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 C-E-R LANGUE ET LETTRES ANGLAISES

*ASPECTS OF SOCIAL AND CULTURAL LIFE IN GHANA AT
INDEPENDENCE AS SEEN THROUGH THE STRANGE MAN by AMU
DZOLETO AND NO SWEETNESS HERE by AMA ATA AIDOO WITH
EXCERPTS TO PRACTISE WRITING SKILLS AMONG 1^{ère} A AND TA
LYCEE STUDENTS*

C.A.P.E.N DISSERTATION

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

	<u>Pages</u>
AKNOWLEDGEMENT.....	0
INTRODUCTION	1
 <u>PART ONE:</u>	
-The Background to the two works	
1-1: Geographical and Human Features	4
1-2: Historical Survey	6
1-3: Traditional Ghanaian Structures.....	14
1-4: Westernization: Examples	17
 CONCLUSION.....	 23
 <u>PART TWO:</u>	
- <u>The Strange Man</u> and <u>No Sweetness Here</u> : Illustrating Some Aspects of Ghanaian Social and Cultural Life	
INTRODUCTION.....	24
2-1: <u>The Strange Man</u>	24
2-2: <u>No Sweetness Here</u>	25
2-3: Topics Common to the two African literary works.....	26
2-3-1: Family Occupations.....	26
2-3-2: Children's Upbringing	30
2-3-3: Traditions and Customs	35
2-4: Socio Cultural Changes Brought by British Colonists.....	42

CONCLUSION	54
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PART THREE

Teaching Application	
INTRODUCTION	55
3-1: Integrating Writing and Reading for Effective Language Teaching.....	57
3-2: Theoretical Part some theories about the writing skill	
3-2-1: Introduction	58
3-2-2: The Importance of Teaching the writing skill	58
3-2-3: Writing skill as seen in the Terminale and I ere A Official	
Syllabuses.....	59
3-3: Experimentations.....	61
3-3-1: Suggested lesson plans.....	75
CONCLUSION	98

BIBLIOGRAPHY	104
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APPENDICIES	107
1: The Logical Steps for the Teaching of the writing skill based on reading comprehension	107
2: The writing activities based on the reading comprehension.....	108
3: Excerpts from <u>The Strange Man</u> and <u>No Sweetness Here</u> ; pedagogical interests in relation with the teaching of writing and criteria for selection.....	110
4: Classroom observations.....	112

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INTRODUCTION

The present work contains a literary study based on two African works: The Strange Man a novel by Amu Dzoletto and a collection of short stories No Sweetness Here by Ama Ata Aidoo; these works tell about aspects of social and cultural life in Ghana at independence and some times after it, with excerpts from the novels we have chosen to practise the writing skill among 1ère A and TA lycée students.

We have settled our choice on these works, because of “the writers’ will to reveal their people’s realities”; their works have influenced African literatures, particularly the Ghanaians very much. Besides, the two works provide themes worth studying for themselves, but we have chosen topics which concern more particularly the social and cultural life: that is why our dissertation is entitled: “Aspects of social and cultural life in Ghana at independence and after. In addition, throughout their works, the two Ghanaian writers try to portray the Ghanaian society under the influence of western civilisation during the colonial period; since the two writers’ native country, Ghana was a former British colony and the western civilisation was mostly here the British way of life, which was brought by the British colonists.

Moreover, our motive to choose the two works, as sources of our dissertation, was to show that the social and cultural life depicted in the novels were common to many African people, either British colonies or also French, Spanish or others. What happened in those countries can be compared to what happened in our own country, Madagascar.

Furthermore, the two works were chosen for personal reasons, because of our own taste, but an important factor for us was that they can be used as teaching material complementary to the textbooks already used in lycées as mentioned in the syllabus for lycées; thanks to their authentic language and the way the writers used the various English vocabulary items and structures. We stated earlier that there were many themes worth studying in these books but, in our study we will proceed by extracting passages which have more especially linked with education, health, opinion, families, social events, and customs and traditions; it is worth mentioning that these suit lycée students, those of 1ère A and Terminale A levels.

In addition, each of the two works can provide our fellow colleagues with exciting topics. In the Strange Man a recurrent theme for example is school discipline: how it was kept in some African schools following British ways in pre colonial era: the teachers then resorted to (harsh) corporal punishment known as caning. This can be a first example to start serious conversations and for an exchange of ideas of the learners and their teachers and this may lead

to other related topics: relation between parents and children, upbringing, authority for example.

No Sweetness Here on other hand is full of social stories focusing on problems like prostitution or life in large towns.

These books also can efficiently serve as a source of new excerpts to be used for the teaching of the writing skill based on reading comprehension. We think it is helpful to introduce novels and short stories at such level because reading prepares the students for the writing skill. Besides, reading helps students (or us) to improve writing tasks, and from reading they can acquire additional ideas, views and expressions. Actually, one of the main reasons which led us to associate the writing skill with our study of these two works is the realisation that more and more learners come from unusual, academic learning institutions, i.e. private schools and the learners there are slightly different from those found in state lycées. It is often surprising and annoying to find tests where the essay section (i.e. the one calling for the ability to write) is left aside, neglected or considered as not very important. Besides, it has been shown from different studies that students (people in general) have lost the taste for reading: how then, can we expect them to have “ideas” about different problems which seem important to us teachers or academics? We, thus, think that our contribution even if it is a modest one, can be of some help to our colleagues in lycées, very often too lycée teachers, after a few years’ teaching are preys to routine and do not try to find ways to improve their teaching; some even provide their learners with ‘model tests’ i.e tests which are more or less identical to those they may expect at actual official exams and learners never make efforts to go ‘further’. As we see it, using works, fiction or imagination (novels, short stories or others), can be useful for readers to diversify their sources, teaching means and materials.

We have chosen 1èreA and T A classes because we expect the students to have mastered the useful grammatical structures, important vocabulary items and syntax required for the writing skill. These learners at those levels can also be expected to have a better understanding and some experience in dealing with such topics. Last but not least, we studied these books in the third year at the Ecole Normale Supérieure in Antananarivo, and we felt that the books could suit Malagasy lycée students because their contents deal with elements comparable to certain Malagasy facts: for example ways of life, social and cultural life including customs and traditions, as well as education, religion, and child upbringing which may arouse students’ interests.

We hope that this modest contribution can be helpful both for lycée teachers and for the Ministry of Education too; as we see it, even the official syllabus, until further updating is

made to it, can still be followed and kept as it is; the official syllabus however, is a general guideline, which was devised to help lycées in Madagascar (teachers, learners) have a common corpus, a unity. This again, to us does not mean that diversification should be prohibited.

Structure of the work.

This work is divided into three main parts: The first part will cover topics like: History and Geography of Ghana at the independent, the Geography of West Africa the Gold Coast and neighbouring countries.

The second one will be centralised on the presentation of the two literary works: The Strange Man and No Sweetness Here, we have chosen to use as a basis for our studies, to illustrate certain aspects of Ghanaian social and cultural life.

Dissertations at ENS have to contain a didactic aspect, or more exactly a pedagogical section contrary to dissertation which may happen elsewhere where work of literary or any oral or written support used as corpus can be studied for itself. As its name indicates the Ecole Normale Supérieure is specially focused and interested in how to improve teaching, thus the last part consists in giving some excerpts from the two works, The Strange Man and No Sweetness Here, for pedagogical use. It is made up of some selected excerpts to be taught in Malagasy lycées according to the official syllabus. These selected excerpts will be selected in such way that we can practise the writing skill based on reading comprehension.

PART ONE

THE BACKGROUND TO THE TWO WORKS

In this part, we are going to study about the background of Ghana, concerning the Geographical and human features, Historical survey, traditional Ghanaian structures, and examples of westernisation.

As far as Geographical and human features are concerned, we will study about the population, the administration division, the economy and the languages.

The Historical survey consists of the pre-colonial period and the beginning of the British rule in the Gold Coast, colonial administration, economic and social development, growth of nationalism, and the post independent.

The traditional Ghanaian structure concerns the family structure, family subsistence, and child's upbringing.

The last subpart is about the westernisation which is made up of education and religion.

1-1: Geographical and Human Features

The republic of Ghana is a country in West Africa which borders Ivory Coast to the West, Burkina Faso (Upper Volta) to the North, Togo to the East and the Gulf of Guinea to the South. It covers an area of 238,537 SqKm with nonetheless, five district geographical regions. Low plains stretch across the southern part of the country. To their north lie three regions: the Ashanti Upland, the Akwapim, Togo Ranges and the Volta Basin. The fifth region, the high plains, occupies the Northern and North-Western sector of the country.

The climate along the coast is humid and warm; in the mountains especially along the Akwapim ridge, it is somewhat drier and cooler, making this area a pleasant place during the partial early hot seasons. The humidity, in the middle strip which consists of tropical rainforests, is high. The rainfall abundant vegetation is heavy in the South, thinning to Savannah and dry plains in the North.

1-1-1: The Administrative Divisions

Ghana is divided into ten regions and subdivided into a total of 138 districts, each with its own District Assembly. Below districts are various types of councils, including 58 towns or area councils, 108 Zonal Councils, and 626 Area Councils; 16,000 Unit Committees on the

lowest level. Its capital is Accra the major town or city is Kumasi and the major ports are Sekondi-Takoradi and Tema

1-1-2: Population

Ghana is a country that brings together people from all over the world and creates special bonds between them. Ghana's population is composed of varieties of socio cultural groups, the most important ethnic constellation, the Akan people which is subdivided into the Ashanti, Fante, Akwapim, Brong, Akim, Nzima; and other smaller units, make up the highest percents of the population. Apart from the Akan people, there are some major ethnic groups: Ewe, Mole-Dagbane, Guan and Ga-Adangbe.

More than 100 separate ethnic groups are found in Ghana today, a number of which are immigrant groups from neighbouring countries. In 1960, the population amounted to 6,7 million, and in 2003 it was estimated by the United Nations at 20,922,000, which placed it at as number 50 in population among the 193 nations of the world. According to the United Nations the annual population growth rate for 2000-2005 is 2,17% with the projected population for the year 2015 at 26,359,000. This statistic about the Ghanaian population shows the rapid increase in population within the country. The majority of the population lives in rural areas, and about 8% live in Accra, the capital. Child malnutrition and death from preventable diseases and contaminated water remain a problem. There is a gross inequality between the rural and urban areas

1-1-3: Economy

Ghana's economy is based on agriculture. During the colonial period, the Gold Coast began to develop economically: Roads, rail-roads and harbours were constructed. At independence time, gold, timber, cocoa, diamonds, bauxite, and manganese exports were major sources of foreign exchange. Agriculture, forestry and fishing constitute close to 50% of the gross domestic product; with manufacturing and mining close to 20%. Trading added 12% services including the government sector close to 14% and transport and communication another 4%. Thus, Ghana remained one of the most economically sound countries all over Africa.

1-1-4: Languages

More than 250 languages and dialects are spoken in Ghana. In view of these linguistic and associated cultural differences, and, as a result of the country's colonial past, English has become Ghana's official language. It is used for all government affairs, large scale business transactions, and educational instruction and in national radio and television broadcasts. In fact, the constitution of 1969 required that members of parliament speak, read and understand English. In the mid 1980s, the ministry of education also encouraged teachers to use local language for instruction during the first six years of formal education. These changes however, have not lessened the importance of English in the Ghanaian society.

Apart from the English, there are the native Ghanaian languages which are divided into two linguistic subfamilies of Niger-Congo language family. Languages belonging to the Kwa subfamily are found predominately to the South of Volta River, while those belonging to the Gur subfamily are found in the North. The Kwa, which is spoken by about 75% of the country's population, includes the Akan; Hausa which is not an official language is spoken among Ghana's Muslims, who comprise about 14% of the population.

1-2 Historical Survey

1-2-1: Pre-colonial history and the beginning of the British rule in the Gold Coast.

Concerning the history, Ghana is the first Sub-Saharan African nation to throw off the hand of colonialism and gains its independence from Britain. Ghana was a former British colony.

This country was inhabited in pre-colonial times by a number of ancient Kingdoms, including the Ga Adangbes on the Eastern coast, inland Empire of Ashanti and various Fante states along the coast and inland. The ancient Empire of Ghana reigned until the thirteenth century. The Akan people established the next major civilisation, beginning in the thirteenth century, and then the Ashanti Empire flourished in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries and became the most powerful states. They controlled much of Ghana and consolidated in the central of Ghana. By the end of the sixteenth century, after its defeat by the Songhai Empire, most ethnic groups constituting the modern Ghanaian population had settled in their present locations.

As early as the thirteenth century, present Ghana was drawn into long distance trade in large part because of its gold reserves. Ghana, like its namesake, was equally famed for its wealth and trade in gold which were found in the coastal area consequently the ancient Ghana became known as "Gold Coast" and since then it was called "Gold Coast".

The nations were built on gold, guns and slaves. As a matter of fact, many people came to settle along the Ghanaian coast to exploit its wealth, the first Europeans to settle there were the Portuguese in the 15th century. Upon their arrival, they encountered a variety of African Kingdoms; some of them controlled substantial deposits of gold in the soil. In 1482, the first castle was built in the Gold Coast by the Portuguese at Elmina. From here, they traded slaves, gold, knives and guns. News spread quickly, and eventually English, Dutch, Swedish traders arrived to trade and built several forts along Gold Coastline as well.

As stated above, Ghana was a former British colony. This British colonisation began after the loss of Dutch interests in the coast and the Dutch ceded their forts free to the British in 1872. Thus, by 1874, the British were the only European in the Gold Coast. They took over all the forts though most of them did not belong to them. Consequently, Ashanti, who was the most powerful and biggest Community in Ghana, began to act against British power. The Ashanti refused British control over the Gold Coast. Due to the Ashanti's reactions, British tensions increased and the British decided to make Gold Coast a crown colony. This in effect gave the British total control. From that period, Ashanti Empire became a British colony. In 1902, the British became interested in the broad areas North of Ashanti, known generally as the Northern territories and did all their possibilities to make that country under their rule. So the northern territories were proclaimed a British protectorate and were placed under the authority of a resident commissioner who was responsible to the governor of the Gold Coast. From that time that was in 1902, the Gold Coast was a British crown colony made up of three separate but related territories. They are known as the dependency or simply as the Gold Coast. By 1956, the people of the Volta Region, known as the British Mandated Togo land, voted in plebiscite to become part of modern Ghana.

1-2-2: Colonial Administration

By 1850, the coastal regions increasingly came under control of the governor of the British fortresses, who was assisted by the Executive Council and the Legislative Council, which were situated at the top of the native authority structure and were created to serve as a link along with the chiefs, between the local administration and the central government. Also it strengthened the chiefs by equipping them with an additional source of legitimacy. The town councils were composed of the Executive Council and the Legislative Council. The Executive Council was a small advisory body of European officials that recommended laws and voted taxes, subject to the governor's approval. The Legislative Council included the members of

the Executive Council and unofficial members initially chosen by British commercial interests. After 1900 three chiefs and three other Africans were added to the Legislative Council, these being chosen from the Europeanised communities of Accra, Cape Coast, and Sekondi

The Legislative Council had also the power to make the laws for the colony. Only the colony came under the Legislative Council's authority. The inclusion of Africans from Ashanti and the Northern territories did not take place until much later. Prior to 1925, all members of the Legislative Council were appointed by the governor. Official members always outnumbered unofficial members.

The gradual emergence of centralised colonial government brought about unified control over local services, although the actual administration of these services was still delegated to local authorities. Specific duties and responsibilities came to be clearly delineated, and the role of traditional states in local administration was also clarified.

The local government structure had its roots in traditional patterns of government. Village councils of chiefs and elders were almost exclusively responsible for the immediate needs of individual localities, containing traditional law and order and the general welfare. The councils, however, ruled by consent rather than by right. The ruling class of the society chose chiefs, a traditional leader continued to rule not only because he was the choice of what may be termed the nobility, but also because he was accepted by his people. The unseating or destooling of a chief by tribal elders was a fairly common practice if the chief failed to meet the desires or expectations of the community. Thus, in administering its African colonies Britain enjoined indirect rule which meant that chiefs or other local leaders became agents of the colonial administration. This system of rule gave Ghanaians experience with modern representative government to a degree unparalleled elsewhere in Sub-Saharan Africa (West Africa). In addition, the indirect rule also entailed governing the native people through their already developed indigenous political institution. The British pursued one type of indirect rule until the 1930s and another type following that date. The colony chiefs maintained their internal autonomy, then the colonial government strengthened their power from 1874 until 1927. After 1904, the governor was given power or authority to confirm the election and installation of new chiefs. For the Northern territories that had no tradition of chieftaincy, the British offered executive powers to the clan elders and ruled through them.

In Ghana, Sir Frederic Gordon Guggisberg established the system of indirect rule which was applied as follows: within a traditional state, the most powerful chiefs and their counsellors were made up into a native administration, also called a native jurisdiction, whose

president was the powerful chiefs. Traditional customary institutions were concerned the native authority's functions. The chiefs were given powers of controlling local tribunal and the members of these authorities worked under the general direction and control of colonial district commissioner.

According to Frederic Lugar, architect of the policy, indirect rule was cost effective because it reduces the number of European officials in field. The application of the indirect rule became absolutely necessary in particular after the Ashanti and the Northern territories were brought under the British rule (1901-1902). Once indirect rule was implemented, the chiefs became responsible to the colonial authorities who supported them. Many chiefs and leaders came to consider themselves as a ruling aristocracy. Some educated young men were dissatisfied with the indirect rule because there was no sufficient cooperation between the council and the central government and because some felt that the local authorities were too dominated by the British district commissioners.

To give the chiefs colony- wide functions, the British established provincial councils of chiefs in all three territories of the colony in 1925. This move was followed in 1927 by the promulgation of the native administration ordinance, which replaced an 1883 arrangement that had placed chiefs in the Gold Coast colony under the British supervision. The aims were to regulate and clarify the powers and areas of authorities of chiefs and councils. Councils were given specific responsibilities over disputed elections and the unseating of chiefs, the procedure for the election of chiefs was set forth; and judicial powers were defined and delegated. Council were entrusted with the role of defining customary law in their areas (the government had to approve their decision), and the provincial councils were empowered to become tribunals to decide matters of customary law when the dispute lay between chiefs in different hierarchies. Until 1939, when the Native Treasuries Ordinance was passed, however, there was no provision for local budgets. In 1935, the native authorities ordinance combined the central colonial government and the local authorities into a single governing system. The governor chose new native authorities, who were given wide powers of local government under the supervision, the central government's provincial commissioners who assured that their policies would be those of the central government. The provincial councils and the moves to strengthen them were unpopular. Even by the British standards, the chiefs had not enough power to be effective instrument of indirect rule. Some Ghanaians supposed that the changes, by increasing the power of the chiefs at the expense of local initiative ,

allowed the colonial government to prevent movement towards any form of popular participation in the colony's government.

1-2-3: Economic and Social Development

Ghana has produced and exported gold for centuries even though its economy was based on agriculture in pre-colonial times. Present Ghana was the one source of the gold that reached Europe via trans-Saharan trade routes, and the British brought many changes in Ghana as far as economy was concerned. The years of British administration of the Gold Coast during the 20th century were an area of significant progress in social economic and education development. Roads, railroads, harbours were greatly improved. For example, the Sekondi-Tarkwa railroad, begun in 1898, was extended until it connected most of the important commercial centres of the South, and by 1937, there were 9,700kilometres of roads. Telecommunication and postal services were initiated as well. New crops were also introduced and gained widespread acceptance. Cacao trees, introduced in 1878, brought the first cash crops to the farmers of the interior; it became the mainstay of the nation's economy in the 1920swhen disease wiped out Brazil's trees. The production of cocoa was largely in the hands of Africans. The Cocoa Marketing Board was created in 1947 to assist farmers and to stabilise the production and sale of their crops. By the end of that decade, the Gold Coast was exporting more than half of the world's cocoa supply. The colony's earnings increased further from the export of timber and gold. Gold, which initially brought Europeans to the Gold Coast, remained in the hands of Africans until the 1890s. Traditional techniques of panning and shaft mining, however, yielded only limited output. The development of modern mode of extracting minerals made gold meaning an exclusively foreign-run enterprise. For example, the Ashanti Goldfields Corporation, which was organised in 1897, gained a concession of about 160 square kilometres in which to prospect commercially for gold. Although certain tribal authorities profited greatly from the granting of mining concessions, it was the European mining companies and the colonial government that accumulated much of the wealth. Revenues from export of the colony's natural resources financed internal improvement in infrastructure and social services. The foundation of an educational system more advanced than any other else in West Africa also resulted from mineral export revenue. Western style education was established culminating in the founding of the university college of the Gold Coast in 1948. During the colonial years, the country's educational institutions improved clearly. From the beginnings in missionary school, the early part of the 20th century

saw significant advances in many fields, and although the missions continued to participate, the government steadily increased its interests and support, and in 1909 established a technical school and teachers' training college at Accra. In addition, the missions set up several other secondary schools. The growing number of both state and mission schools increased the government financial backing. Ghanaian elite gained the means and the desire to strive for independence.

