RESEARCH ARTICLE

# CLASSROOM GRAFFITI: INVESTIGATING LANGUAGE AND COGNITION

Peace Chinwendu Israel [*1] , Nancy Boadu[2] & Richard Johnson[3]

[1,2&3]*(Department of English Education, University of Education, Winneba)*

*Emails:* peacenwendu@gmail.com ; boadunancy1@gmail.com ; richardbenyi7@gmail.com

**ABSTRACT**

This qualitative study investigated classroom graffiti in connection to language, meaning and cognition. The aim was to unearth the intersection between the inscriptions on the walls of classrooms, the cognitive processes involved in such discourse and the context. The theoretical orientation hinged on a combination of cognitive discourse analysis (Tenbrink, 2015) and socio-semiotic approaches of language study (Halliday & Matthiessen, 1999). Through the purposive sampling technique, 40 classroom graffiti were captured from the classroom walls at Swedru School of Business, a senior high school in the Agona West Municipality in the Central Region of Ghana. The graffiti were captured with a Samsung smart phone camera within the months of February and March, 2023. The findings revealed that the following themes (ideologies) were expressed in classroom graffiti: violence/threat, vulgarity, warning, nickname, love/encouragement and awareness, with violence/threat being the most recurring ideology and awareness the least. It was concluded that there is a strong connection between graffiti and cognition and evaluating the form of language in any socio-cultural setting is synonymous to evaluating the cognitive tendencies of the members of such community.

## 1.0 INTRODUCTION

Language, as an important tool for communication and socialization, is a basic necessity in all aspects of human life. As members of a social group, people's ability to function effectively and efficiently in the various roles they play depends basically on their language skills. For one to be able to use language effectively, one needs to achieve an appreciable level of competence in the four basic language skills. These are listening, speaking, reading and writing. Thus, a language user's proficiency level is determined by his/her level of competence in these skills.

The varied functions of language are manifested in its use in various endeavours of the human society such as communication in the field of mass media, education, health care delivery, law and politics. Mwinwelle et al (2019: 162) posit that "Language is flexible and it has elastic edges which provide users the opportunity to manoeuvre it in order to interpret their psychological states or thoughts". Various groups of people therefore use language as a unifying force to pull their members together in order to achieve their collective aims. Continents, international organizations, nations, political parties, social groups and other speech communities are bonded by their commonality of core values and mission articulated through language.

Discourse in graffiti is related to the discourse of the society. This is because graffiti discourse covers all issues in the society and a study of the meaning and ideologies behind graffiti is a study in the consciousness of the society (Farnia, 2014). In linguistics, graffiti has been explored to reflect the form and function of language. Linguists' attentions have been dominantly focused on grammatical forms and functions prevalent in graffiti. Again, most studies in graffiti have been on restroom graffiti: Dundees (1996), Ogungbemi (2012) and Obeng (2000). Most of their findings indicate that inscriptions in restrooms are inherently dialogic and constitute discourse on the situational context of the society that produces them. This present study turns attention to graffiti found in a teaching and learning environment to determine what themes/ideologies such graffiti portray.

### 1.1 THE AIM OF THE STUDY

The primary aim of this study is to examine classroom graffiti in Ghana in order to unearth the intersection between these inscriptions on the walls of classrooms and the cognitive processes involved in such discourse. Again, the aim is to situate the graffiti to their socio-cultural context, and investigate their inherent ideologies.

### 1.2 GRAFFITI: SPEAKING THROUGH WALLS

Graffiti is from the Italian word "graffito" (Chiluwa, 2008) and it refers to a form of communication that is personal and free of everyday social strains that normally prevent people from communicating their thoughts in writing. As such, these sometimes crude inscriptions offer some intriguing insights into the people who author them and into the society in which these people belong (Abel & Buckley, 1977).

One of the most dominate activities children pick up when they start to learn how to write is writing on any surface such as walls of building, on their palms/hands, on tables/chairs and indeed any

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available surfaces within their reach using any available writing tools such as pen/pencils and chalk. This act continues even in later stages in life. As young adults and teenagers, they engage in this act in their various learning institutions as a way of expressing themselves especially such intimate things that matter to them which they cannot easily express due to some sociocultural, religious and political inhibitions and fears of being noticed.

More often than not, the identity of graffitists are unknown (anonymous) which maybe as a result of the content of the graffiti. The content of the writings on walls varies reflecting what the writer wishes to convey at a particular time. This results in its various classifications (Al-Khawaldeh, et al 2017). These classifications include themes on advice, despair and drugs; socially acceptable themes, such as belongingness, homesickness, romance, humour, sex, politics and religion ((Dombrowski, 2011 and Şad & Kutlu 2009). According to Gómez (1992), graffiti is initiated by different motivations and to understand these types of graffiti is to understand the motivation behind its creation. For instance, there are graffiti written by gang members which consist of scrawls focusing on the names of the gang or symbols for the purpose of marking territories and war zones. This is usually used to send message, to insult other gangs and to warn away intruders. Another type of graffiti is tagging. This is usually used to stamp a signature nickname which often incorporates the creator's chosen label and identity for the sole aim of fame and recognition. Tagging is mostly found on walls of public places in educational institutions. Other graffiti are for social expression, moral building and awareness creation (Gómez (1992).

In almost every community, graffiti dominates every available location. Members of the community freely express themselves on the walls of public spaces with the purposes of ridiculing, satirizing, admonishing, shaming, naming or annoying other members of the society usually refer to as their targets (Farnia (2014). This "freedom of expression" has become so popular in schools (Tracy, 2005). Students and indeed other members of the society who can access the buildings of schools use this means to express their thoughts and ideas freely, hence, graffiti has become a very effective means of communication among students/youths. The walls, therefore, becomes a means through which they voice their ideas, feelings, thoughts, love, hate, wishes, declaration etc freely.

## 1.3 CLASSROOM GRAFFITI AS A FORM OF DISCOURSE

Classroom graffiti, similar to other types such as restroom graffiti, are manifestations of the social, cultural and psychological states of the people in a society. It could be asserted that classroom graffiti reflects an intersection of emotions and language, because those involved in the act exhibit their art by publishing their writing in the classroom walls for public discourse. As a discourse genre, the thematic preoccupations in graffiti are related to the discourse of the society. In Asia, graffiti covers issues such as police, economy, and culture (Manning & van Dlermen, 2000; Schwarz, 2004), the social condition (Dahana, 2004) and literary creativity.

Previous studies on graffiti such as Oha (1999) and Obeng (2000) have identified graffiti as a form of powerful tool in the construction of social struggles. According to Oha, graffiti in male restrooms manifest the patriarchal nature of the

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Nigerian society. He further stresses that male restroom graffiti contains vulgar expressions, taboo words and dysphemistic content.

