



**LINGUISTIC CONSTRUCTS AND MEANING  
INTERPRETATION OF MISSION STATEMENTS OF  
SELECTED PUBLIC COLLEGES OF EDUCATION IN GHANA**

**Emmanuel Kyei<sup>i</sup>,**

**Naomi Donkor<sup>1</sup>,**

**Michael Kwame Appiah<sup>2</sup>,**

**Ernest Antwi Akuoko<sup>1</sup>**

<sup>1</sup>Department of Languages,  
Seventh-day Adventist College of Education,  
Agona-Ashanti, Ghana

<sup>2</sup>Department of Languages,  
Saint Ambrose College of Education,  
Bono Region, Ghana

**Abstract:**

Mission statements (MSs) carry the culture, philosophy, and ideology of institutions that own them. By drawing on *discourse as genre* (Bhatia, 2005), we examined how writers of the MS genre negotiate meaning in the context of language use. The data involved MSs of the thirteen (13) public colleges of education (COEs) in the Ashanti and Brong Ahafo Zone of Ghana drawn from the COEs' official web sites and the display of the MSs on campuses. The findings indicate that MSs were written in one sentence, but varied in length, ranging from seven (7) to forty-nine (49) words. Second, there was a common use of nouns and noun phrases (with "teachers" as the head element), verb forms (generally present, imperative, and purposive infinitive), and persuasive adjectives and adverbs. Third, the linguistic components in the MSs had persuasive appeals and depicted the ideal image for the public: (1) nouns and noun phrases indicated the institutions' identity and uniqueness; (2) verbs and verb phrases expressed inescapable actions and obligations; (3) adjectives and adjectives phrases highlighted the greatest degree of quality of the institutions' services; and (4) adverbs and adverb phrases expressed good traits. Finally, the study concludes that the MSs were similarly formulated in terms of linguistic constructs, both paradigmatically and syntagmatically, to appeal to the interests of accreditation agencies, government, industry, alumni, students, and staff. The study contributes to the development of genre studies.

**Keywords:** colleges of education, genre theory, linguistic constructs, mission statements

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<sup>i</sup> Correspondence: email [okyekye09@gmail.com](mailto:okyekye09@gmail.com)

## 1. Introduction

Mission statements (MSs) exist everywhere in higher education. Accreditation agencies require them for recognition, acceptance and legitimacy; hence, almost every institution of higher learning has one. MSs highlight values, positive behaviours and guiding principles, serving as the core background of the institution's announced belief system and ideology. They emphasise what the institutions aspire to accomplish, and state their commitment to achieving expected results (Alawneh, 2018; Salomo, 2015). In almost all tertiary institutions, their MSs are displayed on their campuses, websites, newspapers, matriculation and graduation brochures to showcase their founding principles, purposes and prospects. MSs provide idyllic sources of an organizational and corporate image for the public and portray an institution's unique and durable purpose and practice by employing linguistic features that spell out service benefits. These linguistic features attract readers to buy into the meaning for them (readers) to assimilate it positively (Swales, 2014).

The available literature suggests three (3) reasons for institutions to have MSs: (1) it is a cornerstone in the strategic planning; (2) it is a tool of communication to the public; and (3) it steers the decisions making process, directing and coordinating all activities in an institution (Bart & Tabone, 1998; Collins-Jarvis, 1997; Pearce & David, 1987; Salomo, 2015). Researchers have also conducted studies into the discursive practices as regards the marketisation of higher education by analyzing the academic MS genre outside Ghana. Swales and Rogers (1995), for instance, classified MSs as a non-routine organisational genre because they do not directly form part of the day-to-day running or activities of the institution. After they analysed 100 individual MSs, they found that the texts possessed linguistic and rhetorical similarities enough to classify them as a single genre. They also revealed some differences in communicative purposes. Pennycook (1994) revealed that *"linguistic elements in MSs are subject declarative, frequent use of nouns, modals, adjectives, metaphors, creative language, passive voice and predominantly verb forms"* (p. 23). Other studies have assessed the features and characteristics of MSs and have concluded that they vary in their length and number of words (Downing, 2015), ranging from 7 to 1000 words (Sufi & Lyons, 20020).