Frederic Gordon G, governor from 1919 to 1927, joined the British army in 1889, and he has contributed to many of the economic and social development in the Gold Coast in the early years of the 20th century. He also presented a ten- year development program to the legislative council. He suggested first the improvement of transport, and then in order of priority, he prescribed improvement in water supply, drainage, hydroelectric projects, public buildings, town's improvement, school, hospital, prison, communication lines and other services. Up to that time, his program had been described as the most ambitious ever proposed in West Africa: for instance an artificial harbour at Takoradi, which then became Ghana's first port; Achimota college which developed into one of the nation's finest secondary schools, was also Frederick Gordon idea.

The colony assisted Britain in both World War I and World War II. From 1914 to 1918, the Gold Coast Regiment served with distinction in battles against German forces in Cameroon and in the long East Africa campaign. In World War II, troops from the Gold Coast emerged with even greater prestige after outstanding service in such places as Ethiopia and Burma. In the ensuing years, however, post war problems of inflation and instability severely hampered readjustment for returning veterans, who were in the forefront of growing discontent and unrest. Their war service and veterans 'associations had broadened their horizons, making it difficult for them to return to the humble and circumscribed positions set aside for Africans by the colonial authorities.

1-2-4: Growth of Nationalism and the Way to Independence

After the Second World War, many changes began to occur in the Gold Coast. The economy and the social developed so the focus of the government power gradually shifted from the hands of the governor and officials into those of Ghanaian. Moreover, the changes resulted at last in independence thanks to a great number of strong spirits of nationalists that included urban African workers and traders, along with the small educated minority. The development of national consciousness accelerated rapidly: the Ex-servicemen, Ghanaian soldiers who

fought in the Second World War, helped in another way to expose the weakness of the British. Once the movement had begun, events moved quickly not always fast enough to satisfy the nationalists leaders, but still at a pace that showed surprise not only to the colonial government but also to the most conservative African as well as the Ghanaian elites who gained the means and the desire to strive for independence. Thus many political parties were formed and the first political party that was formed in August 1947 by educated Africans such as: Doctor G.B. Danquah, A.G. Grant, R.A. Awornor Williams, Edward Akafo Adoo and others, was named the United Gold Coast Convention (UGCC). Its slogan was “self government within the shortest possible time”. For these political leaders, traditional governance, exercised largely by using indirect rule was identified with colonial interest and the past. They thought that it was their duties to lead their country into a new age. They also demanded that, given their education, the colonial administration should respect them and accord them positions of responsibility. In 1947, when the UGCC was created to oppose colonial rule, it invited Kwame Nkrumah from London to become the movement’s general secretary. The UGCC, which awakened fervent national consciousness in the Gold Coast, was what might be described as a liberal group with its aim of “self-government in the shortest possible time”. Kwame Nkrumah did not like the UGCC’s aim, self government in the shortest possible time; he wanted “self government now”. Following disagreement of ideologies, Kwame Nkrumah left the UGCC and formed a more radical and nationalist party: “Convention People’s Party (CPP)” on 12th June 1949 with its motto. He was joined by Kojo Botsio, Komba A. Gbademah and a group of mostly young political professionals known as the “veranda boys” identified itself more with ordinary working people than within the UGCC and its intelligentsia and Kwame Nkrumah had also a mass following on the 9th January 1950 when the CPP organised a nation wide boycott and strike. Workers were warned not to cause any trouble whereas some violent disorder occurred; and Kwame Nkrumah, along with his principal lieutenants was arrested and imprisoned at the James Fort Prison what was termed as “Positive action” against the government. The imprisonment of Kwame Nkrumah increased his prestige and made him a hero and martyr in the eyes of the people. In 1951, the pace was set for general elections. In February 1951, the first election was held for the legislative assembly under the new constitution. Kwame Nkrumah was in prison when the election was conducted, and still in jail he overwhelmingly won the election and was released and then chose governor Charles Noble Arden Clark to head the new government. This, however, became the British colony’s first African government.

In 1946, Kwame was designated prime minister and was made responsible to the legislative assembly. He, in June 1946, submitted proposal for a new constitution. It was upon that the 1946 constitution was introduced making the country virtually self governing. This new constitution provided for an all African cabinet from an enlarged legislative. A general election followed in June 1946 from which the CPP won 79 out of 104 seats of the national assembly. In 1948 another election was held in response to a pledge by the British secretary of state for the colonies that was the newly elected legislative; a firm date for the change over would be announced that CPP won. The British mandated Togo land also held a plebiscite to join the Gold Coast, thus by 1948 British Togo land –the Ashanti protectorate and the Fante protectorate were merged with the Gold Coast to become one colony which became known as the Gold Coast

This action opened the way to Ghana's independence and on the 6th March 1947, the colony became the independent dominion of Ghana within the British commonwealth. The country emerged as the first country in Africa, South of the Saharan to regain independence from colonial rule. On the eve of Ghana's independence Kwame Nkrumah proclaimed at the old polo ground in Accra: "At long last, the battle has ended and Ghana, our beloved country, is free forever :"(The Ghana Educational System by David L., 1958). The nation, however, became a republic on first July 1960 with Kwame Nkrumah becoming the first president and the CPP was declared the only legal political party. From that period, Kwame Nkrumah became increasingly an authoritarian ruler. He began his administration of the first independent African country South of the Saharan.

1-2-5: Post independent Ghana

Kwame Nkrumah was overthrown by a military coup in 1966; following the overthrow of Kwame, conditions in Ghana worsened rapidly and Ghanaians were divided and disillusioned. The national liberation council put forward a multi-party constitution, handed over power in 1966 to a democratically elected government in which Kofi A Busia was elected prime minister. Though the government of Busia was economically conservative, he failed to improve the depressed economic conditions of Ghana. Since then, Ghana lived in a decade characterised by severe economic decline and political instability: hence in January 1972, this led another army coup to overthrow Busia.

A series of subsequent coups ended with the accession to power of Right lieutenant Jerry Rawlings in 1981. This change resulted in the suspension of the constitution in 1981 and the

banning of political parties. A new constitution restoring multi party politics were promulgated in 1992 and Rawlings was elected as president in the free and fair elections of that year and again won the election's 1996 to serve his second term. The constitution prohibited him from running for a third term. John Agyekum Kufuor, the next president, was serving his second term which was to end in 2008 when another election was held to elect a new president.

In December 2008 they had to vote a new president and the chair person of the electoral commission of Ghana Kwadwo Agyem-Gyan, confirmed Atta Mills John Evans's victory on Saturday 3rd January 2009. The run off elections were said to be described as orderly and credible. John Evans was born in Western Ghana (Tarkwa) in 1944. It had been praised as an example of a well functioning democracy in practice, indeed he was described by his family as soft spoken; the politician and academic ran for presidency under the slogan: "a better man for a better Ghana". He stated that he felt his chances of winning had significantly improved this time around, as the people of Ghana were ready for change.

To sum up, although there were many heads of state in succession in Ghana, the country remains peaceful; thus Ghana is one of the best examples of African countries which we could imitate.

1-3 Traditional Ghanaian Structures: Family, Social Lives and Religion.

1-3-1 Family Structure

The fundamental unit of all societies is the family. According to the Hutchinson Encyclopaedia, "family" is a group of people related to each other by blood or by marriage. In traditional Ghanaian society, the family or kin group provided basic welfare for the individual thus Ghanaian society focused on Kinship which ties in political, religions, economic and juridical structure. In addition, a family is an economically, socially and demographically reproductive unit. It reinforces natal group solidarity. The Ghanaian family is characterised as patrilineal and matrilineal. The matrilineal family existed in the South and the patrilineal in the North and within which kinship holds an important place. The matrilineal Ashanti family is either under a female head or a male head. If it is under a female head, it consists of the mother, her sister, and her sister's children and perhaps her own and her sister's uterine grandchildren. If under a male head, it is made up of him and his wife (wives) and children of his sister and her children, in addition to his nuclear family. But for the matrilineal Akwapim

family, it is made up of a man and his wife, as well as children or a woman with her children and grandchildren.

On the contrary, members of the patrilineal Ga lineage live in sexually segregated household, in other words, in one household the men possibly three generations joined at night by their wives and several generations of women and their young sons lived in another household. As far as patrilineal tallensi and Komecomba are concerned, the clan is based on their political systems, even though the members do not live together and do not know their exact relationship to one another.

The traditional system in Ghana generally accepted polygamy especially for the wealthy men (big men) and the usual family structure was the extended family, which functions as a mutual aid society in which each member had both the obligation to help others and the right to receive assistance from them in case of need. They helped one another whatever happened. The rural families favoured the extended family, whereas the urban families are a rapid appearance of the nuclear family system. There does not appear to be a sense of cohesion. It is a matter of the individual's life, his house, his possessions, and not the traditional usage of a farm, a home, sharing all the happiness, woes, and successes of the extended family loyalty, responsibility to one's elders.

1-3-2: Family Subsistence

Trading was the largest occupational category in Ghana whereas some people, especially men, occupied their times by fishing and farming. In rural areas of Ghana, where non-commercial agricultural production was the main economic activity, women worked the land and some of the, from the South, also sold fish caught by men. In urban centres commerce was the most common form of economy activity particularly for women of little or no education. On the other hand, there were some Ghanaians who were employed in mining, manufacturing, transportation, communication, forest, community personal and social services, finance and business services, electricity and water and gas construction. Women dominated the secretary and nursing professions and they were paid equal wages as men in the same line of work. Only about 3% of Ghana's economically active female worked in the public or private sector. Most of them pursued informal sector work as small scale-trading, or a cottage industry as pottery made at home. In addition, there were a few people who worked as crafts people, and there were some educated Ghanaians who earned a living as teachers, writers; some men were employed in mining.

An increasing number of Ghanaians also turned to smuggling or crime to earn a living because of the high cost of living and unemployment. Some children ended up in the street to

earn a living and to support their mothers and siblings. They roamed the street, offering their services as load carriers, ice water vendors, scrap metal sorters, wooden toy makers, peanuts, orange and banana sellers. Some boys chase cars with their wares; in general, children have to devote most of their times to help their parents. Generally, women earn less than men because their opportunities were more limited. Besides, wages had not kept up with the cost of living especially in city where life was costly.

On the whole, occupation diversification could be seen among the cities as a result of their different economic development and functional specialisation. Accra is an administrative centre, Kumasi as a trading centre and Sekondi Takoradi an industrial one. About a third of Ghanaians lived below the poverty line and the majority of them were from the rural areas, so it was common place to find some street lined up with nursing mothers with babies under the scourge of the sun begging for money.

1-3-3:Upbringing of Children:

A family is responsible for the care and upbringing of all children; parents have a major role to play in ensuring the proper upbringing of their children and also the provision of shelter, clothing and food.

Generally, the mother has a fundamental responsibility for child rearing and development, so, among such different people as Ga, Gonja, and Dagomba, children are shared among kin and their upbringing is a group responsibility. For those who have located to the city sending children home to the extended family reaffirms bonds, thus the moral and ethical instruction of children is the responsibility of the extended family. As a result there are many mothers for a child hence the child usually develops a strong sense of social responsibility from his earliest years and to be a respectful, responsible and supportive member of his extended family. The traditional values may be transmitted to the young through proverbs, songs, stories, rituals and initiations associated with rites of passage.

In addition, puberty rites for girls offer important occasions for instructing young adults among the Krobo, Ga Adangone and Akan. The informal mode of education in the traditional society is constituted by these methods of communications and it goes without saying that the individual acquires recognition and social status through the family. As a result, the general society sees the individual's action as reflecting the moral and ethical values of a family.

Furthermore, children are raised in close family group. It is common that responsibility for the social development of the child is shared by members of the community. It is in this respect and it could be said that in the traditional system there is hardly the illegitimate child, even

their parents are dead, and a child would always have got "parents" a cushion against the odds. On the whole, all parents bring their children up aiming at obtaining perfect children who behave well and properly.

1-4 Westernisation: Examples

1-4-1 Education

According to the Hutchinson Encyclopaedia Education is the action consisting in the developing the physical, intellectual and moral faculties in a human being.

In the pre colonial period, Ghana had its own ways of transmitting knowledge to develop the natives' physical, intellectual and moral faculties. Ghana had no school building but their children learnt proper roles and behaviour by observing adult skills, or through proverbs, songs, stories or tales and guessing. Also at various stages in life, especially during the puberty rites for young adults, intensive moral and ethical instruction from family or social elders were given. The reason for doing those "informal educations" was to ensure that the citizens were able to satisfy the basic traditional or communal needs such as mother hood for women, and hunting, long distance trading or farming for men, as well as to consolidate the cohesion which existed between them.

But later on , in the colonial period, the western style education was introduced into the Gold Coast by British missionaries, and some African children were influenced that new form of the education .Religions principles were taught to Africans, as well as they were taught how to read and write since that time some Africans ,more precisely Ghanaians," married the alphabet". From the missionaries' point of view, they taught native people aiming at having good members of church who are capable of reading the bible, and can thus help them in spreading the Holy Scriptures. This task also was carried to civilize the African people that are to reform the natives' habits according to the western way of life. On the one hand, for colonists, the rationale of education was to strengthen the colonial administration and also to promote the development of the African child. For the native people, these kinds of educations are a threat to the presentation of their traditional values, because they thought that as soon as children joined the missionaries' education they rejected the traditional customs which constituted their pride. In addition, within a family, parents and children had different opinions about educations, the former still valued the old way of teaching their children and were frightened that once children were educated, they had no time for farm work which was the first means used to support oneself and one's family, and also parents considered the education as means used by the colonialists to destroy the relation which existed between

citizens. On the other hand, children were attracted by the newness and modern day amenities of the western civilisation and were ready to reject the traditional way of transmitting knowledge and also their traditional way of life. The African people could not convince their children to join the western education; consequently, education in the western style replaced the traditional way of education. For the westerners, schools were built in different regions in Ghana and the western education held an important place in Ghana. The British realized that native people might change their traditional practices through schooling; many institutions were established, mission schools also continued to spread and this culminating in the founding of the university college of the Gold Coast in 1948. The colonist set up a board of education to inspect schools, and to standardize their management. Later on, the education developed and governor Frederick Gordon's education policies stressed the need for improved teacher training, equal education for girls, a great emphasis on vocational training, and the establishment of secondary school. Since then, education was given a special place partly because of the governor's goal of replacing Europeans with educated Africans in many administrative positions within the country. Elsewhere colonial conquest frequently stimulated young people to "marry the alphabet" and it goes without saying that modern education was the only solution to the Ghanaian country which needed for modern technicians. The young Ghanaian was encouraged to undertake further studies to be able to replace the white people in the management of their countries' affairs. Thus, thanks to the western education, African natives, more precisely Ghanaians, were trained to be clerks, hospital orderlies, nurses and teachers. Moreover, education was needed to train the African people for the fulfilment of their duty as citizens of their independent country and his education was to give them the western knowledge necessary for their country's progress and also modern ideas which will help them to fight against useless traditional way of life or behaving which Ghanaian society had for a long time. On the whole, education in this modern form was brought to Ghana first by the British missionaries and then reinforced by the implantation of colonization and hence forth it did not stop developing; thus Ghanaian people particularly young people, were becoming westernized through British colonists' education so the western education was one of the means used by the British colonists to reform the native way of life according to the western way of life.

1-4-2: Religion

Ghana, in the pre colonial time, had its traditional religions which had retained its influence because of their intimate relation to family loyalties and local mores. There was Supreme Being which was usually thought of a remote from daily religious life and was, therefore, not directly worshipped and lesser gods that take "residency" in streams, rivers, trees and mountains; these Gods were generally perceived as intermediaries between the Supreme Being and the society. Ghanaians believe in the existence of the Supreme Being and the lesser Gods. All Ghanaian ethnic groups also considered that the spirit world was real and it is the same as the world of the living. Veneration of the departed ancestors was a major characteristic of all traditional religions. They believed in their ancestors as a link with the spiritual world; they thought that the spirit of the dead people was always there to help the living people in case of need, and they also worship their ancestors. Priests undergo rigorous training in the arts of medicine, divination and other related disciplines and are, therefore, consulted on a more regular basis by the public. Traditional priest sometimes act as doctors or herbalists because many diseases were believed to have spiritual causes. Visiting a shrine was crucial among the uneducated and rural communities.

But later on, on the arrival of the Portuguese in the 15th century, the Christian missionaries established Christianity in Ghana which had changed the African way of life either in the interaction between husband and wives, parents and children or in their moral behaviour. The Christian missionaries established the Basel, Presbyterian, Welegan and Methodist missionaries. The latter laid the foundation for the Christian Church in the 19th century and established school as "nurseries of the church" in which an educated African class was trained. From that time, there were Christian churches set up in different regions in Ghana and people began going to church and the missionaries attracted the natives' attentions on the advantages brought by the religion, for they converted some Ghanaian to Christianity. As a result some Ghanaian family rejected the traditional religion and became converts. Thanks to the missionaries preaching that various Christian denominations were well represented in Ghana. The Volta Region has a high concentration of evangelical Presbyterians; many Akwapim are Presbyterians, and the Methodist denomination represented among the Fante.

The Roman Catholic Church was fairly well represented in the central region and Ashanti Region. There were no official figures exist to reflect the regional distribution of the various denominations, but it was generally agreed that the Southern part of the nation was more Christian while the north was more Islamic. On the whole, the task of westernizing the Ghanaian people and the reach of the colonists' objectives would be impossible without some kind of education. The colonists had adopted new attitudes towards the local traditions by

educating some Ghanaian people and then changing their religions, as a result many Ghanaians followed the christianism and the Christian civilization, more precisely, the western religion, and rejected their traditional ones.

1-4-3: Socio cultural life

The British western way of life brought great social and cultural changes in Ghana particularly for the young people. There was a great difference between urban and rural areas: urban areas had customarily been supplied with modern day amenities compared to rural locations, and the urban household differed from the rural one. There were supermarket and department stores in the urban areas. As far as women are concerned, those who lived in urban were almost educated, employed and had few children; well educated professionals, senior civil servants, and members of government held more prestigious positions. They owned fancy cars and expensive clothing, and also they were members in Western Associations.

In general, Ghanaians, especially those who lived in the urban areas, were influenced by the western way of life; this was visible concerning their way of eating, dressing and behaving. The city dwellers were more fashion followers than country dwellers; they followed the western way of life. The people who live in city were more western than those who live in the rural areas.

Furthermore, Ghana, like many African countries, had its own festivals which were lavish affairs that aggrandize life sustaining rituals into pageants. Multitudes of people gathered and marched in procession, danced, prayed and enjoyed themselves. In the countryside and city alike, all tradition occasions were feted, such as first fruit festivals, the end of Ramadan rites of passage, puberty celebration and marriage or death. All these occasions included the Akan, Ga Adangone, and Ewe, voluntary musical associations, were responsible for entertainment, which benefits not only the spectators but the band members themselves. But later on, the British colonists introduced a new form of entertainment. In the urban areas children spent increasing amounts of time away their home; in addition, social activities organised by school, had become more important in their life and had reduced sibling interaction. As a result, a greater amount of socialization was taking place outside the family, whereas, in the rural society the family and lineage remained the most significant institution. Apart from this, city dwellers enjoy life in the western ways by going to a specific place. They made a habit of

going out at night every week end and amused themselves. The urban areas, in general, supplied much entertainment for young people.

