

Pedagogical competencies of teachers applied to teaching learners with hearing difficulties

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ABSTRACT

Teachers need to possess appropriate pedagogical competencies to be successful in addressing the special needs of students in the classroom so as to ensure their accomplishment in education. This study investigated teachers' pedagogical competencies applied to teaching learners with hearing difficulties in the Sekyere South District of Ghana. This study adopted the constructivist paradigm using the qualitative approach. The case study design was employed. In this case study, 16 teachers were purposively sampled, and data were collected from them using a self-constructed interview guide. The instrument was pre-tested to provide experiences and opportunities to engage in critical reflection with regards to the interview schedule. The pre-test also gave a fair idea of the responses to be obtained from the field. All the participants were individually interviewed and their responses were analysed using themes that were generated from the data. Results of the study revealed that although teachers used cooperation, elaboration and motivational strategies to teach learners with hearing difficulties, they did not use other equally good strategies such as storytelling, think-pair-share and demonstration. Additionally, the teachers indicated that they required differentiated and constructivist pedagogies in order to teach learners with hearing difficulties effectively in mainstream schools. Authorities in Universities and Colleges of Education should run programs to educate teachers to be competent in differentiated and constructivist pedagogies to enable effective teaching and learning. Finally, teachers should continuously ensure that there is proper seating arrangement and positive teacher-learner relationship in the classroom to promote a good classroom environment.

Keywords: Classroom management, Cooperative and motivational strategies, Differentiated and constructivist pedagogies, Hearing difficulties, Instructional strategies, Pedagogical competencies.

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Highlights of this paper

- Teachers use cooperative instructional strategy, elaborative instructional strategy and motivational strategy to teach learners with hearing difficulties.
- Differentiated and constructivist pedagogies are required by teachers to be effective in teaching learners with hearing difficulties.
- Classroom management strategies reportedly used in managing learners with hearing difficulties effectively are ensuring positive teacher- learner relationship and proper seating arrangement.

1. INTRODUCTION

Aslan (2018) defined pedagogic competence as the ability of a teacher to manage the learning of learners. This includes the teacher's capacity to understand the learners, to design a learning experience for them, to put that experience into action, to assess the results of that experience, and to cultivate the learners' ability to realise their full potential. Hearing difficulties makes students more prone to social maladjustment, psychological issues, emotional disturbances, interpersonal relationship issues, having a negative self-concept, and personality issues, all of which can impair their ability to learn (Deku, 2013). As a result, students with hearing difficulties require special education that takes into account their unique needs. Ideally, this process involves the individually-planned and systematically-monitored arrangement of teaching procedures, adapted equipment and materials, accessible settings, and other interventions designed to help learners with hearing difficulties to achieve a higher level of personal self-sufficiency and success in school and community than would be available if the learners were only given access to a typical classroom education (Lave, 2016). According to Kuntz, Presnall, Priola, Tilford, and Ward (2013), teachers are crucial to the education of students who have hearing difficulties. Kuntz also mentioned that it can be challenging for teachers to maximize learning and development for students with hearing difficulties in the classroom while trying to provide teaching support. The researcher maintained that, teachers need to possess appropriate pedagogical competencies to be successful in addressing the special needs of students with hearing difficulties in the classroom in order to ensure the accomplishment of their education (Kuntz et al., 2013).

