

From Internship to Impact: Tackling Challenges of Writing Pedagogy in Ghanaian English Language Classrooms

Shine Lillian Gifty Agbevivi, Rebecca Arthur, Emmanuel Owusu & Leticia Akoto

University of Education, Winneba, Ghana

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Abstract

Although writing remains essential for effective English language instruction, many teacher interns in Ghanaian tertiary institutions struggle with resource constraints, learner diversity, and pedagogical limitations. Guided by this concern, this study examined the key challenges teacher interns face and the strategies they employ in English language writing within the Ghanaian tertiary setting. A descriptive survey design grounded in a positivist orientation was adopted, and data were gathered from 286 teacher interns at the University of Education, Winneba. Data were collected using a closed-ended questionnaire with a Cronbach's Alpha of 0.78 and analysed using descriptive statistics. The findings indicate that heterogeneous student proficiency levels and adequate teaching and learning resources remain persistent barriers to effective writing instruction. At the same time, scaffolded approaches such as mentor feedback, structured task sequencing, and collaborative writing enhance pedagogical effectiveness and support interns' confidence as writers and teachers. Drawing on Vygotsky's socio-cultural theory, particularly the notion on Zone on Proximal Development, the study illustrates how mentorship and collaboration mediate learning and professional growth among teacher interns. The study contributes to teacher education discourse by situating scaffolding and mediation within a resource-constrained context and suggesting practical strategies for improving writing instruction during teaching internships.

Introduction

Writing is a critical skill that every student must acquire for adult life. Yet from experience, teaching writing remains challenging for educators. This challenge often leads to ineffective teaching practices, particularly in diverse classrooms where students come from various socio-economic and cultural backgrounds (Moses & Mohamad, 2019). In Ghana, this diversity is pronounced, and student-teachers, who are still in the process of learning, may struggle with teaching English language writing (ELW) effectively. Research indicates that managing different levels of student abilities in the classroom is a significant challenge for teachers when teaching writing (Moses & Mohamad, 2019). Furthermore, practical teaching experience, a crucial component of teacher education, often falls short of fully preparing student-teachers for the realities of classroom instruction (Adu-Yeboah et al., 2016). This



shortfall is particularly problematic for teacher interns from universities and colleges of education (CoEs) in Ghana, exacerbating the challenges they face.

Teacher internship programmes are field-based experiences that expose students to different cultures and practical learning environments, enabling them to apply classroom knowledge to real-world situations. They are formal opportunities provided by universities and CoEs to give students teaching experience, which provides valuable insights that can shape future study directions and benefit both internship schools and training institutions. The internship process includes practical experience and the application of career theory. It takes time and impacts students' understanding, connecting theory with practice by having students completely supervised to enhance both their professional and personal growth (Bhandari et al., 2022; Blasco et al., 2022; Vinay, 2022). Internships are also an excellent way to network, gain skills, and discover one's true interests before entering the workforce (Panel, 2022). Hence, recognised as leading educational initiatives that provide students with hands-on experience in managing classrooms directly within schools (Nagro et al., 2017).

Despite the benefits of teaching internships, research highlights persistent challenges, including lesson planning, lesson delivery, classroom management, training and support, and limited teaching resources (Achmad et al., 2023; Al-azzawi, 2023; Azuuga & Aduko, 2022; Collantes, 2021; Mohammad & Mapinda, & Honori, 2022). Also, such factors as inadequate supervision, mentor neglect, socio-economic constraints, and limited skills in reflective practice, subject teaching, and classroom management negatively affect interns' professional growth (Pop et al., 2013). Mohammad and Al-azzawi (2023) further emphasise that the absence of constructive feedback from mentors can leave student-teachers uncertain about how to improve their teaching practices.

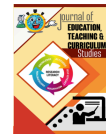
The importance of understanding these challenges notwithstanding, there is a paucity of literature on subject-specific challenges faced by interns during their internship programmes in Ghana. Additionally, research that focuses specifically on the challenges related to teaching the English language, and specifically ELW, remains scarce. This study, therefore, aims to assess the challenges faced by interns from Ghana's University of Education, Winneba (UEW) when teaching ELW during their internships. The research was designed to answer the following questions:

1. What challenges do interns encounter in teaching ELW during their internship?
2. What strategies and resources do interns find most effective in teaching ELW during their internship?