CONCLUSION TO PART ONE

To sum up the first part, we can say that the Ghanaian people are made up of various ethnic groups among which the Ashanti tribes are the most powerful states.

The British missionaries came to Ghana not only to introduce schools but also to evangelise the Ghanaian people. Besides, they brought western civilisation with them.

Some educated Ghanaians were not satisfied when they discovered that the British aim was to dominate all Ghanaian territories so they gained the means and the desire to strive for independence. They faced a lot of problems to gain the independence and after a long struggle, Ghana finally managed to gain its independence in March 1957. It goes without saying that Ghana was the first African country to have achieved its independence from their colonisers.

On the other hand, the British colonists also brought many good changes as far as Ghanaians' way of life and way of behaving were concerned.

The development and improvement of the country concerned particularly the social and cultural life and this is what was illustrated throughout the two African works:” The Strange Man and No Sweetness Here”, both written by Ghanaian writers who are among the most famous African writers, and have been particularly interested in Ghana. Thus, in the second part, we are going to present the study of the two works which have links with the social and cultural life in Ghana at the independence.

PART TWO

THE STRANGE MAN AND NO SWEETNESS HERE: ILLUSTRATING SOME ASPECTS OF GHANAIAN SOCIAL AND CULTURAL LIFE

INTRODUCTION

In this part, we put our points on the study about the two works: The Strange Man and No Sweetness Here. We use these books to illustrate some aspects of social and cultural life in Ghana at independence. We present first the writers and their works, then the plot summaries of the two works, after that the topics common to the two works, and socio cultural changes brought by the British colonists.

The Strange Man and No Sweetness Here: two works illustrating some aspects of Ghanaian social and cultural life

2-1-The Strange Man

a) The writer and his work:

Amu Dzoletso, the fairly well known Ghanaian writer, novelist and poet, was born in 1929 in a village in Ghana. He attended Accra Academic and University College of the Gold Coast, then studied text development at an institute of education. The Strange Man is his first work, which he wrote in 1967. He was also the author of three other popular literary works which were all published by Heinemann: West African Prose written in 1972, Money Galore in 1975 and Amid the Swelling Act in 1992.

b) Plot summary

Throughout The Strange Man, Amu Dzoletso talked about certain aspects of the Ghanaian society and family life such as family occupations, customs and traditions. In addition, he highlighted the roles of Christianity in the lives of Ghanaian families in their daily lives, concerning moral behaviour, their sexual and educational upbringing of children. Moreover,

he depicted the shocking hypocrisy of certain Christians and the unedifying examples of some missionaries, which led some people to have a deeply entrenched hatred for religious educational schools and the teachers there. Apart from these, in this work, Amu Dzoletso through his young hero Mensa, gives the readers an insight into the daily lives of children staying with relatives or family friends in one of the town of the then Gold Coast, enable them the visits of a secondary school. Furthermore, Amu Dzoletso described the way parents, teachers and ministers of the church brought children up.

2-2 No Sweetness Here

a) The writer and her work

One of the most significant women novelists of contemporary Ghana, she is also a playwright and short story writer. Ama Ata Aidoo was born in 1942 in Aboadzi Kyiakor, Gold Coast. Her mother was Maama Abba and her father, the village chief of Aboadzi Kyiakor, was Nana Yaw Fama. She grew up in a Fante royal household and was sent by her father to the Wesley High School in Cape Coast, Ghana. By the age of 15, she wanted to be a writer. She attended the University of Ghana in 1964. After graduating, she attended Stanford University. From 1970 to 1982, Aidoo worked as a lecturer in English at the University of Cape Coast. She had also taught at the university in Ghana, Tanzania and Kenya and then was, for a time, a minister of education in Ghana. Her first novel Our Sister Killjoy, a collection of short stories No Sweetness Here and her plays The Dilemma of Ghost and Anowa were all published in the Longman African classic series. She continued to write short stories, radio plays and poetry.

b) The plot summary

No Sweetness Here, one of Ama Ata Aidoo's most famous works, was published in 1971 and was a collection of eleven different short stories: Every Thing Counts; For Whom Things Did Not Change, in the Cutting of Drink, The Message, Certain Wind Form The South, No Sweetness Here, a Gift From Somewhere, Two Sisters, The Late Bud, Something to Talk on The Way to the Funeral and Other Vision. In these stories which range from the politics of wigs to the fragile joy of maternity, Ama Ata Aidoo said clearly and honestly what she thought about life in post colonial Africa. She does not dodge awkward issues nor does she give in to feelings of hopelessness. Instead, she invites the reader to accept events. Some stories are about village people and family life; others about conflicts and confusions among town's people. She also depicts some western way of life that the African people imitate

concerning education, religion and socio cultural life. In addition, Ama Ata Aidoo gives the readers an insight into the family occupation and the way Ghanaian people behave in general and special focus on such matters as upbringing of children.

2-3 Topics common to the two African literary works

The two African literary works we have taken as the sources of our studies were all published after the time Ghana had won its independence. The Strange Man was written in 1967 and No Sweetness Here in 1971. Ghana gained its independence in 1957.

Throughout their novels, Amu Dzoletso and Ama Ata Aidoo, try to portray certain aspects of Ghanaian social and family lives. They point out almost identical kinds of problem faced by the Ghanaian people in their own country. To some extent, the two African literary works deal with the Ghanaian family occupations, urban and rural customs and traditions, aspects of westernisation in the field of education, religion and socio cultural life, even child upbringing

2-3-1 Family occupations

Selling and buying, farming and fishing seemed the most usual occupational categories both in rural and urban areas in Ghana; but apart from that, however, some educated Ghanaian people had different occupations.

a) Farming

Ghana was independent but its economy was always based on agriculture. Farming was extremely hard work, however, some families devoted their daily lives working on the farm to earn a living. In The Strange Man husband and wife worked together in their farm and helped each other:

"I agree, said old Anang's wife when she and her husband were alone on their farm" (p58).

In No Sweetness Here, the woman and her husband went to the farm early in the morning and went back home late in the afternoon

"We went to the farm (...), when he had not come home

by five o'clock

*I started getting worried, and then his father too returned
from the farm" (p54).*

Moreover, parents spent their time working on the farm but their children too helped them managed it. In No Sweetness Here Ama Ata Aidoo mentioned that:

*"It is high time the young people came home
from the farm" (p58).*

Even old woman like Maami Ama spent their time working on her farm

" Why were you longer at the farm today?" (p59).

Farmers planted cassava, palm trees, yams and corn; and after farming, when they went back home, they brought some of their products with them:

*Like all the loads, the other women would bring the
farms into their homes;
it was colourful with miscellaneous articles.
At the very bottom of the wide tray were the cassavas
and yam tubes, there were the gay vegetables,
golden pawpaw and crimson tomatoes. (p59)*

We can say then that in Ghana farming took an important place in people's occupations and included almost all kinds of people

b) Trading

Trading also was the most common form of economic activity in Ghana, but sometimes, it seemed impossible for the men to consider that trade was their main source of money, particularly when farmers got bad harvest since farming and trading were interdependent activities; consequently, some men had to find another way to get money aside from trading. That was the true situation of Issa in No Sweetness Here: he abandoned his trading occupation and found another job:

"But M'ma, what will be the use of staying here and watching them starve? You, yourself, know that all the cola went bad, and even if they had not, with trade as it is, how much money do you think I would have got for them? And that is why I am going. Trade is broken and since we do not know when things will be good again. I think it will be better for me to go away" (p50).

Some other people could earn their living even though they were shopkeepers. It is the case of Tete in The Strange Man: he could manage to get all his six children into Achimota College:

"Tete sent his second son to Britain to read law (...) how he got money, to do all that? (...) You can't estimate how much a man in Tete's job can make a day? I mean a secured storekeeper handling hardware lines" (p8).

Some women whose husbands were in employment helped their husbands in selling food in the school yard or somewhere else. That was the case of Mr Lomo's wife, Aunt Adzoa in The Strange Man; she sold food to the pupils at school:

"Mensa was among the lot of boys who lined up in front of the women who sold food to the children (...). He was surprised to find that Aunt Adzoa was among them, like the other women, she had more things to sell" (p103).

That was also the case of Mensa's wife

"She was extremely hardworking and toiled at several odd jobs, the most lucrative being the baking and selling of bread and cake. She was, therefore, able to help Mensa save a large portion of his income" (p207).

c) Fishing

Fishing was also considered as the largest Ghanaian family's subsistence. In The Strange Man Amu Dzoletso mentioned that many inhabitants of the Coastal areas of Accra had two main occupations: farming and fishing;

«In those far off-days, many inhabitants of the coastal areas of Accra had two main occupations: There was fisherman who caught fish which their wives smoked and sent inland to the farming settlement to sell" (p15).

d) Other occupations

Apart from farming, fishing and trading, some well educated people, both men and women, worked as teachers, doctors, clerks thanks to the British colonist's goal for western education, African natives were trained to be clerks, hospital orderlies, nurses and teachers; as seen in The Strange Man. Mr Lomo was the head teacher of a primary school

"Old Anang's cousin, Mr Lomo, was in the school office when the letter was handed to him." (p46).

Women also worked as a teacher and headmistress.

"The headmistress in particular would order some of the girls to go to her house every Sunday morning to do the laundry of her household." (p220).

Moreover, in No Sweetness Here, Aidoo mentioned that teaching was an occupation for well educated women:

"What a strange question. Is typing the only thing one can do in this world? You are a teacher, are you not? But, but... But what? Or you want me to know if I had

in the exams; I could have trained to be a teacher too"
(p88).

Furthermore, some Ghanaians of average education became clerks after finishing education at a boarding school; in The Strange Man Amu Dzoletso said:

"It was the practice for a boy of average intelligence to get a job in the administrative service of the country after finishing at this boarding school. Mensa was no exception and was employed as a clerk: first at the secretariat, then after a year was posted to the hands department, and back to the secretariat again before he went through his probation period of three years
"(p196).

Apart from that, some Ghanaian men earned their livings by cutting grass. They did everything to get money. They preferred going to remote places, because they may obtain low salary in their own village. That was the case of Issa in No Sweetness Here, he decided to go to South to cut grass:

Ma'ma, you know it is not the same. If I did that there people think I was mad. But over there, I have heard that not only do they like it but the government pays you to do it. "(p 11)

In one word, Ghanaian people did whatever earned their living, particularly when they were married and had children.

They love their children, and they look for any means of bringing them up. In the following paragraph we are going to show how Ghanaian people bring their children up.

2-3-2 Children's upbringing

a) In the circle of the family

Parents have a major role to play in ensuring the proper upbringing of their children within a family. By doing so, they make efforts to have well behaved children. On the other hand,

father and mother did not have the same way when they bring their children up. They bring them up in a different way. In The Strange Man Amu Dzoletto mentioned that:

"He knew, in matters of that nature, women could come in useful, because they had their own method of making a child talk: they would shout and rail, complain and lament, cajole and threaten, smile and caress, and the truth poured forth" (p37).

In addition, some parents spared the rod and others spoiled their children so that they became well behaved children. In The Strange Man, it was the case of old Anang and his wife, Mensa's parents are against of sparing the rod; they do not want to have their son beaten.

"While my wife and I don't doubt his good intention, we feel, however that from what we've seen in the past, he will subject our son to constant caning, we are unable to accept this method as the best possible way of keeping our son out of mischief" (p63).

As opposed to that, in No Sweetness Here Niamey's father spared the rod to bring his son up:

"And then, he pulled out the cane and feel on the child. He poured those blows on him as though he were made of wood" (p85).

Furthermore, some children suffered from whipping, particularly those who stayed with relations or family to make them behaved well. That was the case of Badu and Antwi; children related to Mrs Adzou, Mr Lomo's wife. In The Strange Man, Mrs Lomo whipped them whenever they were up to mischief:

"Each of you will get four lashes for fighting at all" (p79).

Sometimes, Mr Lomo slapped and kicked children as well as boxed their ears when he was angry with them. It was the case of Mensa when he lived with Mr Lomo:

"Mr Lomo was so cross that he slapped Mensa in the face then boxed his ears with both hands and then kicked him out of the room." (p91).

Parents or elders always find the best way to bring their children up so that they behave properly and perfectly. Mr Lomo, in The Strange Man, punished Mensa by not giving him food:

"You will not feed by your aunt this evening and tomorrow morning" (p121).

Mr Lomo established ten rules in his house aiming at changing the 5 boys' negative attitude:

"here are the cardinal rules in addition to the one fighting which was recited ably by Badu" (p95).

In the past, all girls were meant for marriage, so some parents trained their daughters as future housewives. As a result, some tribes, especially the Akan, thought that daughters needed properly trained mothers with good morals to bring up good daughters whose behaviour was supposed to depend on their training. The careless parents were to blame for the misbehaved-children.

When a girl starts her menstruation, she has to leave her community and lives in another house where she is taught the secrets of womanhood, for examples: birth control, the best ways to be connective with men. According to Ama Ata Aidoo in No Sweetness Here, this traditional custom was still practised:

"..... when Aunti Araba was just about getting ready for her puberty, they sent her to go and stay at A- with some lady relative. That's where she learnt to mess around with flour so wella. (p16)

b) At school

In Ghana, religious and moral educations were compulsory subjects for every child in both public and private schools at the basic of primary level. They were done aiming at making pupils conduct well. In addition, mission schools trained them to recognise that they had made some mistakes and begged for forgiveness. It is mentioned in The Strange Man:

"a mission school trained that child must hesitate and, if necessary, beg for forgiveness whenever his elders were angry with him; no matter whether he was right he had a good excuse to give, once his elders whether rightly or wrongly, though he was wrong and was displeased with him, he must cower in tears and plead that he would never do anything wrong again" (p84).

On the other hand, when the colonists arrived, they considered the native people as slaves so they whipped them whenever they were angry with them because the natives behaved badly towards them. Some indigenous teachers or head teachers imitated this way to transform certain aspects of their pupils' attitudes or characters to train pupils to obey and to behave in a controlled way. The teachers treated pupils impersonally; pupils were severely punished when they did not follow the school rules. They were whipped or given corporal punishment: in The Strange Man, Mensa and Torto did not follow the school rule and then considered as bad pupils so they had to be given some lashes by Mr Lomo, their headmaster:

"Mr Lomo said "here are the bad boys in this school what should we do to them?" Whip them! The school crowd authorised him. Of course, this time, there was no dissentient voice and Mensa and Torto were given that dose of medicine that had succeeded in keeping school children healthy into their adult lives" (p109).

Secondly, pupils could be whipped when conducting juvenile love affair, when they were caught by their teachers, for example writing special types of love letter. Amu Dzoletto used the "billet doux" in The Strange Man and mentioned that:

"any boy or girl, who was caught with a letter of this nature, was declared to have committed a first degree offence, known to the entire religious educational set up; and the punishment that went with it was nothing short of the wilful murder under the banner of the Christian cause for the

salvation of the soul, which had no need of the human body any way; consequently, the boys, who wrote those letters or conducted those juvenile love affairs, were as secretive and desperate as illicit gin distillers in the dark forest of the Akwapim hills" (p131).

Moreover, in The Strange Man, Danso one of Mr Lomo's pupils, wrote a love letter and asked his friend Badu to give it to a girl in the school, but the girl sent the letter to Mr Lomo, and as a result Danso was whipped:

"Danso was given thirty one lashes on his back, the beating was so noisy and severe that the whole school was hushed for the rest of the morning" (p134)

Apart from this, for pupils who did not finish their exercises or get their exercises wrong were given lashes too. It was mentioned in No Sweetness Here:

"... if Kwesi gets his sums wrong I will come to school to receive his lashes..." (p64)

If mistakes were not made within a few minutes, pupils were anyway severely whipped. It was seen in The Strange Man:

"He would ask those sitting in front to read. Boys would do their best to read well If a mistake was not made within fifteen minutes he would rise and shout... the whole class, come round! One after the others, four lashes each" (p192).

During the colonial period, the Ghanaian girls rarely attended school. Those who attended school were taught housecraft in an interesting and practical way and then performed it at the head mistress' house to ensure that girls learnt it very well. In The Strange Man Odole, Mensa's daughter, was one of those girls:

"It was fashionable while Odole was attending school for the female teacher who taught her the housecraft in an interesting

and practical way (p 210). To ensure that the girls learnt how to wash clothes very satisfactory, the headmistress, in particular, would order some of the girls to go to her house every Saturday morning to do the laundry of her household". (p 220)

When one of the girls did not come to the head mistress's house to do the laundry of her household, she punished by whipping her. In The Strange Man, Odoile, Mensa's daughter, is one of the girls who was punished and whipped for not coming to her headmistress's to do her household.

"One Monday evening, Odoile returned from school full of tears and her father asked her why she wept. She, in reply, asked her father to examine her legs and hands. There were bad cuts on them inflated by the cane..... She told him that she was to have gone to the house of her head mistress on the previous Saturday morning to help with the laundry But she could not go" (p221)

On the whole, children should be punished for their misbehaviours, but, ideally, the punishment should fit the crime.

2-3-3 Traditions and Customs

Traditions and customs played important parts in the social and cultural life of the Ghanaian people. Practically in all parts of the country, people made a point of observing them. For examples funeral and marriage were usually considered as great social events. Amu Djeloto and Ama Ata Aidoo illustrate the importance of these customs and traditions through their works.

a) Marriage

Historically, the Ghanaian people were evangelised by the British missionaries at all, so that many of them became converts and called Christians: Amu Dzoletto, in this novel "The Strange Man", precised that:

“Here we are in a Christian village” (p41).

Hence when Christians want to deal with sex, they would have in their mind these following words: virginity, abstinence and marriage.

As far as Oxford World Dictionary is concerned marriage is “the state of being husband and wife”.

For Christian people, wedding can take place at church; they would hold their wedding ceremony in a church, as Aidoo mentioned in No Sweetness Here.

“We hear they have a church wedding” (p126).

For some people marriage is considered, particularly when it is held at church, as an important Christian festival. As a result, many couples held their marriage banns to the minister of church and the latter put up these banns three times in a church in order to check church goers’ opinion about the marriage. It was the case of the bell man, in The Strange Man, when he got married; the marriage banns had been called three times in the church:

“ ... the banns had been called three times in the church/.../ nobody came forward to protest or to object to the marriage” (p 147)

In Ghana, it becomes obligatory for members of both families to ensure that marriage was successful. As opposed to that, as seen in The Strange Man, that was only the bell man who spent on all things to make marriage successful:

” The woman’s father said he would have none on the wedding” (p 146).

Ghanaians enjoy doing party so during a marriage they spent much money to have a big party to celebrate the marriage. During that time, all were happy. In The Strange Man, Amu Dzoletto justified that during the bellman’s wedding, he had a big party and invited many people and all of them seemed very happy on that day:

“....every body was happy that day /.../ Such people are seen by every body to be drunk” (p147).

When men wanted to have a successful wedding they must hoard their money before it will take place. In The Strange Man, the bell man hoarded his money before holding a marriage:

“...The bell man has worked for a long time. He has always been hoarding his money and can easily afford expensive things of they take his fancy. “He was quite splendid on that day” (p149).

“Really Mensa, it was a very successful wedding and the couple looked quite cheerful. For a week or so, there was good feasting and merriment in the bell man’s house” (p150).

When a couple had bad relation, they had to get divorced. After the colonisation, Ghanaian couples had to have formal divorce when they want to separate. That was the case of Maami Ama in “No Sweetness Here:

“do you know that tomorrow I am going to have a formal divorce” ” (p 60).

Being husband and wife is not an easy thing hence, before getting married, one should think deeply, as well as a couple should know each other to avoid separation. A man or a woman should look for whom she or he is dedicated to him/her and can help each other. In The Strange Man, when Mensa decided to get married, he looked for a girl that is dedicated to him and could help to share his problems:

“later on, Mensa married the kind of girl he was looking for, and at this stage he was lucky. She was a good girl from a respectable family. Nobody would say his wife was perfect in every way, but every one knew she was a good and peaceful woman who was completely dedicated to him and shared in large measure his emotional and spiritual life”(p207).

Amu Dzoletto, in this novel The Strange Man, showed that no couples got divorced from the beginning to the end of this novel.

