

Trainee Evaluations on Major Area Course Offerings

Zelege Demilew*

ABSTRACT: *This study was undertaken to find out whether or not the diploma trainees of the Department of English of the Kotebe College of Teacher Education (KCTE) attach varying value judgments to the major area courses that their department offers them. Trainees who joined the department in the first semester of 1993/94 were asked to evaluate the courses that they took over the following four semesters on three counts - Level of Difficulty, Relevance of Teaching English in Schools, and Level of Interest. They were also requested to indicate the grades they expected to score in their courses each semester. The results show (1) the trainees attached significantly differing value judgments to the courses on all the three counts, (2) for eleven of the fourteen courses a significant correlation was observed between grades expected and grades obtained, and (3) each of these was found to have significant relation with the level of difficulty ratings.*

1. Introduction

The Department of English of the Kotebe College of Teacher Education (KCTE) offers fourteen major area courses to its diploma trainees. These courses readily fall into four categories. Firstly, we have the skill courses - different courses that attempt to develop the four skill. Secondly, there are the linguistics courses - courses that aim at acquainting students with the analysis of the structural aspects of languages in general and of the English language in particular. Thirdly, the literature courses - courses that cover the fundamentals of literature and extend to the comparison of different literary genres. Lastly, the professional courses - courses that attempt to acquaint trainees with the theories of English language teaching (ELT) and expose the practical aspects of teaching English.

There has, however, been a feeling (though probably not long-standing) among the members of the staff of the department that certain improvements need to

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1. Introduction

The Department of English of the Kotebe College of Teacher Education (KCTE) offers fourteen major area courses to its diploma trainees. These courses readily fall into four categories. Firstly, we have the skill courses - different courses that attempt to develop the four skill. Secondly, there are the linguistics courses - courses that aim at acquainting students with the analysis of the structural aspects of languages in general and of the English language in particular. Thirdly, the literature courses - courses that cover the fundamentals of literature and extend to the comparison of different literary genres. Lastly, the professional courses - courses that attempt to acquaint trainees with the theories of English language teaching (ELT) and expose the practical aspects of teaching English.

There has, however, been a feeling (though probably not long-standing) among the members of the staff of the department that certain improvements need to

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be made in these courses. Some contend that there are courses that the present list does not include. Others view that some of the courses are redundant and should therefore be discarded. These and other similar contentions seem to suggest the necessity for a revision of the course offerings.

Do our trainees share these views? What value judgment(s) do they attach to the courses that their department offers them? This study was undertaken to find answers to such questions.

Trainees (35 in all) who joined the department in the first semester of 1993/94 were asked to evaluate the courses that they took over the following four semesters. The evaluations were on three counts - (1) Level of Difficulty, (2) Relevance of Teaching English in Schools, and (3) Level of Interest. They were also requested to indicate the grades they expected to score in each course they took each semester. The results show that the trainees have indeed attached significantly differing value judgments to the courses on all the three counts. For eleven of the fourteen courses a significant correlation has been observed between grades expected and grades obtained. Besides the correlations between grades expected and level of difficulty ratings and between grades obtained and level of difficulty ratings were computed and they were found to have significant relations.

2. Theoretical Background

The main purpose of this study is to examine whether or not the diploma trainees of the department attach varying value judgments to the major area courses that their department offers them. This will, to some degree, help determine the nature of their attitude towards the courses. And attitude and motivation are said to have very close relations. Wiesen (1992:39) makes it clear that as in all other fields, the key to success in foreign-language learning is motivation.

A number of research studies have been carried out to see to what extent the attitude of learners affects their achievement in the second language that they are studying. Gardner (1980:268) asserts that the bulk of the research evidence does demonstrate a relation between second language proficiency and attitudinal/motivational variables.

Pierson, Fu, and Lee (1980) studied secondary school students in Hong Kong from the point of the relation between their attainment in and attitude to English. They used both direct and indirect measures for the purpose and found out that the direct measures of the attitude factors show significant relations to the English attainment of the students as determined by a cloze test. Hermann (1980) and others have arrived at similar results though at different levels.