Theoretical Framework

This study is grounded in Socio-cultural Theory (SCT), with emphasis on the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD) and scaffolding/mediation as applied to teacher learning and writing instruction. These constructs provide a conceptual lens through which to understand how intern teachers navigate the complexities of teaching ELW, mediate student learning, and progressively internalise pedagogical competence.

Vygotsky (1978) posits that human cognition is fundamentally mediated through social interactions and cultural tools rather than being an isolated, individual process. Learning, thus, occurs in a social context where more knowledgeable others (mentors, peers, supervisors) support learners until they gradually internalise the skills (Vygotsky, 1978). In the domain of teacher education, SCT implies that



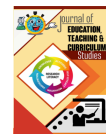
the development of pedagogical expertise is scaffolded through guided participation, collaborative reflection, and gradual transfer of instructional responsibility. Applying ZPD to teacher education, research frames practicum, peer collaboration, diary reflections, and mentor discourse as mediational tools that enable student-teachers to handle more complex teaching tasks progressively. In other words, intern teachers operate within a dynamic zone; tasks that are just beyond their independent capacity become achievable with appropriate support.

The ZPD is the distance between what a learner can do unaided and what they can do with assistance (Vygotsky, 1978). Within teacher training, the notion extends to pedagogical competence. Interns might not yet be able to design and execute effective writing lessons unaided, but with mentorship, scaffolded resources, peer input, and feedback, they can perform tasks until the support is faded. Importantly, ZPD is not static. This is because, as interns' skills evolve, the zone shifts upward. Key characteristics of scaffolding in this zone include contingency (support responsive to the intern's current needs), fading (gradual removal of support), and transfer of responsibility (intern assuming full control) (van de Pol et al., 2010). During an internship, mentor scaffolding should dynamically adapt to interns' growth so that they gradually become autonomous in designing, implementing, and evaluating writing instruction.

Scaffolding has been widely applied to writing instruction, literacy, and language learning. In writing pedagogy, scaffolding can take multiple forms (modelling, guided questioning, co-writing, feedback, graphic organisers), and process scaffolds (pre-writing, drafting, revising) (cf. Masinde, Barasa, & Mandillah, 2023). Scaffolding is most effective when support is just enough to stretch the learner but not so much as to displace their own agency.

In the context of ELW teaching by interns, scaffolding mediates both interns' own learning and their support of students. Interns may scaffold students by breaking down writing tasks, modelling good writing, guiding peer revision, or providing scaffolding rubrics. Meanwhile, mentors scaffold interns by discussing lesson planning, promoting reflection, observing, and providing feedback, and gradually reducing intervention as interns become more confident. Scaffolding must also consider metacognitive and affective support. As interns plan, reflect, and iterate, mentors can scaffold reflective questioning (e.g., "What went well? Why? What would you change next time?"). The process of scaffolding thus ensures that interns shift from extremely guided practice towards independent pedagogical reasoning.

Linking SCT and scaffolding practice in writing instruction, a scaffolded gradual release model where mentors initially take a strong guiding role (modelling, co-teaching), then iteratively release more responsibility to interns (supervised planning, partial teaching, independent instruction) was adopted. This mirrors the gradual release of responsibility framework grounded in socio-cultural ideas. Additionally, empirical studies in teacher education show that pre-service teachers often enter internships underprepared for writing instruction. They emphasise reading, lack confidence, and seldom use research-based writing strategies (Carter et al., 2022). A study by Grisham and Wosely (2011) found that, despite valuing research-based practice, interns rarely incorporate those strategies into actual lesson planning. These findings suggest that scaffolding must address both knowledge gaps and practice gaps in writing pedagogy. A review by Graham and Santaneto (2015) indicates that effective writing instruction often includes strategies such as explicit strategy instruction, modelling, frequent feedback opportunities for revision, and peer collaboration. Teacher education programmes



must scaffold interns' ability to integrate these components into classroom practice (Bazerman et al., 2017). Under SCT, these components serve as cultural tools that mediate interns' growth.