It is not necessary to rush into marriage; it is better to take time getting to know each other, and then to test the depth of love. But Mensa's case, in The Strange Man, is opposed to that situation. He wanted to marry the daughter of his previous head teacher in the boarding school even though he did not know her well, he also did not know how deep his love was:

“he thought first of marrying the head teacher's daughter.... But he was not sure whether he loved the girl or whether the girl loved him” (p200).

Besides, the shopkeeper asked Mensa if he loved the girl, but Mensa was not sure of him and said:

“I'm not sure I do, but I think in a way it is proper I marry her. (p 205).

If one is not sure of oneself, it is better to ask for someone else's advice. For Mensa, he asked for advice from his best friend Torto, because Torto knew the girl and her love affairs in class so he advised Mensa not to marry her. That is justified in The Strange Man:

“if you are not sure you love her, please don't marry. That's my advice and it comes from a good friend. (p205)

Marriage is considered as one of holy things, so for those who were united by God must not separate whatever happens. But, in No Sweetness Here, Issa decided to leave his wife for financial reasons:

” But Ma'ma, what will be the use of my staying here and watching them stare? Trade is broken and since we do not know when things will be good again. I think it will be better for me to go away. (p50)

As a conclusion, the traditional system of Ghana, generally, approved the polygamy. But during the post-independence period, the civilised Ghanaian people considered polygamy as adultery. They considered themselves as Christian people so they follow what the bible said:

“Each man should have his own wife, and each woman should have her own husband “. (I Corinthians 7:2b)

That is for the marriage and the following paragraph tells about the funeral.

a) Funeral

Ghana, like the other African countries, considered funeral as a great social event and a big affair. It is also a reflexion of one’s riches as well as a mark of social important.

All people seem very bitter about death particularly the bereaved family. They cried and sobbed all the time. It was the case of Tete’s wife in the Strange Man: when Tete was dead, his wife always cried and sobbed:

***“Oh! Oh! Oh! Oh! She cried.
I can’t understand it’s cruel” (p2).***

In addition to this, in No Sweetness Here, when Kwesi was dead, all people who came there cried:

“They all forgot their differences and burst into loud lamentation” (p73).

When hearing someone’s death, everybody, even people who live far away, came and attended this momentous event; it is meant to comfort and help the bereaved family. As seen in The Strange Man, all the people in village came to Mensa and Tete’s mother’s house as soon as heaving her death:

“in the evening while her mother’s body lay in state, the local choir and singing band arrive in full force/.../None of them had been in his farm that day and now every body offered his services with an eagerness and enthusiasm” (p250).

In addition, in No Sweetness Here, Adwoa came to Auntie Arabia’s funeral just after heaving the news:

“....I just rushed into my room to pick up my okatado when I heard the news. How could I remain another hour in Tarkwa after getting such news?”(p114).

We mentioned above that funeral is a reflexion of one's riches and also a mark of social importance so from the beginning to the end of the funeral, that was time when the corpse lay in state until it would be placed in the grave, the bereaved family showed how big they were. In The Strange Man, when Mrs Old Anang, Mensa and Tete's mother, died the two men expected an expensive funeral because they were considered as well-off men:

“Her passing away, however; was a momentous event to the villagers who regarded old Mensa and Tete as men who were well-off. They therefore expected an expensive funeral and burial.” (p249).

By doing so, they spent much money during that time:

“Tete rushed to a village in the plains of Accra and bought a fat bull at thirty five pounds. He also bought cases of whisky, schnapps, gim and beer; only a few crates of soft drinks” (p250)

When someone is dead, some other people, relatives or friends, offered financial help for a very short moment and little cash donation from sympathizing villagers, and they are given food and drinks. It is mentioned in The Strange Man:

“Whatever cash was left she had spent on the funeral, most of it having gone into a liberal provision of drinks and food for those who came to mourn with her. Even the little cash donations, she receives from the poor sympathizing villagers, had to be used” (p162).

It was the customs of modern Ghana, especially for the Christian people, to bring the body of the dead person to church for the funeral service. It is seen in The Strange Man that a minister of church wanted to know when Tete's corps was brought to church:

“He wanted to know when the body of Mr Tete could be brought to the chapel for the funeral service” (p3).

After going to church, people brought the body of dead person to a grave for the funeral. There are almost Ghanaian who were buried in a cemetery in No Sweetness Here, Kwesi was buried in a cemetery:

“I had let the children sing “saviour blessed saviour” and we had gone to the cemetery with him” (p73).

It is a custom in Ghana for people to bring different groups of singers and dancers to sing for the decoration of the funeral and also giving respect to the dead person. Aidoo, in her short stories No Sweetness Here, told that Auntie Araba dance group practising the bread song for the funeral:

“did you hear the bosoe dance group practising the bread song? ». Yes I heard, they are going to make it the chief song at the funeral this afternoon/.../” (p114).

In addition, Ghanaian like other African people, have the custom to bury everyone in the afternoon and it is still justifiable until now in Ghana; as seen in No Sweetness Here when Kwesi is dead:

“He was buried at four o'clock” (p73).

It is a customs in Ghana, for the bereaved family not to be alone after the funeral. They need comfort so all the people who attended the funeral ceremony should go to the bereaved family's house; not only to comfort them but also to reaffirm kinship within community and it is no need to weep again. That is mentioned in No Sweetness Here that:

“after funeral, I went to the house of mourning as we should do after a burial .No one was supposed to weep again” (p43).

It is tradition to have a ceremony during the marriage and a funeral but during the marriage all people are happy however, in a funeral people seem to be sad and sobbed, they cry all the time.

Many changes occurred in Ghana when the British colonists arrived there. Not only the customs and traditions changed, but the British colonists also brought changes as far as social and cultural life are concerned.

2-4 **SOCIO CULTURAL CHANGES BROUGHT BY BRITISH COLONISTS**

a) Education

During the pre colonial time, Ghana had its own ways to educate children, even though there was no school building at that time. Children learnt things from imitation of their parents and, then the whole communities. They also learnt the proper roles and behaviours through proverbs, guessing, songs and stories at their home.

During the colonial period, many changes began to occur; the British missionaries and British colonists brought changes by introducing a western style education. Many schools were founded everywhere in Ghana; since then, many Ghanaian children started going to school and received formal education. Parents were also encouraged and even compelled to send their children to school instead of giving them traditional or informal education. Thus, it was obvious that, the western style education had brought changes in the moral outlook and behaviour of Ghanaian people. Amu Dzoletso, in his novel The Strange Man mentioned that if children did not go to school, particularly boys, they would be rotten to the core:

“some of the boys in the village who have not yet been put to school are rotten to the core” (p56).

British missionaries then built some mission schools in Ghana and, they encouraged parents to send their children to those schools if they wanted to have good children. By doing so, as

shown in The Strange Man the catechists convinced Mr and Mrs Old Anang to send their child, Mensa, to his school:

“I therefore appeal to Mr and Mrs Anang to send their children to my school after Christmas holidays/.../ I promised to mould them into useful citizen of our country”(p56)

Apart from this, some parents considered the mission schools as good schools and were the best places to educate children:

“there are three good secondary schools in this country. One is at Achimota, two are in Cape coast. They are all God” fearing school” (p231).

Seeing the advantages from the existence of school, many parents sent their children to school since it had always been their ambitions to have well educated children. That was the case of Tete, in The Strange Man, he wanted to give his children a first class education:

“He made sure all his children got a first class education/.../ one of his children must go to the United Kingdom to read medicine/.../ he sent another son to the United State to study refrigeration engineering at the Massachusetts Institute of technology/.../ one of his daughters had finished at Achimota college; he sent her over to a hospital in Oxford to do midwifery/.../ Tete sent his second son to Britain to read law” (p7-8).

Although some parents thought that school had a fundamental development and responsibility for child rearing, they seemed unable to distinguish between schools. They believed that having good education and progress depended on the type of schools, teachers and staff as well as the environment. That was the reason why Tete advised Mensa to choose a good school for his children as seen in The Strange Man:

“Why, in the name of progress, should you let Nee go to that school? Don’t you see there are no expatriates on the staff? All the delinquent crimes committed in Accra are perpetrated by boys of that school. The pupils in that school are not pupils’ at all/...../ can you take a school seriously when its headmaster has no cow? /.../ Any school founded in a slum is nothing, but a festering of that slum” (p 23)

In addition, children also can choose and distinguish between schools. They know what schools are suitable for them. In The Strange Man, Mensa persuaded his mother to send him to the school where he wanted to. He said:

“I don’t want to go to any other school but that one; the boys there are neat and well behaved” (p 160).

Some parents show a very positive attitude concerning their children’s education; they are ambitious to give them substantial education; even if they are uneducated and poor, in addition, the parents watch with pride as their children succeed in their education. That was the case of Kofi, in No Sweetness Here, who was a bright student and that made his father happy:

“Well, we went to the sixth form and of course father realized I was still in the school. He was quite pounding of to me too. He always managed to let slip into conversation with other men how Kofi was planning to go to the university” (p 12).

We mentioned earlier that the colonists’ rationale of education was to promote the development of the African Child; as well as the governor’s goal was to replace Europeans with educated African in many administrative positions within the country. Amu Dzoletso, in his novel The Strange Man, asserted that:

“It was the practice for a boy of average intelligent to get a job in the administrative service of the country after finishing at this boarding school” (p 196)

Formal education also gives some children the opportunity to go abroad. For children who did very well could continue their studies in another country, thanks to a scholarship they received from the government. For instance, in No Sweetness Here, Kofi, who was a bright student, won a scholarship to an American University:

“I passed higher and with lots of distinctions/.../ and then I met Mr Bunting, who had been our Chemistry teacher. He asked me if I would be invested in a scholarship for an American University/.../ of course I applied/.../ I got the scholarship” (p132).

Moreover, in The Strange Man, Odole and Nee, Mensa’s children, also won scholarship to Europe and West Germany:

“Odole had finished her sixth form course successfully and was going through the ritual for a scholarship award to fly to Europe to do medicine. Nee had also done so well in the west African School Certificate Examination that a mining company had generously given him a scholarship to do mining engineering in West Germany” (p257).

Western style education brought not only good changes but bad changes also in the socio-cultural life of the educated Ghanaian. Sometimes formal education put well educated children in a bad situation and made them behave badly especially towards their family. It was the case of Odole who was bright student and won scholarship, in The Strange Man

“Odole had become rude to everybody in the house particularly to the father and mother” (p257).

Furthermore, some teachers, lawyers, doctors, or clerks felt that their wages were not sufficient for them consequently their dreams of riches had tempted them into corruption. That was the case of Mr Roberto, in The Strange Man, who was a chief clerk and had immediate control over the interpreters. He accepted bribes offered by 2 labourers, who fought each other, in order to avoid prison:

“Friends told them about the interpreters and Mr Roberto's contacts shuffled through the darkeners of the night and each labourer found and gave away ten pounds so that they would not be sent to prison/.../ but Mensa had known this bribe (p211) and (p213).

On the whole, the two Ghanaian writers, Ama Ata Aidoo and Amu Dzoletso, in their novels described their positive view concerning the western style Education; for them it was very important and also the source of development and progress, especially a powerful instrument, for radical change. Thanks to the formal education they had acquired that some well educated Ghanaians became elites as well; thanks to those educated people and elites who gained the desire to strive for the independence of the country and their efforts culminated in victory. Ghana was the first African country who achieved its independence that was on March 06th 1957.

b) Religion

As far as Ghana was concerned, the Christian missionaries established Christianity in the 15th century. Christianity has changed the African way of life whether in the communication between husbands and wives, parents and children as well as in their moral and sexual behaviour or even in the children's education. The missionaries built Christian churches later consequently, there were Christian churches set up in different regions in Ghana and some villages' eyes became Christian villages as Amu Dzoletso, in The Strange Man, affirmed that Bovid, which was a village below the Akwapin hills in the southern Ghana where old Anang and his family lived, was a Christian village:

“Here we are in Christian village” (P41).

When churches were set up in Ghana, people began going to church and managed to reject the traditional religion little by little. They did their best and made big efforts to frequent church or went to church every Sunday to pray to God and it goes without saying that they believed in God who was the creator and ruler of all things. Since then, people were considered as good Christians when they went to church on Sundays.

Ama Ata Aidoo noted, in No Sweetness Here, that a good Christian was described as a person who attended church twice every Sunday:

“She certainly went to church twice every Sunday. She was a good Christian” (P118). For Amu Dzoletu a good Christian was a person who had been baptised and confirmed: “Gadugo, you’re not a Christian, you’re not been baptised and confirmed” (P147).

Thanks to the British missionaries then some African people, mainly some Ghanaian, were converted to Christianity; by doing so, they loved one another and showed respect in whatever they said and did. For example, in family children respected and obeyed their parents.

They followed what bible said: “You children must obey your parents, for this is what pleased the Lord” Colossians: 3-20. In addition in The Strange Man, Mensa was an obedient child, he accepted to go to Mr Lomo though, he did not want to, because he was not chosen to come here, he answered:

“I didn’t choose to come here, It was my father who asked me to come”(P84).

In addition, husband and wife also followed what the Bible said “You wives must submit to your husbands as is fitting for those who belong to the Lord and you husbands must love your wives and don't treat them harshly” (Colossians 3:18-19).

Amu Dzoletu, in The Strange Man, described old Anang as an ideal Christian because he was a good head of family and husband. First he was a good husband because he never treated his wife harshly. For example, when old Anang and his wife, were wanted at the catechist’s house, he, old Anang, did not scold his wife, he counselled his wife before going there:

“you may be right, counselled old Anang; but you must choose your word carefully when we get there” (p47).

Second old Anang was a good head of his family: before his death, he encouraged his children to behave well and the urged them to the help the helpless people and the poor, for he said

“you have to be nice to people, you should cooperate with people in a cause for the common good/.../ try to do good for its own sake/.../ you’ve supposed to believed in God. But if you happen to be unable to do as he wishes, you may end up in hell/.../ translate your ideas into that harmless personal way of life that makes for peace, hope and light in your dark corner/.../ seek the sick, the humble, the dejected and the supposedly down and out, they’re wonderful people do them good, cheer them up and feel you’re one of them in a world in which there’s always something blatantly and radically wrong”(p156).

However Christian people have been taken as models by others, particularly by their descendents. In No Sweetness Here, Mercy and Connie’s attitudes differ entirely from the other girls who chose to settle with rich old men, because for them, they broke Christian rules

“their parents were good Presbyterian. They feared God. Mama had not managed to give them all the rules of life before she died. But Connie knows that running around with an old and disproved public man would have been considered an abomination by parents” (p93).

Furthermore, education and religion are interdependent because once the British missionaries penetrated the local Ghanaian society, they built school to teach some natives to become

convert and then good members of the church who could be capable of reading the bible and could thus help them in spreading the Holy Scriptures. Later on, mission schools were numerous in Ghana and became absolutely necessary for Ghanaian children in order to pave the way for a better future

That case was seen in The Strange Man: parents who wanted to have good children sent them only to a God fearing school like Achimota College and the two schools in Cape Coast; the others schools are considered as bad schools:

“There are three good secondary schools in this country. One is at Achimota and two are in cape coast. They are all God fearing schools, but Accra Brooding School is not attached to any religious denomination and if it had its way, it would be pagan. Anyone in this country who wants his child to be distinguished in future must have him go through one of the three schools I’ve mentioned”(p231).

To sum up, the African people felt that they had a wide choice as far as education and religions were concerned, but on the whole education and Christianity had brought great changes on the lives of the Africans more precisely Ghanaian people.

C) Social and Cultural life

Apart from the education and religion, the British colonists also brought changes concerning the social life of Ghanaians particularly in cities. During the pre-colonial period, the Ghanaians’ life was very simple whereas when the white British colonists arrived, they, the Ghanaians, imitated them completely in the fields of fashion, entertainment and marriage.

Concerning the fashion, Ghanaian girls and women as well as men were influenced by the white British people’s way of life, more precisely the western way of life, because of the long social relations with them. Ghanaian girls and women seeing beautiful white girls and women did all their possibilities to become like white women. In No Sweetness Here Sissie was very surprised when she returned to her country to see all the girls and women imitating white women. They put some artificial things on their smooth black skins to look like white women:

“... it seemed as if all the girls and women she knew and remembered as having smooth black skins turned light skinned” (p3).

In addition, these girls and women wore wigs to have white women's hair:

“it was then she noticed the wigs, all the girls were wearing them” (p5).

Besides, in order to attract men, some woman of prostitution, wore attractive dresses and put lipsticks; Ama Ata Aidoo noticed in her short stories No Sweetness Here that:

“her lips with that red paint looked like a fresh wound. There was no space between skin and dress” (p36).

Apart from girls and women, Ghanaian men also wore fashionable clothes and shoes when they went to a village or town to visit their relatives or friends. It was the case of Mr Lomo, in The Strange Man; he looked very smart when he wanted to visit a cousin Old Anang:

“he was well dressed and distinguished, thought his shoes were slightly cracked here and there, it appeared, they were accustomed to good polishing. His dress sat on him like a man who would not look awkward in Ghanaian clothes” (p71).

In addition, Ghanaian people had their own way of having fun either in cities or in village during the pre-colonial time, whereas when the British colonist arrived, they brought changes and established new forms of entertainment especially in urban areas. For example, city dwellers spent their week-ends having fun since they were very busy on weekdays, and they went out at night; that was their habits, and if not they seemed nervous and unhappy; thus going out at night during the weekends became a must for every Ghanaians when living in cities; Aidoo, in No Sweetness Here, justified that:

“it would certainly be a crime to come to this city and not go out on a Saturday night”. (p33).

City dwellers also always went to big buildings where a band was playing; they went there to dance and drink. Aidoo, in No Sweetness Here, described the city dwellers’ way of spending their time in a night club:

” some were in front of counter buying drinks, others were dancing” (p33).

By doing so, Ghanaian people liked to imitate white people when they danced and drank

***“I think you all dances like white men...” (p34)
” as for me, I told him lemonade but his woman asked for beer” (p34).***

Besides, in The Strange Man when Mensa and Torto went in a shop they asked beer and coca-cola:

“Mensa called for two bottles of beer, but Torto said he was not sure whether he would have beer, perhaps some coca-cola would do” (p202)

In addition, some people began considering beer as a good drink and enjoying it:

“Beer always goes down well in this part of the world. It’ll make you enjoy your dinner, and as you know, it refreshes as you drink it (p 203).

Before the arrival of Europeans, Ghanaian people enjoyed practising polygamy, but when the British missionaries established Christianity in Ghana, many Ghanaians were converted and refused polygamy, The Strange Man showed it:

“What I don’t like is adultery. If I caught my wife at it, I would not cut her throat, I would not drag her to court, I would pour gasoline on her and burn her alive so that she wouldn’t do it to the next man.” (p205).

Consequently some men who wanted to get married did not like a woman who has been already seduced:

“Would you marry a girl everyone has seduced? (p 205)

Moreover, the British colonists brought many changes as far as Ghanaians’ behaviour toward the marriage and moral were concerned.

Some couples preferred and performed religious marriage. That was the case of the bell man and his wife in The Strange Man: they held her marriage at church when some Ghanaians became Christians; they avoided producing bastards who were considered as children from adultery. In The Strange Man, the old clergyman, during his sermon, explained to the school boys how bastards were:

“You don’t go to bed; you lurk behind people’s houses whistling girls’ names. And the result? You produce bastards for others to look after /.../ God doesn’t like it! It embarrasses Him! Besides, it is both embarrassing and inconvenient to everybody to you, the girls, the parents of the girls and yours, the church, the child when he grows up and last, but not the least, to your conscience! Moreover and personally, I don’t derive any satisfaction from baptizing bastards” (p197).

In order to respect God, the Christians should not sleep with someone who is not one’s husband or wife, and should abstain themselves from sexual contact before marriage. That was the case of Mensa in The Strange Man. He had made the daughter of the headmaster at the Middle School of Accra pregnant during the school year, so he felt guilty. But, unfortunately:

“After three months, the girl was seriously ill, and when she recovered she no longer had to look forward to having a baby.”