The present study is motivated by the fact that a discourse analysis of MSs of COEs in Ghana is still lacking. Given the paucity of studies in this field in Ghana, this study set out to fill this gap. Specifically, the study focused on a linguistic analysis of MSs of public COEs in the Ashanti and Brong Ahafo Zone (ASHBA) of Ghana. The objectives of the study were three, namely: (1) explore the linguistic components used in the MSs; (2) discuss how their meanings can be interpreted in their social contexts; and (3) examine how COEs use linguistic components to relate to their target audience.

## 2. Literature Review

### 2.1. Theoretical Framework

This study focused on the framework of Bhatia (2015), *discourse as genre*. According to Bhatia, discourse is *"any instance of the use of written language to communicate meaning in a particular context,*

*irrespective of any particular framework for analysis*” (p. 22). He maintains that discourse analysis can be viewed as *text, genre, professional practice* or *social practice*. According to him, *discourse as genre* refers to the analysis of language use that includes context in a broader sense to analyse not only how the text is constructed but also how it is often interpreted, used and exploited in specific institutional or professional contexts to achieve specific goals. Context is seen as the configuration of text-internal and text-external resources. Bhatia (2015), thus, appropriates *discourse as genre* as a framework for the analysis of institutionalized genres to understand how language is constructed, interpreted and used to achieve community goals as well as why members of specific discourse communities write the way they do. Here, questions addressed include both the linguistic issues and the socio-pragmatic ones. Given this, in this study, we employed the social context as “*the explanation for the analysis of textualization of lexico-grammatical and discursive resources*” (p. 11). We argue that the MSs of the selected COEs display some shared features to indicate the general flavour of lexico-grammatical choices.

## 2.2. Colleges of Education (COEs) in Ghana

Currently, Ghana has fifty (50) COEs, comprising forty-six public ones, and the remaining four (4) private. From October 2019, the COEs in collaboration with five public universities in Ghana, namely: University of Cape Coast, University of Ghana, Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology, University of Education, Winneba, and University of Development Studies, began to run the new four-year Bachelor of Education programmes approved in July 2018 by the National Accreditation Board (NAB). The COEs have been categorised into five zones, namely: Ashanti/BrongAhafo Zone (ASHBA), Volta Zone (VOLTA), Northern Zone (NORTH), Western/Central Zone (WESTCENT), and Eastern /Greater Accra Zone (EGA). See Table 1 below.

**Table 1:** List of COEs in Ghana and their Zones

Zone	Name of COE (Public)	Name of COE (Private)
Ashanti/Brong Ahafo (ASHBA)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Agogo Presbyterian COE, Agogo</li> <li>2. Akrokerri COE, Akrokerri</li> <li>3. Al-Faruq COE, Wenchi/Droboso</li> <li>4. Atebubu COE, Atebubu</li> <li>5. Berekum COE, Berekum</li> <li>6. St. Louis COE, Kumasi</li> <li>7. St. Joseph’s COE, Bechem</li> <li>8. St. Monica's COE, Mampong</li> <li>9. Mampong Technical COE, Mampong</li> <li>10. Offinso COE, Offinso</li> <li>11. St. Ambrose COE, Dormaa</li> <li>12. Wesley COE, Kumasi</li> <li>13. Seventh-days COE, Agona-Ashanti</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Cambridge Teacher Training College, Suntreso, Kumasi</li> <li>2. Christ the Teacher COE, Kumasi</li> <li>3. Jackson COE</li> </ol>
Volta (VOLTA)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Jasikan COE, Jasikan</li> <li>2. Akatsi COE, Akatsi</li> <li>3. Dambai COE, Dambai</li> <li>4. Peki COE, Peki</li> <li>5. St. Teresa's COE, Hohoe</li> <li>6. St. Francis COE, Hohoe</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>4. Holy Spirit COE</li> </ol>