Conceptual Model for the Study

From these theoretical threads, adopt a scaffolding mediation model;

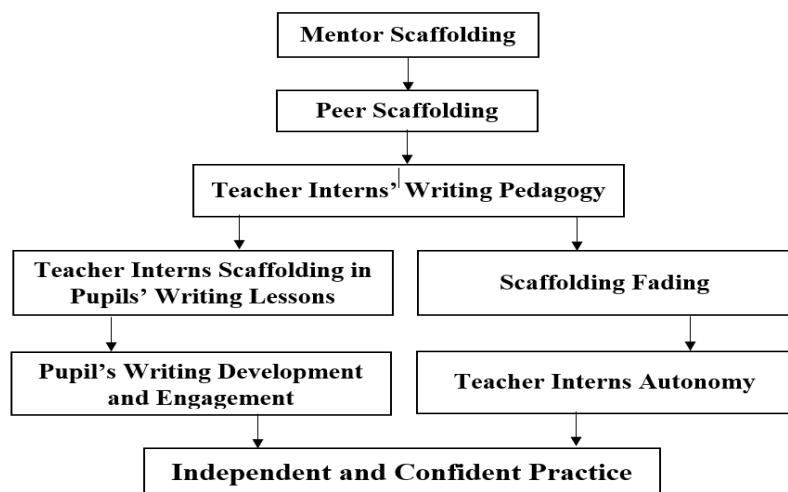
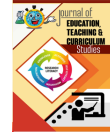


Figure 1: Scaffolding Mediation Model for Teacher Interns Writing Pedagogy

The conceptual framework in Figure 1 depicts writing pedagogy during internship as a layered process of scaffolding that gradually leads to independence. At the top of the model, mentor scaffolding provides the initial structured support for planning, reflection, execution and evaluation of writing lessons. This support then flows into peer scaffolding, where interns collaborate with colleagues to co-design lessons and share practical ideas. These two forms of mediation shape the development of teacher interns' writing pedagogy, represented at the centre of the model as the designing, teaching and reflecting that interns carry out in their classrooms.

From this central point, the model extends in two main directions. On one side, teacher interns' pedagogy is enacted in pupils' writing lessons through concrete scaffolding practices. These include modelling, guided practice, the use of writing frames and the provision of feedback. The framework suggests that when interns employ these supports systematically, pupils' writing development and engagement are strengthened. The arrow from interns' scaffolding to pupils' progress highlights the assumption that carefully structured classroom support is a key route through which theoretical ideas about writing instruction are translated into observable learning gains.

On the other side, the model emphasises the gradual fading of scaffolding from mentors and peers. As interns gain experience and confidence, the intensity and directiveness of external support are reduced. 'Scaffolding Fading' captures this process of intentional withdrawal, which is central to socio-cultural understandings of learning within the zone of proximal development. Over time, reduced reliance on mentors and colleagues encourages interns to make more autonomous pedagogical decisions, resulting in the development of teacher intern autonomy as a distinct outcome of the internship experience.



The final level of the framework brings these two strands together. Pupils' writing development and engagement sit alongside teacher intern autonomy, with both converging on independent and confident practice. The implication is that effective mentoring and peer collaboration, combined with purposeful classroom scaffolding and planned fading of support, should result in two complementary forms of independence. Pupils become more confident and self-directed writers, while interns emerge as reflective practitioners who can design and deliver writing instruction without constant external guidance. The model, therefore, portrays the internship not only as a period of support but also as a deliberately staged pathway towards independence for both teachers and pupils.

In conclusion, the 'Scaffolding Mediation Model for Teacher Interns Writing Pedagogy' suggests that interns who receive well-calibrated mentor and peer scaffolding are less likely to experience persistent difficulties in English language writing instruction and are more likely to adopt practices such as differentiated support, peer revision and carefully sequenced tasks. In this way, the framework organises the reported challenges and preferred strategies and points directly to priorities for mentor preparation and for the design of writing pedagogy within the teacher education curriculum.

