instrument as, “any tool used in the collection of data which includes tests, observations schedules or questionnaires.” These tools are suitable for collecting qualitative data and they do not allow the researcher to influence the participants’ responses. Questionnaires are convenient for collecting

data from a large group within a short time as the respondents' answers can be provided at the same time and be analyzed later (Korrapatti, 2016). In the context of this study, the questionnaires helped the researcher to collect data from a number of teachers and learners at the same time. The test, in this case, was deemed an appropriate tool to measure the content taught in class, hence it covered argumentative topics only. It generated data from learners while the questionnaire was used for both teachers and learners.

3.5 RATIONALE FOR ADOPTION OF THE DATA COLLECTION TOOLS

A number of research scholars describe rationale for the study, notably Jansen (2004) and Maree (2016) who concur that it is a statement of how a researcher developed an interest in a particular topic and why the researcher believes the research is worth conducting. This section, however, aims to provide the rationale behind using the selected tools for data collection.

In order to collect the intended data, the right tools must be used. A questionnaire and a test were used for this study. The questionnaire helped the researcher to collect data from learners and teachers without his interference while the test was used to collect data from learners on their knowledge of argumentative English essay writing.

(a) A questionnaire

A questionnaire is a set of questions for obtaining responses (Lewis & Sauro, 2012). The advantage of using a questionnaire is that it enables the researcher to collect data from many respondents within a short time. A questionnaire with open-ended questions was administered to collect data from both teachers and learners independently as echoed by Foddy (1994) that such a research tool allows respondents to answer in their own words. Furthermore Johnnie (2012) explains that questionnaires reduce the researchers' biasness as they do not intervene in

completing the questionnaire. It is, therefore, not easy for the researcher to influence the answers provided by the respondents. This was intended to ensure the reliability of the results. Again, Kember (2000) indicates that a questionnaire can be used to gather feedback from many respondents but the questions need to be easy to interpret. This study anticipated that by virtue of their positions, teachers and learners of English Language would be able to interpret the questions probing them to draw from the experience of teaching and learning the subject on a daily basis.

(b) A class test

A test is a unit of measurement with a stimulus and a prescriptive form of answers (Osterlind, 2012). Shanton (2003) repeats that a test is a measure taken to check the quality or performance of something or someone. The test, in this case, was meant to measure learners' ability to write argumentatively in English within the given prescriptions. Form D learners from three sampled schools were given a test on English Language Paper 1 under supervision of the teachers to ensure reliability. All learners wrote the test but only a total of forty five (45) sampled essays were marked and their results captured. The test comprised five argumentative topics for students to choose one and write an essay of about two to two and a half pages. The test aimed to produce a qualitative data.

(c) A focused group discussion

After teachers provided their responses on the questionnaires, the researcher brought all of them together for a focused group discussion to elucidate more information and clarification on what they provided on the questionnaires. Focused group discussion refers to a group in which people of similar backgrounds or experience come together to discuss a specific topic or interest. Hennink (2013) defines it as a qualitative research technique useful for obtaining detailed information about personal and group feelings, perceptions and opinions. The aim of a focused group discussion in a qualitative research consists of interviews in which a group of people are asked about their perceptions towards something. It helps to gather detailed information and provide chance to seek for clarity (Nyumba, Wilson & Derrick, 2018). This study, therefore, used a mini focus group that was taped for later transcription. The group encompassed seven teachers who teach English Language at Form D from the three selected schools for this study. The discussion was held to build clear teachers' perceptions on the poor performance of argumentative English essay writing emanating from the information teachers provided on the questionnaires.

3.6 PROCEDURE FOR DATA COLLECTION

Procedure for data collection refers to steps taken in gathering the data for the study (Jeffreys, 2010). To collect data for this study, the researcher arranged with the principals and heads of languages departments of the concerned schools on how and when the data would be collected from both teachers and learners. Learners were given a test at which teachers were requested to provide all the necessary supervision. All English Language teachers at Form D in the chosen schools and 15 learners chosen randomly from each school answered the questionnaire. The

questionnaire helped collect data from both teachers and learners on the causes of poor argumentative English essay writing.

3.7 DATA ANALYSIS

Data analysis is a summary of what the researcher has seen or heard in terms of common words, phrases, themes, or patterns that emerge from the data (Maree, 2007). Brandt (2014) adds that data analysis comprises of methods of numerical, text and graphical representation interpreting data. This study intends to use the Attribution Theory of Success and Failure (ATSF) to analyze and interpret the collected data for this study. The reasons behind poor performance of English argumentative essay writing were classified into four causes of failure and then analyzed in terms of the four causal dimensions illustrated by the theory. Deductive approach of data analysis was also used as the theory provided the pre determined themes to group the causes or challenges. Maree (2016) points out that deductive approach of data analysis provide the pre determined themes for coding the data.

3.8 TRUSTWORTHINESS OF THE STUDY FINDINGS

Trustworthiness of the study is described as the truthful and honesty of the researched work (Laura, 2012). To achieve honesty in the results, reliability and validity need to be given much attention. The section includes Reliability and Validity as tools to ensure trustworthiness of the study.

(a) Reliability

Reliability is the extent to which a measuring instrument is repeatable and consistent (Maree, 2016). This suggests that if the instrument is reliable, the same results of the study should be reproduced under the similar methodology. It is, therefore, important to examine the reliability of

the instruments prior to the research. The questionnaires were submitted to the researcher's supervisor to ensure their reliability and sustainability to generate the required information. Procedure and tools for collecting data should be examined to assess the degree to which they are likely to be reliable (Bell, 2003 and Martyn, 2008).

(b) Validity

The truthfulness of the researched data is known as validity. It is the extent to which the instrument will have measured what was intended to be measured (Rajamanickam, 2001). If the results are valid then the instruments will have measured what they intended to measure. In this study, the researcher will work with teachers in the departments of languages of the three schools to ensure that learners write the test under the teachers' supervision. This will help learners to avoid cheating in the test. The results for the test will hopefully reflect the actual performance of learners. The questionnaire will be administered by teachers to ensure that learners respond to questions without the influence from others.

3.9 PILOTING

A pilot study is a small preliminary investigation of the same general character of the major study (Drummond, 1966). It is a mini study that aims at determining the viability of the techniques intended to be used. Chakrabarti and Blessing (2014) state that the aim of the pilot study is to try out the research approach to identify potential problems that may affect the quality and validity of the results. They add that a set-up is as close to the intended study as possible. The pilot study was conducted at the researcher's school to find out the performance of Form D learners in the researcher's school. The pilot study was done to check the validity of the research

instrument (test). It was done on the relevant population sample but not the one that was used for this study and the results would be attached as appendix.

3.10 ETHICAL CONCERNS IN THE STUDY

Charles 1995 as cited by Serutla (2011) writes that ethics are moral features observed by researchers while Seedhouse (2009) describes ethics as the emotional commitment to ways of living and acting. The researcher ensured that he observes all the research ethics. He asked for a written consent from NUL through its Faculty of Education that permitted him to conduct this study. He further requested for permission to conduct the research from the principals and heads of English departments of the three concerned schools. The researcher disclosed the purpose of the study where necessary and no one was forced to take part in this study. Everybody had a right to withdraw any time he or she wished to. There was no manipulation of data to meet the researcher's interests and the researcher vowed not to report any information without agreement from the respondents. No name was disclosed without the authority from the owner. Confidentiality was therefore highly considered.

3.11 SUMMARY

This chapter covered research designs and population for the study. It further looked into data collection methods as well as procedure for data collection. The next section presents Chapter Four on data presentation, analysis and interpretation.

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

4.0 INTRODUCTION

This chapter features data presentation, analysis, interpretation and summative perspectives. It has four sections based on the four research questions of the study and finally provides the summary of the chapter.

4.1 CHALLENGES FORM D LEARNERS FACE IN ARGUMENTATIVE ENGLISH ESSAY WRITING

In this section, the findings on challenges that Form D learners face in argumentative English essay writing are the focus. Data towards answering the question on challenges faced by learners was generated through learners' essays, semi-structured questionnaire for learners, open-ended questionnaire for teachers and focus group discussions (FGDS) with teachers. Some essays which feature findings on learners' writing errors have been attached to the research report as appendices. A report of findings under each data collection technique would be followed by an interpretation.

4.1.1 Findings on marked learners' essays

Learners were given a test on five argumentative topics to choose one from and write an essay of about two to two and half pages. The test was well supervised by Form D English language teachers. The findings gathered from marked learners' essays were tabulated under ability, effort, task difficulty and luck/chance. Ability refers to what learners and teachers are able or unable to do while effort entails the actions both teachers and learners perform or fail to perform in the teaching and learning of argumentative essay writing. Task difficulty is about failure to understand the demands of the question and luck/chance refers to probabilities or chances that

learners have in the learning of an argumentative essay. The findings presented in tables 1 to 12 were interpreted in terms of the causal dimensions provided by Weiner's (1972) Attribution Theory of Success and Failure (ATSF). Weiner mentions that Causal dimensions study the origin, stability and controllability of the challenge or problem. Origin looks at whether the challenge emanates within or outside the learner. Stability refers to whether the challenge can change or not while controllability examines whether the challenge can be controlled or not.

Table 1: Findings from marked learners' essays

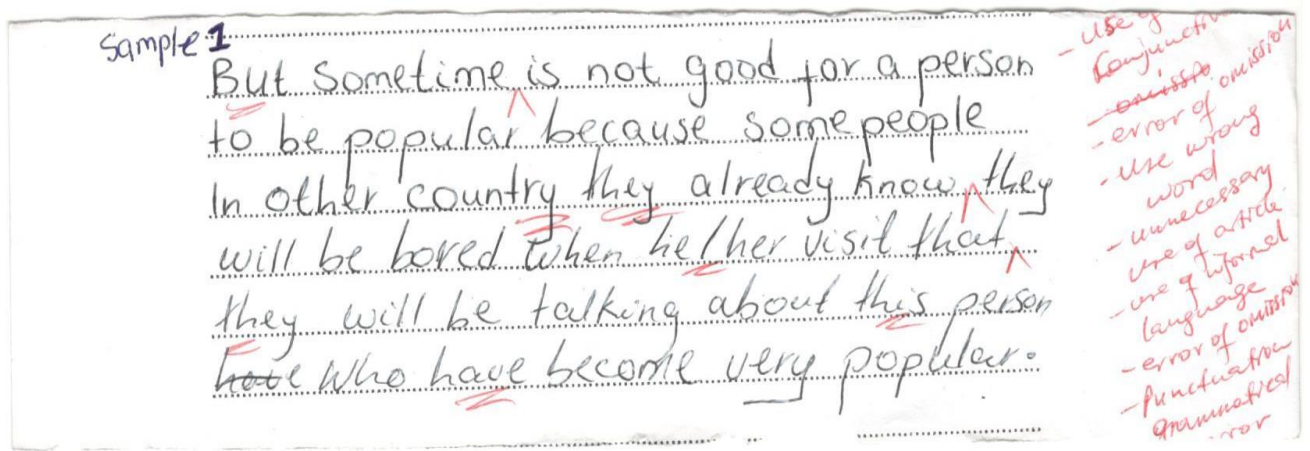
ABILITY	EFFORT	TASK DIFFICULTY	LUCK/CHANCE
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ inability to argue ➤ poor language proficiency ➤ poor paragraph development 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ failure to observe instructions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ first language approximation ➤ difficulty of the question 	

Findings under ability were thematised into poor language proficiency, learners' inability to argue their points and poor paragraph development.