	7. Evangelical Presbyterian COE, Amedzofe	
Northern (NORTH)	1. Bagabaga COE, Tamale 2. Evangelical Presbyterian COE, Bimbilla 3. Gbewaa COE, Pusiga 4. Nusrat Jahan Ahmadiyya COE, Wa 5. St. Vincent COE, Yendi 6. McCoy COE 7. Tamale COE, Tamale 8. Tumu COE, Tumu 9. Gambaga COE, Gambaga 10. St. John Bosco's COE, Navrongo	
Western/ Central (WESTCENT)	1. Komenda COE, Komenda 2. Our Lady of Apostles (OLA) COE, Cape Coast 3. Foso COE, Assin Foso 4. Holy Child COE, Sekondi-Takoradi 5. Enchi COE, Enchi 6. Wiawso COE, Sefwi-Wiawso District 7. Bia Lamplighter COE, Sefwi-Debiso	
Eastern /Greater Accra (EGA)	1. Abetifi Presbyterian COE, Kwahu Abetifi 2. Accra COE, Greater Accra 3. Methodist COE (Ghana), Akim Oda 4. Presbyterian COE, Akropong-Akuapem 5. Seventh-day Adventist (SDA) COE, Asokore 6. Kibi Presbyterian COE, Kibi 7. Mount Mary COE, Somanya 8. Presbyterian Women's COE, Aburi 9. Ada COE, Ada	

As noted in Table 1, the ASHBA comprises thirteen (13) public COEs, VOLTA, seven (7); NORTH, ten (10); WESTCENT, seven (7); and EGA, nine (9) COEs. Three (3) of the private COEs are in Kumasi, and one (1) Holy Spirit COE, in Ho, Volta.

### 2.3. Linguistic Constructs and Meaning Interpretation

Meaning refers to what the source or sender expresses, communicates or transmits in their message to the listener or receiver as well as what the recipient infers from the context. This view is central to the concept of meaning interpretation in this study. We argue that linguistic constructs used, such as syntax, subject declarative, frequent use of nouns, modals, adjectives, adverbs, and verb forms influence readers' interpretations of MSs.

### 3. Data and Methodology

The present study purposively involved the thirteen (13) public COEs in the ASHBA. The main reason that influenced the choice of this zone lied in the fact since we work in the ASHBA, we know most colleagues in the Zone, and that aided the data collection. The MSs of the selected COEs were collected over a two-month period stretching from mid of October to mid of December 2019. While with some COEs, we found their MSs on their websites, in some cases particularly those COEs who did not include MSs or had no websites, we contacted tutors in those colleges who sent them to us through WhatsApp.

### 4. Results and Discussion

This section presents the analysis of the MSs of the thirteen (13) public COEs in the ASHBA of Ghana. First, we present the MS of the COE, and then discuss the linguistic constructs and their social implications for readers.

#### 4.1. Al-Faruq College of Education, Wenchi/Drobonso (AFCOE)

Find the mission statement (MS) of AFCOE below:

*“To nurture morally upright and transformational teachers.”*

The MS of AFCOE has seven words, begins with the “to infinitive” verb form (“to nurture”), has two adjectives (i.e. “upright” and “transformational”), an adverb “morally”, and a noun, “teachers” which is the head element of the noun phrase (“morally upright and transformational teachers”), foregrounding elements of what AFCOE is and what it does. The number of words of the AFCOE MS enhances the element of quality by communicating and clarifying the expected direction of the college. The MS is also very informative as a few words convey a comprehensive meaning and enhance time efficiency for both readers and writers. Linguistic resources such as “morally upright” and “transformational” are elements of persuasion used in the MS of AFCOE to convince readers of its identity in the corporate world. Adverbs and adjectives result in a straightforward and concise interpretation of meaning and represent the highest degree of a particular standard (Salomo, 2015). “To nurture” conveys the unique action the college takes aims to take. One derives the meaning that AFCOE nurtures or strives to nurture teachers that the country needs. Generally, the findings of David et al (2014) agree with the current study that MSs are informative, enduring, inspiring, clear, concise and conducive, and the views of Alawneh (2018) that a MS strives to capture an institution’s unique purpose and practice. This finding is not surprising because MSs emerged to tackle change, set goals to direct change, and express positive meaning to all stakeholders (Kotter, 1984; Limwena, 2019).