Students have many mechanisms of communicating and responding to issues concerning them and their experiences in school. One of such mechanisms is through classroom graffiti. Students write on every surface available to them in the classroom to serve as a medium of communication to vent their anger on a teacher(s), school management and rules, seniors and punishments and of course on unrequited love. They use classroom graffiti to communicate both their personal and social experiences. Thus, classroom graffiti communicate the mental representation of the writers (students) (Ogugbemi, 2012). Even though these writings are found at almost all places in the school environment, most often, teachers/school management do not pay attention to them. They are rather regarded as defacing the school building/property instead of as a channel of communication by the students and by so doing they miss out on the important massages they contain (Trahan, 2011).

According to Gasparyan (2020), graffiti as a form of discourse is grouped under following categories: argumentative, narration, descriptive and expository. Whatever classification it falls in, classroom graffiti as a form of discourse is a product of a process. It is interactively constructed with the target recipient in mind. The utterance encompasses transactional and relational aims on the activities being discussed among interactants. It may be argued that even when individual utterance possesses its peculiar defining features; it is in conformity with an ongoing discourse which is accessible equally to all members of the speech community. Speech community in this context refers to a set of "socio-rhetorical networks that form in order to work towards sets of common goals" (Swales, 1990: 9). In the process of working towards the said common goals, participants become involved in a struggle for identification and acceptance, negotiated through language and other socio-semiotic means which are comprehensible and interpretable to other members of the community. The sense of comprehensibility and interpretability relates to Odugbemi's (2006, 2015) idea of Contextual Mutual Beliefs (CMBs) among interactants, and how they construct the organization of utterances as a discussion progresses.

## 1.4 LANGUAGE COGNITION AND CONTEXT

The mental process of the mind of every human is expressed through language. According to Evans & Green (2018), language is studied by linguists because it reflects patterns of human thought. Thus, language offers the medium in cognitive functions of the mind, throwing light on the nature of what is known by the mind and how ideas and thought are organized. Language therefore, helps users to externalize internal knowledge (cognition). Notwithstanding, cognition is formed through encoding of language as well as impact and experiences of the environment. Thus, human beings do not only share their cognition through language but have their very cognition built through language and the experiences from the environment.

Context is defines as the physical, social and psychological background in which a language is used (Gabrielatos, 2002 as cited in Brown & Yule, 1998). According to Leckie-Tarry (1995), context operates in

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three levels, namely; context of culture which includes the social institutions and ideologies from which immediate situation is derived, context of situation (immediate situation) and context of text (spoken or written). Language cognition is therefore, a situational dependent phenomenon entailing the larger elements of the culture of a group of people and their environmental experiences which allows for the choice of a particular language to be used springing from an on-going discourse. Thus, different context requires the choice of an appropriate language for that context. Hence, language springs from one's cognition and it is context dependent.

The expression of human cognition through language is done within context. Thus, human cognition is not separated from events, settings, social structures and situations which form context. Context, therefore, is the circumstance within which a specific kind of cognition is displayed through language. Different context requires a kind of languages appropriate for that context. In a discourse, effective communication is achieve not just by the exchange or express of thought and ideas but by engaging in this activity taking into consideration the event at hand, the situation and the setting of the discussion.

**Figure 1:** Tenbrink's (2015) analytical model indication the intersection of cognition and language
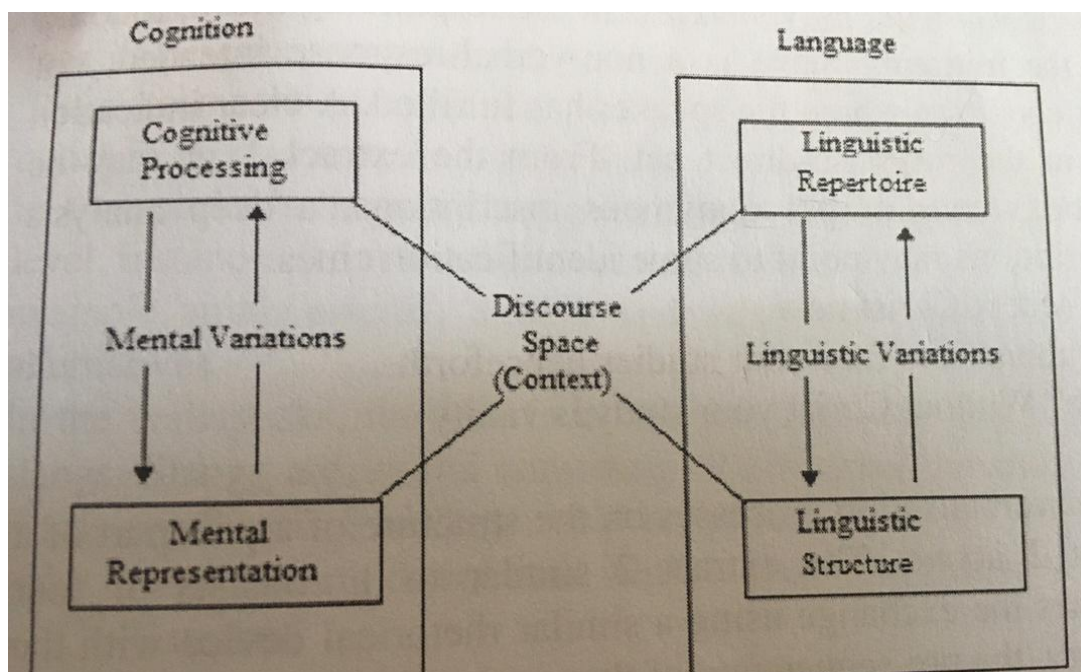


## 2.0 ANALYTICAL FRAMEWORK

The theoretical orientation for this study is a combination of cognitive discourse analysis and socio-semiotic approaches of language study. The

first is built on Tenbrink (2015) which points to the roles of cognition in the construction of language use in discourse. The model holds that language as a socio-semiotic system is "branded" from the

inaccessible mental state of a speaker which structures the sequence of the linguistic components of an utterance before the deployment of the utterance in its social setting. Therefore, understanding the mental model of a discourse and the cognitive structure of its participants necessitates access into the speaker's pattern of thinking which consequently becomes contextualized as an instrument of social organization.

The second, socio-semiotic approach (Halliday & Matthiessen, 1999, Danesi, 2004), hinges on the fact that language is a combination of signs (linguistic and non-linguistic) and discourse contexts. Studies on language as signs abound in literature (Israel et al 2023). Ferdinand de Saussure views language as a system of signs, which designs the verbalization process in a discourse. Signs usually comprise two-fold effects – the signifier and the signified whose interpretability is derived from a speech community cultural awareness. However, the appropriateness or otherwise of the signs in a discourse encounter is a product of cognitive processing which can only and competently be investigated through deconstruction of the semiotic codes within the socio-cultural setting of the discourse.