Lukmani (1972) has reported that of the two categories of motivation (instrumental and integrative) the most common category among foreign language learners is instrumental motivation.

Gardner, Lalonde, and Moorcroft (1985:225) have asserted that "attitudes and motivation and language aptitude are important because they influence the rate at which second language material is learned." Cormon (1986:278) goes even further when he asserts that "students are people and... their different personalities, feelings, and interests should be taken into account."

Chaplen (1980:179) is of the conviction that the way students view their courses has an effect on their motivation. In this connection he writes

Motivation is probably the most important factor in successful foreign language learning. Provided that the learner feels that the course he is following is helping him to obtain knowledge and to develop skills that are or will be useful to him, his motivation will probably remain high enough to enable him to sustain the considerable effort necessary to achieve most of the objectives of the course.

Moreover, taking into account students' evaluation of their courses has proved very useful when changes and improvements are sought to be made. In fact he states, "an essential step when developing a new course or revitalizing a well-established one is to obtain formal evaluation from the students of all its components." (*Ibid.* p.181)

Bax (1995:268) focuses on the role the trainee plays in the evaluation of teacher development activities when he writes that "as a general principle

activities should be designed to allow more scope for trainees to negotiate and offer content arising from their own experience; this will maximize their involvement and increase the chances of new ideas being implemented."

Clarke (1989) has questioned why the teacher carries out the job of materials adaptation solely on his own when greater learner involvement in the activity would be of considerable help.

An interesting finding has been reported by Zughoul and Taminian (1984) in their study of the linguistic attitude of Arab university students. The majority of the subjects of their study "strongly favoured the use of Arabic rather than English as a medium of instruction at the university level." (p. 165). However, paradoxically enough, the majority of these same subjects "view English as more instrumental than Arabic in finding a higher-status job" (p. 169). And when asked about the utility of English, again the vast majority of the subjects "viewed English as more useful than Arabic in pursuing higher education" (*Ibid.*).

The nature of the attitude that learners have towards literature courses has been studied by Hirvela and Boyle (1988:180). They found out that students

have many fears and anxieties about studying literature, especially poetry. These fears are based partly on their lack of background-most of them had studied little or no literature in secondary schools - and partly on a certain mystique about literature: a sense that literature was somehow totally different from other forms of writing in English.

They, nonetheless, remind us that they do not propose that *students' likes and dislikes have to be accepted lock, stock and barrel (Ibid.)*. They advise that teachers views should also be taken into account. In conclusion, they write

Our primary contention is that student attitudes + teacher goals + suitable texts = a course satisfying to students and teachers alike. The second and third variables of the equation have received their fair share of attention in the

past. Perhaps the time has now come to give the first variable its fair share of attention too (Ibid. P. 183).

Zughoul (1987) has also written an article in which he traces the history of English departments in third world (TW) universities. He is strongly critical of their shortcomings and mentions none of their strong sides, if at all there are any. Some of the points he raises are the following:

1. There has not been a proportionate division or balance among the various components of language in the curriculum.
2. The proficiency of the student in English and/or his interest(s) have not been considered.
3. No department of English in TW countries offers *solid language training* (P. 223)

Summarizing his views, he writes

It can be concluded that a department of general English where language, literature, linguistics, and methodology components are incorporated to build up the linguistic competence of the graduate and prepare him to take a job to meet the needs of his community is what suits a TW country (P. 233).

Cullen (1994), not putting any limit to third world countries, has suggested similar combinations of course components. He, however, says that the language improvement component may or may not be present in the curricula of many institutions and discusses at length ways and means of incorporating it.

A number of years have passed since the English Department of KCTE accepted and put into practice the above suggestions. At one time or another, however, the department might decide to improve its courses (a couple of instances of this have already been witnessed); it might decide to introduce additional courses; it might even decide to change some or all of the courses it offers and replace them by others. In any such eventuality being aware of the attitudes of trainees towards the courses they are offered (as has been advised by the different researchers consulted) will have considerable importance.

And if we were to make changes, (Reid, 1994) people who are likely to be affected by the changes (i.e. staff and trainees alike) should be convinced that the change is, after all, for the better lest any side should feel it was an imposition.