#### 4.2. Agogo Presbyterian College of Education, Agogo (APCOE)

Below is the MS of APCOE.

*“Our mission is to produce high caliber of disciplined, innovative, dedicated, competent, committed and selfless teachers to man the various levels of education in Ghana through the pursuance of a comprehensive and effective use of technology and development of leadership and implementation of educational policies.”*

The MS of APCOE has forty-five (45) words, and employs linguistic components, such as nouns phrases, with “teachers” as the head element, to-infinitive verb phrase, frequent use of adjectives to modify their respective nouns, verbs, and prepositional phrases which post modify their noun heads. It begins with the noun phrase *our mission*, has *is* as a main verb followed by to-infinitive verb form (*to produce*). It has adjectives such as *high, disciplined, innovative, dedicated, competent, committed, selfless, various, comprehensive, effective, and educational*. These adjectives are persuasive and contextually create positive hopes for all stakeholders particularly prospective students. For instance, *disciplined, innovative, dedicated, competent, committed* and *selfless*, cement and add essence to their noun head (teachers), emphasizing the greatest degree of the quality of *teachers* to be produced. The APCOE MS also uses prepositional phrases to indicate relationships by referring to certain persuasive components of the language. For example, the prepositional phrase, *through the pursuance of comprehensive and effective use of technology and development of leadership and implementation of educational policies*, is likely to be perceived positively in that it creates positive impulses and meaning which invites positive responses. The relationship between nouns and prepositions strengthens, stimulates and sustains the central goal of APCOE MS. For instance, *in Ghana* indicates that APCOE produces quality teachers for Ghana. The possessive pronoun “our” is very inclusive, and stresses that all relevant stakeholders are part and parcel of the institution’s focus. In the words of Pandey (2012), linguistic constructs, such as possessive pronouns, are used for solidarity, and common goals of the institution. Pronouns signify the speakers’ focus of attention as well as how speakers think about group members whether individuals (e.g. ‘me’, ‘my’, ‘I’) or collective (e.g. ‘we’, ‘our’, ‘us’) (Swales, 2014). The verb “is” has a lexical meaning, demonstrating APCOE’s readiness for deliverance of outstanding performance.

#### **4.3. Atebubu College of Education, Atebubu (ATECOE)**

See the MS of ATECOE.

*“The College shall train teachers who are academically and professionally competent to teach in the basic schools in Ghana.”*

The MS of ATECOE has nineteen (19) words. It has the sentence pattern, SVO, that is, the subject (*the college*) plus verb (*shall train*) plus object (*teachers who are academically and professionally competent to teach in the basic schools in Ghana*). The *object* is headed by the noun element *teachers* post modified by an adjective clause, *who are academically and professionally competent*, and to-infinitive clause, *to teach in the basic schools in Ghana*. While the noun head, *teachers*, indicates the focus of the MS of ATECOE, the adverbs, *academically and professionally* modify *competent*, to indicate the degree of performance of the teachers. The modal verb “shall” promises good

intentions, and the main verb “train” stresses the proposed action for the future. As argued by Downing (2015), *shall* expresses meanings of prediction, and *shall* plus a verb indicating an action to be carried invoke authority and can be used with the force of a directive. We argue that the verb phrase, *shall train*, expresses future events, personal will and determination, and agrees with the view of Downing (2015) that *shall* can express meanings other than a reference to a future time, to refer to future events. This finding affirms the view of Limvena (2019) that when composing a MS, the linguistic components express the institution’s uniqueness and the core components set out to attain the goal of the institution.