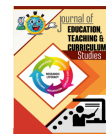
Methodology

This study adopted a descriptive survey design situated within a positivist paradigm to examine teacher interns' challenges and strategies in ELW. A descriptive survey was appropriate because the main aim was to obtain a broad picture of interns' self-reported experiences across a relatively large group, rather than to manipulate variables or test causal relationships. The positivist orientation supported the collection of quantifiable data that could be summarised to reveal patterns across respondents and to enhance transparency and replicability in the research process (Cohen et al., 2018).

The target population comprised 286 teacher interns specialising in Basic Education at the University of Education, Winneba. Given that this number was manageable, a census approach was adopted. All 286 interns who were on internship and present at the time of data collection were invited to participate. This approach reduced the risk of sampling bias and ensured representation from Early Grade, Upper Primary, Junior High School and English language specialisations. A total of 286 completed questionnaires were returned and formed the basis for analysis.

Data were collected using a researcher-developed questionnaire grounded in the SCT and subjected to expert review for content validity. The instrument was designed to align with the study's objectives, the realities of the Ghanaian tertiary context and the characteristics of the target population. It contained sections on demographic information, perceived challenges, effective strategies and access to and use of resources. Items were measured on a five-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 5 (Strongly Agree), and spaces were provided under each section for brief open-ended responses. The tool achieved a Cronbach's alpha reliability coefficient of 0.78, which indicated acceptable internal consistency for the constructs measured (DeVellis, 2016).

Informed consent was sought from all participants before data collection commenced. Descriptive statistics, including frequencies, percentages, means, and standard deviations, were used to summarise responses. This level of analysis was deliberately chosen because the purpose of the study was primarily descriptive and exploratory. The research questions focused on mapping the nature and prevalence of specific challenges and strategies rather than on testing causal hypotheses or building predictive models. Descriptive analysis was therefore considered sufficient to present a clear and interpretable



profile of interns’ perceptions and experiences that could inform subsequent intervention and further in-depth studies.

Results

A total of 286 teacher interns took part in the survey. The group comprised 94 males and 192 females, specialising in Early Grade (81), English language (31), Junior High School (96) and Upper Primary (78) education. Respondents were drawn from different regions and specialisations within English education. The results are presented in relation to the two research questions on challenges in teaching English language writing during internship and on the strategies and resources that interns rated as most effective.

Challenges ELW Instruction

Table 1 presents the mean scores for the main challenges that interns reported in teaching ELW during their internship.

Table 1: Challenges encountered in teaching English language writing (N-286)

S/N	Challenge	Mean (M)
1	Heterogeneous student proficiency levels	3.44
2	Limited teaching and learning resources	3.41
3	Weak student writing background	3.12
4	Class size constraints	3.05
5	Time management during writing lessons	2.60
6	Providing written and oral feedback on pupils’ writing	2.37

The highest mean score was recorded for heterogeneous student proficiency levels (M = 3.44). Limited teaching and learning resources followed closely (M = 3.41). Weak student writing background and class size constraints had mean scores of 3.12 and 3.05, respectively. Time management during writing lessons had a mean of 2.60, while providing written and oral feedback on pupils’ writing had a mean of 2.37.

In the open-ended responses, interns referred to shortages of textbooks and supplementary writing guides. They also mentioned limited access to technology, such as computers and projectors. Some interns wrote that classes contained pupils with very different levels of ability, which required extra planning and preparation.

Strategies and resources for effective ELW teaching

Table 2 shows interns’ ratings of strategies and resources they considered effective for teaching ELW during their internship.

Table 2: Strategies and resources rated as effective in teaching English language writing (N-286)

S/N	Strategy/Resource	Mean (M)
1	Mentor feedback and guidance	4.21
2	Task sequencing in smaller, linked sub tasks	4.16
3	Access to varied instructional materials	4.15
4	Collaborative writing and peer review	4.12
5	Multimedia integration in writing lessons	3.98
6	Professional development workshops on writing pedagogy	3.84



Mentor feedback and guidance recorded the highest mean ($M = 4.21$). Task sequencing into smaller, linked sub tasks had a mean of 4.16. Access to varied instructional materials and collaborative writing or peer review recorded mean scores of 4.15 and 4.12, respectively. Multimedia integration in writing lessons had a mean of 3.98, while professional development workshops on writing pedagogy had a mean of 3.84.