Yalden (1991:98) goes even a step further when she focuses on the necessity of consulting *not only the employer or parent or client, but also the learner (who may in fact be the client)* in the process of designing a course.

The inevitability of change (both quantitative and qualitative) in foreign language departments has also been discussed by Lattore and Palacios (1980).

3. Method

In an attempt to gather the data, a five-point evaluation grid (0-4) was designed for each of the three counts: Level of Difficulty, Level of Relevance, and Level of Interest. This scale was intentionally employed so that it could be congruent with the letter grade evaluation system of the college for comparative computational purposes. In addition to the numerical values all the evaluation grids were verbally cued (very easy to very difficult, not relevant to very relevant, not interesting to very interesting) when presented to trainees. This writer is well aware that researchers such as Ely (1986) have utilized semantic differential scales in order to record students' evaluations of their interest in and enjoyment of L₂ classes.

In the last week of each of the four semesters, trainees were asked to evaluate the major area courses that they had been taking. On the evaluation grid in one column they were also requested to indicate the grades they expected for the courses they evaluated.

Each trainee's evaluation was multiplied by the numerical value assigned. This gave the weighted rating for each count. This was then summed up and the total was divided by the number of trainees who participated in the evaluation. Thus the average of a course evaluated for a given count was obtained this way. To get a general picture of the situation the courses were rank - ordered on the basis of the mean rating for each count.

For a more comprehensive view of the situation the courses were grouped into four; skills, linguistics, literature, and professional; and mean combinations and computations of standard deviations were carried out and a two way ANOVA for correlated groups was run to see whether or not the trainees attached significantly different ratings to the four categories of courses.

An attempt was also made to determine (1) whether or not the grades that the trainees expected to score and the grades that they actually scored were related, and (2) whether or not either of these grades or both of them were related to the trainees' Level of Difficulty ratings. The correlation coefficient statistics was used for these purposes. To determine the significance level of the values computed, the values were subjected into the statistics for testing significance.

4. Data Presentation and Results

It was in the light of the observations under the theoretical background section of the paper that the study was undertaken. The evaluations of the trainees were, therefore, sought on the three counts listed above. Table I provides students' evaluations of the fourteen courses on level of difficulty.

Table I below shows the courses arranged from the most difficult to the least difficult. Eng. 172 (Introduction to Linguistics 1) has received the highest mean rating (3.1714) on a scale of 0-4 for level of difficulty. This indicates that the trainees have found it the most difficult of the courses. It is interesting to note that its senior course, Eng. 271 (Introduction to Linguistics II), has been rated as the second most difficult course with an average rating of 3.0571. Eng. 262 (Modern English Structure) - considered to be a linguistics course - ranked tenth with an average rating of 2.2285.

4.1. *Level of Difficulty Mean-Rating*

The senior literature course, Eng. 222 (Introduction to Literature II), has been labeled as the third most difficult course with an average rating of 2.8000. Its

prerequisite, Eng. 221 (Introduction to Literature 1), has received an average rating of 2.3428 - thus ranking seventh.

Table I. Rank Ordered Rating Averages on Level of Difficulty

Courses	LEVEL OF DIFFICULTY					Total	Av. Rating	Rank
	0	1	2	3	4			
Eng. 172	-	1	10	48	52	111	3.1714	1
Eng. 271	-	-	12	51	44	107	3.0571	2
Eng. 222	-	6	6	54	32	98	2.8000	3
Eng. 131	0	1	18	57	16	92	2.6286	4
Eng. 202	0	4	24	45	12	84	2.4000	5
Eng. 132	0	7	18	42	16	83	2.3714	6
Eng. 221	0	6	22	42	12	82	2.3428	7
Eng. 181	0	4	22	45	8	79	2.2571	8.5
Eng. 201	0	5	28	30	16	79	2.2571	8.5
Eng. 262	0	7	20	39	12	78	2.2285	10
Eng. 252	0	6	26	45	-	77	2.2000	11.5
Educ. 241	0	6	18	33	20	77	2.2000	11.5
Eng. 141	0	7	20	36	8	71	2.0286	13
Eng. 142	0	7	22	27	12	68	1.9426	14

N=35

The two methodology courses, ELT Methods I (Eng. 131) and ELT Methods II (Eng. 132), have ranked fourth and sixth respectively with an average rating of 2.6286 and 2.3714 respectively. Still, one other feature that the table exhibits is that these two teaching methodology courses were labeled as much more difficult than Practice Teaching (Educ. 241) which, in fact, ranked the eleventh with an average rating of 2.2000.

