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Linguistic choices and transcultural identity construction in Mary Specht's *Migratory animals*¹

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Abstract

The study of literary texts within their contexts of production has been the primary concern of literary discourse analysts. Against this backdrop, this paper examines the confluence between Mary Helen Specht's use of language in her novel, *Migratory animals*, and the articulation of transcultural identity. The preference for *Migratory animals* over other novels is motivated by the fact that the novel provides evidence of how people live in transculturalism. The analysis is anchored on literary discourse analysis, an aspect of discourse analysis that deals with the social context that backgrounds the production of literary texts. The paper reveals that though an American, Specht deploys Nigerian expressions, loanwords from Nigerian languages and Nigerian Pidgin expressions to situate her novel in the context of transculturalism. Also, the analysis suggests that the way people use language in socio-discursive situations can enrich our understanding of the identities they create either for themselves or for others.

Keywords: transculturalism, loaning, Nigerian English expressions, Nigerian Pidgin English, *Migratory animals*

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Introduction

The aim of this paper is to illustrate how Mary Helen Specht's *Migratory animals* shows a symbolic parallel between the use of language and transcultural identity construction. Specht, an American novelist who was a Fulbright fellow at the University of Ibadan between 2006 and 2007, returned to America in 2007 to produce her debut novel, *Migratory animals* in 2015. The novel describes the world as a cornucopia of people living in transculturation. Through the metaphor of birds or travel imagery, the novel depicts people's cultural migration from one part of the world to another. Specht's character formulation of Kunle, Santiago, Flannery, Alyce, Molly, Brandon, Steven and Harry shows Specht's firm disposition to transcultural identities. These are characters who have, at various points in their lives, moved around the world such that their behaviour points to them being a combination of several cultures. For example, Santiago is Hispanic-American who has travelled to different parts of the world. However, the emphasis in this paper is on the migration from America to Nigeria, focusing on Specht's narrator and heroine, Flannery. It is through her that we come to terms with the polygonal feature of other characters.

Specht's novel illustrates the shifting trend of literature in terms of focus and linguistic resourcefulness. The novel brings together opposing cultural forms, transcends differences and generates an 'other space' where Specht's articulates her desire for cultural pluralism. In *Migratory animals*, therefore, the reader comes across issues that are germane to transculturalism –family bonding, illustration of the positive effect of transnationalism and migration, home, cultural hybridity, mixed identities, broken relationships and unfulfilled dreams. These issues imprint transculturation on the text and its form, illuminating the connection between the intended message and the central metaphor of the novel, migratory birds. Flannery is presented as the prototype of her generation because she offers a reflection of a moral code arising out of a combination of innocence, love, alienation and redemption. Kehinde argues that both 'contemporary American and African writers prioritise cultural

pluralism to envision enduring experience and consciousness of mixed racial, ethnic and cultural identity' (2010, p. 231). The author of *Migratory animals* appears to be interested in depicting the significance of contemporary existence, global interaction and the migration not only of individuals, but of cultures and identities across the globe.

Migratory animals captures the notions of identity and transculturalism in that the novel traces the coming of Flannery, a young scientist, to Nigeria, her romantic relationship with Kunle –a postgraduate student at the University of Ibadan and the complex turn of events. Drawing from the subjects of migration, transnationalism and transculturalism, Specht depicts the fragmented nature of human existence. The novelist presents us with a panorama of American and Nigerian life where her characters engage questions of culture, identities and belonging. This trajectory is profoundly exemplified in the character of Flannery. Flannery, whose characterisation schema details the modern individual's multi-layered existence, breaks the kernels of her American-ness to take up a Nigerian identity or something akin to it. Essentially, Flannery's duality as expressed in 'migration' dramatises a motivation to locate one's self in a continuously mutating world.

Although there are instances where other languages, most frequently Spanish expressions (*No mames*, *giiey* and *Callate, gringo* p. 201), for example, are used in the novel to depict transculturalism, our concern in this paper is to interrogate how Nigerian ways of using English echo transcultural identity construction in *Migratory animals*. The author, in her creative inventiveness, interlaces her narrative with her experiences in Nigeria and it is in this kind of interspacing that the collective narrative of the novel takes shape and its central metaphor of migratory animals finds articulation in our fragmented reality. Through Flannery, also known as Flan, Specht delineates what is Nigerian as well as allows Flan to take up a voluntary identity. Voluntary identity, as conceived by Kavalski,

depicts the idea of an independent choice of individual identity accentuated by a more flexible understanding of cultural frontiers; it is an articulation of the conjecture of the past with the social, cultural and economic relations of the present. (2003, p. 3)

Specht's description of Nigeria's culture through the prism of Flannery's characterisation is an instantiation of the multi-dimensionality of humankind. This is why Flannery does not consider it an issue to be 'Nigerian'. Her willingness to marry Kunle and ability to find Nigeria habitable implies that Nigeria is her constructed new home. She admits: 'it really hadn't been difficult to adjust to daily life in Nigeria' (p. 137). But Specht's construction of dual identity relies on her ability to use American English, Nigerian English, Pidgin and indigenous expressions. It could be said that her understanding of the culture of the Nigerian people helps in making her creative process an effective link between literature and real-life situations. Bitsani elucidates this process when she postulates better that 'cultures and identities are dynamic sets, they change over time and adapt to circumstances. They are also complex wholes, encompassing heterogeneous components' (2016, p.3). It is, therefore, difficult to 'coagulate' or abridge them at just one level. Bitsani's observation has epistemological validation since one can hardly talk about an entirely pure or singular culture. To study language in terms of identity construction implies buttressing the fact that cultural identity is a constantly shifting phenomenon because neither identity nor language is fixed. The changes we see in language are but a reflection of the changes that take place in human lives and people's ways of perceiving the world. It is in line with the above that this paper examines Specht's use of loaning, Nigerian English expressions and Nigerian Pidgin, exemplifying how her linguistic choices shed light on people's transcultural identities in the fictional world of her novel and in the wider referential world that frames the narrative.