In the narrative comments, interns described the use of graphic organisers, writing frames and step-by-step modelling of paragraph structure. Some reported adjusting group sizes or pairing pupils in ways that allowed stronger writers to support those who needed more help.

Discussion

Interns' Perceived Challenges

The study shows that teacher interns experience the internship as a complex balance between diverse pupil needs and restricted material support. The prominence of heterogeneous writing proficiency, alongside limited teaching resources, points to a dual pressure on early career teachers. They are expected to differentiate instruction for pupils who arrive with uneven writing histories, yet they often do so without stable access to textbooks, graded examples or technological tools. This pattern is consistent with a study that documents the difficulty of teaching writing to classes where learners sit at very different points on a proficiency continuum (Moses & Mohamad, 2019), as well as studies that highlight the strain that limited resources place on novice teachers' preparation and lesson delivery (Mohammad & Al-Azzawi, 2023).

Viewed through a socio-cultural lens, this diversity in pupil proficiency reflects multiple, overlapping zones of proximal development within a single classroom. Each pupil brings a particular linguistic, cultural and schooling background, which shapes what counts as their current level and their potential level in writing. Interns are therefore required to notice and respond to several zones at once. This increases cognitive load and complicates both planning and real-time decision-making. When mentors lack time or preparation to support this work, interns may revert to whole-class tasks that are easier to manage but less responsive to individual learners. The challenge, then, is not only that pupils vary, but that the system around the intern does not always provide the structured guidance needed to work productively with that variation.

Resource constraints are a significant factor. In many placement schools, limited stocks of textbooks, exercise books and supplementary materials restrict the range of writing tasks that can be offered. Access to authentic texts, model scripts or visual prompts is uneven. Earlier work on writing instruction for teacher candidates notes similar patterns, where pre-service teachers draw on generic or borrowed resources because school-based materials are scarce or outdated (Grisham & Wolsey, 2011). In such settings, the intern's ability to scaffold learning is shaped not only by their pedagogical knowledge but also by their capacity to improvise with whatever tools are at hand. This restricts opportunities for pupils to encounter varied genres and for interns to design graduated support that moves from modelling towards independent writing.

It is notable that time management and feedback provision were not ranked among the most pressing difficulties. A possible reason may be that interns have learnt to accept the time structure of the school



day and therefore frame their challenges more in terms of pupil and resource factors than in terms of pacing or assessment. Another is that they may not yet recognise how demanding it is to give detailed, formative feedback on writing, especially when classes are large. This gap between reported and likely challenges points to an area where mentor dialogue and coursework could make the labour of feedback and the management of writing time more visible.

Interns' Preferred Strategies and the Scaffolding Model

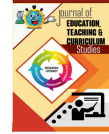
The strategies that interns rated most helpful sit closely with the scaffolding mediation model that underpins this study. Mentor feedback and guidance, task sequencing, access to varied instructional materials and collaborative writing were all strongly endorsed. These describe an internship in which interns learn to teach writing partly by being scaffolded themselves and partly by experimenting with scaffolds for their pupils.

At the centre of the internship programme is mentor feedback. When mentors take time to hold pre-lesson conferences, observe lessons and debrief in detail, they create spaces where interns can rehearse ideas, examine concrete episodes from their teaching and link theory to practice. This kind of contingent support exemplifies the zone of proximal development, as mentors pitch their questions and suggestions just beyond the intern's current level of comfort. Studies of writing teacher education similarly stress that the quality of school-based mentoring shapes whether pre-service teachers are able to enact research-informed writing practices (Dismuke & Martin, 2016; Bomer et al., 2018). In contexts such as Ghana, where school conditions are uneven, sustained mentor engagement may be one of the few stable supports that interns can rely on.