As regards the writing courses, Eng. 202 (Research Methods and Report Writing) ranked fifth with an average rating of 2.4000; Sophomore English (Eng. 201) ranked eighth with an average rating of 2.2571; and Eng. 252 (Advanced Composition) ranked eleventh with an average rating of 2.2000, just like Educ. 241.

Eng. 181 (Critical Reading), the only course attempting to address the reading skill, has ranked eighth with an average rating of 2.2571 like Eng. 201.

The two Spoken English courses I and II (Eng. 141 and Eng. 142) have ranked thirteenth and fourteenth respectively. This means that the two courses have been found the least difficult of all the courses.

This appears to be neat enough. But do these rating differences have statistical support? An attempt has been made to determine this. The courses were grouped into four categories - skills, linguistics, literature, and professional. The group means and standard deviations were calculated. The combined means were for skills, 2.1943, for linguistics, 2.8475, for literature, 2.5714 and for professional, 2.3999. The standard deviations for the combined groups were for skills, 0.8683, for linguistics, 0.7962, for literature, 0.9685, and for professional, 1.0168.

It was, therefore, hypothesized that if there was a statistically significant difference between the means of the combined groups, it could safely be concluded that the trainees attached differing value judgments for the courses. The Two Way ANOVA was thus computed to find out the significance of the difference between the means obtained from the correlated groups. Table II below shows this.

Table II: Two Way ANOVA for Level of Difficulty

Source of Variation	df	SS	MS	F
B/n Course Groups	3	8.0249	2.6749	32.1502*
Among Trainees	34	109.1828	3.2112	38.5961*
Interaction	102	8.4935	0.0832	
Total	139	127.3392		

* $P < .01$

As can be observed from Table II,, the computed F values are far greater than the table values of F at $p < .01$. This finding therefore, brings to light the fact that the differences between the mean ratings of the four categories of courses on level of difficulty are highly significant.

4.2. Level of Relevance Mean-Ratings

Table III below presents the rank ordered average ratings on relevance to teaching English in schools for each of the fourteen courses.

It can be observed from this table that what was considered the second most difficult course (Eng. 271) has now been rated as the least relevant. Its prerequisite, Eng. 172, has been given low relevance rating (the eleventh). It was ranked the most difficult of the fourteen courses. However, Modern English Structure (Eng. 262), considered a linguistics course, ranked the tenth in level of difficulty but the fourth in relevance.

Table III. Rank Ordered Rating Averages on Level of Relevance

Courses	Level of Relevance					Total	Av. Rating	Rank
	0	1	2	3	4			
Educ. 241	-	-	-	12	124	136	3.8857	1
Eng. 132	-	2	-	21	104	127	3.6280	2.5
Eng. 142	-	-	6	21	100	127	3.6280	2.5
Eng. 262	-	1	2	27	96	126	3.6000	4
Eng. 252	-	-	4	33	88	125	3.5714	5
Eng. 201	-	2	2	24	96	124	3.5428	6
Eng. 141	-	2	6	18	96	122	3.4857	7
Eng. 131	0	2	8	18	88	116	3.3143	8
Eng. 181	-	3	16	33	52	104	2.9714	9
Eng. 221	-	1	22	36	44	103	2.9423	10
Eng. 172	0	3	16	45	28	92	2.6285	11
Eng. 222	0	4	24	18	32	78	2.2285	12
Eng. 202	0	6	14	33	24	77	2.2000	13
Eng. 271	0	6	20	33	12	71	2.0286	14

N=35

And what was considered as one of the least difficult, (Educ. 341), rated as the eleventh, has now been rather the most relevant. The senior methodology course, Eng. 132, has been ranked the second most relevant course. Its prerequisite, Eng. 131, has ranked eighth in relevance. Eng. 132 was indicated as moderately difficult (the sixth), whereas Eng. 131 was ranked the fourth difficult course.