(a) Poor language proficiency

The study revealed that wrong use of articles, tense, prepositions, words, punctuation marks, conjunctions, use of informal language, grammatical errors, error of omission, incorrect plural formation, unnecessary repetition and ambiguity are challenges that learners face in writing an argumentative English essay at LGCSE. These linguistic errors result from deficiencies in language proficiency. The insert below is a sample from one learner who committed a number of such errors. He or she omitted some words, used informal expressions, incorrect tense and could

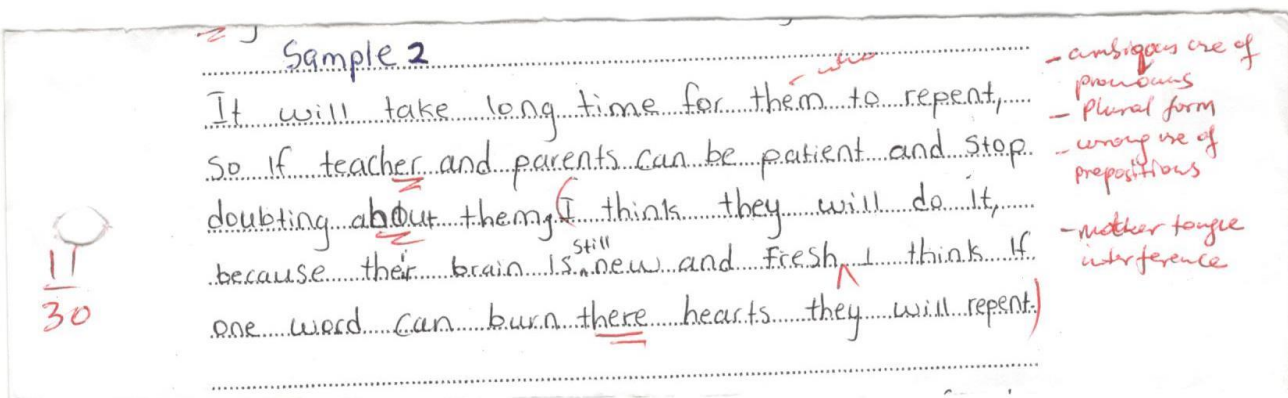
not use conjunctions correctly. All grammatical errors are indicated by double underlining in the insert and omitted words by omission sign.



The errors are in line with LGCSE English Language (0175/1) Marking Memo (2012) that such should be considered as cross in English Language Paper 1. The finding points to poor language proficiency as a challenge at LGCSE.

(b) Learners' inability to argue their points

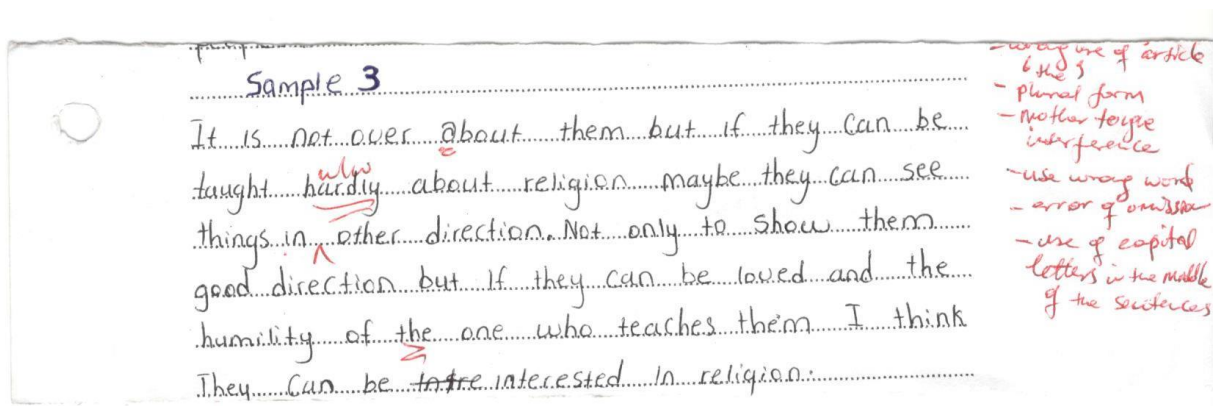
Failure to reason over mentioned points and take a definite stance emerged as challenges that LGCSE learners face in their learning of argumentative English essay writing. Some learners were not able to support their points with evidence and relevant supporting details while others had no arguments established. An insert below is a sample of a learner who committed most of these errors.



The learner did not show which side of the argument he supports most. These challenges contradicts Mukitiri's (2016) and Cheng's (2005) proposition that in argumentative essay writing, the writer must convince the reader over a certain argument (2.3.1) (f). The findings points to learners' inability to argue their points convincingly.

(c) Poor paragraph development

Poor paragraphing emerged as a challenge to some learners. Some learners were not able to structure their paragraphs logically and coherently. The other paragraphs did not have topic sentences while others used wrong conjunctions. Below is an extract from one learner who could not develop paragraphs well.



The above paragraph has no topic sentence and there is no relationship between and among other sentences. This is against LGCSE English language (0175/1) Marking Memo (2012) and Saranda's (2008) suggestion that learners' paragraphs must show unity and logic. (2.3). The researcher finds it reasonable to conclude that some learners at LGCSE are not able to develop cohesive paragraphs.

4.1.1.1 Interpretation

According to Weiner's (1972) Attribution Theory of Success and Failure, all challenges listed under ability in Table 1 are internal, stable and can change. The challenges emanate from the learners and if there is no attempt taken to address the challenges, they remain stable. The theory claims that they can change and the researcher also believes that they can change as some of them are grammatical. It is the responsibility of every teacher therefore to ensure that he or she uses appropriate measures to help learners use grammatical language. The findings presented under effort were thematised into learners' failure to observe instructions.

As indicated above, the study portrayed that some learners fail to pay attention to some instructions. For example, they fail to provide the required length and they write illegibly. The question paper given to Form D learners required that they write an essay of about two to two and half pages. However, there were some learners who could not even write one and half pages legibly. These challenges are in contrast to LGCSE English Language (0175/1) Question Paper (2014) requirement that learners write two to two and half pages legibly (2.3). The findings could suggest that some learners sometimes fail to observe the given instructions in the examination.

4.1.1.2 Interpretation

All challenges reflected under effort relate to the determination learners put into their work. The challenges are internal, unstable and can change. They are internal because they originate within the learners (Weiner, 1972). The Attribution Theory of Success and Failure claims that such errors are unstable as any attempt that learners take to overcome the challenge brings a change in performance. For example, once a learner is able to write up to the required length, he or she is likely to also perform better. The researcher also finds the challenges internal, unstable and changing because they are what learners can change. The findings under task difficulty were thematised into difficulty of the question and language interference.

(a) Difficulty of the question

Inadequate scrutiny of the question and use of irrelevant supporting materials were reflected as challenges that result from task difficulty. Some learners failed to correctly interpret the questions. For example, one question was, ‘Technology has brought more harm to human kind. Do you agree?’ Some learners interpreted the word ‘kind’ as ‘a certain type of people’. Failure to understand the question led some learners to support their arguments with irrelevant details. This coils back to Connelly and Forsyth’s (2012) assertion that one of the key causes of poor performance of argumentative essay writing is inadequate scrutiny of the question and the demands it makes (2.5.2). The study therefore seemed to reveal that learners at LGCSE sometimes find it difficult to interpret the questions.

(b) Language interference

First language approximation (Mother tongue) appeared to have a negative impact on the performance of argumentative English essay writing at LGCSE. For example, on the same question used above (4.1.1.2) (a), some learners failed to interpret the word ‘kind’. It appeared

that Sesotho had much influence on their interpretation of the word ‘kind’ as some learners interpreted it to mean ‘type’. The words ‘type’ and ‘kind’ in Sesotho can have the same meaning. This idea supports Hibbert and Walt’s (2014) conclusion that languages might be closely related but each language is independent (2.5.1). It is evident from the findings that trying to use Sesotho to interpret argumentative topics asked in English leads to misinterpretation of the question.

4.1.1.3 Interpretation

The theory groups these challenges under task difficulty because they depend on the question’s difficulty. The challenges are external, stable and cannot change. They are external as they do not originate within the learners. They are also stable because once the task is difficult, learners cannot change that. Learners can only equip themselves with necessary skills to overcome the difficulty of the question. The researcher believes that the findings cannot be changed by learners. There were no challenges related to luck or chance identified in this section of data presentation. The failure to identify such challenges can suggest that performance may not be based on luck or chance.

4.1.1.4 Findings on students’ semi structured questionnaires

Learners were given semi structured questionnaires to complete under the supervision of their English language teachers. The questionnaire demanded that learners provide the challenges they face in learning argumentative English essay writing. This is where challenges like lack of motivation and inability to argue points reflected. The findings were presented, analyzed and interpreted using Weiner’s (1972) Attribution Theory of Success and Failure as illustrated in (4.1.1).

Table 2: Findings on students’ semi structured questionnaires

ABILITY	EFFORT	TASK DIFFICULTY	LUCK / CHANCE
➤ inability to argue points	➤ learners concentration		➤ lack of motivation ➤ beliefs

Findings under ability were thematised into learners’ inability to argue points. The study discovered that some learners at LGCSE are not able to argue their points. Some learners seem to lack skills on how to state and defend their points. This challenge is similar to what the researcher also found out while marking the learners’ essays. Most of the learners were not able to argue their points. The idea was also emphasized by teachers in their focus group discussions as reflected in Table 1, (4.1.1.1) (a). This is dependable on Kieran’s (2015) claim that culturally Basotho do not allow young children to question their elders on what they are told (2.5.1). This practice denies them chance to gain critical skills needed to argue points. It is, therefore, realistic to conclude that some learners at LGCSE are not able to argue their points.

4.1.1.5 Interpretation

This challenge is internal, stable and can change. It originates within the learners and changes with some efforts put in. If no attempt is made to address the challenge, it remains stable. For example, learners need to acquire critical skills in order to argue points. If they acquire such skills, the challenge changes but if they do not possess the skills, the challenge remains stable.

The findings under effort were thematised into challenges from learners’ concentration.

As indicated in the paragraph above, the study revealed that learners’ loss of concentration in class is a trigger behind poor performance of argumentative English essay writing at LGCSE.

This indicates that there are learners who lose concentration during the teaching and learning of

an argumentative essay. This was proved by answers such as ‘feeling sleepy’. Some learners claim that they sometimes feel like sleeping while in class. This is consistent with what teachers claimed during the discussion in their focus group. This finding favours Olson and Mitchell’s (1975) perception that learners need some reinforcement to encourage them learn further (2.5.3). It implies that learners who lose concentration during the teaching and learning of argumentative English essay writing may miss some important information on how the essay must be written and such learners are likely to perform poorly in an argumentative essay.

4.1.1.6 Interpretation

This challenge was classified under effort because it pertains to what learners should do. The effort they put into the lesson determines their level of concentration in class. The challenge is internal, unstable and can change. It originates within the learners. It is unstable because there can be a number of situations that can stop the learner from concentrating on the lesson but these situations may not always be permanent; they can change. What distracts the learners’ concentration today may not do so the next day. There were no challenges identified under task difficulty through the given questionnaire. This may suggest that learners believe that essay topics are not difficult for them. The findings presented under luck/chance were thematised into lack of motivation and beliefs.

(a) Lack of motivation

Lack of motivation in learners appeared to contribute towards poor performance of argumentative English essay writing at LGCSE. Learners seem to have little or no interest in learning argumentative essay writing. This is still justified by responses that indicated that learners sometimes feel sleepy while in class. The challenge was again echoed by teachers in their focus group discussion. This is consistent to Dukes at al.’s (2007) claim that learners need

motivation in order to learn (2.5.1). The finding clearly establishes that motivation plays a vital role in learning.