Old Anang was described by Amu Djoletto as the perfect Christian. The principles of his moral were to convey the sympathy to the helpless and poor people. Before he died, he encouraged his family to help people who were poor or sick:

“Seek the sick, the humble, the dejected and the supposed down-and-out; they are wonderful people. Do them good, cheer them up and feel you’re one of them in a world in which there’s always something blatantly and radically wrong.”(p156)

He also gave his family some advice about the way they speak, he advised them not to harm anyone when saying something or expressing ideas:

“Translate your ideas into that harmless personal way of life that makes for peace, hope, and light in your dark corner. (p156)

On the whole, Amu Dzoletto and Ama Ata Aidoo, in their literary works, described the changes as powerful instruments that made Ghanaian people develop and able to improve their way of life

CONCLUSION TO PART II

From the studies of the two works, The Strange Man and No Sweetness Here, we can conclude that some aspects of social and cultural life in Ghana at independence were illustrated by Amu Djeloto and Ama Ata Aidoo throughout their works.

Moreover, the themes “social and cultural life” that we have studied within the two works concern also the Malagasy way of life.

As far as education is concerned, caning is very important: first it is the best way to punish pupils, but on the other hand caning made some other parents not admit their children in schools where teachers enjoyed using cane when punishing pupils.

We stated earlier that, when we studied the two works in the third year at the “Ecole Normale Supérieure”, we felt that these books can be used as didactic material in Ière and Terminale because there are some excerpts we can use to practise the writing skill which fit these levels according to the Malagasy lycée official syllabuses.

Thus in the following part, we are going to use these excerpts as written supports or reading comprehension.

PART THREE

TEACHING APPLICATION

INTRODUCTION

Malagasy students often have difficulties in their acquisition of the English language; these difficulties may lead them to dislike, neglect or omit this subject. The latter are often due to the government, teachers, as well as students themselves.

First of all, the foreign language teaching policy in Madagascar is focused on the teaching of French language which is put it in first place, but does not care enough about the English languages teaching strategies. English is made an optional subject at school; though it is compulsory for the literary forms, its coefficient is not suitable enough for the learners to learn it seriously. Moreover, three hours a week are not sufficient times for such a demanding course.

Second, in the classroom some teachers are not ashamed to humiliate some of their students, when the latter use or write wrong words, or obtaining bad marks. The teachers' attitude can lead students to dislike or skip English classes, besides some teachers do not pay much attention to the teaching when they feel that their students do not pay much attention to it either. Concerning the writing skill some teachers assert that it is not necessary to teach writing, since students are already capable of writing sentence or sentences and it could logically follow that they know how to build paragraphs since paragraphs are made up of sentences more precisely, some teachers do not motivate students to do or improve writing. In addition, some teachers teach in a very routine way which is very boring or not exciting; as a result, students may skip the class, indeed they always speak English during a session and do not care of those who do not understand; the latter make up the majority of the students. Some teachers do the writing activity at a very end session and forget to correct it in the following session, therefore students, who have not finished their work and are not familiar with writing, are very happy and neglect the writing totally.

Third, some students neglect or omit the English subject because they think that "literary" forms are not so important compared to the "scientific" ones; besides at the beginning of their English learning, they already know that English is not a compulsory subject in 3eme and in T D-C, indeed those who have learnt it seriously from 6eme to 3eme may not have acquired in a satisfactory way what they have learnt. They always feel that English is not their mother tongue and their brains do not feel like making efforts anymore. Some students are not ashamed to say that it is not possible for them to continue their English learning abroad.

Furthermore, some students complain that English books are very expensive and difficult to find particularly novels and English through English dictionary. As a result, their wills for reading decreases, they lack vocabulary and it is difficult for them to become familiar with or fluent in the English language. In addition, they cannot adjust themselves to the style of any writers. Students who choose the “A” section i.e the literary forms, are not so good at English; they choose this section to become free from scientific subjects especially mathematics, but for those who really choose it seriously, they are too self confident and do not care much of it, consequently they make many mistakes.

All in all, the Government must be more responsible for Malagasy Students’ success or failure. Students could do better if the former took some important measures to improve the English Language teaching and learning in MADAGASIKARA.

In view of trying to solve these problems, in this last part, we shall suggest some ways to make students be interested in the English subject; particularly, the part about the writing task at the Baccalaureat exam for example. To do it, we shall use and adapt some excerpts from the two works for practising the writing skill.

Thus, this last part of our dissertation will focus more particularly on how to improve the practice of the writing skill; that is we show our suggestions by combining some writing activities with the reading comprehension (excerpts from the two works), then we shall at the same time present some theoretical parts concerning the writing skill; after that we carry out our experimentations. The last paragraph is about the suggested lesson plans.

3-1- Integrating Writing and Reading for Effective Language teaching

We tried to look for an effective way to increase the students' vocabulary, expressions, structures as well as their will for tackling writing; hence, we realised that writing, which is considered a difficult skill, can be combined with the reading comprehension; and when we carried out our experimentations we integrated writing with it; as a result some students, who seemed reluctant to learn English because of their levels of knowledge, became interested in it when seeing and following our writing lessons and activities. The students were at first poor at writing, because it was a fairly difficult skill. They were expected to create a written product that showed their mastery of the content, the meaning of a paragraph, the mastery of vocabulary, as well as the structure, spelling in a new language, and especially the possession of cogent convincing ideas. Besides, some students who came from rural areas and those who chose "B" option at the BEPC could not even write one accurate sentence or one coherent paragraph during their Lycée years.

On the one hand, some teachers asserted that it was not necessary to teach students how to build a sentence for example, since they had already been told that during the four years at the CEG level, they chose to emphasize grammar and spelling rather than content and organisation of ideas. They did not help students develop their ability to express ideas either. Thus, in view of the many difficulties which students are faced with in performing writing, we thought that integrating reading and writing could be an effective way for teaching the English language, to make students obtain better results at the writing skill.

The writing skill is a productive skill and reading is receptive one as we know, hence the two skills can reinforce each other. By doing, the teacher can use different kinds of reading material or anything written, namely texts such as: letters, reports or excerpts from novels or, short stories. With texts, the teacher can teach grammar and difficult vocabulary items contained in them, and which the students need to master; in addition, the best way to improve students "word power", i.e. the mastery of expressions and structures is through reading. Students may face difficulties with reading but they can adjust themselves with the writer's style and when reading is combined with writing, it becomes easier to introduce different types of writing activities, such as controlled writing, guided writing, semi-guided writing activities, or as a last stage free writing activities.

3-2- Some theories about the writing skill

3-2.1- Introduction

Writing can be considered as communicating messages or information as Donn Byrne, in English Teaching Extracts, said: «writing is not language but a communicative system tied in very intimately with language” (P 20)

Moreover, writing skills are productive skills since they are mainly characterized as processes of output, they aim at reinforcing vocabulary and structures already mastered orally; writing skills are not only the abilities of learners to express their opinions on a definite given topic in writing, but also the organization of information logically and clearly in sentences and may be considered as a feedback either for the teachers or the students. Writing is also considered as output, since they reinforce vocabulary and structures already mastered orally, they can be used for practicing end term achievement tests.

To sum up, we can define the writing skill as means of expressing thought, message, ideas and feeling, using written words. But before students write, teachers should make sure that those students can say something, read it, and understand it. It is worth mentioning that there are some kinds of writing: sentence writing, paragraph writing, letter and essay writing; each of which has its own style: narrative, argumentative, and descriptive according to the given topic.

3-2-2 The importance of teaching the writing skill

Writing, a difficult skill, may require time for its teaching. Teachers should teach and explain their students how to deal with this skill especially concerning essay writing and paragraph writing if they want them to consider the writing skill seriously and make it more interesting in class. This will bring success especially if teachers persistently exert themselves to motivate students to read and write.

Moreover, teachers should not continue to believe that there is no particular need to teach writing as some of them say:” students are already capable of writing sentences and paragraph” nor should they undertake the study only at the very end of the course. This strategy about writing is bound to decrease the interest of the students and their motivation to write well.

Furthermore, writing activities present less threat than giving response to oral activities particularly for students who are very shy or have difficulties in speaking. During the writing

activities, students have more time to look for words, forms and they can express their thought calmly; they can also make progress in concept acquisition and in writing. Abilities were seen through writing tasks; in addition, some students' concerns, especially for Terminale class, are to be able to read accurately, to acquire information and to write logically so as to get good marks in written examinations.

Thus, to make learners be interested in writing and obtain positive results, as well as to make it important for students: as we see it, teachers should first help students towards acquiring a mastery of the written form of the language; second, consider teaching writing as an important element in then teaching, even though it may be difficult.

Last but not least, teaching the writing skills is very important if only for practical reasons: it makes up more than 1/3 of the total mark: 07/20 either in the BEPC or Baccalaureat examinations, so teachers should devote enough time and should be patient to teach it for any of those classes.

3-2-3 The Writing Skill as Seen in the 1ère and Terminale Official Syllabus

First, we will examine the 1ère official syllabus. It can be described as a block of teaching units which fall into twelve units.

Each unit is organized from the selection of language functions. Once it is selected, this function requires a context which permits its realization (sample context). Immediately after a choice of a context, the topic and vocabulary are defined, as well as the structures. Sample tasks and sample techniques for presentation have been seen within the syllabus. Writing skills are seen within practices such as filling bubbles, information gap, filling up charts, cloze procedure, information transfers, and completion and also within free productions like: describing something, building up sentences or dialogues, narrating events, writing personal letter and job application, articles and filling up questionnaire.

As far as the Terminale official syllabus is concerned, there are not many differences between it and the 1ere official syllabus, but at the end of the Terminale level, students will be involved in many situations of communication. Students will be able to write passages of various situations or of different natures such as description, narration, letters, and articles.

In addition, the syllabuses describe some types of evaluations for the writing skills; the tests aim at measuring the students' level or competence in writing accurate and appropriate sentences.

All in all, it is worth mentioning that all the elements such as the unit, the topics, vocabulary, structures, language functions which are presented in the syllabus can improve students' knowledge, result and competence if teachers can get hold of them. Indeed if they possess various didactic materials to use and follow, and they finish the program well.

Students also can perform and understand writing, particularly perform their writing in baccalaureat examination easily if they are taught and explained how to deal with the writing skill. There are some suggestions on how to teach the writing skill integrated with the reading comprehension that we have put as appendices.

3-3-: EXPERIMENTATIONS

During our classroom observations, in the third and fourth years at the Ecole Normale Supérieure, we noticed that the teachers did not use any excerpts from novels or literary works when teaching the writing skill. They only announced a topic and then ask the students to write their essays or paragraphs about it. It is worth mentioning that we put all those observations as part of the appendices.

Writing activities were given at the very end of the session; none of the teachers, we could observe, gave controlled and guided writing activities. This is why, we decided to use some excerpts from novel and short story collections: The Strange Man and No Sweetness Here as sources for reading texts, and used them with some writing activities.

During these sessions, we also tried to show how to teach writing paragraphs, essays and personal letter writing.

In T A we dealt with the topic “health”, and we tackled personal letter writing in 1ere A class. Our aim was to teach and to improve the teaching of the writing skill by using and adapting excerpts from the two literary works suitable to these levels and in compliance with the official syllabus.

3-3-1- Experimented lesson plans for Terminale A

We think that there are ways to implement a full teaching session focused on the study of topics for examples: health and personal letter.

First, we began with a warm up activity, then introduced the excerpt from the work” The Strange Man” as a reading text followed by silent reading, oral questions and vocabulary, this was the comprehension stage .After that, we asked the students to take notes. We, then, gave them a few different kinds of writing activities (controlled, guided and semi-guided). We asked them to wait for the explanations about how to deal with a semi guided writing before starting work.

On the whole, we spent time on developing the student’s writing skills, we first prepare them for the semi and free writing models in view of their examination. Besides, we also made some teachers aware of the importance of the writing skill, explain why it was not always advisable to do it only at the very end of a session as a way of winding up a session. We explained our view: this could mean for a great number of learners that writing, offering ideas, giving one’s opinions about a problem or a serious question, was not an important part of the teaching.

The script

Date: 18th November 2008

School: Lycée R.V.Moramanga

Class: Terminale

Duration: 2 hours

Title of the lesson: Talking about diseases and keeping fit

Unit 11: Health

Skill to be emphasized: writing

Materials: Excerpt from The Strange Man/Wrapping paper

Documentation section: - Official syllabus

- The Strange Man by Amu Dzoletto

- Dictionary: Oxford Word power

Stage I: WARM – UP ACTIVITY

Objectives: To raise the student's awareness and to make them ready for the teaching and introduce a bit of the topic.

Timing	TEACHER'S PART	STUDENT'S ANSWERS
Stage I 10 mn	How much do you weigh? Do you smoke? Do you drink alcohol?	SI 42 kg No No
	And you, how much do you weigh? Do you eat much food? And do you eat much good food?	S2: 58 Kilos No No
	What is the consequence of drinking too much alcohol? In English tension is: blood pressure and you say: I have a high or low blood pressure. When your stomach is painful you say: "I've a stomach ache"	-Tension -To have ill stomach
	And what are the consequences of eating too much good food? When a person is very fat we can say: he is overweight "under weight" is its opposite	You are ill You are fat
	So do you want to be healthy or to keep fit?	Yes, madam!
	OK- what can we do to be healthy or to keep fit?	Practice sports!

Very good! Give examples of sports	Swimming Running
What else can we do?	Cycling
Yes- very good. So, when we want to be healthy or to stay fit we should: do exercises, give up(= stop) smoking or drinking alcohol, go on a diet and practice sports	Don't smoke Don't drink

Stage II- PRE – WRITING

<p>Objectives: To give some vocabulary items from the given excerpt that students may or need to use for semi-guided writing and during their learning sessions.</p> <p>Tete and his family lived in a village in Ghana. Even though he was a very rich man he caught a serious disease. He had suffered from a stroke three months before his death which left his right arm and leg paralyzed. He felt a terrible pain. His family did not know what to do so they decided to go and see a doctor</p>	
<p>He consulted a doctor. The doctor examined him; prescribed some medicine for his disease and asked him to stay in the hospital .He was well treated there. Although the doctor did his best to cure Tete, he died from a cerebral hemorrhage.</p> <p>At his funeral, in a corner, away from the mass of formal mourners, a group of middle aged men were conversing. One of them Akoto said “I think, Tete drank too much and, this is the result”...</p> <p>Read the text silently After 5 mn, I read in a loud voice Do you understand the text?</p> <p>Asked the students the difficult vocabulary and wrote them on the board followed by explanation</p> <p><u>Caught (to catch) a disease</u> = got a disease</p> <p>Give me some example of diseases Ex: Tooth ache, stomachache, cough, sore throat, cancer, heart attack, blood pressure, stroke...</p> <p><u>Stroke</u>: a sudden disease which attacks the brain an can leave a person paralyzed</p>	<p>Read it silently Listen to me No, Madam</p> <p>Headache, malaria, aids ...</p>

<p><u>A pain</u>: (to feel a pain) an unpleasant feeling from disease</p> <p>What do you do when you catch a disease? You <u>consult</u> a doctor = you take medical advice</p> <p>What does the doctor do to you?</p> <p>1/ The doctor examines you and prescribes a treatment = to mention or to say what medicine or treatment you should have; he orders medicines on special forms (= prescription=)</p>	<p>Guess</p>
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<p>2/ The doctor cures you <u>To cure</u>: to make someone healthy again <u>A cure</u>: a medicine or treatment that can take away a disease (= illness)</p> <p><u>Cerebral</u> = connected with the brain <u>Hemorrhage</u> = very heavy bleeding <u>To bleed</u> = to lose blood <u>Bleeding</u> = blood flowing from a cut <u>To bury</u> = to put a dead body in a grave (= tomb) Do you understand the text? <u>Mourner</u> = a person who goes to a funeral as a friend or relative of the person who has died To mourn = to feel great sadness because somebody has died Mourning = a time when people feel or show sadness because somebody has died</p> <p>Is the text clear?</p> <p>Oral questions 1- What is the text about? 2- Did Tete feel well? 3- What was the matter with him?</p> <p>Now take your vocabulary note books and take notes Now if you have finished, take your exercise copy books and do the following exercises: <u>III- WHILE – WRITING</u> .. <u>Objectives</u>: to give the students some writing activities in order to train them to write accurate and appropriate words or sentences as well as to make the students ready for a free or semi guided writing such as paragraph writing or essay writing. A- Controlled writing activities</p>	<p>Give medicine</p> <p>Please madam, what does mourner means?</p> <p>Yes, madam</p> <p>- Health - No - He had suffered from a stroke</p>
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1- Complete the blanks with the appropriate connectors: and- or - but – because - such as

NB: timing 7 mn to do the exercises

3 mn to correct them

Tete was very ill ... he felt a terrible pain. He decided to consult a doctor he thought that his disease was very serious. The doctor examined him gave him some treatment after three months he died.

Expected answers: so - because - and – but

2/ Reorder the following sentences to continue Tete's story

A: Twia said:" on the top of the two: drinking and eating, he was also too fond of women.

I've a theory that when you combine the three in excess, you're fast digging your grave"

B: Obeng disagreed:" I don't think it was the drinking really. I think, he ate too much good food.

C: Ofore then chimed: I don't believe such theories. I enjoy all three to the maximum and I am fit indeed. I'll quit at 85, no sooner; no later.

To quit: to pass away, to die

Expected answers: B-A-C

B/ Guided writing activities

1- Look at the text again and think of things that Tete should have done to keep fit and then complete the following text.

Tete was a very rich man in his village but he was always ill. He always went to a doctor because he wanted to1.....2.....the doctor gave him some3.....and advised him4.....5.....6.....too much alcohol.....7.....to eat too much8...9...to be ...11.....12.....women .The doctor did all things he knew to...13....him but he died ...14....the age of 56 .

II) Now, write a paragraph about what you personally do to be healthy or to keep fit.

Expected answers

- | | |
|-------------|----------|
| 1) 1- Keep | 8- good |
| 2- Fit | 9- food |
| 3- Medicine | 10- not |
| 4- not | 11- fond |
| 5- to | 12- of |

<p>6- drink 13- cure 7- not 14- at</p> <p>2) It is worth mentioning that the following short paragraph was one the best that the student produced in class. Health is very important for me because when I am healthy, I can do every thing I want to. So to be healthy I practice a few sports such us as: cycling and swimming and sometimes I follow a diet.</p> <p>Stage 4: POST WRITING <u>Objectives:</u> to make the students express their own ideas or thoughts individually with accurate and appropriate words, sentence or paragraph (s).</p> <p><u>Free writing and semi- guided writing.</u> Cycling is one of the best ways to keep fit. Write a paragraph of about 120 words to tell your view.</p>	
<p>We taught and explained how to deal with these items, before letting the students do this semi-guided writing activity.</p> <p><u>How to deal with paragraph or essay writing</u></p> <p>Now, as we could see it from personal experience, many learners simply left aside and ignored those important items, although the grading is fairly high, namely essay writing, at the official exam (the baccalaureat) writing is marked 07 out of a total of 20; almost one third of the total mark.</p> <p>I/ <u>Objectives:</u> at the end of the lesson, the students will be able to understand how to write a paragraph or an essay so that they will not leave it aside or ignore the writing item at official examination.</p>	
<p>We asked and explained to learners the following elements</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - What is a sentence? - Very good A sentence is S+V+O - Give me an example What else Another one - O.K. what is: a paragraph? And an essay? <p>Well, a paragraph is part of writing activity that consists of several sentences and an essay is a short piece of writing on a given topic.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Do you know how to write or build a paragraph or essay? <p>II/ <u>When writing a paragraph or essay we should follow three steps:</u></p> <p><u>First</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - we try to understand the topic 	<p>S+V+O I go to school I play foot ball I write a letter</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - We determine the purpose (why are we writing?) - we try to determine the reader (who is the reader) - we define the nature of the text (Descriptive, argumentative) - We collect or brainstorm ideas we need which are related to the given topic. <p><u>Second</u></p> <p>We make a draft of the work and arrange our ideas in a coherent way choosing lexical items that we are going to use; then we form sentences, this implies a good use of grammar and require organisation.</p> <p>When building a paragraph, we use logical connectors and punctuations marks.</p> <p>Finally we have to distinguish the: introduction, development and conclusion using transitions.</p> <p><u>Third</u></p> <p>We make sure if everything is O.K. and when we are satisfied we can copy the result in our exercise book.</p> <p>Examples of connectors are the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <u>For an enumeration</u>: first, second, third, then, finally... - <u>To mean addition</u>: also, besides, in addition, moreover... - <u>For a comparison and similar ideas</u>: in comparison, in the same way... - <u>To show contrast or opposite idea</u>: but however, on the one hand... - <u>To express cause and effect</u>: as a result, consequently... 	
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Post writing activity

Cycling is one of the best ways to keep fit

There are many kinds of sports in the world. Some of them are good for our health. Cycling is healthy and cycling is fun. Cycling is also one of the best ways to keep fit.