A teacher who understands hearing difficulties and associated learning needs for learners with hearing difficulties is better positioned to ensure a learner has successful educational outcomes (Kuntz et al., 2013). Due to changes in the educational setting and the demographics of learners, the job requirements for teachers of learners experiencing hearing difficulties have changed rapidly in recent years (Oppong, 2013). These teachers are now not only asked to deal with curriculum content, but also perform a multitude of tasks related to programming and individualising education, re-adapting the curriculum to allow learners to learn according to their potential abilities (Leu & Price-Rom, 2006). These dynamics in the educational setting require appropriate show of pedagogical competencies. As a result, the educational landscape has shifted, necessitating new approaches to teacher training and the introduction of specialised courses for teachers to acquire the skills necessary to support learners with special needs, including those with hearing difficulties (Kwakman, 2013; Leu & Price-Rom, 2006). Teachers must be aware of the varying needs of learners with hearing difficulties due to the wide range of causes and severity levels of hearing difficulties (Kwakman, 2013). Teachers need to be equipped to provide a supportive learning environment for learners who have hearing difficulties, Cole and Flexer (2019), so that these learners can succeed in school (Luckner & Carter, 2011). In line with the discussions above, it was important, however, that the researchers investigated the pedagogical competencies teachers applied to teaching learners with hearing difficulties.

Asamoah, Ofori-Dua, Cudjoe, Abdullah, and Nyarko (2018) explained that inclusion was created in response to the expansion and evolution of education for all on the principle that learners who have hearing difficulties should be afforded the same educational opportunities as their hearing classmates. No school in Ghana is allowed to turn away a learner under the provisions of Act 715 of the Persons with Disability Act (Asante & Sasu, 2015), except in cases where an evaluation reveals that the learner does not perform adequately in a mainstream setting. This is the case when testing shows that the learner has a significant disability and needs to attend a special school. Poor academic outcomes are strongly related to hearing difficulties, the most frequent congenital defect detected in learners worldwide (Krahn, 2011; Miles, 2013). Statistics show that the number of learners who have hearing problems in elementary school remains low, and that their academic performance is subpar (Agbenyega & Deku, 2011). Learners who have trouble hearing have a high school dropout rate and low academic achievements due to the many obstacles they face, both in terms of the physical environment, (such as access to information and communication) and, in terms of the attitudes of teachers and their applied pedagogical strategies (Howell & Lazarus, 2003). Evidence from studies conducted in Ghana showed that learners with hearing difficulties have a much lower likelihood of finishing high school and have worse educational results (Agbenyega & Deku, 2011). According to Aidoo (2011), learners with hearing difficulties have been underperforming in Ghanaian classrooms due to communication barriers. Nukunya (2003) indicated that although some studies have been undertaken in Ghana on learners with hearing challenges, nothing is known about the teachers pedagogical competencies applied in teaching these learners. Poor academic performance by learners with hearing difficulties has been highlighted by Nukunya, who argued that this calls into doubt the teacher's abilities and or competencies. Teachers' inability to master the skills and the information they need to properly provide instruction to learners with hearing difficulties is hampered by a lack of appropriate pedagogical competence adopted in the classroom. This indicates a critical need for expanded understanding of the pedagogical skill-sets needed by teachers to competently teach learners who have hearing difficulties. This current study, however, investigated the teachers' competencies in teaching learners with hearing difficulties in the Sekyere South District of Ghana.

2. RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The following research questions guided the study.

1. Which instructional strategies do teachers use in teaching learners with hearing difficulties in the Sekyere South District, Ghana?
2. Which pedagogical competencies are required by teachers to teach learners with hearing difficulties in the Sekyere South District?
3. What classroom management strategies do teachers use in teaching learners with hearing difficulties in the Sekyere South District of Ghana?

3. RESEARCH METHODS

3.1. Research Approach

This study adopted the constructivist paradigm using the qualitative approach. This approach was used in order to provide participants a chance to have their thoughts, experiences, and opinions represented (Lee, 2018). Furthermore, the qualitative method assisted in critically observing, interpreting, and collecting data about occurrences by making inferences or evaluating the fit between data and certain abstract patterns as prescribed by Blaikie (2018). Blaikie indicated that the qualitative research technique seeks to provide detailed descriptions of what is observed based on first-hand experience. To sum up, Creswell (2014) stated that one feature of qualitative

studies is that it encourages in-depth comprehension of life by analyzing the interpretations that research interviewees attribute to their surroundings.