The emphasis on task sequencing suggests that interns are taking up process-oriented and genre-based ideas about writing pedagogy. Breaking writing into smaller stages, such as brainstorming, drafting, revising and editing, allows teachers to adapt the pace and focus of lessons to different groups of pupils. It also creates natural points for scaffolding, where teachers can think aloud, model sentence construction, or provide partially completed frames that pupils can then extend. Moses and Mohamad (2019) note that such graduated support is particularly important in mixed proficiency classes, because it offers lower-achieving learners a structured pathway while still allowing higher-achieving learners to extend their work. The present study adds to this literature by showing that teacher interns themselves recognise these practices as helpful, even when they are still developing confidence in using them routinely.

Interns' appreciation of varied instructional materials underscores the role of cultural tools in socio-cultural theory. Graphic organisers, sample texts and writing frames serve as concrete mediators between abstract expectations and pupils' current capabilities. Where these tools are absent, interns' efforts to scaffold learning depend largely on oral explanation and improvised examples. This makes it harder to build coherent progressions over time. The high value placed on such tools by interns, therefore, strengthens the case for departments and partner schools to prioritise the development and sharing of simple, reusable writing resources.

Collaborative writing and peer review among pupils, as well as collaboration among interns themselves, further extend the scaffolding network. When pupils read and comment on one another's drafts, they gain opportunities to see alternative ways of expressing ideas and to negotiate criteria for good writing in accessible language. At the same time, when interns plan lessons together, examine



scripts jointly or observe each other's classes, they distribute the cognitive and emotional demands of early teaching. This reflects Vygotsky's insight that learning is not only vertical, from expert to novice, but also horizontal, among peers who are close in developmental level.

Moderate ratings for multimedia integration and professional development workshops suggest that interns do see the potential of technology and formal training, but perhaps experience uneven access to both. Where computers, projectors or reliable internet connections are scarce, multimedia pedagogy remains theoretical. Where workshops are irregular or theory-heavy, interns may struggle to translate them into classroom practice. These findings point less to a lack of interest and more to the structural conditions that shape what is feasible in internship schools.

Theoretical and Practical Implications

Collectively, these patterns show interns moving from being recipients of scaffolding towards becoming designers of scaffolded writing instruction. Their accounts reflect what a socio-cultural perspective would describe as a mediated apprenticeship in teaching writing. Mentor guidance, peer collaboration, task sequencing and the use of tools all function as forms of mediation that, over time, can be internalised as professional habits. Yet, the same accounts also reveal tensions between the ideals of scaffolding and the realities of resource-constrained classrooms. Interns value differentiated tasks, rich materials and dialogic feedback, but operate within systems that do not always provide the time, resources or training needed for sustained implementation.

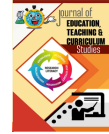
This tension resonates with international studies documenting a gap between the writing pedagogy promoted in university courses and the practices pre-service teachers can enact in schools (Grisham & Wolsey, 2011; Dismuke & Martin, 2016; Bomer et al., 2018). The current study contributes by situating that gap within a specific Ghanaian tertiary context and by making visible the strategies that interns themselves judge to be workable. It also speaks to design-based work, suggesting that structured, ongoing support for genre-based, scaffolded writing instruction can improve pre-service teachers' classroom practice across internship cycles (Traga Philippakos & Sipitanos, 2025).

For teacher education in Ghana, several implications follow. Programmes need to treat resource provision as integral to pedagogy, not as an optional extra. Simple, locally relevant writing materials developed jointly by university lecturers, mentors and interns could ease the resource burden on individual schools. Mentor training that foregrounds scaffolding principles and models concrete ways of working with mixed proficiency classes would help align school-based guidance with the theoretical emphasis of university courses. Finally, opportunities for interns to engage in structured peer collaboration, both within schools and across clusters of schools, could extend the scaffolding network beyond individual mentor-intern pairs and create a more sustainable community of practice around writing instruction.

Summary of Findings

The study revealed that interns' primary challenges in teaching ELW were heterogeneous student proficiency levels ($M=3.44$) and limited teaching resources ($M=3.41$). Conversely, time management and feedback delivery were not widely perceived as major obstacles.