If you cycle to school or to work you save your health. Besides, if you are overweight, smoke cigarette, want to reduce heart attack, especially you want your body in a good shape, cycling is good for you.

If you are overweight and unfit, you should worry about it. Why don't you take up cycling? You will feel calmer, you will soon be fit and you will be happy too. But cycling may be dangerous, especially in large cities.

3-3-2- Experimented lesson plan for 1ere A

Date : 21st November 2008

School: Lycée RV Moramanga

Class : 1 ere

Level: 1ère A

Lesson: Personal letter writing

Duration: 2 hours

Skill to be emphasized: writing skill

Didactic materials: personal letter-wrapping paper

Documentation section: -official syllabus

-Dictionary

-The Strange Man novel by Amu Dzoletso

SCRIPT OF THE LESSON

STAGE I: Warm up activity

Objectives: To prepare the students for the new lesson and introduce a bit of the topic.

Teacher shows an envelope and asks the students.

What is this?

Student: an envelope

Look at inside of it, what is it?

Letter

Very good! It is a letter because you can see words or expressions like:

Dear.....,

Yours sincerely,

Signature

What kind of letter is it?

It is a personal letter.

Have you ever been taught how to write a personal letter?

Yes!

When?

In 3ème

STAGE II PRE WRITING

Objectives: at the end of this stage, the students will be able to acquire some useful additional vocabulary items in view of doing the semi-guided or free writing activity.

Now, look at this following personal letter (we have already copied it on a wrapping paper and stuck it on the blackboard.

2mn	<p style="text-align: right;">Botoi Southern Ghana Ghana 20 November 2010</p> <p>My dear cousin,</p> <p>It's a pity, you've not heard from me so long. We, farmers, don't usually write unless we have something important to say.</p> <p>You probably know I'm fond of my first son Mensa and I want to give him the best education possible. I am poor but I am determined.</p> <p>Mensa is a mischievous boy and this quite often gets him into trouble and has disturbed the village a bit.</p> <p>Moreover, his conduct has led our catechists advised me and my wife to let him admit to his school. I do not agree with the catechist 'advice. We feel that he will subject our son to constant caning. We are unable to accept this method, so we have decided to request you, whether you will be kind enough to have Mensa to stay with you and you train him with kindness and understanding. I'm prepared to send you at the end of each month Ar 100,000 for his board and lodge, as well as for any incident expenses. I'm sorry, I have to bother you. Kindly write to let me know whether I can send him over or not.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Yours sincerely, Anang</p>
15mn	<p>This letter is from Anang to his cousin Mr. Lomo, who is the headmaster of a primary school in Accra, Ghana.</p> <p>–<u>Teacher</u>: explain that Accra is the capital of Ghana which is a country in West Africa</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - We read it silently together - We read it in a loud voice - We asked the students if there were any difficult word of vocabulary in the text. - We explained some useful vocabulary items and then wrote them on the board <p><u>Mischievous</u>(adj) : Used about children fond of having in a rather naughty way</p> <p><u>Mischief</u> (noun): bad behavior that is not very serious</p> <p><u>To disturb</u>: to interrupt and possible annoy somebody</p> <p><u>To admit</u>: to allow somebody to enter</p>

To constant caning : to cane: to punish someone by hitting with a cane

Board: meals that are provided when you stay in a relative or in a hotel

Lodge: house

To bother: to disturb or annoy somebody

Annoy: make somebody quite angry

ORAL QUESTIONS

- Where does the writer live? —————> In Botoi, Ghana
- When did he write the letter? —————> On 20th Nov 2008
- To whom did he write the letter? —————> His cousin
- Who wrote the letter? —————> Mr. Anang

Why did Anang write the letter?

Anang wrote the letter because he wanted to request his cousin, Mr. Lomo, for help to have his some Mensa to stay with him and admit him to his school.

- What kind of letter is it?

It is a personal letter. Now look at this layout

.....	
.....Writer's address	
.....	
.....date	
Dear,	Salutation
.....	
.....Body of the letter	
.....	
.....	
.....	
.....Finishing statement	
.....	
.....Ending	
.....	
Signature	

Salutation used for a personal letter

- Dear + name —————> Ex: Dear Betty

	<p>-Dear + Mr./Mrs./Miss + Name → Ex: Dear Mr. Paul</p> <p>-Dear + member of a family → Ex: Dear cousin</p>
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	<p>When we write a letter we have to think about the tense of the verb</p> <p>Ex: *Present perfect: has/have + Past Participle</p> <p>→ I have heard</p> <p>Present perfect + since → the beginning</p> <p>For → the duration</p> <p>* Past simple + specific time</p> <p>Last, ago, the day before ...</p> <p>We had already written the layout of a personal letter on a wrapping paper</p> <p>And just stuck it on the blackboard.</p> <p>We asked the students to copy them or note in their lesson note books and then take their exercise books</p> <p>Stage III: WHILE WRITING</p> <p><u>Objectives:</u> to give the students some writing activities in order to make them be familiar with the writing tasks</p> <p><u>Controlled writing activities</u></p> <p>Objective: to make the students aware of the importance of grammar elements when doing writing tasks.</p> <p>I- Exercises</p> <p><u>Join the 2 sentences with an appropriate connectors:</u> <i>or, but, and, so, because, in addition</i></p> <p>- Anang writes a letter to his cousin(1) he wants his son Mensa to stay with him</p> <p>- Anang wants to give his son the education..... (2) he decides to send him to his cousin's school in Accra</p> <p>- The catechist advises Anang to send Mensa to his school(3) he refuses</p> <p>-Anang asks Mr. Lomo if he accepts him(4)... not</p> <p>Mensa's father decides to send his son to stay (5) live his cousin Mr. Lomo.</p>	<p>Gues s</p>
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	<p>Corrections</p> <p><u>Expected answers</u></p> <p>1-Because 2-So 3-But 4-Or 5-And</p> <p>2/ <u>Reorder the following sentences so as to get Mensa's story and then write it after</u></p> <p>a- Mensa was their first son</p> <p>b- Hence they decide to send him to Mr. Lomo the headmaster</p> <p>c- In a primary school in Accra, the capital of Ghana, to stay with them</p> <p>d- They were farmers and they have got three children</p> <p>e- He was a mischievous boy and always disturbed the life in the village</p> <p>f- But they did not accept their son to go there</p> <p>g- Mensa's parents lived in Botoi in Southern Ghana</p> <p>h- His parents were advised to send Mensa to a catechist school</p> <p>Corrections</p> <p><u>Expected answers:</u> g-d-a-e-h-f-b-c</p> <p>B/ <u>Guided Writing</u></p> <p><u>Objectives:</u> To train the students to write their own sentences which must be accurate and appropriate and suitable for the given topic or model</p> <p><u>Complete and continue the following letter using your own sentence</u></p> <p>-Betty's school has organized a field trip in your village. She wrote a letter to you because she wanted to stay with you during her visit. You answer her letter telling her that you cannot receive her. Give a convincing explanation to your refusal and give her a solution.</p> <p>Dear Betty,</p> <p>Forgive me for not writing to you for a long time. I hope you are all well. I have received your letter requesting me to give one room for your stay during the field trips.</p> <p>I wrote this letter to let you know that it is not possible form to give you that room because..... (1)..... so you should.....</p> <p>(2)..... or.....(3) All I can do is to wish you a good stay and(4)..... field</p>	
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	<p>trip.....(5).....</p> <p><u>Corrections</u></p> <p><u>Expected answers</u></p> <p>(1) I will not here on these days I will have to go to Antsirabe to visit my mother in law who is very ill.</p> <p>(2) Look for another room</p> <p>(3) Book a single at a hotel there is a nice one here</p> <p>(4) Wonderful</p> <p>(5) Name signature of the writer</p> <p><u>IV POST WRITING STAGE</u></p> <p>Objectives: to make students express their thoughts or feelings in appropriate and accurate words for the given topic</p> <p><u>-Semi- guided letter writing</u></p> <p>Look at the given letter, now suppose you are Mr. Lomo(Anang's cousin)</p> <p>Write a letter to him (to Anang: Mensa's father) to answer his letter either you accept or refuse his request.</p>	
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Comments

Thus, we decided to combine the writing skill and reading comprehension during our experimentations because writing presents a great number of advantages for students particularly when it is integrated with the reading comprehension. The learners can adjust themselves with the vocabulary items and the writer's style. For this, we used some excerpts from "The Strange Man" followed by some explanations, oral questions, vocabulary items particularly about the techniques concerning the writing skill. In addition, we used these excerpts to help our fellow English teachers and show them that novels or short stories can be helpful for English language teaching and learning, particularly for the writing skill. During the oral questions, we always use Wh questions because it is among the 1ère A official syllabus.

As far as the lesson and activities were concerned, we had opportunity to explain a bit of Ghanaian country since all the names in the excerpts are Ghanaian names which made

students smile. After we had finished one activity, we did the corrections together. We probably spent too much time on teaching a paragraph writing, essay and the letter writing so, we had not enough time to do the corrections for example of the semi-guided writing;

Concerning the students, those in 1ère A were good at English; they were bright and showed respect for their teacher. The class was alive and the students took part all the time so it was not difficult to teach them as they seemed interested in the lesson whereas in Terminale A, the students were talkative. There were too many students in a rather small classroom; as a consequence, the class was noisy and boring.

When the lesson was finished some students thanked us and said that it was the first time they spent time to experience, to try on how to cope with the writing skill. Nevertheless, the students had to do revisions for their first term examination consequently we could perform only two experimentations.

We could present only two experimented lesson plans: one for terminale A and another one for the 1ère A. Thus in this following part, we gave some suggested lesson plans for the two classes used as pedagogical material complementary.

3.4 - Suggested lesson plans

The excerpts chosen in this research work are taken and adapted from: “The Strange Man and No Sweetness Here” for the writing skill especially in the literary sections of Lycée: 1ère A and Terminale A. They are based on topics included in the 1ère A and Terminale A official syllabus such as: families, narrating social events, customs and traditions, opinion and education. We present first the possible excerpts followed by some writing activities for the Terminale A level, and then those for the 1ère A level.

A- SUGGESTED LESSON PLANS FOR THE TERMINALE A LEVEL

TOPIC I/ Families: Family life

Tete and Mensa had spent their childhood days with their parents in Botoi Akwapim hill in southern Ghana. Now, they were both married and had their own family. One good

thing which they did was to recondition their parents' house at the village where they had spent their childhood days. They were very fond of the place, particularly old Mensa. At Christmas time every year he would remember how when he was a little boy there, he would look forward eagerly to the slaughter of a goat; the meat of which was used by his mother for cooking excellent soup. His mother's cooking was always the best and though his wife was undoubtedly a better cook, at that time of the year, it was his mother's food he longed for.

Their father, old Anang died thirty years ago and their mother, Mrs Anang was now quite old; she was over eighty and was given to counting her days to make her exit from a world she had faced with sorrow and happiness. She looked upon one thing as her greatest achievement that she was able to need her determination and harrowing hard work and faith to educate her children as their father had wished. Her daughter, Massa was happily married, her domestic life equally tranquil. Now Mrs Anang was spending her last days in a more comfortable house. Some of her grand children often visited her.

Excerpt from: The Strange Man P: 248

A- WARM UP ACTIVITY: 5mn

Teacher asks a few questions to the students;

- Where do you live?
- With whom do you live?
- Teacher brings his or her family photograph and talks about it to the students

Ex: this is my mother, father, uncle, aunt...

..

B- PRE-WRITING STAGE: 40mn

1) silent reading and loud reading

– Teacher gives the texts to the students and asks them to read it silently for 5mn. After that, he or she reads it in a loud voice.

After the reading, the teacher explains some difficult words and gives them to the students. It should take 10mn.

- some difficult words from given topic:

- To recondition: to keep something in good condition again.
- Childhood: the time when we are a child
- Eager (adjective): full of desire or interest
Eagerly: adverb
- To slaughter: to kill an animal usually for food
- Undoubtedly: acceptably as being true
- To long(for): to want something very much
- Exit from (the world) = to go away
= to die
- Sorrow = great sadness ≠ happiness
Sad ≠ happy
- Sheer: complete, absolute
- Harrowing: making people very sad or upset
- To romp: used about children = to play in a noisy way with a lot of running, jumping...
- To thrill: to make somebody feel a thrill

A thrill: a sudden strong feeling of pleasure or excitement

Grandchildren: the children of your son or daughter

10 mn – **Oral questions**

Teacher asks the students to answer the given questions orally

- 1) You know some English words for members of a family. What are they?
- 2) With whom had Mensa and Tete spent their childhood days?
- 3) Who is old Mensa?
- 4) Who was spending her last days in a more comfortable house?
- 5) What is the relationship between Mensa's wife and his mother?
- 6) What is Mensa's sister's name?
- 7) Is Mensa's sister married?
- 8) What is the opposite of "to be married"?
- 9) How many children has Mrs Anang got?
- 10) How many sons and daughters? Who are they?

15 mn – **Teacher asks the students to take notes**

C – WHILE WRITING STAGE

Teacher asks the students to take their copybooks and the following exercises:

I- Controlled writing activities

10 mn

- 1) Write out a complete sentence in each case, using the elements in their correct order

- /She/but/Mensa/looked/was/mother/eighty/younger/
- /life/and/Mrs Anang's/had/daughter/a/was/domestic/married/tranquil/

05 mn

- 2) Join the following pairs of sentences with: because, as a result or although

- Mensa's wife was undoubtedly a better cook, he longed for his mother's food.

Mrs Anang had faced her life with sorrow ... her husband had exited from the world.

- Tete and Mensa had reconditioned their parents' house ... their mother lived in a more comfortable house.

10 mn

- 3) Fill in the gaps with: where, who, whom or which

- Massa ... is Mensa's sister, was happily married
- The house ... Mensa's mother lived, was comfortable
- The house ... was reconditioned, was Mensa's parent's house
- Massa's children ... Mrs Anang loved, always visited her

II- Guided – Writing activities: 20 mn

- 1) Look at the given text, which tells about Mensa's childhood days then complete the passage.

Mensa spent his childhood days with his ... they ... in a big ... comfortable house in a countryside in Ghana. He ... the oldest ... of his parents; when he was a ... boy, he castrated a he goat and used to play ... his friends. He remembers that every Christmas day, his parents slaughtered a ... they were ... of its meat because ... was very delicious and could use ... cooking an excellent soup. On week days, he ... in a farm with his father and on Sundays he always went to ... because he was a Christian boy.

- 2) Now, look at the text above which tells about Mensa's childhood days. Write a short paragraph about what you remember doing in your childhood days. (about 6 lines)

- 3) Mensa's parents were farmers, they didn't earn very much money but they liked being farmers. They supposed, it was because they enjoyed working on the land. Being a farmer is hard work and is not very pleasant sometimes. There were all sorts of things they did not enjoy; for example when the harvest was very poor or crops were failed; working in the open air is not much fun but at least they know they were doing something useful.

→ Mensa's parents were farmers, you know people who are nurses, teachers or shopkeepers. Write about their jobs and their lives; use the paragraph above as a model.

(About 10 lines)

D- POST WRITING ACTIVITY: 30 mn

Semi- guided writing activity.

As far as family life is concerned, what are the ideal parents like?

You can use one or more of these following vocabulary items:

- about parents:
 - understand → showing sympathy
 - kind → friendly
 - generous → willing to give help, money
 - helpful
 - honest (telling the truth)
 - teetotal (→ never drinking alcohol)
 - Christian
 - Smiling
 - Not excessively authoritarian nor too lax
 - Giving advice

EXPECTED ANSWERS

Pre-writing stage

- Oral questions

1. Father, mother, sister, brother, uncle, aunt, mother in law...
2. With their parents
3. Tete's brother Mrs Anang's son/ Massa's brother
4. Tete's and Mensa's mother
5. Daughter in law
6. Massa

7. Yes, she is
8. To be single
9. 3 children: 2 sons and 1 daughter

- While-writing activity

- Mensa's mother was eighty but she looked younger

- Mrs Anang's daughter was married and had a tranquil domestic life

1. Although/ because / As a result
2. who – where – which – whom

- Guided writing activities

1. Parents – lived – and – was – son – small – with – goat – fond – it –for- was – church
2. I spent my childhood days with my parents and my two sisters. We live in Moramanga in a small house. I am the youngest daughter of my parents. When I was a little girl, I used to play marbles; I like playing marbles very much, especially with boys.

On Easter days, we always go to church and every Monday Easter; we used to go for a walk with our cousins and some of our friends. We went to places we could go fishing. We brought special food and drink that our mother used to prepare them. We left our house very early in the morning and came back early in the evening.

3-My aunt is a nurse and she doesn't earn very much money. But she likes being a nurse because she enjoys helping people. Being a nurse is not pleasant sometimes, she says, because there are many things she does not enjoy. For example she does not like seeing people in pain. Working ten hours a day and more is not much fun but at least she has got an import and useful job.

-Post writing activity

I think the ideal parent is someone who is easygoing, does not get upset easily and is not temperamental.

I like my mother's attitude: she is sensitive about my feelings. She is a person who is very supportive and always listens to my problems. My father is very sociable, he always shows sympathy and he is generous. My parents are understanding; they are easy to talk to patient and considerate. I like them very much and I think they are ideal.

On the whole, ideal parents are someone who children can count and rely on them.

TOPIC II: NARRATING SOCIAL EVENTS.

At the age of seven, Mensa left his parents and went to live with uncle, Mr Lomo, in Accra capital of Ghana, to study. Now, he was going back home after so long a year. He returned, as he had come, by lorry and was surprised to find the village just the same as he had left it, except for the addition of the few building here and there. In the evening, Mensa's old friends called to see him; they were very happy and had so much to say. As soon as, they were gathered, Odoi one of Mensa's old friends, started his story at once: "Mensa, we have something to tell you"

- It is a very interesting story. Darku chimed in.
- I'd like to hear it, Mensa said enthusiastically

Odoi started the story right from the beginning to make sure he did not leave a single detail out. A year or so after you left this village the bell man took a wife again.

- That's impossible. Mensa said
- But it's true, Odoi confirmed
- But everybody said he wouldn't keep a wife. Mensa recalled
- That's what everybody said or thought, but the bell man thought differently. Drake agreed. All he wanted right then was a wife but none of the girls here would have him. I can't tell you why they wouldn't because it was the girls who said they wouldn't have him; he definitely decided to take a wife from the other village. There was a plain woman there with a child who had been deserted by her husband. The bell man picked on her. He had more money then he needs so he used his money generously and impressed the woman and her parents. The woman agreed to have him. When the preparation for the wedding had gone quite far, the woman's father refused but it was too late to stop it since the bans had already been called three times in the church and nobody came forward to protest or to object to the marriage. In short, Mensa, the wedding took place well, the wedding took place and everybody was happy or pretended to be. Most of the girls were openly amused and I was watching your mother amused.
- How did you know?
- Because of the way she smiled. The bell man looked father handsome for once. He was in rich suits which he later told me, cost him eighty pounds.

Excerpt from: "The Strange Man" P 14

A/ WARM UP ACTIVITY: 05 mn

Teacher tells the students a funny story → it should be short and understood

B/ PRE-WRITING ACTIVITY: 20 mn

Teacher asks the students to read the text silently during 05 mn and then reads it in a loud voice. After that he asks the students for the difficult words, explains by gestures or mimes or gives their meaning in words.

Examples:

- bell man: the man who rings a bell; for example at church
- to chime (in): to interrupt a conversation and add comments
- enthusiastic (adjective): full of enthusiasm
- enthusiasm: a strong feeling of eagerness
- plain: not beautiful (used about a girl/ a woman)
- to desert: to leave someone or something forever
- to be deserted: to be left
- to object: to be against
- to take place: to happen: to occur
- to pretend: to appear to do or to be
- to amuse: to make some body laugh/smile
- handsome: good looking or attractive (used about a man)

After giving such vocabulary items, teacher should explain where Ghana is and/ or tell a bit about Ghana.