## 3.0 METHODOLOGY

The qualitative content analysis approaches is adopted for this study (Elo & Kyngäs, 2008). Specifically, textual analysis design was adopted in the analysis. According to Vanderstoep & Johnston (2009), textual analysis involves the identification and interpretation of a set of verbal or nonverbal signs. In textual analysis, the researcher becomes the interpreter of the selected text and in this study,

classroom graffiti. Through the purposive sampling technique, 40 classroom graffiti were captured from the classroom walls at Swedru School of Business, a senior high school in the Agona West Municipality in the Central Region of Ghana. These inscriptions on classroom walls were taken from five different classes – Art1A, Buiness1A, Business 2A, Science 2B and Science 3A. The graffiti were captured with a smart phone camera within the months of February and March, 2023.

Vanderstoep & Johnston (2009) point out that the first step for data collection is defining the context of the study. This was done by considering the nature of the study, the implications of the massage and the socio-semiotic consciousness underlying the selected inscriptions. In line with this, the captured graffiti were examined and grouped into various categories. The classification was done in terms of the massages they portray – thematization. This is for easy interpretation/intersection between language and cognition. The massage was group under the following themes: love/encouragement, nicknaming, violence/threat, vulgarity, warning and awareness.

## 4.0 ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

Various approaches have been adopted by previous researchers on the study of graffiti. The preoccupation of this study is to present an overview of the intersection between cognition and language. Although it may appear difficult to account for the sequential generation of linguistic structure in a discourse by accessing and assessing the organization of mental processes in a discourse, however, specific attention would be pointed to relevant contextual and semiotic features in the setting of data. These

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would give access and help in the interpretation of mental processes behind the inscriptions. In the classroom graffiti, minimal units of inscriptions are lexical items from alternatives, and each reflects, often directly, the thought pattern of the interlocutors. The extracted inscriptions have been themalized for easy analysis and discussion.

## (a) Theme of Love/Encouragement

**Extract 1**
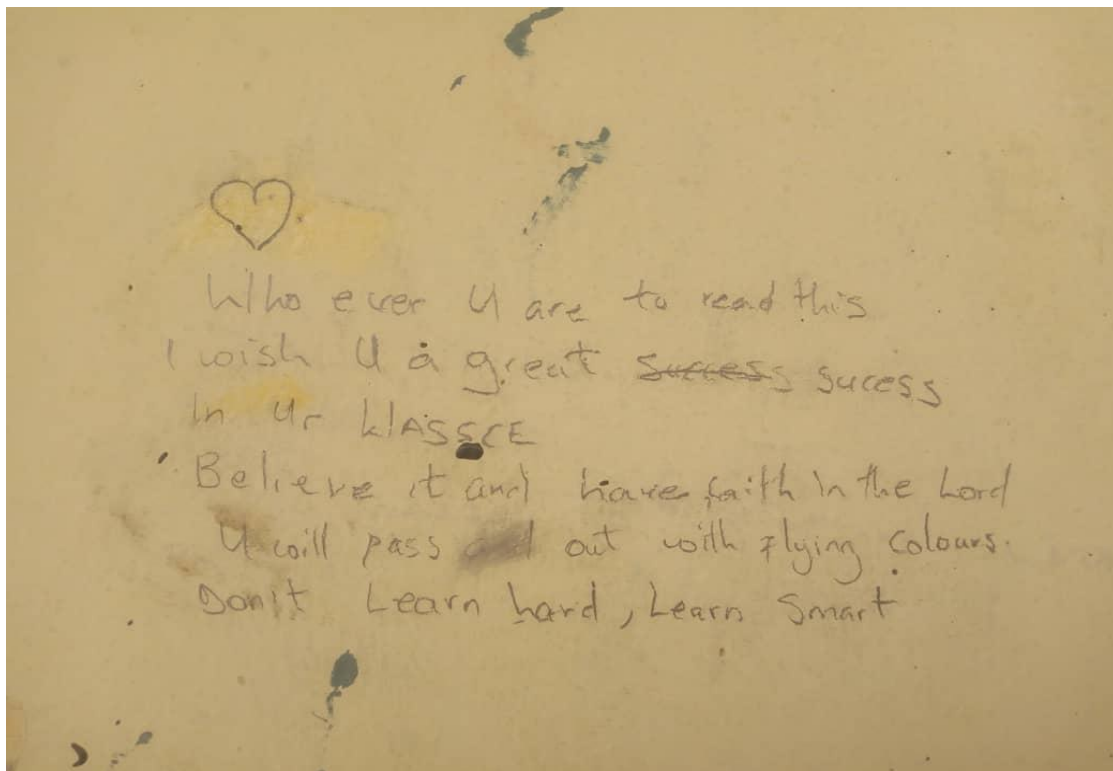


**"Whoever u are to read this I wish u a great success in ur WASSCE Believe it and have faith in the Lord U will pass out with flying colours Don't Learn hard, Learn Smart**

In the extract above, the anonymous speaker uses this inscription to encourage anyone preparing to write the final exam in the senior secondary school, West African Senior School Certificate Examination (WASSCE). Despite the grammatical infelicities in the structure, the message is apt and clear. It is meant to boost the students' morale prior to their final examination. The writer uses a catchy opening to arrest attention – "Who ever u are to read this". This is an integral part of a quality advert. Syntactically, the first structure is a complex sentence starting with a dependent clause. It depends on the other half of the structure "I wish

you a great success in your WASSCE" to convey a complete thought.

Bowerman (1979) asserts that complex sentences are structures that are built up of simpler sentences through the recursive operations of coordination and embedding. In the early period of semantic development, children structure most of their utterances in simple sentences. As the child's language acquisition grows in time, the ability to construct compound and complex sentences greatly increases and this in turn increases the child's generative capacity. The anonymous writer delivers the later part of his/her utterances in simple sentences. Although poorly punctuated, one can easily read them as 3 simple sentences – "Believe it and have faith in the Lord. U will pass out with flying colours. Don't Learn hard, Learn Smart".

This same structure illuminates traces of religiosity: "believe" and "faith in the Lord". The writer's closing message: "Don't Learn hard, Learn smart" has a thematic implication which suggests that he believes that success is not only achieved through hard work but through diligence and smartness.