#### **4.4. St. Louis College of Education, Kumasi (SLCOE)**

The MS of SLCOE is stated below.

*“St. Louis College of Education shall become the best College of Education in Ghana, producing morally, academically and professionally competent teachers capable of operating worldwide.”*

The MS of SLCOE has twenty-five (25) words, with the sentence pattern, SVC: that is, *St. Louis College of Education* as subject (S), *shall become* as verb (V), and *the best College of Education in Ghana, producing morally, academically and professionally competent teachers capable of operating worldwide* as complement (C). Mentioning the name of the college implies the particular owner of the MS and equates it to the complement: its focus is to be the best COE in Ghana that produces quality teachers. The use of the adverbs *morally, academically* and *professionally* to qualify the adjective *competent* is significant for two reasons: first, it conveys positive meaning, highlighting the uniqueness of the *teacher* to be produced; second, it has a persuasive appeal, playing a key role in the ultimate buy-in from stakeholders. Such a persuasive message serves three (3) positive purposes: (1) creates a reader’s response to a new stimulus, (2) strengthens an attitude or behaviour advocated by the persuader, and (3) changes values, beliefs, attitudes, intentions or behaviour. Downing (2015) is also of the view that *shall* plus *infinitive* indicates cyclical events and general truths. We also argue that “shall become” indicates SLCOE’s inherent potential to achieve the resulting attributes in the future.

#### **4.5. Berekum College of Education, Berekum (BETCOE)**

Below is the MS of BETCOE.

*“To provide competent, dedicated, creative and innovative teachers who would inspire, motive and bring out the best in their pupils in the basic schools, through pre-service and in-service training.”*

The MS of BETCOE has twenty-nine (29) words beginning with the “to-infinitive” verb phrase (*to provide*). To analyse the syntactic structure of to-infinitive sentences, Ojea (2008) argues that identifying the head element is key to understanding the correct interpretation of the sentences and the processes to be involved. Here, we observe the use of adjectives such as *competent, dedicated, creative*, and *innovative* qualifying the noun head, *teachers*, which is post modified by the restrictive adjective clause *who would inspire, motive and bring out the best in their*

*pupils in the basic schools*. The verbs, *inspire*, *motivate*, and *bring out*, do not only highlight the good qualities of *teachers* to be trained in BETCOE but also indicate impressive actions and strategies to achieve a long-term goal of BETCOE. Generally, this finding agrees with the views of Swales (2014) that the verb form is primarily the present, and imperative. The noun phrases *their pupils* and *the basic schools*, persuasively align the noun head, *teachers*, indicating where the well-trained teacher will work. *Through in-service and pre-service training* exhibits how the institution will go about attaining its goals. Such a thought is assimilated in the meaning of the MS of BETCOE as readers read them. This finding agrees with the view of Pandey (2012) that language and meaning play a significant role in social contexts and create social relations.

#### **4.6. St. Ambrose College of Education, Dormaa (SACOE)**

Find the MS of SACOE.

*“To educate and train highly qualified, responsible, skilled and morally principled teachers.”*

The MS of SACOE has twelve (12) words. It has the structure “to-infinitive” verb phrase, and its object is the noun head, *teachers*. The connection between “to” and “educate and train” is significant: “to” equates the future of SACOE to its goal. This finding affirms the view of Ojea (2008) that “to” is not a meaningless particle. In future, SACOE aims “to educate and train” “teachers”. Hence, we argue that there is a modality value/character of the particle “to” in the to-infinitive verb form. SACOE MS employed persuasive adjectives such as *highly-qualified*, *responsible*, *skilled* and *morally principled* to qualify the noun head, *teachers*. While these linguistic resources are appealing, and delight the MSs’ interpreters, they also indicate the uniqueness of the produced teachers. The length of the MS of SACOE serves two significant functions: first, it can be more easily memorized and repeated; and second, it critically reflects how SACOE hopes it will function. This finding concurs with Alawneh’s (2018) argument that a short MS summarises critical information about the purposes and goals of the institution in a succinct and catchy way.