The senior Spoken English course (Eng. 142) was ranked the second most relevant course just like Eng. 132. Its prerequisite, Eng. 141, has been ranked the seventh in relevance. These two courses were considered the least difficult courses. Eng. 202, considered to be the most difficult of the writing courses, has been ranked the least relevant next to Eng. 271. Eng. 201, which was

given low difficulty level (the eighth), has been considered sixth in relevance. Eng. 252 which was considered as one of the least difficult (the eleventh) has now been considered the fifth relevant. Eng. 221 and Eng. 222 the seventh and the third in level of difficulty rating respectively, ranked the tenth and the twelfth in relevance rating respectively. Eng. 181 ranked eighth like Eng. 201 in difficulty and now it ranked ninth in relevance.

To see whether the average ratings show statistically significant differences, the same procedure as for level of difficulty was followed. The computed mean ratings for the course groups were skill, 3.2333; linguistics, 2.7523; literature, 2.5857 and professional, 3.6095. The standard deviations for these same course groups were 0.8186, 0.9339, 1.0589 and 0.6784 respectively. The same Two Way ANOVA was run to determine the significant findings.

Table IV Two Way ANOVA for Level of Relevance

Source of Variation	df	SS	MS	F
B/n Course Groups	3	23.2409	7.7469	36.8023*
Among Trainees	34	90.4364	2.6598	12.6356*
Interaction	102	21.4732	0.21205	
Total	135	135.1505		

*P<.01

Table IV exhibits that the difference between the mean ratings of the categories of courses on level of relevance is highly significant.

4.3. *Level of Interest Mean Ratings*

Table V summarizes the rating averages the trainees attached to the courses on level of interest.

From Table V it can be observed that Eng. 141 has ranked first although its relevance rating was seventh. The senior course Eng. 142 has ranked fourth. Educ. 241 has ranked second. The theoretical courses Eng. 132 and Eng. 131 ranked ninth and tenth in level of interest respectively. Eng. 132 ranked second in level of relevance along with Eng. 142.

Eng. 221, the first course in literature, ranked third in level of interest. Its relevance rating was tenth. The senior course, Eng. 222, ranked the eleventh. Eng. 262 ranked fifth. The two other linguistics courses, Eng. 172 and Eng. 271, ranked thirteenth scoring equal average rating (2.2857).

The writing course, Eng. 252, has ranked sixth. Eng. 201 and Eng. 181 (a reading course) scored equal average rating - they ranked seventh. Eng. 202, the other writing course, received a rating more or less equal to its relevance rating. It ranked thirteenth in relevance. It now ranked twelfth.

Table V Rank Ordered Rating Averages on Level of Interest

Courses	Level of Difficulty					Total	Av. Rating	Rank
	0	1	2	3	4			
Eng. 141	-		10	48	52	111	3.1714	1
Educ. 241	-	-	12	51	44	107	3.0571	2
Eng. 221	-	-	6	54	32	98	2.8000	3
Eng. 141	-	-	18	57	16	92	2.6286	4
Eng. 262	-	-	24	45	12	84	2.4000	5
Eng. 252	-	-	18	42	16	83	2.3714	6
Eng. 201	-	-	22	42	12	82	2.3428	7
Eng. 181	-	-	22	45	8	79	2.2571	8.5
Eng. 132	-	1	28	30	16	79	2.2571	8.5
Eng. 131	-	7	20	39	12	78	2.2285	10
Eng. 222	-	6	26	45	-	77	2.2000	11.5
Educ.202	-	6	18	33	20	77	2.2000	11.5
Eng. 172	0	7	20	36	8	71	2.0286	13
Eng. 271	0	7	22	27	12	68	1.9426	14

Following the same procedure as in the two previous cases, an attempt was also made here to determine whether or not the mean ratings have significant differences. The mean ratings for the four groups were skill, 3.5809; linguistics, 3.7429; literature, 3.5714 and professional, 3.5523. The four groups had the following standard deviations: skill, 0.2621; linguistics,

0.9394; literature, 0.6454 and professional, 0.5634. The findings of the Two Way ANOVA are shown below.