Transculturalism

Definitions of transculturalism, like identity, are varied and rooted in different scholarly traditions or orientations. Transculturalism, according to Onghena (2008, p. 183), is ‘a process the elements of which are altered and from which a new, composite and complex reality emerges; a reality that is no mechanical mixture of characters, nor mosaic, but instead a new, original phenomenon’. Transculturalism, therefore, describes a practice in which the singularity of existence is altered, thereby creating opportunities for the emergence of a complex reality. Kehinde defines transculturalism as ‘a quintessential weapon for uniting peoples across races, ethnicities and cultural divides’ (2010, p. 231). Kehinde’s argument underscores the fact that transculturalism, in practice, breaks individual, cultural and national limitations. People or nationals no longer live in a single culture; they embrace multiple ways of configuring the world.

In a similar vein, Tartaglia contends that ‘transculturalism is about looking for shared interests and beliefs, which cut across cultural, historically contingent boundaries’ (2016, p. 1). This postmodern trait is a further illumination of coming together of cultures because there is hardly any society in today’s world that is insulated from the others. The advancement in technology, for example, is making it easier for people across diverse cultural spaces, races and nations to share their ways of life with others as well as appreciate other ways of doing things. In so doing, the world is being brought together and the individual becomes a compendium of manifold identities. Perhaps another way to say this is that transculturalism tries to explain that cultures are being fashioned, shaped and influenced by their constant interactions. Culture and identity are not static, and are in a constant state of flux, making every individual a mosaic of cultural identities.

In the context of transcultural identity construction, linguistic identities describe ‘the sense of belonging to a community as mediated through the symbolic resource of language, or to the varying ways in which we come to understand our language

ourselves' (Park, 2012, p. 1080). Through the linguistic choices we make, we position ourselves in a social context. Linguistic identities become, in the context of transculturalism, central to our understanding of the world because 'most of people, ideas, products, and cultural forms across national boundaries intensify contact among languages' (Park 2012, p. 1080). This suggests a symbolic parallel between meaning-making and context of discourse.

Identity construction, therefore, is a constitutive part of human existence and can manifest in different forms and various human transactions. However, the notion has remained very difficult to define. It could be seen as the way an individual wants to be regarded or the way an individual is regarded or constructed by others. The multifaceted and fluid nature of identity is perhaps the reason why Ahmed (2016, p. 138) argues that 'identity can, hence, change, just like the chameleon's multicolours, to suit different situations and occasions'. Ahmed's position resonates with the concept of transcultural identity. Human experience and existence, argues Cuccioletta, are 'due to the contact with the other, who in reality is like, oneself' (2002, p. 2001). Although there are factors that articulate as well as construct people's identity or identities, language is central to identity enactment. One's knowledge and use of language reveal much about one's experiences in life, the reason this paper focuses on Specht's use of language.

Theoretical framework

This paper is anchored on the analytical principles of literary discourse analysis (LDA). The development of LDA as a branch of discourse analysis in the 90s produced a profound transformation in the condition under which literature can be studied (Maingueneau, 2010). As an approach of analysing literary texts from a discourse analysis perspective, unlike traditional stylistics, LDA deals with literary texts 'as part of the discursive practices of a given society' (Maingueneau, 2010, p. 152). Thus, LDA is concerned with the function language performs in a particular context. It deals with 'the specific use of language in literature' (van Dijk, 1985, p. 1), focusing on how sociocultural context intersects with meaning-

making as well as explication. Expressed in another way, LDA is interested in reviewing and explaining the origin and the nature of the social meaning attached to both the linguistic and literary forms.

Proponents of LDA –Tolliver (1990), Vendonk, (2002), Porras, (2011), among others– strongly hold the view that the complete meaning of discourse can be understood from the context rather than the sentence. Therefore, understating context will make ‘reading a purely relativist process’ (Miall, 2002, p. 324) and also what the text is saying will be forcefully foreclosed. ‘Literary interpretation’, argue Allington and Swann, ‘is wholly contingent upon socio-interactional context of a particular reading event or activity, and the most interesting aspect for analysis is the way these socio-interactional contexts (involving individual and group identities, for instance) are produced and reflected in the discourse’ (2009, p. 227). The context in which a text is situated is very important to LDA.

Context, in LDA, describes the situations in which something exists (Yina, 2011). A reader of a text is therefore required to have profound understanding of the sociocultural context of the text’s discourse in order to account for what a text is actually saying. Yina further argues that the conception of ‘literature as discourse allows the reader to create his own contexts of meaning adduced in actual manifestation of behaviour and attitudes depicted in a text’ (2011, p. 19). As a literary representation of reality, literature as discourse ‘enables us to account for the artistic axiom that different readers in different times and places would attach different sets of contextual interpretations to one and the same verbal structure or text’ (Yina, 2011, p. 20). LDA locates the language of literary texts within its context of production. The ideas that inform the writers’ use of language are important indices to be considered by analysts in order to understand the fundamental message of a text. Both the text and the context of the text are important to the literary discourse analysts. Maingueneau reasons that ‘for discourse analysts, there is no inside and outside text. What is “inside” must construct its own “interiority” through interdiscourse’ (2010, p. 151). Therefore,

it is less helpful to analyse Specht's *Migratory animals* without recourse to the Nigerian sociolinguistic milieu in which the novel is partly situated.