#### **4.7. St. Joseph’s College of Education, Bechem (JOSCOE)**

See the MS of JOSCOE.

*“The College shall exist for the development of academic, professional and occupational competencies necessary for the preparation of dedicated, disciplined, committed, resourceful, creative and patriotic teachers capable of teaching in the basic schools in Ghana.”*

The MS of JOSCOE has thirty-five (35) words and has the pattern, SVA. The MS of JOSCOE employs noun phrases, prepositional phrases and frequent adjective phrases to project its goals. The prepositional phrase *for the development of academic, professional and occupational competencies ...* is linked to the noun phrase, *the college*, establishing the ultimate goal of JOSCOE. “The” in “the college” is definite and highlights the uniqueness of JOSCOE. The nouns, *college* (head of *the college*), *development* (head of *the development of academic, professional and occupational*



competencies), and *preparation* (head of *the preparation of dedicated, disciplined, committed, resourceful, creative and patriotic teachers*) linguistically provides a sequence: that is, JOSCOE develops competencies that adequately prepare teachers for the basic schools in Ghana. The indication is that by developing the necessary competencies, the teacher will holistically be prepared to teach in the basic schools in Ghana. This finding, therefore, agrees with Sidhu's (2003) suggestion that an effective MS outlines the school's purpose, direction, philosophies, values, core competencies, and the ends to which it will realise its mission. We see adjectives of persuasion such as *academic, professional, and occupational* modifying the noun head, *competencies*, as well as *dedicated, disciplined, committed, resourceful, creative and patriotic*, modifying the head element, *teachers*, meant to influence readers to attach a high degree of positive meanings. It can also be argued that "shall exist" demonstrates JOSCOE's inescapable obligation and articulates how the institution should live. Downing (2015) adds that a declarative which has a modal auxiliary (e.g. *shall*) with a verb is normally quite strong, invokes authority, and can be used with the force of a directive.

#### **4.8. St. Monica's College of Education, Mampong (MONICOE)**

The MS of MONICOE is given below.

*"St. Monica's College of Education shall serve as a centre of excellence for training teachers for the basic schools and inculcate in the products academic, spiritual and humanistic values which will make them effective role-models in the country."*

The MS of MONICOE has thirty-eight (38) words. Contextually, *teachers* and *products* are in synonymous relation because the *teachers* to be trained suppose the *products*; thus, MONICOE intends to inculcate *academic, spiritual, humanistic values* to its *products* who are teachers. It implies that MONICOE is excellently training teachers who exhibit academic, spiritual, and humanistic values. Interestingly, societies see teachers with these positive values as role-models; hence, MONICOE employs linguistic resources which societies consider salient. "Shall serve" expresses certainty and assurance. This finding affirms the views of both Quirk and Greenbaum, (1990) and Fowler (1984) that *shall* is used to denote intention and conveys an exhortation. "Will make" also encodes a degree of willingness to act: while the modal verb "will" suggests good intentions, the main verb "make" accentuates the proposed action for the future. The positive connotation of linguistic resources such as "a centre of excellence", and "effective role models", not only are very impressive and motivating but also invite positive thoughts in readers' minds.

#### **4.9. Offinso College of Education (OFCOE)**

The MS of OFCOE states:

*"The Mission of the College is to provide quality teacher with excellent profession and relevant teacher training, that would produce competent, dedicated, God fearing and committed teachers who will perform creditably by international standards."*