(b) Beliefs

The study proceeded to advance that another challenge that learners face in learning argumentative English essay writing is the inclusion of religious topics that are against their religious beliefs. It appeared that learners are sometimes forced to write on topics that are against their religious beliefs and this practice makes them avoid such topics. Some learners are deeply rooted into their religions and may not find it wise to write anything against it. They may decide to avoid the topic or write only what favours their religion. This challenge supports Wyrick's (2017) claim that history has shown that placement of immoral books and essay topics in schools is part of an insidious plot to weaken the moral fiber of the youth (2.5.1). This act may influence some students to lose interest in argumentative essay writing. The finding implies that the inclusion of religious topics in learners' question paper may influence them to develop a negative attitude or biasness towards argumentative topics.

4.1.1.7 Interpretation

All challenges classified under luck / chance depend on the learners' luck. At one point, a learner might be faced with a topic that allows him to promote his religious belief while at the other point, he or she might have to stand against the principles of his religion. Nothing depends on his or her choice. It is a matter of luck. The challenges, therefore, do not originate within the learners and cannot be changed. If the topic is against the learners' religious belief, it cannot change. The challenge is unstable.

4.1.1.8 Findings on the teachers open-ended questionnaires

Teachers individually answered an open ended questionnaire which required that they give challenges learners face in the teaching and learning of an argumentative essay. Inability to argue appeared in most responses. The findings were presented, analyzed and interpreted using Weiner's (1972) Attribution Theory of Success and Failure as illustrated in (4.1.1).

Table 3: Findings on the teachers open ended questionnaires

ABILITY	EFFORT	TASK DIFFICULTY	CHANCE/LUCK
➤ inability to argue points		➤ misunderstanding of the question	

Findings tabulated under ability were into learners' inability to argue points. The study revealed that learners' inability to argue points leads to poor performance of argumentative essay. The finding was strengthened by responses that learners were not able to focus on their points of view, instead, they ended up writing contradicting arguments. This contradicts to Mukitiri's (2016) and Peterson's (2012) view that ability to prove one's point and take a definite stance over points discussed is important in argumentative essay writing (2.3) (e) (iii). It is, therefore, reasonable to draw the conclusion that without well-argued points and a definite stance taken over discussed points, learners are likely to perform poorly in an argumentative essay.

4.1.1.9 Interpretation

All challenges under ability are internal, stable and can change. They originate within the learners. If no attempt is made to address the challenge, they remain stable. For example, if learners do not improve their ability to argue points, the challenge remains the same. There were

no challenges identified under effort. This implies that teachers believe that effort may not have an impact on the performance of argumentative English essay writing. The findings under task difficulty were thematised into misunderstanding of the question.

As shown in the previous paragraph, the study further exposed that some learners narrate while they are expected to argue. They narrate due to failure to understand the demands of the question. Although all questions for the essay writing demanded that learners argue, some learners narrated their stories. This claim supports Connelly and Rorsyth's (2012) opinion that one of the key causes of poor performance in essay writing is inadequate scrutiny of a question and its demands (2.5.2). The researcher believes that once learners fail to understand the question, they are likely to present irrelevant information.

4.1.1.10 Interpretation

The challenge was placed under task difficulty because it depends on the question's difficulty. It is external, stable and cannot change. It is external as it does not originate within the learners. It is also stable because once the task is difficult, learner cannot change that. Learners can only equip themselves with necessary skills to overcome the difficulty of the question. There were no challenges identified under luck. This implies that teachers believe that luck may not have an impact on learners' ability in argumentative essay writing in English.

4.1.1.11 Findings on the teachers' focus group discussions (FDGs)

Teachers were told the purpose of the study and asked to relate their challenges in the teaching of an argumentative English essay. Most of them indicated that inability to argue and appropriate use of language among learners appear to be the most challenges they face. The findings were presented, analyzed and interpreted using Weiner's (1972) Attribution Theory of Success and Failure as illustrated in section (4.1.1).

Table 4: Findings on the teachers' FGDs

ABILITY	EFFORT	TASK DIFFICULTY	LUCK/CHANCE
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ inability to argue points ➤ poor argumentative structure ➤ poor language proficiency 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ lack of information ➤ negative attitude 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ misunderstanding of the question 	

Findings under ability were thematised into learners' inability to argue points, poor structuring and poor language proficiency.

(a) Learners' inability to argue

Teachers, in their focus group discussion, re-emphasized the point that inability to argue points is a challenge to learners at LGCSE. Teachers further indicated that learners fail to argue convincingly because they sometimes expand with irrelevant points while others lack language to expand their points. This challenge manifested in both learners' essays and learners' questionnaires. It is against Cheney (2005) and Mutikiri (2016) who state that the purpose of argumentative essay writing is to convince the reader (2.3) (d). The finding revealed that some learners at LGCSE are not able to argue their points.

(b) Poor structuring

Poor argumentative structuring was also raised as a challenge in teacher's discussion. Teachers pointed out that different teachers approach argumentative English essay writing differently. This happens because some teachers only rely on certain books. They claimed that teachers teaching

in the same school are sometimes not able to sit together and develop common understanding of how an essay must be structured. This is contrary to Mutikiri's (2014) proposal that an argumentative essay has three parts that make it unique from the other types of essay writing (2.3) (d). It is, therefore, essential to conclude that it is important for teachers to share ideas on their teaching.

(c) Poor language proficiency

Poor language usage also emerged as a challenge to learners at LGCSE. Teachers claimed that learners experience various grammatical mistakes in their writing among which incorrect spelling was singled out to be the most common error learners commit. This challenge was also evident in the learners' essays. The challenge is contrary to LGCSE English Language (0175/1) Marking Memo (2014) which clearly reflects that learners must use language appropriately (2.5.2). The researcher is of the opinion that some learners fail to support their arguments convincingly due to failure to use language appropriately.

4.1.1.12 Interpretation

These challenges were classified under ability because they are what learners do or fail to do. They are all internal, stable and can change. They originate within learners and any attempt taken to address them brings a change. For example, once learners' use of language improves, the challenge also changes. The researcher also believes that these challenges can change as they all relate to one's ability to do something. Ability has potential to change. The findings under effort were thematised into lack of information and negative attitude.

(a) Lack of information

Teachers pointed out that sometimes other learners show poor background information on the topic. They claimed that poor background information lead to irrelevant supporting details and biasness. The researcher holds a feeling that learners with limited information on the topic end up failing to acknowledge the other side of the argument. Mutikiri (2012) indicates that an argumentative essay must have two sides with the writer's side more supported (2.3) (e) (i). The findings suggest that if learners fail to acknowledge the two sides of their arguments, they fail to structure their essays as required and this may lead to poor performance.

(b) Negative attitude

According to this study, lack of practice and poor reading habits lead to learners' poor performance of argumentative English essay writing. Teachers indicated that they also share the blame because in most cases, they fail to give learners adequate practice on argumentative essay writing. This is against Yates's (2011) perception that practice makes perfect (2.5.2). It is the researcher's conclusion that if learners are not given adequate chance to practice writing argumentatively, they may not perform well in argumentative English essay writing.

4.1.1.13 Interpretation

These challenges were classified under effort because they relate to the effort learners need to put into their work. The (ATSF) explains these challenges as internal, unstable and capable of changing. They emanate within the learners. They are unstable and can change. Any effort that learners put in to improve their argumentative English essay writing results into a change in performance. For instance, once learners balance their arguments, the challenge changes. This emphasizes that they are unstable. The findings under task difficulty were again thematised into misunderstanding of the question.

As shown in the paragraph above, the study seems to reveal that some learners sometimes misunderstand the questions. Teachers pointed out that learners sometimes have a lot of narrative skills and turn to use such skills even in argumentative essay writing. They narrate even when they are supposed to argue. Learners fail to understand questions that require them to narrate from those that require arguing. The literature did not say anything about this practice but it is consistent to the researcher's ten years of experience teaching English language at senior secondary. It is, therefore, reasonable to believe that teachers do not adequately teach argumentative English essay writing.

4.1.1.14 Interpretation

This challenge was classified under task difficulty because it results from the difficulties that learners face in an attempt to answer the question. The challenge is external; it does not originate within learners. It is stable and cannot change. If the task is difficult for learners, it remains so and learners cannot change that. They can only study harder to acquire skills to overcome the difficulty of the question. There were no findings under luck/chance.

4.1.1.15 Summative perspective

In relation to the first research question, the study has established that most challenges that learners face in the argumentative writing consolidate into poor language proficiency. These challenges are placed under ability. Poor paragraphing also appeared to be the main finding in this study. It is categorized under effort. Lastly, misunderstanding of the question also appeared to be common in the respondents' feedback. The challenge is classified under task fulfillment. The main findings under the first research question therefore cover ability, effort and task difficulty.

4.2 CHALLENGES TEACHERS FACE IN THE ARGUMENTATIVE ENGLISH ESSAY WRITING

This section is a report of findings on challenges teachers face in the argumentative English essay writing. The findings are from data generated through a teachers' questionnaire and FGD. A report of findings under each data collection technique would be followed by an interpretation.

4.2.1 Findings from teachers' open-ended questionnaire

Teachers were expected to mention challenges they face in the teaching of argumentative English essay writing. Learners' inability to argue was a common challenge indicated. The findings gathered from the questionnaires were tabulated under ability, effort, task difficulty and luck/chance. They were then analyzed and interpreted according to the causal dimensions as indicated in (4.1.1).

Table 5: Findings on teachers open ended questionnaires

ABILITY	EFFORT	TASK DIFFICULTY	LUCK/CHANCE
<ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ inability to argue points➤ poor language proficiency in learners		<ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ lack of information background on the topic➤ communication breakdown	<ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ lack of motivation

Findings under ability were thematised into learners' inability to argue and poor language proficiency.

(a) Learners' inability to argue

The study further revealed that some learners are not able to argue their points, structure their essays and reconcile the two sides of the argument. This challenge was also reflected from the first research question under learners' essays and questionnaires. It is observed that the writer needs to state points for and against the topic and then show which side he supports most. Learners who fail to do this do not write argumentatively. This contradicts Mukitiri's (2016) and Cheney's (2005) advocacy that writers writing argumentatively must balance their arguments. (2.3). The findings bear the conclusion that some learners at LGCSE do not know how to write argumentatively.

(b) Poor language proficiency

Learners' inability to use language accurately was illustrated as challenges teachers face in teaching of argumentative English essay writing. This finding was proved right by responses such as failure to use transitional words correctly. Teachers in their focus group discussion also claimed that learners sometimes use ungrammatical sentences. The researcher also observed this while marking learners' essays under the first research question. The challenges are against Gadd's (2006) (2.3) (d) (ii) and LGCSE English Language (0175/1) Marking Memo (2012). (2.4) on language accuracy. It is, therefore, reasonable to consider that some learners at LGCSE do not use language accurately.

4.2.1.1 Interpretation

These challenges are internal. They emanate within the learners and are stable but can change if an attempt to change them is taken. For example, improving the use of transitional words affects the challenge. There were no challenges identified under effort. This implies that teachers may not be experiencing any challenge related to effort in the teaching of argumentative English

essay writing. The findings under task difficulty were thematised into lack of information and misunderstanding.

(a) Lack of information

Teachers pointed out that sometimes other learners show lack of background information on the topic. Learners with limited information on the topic end up failing to acknowledge the other side of the topic. Mutikiri (2012) indicates that an argumentative essay must have two sides with the writer's side more supported (2.3) (e) (i). On the basis of this, the researcher believes that if learners fail to acknowledge the two sides of their arguments, they fail to structure their essays as required and this may lead to poor performance.