In conjunction with the above, Bradford (1997, p. 96-97) argues that 'Language is always dependent upon its historical contexts. The conventions of speaking and writing reflect or engage with the social, political or ideological resources of a word, a phrase or locutionary habit, and these non-literary registers inform the texture of poems and novels'. It follows that, in order to understand how transcultural identity is constructed, one needs to understand how language works in context-specific ways. This analytic paradigm has more sociocultural direction since the analysis of texts, in terms of meaning-making, involves the analysis of broader, fundamental discursive questions. Meaning is not semantically fixed; therefore, meaning-making crucially 'depends on the essential indeterminacy of language' (Widdowson, 2012, p. 15). Literary discourse analysts, then, are interested in deciphering the various hidden significations of a text. They project the idea that the analyst should be interested in analysing the web-like trajectories of linguistic choices, identities and cultural ways of speaking. Widdowson makes the point that understanding literary texts 'is particularly elusive', because 'literary texts do not key into context and pretext in conventional ways' (2012, p. 5). Deducible from the foregoing argument is that LDA supports variable ways of reading texts in order to highlight how discursive encounters confluence with the meaning-making process. Therefore, LDA accounts for how social, psychological and socio-historical contexts influence the art of communication.

The way people use and interpret language is often linked with their identities. In line with LDA's analytic principle of engaging literary texts from contextual perspectives, Specht's *Migratory animals* can be seen as an authentic sociocultural linguistic corpus. Ajtony (2013, p. 258) explains that 'The social variables that shape identity of the characters are tied to their language use and social behaviour'. The concern of this study, then, is to investigate the role language plays in literary characters' articulation of their

multifaceted existence.

The use of loanwords in *Migratory animals*

Loanwords are not the only linguistic means by which transcultural identity is enunciated. But loanwords have underlying meanings; they transcend stylistic motivation to provide information about why people use language the way they do. Loaning and borrowing are two code-switching phenomena that have been used interchangeably without paying close attention to the sharp peculiarity that exists between them. Code-switching, a common feature of bilinguals/multilinguals, describes the simultaneous use of two or more languages in written and spoken situations (Lamidi, 2017). While a loanword, as described by *The Oxford companion to the English language*, refers to ‘a word taken into one language from another’ (1992, p. 623), borrowing goes far past taking an individual word to show the structural changes the borrowed words undergo as they leave one language to a host language. Loanwords deal with individual words; ‘lexical borrowing implies the adoption of individual words or even large sets of vocabulary items from another language or dialect’ (Aboh, 2012, p. 53). The difference between the two linguistic notions is that the former is about single words, also known as ‘switch tag’, while the later involves ‘large sets of vocabulary items’ (Rahim, 2008, p. 5).

Although there are many languages (Spanish, Yoruba, Nigerian English, Hausa, etc.) that used in the narrative, the focus of this paper is on loaning from Nigerian languages to English. As writers loan from one language to another, they provide information about their ‘double’ or ‘multiple’ selves. Specht deploys loaning as a narrative strategy to reflect the transcultural composition of her major character, Flannery. For example, there is the use of *Oyinbo*. In Nigeria, anyone who is white in complexion is called an *Oyinbo*. Kunle, as well as other Nigerians, calls Flannery, the white American, *Oyinbo*. When she returns to America, she tells Molly, her sister, what the lexical unit means. By so doing, Flannery imprints in Molly’s consciousness that if she has the opportunity to be in Nigeria, she will also be called an *Oyinbo*. But perhaps

the most significant aspect of such a linguistic socialisation is that the lexical unit reveals how Flannery has learned a new word, a word that defines many Nigerians' naming technique, especially in western Nigeria – because the word has a Yoruba etymology. In learning a new word, she also learns another way of understanding the world. This makes it possible for us to talk of both identities and transculturalism.

In her 'new world,' Flannery does not quite encounter difficulties in adapting to Nigeria's lifestyle. Her transmutation appears to be very fast. For example, she and Kunle go out to drink *palm wine*, juice tapped from palm trees in most parts of Nigeria, and as they drink from little plastic cups, 'Flannery imagined she and Kunle were bound in the pages of *The palm-wine drinkard* [an allusion to Amos Tutuola's novel] [Has been included in the References] and sitting and drinking was the only job they had in the world' (p. 4). Specht, in this instance of language use, forays into a cultural pattern of her host community where members of the community sit out to drink *palm wine* and have open conversations about what their immediate environment offers. But more than this, *palm wine* functions as a means of formulating a Nigerian identity for the American. The palm wine drinking is one spectacular moment for Flannery as it captures a series of symbolic identity constructions for her, which draws strongly from the overall meta-discursive context of transculturalism. It is not that she attempts to forget or obliterate her American identity; rather, she provides a compelling example of how human beings navigate the seams of cultures and identities. It is this intersection of multidimensionality that Hobsbawm clarifies:

The concept of a *single*, exclusive, and unchanging ethnic or cultural or other identity is a dangerous piece of brainwashing. Human mental identities are not like shoes, of which we can only wear one pair at a time. We are all multi-dimensional beings. (1996, p. 1067)

Hobsbawm persuasively argues that individuals operate a framework of multiple identities. Even nations that are thought to be homogenous are, in effect, heterogeneous in identity. For, there are diverse people, in that supposedly homogenous nation, with diverse ways of existence, of viewing the world. Flannery goes on with her daily life the way she finds Nigerians do.

Language constructs identities and gives us belonging. Kunle uses *abi*? (p. 15), a Yoruba expression that translates roughly as ‘isn’t it?’ or ‘right?’, when talking on the phone with Molly. In non-literary situations in Nigeria, interlocutors loan the word as a conversational strategy to ‘make’ listeners agree or confirm what they say. The fact that Kunle uses the Yoruba word with an American who has never been to Nigeria should not be conceived as a demonstration of arrogance but a deliberate act of identity ‘transfer’. He presupposes that Molly would understand what it means. But most importantly, in ‘fixing’ this word in her characters’ mouth, Specht typifies the fact that one does not necessarily have to live in a particular community for one to imbibe the cultural patterns of a people, for language embodies the ways of life of a people. Kunle’s use of *abi* while talking with Molly is strategic in that he has expanded the linguistic frontiers of English so as to relate in an unencumbered manner with Molly.