Oral questions: 10 mn

1. How did Mensa go to Accra?
2. When and why did the boys gather in a group?
3. Who started telling the story?
4. Did the bell man get a wife from his village?
5. What kind of woman did the bell man get?
6. How often had the marriage bans been called in church?
7. Did the bell man's marriage take place?
8. How was it?
9. How was everybody during the marriage?
10. What tense are the verbs in the story?

Teacher should remind the students of the tenses to be used when narrating or reporting past events: 10 mn

- We use the past tense when we narrate past events

Past simple / past continuous / present perfect and past perfect

- Take notes: 10 mn

C/ WHILE – WRITING ACTIVITY: 70 mn

1. Controlled writing activities: 40 mn

- a) Match the sentence in A with those in B and rewrite them using the connectors “because”

A

B

- | | | |
|---|----------------|---|
| 1. Mensa left his parents | | a. They had not met for years |
| 2. Mensa was surprised | <u>because</u> | b. He felt single |
| 3. Mensa and his friend had too much to say | | c. He went to study in Accra |
| 4. Mensa's old friends wanted to see him | | d. They had too much to tell him |
| 5. The bell man wanted to get married | | e. The village did not change |
| 6. The bell man was very attractive | | f. He wore very beautiful and expensive suits |

- b) The model paragraph below is written as the events are taking place at this moment. Now, rewrite the paragraph as if the actions took place yesterday

It is a marvellous wedding party. The bell man is wearing a black suit and white shoes. All the guests are going to his house and are having plenty of food. Odoi is drinking too much and he is drunk. The bell man's wife is surprised and fears. She decides to call his parents to take him home. Odoi's parents are arriving, thank the bell man's wife, and are taking them home.

- c) Reorder the following sentences to continue the bell man's story

A: It was the first time. I got drunk, and I regretted it later

B: Eighty pounds? Incredible! Cried Mensa

C: We went to his house and had a very big meal

D: Mensa; you don't understand. Darku began to explain

E: He was quite splendid on that day

F: The bell man had worked for a long time and had lot of money

2. Guided writing activities: 30 mn

- a) Following the model given below, write a 4 lines paragraph in which:

- you state that you like something or someone
- you give three reasons for your taste, placing the strongest one at the end

Model paragraph: I liked the bell man's wedding very much. There was plenty of food and drinks during the party. On the whole the guests were all friendly and very polite. They said that they were satisfied; but the best thing of all is that, particularly, we did not have pick pockets, thugs and muggers on our way home even though it was too late at night.

Now write your own paragraph

- b) The bell man organized a party for his wedding. It was a very nice party. There was a lot of food and drinks. Two boys drank too much alcohol and nearly ruined the party.....
....

D/ POST WRITING ACTIVITIES

_One day you attended a marriage ceremony .Write paragraphs to tell about it. (About 120 words)

EXPECTED ANSWERS

1- PRE WRITING STAGE

Oral questions

Mensa went to Accra by lorry

The boys gathered in the evening to talk about the right story of the bell man

Odoi started telling the story

No, he didn't

The bell man got married with a plain woman with a child who had been deserted by her husband

Three times

Yes, it did

It was marvellous

Everybody was very happy

Past tense

2-WHILE WRITING STAGE

A-Controlled writing activities

a)-Matching

1.....C

4.....D

2..... E

5.....B

3.....A

6.....F

B-Guided writing activities

a)-I like living in our village. It is very clean and calm. There is little noise here. People are friendly and polite; the best thing of all is that, practically, there are no pickpockets, no thugs and no muggers especially during the market days. We fetch water in a clean and clear river

b)-The bell man organized a party for his wedding. It was a very nice party. There was a lot of food and drinks. Two boys drank too much alcohol and nearly ruined the party, they made much noise and fought each other; the bell man could not bear that situation so he forced the two boys to leave the place. After that the party was continued till dawn

3-POST WRITING ACTIVITIES

Last September, I attended a marriage ceremony in Antananarivo. Tsiry was married to Rindra

After their wedding at one church in the town, Tsiry and Rindra had a big reception. All their families and friends were there. There was a lot of food and drinks and the room was crowded. Some of Tsiry's friends brought instruments and played dance tunes. Young boys and girls danced, adults did not dance. But everyone seemed happy.

At half past eleven in the evening, Tsiry and Rindra thanked everyone for coming and said good bye. Everyone stood behind their tables, watched them leave and said "good luck". But we ate, drank and danced till dawn.

TOPIC III: CUSTOMS AND TRADITIONS

THE DEATH OF KWESI

As I was descending the hill the second time that afternoon, I saw that the whole school was at the other end of the main street. What were the children doing so near Maami Ama's place? I ran towards them. I was not prepared for what I saw. As if intentionally, the children had formed a circle when some of them saw me, they all began to tell me what had happened but I did not hear a word. In the middle of the circle, Kwesi was lying flat on his back. What is the matter? What has happened? Kwesi had been beaten by a snake. Where? At school when he was playing football.

Meanwhile, those who were used to finding and knowing about snake bites were giving the names of different cures; they practise them but nothing seemed to have any effect. After what seemed an unbearably long time, the messenger who had been early sent to Surdo, the village next to Bamso, to summon the chief medicine man arrived, followed by the eminent doctor himself. He was renowned for his cure of snake bites. When he appeared, every one gave a sigh of relief. The potion which was made of herbs was given. Thirty minutes, one hour, two hours, three hours, four hours, he had not retched. Before midnight, Kwesi, who was Maami Ana's only child, was dead.

No grown up in Bamso village slept that night (...).

He was buried at four o'clock in the afternoon. I had taken the school children to where he lay in state. When his different relatives saw the little uniformed figure they all forgot their differences and burst into loud lamentation: Chica! O! Chica! What shall I do now that Kwesi is dead? His Grand mother addressed me, Kwesi my beauty, Kwesi my master, Kwesi my one Kwesi! One aunt was chanting: "father death had done me an ill turn" I stood there saying nothing. I had let the children sing: "saviour, blessed saviour" and we had gone to the cemetery with him.

After the funeral, I went to the house of the mourning as one should do after the burial. No one was supposed to weep again for the rest of the day. I sat there listening to visitors who had come from the neighbouring villages.

My daughter, said the grand mother again: "Kwesi is gone, gone forever to our forefathers"

Excerpt from No Sweetness Here p.70, 71, and 73.

1- PRE WRITING STAGE

- **Students: first silent reading.**
- **Teacher: reading in a loud voice.**
- **Teacher: explaining and giving some difficult vocabulary items.**

Death: (verb to die) the end of somebody's life

Unbearably: intolerably (# tolerable)

Messenger: a person who carries a message

To summon: to order a person to come to a place

Eminent: famous, important

Appear # disappear

Relief: feeling that you have when some thing unpleasant stops or becomes less strong.

Grown up: adult

To bury: to put a dead body in a grave (tomb)

Lamentation: to lament: to feel or express great sadness

Chica: teacher

To chant to shout a word or phrase many times

Funeral: burial: a ceremony for burying a dead body

Mourning: to mourn: a time when people feel or show a great sadness because somebody has died

Neighbouring: near or next to

For fathers: ancestor

Oral questions

How did Kwesi die?

Where did he die?

What time was he dead?

How many brothers and sisters has he got?

When did people go to house of the mourning?

Were people supposed to weep again after the burial?

WHILE WRITING ACTIVITIES

1) Controlled writing activities

- a. Fill in with and –but or because

After the funeral, Chica went to the house of mourningit was the custom in Bamso villageduring that moment no one was supposed to weep again. She sat down listening to the visitor All of the sudden, Kwesi's grand mother addressed her and said: "Chica! Kwesi is gone forever to our fore father "Chica stood uptry to comfort herwhen she heard Chica's voice, she cried againChica was her only best friendKwesi's teacher.

b. Join the pair of sentences with appropriate relatives

Kwesiwas his mother's only child was dead by snake bites

The school.....Kwesi studied was inaugurated 6 years ago

Maomi Anaonly child was dead, did not give up crying

Kwesi's shirthe put on, was off

2) Guided- writing

a. Complete the blanks to tell about Kwesi's daily chores

Every morning, Kwesi always.....up at 5 o'clock. He takes a.....and has his..... before going to school. In the afternoon after school, he is used to.....football; his ball isof ragged clothes. When he is at.....he does his homework, fetches.....and helps his.....to prepare their.....; He does not forget to pray.....sleeping.

b. Now write a short paragraph telling about your daily chores

as the model above.

c. Finish the following paragraph using your own sentences

Kwesi's parents and family have their own culture as far as a funeral is concerned; they consider a funeral as a great social event and a big affair. It is also a mark of social important for them

.....

POST WRITING STAGE.

1-You have an English pen friend .She /He is going to visit you in Madagasikara .Write a letter telling her/him about your own culture.

2-Write a 80 words paragraph talking about your parents and family customs during a funeral

EXPECTED ANSWERS.

Oral questions

By snake bites.

At school.

-Before twelve p.m

-No brother and no sister

-After the funeral

-No, they didn't

1-While-writing stage

-1Controlled writing

-a- because

And

But

And

But

Because

And

-b- Who

Where

Whose

Which

-2- Guided –writing

Wakes

Bath

Breakfast

Playing

Made

Home

Water

Mother

Dinner

Before

b- Every morning, I wake up at five. I make my bed, make my room clean and tidy; then I prepare my breakfast, after that, I take a bath and have my breakfast. Before going to school, I

brush my teeth, change my clothes and comb my hair. In the afternoon after school, I help my mother to prepare our dinner. After having dinner, I do my homework, learn my lessons and go to bed at half past eight.

c) Kwesi's parents and family have their own culture as far as funeral is concerned. They consider the funeral as a great social event and a big affair; funeral is also considered as a mark of social important.

When someone dies, many sacrificial animals, which are very fat, must be killed on that day for the mourners especially for the guests. The local choir and singing band are invited, particularly, during the wake-keeping.

The funeral takes place in the afternoon and no one is supposed to weep again especially during the burial. After that bitter moment, people go to the house of the mourners

TOPIC IV OPINION

Dear father,

I was very sad to hear you were not very well.

I know you'll be very surprised; this letter is not really about me. I know you'll be upset by the time you've finished reading it, I know my mother will be very angry with me for this letter which can upset you.

It was your health which prevented me from telling you what should have known about Odole, still it is a matter that transcends secrecy and, more important, which has been worrying me ever since I came here. I can no longer keep it myself because I know I won't feel quietly one day if we don't do anything about it. And though, I don't like quoting worn out phrases. I sometimes think, they come in useful therefore, I'll say prevention is better than cure. So this letter is meant to make you act to prevent something what may bring disgrace on the family.

There is a young man in our area who has been flirting with Odole. The whole affair started one day when Odole and I were going to see pictures. Since then one of my friends started telling me stories; they said Odole was now the topic of our neighbourhood's gossip and they were surprised that after her pride and superciliousness, she had chosen a smuggling crook as her boyfriend. On top of that, they said Odole was going to break up a home as the man had a wife and children with whom he shared the same house.

I told Odole what I had heard and warned her. She would not listen to me. She told me I could please myself and that she was old enough to look after herself. Thus, I would ask you to use as much tact as possible and put an end to the whole scandalous affair.

Well father, I prefer to stop my letter because it is too long, do write to me soon. Give my best wishes to my mother and my sisters especially I wish you a quick recovery.

Your loving son,

Nee

Excerpt from The Strange Man

Page 247

PRE WRITING STAGE

Students' first reading.

2nd reading: teacher: in a loud voice

-Explaining the difficult vocabulary items and giving them to the students

Upset: worried and unhappy

Transcends: to be greater or more important than something

Secrecy: the state of keeping something secret

Guilty (# innocent): having done something wrong

To quote: to repeat

Worn out: extremely tired

To disgrace: the state of not being respected by other people because you have behaved badly

Gossip: informal talk about other people and their private life

To flirt: to go out with someone

Supercilious (ness): showing that you think that you are better than other people

Smuggle: to take things into or out of country in secret and against the law

Crook: a criminal / a dishonest person

To warn: to tell somebody to be careful or aware of something

Tact: the ability to deal with people without offending or upsetting them

Scandalous: very shocking or wrong

Asking students to take notes

ORAL QUESTIONS

Who writes this letter?

How does Odole behave?

Why does Nee write the letter?

To whom does Nee write the letter?

Did Nee stay with his parents when he wrote the letter?

WHILE-WRITING STAGE

1-Controlled –writing activities

-a – Complete the gaps with appropriate connectors

I know you'll be surprisedthis letter is not about me.

I told Odole what I had heard and warned hershe wouldn't listen to me

My letter is too longI prefer to stop it

-b- Fill in the blank with the appropriate relatives

Odoleis Mensa's only daughter behaves badly

Neefather is not very well, writes this letter to him

This is the letterupsets old Mensa

2-Guided –writing activities

-a- Complete and continue the following letter using your own sentences

Your friend Sarah, who is only sixteen years old, wrote to you because she wanted to go out with her boy friend .She asked you for your opinions about her desire.

Dear Willa,

Forgive me for not writing to you for a long time. I am very busy with my preparations of my final exam .How are you? How are things getting on?

Willa, I am writing this letter to you
.....
.....
.....
.....
.....

Looking forward to hearing from you .Please remembers me to your cousin Shella and I wish you a success in your studies.

Best wishes,

Sarah

POST WRITING STAGE

1-Imagine you are Nee's father; now write a letter to answer Nee's letter.

2-Suppose you know Nee's father, write a letter to him to cheer up, to comfort and to advise him.

Expected answers

Oral questions

Nee writes the letter

Odole behaves badly

Nee writes the letter to make his parents know about Odole

No, he doesn't

Controlled writing

-a- because

But

So

-b- who, whose, which

Guided writing

Dear Willa,

Forgive me for not writing to you for a long time. I'm very busy with the preparation of my final exam. How are you? How are things getting on?

Willa, I'm writing this letter to you to ask about your opinion. You know I had got a boy friend since we were in the third form, but we had never gone out together, I always hesitate because I'm afraid of my parents. Now, he insisted and said that if I did not accept he would break up with me. I do not know what to do but I love him so much. Please help me.

TOPIC V: EDUCATION

A BRIGHT SCHOOLBOY

Bekoe and I were finished our five years in a secondary school and have sat an examination; the whole things had started after the school certificate exams. Instead of going straight home, we had stayed in town to look for a job. We found a job as receptionists in post office. We were going to work for three months that was the only time we could have in the long vacation; you see we both wanted to go to the sixth form.

I remembered what mother had told me. I remembered her telling me one day that any time I got my first pay, I was to give money to my father; that was why the first Saturday after-pay I went home and give money to my father; of course, I had always thought this money should be given to mother. And so see, how do you think, I felt when, in private discussion with her the afternoon I arrived; she told me it would be better if I give it to my father

“Hand it over to your father” she said.

“But mother.....!”

“Listen my son; does it matter if your father has 3 pounds of your pay? It does not matter, I’m telling you because then, he shall not be able to say you have not given him anything since you started working”.

“But mother! I am not starting work permanently.”

“And what do you mean?”

“Mother I have done an examination, if I pass very well I shall go to school again”

“Ah! And were you not the one who made me understand that you would finish after 5 years?”

“Yes, but the government pays their fees too?”

“Yes”.

“Then, that is good because I do not think your father would like to pay anymore fees for you”.

Well, we went to the sixth form. And of course father realized, I was still in school. He was quite proud of me too. He always managed to let slip into conversation with other men how Kofi was planning to go to the university, oh! It was fine as long as he was not paying...

I passed higher and with lots of destinations. I stopped working at my holiday’s job to get ready to go to our national university. And then; I met Mr Buntyne, who had been our chemistry teacher. He asked me if I would be interested in a scholarship for an American

university. He knew a business syndicate. They were looking out for especially bright young people to help. Of course I applied. There were endless forms to fill out but I got the scholarship. And I came here.

Excerpt from No Sweetness Here page 131-132

1- PRE- WRITING STAGE

Teacher asks students to look at the text and then asks them to read it silently.

Teacher reads the text in a loud voice.

He/she asks the students for the difficult vocabulary

He explains and gives them to the students.

Difficult vocabulary

Going straight home: going back home directly

Pay: money that you get regularly for work you've done

To hand over: to give something to someone

Matter: problem

Fees: the money you pay for your study from private schools

To be proud: feeling pleased and satisfied

Distinction: the quality of being excellent

Scholarship: an amount of money that is given to a person has passed an exam in order to help pay for his/her studies.

To be awarded a scholarship

To award: to give something to somebody as a prize.....

Bright: clever, intelligent

Endless: very long, without end

Oral questions

1- What is the text about?

2- What have the 2 boys done before looking for a job?

3- Why did Kofi stop working?

1- Who awarded the scholarship to Kofi?

2- Where did Kofi continue his studies after getting the scholarship?

2-WHILE WRITING STAGE

1-Controlled writing activities

a- join the following pairs with: although, so because

- Kofi and Bekoe worked during their vacation.... They need money
- Kofi gets insufficient salary; he gives money to his father.
- Kofi was awarded a scholarship He was a bright student
- Kofi was awarded a scholarship ... he went to America to continue his studies

b- Re-write the following paragraph by avoiding repetition

Kofi and Bekoe were school boys. After finishing five years studies in a secondary school, Kofi and Bekoe went to town to work.

After three months, Kofi stopped working. Kofi was one of the brightest students so Kofi was awarded a scholarship and Kofi went to an American University to continue his studies.

c- Re-order the following ideas as they appeared in the text

- 1- Kofi was one of the brightest students who got a scholarship and went to USA to study
- 2- Having finished their five years in a secondary school, Bekoe and Kofi searched for work
- 3- The government pays fees for the best students
- 4- Kofi's mother thought he should give his pays to his father.

2- Guided –writing activities

a- complete each gaps with one of the following words: secondary, passed, was awarded, university, continued, sit, and primary

When Kofi was very young, he went to a playground and then nursery school. When he was 5, he started at the local school. At the age of 11, he went to an all boys ... school. After 5 years, he ... for examination and went to the sixth form. He ... higher there and ... a scholarship. He ... his studies in an American

b- Now, write a short paragraph about yourself telling what sorts of studies you followed up to now.

c- Suppose you are awarded a scholarship to go abroad to continue your studies.

- where would you like to go?
- how would you react?
- what may be your parent's reaction?

3- POST-WRITING STAGE

Semi guided writing

As far as education is concerned, what kind of school would you like to study? 'in about 120 words).

Expected answers

Oral questions

- the text is about education
- they have sat an exam
- he stopped working to be ready fir his study
- a business syndicate
- he continued his studies in America

Controlled writing

- a- because –although – because –so
- b- Kofi and Bekoe were schoolboys. After finishing their five years studies in a secondary school; they went to town to work. After 3 months Kofi stopped working. He was one of the brightest students so he was awarded a scholarship and he went to America to continue his studies.

c- 2-4-3-1Guided writing

- 1 primary
- 2-secondary
- 3- Sat
- 4-passed
- 5- Was awarded
- 6- Continued
- 7-university

CONCLUSION TO THE THIRD PART

What we have suggested for the improvement of the teaching of the writing skill for 1ère A and Terminale A sections is far from being perfect.

We made suggestions for the adaptation of a few interesting excerpts from The Strange Man and No Sweetness Here followed by some writing activities thought suitable for 1ère A, Terminale A levels; they are given to provide teachers with pedagogical materials. Our aim was to help teachers to teach and to strengthen the writing skill.

All these writing activities are meant to help to consolidate the language acquisition. Writing gives the students practice in manipulating structural variants, in selecting and combining lexical elements, in expressing their thoughts or ideas; before any writing activity, students must learn or be reminded of a few particular grammar points so as to improve their linguistic knowledge.

In the 1ère and Terminale official syllabuses, students should be thoroughly trained again in the use of relative pronouns such as: who – which – whom – whose ... and in Terminale, they should have a revision of the different types of conjunctions, connectors or linking words. As we see it, if all Lycée teachers followed the official syllabus and could actually finish it, we could be sure that the students in those forms could be better at building compound and complex sentences as well as at producing written work such as: descriptive narrative and argumentative paragraphs, letter or essays.