The MS of OFCOE has thirty-four (34) words. It begins with the noun phrase, *the mission of the college*, which makes clear and unambiguously reiterates the owner of the MS. Like the MSs of the COEs discussed above, the head element is “teacher” pre-modified by “quality” and post-modified by the prepositional phrase “with excellent profession and relevant teacher training”. “Teacher training” is also modified by the adjective clause “that would produce competent, dedicated, God fearing and committed,” and “Who will perform creditably by international standards” modifies “teachers”. Adjectives such as *excellent, relevant, competent, dedicated, God fearing* and *committed* suggest why the products of OFCOE stand out in comparison to others. The adverb, *creditably* also qualifies *will perform*, indicating the performance of the products. The verb “is” declares OFCOE’s reason for being, indicating what OFCOE is all about and/or seeks to achieve, “produce” and “perform” state impressive actions, and “will” provides the institution’s assurance and commitment to action. We note that *will* expresses a confident assumption by the speaker. Projecting that the products of OFCOE as *unique* and *superior* to others is not surprising because it is expected that MSs of colleges will articulate the quality of its products.

#### 4.10. Wesley College of Education, Kumasi (WESCOE)

Below is the MS of WESCOE.

*“Wesley College of Education seeks to provide excellent, professional and relevant teacher education and research-based training to prepare committed teachers who meet national standards.”*

The MS of WESCOE has twenty-four words. The mention of the College’s name is important and serves two functions: first, it binds the college; and second, provides purposeful steps the college aims to take. The linguistics resources in the MS of WESCOE pave and direct the institution’s positive footsteps. These steps are further highlighted by the verbs, *seek, provide* and *prepare*: the first step (*seek*) denotes the binding; the second (*to provide*), what WESCOE binds itself to do; and the third (*to prepare*), what the result will be. We argue that these verbal elements enforce social contracts; and that “to-infinitive verb forms” as well as verbs such as “seek” have modality value denoting futurity and potentiality. Also, adjectives such as *excellent, professional, relevant, and research-based* uniquely generate positive references to shared values of WESCOE as are the verbs *seek, provide* and *prepare*, and all together project its products (trained teachers). The focus is “teachers” who are “committed” and “who meet national standards.” That is to say, the nouns and noun phrases, verbs, adjectives and adjective clause do not only complement the meaning but also extend in detail the meaning. This finding concurs with the view of Certo and Peter (1991) that MSs states “*the proposal or reason for which an organization exists*” (p. 76). MSs of colleges, thus, outline an institution’s vision of excellence for students, staff, and organization, as well as its reasoning, intent, and obligations for both the student body and society. The meaning interpretation is that WESCOE considers its stakeholders and broadcasts its values and standards to its leadership, staff and intended audience alike.

#### 4.11. Mampong Technical College of Education, Mampong (MTCOE)

The MS of MTCOE states:

*“To engage contemporary research outcomes, technologies and relevant cultures in delivering quality technical teacher education.”*

The MS of MTCOE has fifteen (15) words. It begins with an infinitive verb form. “to engage”. It can be argued that “to” signals a goal of motion and a purposive nominal action; that is, it connects “engage” and projects MTCOE’s future, potentiality and ways to achieve its expected goal. Probably, this explains why we argue that, among all the verb forms, the infinitive best conveys grammatical information. The use of the “-ing form” as in “delivering” creates a factual sense. The adjective “technical” shows the uniqueness and focus of the College: “technical” refers to the fact that the college offers “Technical Skills” as a subject as well. In the words of Alkhafaji (2003), MSs incorporate specifics that make the institution unique. Since MTCOE offers Technical Skills, Science and Mathematics as elective subjects, the linguistic resources “contemporary research outcomes,” “technologies and relevant cultures,” relate to the motivation and direction of the College given that these subjects largely involve integrating technologies. The implication is that the college’s philosophy and direction guide its MS. This concurs with the finding that MSs constitute the underlying motivation to act in business and exalt their institutions’ focus (Rukstad & Collins, 2008). Moreover, the adjectives “contemporary” and “relevant” demonstrate MTCOE’s readiness and commitment to shaping its curriculum to serve the existing needs of the society. MTCOE, thus, proclaims and shares its adapting strategies to meet the ever-changing needs of society. These strategies as Tanković (2013) found, show the visionary future which will guide the institution towards improvement and expansion, emphasising that the relationship and the service rendered were not only for now but also for the future, since stakeholders are interested in what they foresee, rather than what they have.