The symbol of love beside the inscription signifies care and brotherhood. Therefore, one is never in doubt about the writer's theme of love, hope, and care in this graffiti. It is also very interesting to see the effect of the social media in his writing. One feature of the social media writing is reduction: "u" in the place of "you". Therefore, this writer apparently belonging to what Nutakor & Israel (2023) refer to as the social media age.

**Figure:2**
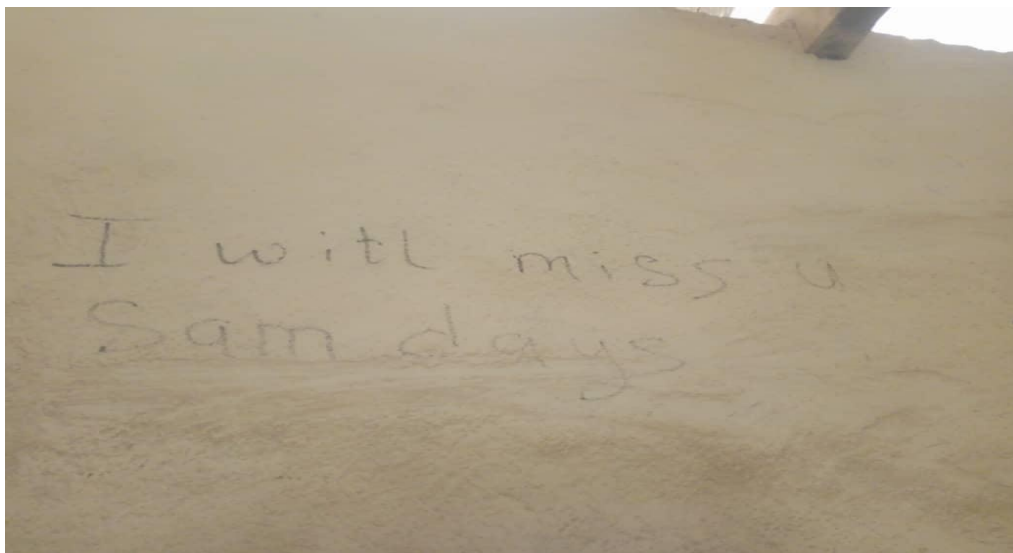


**"I will miss u Sam days"**

This graffiti is a love message from the writer to his/her reader. Despite the misspelling "sam" instead of "some", one can easily see that the writer is expressing somewhat sadness which his

reader's absence will cause him in the future. This is made known by the introduction of the verb 'will'. The certainty of missing the other person is as a result of intimacy between the writer and the reader.

It can be interpreted that the graffiti is directed to a specific reader. Thus, the writer has a specific person to receive the information. Though there is the certainty of missing by the writer, the specific days this would happen is unspecified "sam days". The bound morpheme (s) attached to word "day" indicates indefinite number of days. The spelling of 'some' as "sam" is as a result of the writer's mispronunciation of the word "some". This underscores students' wrongful substitution of words with similar pronunciation and mishandling of partial homophones without paying attention to the word classes and correct meaning of such words.

**(b) Theme of Nicknaming**

**Figure:3**
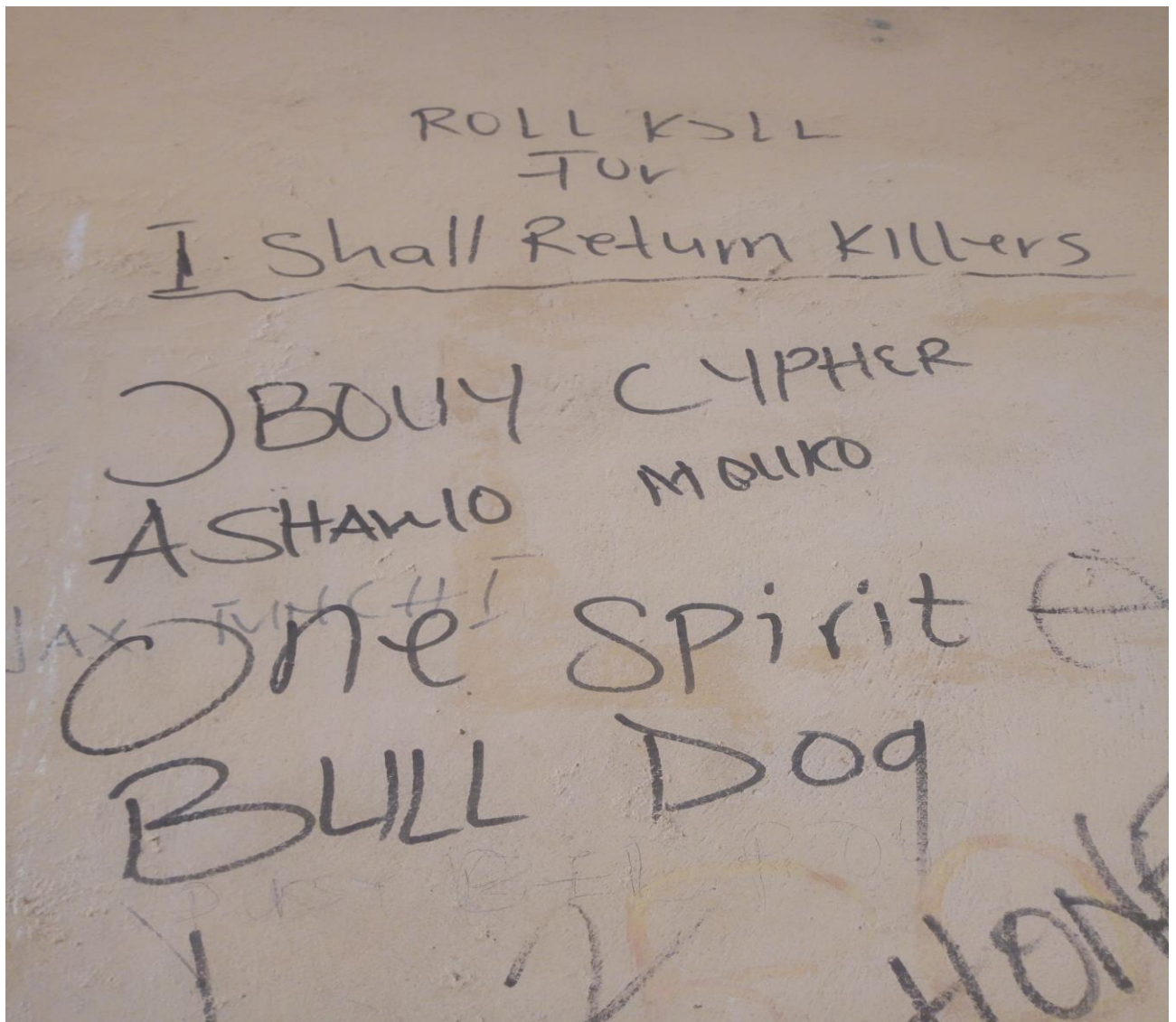


**"Roll kɔll for I Shall Return Killers ƆBOUY CYPHER ASHAWO MOUKO ONE SPIRIT BULL DOG"**

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This graffiti is loaded with many nicknames. It consists of nicknames of four different writers. As nicknames, even though they are not formal, they refer to individual bearers of these names and in many cases become more popular than the bearer's real names and most importantly reveal the character/features/behavioural identity of the bearers. The spelling of the word "kɔll" in this inscription is ambiguous because one does not know whether the writer wishes to transcribe or just inserted Twi alphabetic letters into the English language. Again, there is the insertion of some letters from Twi language which is the local language of the community to the English language. The use of these local 'terms' signify the mental cognition of the writers for both languages and the influence of the first language on the second language.