There is the calculated loaning of *wahala* by Flannery when she thinks of Molly. *Wahala* is a Hausa expression that translates as ‘trouble’, ‘problem’ or ‘controversy’. But the context actually determines the depth of the meaning. In some cases, its meaning is weightier than mere ‘trouble’ or ‘problem’. Having lived in Nigeria, Flannery understands that it can be used to mean more than ‘trouble’. This is the reason she loans *wahala* to tell the degree of the psychological trauma Molly is undergoing because of Huntington disease – a genetic disease passed to her from their mother. In displaying transculturalism, Flannery, through the discourse strategy of linguistic apposition, tells us what *wahala* means – ‘big trouble’ (p. 16). *Wahala* better explains what she thinks of Molly’s situation. It is fascinating to see how Flannery navigates the seams of existence through the linguistic choices she

makes.

Specht loans indigenous expressions in her creative initiative to explain the conflation of language and the presentation of sociocultural reality. She uses the Nigerian term *Okada* which describes both a commercial motorbike and the rider. Ontologically, it describes a town in present-day Edo State, Nigeria. Flannery systematically mediates an internal sense of belonging to Nigeria. This feeds into the fact that she will become Nigerian if she marries Kunle. Kunle is a Yoruba-Nigerian Flannery falls in love with. She reminisces about the way

they sped by on the back of an *Okada*. ... Flan behind the driver; Kunle behind her. She remembered how his breath passed along her ear and the side of her face as she leaned back into him. His legs straddled hers, and his hands barely touched her torso as if held there not by muscle but by magnetism. It was joy and movement and freedom in a liminal space, invisible ghost licking at their heels. (p. 22)

Although there are motorbikes all over the world used both as private and commercial means of transportation, the lexical entity *Okada* is a means of transportation that is specifically known by Nigerians. The word ‘movement,’ in the context of the novel, is symbolic: it connotes a transitional process Flannery undergoes to embrace a new identity while maintaining her American-ness. In this instance, it does not seem out of place to argue that *Okada* systematically functions as a vehicle of psychological identification: a means that liberates her from cultural constraints. Specht’s use of language activates Flannery’s schema of dual or multiple existences. The preference for the Nigerian expression over the English one (motor bike) should not be read as Flannery’s eradication of her American-ness, but an explicit account of her ‘transcultured selves’. This is why when she goes back to America, she feels a deep sense of incompleteness without Kunle and she laments: ‘I wish Kunle were

here' (p. 41).

Relatedly, there is the loaning of *danfo* (p. 41), a minibus taxi. Although the origin of the word *danfo* is not certain, it means 'hurry' in Yoruba. It is one of the chief means of commercial transportation in Lagos, Nigeria. A ride in a *danfo* can be quite uncomfortable; it is not the best means of transportation because of what it signifies. Significantly, the novelist deploys *danfo* to provide her readers with visual accounts of transportation system in the city of Lagos. So Flannery imagines when Kunle 'would be riding a *Danfo* crowding four to a seat...painted with maxims like "Protected by the Blood" or "No food for lazy man"' (p. 41). The other important thing to note from the above use of language is Flannery's consistent psychological flux between America and Nigeria that represents a further illustration of transculturalism. Besides that, expressions such as 'Protected by the Blood' and 'No food for lazy man' are hand-written inscriptions one finds on commercial vehicles and on some private cars in Nigeria. They function as semiotic constructs because they enable Flannery to identify with and accept something new, something that, perhaps, she does not see in America. Both *Okada* and *danfo* function as transforming processes that diminish the concept of a single identity.

In her cultural excursion into Nigeria's ways of life in terms of greeting, Flannery loans the Yoruba word *ekaaro* (p. 135) to illuminate the premium some Nigerians place on greeting. It means 'good morning'. Unlike the American greeting culture, *ekaaro* comes with body movement—the male child is expected to prostrate and the female to genuflect while greeting an elderly person. This body movement speaks volumes for the amount of respect attached to greetings in Nigeria, implying that it goes beyond phatic communication. Meeting with Kunle's mother, Flannery takes on a different identity than the American one. She switches from the formal mode of the English language to Yoruba which carries its own sensibilities and social functions. Hudson argues that 'the choice of language at a point is decided by situation which in turn is defined by it' (1996, p. 53). Hence, Flannery having understood that she is conversing with a Yoruba woman, uses the expression

ekaaro. Flannery's conscious cultural transportation intersects with her identity construction goal. This is manifest in her tongue swap. Her linguistic representation echoes Onghena's (2008, p. 182) view, 'we can safely say that cultures are constantly evolving and that we should consider them dynamic. Moving from the descriptive to the more explanatory nature'. It does not appear to be out of place to mention that Flannery's loaning indicates her transitive process of navigating two cultures simultaneously.

The position of this paper is that there seems to be a conjunction between the language of literature and the identity that produced it. The deployment of *suya* (p. 154) to capture the culinary habit of many Nigerians is an instantiation of the foregoing conjecture. *Suya* describes strips of beef with oil sprinkles grilled on skewers over open fire. It is a Hausa expression that is commonly used in Nigeria. Knowing this, Flannery buys it for Kunle and they both sit out 'devouring' it (p. 154). While Flannery is familiar with grilled meat, it can hardly be said that she is used to *suya*. Even Kunle marvels at Flannery's adaptability. He says, 'I'm surprised an *oyinbo* can take the spice'. Therefore, her having *suya* despite the fact that it is spicy could be seen as an attempt to calibrate herself into the cultural pattern of Nigerians in terms of food. This is why Ajtony argues that 'the social variables that shape the identity of the characters are related to their language use and social behaviour' (2013, p. 258). It is during the scene of *suya* eating that 'they talked about their childhood'. The '*suya* atmosphere' offers a perfect opportunity for them to dig into their respective histories, enabling them to get to know each other even better. This is a dynamic transformation, an indexicalisation of our polygonal existence. The next section of the paper focuses on the significance of Nigerian English expressions in *Migratory animals*.