#### 4.12. Akrokerri College of Education, Akrokerri (AKCOE)

See the MS of AKCOE.

*“Akrokerri College of Education exists to equip its graduates with the requisite academic proficiency and professional competence for teaching, research and community service at the pre-tertiary level to influence national development.”*

The MS has thirty-one (31) words and begins with the name of the college plus the main verb “exists” followed by a to-infinitive clause. “Exists” creates action and dedication. “To equip” has a modality character; that is, AKCOE provides its products (graduates) with the necessary academic proficiency and professional competence for teaching, research and community service. While the preposition “for” indicates the purpose of the training (for teaching, research and community service), “at” relates to where the service of the graduates will be needed the most; that is “at the pre-tertiary level”. The adjectives “requisite,” “academic,” and “professional” emphasise the *degree of equipment* indicated in the MS. Nouns such as

“proficiency,” and “competence,” can positively be assimilated by the readers. These values and meanings represented by the MS of AKCOE enforce a “new social contract”. Pandey (2012) employs the theory of person-organisation fit (POF) to claim that readers’ level of perceived alignment between the organisation and personal value expectations influence their attitudes towards an institution’s mission.

#### **4.13. SDA College of Education, Agona-Ashanti (SDACOE)**

Find the MS of SDACOE.

*“The mission of the college is to provide comprehensive training for the holistic development of students who would be morally upright, competent, committed and dedicated to professional work ethics.”*

The MS of SDACOE begins with “the mission of the college” which serves to emphasise and delineate it from say vision statement. We see the “to-infinitive” verb form, “to provide”, which projects the potentiality and futurity of the college. Unlike the other MSs discussed, the head element is “students”. Though “students” may appear out of place, its meaning is gained from the modality character of “to provide” as well as “development” which is the head of the noun phrase, “the holistic development of students who would be morally upright, competent, committed and dedicated to professional work ethics.” The indication is that SDACOE holistically develops “students” and the developed students (now teachers) are unique for they are “morally upright, competent, committed and dedicated to professional work ethics”. The linguistic resources “morally upright, competent, committed and dedicated to professional work ethics” explicitly denote the actual qualities of the developed students or teachers. We see the frequent use of adjectives such as *comprehensive, holistic, upright, competent, committed, dedicated,* and *professional* and an adverb (*morally*), defining the quality of the products of SDACOE. This finding agrees with Salomo’s (2015) view that adverbs and adjectives contribute to a clear and precise interpretation of meaning and represent the greatest degree of a particular quality.

### **5. Conclusion**

The study analysed MSs of the thirteen (13) public COEs in the ASHBA of Ghana. The aim was to identify why and how the texts were rhetorically designed to ensure maximum stakeholder buy-in. The study found that all MSs were written in one sentence, and were considerably short. Secondly, it was however observed that they varied in their length and number of words, ranging from seven (7) to forty-nine (49) words. The findings revealed that COEs employed common use of nouns and noun phrases, verb forms (generally present, imperative, and purposive infinitive), and persuasive adjectives and adverbs to add colour to the text and to characterize activities in a positive light. Also, the study revealed the linguistic components in the MSs have persuasive appeals and depict the ideal image for the public: (1) noun phrases indicate the institutions’ identity and uniqueness; (2) verb phrases express inescapable action and obligation; (3) adjectives phrases indicate the greatest degree of quality of the institutions’ services; and (4)

adverb phrases express good traits. Finally, the study concludes that the MSs were similarly formulated in terms of linguistic constructs, both paradigmatically and syntagmatically, to appeal to the interests of accreditation agencies, government, industry, alumni, students, and staff.

### **Conflict of Interest Statement**

We declare that we have no financial and personal relationship with any organizations or people that can inappropriately influence my work.

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