3.2. Research Design

The case study research design was adopted for the study. This was occasioned by the fact that case studies explore a phenomenon bound by time and collects detailed information and may use data collection procedures during a sustained period of time (Creswell, 2014). As a result, the case study allowed for in-depth exploration of teachers' competences required to teach learners with hearing difficulties. According to Babbie (2015), the case study design is timely since it analyses current phenomena in a real-world setting and necessitates the collecting of extremely substantial data to generate an in-depth knowledge of the item being examined. In view of this the use of the case study design helped to examine the naturalistic settings of the research site that further helped to discover the phenomenon being investigated. The case study again helped to examine teachers' competencies in teaching learners with hearing difficulties in Sekyere South District of Ghana.

3.3. Population

The target population for the study was drawn from six (6) basic schools in the Sekyere South District. The population was made up of 30 Upper Primary to junior High School teachers (18 males and 12 females). Table 1 shows the entire population for the study. The population was chosen because, the learners identified with hearing difficulties were found in these schools and grade levels. The teachers who taught them served as the accessible population for the study because they were in a better position to provide the researchers the needed information.

Table 1. The population of the teachers.

Schools	Population	Male	Female
Agona Jubilee Primary	5	3	2
Taabre Experimental Basic School	6	3	3
Boanim Roman Catholic Basic School	5	4	1
Wiamoase Presbyterian Basic School	8	5	3
Jamasi Roman Catholic Basic School	6	3	3
Total	30	18	12

3.4. Sample Size

The sample size for the study was 16 teachers, comprising 10 males and 6 females. The selection of the sample size was based on Bell and Bryman (2015) assertion that, a sample of 6-16 teachers for qualitative case studies may be enough to enable development of meaningful themes and useful interpretations especially for studies with a high level of homogeneity among the populations. The Teachers were sampled from the Basic level precisely basic 4, 5, 6, 7 and 9 given that only those classes had learners with hearing difficulties. Table 2 presents the number of teachers selected from the various schools to participate in the study.

Table 2. Sample size of the teachers.

Schools	Sample population	Male (%)	Female (%)
Agona Jubilee Primary	3	2(66.6%)	1(33.3%)
Taabre Experimental Basic School	2	0(00%)	2(100%)
Boanim Roman Catholic Basic School	4	3(75%)	1(25%)
Wiamoase Presbyterian Basic School	3	1(33.3%)	2(66.6%)
Jamasi Roman Catholic Basic School	4	2(50%)	2(50%)
Total	16	8(50%)	8(50%)

3.5. Sampling Technique

Purposive sampling technique was used to select 16 teachers for the study. Avoke (2005) described purposive sampling technique as a technique in which researchers use their judgment to select a sample that they believe, based on prior information, will provide the data they need. Creswell (2005) added that purposive sampling techniques are more suitable for studies located within the qualitative framework than studies that fall within the quantitative framework. Purposive sampling, as Creswell explained further, allows researchers to zero in on a narrow set of viewpoints they want to investigate before setting out to find research teachers who can provide data from a wide variety of views.

3.6. Instruments

The one-on-one interview approach was used in collecting data for the study. The approach helped the researchers to conduct intensive individual interviews with the teachers to explore their views and competencies in teaching learners with hearing difficulties. The teachers were asked to share their experiences related to the research questions. The interviews offered a more complete picture of the teacher competencies in teaching learners with difficulties at the research site. Additionally, it provided the opportunity for in-depth views which gave more detailed information for the research given that the approach provided a more relaxed atmosphere for data collection. The interview questions were developed by the researchers after thoroughly reviewing literature. The items on the interview guide provided flexibility and range, allowing teachers the freedom to elaborate on the subject matter more comfortably in their respective schools. The responses were manually collected through note taking after consent was sought from the Teachers. Each interview session lasted between 30 and 50 minutes.