Table VI Two Way ANOVA for Level of Interest

Source of Variation	df	SS	MS	F
B/n Course Groups	3	17.8940	5.9646	170.4171*
Among Trainees	34	51.8726	1.5256	43.5885*
Interaction	102	3.5782	0.0350	
Total	139	73.3448		

* $p < .01$

As in the previous two levels the findings of the Two Way ANOVA for level of interest are highly significant.

5. Grade Expected Vs Grade Obtained

It was mentioned in the method part of the study that an attempt would be made to determine the relation between the grades that the trainees expected to score in each course and the grades that they actually obtained. Accordingly, the correlation coefficient for each course was computed and it was found that ten of the courses had significant relations at $p < .01$. One course showed significant relation at $p < .05$. Three of the courses did not show significant relation at all. The table below shows the findings.

Table VII. Correlation (r) and Level of Significance (t) Between Grade Expected and Grade Obtained.

Course	Mean	St. Deviation	Correl. (r)	t
	Gr..Ex/Gr.obt.	Gr.Ex/Gr.obt		
Eng. 131	3.2857/2.6285	0.6218/0.7701	0.0418	0.2403
Eng. 141	3.3142/2.4857	1.2184/0.7810	0.0328	1.9456*
Eng. 181	3.4000/2.7714	0.8737/0.7311	=0.2349	=1.3882*
Eng. 142	3.4857/2.9142	0.8357/0.7049	0.3821	2.3752*
Eng. 172	3.2285/2.4857	0.6908/1.0108	=0.0849	=0.4894*
Eng. 132	3.3428/2.9142	0.6838/0.7020	0.0630	0.3626**
Eng. 271	3.1142/2.6857	0.5831/0.8522	0.0153	0.0879
Eng. 221	3.4571/2.200	0.5057/0.8427	=0.2324	=1.3726*
Eng. 201	3.2857/2.8857	0.6218/0.7582	=0.0534	=0.3071
Eng. 241	3.6571/2.9714	0.4819/0.8907	0.1136	0.6565*
Eng. 202	3.4571/2.9142	0.5608/1.3257	0.1727	0.9925*
Eng. 222	3.1142/2.9428	0.9608/1.7872	0.2668	1.5696*
Eng. 252	3.4571/2.8000	0.5608/0.9641	=0.3679	=2.2473*
Eng. 262	3.5714/2.6000	0.6082/0.6507	0.2658	0.8509*

* $r < .449$

** $r < .349$

df = 33

5.1. Grade Expected Vs. Difficulty Level

It was hypothesized that the more difficult the rating of a course the less the grade expected for the course and vice versa. The mean and standard deviation of the grades expected for all the courses combined and the corresponding difficulty rating mean and standard deviation were computed. The *r* value obtained was subjected into the *t*-statistics to determine whether or not the *r* value showed significant relations. The result was indeed significant at $\alpha=0.01$ though negative. (See Table VIII).

5.2. Grade Obtained Vs. Difficulty Level

Here the hypothesis was the more difficult a course is rated the less the grade obtained and vice versa. As in 5.1. above, the mean and standard deviation of all the courses combined and the corresponding difficulty rating mean and standard deviation were computed and the *r* value obtained was subjected into the *t*-statistics. The result showed the presence of a negative significant relation (see Table VIII).

Table VIII Correlation (*r*) & Level of Significance (*t*) Between Grade Expected & Level of Difficulty, & Between Grade Obtained & Level of difficulty

	Mean	S.D	<i>r</i>	<i>t</i>
Gr. Expected	3.3713	0.2621	-0.3175	-1.9233*
Level of Diff.	2.4285	0.9285		
Gr. Obtained	2.7427	0.9407	-0.1152	-0.6661*
Level of Diff.	2.4285	0.9285		

* $r < .449$

6. Discussion

From both the results of the rank ordered average ratings and the computations of the Two Way ANOVA for the different counts, it has been possible to observe that these trainees have attached differing value judgments to the individual subjects and also to the course groups.