(b) Misunderstanding of the question

The study revealed that communication breakdown is also one of the challenges that teachers face in the teaching and learning of argumentative English essay writing. According to claims made by teachers in their focus group discussion, communication breakdown is brought by failure to understand the question or part of the question. If a learner misunderstands the question, he or she is likely to communicate irrelevant information. This challenge is in line with English language (0175/1) examiners' report (2015) claim that most learners did not perform well in an argumentative essay due to failure to understand the question (1.2). The researcher finds it rational to think that communication breakdown may result to failure to understand the question.

4.2.1.2 Interpretation

The challenges were classified under task difficulty because the errors are done by learners who fail to understand the task at hand. These challenges are external and stable. Once a task is difficult, there is nothing the learner can do to change that. The challenges remain stable, it is the learner who has to equip himself with necessary skills to overcome the challenge. The findings tabulated under luck were thematised into lack of motivation.

As pointed out in the previous paragraph, the study established that lack of motivation in teachers can be a trigger behind poor performance of argumentative English essay writing at LGCSE. Teachers who lack motivation end up dodging classes and not doing their work effectively. This is in line with Carr's (2015) proposition that teachers who have been in the field for a long time may be good in their content but fail to motivate learners to learn further (2.5.1). It is consequently sound to agree that some learners exposed to less motivated teachers may develop negative attitudes towards argumentative essay writing and finally perform it poorly.

4.2.1.3 Interpretation

This challenge was classified under luck/chance because it depends on how lucky is the learner. At one point, the learner might be exposed to a highly motivated teacher but this does not mean he will always be exposed to such teacher. The challenge is unstable but cannot be changed by learners. If a learner is exposed to a less motivated teacher, he or she cannot change that.

4.2.1.4 Findings from teachers' focus group discussion

Teachers were expected to give the challenges they experience in the teaching of an argumentative English essay. Most of the teachers complained about teachers' inability to argue. The findings were presented, analyzed and interpreted using Weiner's (1972) Attribution Theory of Success and Failure as illustrated in (4.1.1).

Table 6: Findings from the focus group discussion

ABILITY	EFFORT	TASK DIFFICULTY	CHANCE/ LUCK
➤ teachers' inability to teach argumentative	➤ inadequate practice ➤ lack of cooperation among teachers		

Findings under ability were thematised into teachers' inability to teach argumentative essay. Teachers claim that they are not properly trained on how to teach argumentative essay writing from Lesotho College of Education (LCE) and the National University of Lesotho (NUL). They further pointed out that this makes them insecure. This implies that teachers are sometimes not sure if they are doing the right thing in their teaching. This claim contradicts LCE course outline for the third year students measuring in English Language. The course outline indicates that students are taught how to argue (English Language (ENG1303S-B) Course outline 2015/16) (2.5.1). However, the researcher wonders if teachers are indeed trained properly.

4.2.1.5 Interpretation

According to ATSF, the challenge was placed under ability because it involves one's ability to perform. It is internal, stable and can change. It is internal because it originates within the teachers. It can change even though it remains stable if no attempt is taken to bring a change. The findings under effort were thematised into inadequate practice and lack of cooperation.

(a) Inadequate practice

It was discovered that teachers do not give learners an adequate practice on argumentative essay writing. Teachers complained that marking essays is strenuous so they are not able to give learners enough practice. They claim that it takes longer to mark an essay. This is against Yate's (2011) understanding that practice makes perfect (2.5.2). The finding, therefore, revealed that if learners are denied opportunity to practice, they may not know the areas they are weak at until they are faced with such areas in the examination and this may lead to their poor performance.

(b) Lack of cooperation

Lack of cooperation between and among teachers was proved to be a challenge that teachers face in the teaching and learning of argumentative English essay writing. Teachers claimed that some teachers behave like islands in their schools. They never consult where they have problems. This contradicts Yalden's (1987) contention that teachers need to team teach in order to learn from each other (2.5.3). The researcher holds the feeling that teachers sometimes impart incorrect piece of information due to failure to discuss their teachings with other teachers.

4.2.1.6 Interpretation

The above challenges were classified under effort because they can be linked to the efforts that teachers put into the teaching of argumentative English essay writing. They are internal as they emanate within the teachers and this tells that they can change. For example, once teachers give learners enough practice on the argumentative essay writing, the challenge changes. There were no challenges classified under task difficulty and luck. This may suggest that teachers hold the belief that an argumentative English essay is not difficult to learners and luck may not determine the performance of learners in argumentative English essay writing.

4.2.1.7 Summative perspective

Inability to argue points manifested as a common challenge. The challenge is presented under ability. Inadequate practice also reflected as a common challenge. It is placed under effort.

4.3 CAUSES OF CHALLENGES FACED IN ARGUMENTATIVE ESSAY WRITING

This section is a report of findings on causes of challenges faced by learners and teachers in argumentative English essay writing. The findings are from data generated through teachers' questionnaire, learners' questionnaire and FGD. A report of findings under each data collection technique would be followed by an interpretation.

4.3.1 Findings on teachers' questionnaire

Teachers were expected to provide causes that relate to challenges they experience in teaching argumentative English essay writing. Poor language appeared to be a common cause among the responses. The findings gathered from the questionnaires were tabulated under ability, effort,

task difficulty and luck/chance. They were then analyzed and interpreted according to the causal dimensions as indicated in (4.1.1).

Table 7: Findings on teachers’ questionnaire

ABILITY	EFFORT	TASK DIFFICULTY	LUCK/CHANCE
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ language proficiency ➤ teachers inability to teach argumentative essay 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ lack of teaching aids ➤ poor habits ➤ approach 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ lack of information on the topic 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ favouritism

Findings under ability were thematised into poor language proficiency and teachers’ inability to teach an argumentative essay.

(a) Poor language proficiency

According to this study, poor use of language was found to be a cause for poor performance of argumentative English essay writing at LGCSE. It appeared that some learners do not write grammatical sentences. This was also observed by the researcher while marking the learners’ essay. This is in harmony with LGCSE English Language (0175/1) Marking Memo (2014) which emphasizes that learners must be taught the proper use of language. (2.5.2).It can therefore be concluded that if learners are not able to use language appropriately, they may not perform argumentative English essay writing well.

(b) Teachers' inability to teach argumentative essay

Teachers' incompetence to teach argumentative English essay at LGCSE emerged as a cause for poor performance of argumentative essay writing. This becomes more evident where Lesotho College of Education (LCE) student-teachers teach at Form D level. The finding pointed out that some student-teachers seem to lack skills on how to teach argumentative English essay writing. However, the literature covered does not say anything about teachers' incompetence to teach argumentative English essay at LGCSE. It is, therefore, possible to claim that if student-teachers lack skills to teach argumentative English essay writing, they limit learners' chances to perform better in argumentative essay writing.

4.3.1.1 Interpretation

ATSF places these causes under ability. They are internal and stable and can change. They emanate within the learners and teachers and if any attempt to eradicate any cause is taken, the challenge changes. The findings under were thematised into lack of teaching aids, approach, and habits.

(a) Lack of teaching aids

The study indicated that absence of books is a cause for poor argumentative English essay writing. If learners have no books, it becomes difficult for them to practise what they learned from school. The findings correspond to James and Hagedorn's (1933) and Germeroth and Hess's (2013) perception on the use of textbooks and the importance of reading (2.5.3). It is clear that teaching without teaching aids maybe challenging to both teachers and learners.

(b) Approach

The findings further demonstrated that some learners use bias approach which negatively affects their work. This approach denies learners a chance to argue or state points from the other side of the argument. They only focus on one side of the argument. This is contrary to Mukitiri's (2014) perception that students are expected to use a balanced approach of writing so that the essay covers points for and against (2.3) (e) (ii). It is, therefore, reasonable to suggest that if learners use bias approach, they are likely to miss some points as they will only focus on one side of the argument.

(c) Poor habits

The study further disclosed that learners' poor planning is a cause for poor argumentative essay writing. If learners are not used to planning their work, they end up writing whatever crosses their mind. They are likely to bring unnecessary details into their work. Poor planning in essay writing is against Hook and Edstrom's (1953) assertion on planning (2.3) (b) (ii). It is, therefore, evident that learners who fail to plan their writing are likely to lack logic in their work.

4.3.1.2 Interpretation

These causes are about efforts that learners need to put into their work. Naturally, they are internal, unstable and can change. They originate within the learners and depend on the effort learners put into their work to change them. The findings under task difficulty were thematised into lack of background information.

As indicated above, the study advanced that limited background on the topic leads to failure to understand the question. Once learners fail to understand the question, they are likely to deviate and this affects their work negatively. This is in favour of Connelly and Forsyth's (2012) view

that once a learner fails to understand the question he or she is likely to deviate from answering correctly (2.5.2). This cause was also observed by the researcher while marking learners' essays as some showed lack of understanding on the question as indicated in Table 1 (4.1). According to the finding, it is conclusive that if learners fail to understand the question, they are likely to deviate from the question.

4.3.1.3 Interpretation

The challenge is external, stable and cannot change. It does not emanate from the learners and it cannot be changed; it is stable. What is difficult to learners remains difficult all the time. Learners are the ones who have to equip themselves with necessary skills to sharpen their understanding of the question. The findings under luck /chance were thematised into favouritism.

As shown above, the study again shows that some learners prefer to narrate or describe over argumentative. They do not favour argumentative English essays. This denies them a chance to sharpen their argumentative skills of writing. This finding also goes against Yates's (2011) perception on practice (2.5.2). The researcher draws the conclusion that if learners are influenced to like one type of essay writing over others, they may divert much of their attention to the most favoured essay.

4.3.1.4 Interpretation

This cause was classified under luck/chance. According to the ATSF, the cause is external, unstable and cannot change. The cause does not originate within the learners and it is not always the same.

4.3.1.5 Findings on learners' questionnaires

Learners were expected to give causes of challenges they experience in their learning of argumentative English essay writing. Inability to argue points appeared to be the most common

among the respondents. The findings were analyzed and interpreted using Weiner's (1972) Attribution Theory of Success and Failure as illustrated in (4.1.1).

Table 8: Findings on students' questionnaire

ABILITY	EFFORT	TASK DIFFICULTY	LUCK/CHANCE
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ inability to argue points ➤ poor language usage 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ lack of practice 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ difficulty of the question 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ lack of time

Findings under ability were thematised into learners' inability to argue and poor language proficiency.

(a) Learners' inability to argue

It was discovered that lack of skills to argue points with relevant information is a cause for poor performance in argumentative English essay writing. Teachers, in their focus group discussion, emphasized that some learners fail to support their points with clear and relevant evidence. This cause aligns with Kieran's (2015) perception that Basotho do not allow young children to question their elders on what they are told (2.5.1). It is, therefore, important to train learners on how to argue their points.

(b) Poor language proficiency

Learners established that poor language usage is a cause for poor performance of argumentative English essay writing. The finding is justified by learners who responded that they fail to use transitional words correctly. Teachers, in their focus group discussion, also pointed out that all learners are likely to commit one or more grammatical mistakes when writing an essay. This cause was also picked by the researcher while marking learners' essays. The cause supports the

view that learners should be taught different mechanics of language (LGCSE English Language (0175) Marking Memo, 2014) (2.5.2). The finding suggests that teachers need to use every device that can help learners master the language.

4.3.1.6 Interpretation

These causes depend on the learners' ability. They are internal, stable and can change. They emanate within the learners and can be changed by any positive attempt that learners take. For example, once learners improve their language proficiency, the cause changes. The causes presented under effort were thematised into inadequate practice.

The study established that lack of practice brings about poor performance of argumentative English essay writing at LGCSE as shown above. It is only through doing that one can be sure that he or she knows something. If learners are denied a chance to practice what they learned in class, they may not know what they do not know until they see it in the examination room. This further supports Kieran's (2015) perception about practice (2.5.1). The finding revealed that learners must be given enough time to practice what they learned in class.