The contextual meaning of the list of nicknames written on the wall brings out the mental imageries the writers have about who they are (personality threat). The writers see themselves as powerful, dangerous, fearless, difficult to handle and unbending to any situation. This can be seen in the 'topic of the discourse' "I Shall Return Killers". "CYPHER" depicts something 'secret', therefore, ƆBOUY (My boy) CYPHER denotes a "secretive boy". This emphasizes something hidden or unseen, thereby, making him mysterious. Again, the use of the uppercase signifies attention. The same idea is demonstrated on the third nick name "One Spirit". This mindset is formed through the cultural orientation of the writer. Culturally, 'spirits' are nonphysical entities yet powerful and capable of causing mayhem in society. The use of "one" to describe "spirit" throws a light on the non-specificity of the entity (spirit), giving the indication of the diverse evil or harm he/she (the writer) could cause without being noticed or seen. This could be a clear warning to students/teachers/school management to be careful with him/her.

"ASHAWO MOUKO" is a kind of grounded pepper that is extremely hot in the Ghanaian society. The consumption of this kind of pepper causes discomfort to the consumer. This is an indication of what the bearer of the name can give others – discomfort. "Bull Dog" is a dog for bullbaiting sports and they are used for these sports because of their cruelty, violence and resilience in fights. In the Ghanaian context, such dogs are kept at homes as security against criminals and trespassers. Therefore, in communicating fearlessness, violence and resilience, the writer chooses the nick name.

The nicknames in this inscription evoke the themes of mystery, fear, violence, unbending/unyielding. The use of the noun "Killers" in this context semantically mean a formidable force and their formidability is seen through their mysterious, fearless and violent actions which make them unyielding to anybody and to any situation.

**(c) Theme of Violence/Threat**

**Figure:4**
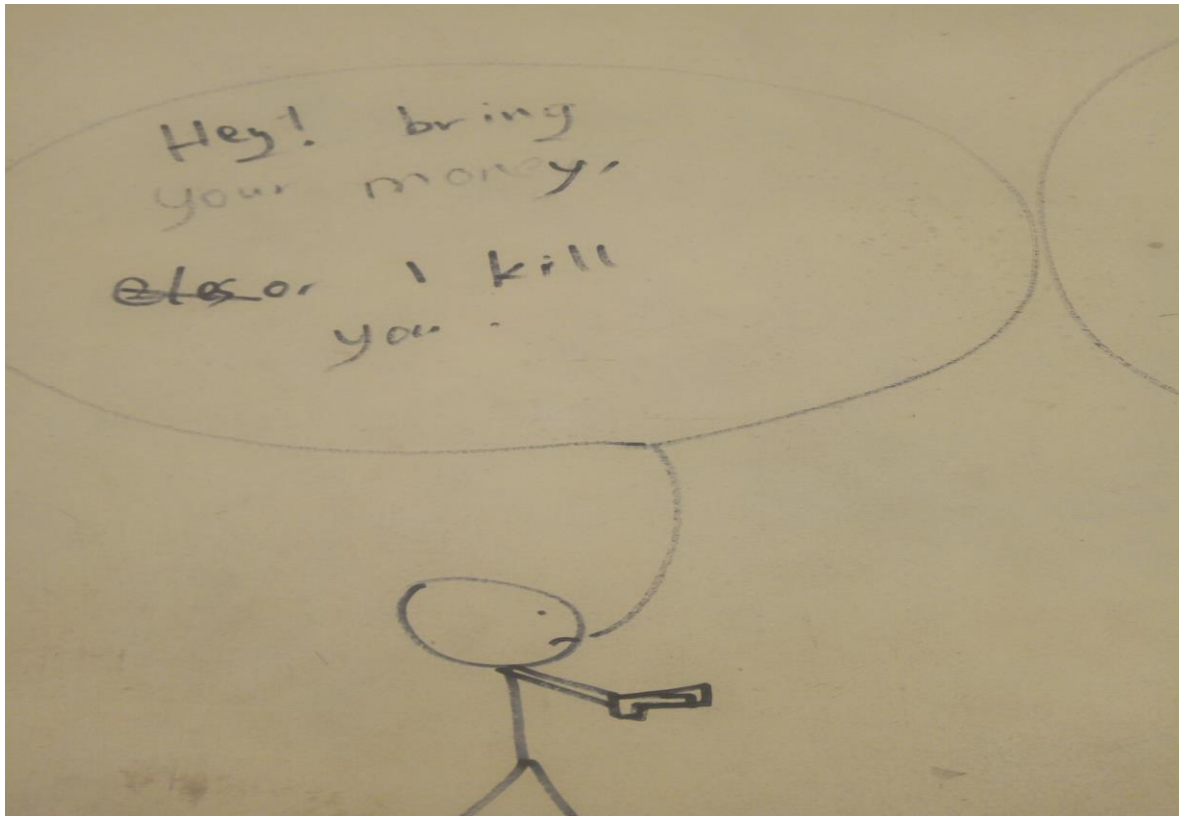


**"Hey! bring your money, or I kill you"**

The above structure showcases a robbery scene language. The massage clearly portrays violence and threat. Lexical items like "money" and "kill" depict it as such. The structure opens with an exclamation, "Hey!" Exclamation is widely known for its expression of feeling. Therefore, the opening brings up an aggressive feeling of an attacker which is punctuated with an exclamation mark.

The imperative statement in the above structure is followed by "bring your money, or I kill you".

The structural formation could be described as a compound sentence. The speaker uses the coordinator "or" to join two complete ideas: "bring your money" and "I kill you". The use of the conjunction "or" clarifies the intention of the speaker which is "failure to obey my order will result to your death". This communication is substantiated by a pictorial representation of a gun in the hand of the human symbol which is the weapon on death.