Nigerian English (NE) expressions

Extensive studies by Odumuh (1984), Jowitt (1991), Adegbija (1998), Udofot (2007), Aboh and Uduk (2016), among many others have validated the existence of a variety of World Englishes known as Nigerian English (NE). These scholars, in

their respective studies, have described the dynamic use of English in Nigeria as *domestication*, *nativisation*, *acculturation* and *hybridisation*. As in a typical Nigerian novel, there are numerous uses of Nigerian English expressions such as *goat stew*, *pepper soup*, *Calabar stew* and *periwinkle snails* in *Migratory animals*.

Pepper soup is a special type of pepper-based consommé made with meat or fish, and prepared mostly without red oil. While most Nigerians prepare and enjoy *pepper soup* at home, it is worth noting that it is also served at restaurants. As the name suggests, it is usually very peppery. *Goat stew* (p.135) is prepared with mutton or the offal of a goat. *Calabar stew* (p.136) is a kind of Efik soup known as *edikang ikong* and is consumed in many parts of Nigeria, especially the south. *Periwinkle snails* (p.136) are obtained from some Nigerian rivers and are used to make soup and other sorts of food. By making specific references to Nigeria's food technology, Specht takes her readers on an anthropological excursion into the culinary culture of Nigerians. As she does so, she allows Flannery to manifest her transcultural identity. Food is a constitutive aspect of a people's material culture. The various references to Nigeria's food culture in *Migratory animals* transform the author's natural setting, enabling her to enact not only a Nigerian identity for her characters, but to also draw attention to people's fragmented existence. Apart from Flannery, characters such as Santiago, Brandon and Alyce are typical manifestations of our split existence.

Using language as the gateway to Nigeria's linguistic space, Specht reproduces a pattern of life that is ontologically Nigerian. For example, the expression *Calabar stew*, as used when

One of Kunle's neighbors from Cross River State stuck her head in to ask if they'd eaten – "Done chop?" They spooned up her *Calabar stew*, sucking the periwinkle snails from the shells and scooping big chunks of leafy greens with balls of soft *fufu* made from boiled cassava. (pp. 136-137)

The passage provides cultural information about the food culture of the Efik ethnic group of southern Cross River State in Nigeria. The sucking of *periwinkle snails* and swallowing of balls of *fufu* are telling examples of the eating pattern of the people described. The fact that Specht's central character finds herself assimilating such a pattern of life is an illumination of her multiple existences. Specht tells of how 'Flannery was living in mental possession of two worlds' (p. 224).

In a similar anthropological cum historical excursion, the expression, *Boys Quarters (BQ)*, refers to the quarters where (male) servants are housed. *Boys Quarters* is a vestige of colonialism that has continued to recur in NE usage. In Nigeria today, as in some ex-British colonies such as Sierra Leone, The Gambia and Uganda, some people build a main house and a special, small apartment slightly cut off from the main residence and they call it *BQ*, a place reserved for the 'boys' and possibly home helps. In other instances, it is reserved for non-members of the immediate family and visitors. Many present-day Nigerian *BQs* do not have that subservient, dehumanising colonial tinge. Flannery tells us what a *BQ* means:

Kunle's room was in a BQ, or 'Boys Quarters,' a term for the small building adjacent to a residence that, during colonial times, had been used to house servants or 'houseboys.' BQs – and his was no different – were usually a row of three or four rooms connected by a slab porch, which, since there wasn't a proper kitchen, was where inhabitants set up hot plates and buckets of water. (p. 135)

Besides providing architectural information about *BQs* and the fact that it is a colonial vestige, it tells us about some students' housing lifestyle in some Nigerian universities, specifically the University of Ibadan. When Flannery goes to see Kunle, she is amazed how he lives in a small apartment with two other postgraduate students. Whenever *BQ* is mentioned, many Nigerians can tell what it means

because it describes a familiar housing system. Significantly, Specht has consciously unravelled the historical situation and condition responsible for the creation of a linguistic expression that can be deemed as typically Nigerian and West African. As much as Flannery does not belittle where Kunle lives, she identifies with him: such identification is significant in the understanding of transculturalism. Kalpana corroborates this, as he notes, ‘identity is stuck within the nation’s history, for individuals are at a point identified only if they have a location within the historical moment’ (2015, p. 50). We can then say that Specht’s use of language symptomises how writers use their artworks to give expressive force to transnational identity.

According to the backdrop provided by Specht’s narrative, it could be argued that *Migratory animals* is anthropological in many ways because it insightfully details Nigeria’s culture. The Nigerian identity reproduced throughout the novel provides an objective ground for a valid discussion of transcultural identity construction. The expression, *village*, in Nigeria describes a rural, undeveloped area as contrasted with an urban area so that *my village* means my rural, undeveloped hometown where my roots lie. An important indicator of the use of *my village* is that it connects a Nigerian to his or her roots. It has everything to do with identity and one’s place of birth. There is a saying in Nigeria that ‘everybody comes from a village’, meaning that, however sophisticated or educated one may be at present, one’s roots are located in an underdeveloped place called village. It is in *my village* that *kerosene lamp* (a local lamp made with a reduced metal can with a wick in the middle that uses kerosene to burn) is used by villagers. Specht succinctly details village life in:

Kunle’s village was beautiful in its way – a pastoral answer to the maddening crowds and jammed roads of the major Nigerian cities. Women carried water on their heads, to and fro from the wells. Cocks fought and chased each other while the occasional teenager kicked up dust on a motorbike, probably going nowhere,

killing time. (p. 159)

For the Nigerian who has lived or been to the village, these are familiar features of rustic glamour: *pastoral* décor and answers, *women* (not men) *carrying water on their heads*, *cocks fighting and chasing each other*. True to Specht's narrative, it is in the *village* that Kunle's mother uses a *kerosene lamp* to illuminate the kitchen and the compound. It is also in the *village* that *mango trees* are commonly found. Each of these expressions represents life in many Nigerian villages. It is not that *village* is a Nigerian English word, but its deployment in the novel reflects a typical Nigerian rustic lifestyle, which Flannery comes to like. For Flannery to consider Kunle's village beautiful and habitable in its pastoral way means that she has accepted where he comes from, and to accept his origin is to accept him for who he is. This has a mental representation – that people shift in tune with the shifting nature of reality to have a new definition.