4.3.1.7 Interpretation

This cause was classified under effort. It is about effort that learners need to put into their work. Naturally, it is internal, unstable and can change. It originates within the learners and depends on the effort the learners put in their work to change. Causes under task difficulty were thematised into difficulty of the question.

As shown above, lack of information on the topic and inability to understand the question appeared to be causes of poor argumentative English essay writing. There is no way one can correctly answer the question if he fails to understand its demands. The finding is in favour of Connelly and Forsyth's (2012) proposition on the demand of the question as already indicated

(2.5.2). This challenge appeared to be common in the first two research questions. It is, therefore, reasonable to draw the conclusion that learners must be trained on how to interpret questions.

4.3.1.8 Interpretation

The challenges are external, stable and cannot change. They do not emanate from the learners and they cannot be changed, they are stable. What is difficult to learners remains difficult all the time. Learners are the ones who have to equip themselves with necessary skills to sharpen their understanding of the question. The Findings under luck/chance were thematised into mismanagement of time.

As pointed out in the above paragraph, lack of time was raised as a cause for poor argumentative English essay writing. Time appeared to be inadequate for learners to write the paper, especially when they are expected to convince their readers on a topic under discussion. Learners were given an hour to write two to two and half pages on one argumentative topic. Some learners failed even to write one and half pages due to inadequate time. This is however consistent to LGCSE English Language (0175/1) question Paper (2016) on the time set for the paper (1.1). The question paper required that learners write two to two and half pages in an hour. It is essential for learners to practice writing fast in order to abide by the given time in the examination.

4.3.1.9 Interpretation

This cause was classified under luck/chance. According to (ATSF), the cause is external, unstable and cannot change. The cause does not originate within the learners. It is external, learners cannot change it. It is, however, not always the same. It can change.

4.3.1.10 Findings from teachers FGD

Teachers were asked for causes of challenges they experience in their teaching of argumentative English essay writing. Teachers’ inability to teach argumentative essay was highly emphasized among teachers. The findings were analyzed and interpreted using Weiner’s (1972) Attribution Theory of Success and Failure as illustrated as shown in (4.1.1).

Table 9: Findings on teachers focus group discussion

ABILITY	EFFORT	TASK DIFFICULTY	LUCK/CHANCE
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ teachers’ inability to teach argumentative essay ➤ poor language proficiency 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ lack of exposure to arguments ➤ poor habits ➤ approach 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ difficulty of the question 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ structure of the question paper ➤ emotions

Findings under ability were thematised into teachers’ inability to teach argumentative essay writing and poor language proficiency.

(a) Teachers’ inability to teach argumentative essay writing

Teachers’ inability to teach argumentative English essay writing appeared to be a cause for poor argumentative English essay writing at LGCSE. Teachers’ focus group discussion revealed that some teachers are not able to discuss their challenges with their colleagues in their departments. They just rely on books which sometimes fail to address their needs. This point was also raised by teachers in their questionnaire. It is, therefore, important to conclude that teachers need to discuss their work as no one knows everything.

(b) Poor language proficiency

Learners' inability to use language correctly was also identified as a cause for poor argumentative English essay writing. Teachers complained about learners' incorrect use of language. The researcher also found out while marking learners' essays that they commit a number of grammatical mistakes. This is contrary to LGCSE English Language Syllabus Paper 1 (2016) which stipulates that learners must use language appropriately (1.1). It is, therefore, vital to ensure that learners are taught all mechanics of language.

4.3.1.11 Interpretation

These causes are classified under ability because they are related to what learners are able or not able to do. According to the theory, they originate within the learners (they are internal) and are stable. They are described as stable because if no attempt is taken to improve the learners' abilities, the causes remain the same. They are also believed to change. This idea informs that if any attempt to improve the performance is taken, an improvement is experienced. The findings under effort were thematised into lack of exposure, approach and poor habits.

(a) Lack of exposure

Lack of exposure to arguments and lack of cooperation between and among teachers were in this study reflected as causes of poor argumentative English essay writing at LGCSE. For learners to master argumentative English essay writing, they need to be exposed to different situations that can help them develop critical skills needed in arguing points. They also need well informed teachers on the argumentative essay. If both learners and teachers lack exposure to argumentative English essay writing, learners will not perform well in an argumentative essay. This is further in line with Yates's (2011) perception that practice makes perfect (2.5.3). It is, therefore, evident that teachers need to adequately expose their learners to argumentative English essay writing.

(b) Approach

Low level of reasoning and biasness were identified as causes of poor argumentative English essay writing. Teachers indicated that some learners fail to support their points evidently. This is contrary to Mutikiri's (2012) and Mutikiri's (2014) proposition on the purpose of argumentative English essay writing (2.3) (d). It is, therefore, important to teach learners the right approach for argumentative English essay writing.

(c) Poor habits

Poor reading habits, lack of practice and cultural background were also discovered as causes for poor argumentative English essay writing. Teachers indicated that some learners are not interested in reading novels, magazines and newspapers; as a result, some have become poor writers. They further blamed the way Basotho children are brought up, they stated that Basotho children are sometimes denied a chance to express their emotions. This is in line with Kieran's (2015) idea that Basotho children are culturally not allowed to question what their adults tell them (2.5.1). This appears to lead to passive learners who find it difficult to argue their points at school. It is, therefore, advisable to let children air their feelings and opinions whenever they need to.

4.3.1.12 Interpretation

All causes classified under effort were related to learners' effort. The theory stipulates that they are internal because they originate within the learners. Learners are capable of bringing a change to all causes listed under effort because they are not stable; any attempt learners take can bring a change to a challenge. For instance, once learners can reason over their points, a challenge changes. The findings under task difficulty were thematised into difficulty of the question.

It was further discovered that sometimes learners fail to perform well in an argumentative English essay because they fail to understand the demands of the question as already indicated. For example, they fail to understand what the question requires. This means that much time should be spent on how to interpret questions. This cause was also raised by teachers in their questionnaire. The finding is in favour of Connelly and Forsyth's (2012) proposition on the demands of the question (2.5.2). It is, therefore, concluded that if learners understand all the demands of the question, they are likely to answer the question correctly.

4.3.1.13 Interpretation

The cause was classified under task difficulty because it results from the difficulty of the question. The cause is external, it does not originate within the learners and the learners cannot change the difficulty of the question. ATSF emphasizes that the cause is stable and cannot change. The findings under luck /chance were thematised into structure and emotions.

(a) Structure

Teachers disclosed that the structure of the question paper is also a cause for poor performance of argumentative English essay writing. They claimed that the structure is biased against argumentative topics. They all agreed that out of five topics that constitute an LGCSE question paper, only one question is an argumentative topic while two or three are narrative. Teachers pointed out that this influences teachers to put more attention on a narrative essay than on an argumentative essay. This is in line with the LGCSE English Language (0175/1) question paper (2012) (1.1). The finding revealed that the structure of the LGCSE English Language Paper 1 needs to be revised.

(b) Emotions

Religion and emotions were also found to have ability to cause poor performance of argumentative English essay. Teachers indicated that sometimes learners get over taken by emotions and turn to relate stories that affected them in the past and forget to argue over several points to justify for their choice of side on the topic. This is in line with Wyrick's (2017) proposition on the impact of religion on learners' essay writing (2.5.1). It is reasonable to conclude that teachers need to train learners to detach themselves from their past experiences or religious backgrounds as they write argumentatively.

4.3.1.14 Interpretation

These causes are classified under luck/chance because they are luck oriented. A learner might be asked to argue over certain issues that might remind him of his interesting or painful experiences related to his religious belief. The learner's writing may highly be influenced by his painful religious experiences. A learner who is exposed to these situations is likely to perform poorly in argumentative essay writing because he may focus on these experiences and miss the rubric of the question.

4.3.1.15 Summative perspective

Poor language proficiency and ability to argue appeared to be the main findings in this section. They both appear under ability. Lack of teaching aids and poor habits under this section were also the main findings. They are tabulated under effort. The main findings are, therefore, related to ability and effort.

4.4 MEASURES TO ENHANCE THE TEACHING AND LEARNING OF ARGUMENTATIVE ENGLISH ESSAY WRITING

This section is a report of the findings to enhance the teaching and learning of argumentative English essay writing. The findings are from data generated through learners’ questionnaires, teachers’ questionnaires and teachers’ focus group discussion. A report of findings under each data collection technique would be followed by an interpretation.

4.4.1 Findings on the learners’ questionnaires

Learners were asked to give strategies they hope can enhance the teaching of argumentative English essay writing at LGCSE. The findings gathered from the questionnaires were tabulated under ability, effort, task difficulty and luck/chance. They were then analyzed and interpreted using the causal dimensions of ATSF as shown in (4.1.1).

Table 10: Findings on the learners’ questionnaires

ABILITY	EFFORT	TASK DIFFICULTY	LUCK/CHANCE
➤ Learners’ feedback	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ classroom activities ➤ outside classroom activities 		

Findings under ability were thematised into learners’ feedback. The study revealed that teachers must strive to give positive feedback where possible. Positive feedback does not discourage learners but helps them realize their strengths and weaknesses. This is in line with Curriculum and Assessment Policy (2012) which states that for work where marking is subjective, for example, essay writing, the marking should not always be done on marks but focus can be on what is good and what needs improvement (2.5.3). It is, therefore, important for English

Language teachers not to always award marks on learners' essays. They sometimes need to talk about what learners did well and what needs to be improved.

4.4.1.1 Interpretation

The measure was placed under ability because it is about the ability to perform a certain task. It is, therefore, internal, stable and can change. This informs that the measure originates within the teacher. Any attempt that the teacher takes to improve his feedback brings a change in performance. The findings under effort were thematised into classroom activities and outside classroom activities.

(a) Classroom activities

The study further portrayed that it is essential to give learners some incentives, team teach, discussion, file their work, play video tapes, have adequate practice, have textbooks and freedom of expression to encourage learners work harder. The availability of the above mentioned measures promote learning. This follows Carr, Warren and Sexton's (2007) philosophy that one action that is followed by a favourable reward is likely to happen again (2.5.3). If learners get a positive reward over their argumentative essays, they will want to achieve more so that they can be rewarded more and this may help them gain confidence over their essay writing. The researcher, therefore, concludes that learners must be exposed to different strategies to enhance the learning of argumentative English essay.

(b) Outside classroom activities

The study indicates that taking field trips and workshops to learn and exchange ideas on how to state and defend arguments can help improve the performance of argumentative English essay writing. Field trips help learners learn from the experts while workshops help teachers acquire

more skills from other teachers. This is in favour of Browes's (2006) understanding that learners can visit parliaments to learn how parliamentarians debate issues (2.5.3). This practice may help learners and teachers learn from the experienced personnel. The finding reveals that teachers and learners should take more field trips to expose learners to relevant personnel outside the classrooms.

4.4.1.2 Interpretation

The measures were classified under effort. They are about efforts that both teachers and learners are supposed to apply in order to improve the performance of argumentative English essay writing. They are internal, unstable and can change. The theory describes them as internal because they originate within teachers and learners. They are also unstable because there is no surety that what happens today will happen the next day. There were no measures identified under task difficulty and luck. This can imply that learners who answered the questionnaire do not consider argumentative essay writing as difficult and that its performance cannot be measured in terms of luck.

4.4.1.3 Findings from the teachers' questionnaire

Teachers were also expected to give measures they use or think can help in the teaching of argumentative English essay writing. Debating was the most common measure. The findings were analyzed and interpreted using Weiner's (1972) Attribution Theory of Success and Failure as illustrated in Table 10 (4.4.1).