**Figure:5**
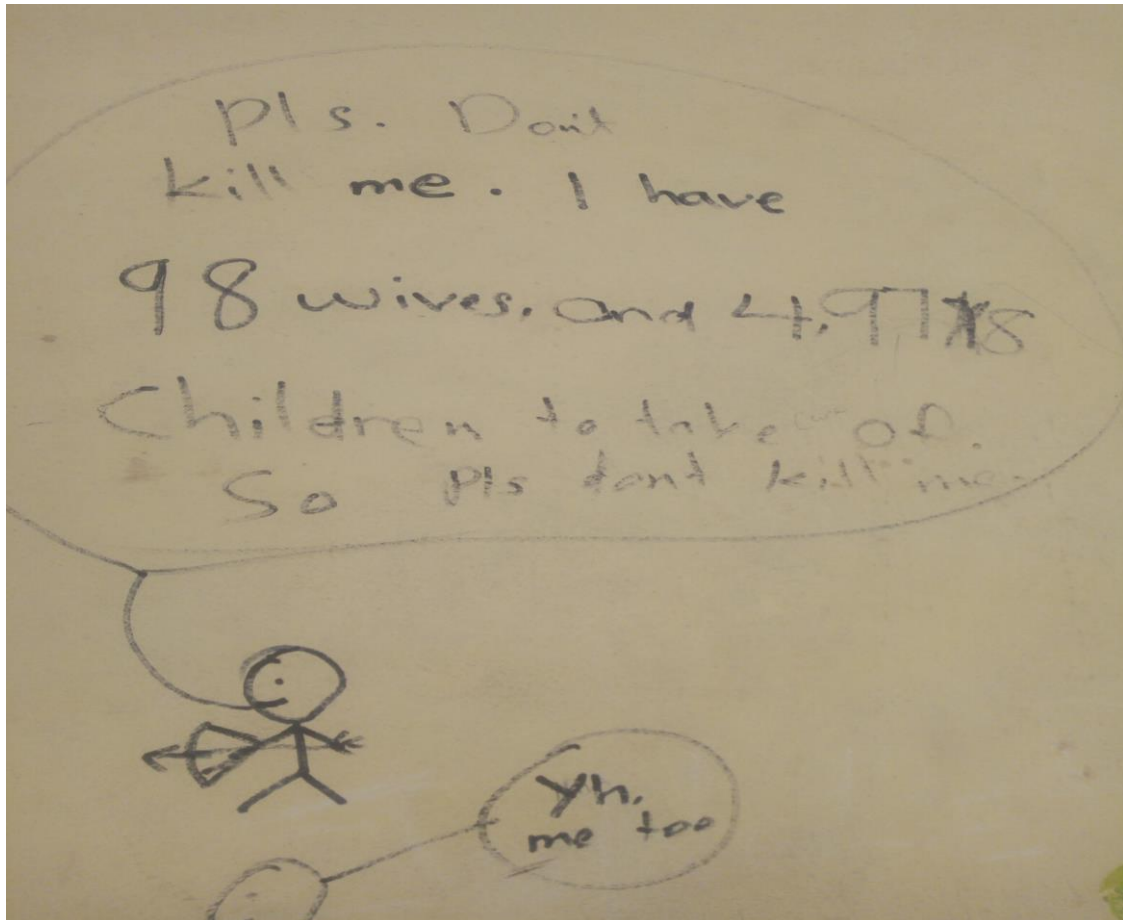


**"Pls. Don't kill me. I have 98 wives, and 4,978 children to take of. So pls don't kill me"**

**"Yh me too"**

Figure 5 is a continuation of the violent events in figure4. It consists of two interactants. In the first graffiti the graffitist is going through an attack from an armed robber and so pleads to the anonymous attacker to spare his life. He gives reasons why he should not be killed. The second speaker's comment "Yh, me too" indicates that the second speaker is facing similar situation as the first speaker. His reason for pleading for his life is also same as the first speaker's. The choice of words by these speakers indicates that they are males: "I have 98 wives"; "me too".

Ghana, being an African country, practices polygamy. In many African homes especially in a polygamous one, the husbands are usually the breadwinners. The writer of this graffiti, drawing from his socio-cultural experience, uses his having wives to appeal to the conscience of the robber to spare his life because if he is killed, his wives and by extension his children will suffer a great deal.

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**Figure:6**
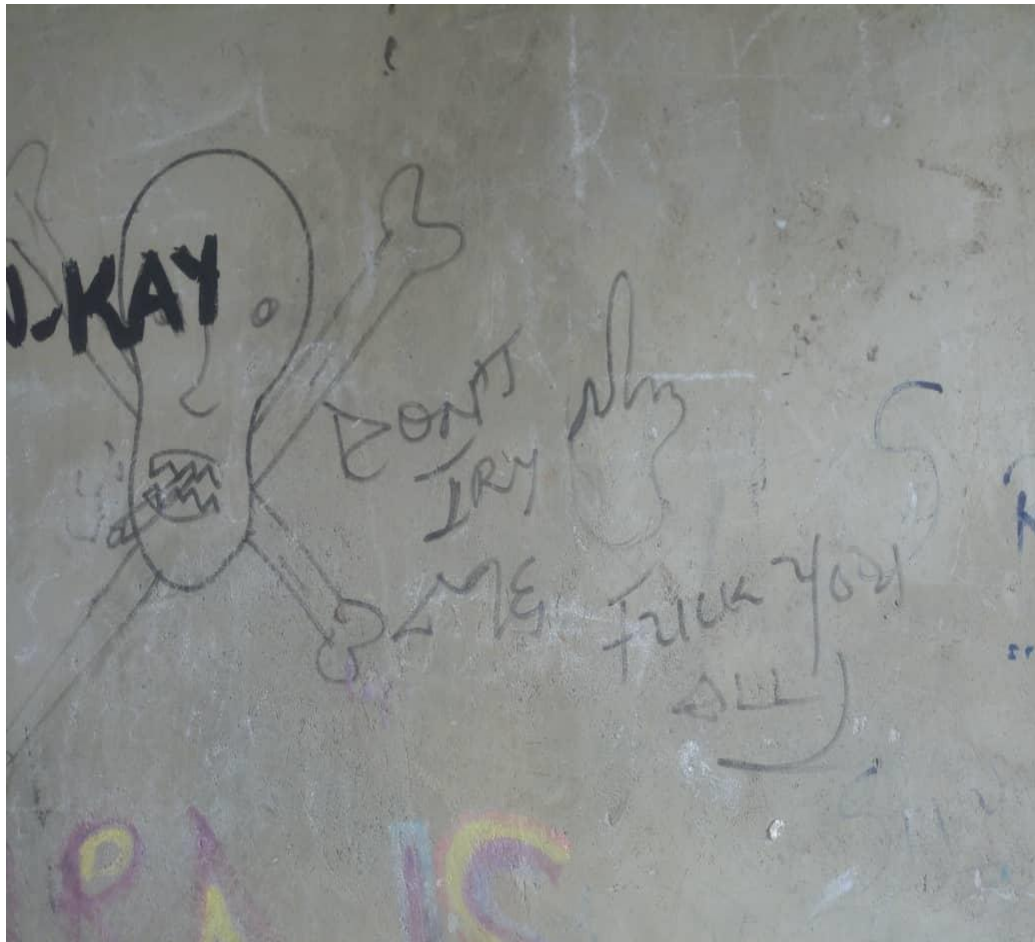