The expression *let me land* is an example of semantic shift in NE. It means *allow me to make my point* or *let me be through*. In either Standard British or American English, *to land* is to bring an aircraft down onto solid ground or water, especially in an airport. Contextually, Kunle reads through Flannery's data and becomes unhappy because she is elongating her stay in America only for a 'mere' cloud seeding. On interrupting him when he finally makes up his mind to discuss her overstay, he says, 'let me land' (p. 195). Immediately, Flannery gives him back his conversational turn. Flannery understands what Kunle means because she has lived in Nigeria and knows what Nigerians mean when they say 'let me land'. This, of course, is an explication of linguistic transnationalism. The fact is that Specht's use of language demonstrates the way many Nigerians use English. The Nigerian English expression is often used when a speaker's conversational turn is interrupted. In line with this analytical approach, it can be argued that Specht's *Migratory animals* is a linguistic behaviour that highlights the role of language in displaying our transcultural identity.

Nigerian speakers of English demonstrate a penchant for creative usages that often link the created expressions with their context of use. In Nigeria, according to Eka (2002, p. 80), the Nigerian English expression *been-to(s)* describes ‘someone who has travelled overseas, particularly to Britain’. Eka further explains that the term has a social meaning in that it tells of Nigerians who were early visitors to Britain. And when they returned to Nigeria, they were in the habit of announcing it to people that they had been overseas, had ‘been to’ Britain, for example. So, the word was seen as an appropriate tag for such people. Specht uses the expression in a similar way. She tells us that *been-tos* are ‘people who had been abroad’ (p. 192). Such a usage signposts the mutual influence that English and Nigerian languages have on each other in the Nigerian sociolinguistic context, thus testifying to the healthy co-existence between the languages in this contact situation. It also confirms that in transculturalism, as languages come in contact with each other, they also exchange cultural ideas. Against this context, this paper insists that Specht’s linguistic choices illuminate her thematic thrust in *Migratory animals*. Having drawn attention to the use of some Nigerian English expressions in the construction of transcultural identity, the attention of the paper will be turned to the deployment of Nigerian Pidgin expressions in relation to the enunciation of transcultural identity.

Nigerian Pidgin in *Migratory animals*

Nigerian Pidgin (henceforth NP) is English-based; it draws from the vocabulary of the English language and from indigenous languages to form a new unique language. Balogun draws attention to the fact that ‘The dynamic and generative capacities of Nigerian Pidgin to create from a finite set of lexical items have continued to foster communicative process and interaction among Nigerians’ (2013, p. 90). However, NP is mostly used in informal transactions. It is a vehicle for the formulation of friendly relationships among its users. Some NP expressions used in *Migratory animals* are examined presently.

The expression *Body no be firewood* has several significations. Specht narrates Flan's thoughts:

There was a saying in Nigerian pidgin: "Body no be firewood," meaning that a body is not meant to be put through all the searing pains and horrors of this life. But when she'd first heard Kunle use the phrase, she thought he was talking about romantic sparks, the burn of physical attraction. Love turning your body into sticks of firewood. (p. 42)

The context in which the expression, *Body no be firewood*, (literally means 'the body is not a log of wood') is used determines its meaning. It can be used by someone who has been stressed or strained to mean that his/her body, unlike firewood, is not meant to be subjected to unbearable suffering. But it is also commonly used in Nigeria to refer to sexual craving or readiness, suggesting that one is not as sexually insensitive as a log of wood. Flannery thought that Kunle, using such an expression, means his sparkling love—as firewood does when burning— towards her, but later she realises that his usage aligns with the explanation offered above. She understands this more in the stressful situation she finds herself in.

One noticeable feature of NP is that it is 'liberal' and fluid. Sometimes, its meaning can be deduced from its subtle, witty and metaphorical combination of individual words. This can be seen in the interaction between Flannery and Kunle:

'I'm sorry I'm not in a better state. It's not often I get house calls from Americans. How do you find Nigeria?' This was a question everyone asked Flannery and two other Americans working with her.

'I like it here. I'm still here'.

'You try small, small. But for how much longer'? he asked. (p. 136)

The expression, *You try small, small*, has its cultural embedding: the reduplication, *small, small*, is used to commend someone who has been able to perform a given task to an extent so that *small, small* means that the commendation is commensurate with the impartial completion of a duty. In the case of Kunle and Flannery, the remark is on her commendable progress, encouraging her to do more. She is commended for her first-time experience in Nigeria as she tries to adapt to it. The language –NP– that is used is not a language Flannery has originally known. But the time she has spent in Nigeria enables her to understand what Kunle means. A symbolic aspect of Kunle’s use of language is his intention to ‘initiate’ Flannery into Nigerian ways of using language.