Considering first the rank ordered ratings on two of the counts - level of difficulty and level of relevance - the fact that some of the courses - linguistics, literature, methodology - were found very difficult, could be due to the very little prior orientation of the students about these courses. The

trainees may have come across these courses for the first time here in college. There is little or no treatment of these courses in the schools.

That Research Methods and Report Writing has been found the most difficult of the writing courses is fairly understandable. This is a course that requires trainees to accomplish what they have never accomplished hitherto - writing a research paper with all that it entails.

The fact that the prerequisite Spoken English course (Eng. 141) has been found slightly more difficult than the senior course is explainable. This is where they begin to make use of the language in speech in pairs, in groups, individually to the whole class. These things are bound to be difficult at first. When they take the second course, the students may gain valid experience from the first.

A quick comparative viewing of Table I and Table III shows that the courses that were ranked as some of the most difficult were ranked as least relevant. Courses that were ranked at least difficult were ranked as most relevant. Though not applying to all the courses, these results seem to suggest inverse proportionality between level of difficulty and level of relevance ratings. This is strengthened by the significant results gained in the computation of the Two Way ANOVA.

Another important finding is the fact that though most courses with prerequisites were ranked accordingly or rather sequentially on level of difficulty, the senior courses were found to be more relevant than the prerequisite junior courses. A few of the courses were ranked on more or less equal bases on both level of difficulty and relevance.

When we come to the level of interest ratings of the trainees, it can be discerned that, generally speaking, their level of interest ratings have not been influenced by either their level of difficulty rating or by their level of relevance rating. There were, however, courses that received similar or indeed identical ratings for both level of relevance and level of interest considering the rank orders.

The results of the Two Way ANOVA have clearly established that there are highly significant differences in the way the trainees rated the fourteen courses

individually and these same courses grouped into four categories - skill, linguistics, literature, and professional - on all the three counts - difficulty, relevance, and interest.

It is understood that the Department of English has worked out a reasonably good distribution of courses in the said four course categories. If any of these courses and/or categories were to be tampered with without proper and detailed study, future trainees would, in the final analysis, be subjected to inadequate training.

Obviously, without being exposed to the knowledge of language analysis in general and that of the English language in particular, the trainees will not be well-equipped teachers of the English language.

It is worth noting further that being a good teacher of English does not only require the development of linguistic capacities. Icoz (1992) states

Exposure to literature can compensate for the deficiencies of the linguistic approach in the areas of grammar, idiom, vocabulary, and syntax and can enhance the students' competence in English. It is only through continued contact with writing at native speakers that non-native students can acquire the connotations of the words used (p.10).

Hence the writer believes that the courses which have been ranked as very difficult and less relevant should be critically examined from the point of view of the selection of the items and/or topics. Whether or not the selected items and/or topics have been properly graded should also be looked into.

What has been said so far applies equally well to situations whereby the prerequisite courses have been ranked as more difficult than their senior alternates (c.f. Table I). This holds true, of course, in so far as those courses whose prerequisites or senior courses have been found more relevant than the others as for instance Eng. 131, Eng. 132, Eng. 141, Eng. 142 Eng. 172, Eng. 271, etc. Instructors who are teaching these courses should, it is felt, shoulder the responsibility of examining the courses.

The Department should continue with the further evaluation of its courses by students. The courses should, if possible, be evaluated both when the students are on-training and when they are on-the-job. This would be even more useful to determine the relevance of the courses.

The writer had hoped to include in his study this last missing side. Before the subjects of this study dispersed to the various schools in the country upon their graduation, a questionnaire was designed in the form of a five point grid (0-4) and distributed to them. They were requested to carry out on-the-job evaluation of the relevance of the fourteen courses after they had taught for one semester and post their evaluation to this writer. Unfortunately, however, only less than a third of the subjects returned their evaluations. Still, it should be pointed out that the returned evaluations seemed to follow the general trend of the on-training evaluations.