Table 11: Findings from teachers' questionnaires

ABILITY	EFFORT	TASK DIFFICULTY	LUCK
➤ skills for learners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ outside classroom activities ➤ classroom activities 		

Findings under ability were thematised into skills for learners. The study depicted that learners need to be equipped with skills that would help them analyze situations and draw conclusions. This would help them analyze argumentative topics for better understanding. If they understand the topic, they will not deviate from it. This is in favour of Kieran's (2015) claim that Basotho children should be given freedom to question what they do not understand (2.5.1). One can, therefore, claim that if learners are exposed to analytical skills, they will be able to analyze questions correctly in the examination room.

4.4.1.4 Interpretation

This measure is classified under ability. It is internal, stable and can change. It is about teachers' and learners' abilities in the teaching and learning of argumentative English essay writing. Any attempt taken to improve the performance brings a change. Findings under effort were thematised into outside classroom activities and classroom activities.

(a) Outside classroom activities

Taking field trips was discovered as a measure to help improve the performance of argumentative English essay writing. The study indicates that taking field trips to learn and exchange ideas on how to state and defend arguments can help improve the performance of argumentative English essay writing. This measure was also raised by teachers in their

questionnaire. This is in favour of Browes's (2006) opinion that learners can visit parliaments to learn how parliamentarians debate over issues raised (2.5.3). It is, therefore, reasonable to conclude that exposing learners to the world outside the classroom can help them understand concepts better.

(b) Classroom activities

The study again discovered that learners need to be equipped with necessary vocabulary, through group discussions, debate, class presentations, incentives and essay writing competitions. These activities can enhance learners' motivation to learn further. A highly competitive class is likely to perform better because learners may not want to be out performed by other learners in the examination. This is in line with Kathleen's (2007) perception on motivation (2.5.3). It is again reasonable to conclude that learners who are motivated are more likely to perform better than the less motivated learners.

4.4.1.5 Interpretation

All measures listed under effort are internal, unstable and can change. They are what both learners and teachers can do to eradicate causes of poor argumentative English essay writing at LGCSE. The measures are unstable and can change. There are no measures provided under task difficulty and luck. This might imply that teachers do not believe that argumentative English essay writing is difficult and that its performance can be affected by luck or chance.

4.4.1.6 Findings from teachers' focus group discussion

Teachers were expected to give measures they consider in teaching argumentative English essay writing. Debate was the most favoured measure discussed. The findings were analyzed and interpreted using Weiner's (1972) Attribution Theory of Success and Failure as illustrated in Table 10 (4.4.1).

Table 12: Findings from teachers’ focus group

ABILITY	EFFORT	TASK DIFFICULTY	LUCK/CHANCE
➤ practical activity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ activities for knowledge ➤ emotional control 		

Findings under ability were thematised into practical activity. The finding for this study revealed that debating helps in the teaching and learning of argumentative English essay writing. Debate helps learners acquire reasoning skills. This is similar to Mcleod’s (2015) perception on debate (2.5.3). The researcher holds the assumption that if all stake holders can ensure that a number of debating sessions are held for learners locally, regionally, nationally and internationally, a number of learners may gain reasoning skills and develop their reasoning strategies as well as how they can best state and defend their arguments.

4.4.1.7 Interpretation

This measure is placed under ability because it relates to the learner’s ability to state his or her points and defend them. ATSF specifies that the measure is internal, stable and can change. This indicates that the ability to debate originates within the learners. The ability is stable, it does not change naturally. It can only change if an attempt is taken to improve the performance. The findings under effort were thematised into activities for knowledge and emotional control.

(a) Activities for knowledge

Reading newspapers and watching television programs or video tapes analytically and discussing them in class appeared to be the remedy for poor argumentative English essay writing. Teachers,

in their focus group discussion, pointed out that teachers can assign learners tasks to watch television programs that are popular among them and then discuss what they watched in class. This will help learners develop analytical skills which can help them read and understand questions. This is consistent with John et, al. (2000) understanding that playing video tapes for learners can help fill the gap in the learners' background knowledge (2.5.3). It is, reasonable, therefore to conclude that if learners can be exposed to various reading materials, television programs or video tapes and critically analyze them, they may improve on their argumentative essay writing.

(b) Activities to control emotions

The study further identified that learners must be trained to detach themselves from their emotions as they write argumentatively. Teachers emphasized that in argumentative essay writing, learners are expected to provide more of the facts than their emotions. Teachers stated that learners must be asked to write paragraphs on certain topics where the teacher's focus must be on facts provided and not emotions. This supports Mutikiri (2012) and Mutikiri (2014)'s observation on how learners must structure their arguments (2.3) (d). It is, therefore, essential to train learners on how to control their emotions in argumentative essay writing.

4.4.1.8 Interpretation

The above measures were classified under effort because they pertain to the efforts both teachers and learners need to put into their work in order to improve the argumentative English essay writing. There were no measures provided under task difficulty and luck. This might imply that teachers do not believe that argumentative English essay writing is difficult and that its performance can be affected by luck or chance.

4.4.1.9 Summative perspective

Classroom and outside classroom learning activities were identified as the main findings of this study. The measures were classified under effort.

4.5 SUMMARY

As stated in the introduction, this chapter presented data on the challenges and causes of poor argumentative English essay writing by research questions. It, further, presented the findings on the possible measures to enhance the teaching and learning of an argumentative English essay. On the basis of all the findings discussed in this chapter, the researcher will then draw the conclusions and recommendations in Chapter Five.

CHAPTER FIVE

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.0 INTRODUCTION

The chapter features conclusions of the main findings, summative perspective, recommendations and summary of the chapter.

5.1 CONCLUSIONS

5.1.1 The first research question

The analysis of data for the first research question revealed that inability to argue points is common among learners in writing argumentative essays at LGCSE. This challenge was raised in every data collection technique used in the first research question. It came as a result of learners who could not take stance over their points while others could not establish any argument as Cheney (2005) and Mutikiri (2016) state in (2.3) (d). It is, therefore, realistic to draw the conclusion that some learners at Form D are not able to argue their points.

Poor language proficiency also emerged as the main challenge that learners face in the learning of argumentative English essay writing. A number of learners committed numerous grammatical errors in their essays in an attempt to use language appropriately. This was mostly experienced through the learners' marked essays that pointed to deficiencies in language proficiency. It makes sense to propose that teachers need to ensure that learners observe all the grammatical rules and use conjunctions appropriately to enhance a smooth transition of ideas.

The analyzed data reflected that misunderstanding of the question is a common challenge to learners learning argumentative English essay writing. This is a concern for English Language teachers at Form D (4.1.1.9). This strengthens the claim that some learners fail to perform well in

an argumentative essay due to failure to understand the question (Examiners Report English Language, 2015). It is assumed that some learners at Form D find it a challenge to interpret argumentative English essay writing topics.

Most of the main findings under the first research question seem to appear under ability as per Weiner's (1972) Attribution Theory of Success and Failure (ATSF). This emphasizes that one's ability does determine his or her failure or success. The first research question achieved its objective as it was able to identify challenges learners face in argumentative English essay writing at Form D.

5.1.2 The second research question

Learners' inability to argue points appears again as the main finding under the second research question. Some learners could not convince the reader over their points while others did not even have any argument established. This contradicts Mukitiri's (2016) and Cheney's (2005) advocacy on argumentative English essay writing (4.2.1) (a). It is further assumed that some learners at Form D are not able to argue their points.

The main finding falls under ability as per Weiner's (1972) Attribution of Theory of Success and Failure. This verifies that performance mostly depends on the learners' ability. The second research question also achieved its objective of identifying challenges that teachers face in the teaching of argumentative English essay.

5.1.3 The third research question

Inability to argue points was again identified as the main cause for poor argumentative English essay writing under the third research question. The analysis indicated that this is where learners fail to support their points and take a clear stance over them (4.3.1.5) (a). The researcher holds

the opinion that learners might be failing to argue their points due to failure to take a clear stance and support their points.

Language proficiency further emerged as the main finding under the third research question. Some learners do not use language appropriately as they do not observe some grammatical rules. Teachers also complained that learners fail to use language appropriately (Vide 4.1.2.1) (c). It is, therefore, reasonable to conclude that if learners are not able to use language appropriately, they may not perform well in argumentative English essay writing.

It seems from the study that some learners have bad habits that promote failure in argumentative English essay writing. The analysis of this study disclosed that some learners do not plan their work when they write (4.3.2.1) (c). Bad habit is classified under effort; it is about efforts learners put in their studies. It is, therefore, convincing to draw the conclusion that bad habits such as lack of planning leads to disorganized piece of writing.

Two main findings are classified under ability while one is categorized under effort. This still emphasizes that ability can determine or measure one's success or failure. According to Weiner's (1972) Attribution Theory of Success and Failure, if learners' and teachers' abilities improve, the performance of argumentative essay may also improve. This research question achieved its objective of revealing causes behind poor argumentative English essay writing.

5.1.4 The fourth research question

As a way of improving the performance of argumentative English essay writing, the study disclosed that certain classroom activities must be carried out. It was indicated in the data analysis that activities like team teaching, discussion, filing learners' work, playing video tapes and others can help improve learners' performance of argumentative English essay writing

(4.4.1) (a). This supports Yalden's (1987) and Sundem's (2006) assertions on team teaching and discussion. The researcher holds the feeling that participatory learning enhances understanding. Learners must, therefore, be active in their own learning.

Outside classroom learning activities such as taking field trips and workshops also appeared as the main findings of this study. These findings support Kathleen's (2007) and Browes's (2006) perceptions of field trips and workshops. The activities are classified under effort. The researcher, therefore, believes that outside classroom activities help break monotony of everyday teacher activities and can therefore enhance learners' motivation and understanding of argumentative English essay writing.

All the main findings under the fourth research question fall under effort. They all relate to what both teachers and learners should do to enhance the teaching and learning of argumentative essay writing.

5.1.5 Summative perspectives

Most of the main findings fall under ability and effort. Main findings that fall under ability are on what both teachers and learners can do while under effort we get measures on what needs to happen. There is only one main finding identified under task difficulty.

5.2 RECOMMENDATIONS

(a) Adequate teaching aids and instructional materials

Based on the findings of this study, it is recommendable that schools should ensure that teachers have adequate teaching aids to facilitate the teaching and learning of argumentative English essay writing. Learners should also be advised to have all needed textbooks. Where possible, the school can buy such books and provide them to learners through rental schemes. This will help teachers equip learners with some necessary skills needed in writing argumentatively. Teaching aids and instructional materials will also help improve the learners' command of language which will in turn help learners understand and interpret questions correctly.

(b) Team teaching

Team teaching helps teachers learn from each other. The researcher, therefore, recommends that teachers practice team teaching as it will help them supplement and complement one another on the teaching and learning of argumentative English essay writing at LGCSE. This practice will expose learners to different teachers who might be understood differently.

(c) More workshops for teachers

It is further recommended that new teachers who join the teaching profession should learn from the experienced teachers how argumentative essay writing is taught. This can be achieved through regular workshops. Workshops also help teachers to learn more from one another as learning is an ongoing process.

(d) Essay and debate competitions

Considering the findings for this study, the researcher recommends that essay writing and debate competitions be established between and among schools to encourage learners to write more on argumentative English essay writing. The competitions will also enhance learners' motivation towards argumentative essay writing.

(e) Field trips

It is again essential to take field trips. Field trips help to expose learners to the world outside the classroom. If learners take trips to places like parliament, they get exposure on how other people state and defend their arguments. Learners will, therefore, copy from other experts outside the classroom.

(f) Further research

Finally, it is recommended that further research be conducted to establish whether teachers are well trained on argumentative English essay writing or not. The researcher holds the feeling that teachers might not be adequately exposed to the teaching and learning of argumentative English essay writing from the higher institutions of learning. It is, therefore, essential to recommend for further research on this field.