One inference that can be drawn from Specht’s novel is her reflection of Nigeria’s cultural semantics. Since many Nigerians still live communally, a member of a community would always want to know how other members of the household or community are faring. There are questions asked about one another’s welfare, health status and, in fact, well-being in general. These cultural tenets are backgrounded in NP expressions such as *Done chop?* (p. 136), *How body?* (p. 138) and *Body fine-o* (p. 138). In a sense, while *Done chop?* is a question that ordinarily asks whether one has eaten or not, it implies more. It usually comes from a caring friend or relative. Specht tells us how, ‘One of Kunle’s neighbors from Cross River State stuck her head in to ask if they’d eaten – “Done chop?”’ (p. 136). The question, *Done chop?* (‘Have you eaten?’), demonstrates the communal practice of Nigerians as well as details the charitable things Nigerians do for one another. It presupposes that despite the fact that most Nigerians’ modes of living bear marks of western influence, some communal fragments are still noticeable among contemporary Nigerians as can be inferred from the use of NP. Specht portrays the life of living together and sharing possessions and responsibilities as a feature of transculturalism. Corroborating this postulate, Amao contends that ‘Nigerian pidgin is also acknowledged as a formidable stride in the re-creation of Nigerian and African socio-cultural identity’ (2012, p. 45). Specht tells us that Flannery not only observes this cultural exigency, but

participates fully in the process.

Through the use of this pidgin expression, we can understand a connection between food behaviour and the formulation of a new identity. Perhaps we should not forget that Flannery does not at any time reject any Nigerian food she is offered. Kunle tells his aunt, 'Flan loves our food' (p. 223). It is in the eating of the food that she actually comes to know their names. In this way, we understand the efforts she makes to forge a new identity for herself, a formulation that does not destroy her American-ness. Rather, it is an identity that makes her fit snugly into the complex dynamics of human many-sided existence. Accordingly, although food in principle is morally neutral, in practice, it makes moral and political statements. It is a site, in fact, an advantaged site for the enunciation of identities. Even when Kunle's pronominal choice –our– appears to exclude Flannery, it captures his desire to see Flannery as a member of his group. In this way, 'our' rather expands to include the American.

Similarly, *How body?* with its corresponding response *Body fine-o* is a question that requests an answer not just on the respondent's physiological well-being (as could be inferred from the linguistic context of the sentence) but also on his/her total well-being, which includes psychological, social, economic, financial, mental health and, in fact, family relationship. In this sense, the answer *Body fine-o* could be synonymous with the English version of *All is well*. Some NP expressions are pure transliterations of indigenous languages. In the novel, the very first words Kunle used when Flannery calls him on the phone are *How body?* and she responds *Body fine-o*. From this question-response transaction, Kunle is certain that, all things being equal, Flannery is doing well back in America.

Every point at which Specht deploys a Nigerian Pidgin expression seems significant to our understanding of the discourse of transcultural identity construction. Kunle's village is a stark contrast to the noisy, busy and crowded Nigerian cities. Back home in Kunle's village, Flannery will always notice Kunle's mother shake her head signaling her disapproval of Flannery's consistent going out. The likes of Flannery, according to Kunle's mother, are

called *waka waka*. The term could be either derogatory or jocular. It is derogatory when used to describe a commercial sex worker, and jocular when used to refer to one who likes going out a lot. The latter meaning explains why Kunle's mother calls Flannery *waka waka* (p. 159). Thus, *waka* means 'to walk' and 'waka waka' means 'to walk a lot'. The meaning of NP words and expressions is best understood in their context. The few examples discussed in this paper show how Specht interlaces American English with NP expressions to tell the stories of plural identities. In the specific case of Flannery, her transculturalism is manifest in her being a Nigerian on the one hand and retaining her American-ness on the other. Similarly, Kunle is willing to marry the American, to leave Nigeria for America and to accept Flannery's family as his. Kunle's readiness to be part of another culture signposts his understanding of the multifaceted nature of human existence.

Conclusion

Drawing examples from the author's reading of Specht's linguistic strategies *vis-a-vis* scholarly summations on the confluence of language and identity, the paper supports the view that people's use of language can help us to understand how they live in transculturation. We have seen how the novelist's use of loanwords, Nigerian English expressions and Nigerian Pidgin depict her characters' articulation of their multiple identities. In this way, Specht tries to show that literary language cannot be disconnected from the social uses to which it is put. Whether we admit it or not, we are always mindful of how we use language. Our use of language is in many respects constrained by what we want to say or the message we intend to communicate. This symbolic parallel provides us with examples of Flannery's simultaneous belonging to Nigeria and America. Belonging to Nigeria does not warrant abandoning her American-ness. The argument thus far is that an individual's choice of a language or languages is a contextual activity that determines both the linguistic form of a text and its implied meaning.

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Implementation challenges of social protection policies in four districts in Ghana: The case of the District Assembly Common Fund meant for Persons with Disabilities

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Abstract

This study explores Ghana's implementation of a policy of two per cent of the District Assembly Common Fund (DACF) meant for persons with disabilities (PWDs) in four districts. It employed in-depth interviews with PWDs and officers in the District Assembly. The study revealed that the District Assemblies did not fully comply with directives from the central government to implement the policy. There were inconsistencies in the implementation of the policy and many PWDs received amounts that were less than they required. Further, fixed amounts were allocated to PWDs for different purposes and even though the purposes for requests were not clear, payments were made. The study recommends the need to compile and maintain a database of all PWDs in all the Districts in Ghana, implementing uniform format for allocation of the DACF to PWDs, providing support in the form of inputs rather than cash, and mobilising PWDs into cooperatives. The District Assemblies might consider engaging independent evaluators to monitor and evaluate the implementation of the policy to give the much-needed direction to the policy.

Keywords: District Assembly, District Assembly Common Fund, Persons with Disability, Ghana, social protection policy.

Introduction

The need to address poverty has been the object of sustained scholarly debate and policy attention across the world. Organisations such as the World Bank, the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UNDESA) and the United Nations Education and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) have supported the implementation of pro-poor policies in developing countries where poverty is endemic and policies around disability and exclusion have been emphasised (UNDESA & UNESCO, 2014; VOICE GHANA, 2014). Ghana has been a signatory to all these important United Nations (UN) and international protocols with regard to pro-poor policies for poverty reduction. The World Health Organisation (WHO) (2011) estimates show that more than a billion people in the world experience disability and they generally have poorer health, lower education achievements, fewer economic opportunities and higher rates of poverty than people without disabilities. Women and girls with disabilities are particularly vulnerable to abuse (UN, 2006).