3.7. Pre-Test

A pre-test was conducted at the State Experimental Primary School in the Kumasi Metropolitan Assembly with 10 teachers. The pre-test helped the researchers to identify and removed ambiguities, and unnecessary questions from the research instrument. The pre-test data were collected by the researchers. The researchers asked the teachers to reflect on the interview process and indicate any points for discussion. The pre-test provided experiences in facilitating interviews and an opportunity to engage in critical reflection with regards to the interview schedule. The pre-test also gave a fair idea of the responses to be obtained from the field.

3.8. Procedure for Data Collection

The researchers sought permission from heads of the various schools whose teachers participated in the study. The researchers visited the schools in advance to familiarize themselves after which they scheduled appropriate appointments with the schools' authorities taking into consideration the school schedules. The most appropriate times were fixed to conduct the interviews. The researchers conducted the face-to-face interviews by using guiding and prompting questions in varied natural settings of the teachers. The interview sessions lasted for a period of three weeks and each interview session lasted between 30 to 50 minutes. The teachers were allowed to express their feelings and experiences without undue pressure on them. Each interview was recorded and later translated into Microsoft Word by cross-checking with separate transcription by the researchers.

3.9. Procedures for Data Analysis

The researchers transcribed the interview data to form the material for the analysis. Following this, the researchers made the coded data available to the teachers to cross-check and ensure that the information was

consistent with what they provided during the interviews (member checking). Following that, the researchers browsed through the transcripts carefully and made notes of their first impressions and then read through the transcripts one by one, line by line, and labelled relevant pieces words, phrases and sentences that were relevant. Finally, the researchers coded the data (coding or indexing) to identify the different themes and the relationships between them. According to Creswell (2014), a manual analysis is conducted on interview texts, in order to look for groupings of behaviours. Undertaking a manual thematic analysis depends on compassion towards connections in a text. Creswell further indicated that a manual look for statements is more sensitive to themes and connections between teachers' beliefs. In this study, therefore, the data were analyzed based on themes.

3.10. Ethical Considerations

All necessary ethical guidelines were adhered to at all times throughout this study. Teachers were given the option to engage willingly and to stop at any time if they changed their minds. The identity and confidentiality of the teachers' replies were protected. Furthermore, secrecy and anonymity were promised to all teachers. Again, no identifying details about the teachers were provided. Also, the acquired information was not utilized for other than what was explicitly mentioned in the study's aims.

4. RESULTS

4.1. Research Question One: What Instructional Strategies do the Teachers use in Teaching Learners with Hearing Difficulties in Sekyere South District, Ghana?

Research question 1 was meant to determine the instructional strategies the teachers use in teaching learners with hearing difficulties.

The researchers generated three (3) themes to present the data. The themes were:

Theme 1: Teachers' understanding of "Instructional strategies."

Theme 2: Instructional strategies frequently used.

Theme 3: Instructional strategies that improve academic performance.

Theme 1: Teachers' understanding of "Instructional strategies".

Three of the participants indicated that instructional strategies were the techniques, methods or measures that they used in the classroom to ensure effective teaching and learning. Some of the teachers' responses are summarized as follows:

"Oh ok! It is the way in which lessons are delivered to the learners in the classroom. That is what we mean by instructional strategy" (Teacher A).

"Well I think they are all the measures you employ during your teaching to make your learners understand what you want to put across" (Teacher B).

"Instructional strategies are methods and techniques employed in the classroom to ensure effective teaching and learning" (Teacher C).

The teachers further claimed that instructional strategies motivate learners and help them focus, organize class, and in real-life situations. The teachers also reported that instructional strategies offer an opportunity for learners to demonstrate their knowledge and make corrections on their own when needed. Additionally, the teachers indicated that, in modern classrooms, learning is a cooperative process which includes social interaction. They further claimed that small group of learners in a study increase their knowledge in learning.