5.2.1 Summary

In this chapter, the main findings were discussed and conclusions drawn. Recommendations based on the conclusions were also given.

REFERENCES:

- Abdul-Raof, H. (2001). *Arabic Stylistics: A course Book*. Memmingen: Harrsowitzverlag.
- Alexander, R. and Jarrell, J. (2012). *Joining A community of Readers: A Thematic Approach to Reading*. Boston: Wadsworth Cengage Learning.
- Amandla, K. and Christine, H. (2017). *Using Evidence in L2 Argumentative Writing: A Longitudinal Case Study across High School and University*. The internet TESL Journal.Vol.5, No.7 in <http://itesolj> Retrieved 15 August 2016.
- Anderson, B. (1993). *Instrumental Engineerings' Hand Book* (4th) Edition. New York: Crc Press.
- Anne, B. (2012). *Co- Teaching That Works: Structure And Strategies For Maximizing Student Learning*. San Francisco: Jossey- Bass.
- Anthony, S. and Zulkifli, R. (2013). *A corpus Based Study on the Use of Prepositions of time 'on' and 'at' in Argumentative Essays of Form 4 And Form 5 Malaysian students- English Language Teaching*. The internet TESL Journal.Vol.3, No.8 in <http://itesolj> Retrieved 02 February 2018.
- Asten, A. M. (1997). *Lesbian Family Relationships In American Society: The Making of An Ethnographic Film*. London: Praeger.
- Behrman, R. and Stacey, N. (1997). *The Social Benefits of Education*. Washington DC: The University of Michigan Press.
- Bell, J. (2013). *Blowing Away the State Writing Assessment Test*. Gainesville: Maupin House Publishing.

- Brandt, S. (2014). *Data Analysis: Statistical and Computational Methods* (4th Edition). New York: Springer.
- Breckler, S. Erlson, J. and Wiggins, E. (2005). *Social Psychology Alive*. USA: Thomson wadsworth.
- Browes, A. (2006). *Risk Assessing And Planning for Safe and Successful Educational Trips and Visits*. Britain: Eksol Education Ltd.
- Burstein, R. (2009). *Gmat Cram Plan*. South Gate: WileyPublishing.inc.
- Carr, J. Warren, J. and Sexton, U. (2007). *Making Science Accessible To English Learners: A Guide For Teachers*. Sam Frisco: Wested Publishing.
- Carroll, W. D. (2008). *Psychology of Education*. Thomson West: Belmont.
- Casasus, I.; Rogosic, J. and Rosati, A. (2012). *Animal Farming and Environmental Interaction In Mediterranean Region*. Netherlands: Sprinkler.
- Chakrabarti, A. and Blessing, L. (2014). *Design Research Methodology*. New York: Springer.
- Checkett, G. (2013). *The Write Start, Paragraph to Essay*. UK: Cengage Learning.
- Checkwell, S. Micheal, V and Liza, F. (2012). *The Right Start*. Boston: Wadsworth Cengage.
- Cheney, R. A. (2005). *Getting The Worlds Right* (2nd Edition). Australia: Digest Book.
- Cheng, S. (2005). *Using Blended Learning: Evidence Based Practice*. New York: Sprinkler.
- Connelly, J. and Forsyth, P. (2012). *Essay Writing Skills: Essential Techniques to Gain Top Marks*. Linco: University of Michigan press.

- Coulmas, F. (2003). *Writing Systems: An Introduction to their Linguistic Analysis*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Crusis, T. and Channell ,C. (2003). *Aims of Argument*. New York: Mccraw Hill.
- Davis, G. (2009). *Tools for Teaching* (2nd edition). San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
- Debeshe, N.; Pitso, L.; Tsatsane, H. and M. Motlalepula. (2013). *Excel in Development Studies*. Maseru: Longman Lesotho (Pty) Ltd.
- Douglas, C. (2001). *Reciting America: Culture and Cliches in Contemporary U.S Fiction*. Chicago: University of Illinois Press.
- Drummond, A. (1966). *Research Methods For Therapists*. London: Stanly Thomes Publishers.
- Dukes, M., Scott, B. and Donna, R. (2007). *Taking Action on Adolescent Literacy*. Alexandra: Ascd.
- Ekstrom, F. and Hook, N. (1953). *Guide To Composition*. New York: J.B Lippincott Company.
- Etherton, A. (2005). *Key Spelling*. Oxford: Ginn logo.
- Examinations Council of Lesotho. (2014). *Lesotho General Certificate of Secondary Education Mark Scheme*. Maseru: Ecol.
- Examinations Council of Lesotho. (2012). *English Language (0175) Syllabus*. Maseru: Ecol.
- Examinations Council of Lesotho. (2016). *LGCSE English Language (0175/1) Question Paper*. Maseru: Ecol.

- Examinations Council of Lesotho. (2015). *The Examiner's Report on English Language (0175/01)*. Maseru: Ecol.
- Examinations Council of Lesotho and (DR) Newman, B. (2012). *Assessment Strategy*. Maseru: Government Printing.
- Fareed, Z. and Ashraf, F. (2016). *Process based Unification For Multiple-model Software Process Improvement*. Mexico: Zador Kelemen Publishing.
- Foddy, W. (1994). *Constructing Questions For Interviews and Questionnaires: Theory and Practice in social research*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Freely, J.A. and Steinberg, L. D. (2008). *Argumentation and Debate*. Boston: Cengage Learning.
- Frelazzo, L. (2013). *Helping Students Motivate Themselves: Practical Answers to Class Challenges*. New York: Routledge.
- Gadd, T.R. (2006). *How To Write a Paragraph*. Canada: S&S Learning Materials.
- Gbedawo, G. (2015). *Steps Towards Educational Excellence*.UK: Xibris.
- Genette, G. (1983). *Narrative Discourse: An Essay in Method*. New York: Cornell University Press.
- Germoroth, C. and Hess, C. (2013). *Self-Regulated Learning for Academic Success*. USA: Ascd.
- Gillies, M.; Earl, L.; Jeffrey, S. and Patrick, G. (2007). *The Teacher's Role in Implementing Cooperative Learning in the Classroom*. Australia: Springer.

- Gonzales, D. (2004). *Sustaining Teacher Leadership: Boundaries of an English school Culture*.
New York: University Press of America.
- Goodridge, P. (2010). *Brilliant Activities For Persuasive Writing: Activities for 7-11 years olds*.
UK: Brilliant Publications.
- Gravetter, J. and Wallnan, B. (2016). *Essentials of statistics for the Behavioral Sciences*. Boston:
Cengage Learning.
- Grove, A. (2008). *The Life and Times of an American Business Icon*. England: Penguin.
- Hackett, T. (2005). *Creative Writing: Using Fairy Tales to enrich Writing Skills*. Texas: Prufrack
Press.
- Hagedom, J. (1933). *Tools Working Wood in Eighteen Century*. China: Willaneburg Foundation.
- Hammand, M. (2010). *Creative Writing For Dummies*. South Gate: Wiley and Sons Ltd.
- Harpin, J.L. (2010). *Promising Partnerships: Way to involve Parents in their children's
Education*. New York: Rowman Littlefield Education.
- Hassan, R. and Halliday, M. (2013). *Cohesion in English*. New York: Routledge Taylor and
Francis Group.
- Haven, S. (2004). *Getting It Write: Creating Life Long Writers Form Expository To Narrative*.
USA: Libraries Unlimited.
- Hibbert, L. and Walt, S. (2014). *Multilingual Universities in South Africa: Relating Society in
Higher Education*. Texas: Multilingual Matters.

- Hirose, R. (2003.) *Comparing L1 and L2 Organisational Patterns in the Argumentative Writing of Japan Students*. Vol.12 Issue No.2 May 2003.
- Hoeckel, J. (2010). *OECD Review of vocational education and Training: Learning For Jobs Review Austria*. Austria: OECD Publishing.
- Hornby, G. (2011). *Involvement in Childhood Education*. New York: Springer.
- Hornby, S. (1959). *Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary (8th Edition)*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Housel, T.D. (2014). *Read and Succeed Comprehension level 4: Topic Sentences Passages and Questions*. California: Teacher created Material.
- Howell, K.E. (2013). *Introduction To The Philosophy of Methology*. London: Sage publications.
- Hubber, B.R. and Suider, C.A. (2006). *Influencing Through Arguments*. New York: Sprinker.
- Janicek, M. (2014) *Writing, Reading and Understanding in Modern Health Sciences: Medical Articles and other forms of communication*. New York: CRC Press.
- Jangarun, K.; Loibois, M.; Jules, G. and Benoit, T. (2015). *Journal of Pan-Pacific Association of Applied Linguistics: Discourse connector usage in Argumentative Essay by American and Thai University students*. Vol.1, Issue 1, 2015.
- Jeffreys, M. (2010). *Teaching Cultural Competence In Nursing Health Care (2nd Edition)*. New York: Springer Publishing Company.
- John, J. (2000). *Nursing Research: Designs and Methods E-Book*. Johannesburg: Elsevier Health Sciences.

- Judy, M.D. (2010). *Learning To Love Maths: Teaching Strategy That Change Student's attitudes*. USA: Ascd.
- Kafela, K. (2010). *Closing the Attitude Gap*. USA: Acsd.
- Kalia, N. (2015). *No Free Gifts*. New York: Hebrew University.
- Kathleen, C. (2007). *Guide To Create Field*. Chicaco: Zephy Press.
- Kathyn, P. (2012). *Team Teaching: New Pedagogies and Practices for Teaching in Higher Education*. New York: Stylus Publishing.
- Kelly, R. (2012). *Education For Creativity: A global conversation*. Canada: Government of Alberta.
- Kember, D. (2000). *Action Learning and Action Research*. UK: Kogan Page.
- Kenjale, S. (2017). *Study of Organisation and Working of some co-operative sugar factory*. USA: Laxmi Book.
- Khati, G. and Khati, M. (2009). *Proficiency in English as a second language official languages (ESOL) in Lesotho: A survey on views of examiners and moderators*. Roma: University of Lesotho. Vol.13.No.1 of 2009.
- Kieran, D. (2015). *The War of My Generations: Youth Culture and The War on Terror*. UK: University Press.
- Kiester, J. (2013). *Inequality: A Contemporary Approach To Race, Class and Gender*. New York: Cambridge University Press.

- Kirkman, J. and Turk, C. (1989). *Effective Writing: Improving scientific technical and Business Communication*: New York. F.N. Spon.
- Kong, A. (2015). *Parenting, Education and Social mobility in Rural China*. New York: Routledge.
- Korrapati, R. (2016). *Five Chapter Model For Research Thesis Writing*. New York: Diamond Pocket Books.
- Lacey, A. and Gerrish, K. (2010). *The Research Process In Nursing*. Singapore: Wiley-Blackwell Publishing ltd.
- Laitin, D.D. (1977). *Politics: Language and Thought: The Somali Experience*. London: The University of Chigago Press.
- Lambert, J.; Swart, J.; Noakes, T. and Caspostagno, T. (2015). *Final Draft*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Laura, E. (2012). *Trustworthiness*. Boston: Chery Lake.
- Lepionka, M.E. (2008). *Writing and Developing Your college Textbook (2nd Edition)*. USA: Atlantic Path Publishing.
- Lesotho College of Education. (2015). *Course Outline (ENG 1303S-B) 2015/16*. Maseru: Lce.
- Lesotho Examinations council of Lesotho. (2016). *Junior Certificate English (101) Pass List*. Maseru: Ecol.
- Lesotho Examinations council of Lesotho. (2001). *Junior Certificate English (101) Syllabus 2001*. Maseru: Ecol.