**"DON'T TRY ME, FUCK YOU ALL"**

The above graffiti portrays rage, rebellion and violence. To "try" someone in Ghanaian English means to "dare" someone; therefore, this expression is a warning. The anonymous writer warms his readers not to dare him using the imperative structure "DON'T TRY ME". It did not end there. He continues to exhibit this rage by using a profane language, insult and a taboo "FUCK YOU ALL". One can sense bitterness and insolence from this writer. This inscription indicates the restlessness of the youth characterized by growing up and the loss of innocence. Again, the use of all capital letters (shouting) signifies that the writer wishes to draw the attention of readers.

To buttress his threat, warning and rage, the writer drew the symbol of death (skull) beside his inscription. And to further terrorize his readers, the skull has a cigarette in its mouth. The skull symbolizes death in the Ghanaian society and many people in Ghana classify the act of cigarette smoking as a mark of waywardness and irresponsibility, therefore, the meaning the writers wishes to communicate to his readers is that of "I don't care attitude."

**(d) Theme of Vulgarity**

**Figure:7**



**"What is the formula for finding pussy"**

This inscription depicts the theme of vulgar. It is an interrogative sentence although the right interrogation mark was not used. Under normal conditions, "wh" words/questions request answers from the listener. One may reason that the anonymous writer asked a rhetorical question, hence, he/she does not expect answers from anyone. That, perhaps, may have informed the use of the "full stop" instead of the question mark. In the Ghanaian culture, it is a taboo to mention human private parts in the public – "Pussy".

The use of this taboo expression signifies a breakdown in cultural values. Warddaugh (1986) describes taboo as "a total or partial prohibition of the use of certain words, expressions, topics, etc., especially in social intercourse." Taboo varies from one culture to another. The culture of a particular group serves as constraints to evaluate what should be permissible in words and actions. Therefore, this paints a picture of immorality and culturally decadence.

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**(e) Theme of Warning**

**Figure:8**
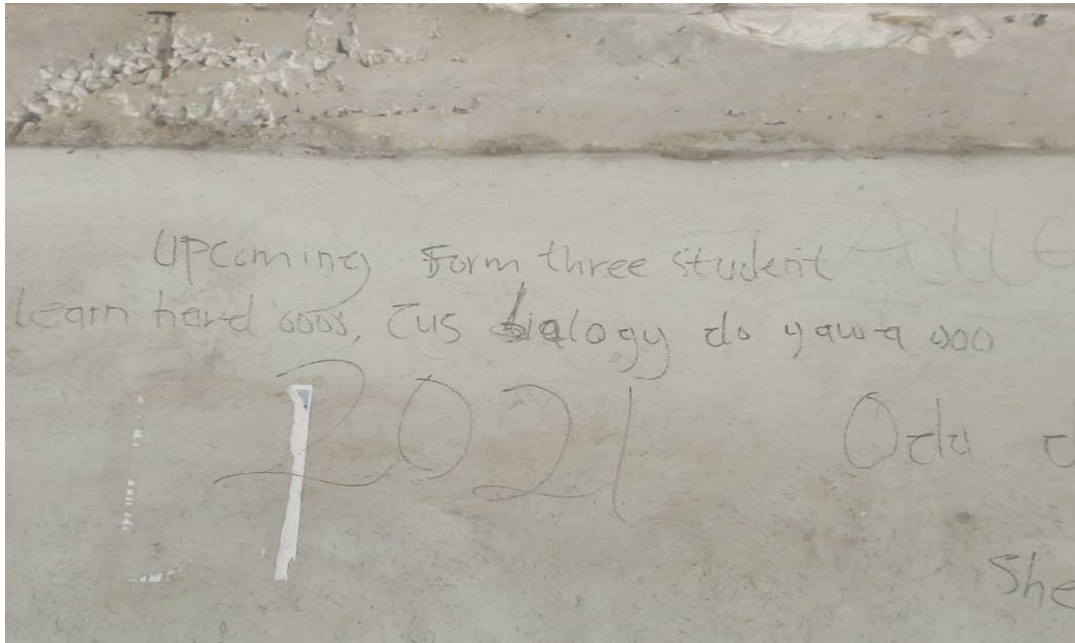


**"Upcoming Form three student learn hard ooo, Cus biology do yawa ooo 2021"**

The structure above is a declarative sentence meant to warn someone about a possible danger/problem. It evokes alertness and opens a forum for discussion among readers. The inclusion of the date signifies that the issue at hand is real and recent. This is written to curb the tendency of the information being ignored by readers because by experience, perhaps, the writer knows that people in general do not attach importance to outdated information; therefore, the inclusion of the date would inspire readers to take the information seriously.

The seriousness and urgency of the situation is seen in the use of the repetition of 'ooo'. In Ghana among the Akan speaking communities, the repetition of "ooo" with a falling tone is used to show emphasis, caution and to draw attention to something in a conversation. Thus, the information provided by the writer is to be taken seriously by the readers. This confirms that human cognition is fundamentally a socially mediated process that is organized by cultural activities, artefacts and concept (Vygotsky 1980) expressed through language.

Again, the inscription pattern of the communication reveals superiority. The information was meant for a student(s) yet to write WASSCE from someone (a senior) who had already written the same exam and therefore is in a better position to advise them. The emphasis here is on the subject "biology". This wake-up call by this "kind senior and adviser" to juniors is necessitated by current state of biology (yawa). "Yawa" and "Cus" are common terms used among friends in an informal discourse in Ghana (Pidgin English) and "yawa" means trouble/problem and "cus" is a short form of "because". This could mean that biology is a difficult subject in the

WASSCE, therefore, students should pay more attention to this subject in their course of study or that the biology teacher is a difficult person or does not teach biology well, therefore, the reader should beware of him/her. Whatever be the case, the inscription is warning the reader to pay extra attention to the subject, biology to avoid "yawa" in the exam.