Theme 2: Instructional strategies frequently used

This theme focused on the instructional strategies that teachers frequently used during teaching. Four of the teachers stated that, the strategies they frequently used included learning in small (co-operative learning), connecting information to be learned with information that learners already know (elaboration strategy) and, the creation of a conducive learning environment where the main strategies that they often used. The following are examples of the teachers' responses:

"I think without the cooperation learners cannot succeed in their learning effectively, because I believe the cooperativeness of learners in classroom improve the learners understanding" (Teacher C).

"I think when the learners support each other in their learning in small groups, the learners work together to increase each learner as well as, group member learning abilities" (Teacher D).

"I think teacher competent in making the learners work in small groups help each learner in the mastering academic content"(Teacher E).

"I think teacher ability in creating learning environment that support the learners in pair or group work will not only improve the learners' academic performance, but also enhance the learners' cooperative skills". (Teacher G).

Theme 3: Instructional strategies that improve academic performance

Under theme three which sought to identify the strategies that improved academic performance of learners with hearing difficulty, the teachers identified the following:

- Instructional strategies that connect information learned with those that learners already know (Elaboration).
- Teacher Motivation strategies.

4.2. Instructional Strategies that Connect Information Learned with Those that Learners already Know (Elaboration)

Three of the teachers indicated that the teaching strategies that connect information to be learned with information that learners already know improve the learners' academic performance because connections create efficiency of learning. The teachers indicated that:

I think it will be effective for learners with hearing difficulties to improve upon their academic performance as it will be potential for the learners to make the new material more memorable and meaningful (Teacher F).

I think the learning process by which the learner builds an internal connection between what is being learned and previous knowledge will help enhance the learners experiencing hearing difficulties academic performance" (Teacher G).

"I think teachers ability in explaining about the way their new teaching or new concepts relates to the learners prior knowledge, the stronger the learners will grasp of the new learning will be, and the more connections will help the teacher create that atmosphere to help learners remember it later" (Teacher A).

4.3. Teacher Motivational Strategies

Three of the teachers indicated that the learner's motivation is mostly regarded as a central condition for successful learning. They further emphasized that teachers' motivational strategies will have an impact on learners' learning motivation. The teachers' responses are as follows:

"I think when learners are in autonomy supportive classrooms it will engage the learners in activities as a part of self-development, learning" (Teacher C).

“I think that self-sufficiency supportive teachers attempt to respond to the learners’ autonomy, competence, and relatedness that motivate the learners to improve upon their studies” (Teacher G).

“I am with the hope that when teachers consider the learners with hearing difficulties point of view when planning and preparing lessons, allowing learners to express their negative feelings and providing constant feedback to learners will motivate such learners to improve upon their studies”(Teacher H).

4.4. Research Question Two: Which Pedagogical Competencies are Required by Teachers to Teach Learners with Hearing Difficulties in Sekyere South District?

The following themes emerged; namely (a) Differentiated pedagogy, and (b) Constructive pedagogy. Nine of the teachers indicated that, for teachers to teach learners experiencing hearing difficulties, differentiated instructional pedagogy serves to allow them (teachers) to take diverse learners’ factors into account when planning and delivering instruction. They further indicated that teachers could structure learning environments that address the variety of learning styles, interests, and abilities found within a classroom to enhance the learner’s academic capabilities. The teachers stated as follows:

“I hope that the learners will academically improve when the teachers anticipates the differences in learners’ readiness, interests and creates different learning paths so that learners have the opportunity to learn as much as they can as deeply as they can” (Teacher K).

“I think that the classroom practice with a balanced emphasis on individual learners and learning behaviours will make the learner with hearing difficulties improve upon their learning abilities” (Teacher J).

“It is obvious that learners differ as learners in terms of hearing and non-hearing, interests, readiness to learn and self-awareness as a learner. Teaching strategy teachers adopt to attend to each learner will enhance the learners’ academic performance” (Teacher I).

“I think teachers using pedagogy that is learner-aware teaching which recognizes and teaches according to learner differences will benefit the learners academically” (Teacher C).