- Lewis, R. and Sauro, J. (2012). *Quantify The User Experience: Practical Statistics for user Research*. New York: Elsevier.
- Lunenburg, F. and Irby J. (2008). *Writing A Successful Thesis or Dissertation: Tips and Strategies For Student in the Social and Behavioral Sciences*. London: Corwin Press.
- Mangat, S.N. and Singh, R. (1996). *Science and Business Media*. India: Springer.
- Maree, K. (2016). *First Steps In Research*. South Africa: Van Schaik.
- Martin, W.M. (2008). *Ethics and Excellence in Science*. New York: Lexington Books.
- McCarthy, T. (1998). *Narrative Writing*. USA: Scholastic Inc.
- Ministry of Education. (2012). *Curriculum and Assessment Policy*. Maseru: Government Printing.
- Ministry of Education and Training. (2016). *Integrated Primary curriculum Grade 6 Syllabus*. *The National Curriculum Development center*. Maseru: Government Printing.
- Morreal, J. (1991). *A New Beginning: A textual Frame Analysis of the Political Campaign Filim*. New York: State University of New York Press.
- Mpoi, A, L. (2014). *Factors That Influence Learners To Commit Spelling Errors In English Language Acquisition: A Case Study of Makhaola High School Qacha's Nek*. Roma: Nul.
- Mueller, J. (2008). *Assessing Critical Skills*. New York: University Press.

- Munduku, G. Nyawara, C. and Kosgey, J. (2017). *Teaching and learning Resources: Implications on availability and use*. Boston: Grin Copyright.
- Mutikiri, O. (2014). *Passwell English Language For LGCSE*. South Africa: Oxford University Press.
- Mutikiri, O. (2016). *Passwell English Language For LGCSE*. South Africa: Oxford University Press.
- National Post-secondary Education Cooperative Student Outcomes Source Book on Assignment. (2000).
- National University of Lesotho. (2012). *Prospectus (2013/14)*. Roma: Nul.
- Nielsen, J. and Markey, K. (2012). *Investing in Place: Economic Renewal in Northern British Columbia*. West Mall: University of British Columbia.
- Ofori, E. (2011). *Guaranteed Formula For Writing Success*. Columbia: CCB Publishing.
- Olson, C. and Mitchell, A. (1975). *The Process of Attitude Acquisition: The value of a Developmental Approach to Consumer attitude Research*. Boston: Grin Copyright.
- Osterlind, F.J. (2012). *Constructing Test Items*. London: Kluwer Academic Publishers.
- Oxford Advanced Learners Dictionary*. (2010).
- Parker, P. (1999). *The Art and Science of Screen Writing* .USA: Intellect
- Parvin, H. (2011). *How Important is Revision of studied Topics Before PT Test*. Boston: Grin Copyright.

- Peterson, P. (2012). *Master the College Composition Clep Test: Part 11 of vi*. Boston: Peterson Elenet Company.
- Pflug, M. (2003). *Making the Grade*. New York: Barrons.
- Pumfrey, J. and Elliot, G. (2013). *The Novel Dolphin Classic*. UK: Sprinkler.
- Rajamanickam, M. (2001). *Statistical Methods in Psychological and Educational Research*. New Delhi: Concept Publishing Company.
- Rajeswari, S.M. (2008). *Stress and Attitude of Women Teachers*. New York: Discovery House.
- Rakhoba, M. (2014). *An Investigation Into The Attitudes of Sesotho Teachers and Students Towards The Teaching and Learning of Sesotho Grammar In The Berea District High Schools. Lesotho*. Roma: Nul.
- Reid, G. (2007). *Motivating Learners in the Classroom: Ideas and Strategies*. London: Paul Chapman Publishing.
- Rollins, B. (2009). *Master Writing: Writing Skills Series*. San Diego: Classroom Complete Press.
- Rose, S. and Irny, A. (2005). *Handbook of Research on E-Government In Engineering Economies*. Columbia: IGI Global.
- Ruday, S. (2016). *Narrative Writing Toolkit*. New York: Routledge.
- Sampson, G. (1985). *Writing Systems: A Linguistic Introduction*. California: Stanford University Press.

- Sara, H. (2017). *An Examination of the Instruction provided in Australia: Assessment and Evaluation in higher Education*. Australia: Sprinkler.
- Sarada, M. (2008). *The Complete Guide to Paragraph To Essay Writing*. Delhi: Asterling Paperback.
- Seedhouse, D. (2009). *Ethics: The Heart of Health Care*. New Zealand: Wiley and Sons Ltd Publication.
- Scott, B. (1996). *Philosophy of Law: Collected Essays*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Sharifian, F. (2009). *English as an International Language: Perspectives and Pedagogical Issues*. North York: Multilingual Matters.
- Shewan, E. and Garry, J. (2005). *Analysis of Effective Communication*. Alington Heights: Christian Liberty Press.
- Skinner, W.; Kent, C.; Franklin, T. and Pope, M. (2011). *Mark as Story: Retrospect and Prospect*. New York: University Press.
- Sreejesh, S. (2013). *Business Research Methods: An Applied Orientation*. India: Springer
- Stephen. M.; Edward, S.; Metcalf, M. and Dadaiel, C. (2007). *Towards Science of Distributed Learning*. China: Routledge.
- Tan, A. (2007). *Creativity: A handbook for Teachers*. Singapore: World Scientific Publishing (Pty) Ltd.

- Taylor, I. and Olsen, R.D. (1994). *Neuropsychology and Cognition: Scripts and Literacy*. London: Kluwer Academic Publishers.
- Thomson, B. (1992). *The literary Stylistics of French*. New York: Manchester University Press.
- USA International Business Publications. (2009).
- Wallwork, A. (2016). *Examining The Pros and Cons: Are Source Book of Speaking Activities*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Weiner, B. (1972). *Attribution Theory, achievement, motivation and the Educational Process: review of Educational Research*. New York: University Pres.
- Weizhu, J. (2001). *Performing Argumentative Writing in English difficulties, process and strategies*. TESL Canada Journal.Vol.19, Issue 1, 2001.
- Wenning, J. (2011). *Scientific epistemology: How scientists know what they know*. Vol.1, 1 September 2011.
- Winkler, G and Metherell, M. (2009). *Reading for Writer*. Thomson Wadsworth.
- Wyrick, J. (2017). *Steps To Writing Well*. New York: Sprinkler.
- Yalden, J. (1987). *Principles of Course Design For Language Teaching*. London: Cambridge University Press.
- Yates, J. (2011). *Practice Makes Perfect English: Conversations For Beginning ESL Learners*. Singapore: McGraw Hill.

Zheng, P.; Shuo, L. and Gabor, S. (2017). *Critical Thinking and Argumentative Writing: Inspecting the Association Among EFL Learners*. China. Sprinkler.

LIST OF APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR FORM D LEARNERS

CAUSES OF POOR ARGUMENTATIVE ENGLISH ESSAY WRITING

CATEGORY 1 (tick [√] where appropriate)

GENDER

Male { }

Female { }

AGE

(15-16) { }

(17-18) { }

(19-21) { }

22 + { }

CATEGORY 2

Complete this questionnaire by placing a tick {√} in the correct box. Tick all answers that are correct.

WHAT CHALLENGES DO YOU EXPERIENCE IN THE TEACHING AND LEARNING OF ARGUMENTATIVE ENGLISH ESSAY WRITING?

Lack of motivation	
Inability to argue convincingly	
Topics that go against religious belief	

Any other.....

2. WHAT ARE THE CAUSES OF CHALLENGES THAT YOU EXPERIENCE IN THE TEACHING AND LEARNING OF ARGUMENTATIVE ENGLISH ESSAY WRITING?

Inability to understand the question	
Lack of skills to argue points	
Poor language usage	
Inability to use transitional words correctly	
Lack of practice	

Any other.....

3. WHAT MEASURES CAN BE TAKEN TO ENHANCE THE TEACHING AND LEARNING OF ARGUMENTATIVE ENGLISH ESSAY WRITING?

Learners must be given incentives	
There must be regular workshops for teachers	
Team teaching should be encouraged among teachers to help one another	
There must be group discussions for learners	
Teachers must not always give negative feedback but positive feedback and what needs to be improved	
Learners must have more practice on the essay writing	
Learners must have personal files to file their work for future reference	
Field trips must be taken	
Video tapes on debate must be played	
Learners must have all required textbooks	
Learners must be given freedom of expression in order to develop critical skills	

Any other

APPENDIX 2

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR FORM D ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHERS

CAUSES OF POOR ARGUMENTATIVE ESSAY WRITING

I am Phenyane Tlali, a master's student at The National University of Lesotho in the Faculty of Education, conducting a research on the topic stated above. I therefore sincerely ask that you assist me by completing the questionnaire herein attached.

CATEGORY 1 (tick [] where appropriate)

GENDER

Male { }

Female { }

AGE

(18-35) { }

(36-49) { }

(50-65) { }

Above { }

CATEGORY 2

Complete this questionnaire by writing your answers on the space provided.

WHAT ARE THE CHALLENGES FACED BY LEARNERS IN THE TEACHING AND LEARNING OF ARGUMENTATIVE ENGLISH ESSAY WRITING AT LGCSE LEVEL?

.....

.....

.....

.....

WHAT ARE THE CAUSES OF THESE CHALLENGES?

.....

.....

.....

.....

WHAT CHALLENGES DO YOU FACE IN THE TEACHING AND LEARNING OF ARGUMENTATIVE ENGLISH ESSAY WRITING AT LGCSE LEVEL?

.....

.....

.....

.....

WHAT ARE THE CAUSES OF THESE CHALLENGES?

.....

.....

.....

.....

WHAT PADAGOGICAL/ TEACHING STRATEGIES CAN BE USED TO OVERCOME THESE CHALLENGES?

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

WHAT OTHER MEASURES CAN BE TAKEN TO ENHANCE THE TEACHING AND LEARNING OF ARGUMENTATIVE ENGLISH ESSAY WRITING?

.....

.....

.....

APPENDIX 3

GUIDELINES FOR TEACHERS FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSION

CAUSES OF POOR ARGUMENTATIVE ENGLISH ESSAY WRITING

1. How long have you been teaching at LGCSE?
2. What qualifications do you have?
3. What are your experiences teaching Form D?
4. What are the causes of challenges you experience?
5. How do you overcome such challenges?
6. How do you teach an argumentative English essay?
7. What do you think can be done to improve the performance of argumentative English essay writing at LGCSE?

APPENDIX 4

FORM D LEARNERS' ESSAY WRITING

CAUSES OF POOR ARGUMENTATIVE ENGLISH ESSAY WRITING

Name

INSTRUCTIONS

TIME: 1 hrs

- Write on the dotted lines provided in the question.
- Write on one of the topics that follow
- At the head of your essay put the number of the question you have chosen

You are advised to write in 300-500 words or 2-2 1/2 pages. Total marks: 30

1. "Young people are no longer interested in Religion." What is your view?
2. "Young people should obey their elders without questions." What is your view?
3. Has classroom teachers become less important with the increased use of the internet in education?
4. "Being very popular brings as many disadvantages as disadvantages." What are your views?
5. Technology has brought more harm to human kind. What are your views?

APPENDIX 5

RESULTS FOR PILOT STUDY

ESSAY TYPE	PASS	FAIL	NO.OF STUDENTS	% PASS	% FAIL
NARRATIVE	17	16	33	52%	48%
DESCRIPTIVE	6	10	16	37%	63%
ARGUMENTATIVE	0	4	4	0%	100%
TOTAL	23	30	53	43%	57%

A few number of learners chose to write on an argumentative topic and all of them failed the test.