**(f) Theme of Awareness**

**Figure:9**
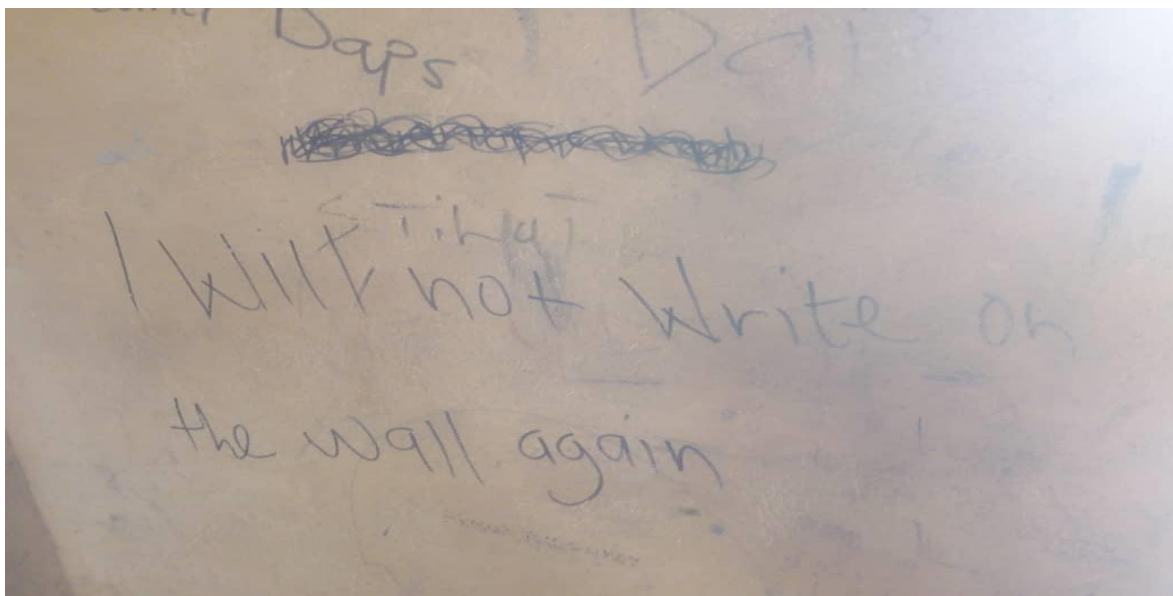


**"I Will not Write on the wall again"**

The above declarative sentence indicates an intention of breaking free from a particular habit (writing on walls) by the writer. This declaration initiates some form of questioning in the mind of the reader. The reader may wish to know the reason behind the declaration. Thus, the above graffiti also indicates regret/repentant state of the mind of the writer.

What might have caused this turn-around is unknown to the reader because no information was provided on that. This violates the maxim of quantity as proposed by Grice in 1975 as cited in Gabrielatos (2002). This inscription also is a violation of maxim of quality where the information provided by the writer is not the truth. The writer violated both maxims to hide his actual intentions and feelings/emotions from the reader but the introduction of the uppercase in the verbs "Will" and "Write" reveals that the writer actually enjoys writing on walls.

The use of uppercase to begin the auxiliary "will" and main verbs "write" is meant to draw readers' attention to both words (Gasparyan, 2020).

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**Figure:10**
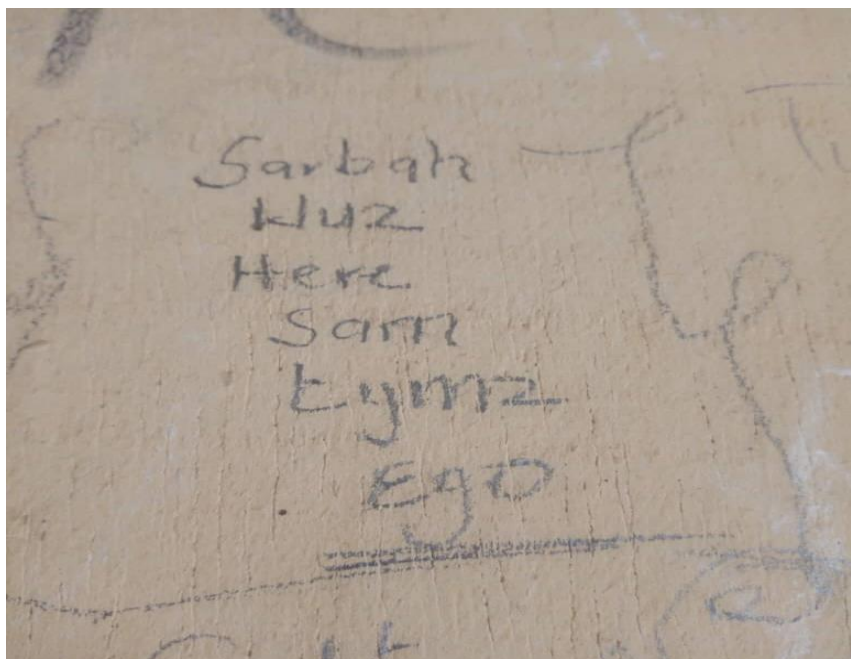


**"Sarbah Wuz Here Sam tymz Ego"**

Obviously, this anonymous writer's intention is to "engrave his name in gold in the sand of time" to let whoever visits this classroom to know that he was once in this class. The inscription gives a clear picture that he is no more in the school or about to leave school. The above structure is a simple sentence. Being the typical feature of graffiti, the writer began almost every word in the capital letter despite that fact that they are not proper nouns.

And just like the extract 2 above, the writer's spelling of "some" as "sam" is as a result of the mispronunciation of the word "some". It has been noted that in Ghanaian English "some" – /səm; strong sʌm/ and the personal name "Sam" – /sæm/ are wrongfully treated as homophones instead of as partial homophones (Mpotsiah, 2019).

## 5.0 CONCLUSION

This study investigated the language use as a socio-semiotic system deployed in the representation of social existence and human behaviour. Evaluating the structure of form of language in any socio-cultural setting is synonymous to evaluating the cognitive tendencies of the members of such community. This is because of the inseparable relationship between language and cognition. The former manifests the structure of the later and the later processes the form of the former. The analysis of the classroom graffiti of this nature must take into cognizance the basic sociolinguistic and sociocultural features which are influenced by the language user's cognitive system. It can be deduced from the graffiti that the writers are young people and matters of their education was paramount to them. Again, the

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graffiti probe and draws attention to the mental representation which reveals their restlessness, rebellion, violence and profanity. The inscriptions also showcased the Ghanaian cultural behaviour and adequately linked cognition, language and culture.

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