“I think if teachers employ pedagogical that ensures every single learner’s learning is aligned with the learner’s readiness level, interests, and preferred mode of learning, it will improve the learners academic abilities” (Teacher M).

“I think learners experiencing hearing difficulties will improve upon their academic performance when teachers advocate a participatory approach in which learners actively participate in the learning process” (Teacher A).

“I believe learners will learn better if the learners’ knowledge is actively constructed by the learner and not passively received from the teacher” (Teacher B).

“I think in pedagogical strategy that make teachers employ learner-dominated teaching where teachers function as facilitators, will benefit the teachers to improve upon their learning abilities” (Teacher C).

“The pedagogical strategy that encourage learner-to-learner interactions in classroom situation will enhance the learner’s academic performance” (Teacher G).

4.5. Research Question Three: What Classroom Management Strategies do Teachers use in Teaching Learners with Hearing Difficulties in Sekyere South District, Ghana?

This research question was meant to identify the classroom management strategies required of teachers in teaching learners experiencing hearing difficulties. The following themes emerged: (a) Seating arrangement, (b) Positive teacher-child relationship.

4.6. Seating Arrangement

When the teachers were asked to address the question of classroom management strategies they required in teaching learners experiencing hearing difficulties, the theme or the construct of seating arrangement emerged. With seating arrangement, the teachers meant a plan that shows where learners should sit. Five of the teachers commented that:

“I think the learners experiencing hearing difficulties should sit in the position in the classroom where they face the teachers in order to participate in class discussions” (Teacher D).

“Teachers should make sure that learners with hearing difficulties should sit in a clear and visible where the sound of the teacher voice is least obstructed” (Teacher A).

“I think teachers should be rooted with classroom seating arrangement with learners experiencing hearing difficulties as it can impact how teachers communicate with the learners” (Teacher K).

“Teachers should gain competence in managing classroom exhibiting seating arrangement as it will promote learners learning, because the teacher can keep an eye on such learners when teaching” (Teacher B).

“Teachers should be conversant and competent in seating arrangement, because it has the potential to help prevent problem behaviours that decrease learner attention and decline the learners’ academic performance” (Teacher C).

4.7. Positive Teacher-Child Relationship

In an attempt to respond to the question on the classroom management strategies the teachers use in teaching learners with hearing difficulties, the theme “Positive teacher-child relationship” emerged. Four (4) of the teachers asserted that the heart of effective behaviour management is building positive relationships with learners. This to the Teachers allows the teacher to connect to the learners forming a strong foundation from which behavioural change can take place. The teachers mentioned that:

“I see that the classroom is more than just an academic setting; it also involves humanistic values to learn about life, therefore teachers building good relationship with the learners will motivate the learners to learn” (Teacher H).

“I think teachers should build positive teacher-learner relationship, because it is open communication as well as academic support that enhance learners learning abilities” (Teacher L).

“I think teachers ability to build good relationship with the learners that characterized by mutual acceptance, understanding, warmth, closeness, trust, respect, care and cooperation will improve the learners learning capabilities” (Teacher E).

“Learners who have positive relationships with their teachers feel motivated to learn and supported. Such learners are more engaged when they have a supportive relationship with the teacher; they tend to study harder” (Teacher C).

5. DISCUSSIONS

Research question one looked at the teaching methods that are employed by teachers while working with students who have hearing problems. The results showed that instructional strategies such as cooperation, elaboration and motivation were employed by the teachers to teach learners with hearing difficulties. Additionally, the findings indicated that these strategies the teachers adopted helped learners to focus attention, organize information for understanding, remember, monitor and assess their own learning. The outcome also showed that social contact and cooperative learning go hand in hand in contemporary classrooms. This finding is consistent