The findings highlight how interns' experiences in teaching ELW are shaped by contextual and socio-cultural factors. The prominence of learner diversity and limited materials supports prior studies



(Moses & Mohamad, 2019; Mohammad & Al-Azzawi, 2023), which identify similar constraints in developing contexts. Within Vygotsky's Socio-cultural Theory, these challenges reflect gaps in access to mediational tools and scaffolding opportunities that facilitate learning within the ZPD.

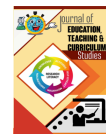
Among strategies, interns rated task sequencing, mentor feedback and collaborative writing as most effective for engaging learners and improving writing outcomes. Therefore, their effectiveness underscores the importance of guided support and peer interaction in constructing pedagogical knowledge. These findings reinforce Vygotsky's view that learning is socially mediated and that collaboration enhances teachers' professional competence. The interns' strong preference for structured mentorship contradicts Pop et al. (2013), who reported mentor neglect as common. Instead, this study found mentorship to be a positive driver of teaching confidence.

Access to varied instructional materials and digital resources was also viewed as beneficial. However, limited instructional resources continue to constrain interns' capacity to implement innovative writing instruction. As SCT suggests, the absence of adequate tools restricts pedagogical creativity and learner engagement. Thus, instructional support through materials provision and targeted training becomes essential to sustain writing pedagogy improvement. Collectively, the results emphasise that differentiated instruction, mentoring, and material access are mutually reinforcing components of effective writing pedagogy in Ghanaian teacher education. These findings align with SCT's emphasis on mediation and scaffolding in learning environments.

Conclusion and Implications

The study assessed key challenges and effective strategies for interns in teaching ELW during their internship programme. The main challenges faced by interns were managing students' varying levels of writing proficiency and limited access to teaching resources. The findings show that managing classroom time, providing constructive feedback, and aligning writing assignments with curriculum standards were not perceived as significant challenges. In terms of effective strategies and resources, student-teacher respondents found that professional development workshops, utilising a variety of writing prompts to engage students, and breaking writing tasks into smaller, manageable steps were beneficial. Most importantly, strategies grounded in socio-cultural learning, such as regular mentor feedback, the incorporation of multimedia resources, and the encouragement of collaborative writing activities, effectively address the constraints. Access to a variety of teaching materials was also seen as a significant support. The findings show that managing classroom time, providing constructive feedback and aligning writing assignments with curriculum standards were not perceived as significant challenges. Therefore, to strengthen internship practice, teacher education programmes should promote differentiated writing instruction, structured mentorship, and equitable access to resources.

This study contributes new empirical and theoretical insight by situating Vygotsky's SCT within the under-researched context of Ghanaian teacher internships. Whereas prior research on scaffolding in writing pedagogy has largely been conducted in high-income or ESL laboratory settings (e.g. van de Pol et al., 2020; Traga Philippakos & Sipitanos, 2025), the paper demonstrates how mentoring, peer collaboration, and material constraints mediate interns' professional development in resource-limited environments. The originality, therefore, lies in evidencing how socio-cultural mediation and distributed scaffolding operate simultaneously at multiple levels (mentor-inter, intern-peer, and intern-learner) within Ghanaian teacher education systems.



Based on the findings and conclusions drawn, stakeholders are encouraged to;

1. Provide professional development on differentiated writing instruction and feedback techniques.
2. Train mentors in coaching and reflective supervision for writing pedagogy.
3. Supply writing toolkits such as rubrics, exemplars, and digital media for teacher interns.
4. Align assignments with curriculum standards.
5. Encourage collaborative and peer-supported writing approaches within practice schools.

This study is significant because it identifies ELW-specific challenges interns in Ghana face and provides evidence to guide teacher education reforms. Findings will inform curriculum review, internship mentorship, and targeted professional development to improve writing pedagogy.

Limitations and Future Research

The study relied exclusively on self-reported perceptions, which may not fully capture classroom realities. Future research could triangulate data through classroom observations, mentor interviews and analysis of students' writing samples. Further studies may also employ mixed-method approaches to validate and extend the present study.

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