In this part we started with excerpts from the two novels, as our main source for providing practice material, this in order to reinforce the students' knowledge of lexical items and the grammar elements they need to master. Teachers can give some writing activities such as: controlled writing activities, guided writing activities, or semi-guided writing activities. Besides, this work was also meant to make the students familiar with a writer's style and to encourage them to read and use literary work. To be literate in language acquisition implies the ability to read and write. Furthermore, the excerpts we have used correspond to the official syllabus and then can suit the 1ère A and Terminale A sections.

CONCLUSION

The teaching of foreign languages, English among others, should time and again be reconsidered in Madagascar if we really want to develop the students' capacity and proficiency. English is taught as an optional subject in third year (3ème), in terminale D and Terminale C; besides, it is also taught for only three hours a week and its coefficient is rather low at the official examinations, (BEPC, Baccalaureat) some students avoid it or leave it aside, more precisely neglect it. At school very few are willing to learn it thoroughly.

Although, there is an official intention to teach English from primary school, it is included as school subject and but is not part of the CEPE examination for example. The problems about it (teaching / acquisition) are numerous and should be tackled not only by responsible teacher but also by the very Malagasy government. It is an important government responsibility. English practice requires reconsiderations.

In our view, English language should be made compulsory from primary school to university particularly at different national and official examinations. Moreover, its coefficient should be reconsidered. We suggest that in elementary level, the coefficient should be 1; during the secondary school, it should be 2 or 3 or 4. Some teaching practices have to be improved or changed. Teachers should make efforts to attract the students' interest in their teaching; they should not hesitate to resort more to gestures, pictures, mimes when explaining vocabulary elements if they do not want to speak Malagasy all the time, for example. It is worth mentioning that what we are going to suggest is far from being enough to improve the English language teaching and learning in Madagasikara.

The ministry of education should take some serious measures to make students aware that learning English language is crucial since it is spoken and known all over the world. By doing so, the government, more precisely the ministry of education, should make English compulsory at school and introduce it from primary to university like French subject. Apart from that, the coefficient and the amount of time for such a demanding course as well as the syllabus should be reconsidered. The coefficient should be close to a similar to French at school; three hours a week may not be sufficient time for such a demanding course, at least four or five or six hours should be assigned for teaching it effectively; besides, the contents of the official syllabus should be improved and reformed.

Moreover, English teachers should not humiliate any students for their weaknesses. They should encourage and motivate them and teachers should devote time to teach language skills

particularly the writing skill, they should not assert that it is not necessary to teach it, nor think that the students already know how to build sentence or paragraph. They should spend if necessary five up to ten minutes to comment on an individual paper, give extensive suggestions and make specific individual remarks as well as general global remarks. To avoid discouragement, the feed back given by teachers to students should be positive in general; it should be focused more on their strength than on their weakness.

Teacher should also change their way of teaching each year to serve students to be interested in their courses and make their lesson well prepared. In addition they should not forget to correct homework and should search different ways to present a topic, language function, structures by using various didactic materials such as: pictures, novels or short stories; this is precisely what we suggest them to do to improve the teaching of the writing skill in this dissertation.

Concerning the writing skill, guidelines for writing correct, appropriate sentence, paragraph, letter and essay should be introduced early in a school year for example at the beginning of the second term to make the students familiar with them.

Apart from that, students should be advised to be members of a library and there should be a schedule for a library time each week; apart from that, school should introduce some English books such as novels, short stories, tales which are interesting and correspond to the official syllabus and Lycée student's level. These can help the students and can avoid students' tiredness of using one book (NCE) during their studies in Lycée as well as to increase students' wills for reading.

Furthermore, students must be encouraged to do their homework and not consider English as a valueless school subject. They should put in their mind that they need the English language; it is spoken and known all over the world, particularly in their professional life and at some future time.

All in all, it is the government and teachers' responsibility to make students aware of the importance of English subject so that they do not underestimate it. Concerning the teaching of the writing skill, we tried to give suggestions for how to improve the teaching of that skill. We stated earlier that writing was very difficult as far as learning and teaching English was concerned because in the creation of something in a written form, students have to think about what to write and how to write it; real writing involves: vocabulary items, structures, spelling, punctuation and good organization of the content at the same time. As ODA London and UERP, in Handbook for teaching, asserted: language learning is the same as driving a car: "... you cannot learn to steer one day, learn to change gear the next day and learn to use the brake

on yet another occasion. Driving requires you to do all these things at the same time». Owing to this, we tried to give some suggestions to help the teacher as well as the students concerning the writing skill. Our suggestions are far from being perfect, however.

First of all, teachers should follow, finish and get hold of the programme within the Lycée official syllabus since all lessons and activities presented in the syllabus can improve the students' knowledge, results and competence.

Second, as far as writing task is concerned, students should be taught how to build correct sentence and how to build paragraphs. By doing so, teacher should ask students to build 1 sentence or 2 sentences just after tackling a lesson on: structures, vocabulary, functions. It is also worth mentioning that students should be taught how to use connective and relative words since they cannot do good writing without them. Moreover, learning these connectives and relatives may force the students to improve their knowledge of structure and to improve their reading comprehension, apart from the improvement of the writing skill itself. We suggested this so as to make students achieve "cohesion" at sentence level.

When a teacher feels that his students make progress, he then should give them some guidelines or strategies for building paragraph or/and essay.

Teachers should also explain that paragraph(s) involve coherence too that is: two paragraphs should relate or connect in a way that makes sense.

After that, students should be given exercises, homework, holiday tasks concerning essay writing; it is important to stress the importance of correction. To avoid discouragement, the feedback or correction given by the teacher should be positive in general; it should focus on strength rather than weakness, indeed to avoid inhibition in the students, grades should not be given. Teachers should evaluate students' work as good, fair, acceptable and so on.

In this research work, we have come back upon the teaching of that particular skill: writing which seems a rather difficult task not only for the teachers but especially for the learners.

Teachers should find out or pinpoint the needs and obstacles faced by their students; for example: the latter have to be encouraged or helped, taught how to gradually build sentences or paragraphs, to write letters or essays; they will have to be shown that writing is as an integral part of language acquisition.

Writing is not an isolated activity, it must be integrated with the other skills (reading, listening or speaking).

All in all, teachers should be well advised to reconsider their pedagogical means, their methods to make the students always interested in their teaching and to avoid routine which makes some students unwilling to make efforts.

Moreover, teaching and acquiring the writing skill require our constant effort and thinking because it is not an easy subject. What we have considered in this work is what teachers and learners are expected to perform at Lycée level. Writing may also involve other important aspects like style for example, but this is another matter and we would like to end our conclusion by saying that what we have mentioned in this work is first and foremost suggestions and they certainly can be improved or modulated.

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The Strange Man by Amu Dzoletto:-The writer and his work

-Plot summary

No Sweetness Here by Ama Ata Aidoo

- The writer and her work

-Plot summary

CAPEN DISSERTATIONS:

- 1- RAZAFINDRATOVO Mbolatiana, Aspects of Social and Cultural life in Ghana during the Post Colonial Period as seen through The Housemaid by Ammadarko, No Sweetness Here by Ama Ata Aidoo and The Marriage of Anansere by Efauasuthed and with selected text for pedagogical uses, Ecole Normale Supérieure 2008.
- 2- RAHERIVOLOLONA Tarabolamena, The Evangelisation of The Black African as seen through Things Fall Apart by Chinua Achibe, The River Between by Nguigi WATHION'O, The Strange Man by Amu Dzoletto and The Poor Christ of Bomba by Mongo Beti, Ecole Normale Supérieure 2005.
- 3- RAFARAMALALA Florence Isabelle, Adapting Short Stories to Develop The Reading and Writing Skills in Terminale A section, Ecole Normale Supérieure 1998

APPENDICES

In this section, we will describe and show the logical steps for practising the writing skill when combine with the reading comprehension: we analyse the pre-writing, the while-writing, and the post-writing. Then, writing activities based on the reading comprehension will be presented. After that, we show the pedagogical interests of excerpts from The Strange Man and No Sweetness Here in relation with the teaching of writing followed by the criteria for selection. In the last paragraph, we will describe our classroom observations.

1- The Logical Steps for Practising the Writing Skill When Combined With the Reading Comprehension.

A- Pre-Writing Stage

Before dealing with pre-writing, it is better to perform warm up activities which should consist not only in rising students' awareness about an important question, but also in introducing the topic a bit so that the students will be interested in a passage the teachers are going to deal with and use for teaching the writing skill.

Once the warm up is over, the excerpt to be used for reading should be introduced first. It is no need to introduce the topic of the text, for students will be asked to understand it at the end of this stage; the teacher should ask students to read the text silently. P. GURREY, in Teaching English as a Foreign Language, states: "the best kind of preparation for the students is the reading silently of the text", during that moment, teacher should not take any part at all, but should let students work out the meaning of the text; then he or she will read the text aloud; or P. GURREY again states: "the reading aloud by teacher of an excerpt will provide fresh and varied preparation for writing".

After the two readings, explanations of difficult vocabulary item should take place. Teacher should give synonyms and opposites of some words, because they play important role for developing and proposing students' word power. Some oral questions concerning the text should be carried out after giving vocabulary items. These questions should stimulate further thought and should depend on students' level, for example: for the intelligent class, students should be enquired deeply into the topic. It is worth noting that student should speak, read before writing.

Moreover, it is in this stage that teacher should have opportunities to give some important and useful information from the text such as: historical events, social and educational facts of the writers' country. All the excerpts we are going to present are about Ghana so, we give some information about the country to the students.

On the whole, the pre-writing stage is the stage students need some input from teacher. They should use these inputs during the while-writing stage which is the stage of output.

B- While-Writing Stage

During the pre-writing stage, students should obtain something to use in the while-writing stage because this stage is the stage for practices, thus students should not leave aside what the teacher is going to give.

Here, the teacher gives students some writing activities such as controlled and guided writings in order to train them to write accurate and appropriate words and sentences. In this stage, teacher should motivate students to do activities to serve them for a semi-guided writing for example essay writing or letter writing.

This is in this stage that students are in real contact with text, thus, all controlled and guided writing activities are based on the given excerpt. Besides, students should be explained how to deal with the above activities; the controlled writing is often used for grammar so students will be familiar with certain exercises whereas guided writing means providing students with something to write about and the framework for organizing it; in addition, students should be ready for the preparation of an essay writing. Help from teachers should be considered.

To sum up, while-writing stage is the stage where students should express their own ideas little by little in order to be familiar with the essay writing which we are going to describe and is part of the post-writing stage.

C- Post Writing Stage

After such detailed activities, semi-guided or free writing activity should take place.

2- Writing Activities Based on a Reading Comprehension

As far as we are concerned, the way to make writing activities more meaningful for the students as well to increase the students' motivation to do the activities will depend on the different types of materials that the teachers use when teaching or dealing with writing activities; the teachers should use written supports as text, report, or letter; and series of pictures for example, particularly excerpts from novels or from short stories.

The writing activities, which are based on these materials, should relate to the given materials but not differ from them particularly the essay writing, in order to give students an

opportunity to use or re-use a writer's vocabulary, expressions or style; indeed students should have something to write but not sit in front of their papers with empty brains unable to write anything. For example when a text (or material for reading comprehension) is about health, the essay writing or composition should naturally relate to the same topic health or disease.

Thus in order to make students able to write something, mainly to do writing activity well, teachers should give them exercises to help them cope with the reference skills as well as the language skills.

Writing gives the students practice in handling structural variants, in selecting and combining lexical elements; so to help in the practices, the following stages of writing activities can be convenient: controlled writing activity, guided-writing activity and semi-guided or free-writing activity.

In the controlled writing activities, grammar practices often take a great place, in order to help most students be familiar with certain exercises. The controlled writing activities may include: matching sentences and rewriting them; constructing sentences from random sequences of elements; constructing sentences by supplying missing elements; joining two sentences with a given connectives, and dictations. At this stage the students do not resort to 'inspiration' yet. In the guided writing activities, teachers should provide learners with something to write about mostly using some lexical elements. We can suggest some types of guided writing activities: Writing according to a model, or parallel writing (the given model helps students both with what to say or write and with how to organise it); the model may be a text or a letter or a paragraph practice like: writing from tables, charts, and diagrams; rearranging sentences or paragraph, completing paragraph(s) by supplying the missing words, phrases, or clauses or supplying the missing words in a text using a given list or cues. Here, students are given guidance but with lesser control compared with the controlled writing activities. In semi-guided writing activities, students should give their own points of view and follow their own inspiration in relation with a given topic. They do not write anything they want to write but they have to write something related to the given topic; that is the reason why it is called semi-guided writing". Students should also be gradually led to differentiate some types of writing (narrative, descriptive, comparative, argumentative writing or reports.....)

When we want to develop the students' writing skill and to prepare them for semi-guided or free writing compositions for their examinations, controlled-writing, guided writing and semi-guided writing activities make up the best way for effective language teaching as far as writing activities are concerned.

3- Excerpts from : “the Strange Man and No Sweetness here

Pedagogical interests in the relation with the teaching of writing

All writing activities should be carried out within the broader framework of a text, that is, excerpts from novels short stories, reports, and letters for examples. That is the reason why we decided to adapt and use some excerpts from “The Strange Man and no Sweetness Here” as a starting basis for the improvement of teaching of the writing skill to the Lycée learners especially in literary forms (1ère A and Terminale A levels).

First, the two literary works contain texts which can be adapted to suit the two literary sections and respond to vocabulary items required by the official Lycée syllabus; besides, they can provide some interesting topics for the reading as well as the writing skill such as: health, education, family customs and traditions and others; thus they can make writing activities much more meaningful and interesting for the students. Moreover, the students can have an opportunity to get information about Ghana, for the occasion: the social, political and cultural situations of that country and this will be of some help for their future studies, while at the same time it can broaden their general knowledge. Apart from that, the two works can be used to help lycée teachers to increase their collection of reading passages so as to have a variety of choices and thus avoid possible boredom, especially if there are any repeaters in their class.

Furthermore, the novel and the short stories can be enjoyable and entertaining for secondary school students to read because some themes in these books are comparable to situation in Madagascar. Although most word which are used within them seen simple and easy to understand, the students may however face difficulties when reading or meet with unfamiliar words, because of a poor level; anyway they can be helped to adjust themselves to the repeated vocabulary and to the style of the writer if necessary; they may also be provided with in the case of unusual vocabulary items or new structures or expressions and especially they can acquire new helpful ideas.

- Criteria for selection

It is teacher’s role to choose the excerpts suitable for the students’ levels and needs, and also, as far as their length is concerned. Besides, they should not present too many structural and lexical difficulties; they should have interesting themes likely to reduce the lack interest among the majority of learners following the study. The excerpt should be simple and short, because time must not be wasted on a too long story, since the reading has to be followed by questions. Too long text produces boredom, half hearted effort and lack of enthusiasm; it may also decrease the students’ will for reading, whereas short texts ease comprehension.

The excerpts should not be too complicated, but not too short either on the other hand; the aim is to enrich the students' mental by providing them with new vocabulary areas, structures or expression. All this will broaden their general cultural horizon.

For our experimentations, we chose excerpts we expected to be suitable for the students' level and needs. On the other hand, we always tried to keep as scrupulously as close to the official syllabus as possible.

CLASSROOM OBSERVATIONS

We observed many classes in the fourth year before doing the teaching practice, and before our experimentations, but there were only two lessons which were related to our themes.

Classroom observation N 1(in the fourth year)

Date: 16 April 2007

School: Lycée Jean Joseph Rabearivelo

Class: Terminale A3

Activity: corrections of the written test

Duration: 2 hours

Skill to be emphasized: Writing

Materials: text

Classroom teacher: Mrs Ramaholison Eliane

STAGE 1: Warm up activity

Teacher: how are you every body?

Students: fine thank you!

Teacher: did you spend nice holidays?

Students: yes, very nice!

STAGE 2: Pre - teaching

Teacher: what does W.B stand for?

Student: World Bank

T: And I.M.F?

S: guess

T: - International Monetary Fund, it provides poor country with money.

-What is Madagascar?

S: guess

T: Madagascar is a developing country

Developing country is the opposite of developed country

T: What do you call the moment of conference?

S: Guess

T: A summit

There are two meanings of summit -1 conference

2 a summit of a mountain e.g.: summit of Himalaya

(The teacher draws a picture of a summit)

T: What does the 5 continents?

S: Asiatic, African, European, American, Australian

STAGE 3: While-teaching

TEXT (the teacher gives the text)

About Washington

Washington, World Bank Officials say it will be “an uphill battle” to slow the high rate of forest destruction in the next ten or fifteen years.

Some seventeen to twenty million hectares of forests are being destroyed each year in developed and developing countries. Navenda Shama, an economist at the World Bank, said at a briefing September 14

There is not sufficient international concern to really be effective in stopping deforestation said Michel Petit director of Agriculture and rural development for the World Bank. That could be seen most recently at the Earth Summit in June, when the industrial and developing countries split over; how much protection forest need, how to preserve and how to pay for such efforts, he said.

The developing countries are beginning to take step to step widespread logging and clearing of land for farm and ranches but they need financial help to do more, he said. Most forest destruction is in developing countries and occurs mainly as poor people cut trees for firewood or clear land for farming. Saving the forest requires doing something to combat poverty according to Michel Petit. In the developed world, people want tropical forest preserved as a tourist destination and because they absorb carbon dioxide, the major gas that may be warming the earth and could lead to drastic climate changes

I-The teacher asked the students to read the text silently (10mn).

II-The teacher read the text loudly and then explained some difficult vocabulary items

Uphill # downhill

To split= to break

To split over= not to agree about certain points

Drastic= that has a strong effect; very powerful, excellent magic

ORAL QUESTIONS

-Where are forests destroyed?

S: forests are destroyed in developing and developed countries

-Why do some people destroy forests?

S: They destroy forests for firewood and for farm

-What does the third World need to stop deforestation?

S: They need financial help to stop deforestation

The students were given 10 mn break

-

III-Reading comprehension

A-Vocabulary

1) - Choose the correct answer

It will be an uphill battle means: a- It will be difficult

b- It will be quite easy

c- It will be neither easy nor difficult

2) - Find in the text

a- The equivalent of: enough - to take place

b- The opposite of: last- a long time- to destroy

3)-Use the words" summit, country, and most in three sentences or expressions of your own with meanings different from the they have in the text

CORRECTIONS

The students did the corrections one after the other

A Vocabulary: 1 correct answer: a) it will be an uphill battle means: it will be difficult

2 The equivalent of: enough=sufficient

To take place= to occur

The opposite of: last# next

A long time ago # recently

To destroy# to preserve, to protect

3 sentences building 1 country: I like living in a country

2 summit: The summit of Himalaya is called Mount Everest

3 Most: German is one of the most difficult languages.

B WRITING

Imagine a stay at a sporting centre

What happens?

What do you appreciate/ like at the centre?

Do you feel at ease?

Classroom Observation N 2(before our experimentation)

Date: 14th November 2008

School: Lycée R V Moramanga

Class: Ière

Level: Iere A

Lesson: Paragraph Writing

Activity: exercise

Duration: two hours

Skill to be emphasized: writing skill

THE SCRIPT

I-The teacher checked the attendance

II-The teacher asked the students to take sheets of paper

III-The teacher wrote the subject on the blackboard

“Tell about your All Saint holidays” (about 60 words)

After one hour the teacher collected the students’ sheets of paper and the students were given 10 mn break.

After the break, the teacher asked two students to copy their works on the blackboard

Student 1: During the all saint’s holidays, I went to Antananarivo with my mother and my little sister. We bought some flowers on the 1st November, and then we went to our countryside. After that, we brought the flowers to the tomb, we cleaned the alentour and finally we put the flowers on the tomb.

Student 2: During the all saint’s holidays we gone to the cemetery to put the ancestor’s flowers, in the 1st November. After that I worked in the jardin and visited my family.

-The teacher asked some of the students to correct the mistakes

Alentour/surroundings

Jardin/garden

We gone/ we went

In/ on the 1st November

Five minutes after, the bell rang; time was up.