with that of [Saker and Ouldmahammed \(2018\)](#), who found that cooperative strategies significantly affect students' performance and attitudes toward learning, and with those of [Dallmer \(2004\)](#), who claimed that cooperative strategies are pedagogical techniques that require students to collaborate in small and mixed groups on a structured learning task in order to maximize each other's learning. The results are also in line with those of [Hänze and Berger \(2007\)](#), who stated that a cooperative teaching technique aids in raising students' academic accomplishment, fostering healthy relationships, and offering opportunities for the development of both good learning and social skills. The results corroborate the findings of [Keramati \(2010\)](#), who found that using a cooperative learning approach led to improved learner outcomes like higher grades, greater retention, stronger friendships and higher levels of confidence in oneself and others, and more positive views of and respect for the classroom teachers. [Felder and Brent \(2001\)](#) observation that instructional practices that encourage learners' active engagement and interaction greatly aid learners' learning and remove feelings of inferiority provides more support for the results.

The findings also showed that learners' academic performance improved when teachers made links between new and previously acquired knowledge. That's in keeping with what [Johnsey, Morrison, and Ross \(1992\)](#) found, too, when they looked at how elaboration as a teaching method aids retention by encouraging learners to forge personal connections between concepts. These results corroborate the findings of [Mayer \(2010\)](#), who found that teaching through elaboration encouraged learners to draw connections between previously learned material and new information. These results are consistent with those found by [Slavin \(2000\)](#), who argued that a key reason why learners do well when using a learner-generated method like elaboration in the classroom is that such approaches capitalize on learners' existing knowledge. Teachers need to take into account the various learning styles represented in their classrooms while designing lessons. In order to guarantee that the educational requirements of all learners are addressed, it is crucial that teachers have access to a variety of instructional approaches that allow them to present the same subject in a variety of formats ([Luckner, 2016](#)).

However, the research showed that learner motivation is often considered a necessary factor for effective learning. That is, learners' education would benefit from teachers' use of motivating techniques. These results are consistent with those found by [Erdil-Moody and Thompson \(2020\)](#), who found that learners were more motivated to study when their teachers provided a vibrant and pleasurable learning environment, presented assignments in a manner that inspired them to succeed, and encouraged them to work together. The finding also supports that of [Atkinson and Delamont \(2017\)](#), who found that, teacher's engagement in the teaching and learning process serves as motivating factor that motivate learners to learn, engaging teachers did much to motivate their learners and little that might undermine academic motivation. This finding is further supported by [Anderman \(2010\)](#) who found that, teachers providing learners with encouragement and showing enthusiasm for the subject positively contributed to learners' learning motivation and enjoyment in overall learning. This finding concurred with that of [Brophy \(2010\)](#), who noted that teacher motivational teaching strategy of providing learners with repetitive, but varied practice, enabled learners to gain significant improvement with their learning. Again, this finding supports that of [Dörnyei and Muir \(2019\)](#), who noted that, teachers' motivational practice relates to learners' motivated learning behaviour in that teacher motivational strategies enhance learner-teacher interactions in classrooms that has an impact on learners' expectancies about their future success.

The findings on the pedagogical competencies required by teachers to teach learners with hearing difficulties indicated that how teachers teach is relevant as it impacts on the learners' learning behaviours. It was further revealed that pedagogy requires meaningful classroom interactions between teachers and learners in order to help learners build on prior learning and develop skills and attitudes. [Read \(2018\)](#) found that they instead used teacher-centred teaching strategies that discouraged active lesson engagement on the part of learners. [Coker \(2018\)](#)

demonstrated that the learning capacities of learners with hearing difficulties increase when they participate in learner-centred teaching approaches including demonstration and classroom discussions. [Ball and Forzani \(2009\)](#) found that, learners with hearing difficulties performed better on tasks that required more hands-on participation, had direct relevance to the learners' future careers, and made the learners feel that their efforts were appreciated. In this way, learners with hearing difficulties are not only included in classroom activities but also empowered to solve issues on their own ([Ambrose, Bridges, DiPietro, Lovett, & Norman, 2010](#)).