Moreover, evaluations should not only be restricted to whole courses. Evaluations could and should be sought at the subject by subject, unit by unit, topic by topic levels. This is something that should be done by individual instructors. Such evaluation added to the evaluations of whole courses should give a fairly complete picture of the situation.

Other than this, that the trainees have strong positive attitudes towards their professional courses is very much encouraging as KCTE is a professional institution.

So far as the evaluations of the trainees on grades expected and obtained and on the relations that either of these has to the level of difficulty ratings are concerned, the findings of the statistical computations warrant some degree of discussion. Comparing the mean grades expected and the mean grades obtained, each of the former is invariably greater than each of the latter. Slightly less than a third of the results show negative significant relation (See Table VII). This indicates that the relation is in the opposite direction for the four courses. These courses are among the courses considered less relevant and very difficult. But it should be noted that the figures show strong correlation.

For six of the courses a positive significant relation has been observed. These courses are among the courses considered less difficult and more relevant. It can be said that the relationship here is fairly direct. The same could be said for the result of one course which showed positive significance at $\alpha=0.05$. The three courses did not show any relation at all. They were considered as some of the more difficult and the less relevant than the others.

The relation of the grades expected for the fourteen courses and of the difficulty level ratings of the same courses has been found negative but significant (in fact strongly significant). The relation between the grades obtained in the fourteen courses and the corresponding difficulty level ratings has been found to be negatively significant.

A couple of reasons could account for the non-significant findings above and of the negative significance. An important factor that could account for the results got might be the nature of the test itself. This is to say that the tests might have been of the sort that take testees by surprise and as such grades other than the trainees expected might have been scored.

Another variable that could influence the grade markings might be the attitude that the trainees attached to the instructors which could be influenced by, in the main, their seniors. On the basis of the image that they have formed about their teachers, they might indicate their expected grade markings. This could mean that instead of rating themselves, they may rate their instructors.

A somewhat different explanation from those given so far could also be added. A quick survey of the raw grades for the expected and the obtained shows that most grades expected are higher than most obtained grades as was mentioned earlier. This might indicate that what the trainees marked on the evaluation grid were the grades that they wished to get rather than those that they expected to get.

7. Conclusion

The study was undertaken to see whether or not the diploma trainees of the Department of English Language and Literature of KCTE attach differing value judgments to their major area courses. It was also to see whether (a) the

grades they expected to score and those that they actually scored and (b) either or both of these and their level of difficulty rating are related. From the results obtained, the following could be concluded.

- 7.1. At the level of individual courses, the rank ordered average ratings have established that the trainees do attach varying value judgments to the courses on all the three counts - difficulty, relevance, and interest. For this batch of trainees, therefore, the courses have varied levels of difficulty, relevance and interest.
- 7.2. At the level of course groups also, the trainees have attached significantly different ratings to skills, linguistics, literature, and professional courses. The conclusion as in 7.1 could be made here also.
- 7.3. It has become evident that the trainees have been strongly favorable towards their professional courses - Eng. 131, Eng. 132, and Educ. 241.
- 7.4. Considering the grades, negative and positive significant relations have been observed between expected and obtained, and negative significant relations between each of these and level of difficulty. In at least the positive significant correlations go, it can be said that the higher the grades expected, the lower the grades obtained.

8. Recommendations

On the basis of the findings of the study, the following could be recommended.

- 8.1. the courses that the Department offers for its diploma trainees should be closely examined from the point of view of their selection and gradation; prerequisite and follow-up; and their continuity. (See Appendix II).
- 8.2. Especially in areas where there are consecutive courses, instructors should re-examine the courses that they teach in line with the above principles.

- 8.3. Instructors should again seek the evaluation of the trainees not on a whole-course basis alone but on a subject by subject, topic by topic, and unit by unit basis.
- 8.4. Diploma graduates of the department who have gone through these courses should be requested to carry out an on-the-job evaluation of their courses as this would help determine the level of relevance of the courses.
- 8.5. Some of the courses that the trainees might have found rather technical could and should be geared towards their application to language teaching.
- 8.6. It would only be axiomatic to say that further studies should be carried out with a larger sample size and over a longer duration of time.

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