These results supported the findings of [Cooper \(2013\)](#), who concluded that differentiated instruction is particularly effective in the teaching of reading, writing, and mathematics. This result backs up [Conklin \(2009\)](#) assertion that a tailored instruction method aids language skill development for students who have hearing impairments. This result supports the claims made by [Chapman, Foley, Halliday, and Miller \(2021\)](#), that students who receive individualized instruction develop reading and comprehension skills that are suited to their individual learning characteristics. This research confirms that differentiated instruction has a significant impact on learner achievement, as stated by [Benjamin and Kline \(2019\)](#). Once more, the results showed that teachers began teaching with the idea that students would learn. Additionally, teachers help students improve their academic performance by building on the knowledge they currently possess. This result is consistent with [Anderson \(2020\)](#) observation that constructivism in basic education classroom teaching asserts that students are the subject of instruction because teachers give students greater attention and foster a positive learning environment. The results further corroborate [Aknoğlu \(2014\)](#) assertion that constructivist pedagogy places an emphasis on initiatives that both teachers and students take to interact with one another during the educational process in order to facilitate teaching and learning. [Aknoğlu \(2014\)](#) went on to say that constructivist education focused on cooperative learning based on prior knowledge and experiences through interactive activities, which allowed students to continually enhance their cognitive function. This result agrees with that of [Arkün and Aşkar \(2017\)](#), who observed that constructivist pedagogy has significant implications for inclusive education in that it encourages students to improve their all-around quality. This result supports the argument made by [Altinok and Nguyen-Van \(2022\)](#), who claimed that constructivists concur that knowledge is a social construction that is negotiated between people and that requires collaboration and communication on the part of learners.

The research results showed that effective classroom management strategies are necessary for teachers to facilitate learners learning. It was once again established that a well-managed classroom fosters an environment conducive to teaching and learning. Respondents also noted that classroom management fostered learners' growth in self-awareness and ownership of their actions and behaviours, even among those with hearing difficulties. These results are consistent with those found by [McCorskey and McVetta \(2016\)](#), who found that learners seated in the front rows paid more attention than those in the back. This is because the teacher's attention is naturally drawn to the learners in the front of the classroom. This confirms the observation made by [Juhary \(2012\)](#), who found that, rearranging seating was effective at decreasing distractions and boosting productivity in the classroom. In this way, the research backs up the claims of [Daniels \(2015\)](#), who argued that, every teacher wants to set up their classroom in a way that benefits their learners the most. Learners need to be able to concentrate and see what is going on in the classroom at all times, so arranging seats in such a way as to maximize their visibility and comfort is crucial.

6. CONCLUSIONS

1. The findings from the study revealed that teachers used cooperation instructional strategy, elaboration instructional strategy and motivational instructional strategy to teach learners with hearing difficulties in the Sekyere South District.

2. Again the pedagogical competence the teachers required in teaching learners experiencing hearing difficulties were differentiated and constructivist pedagogies as shown from the findings of the study.
3. Lastly the classroom management strategies reportedly used in teaching learners with hearing difficulties were ensuring proper seating arrangement and establishing a positive teacher- learner relationship.

7. RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations were made:

1. Equally important strategies such as think-pair-share, story-telling and demonstration strategies were not mentioned. It is therefore recommended that the Ghana Education Service organizes in-service workshops to broaden the horizon of teachers' instructional strategies to supplement the strategies that they already use. This will ensure that teachers have a broad array of instructional strategies that they can use to improve learning outcomes among learners with hearing difficulties.
2. The Authorities in universities and Colleges of Education should run programs to educate in-service teachers to be competent in differentiated and constructivist pedagogies in order to teach learners with hearing difficulties effectively.
3. Teachers should continue to ensure that there is proper seating arrangement and positive teacher-learner relationship in the classroom since they help foster effective classroom environment.

8. RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

The following areas were suggested for further research:

- The factors hindering teachers' competences needed in teaching learners with hearing difficulties.
- Perceptions of teachers on motivational strategies in teaching learners with hearing difficulties.

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