Disability is a multi-dimensional concept that has been defined differently for different purposes such as employment, social security and welfare (ILO, 2011). The International Labour Organisation (ILO) (1983) has described PWDs as individuals whose prospects of securing, retaining and advancing in suitable employment are substantially reduced as a result of physical, sensory, intellectual or mental impairment. This definition focused mainly on the job security aspect of disability. For the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD) (UN, 2006), disabled persons are those who have long term physical, mental, intellectual or sensory impairment, which in interaction with various barriers, may hinder their full participation in society on equal basis. The UN's definition of disability emphasises social, political and economic competencies.

According to Sen (2009), there is a relationship between disability and poverty in that, disability can lead to poverty whereas poverty can also create room for disability. According to Gwatkin

(2007), the risk of contracting disability-related diseases is mainly experienced by the poor in many developing countries due to their limited access to proper health care and rehabilitation services. In the same way, the extra cost incurred by persons with disability to meet their health needs and efficiency at work increases their risk of poverty.

The assertion that globally, PWDs tend to be poorer is consistent with a study conducted by the Organisation of Economic Development (OECD) in 2009 in developed countries. Of the 21 upper-middle and high-income countries studied, it was revealed that persons with disability within the working age bracket showed higher poverty rates than their counterparts who were without disability (OECD, 2009). It was evident from the study that the working-age of persons with disability population was twice as likely to be unemployed. In cases where they were employed, they worked part time except when they were highly educated to secure full time jobs. Even in such cases, they received lower wages.

A survey by the World Health Organisation in 15 developing countries revealed that households with disabled members incur more cost on health care as compared to households without disabled persons. The survey indicated that households with disabilities experienced higher poverty levels with non-health per capita consumption expenditures in five of the surveyed countries. Also, in Sierra Leone, households with persons with severe disability spent 1.3 times more on health care than households without disabled persons (WHO, 2011).

The United Nations Development Programme recognises poverty as the lack of access to opportunity and violation of human dignity (UNDP, 2008). It uses human development index as a measure of poverty employing indicators such as literacy, education, health care, employment and other basic necessities. Given the evidence that disabled persons in developing countries are disadvantaged in terms of educational attainment, health care and employment opportunities (WHO, 2011), it follows that national and international communities must execute programmes to reduce

poverty amongst the disabled and create equal opportunities for all.

Global response to disability and pro-poor policies

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) which constitutes the International Convention on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) and the International Convention on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (CESCR) were among the first treaties after World War II that sought to protect the political/legal and social/economic rights of all persons as stated in Article 2 (Schulze, 2010, p. 15).

An earlier effort to bridge the gap by the UN led to the Declaration on the Rights of Mentally Retarded Persons in 1971 and the Declaration on the Rights of Disabled Person in 1975 (Guernsey et al., 2007). These declarations were more specific and targeted the disabled populace. The Declarations for Mentally Retarded Persons and Disabled Persons were made to create the platform for people with disability to enjoy their human rights. It stated that all human rights ‘shall be granted to all disabled persons without any exception whatsoever and without distinction or discrimination on the basis of race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinions, national or social origin, state of wealth, birth or and other situation applying either to the disabled person himself or herself or to his or her family’ (Schulze, 2010, p. 16).

According to Schulze (2010), the provisions that seek to protect PWDs and their families constitute the first step for social recognition of PWDs and their families. In his view, this has firmly established the equality of rights of PWDs, which creates the opportunity to enjoy a decent life as normal and as full as possible. Other frameworks that support the rights of PWDs include the World Programme of Action Concerning Disabled Persons developed in 1982, the Tallinn Guidelines for Action on Human Resources Development in the Field of Disability in 1990, the Principles for the Protection of Persons with Mental Illness and the Improvement of Mental Health Care in 1991, the Standard Rules on the Equalisation of Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities in 1993 and the Human rights of persons with disabilities in 1998

Adamtey, R. Oduro, C. Y. & Braimah, I./ *Implementation challenges of social protection policies* (Guernsey et al., 2007).

According to Guernsey et al. (2007), although these documents including the Declaration on the Rights of Mentally Retarded Persons and the Declaration on the Rights of Disabled Persons highlight on the need to protect the rights of persons with disabilities at the international level, they were not binding due to the absence of any legal backing. The anticipated changes from these documents were not realised, as there were no laws guiding the implementation of the provisions enshrined in the documents.

A more comprehensive legally binding document directed to protect the rights of PWDs became a requirement for change as noted by the UN Secretary General that ‘change comes rapidly when laws are in place’ (Annan, 2006). In 2006 a Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disability (CRPD) was adopted with emphasis on the civil, cultural, political, social and economic rights of persons with disabilities (UN, 2006). As noted by Schulze (2010, p. 34), ‘the purpose of the convention is to promote, protect and ensure the full and equal enjoyment of all human rights and fundamental freedom by all persons with disabilities and to promote respect for their inherent dignity.’ The CRPD outlines measures to remove barriers and discrimination as well as promote the active participation of disadvantaged people in the life of their communities. These principles serve as the key to eradicate discrimination, segregation and exclusion of PWDs and at the same time create the platform for PWDs to exercise their rights and freedom.

Beyond these conventions, international development programmes, such as the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), also make provision for the protection of the rights and freedom of PWDs. The SDG 10 calls for ‘reducing inequalities in income, as well as those based on sex, age, disability, race, class, ethnicity, religion and opportunity both within and among countries’ (UN, 2016, p. 30). The principle of equal opportunity and the quest to reduce income inequalities among PWDs creates the avenue for them to undertake any economic activity which they deem fit.

Disability and pro-poor policy implementation – Ghana’s response

Ghana has implemented a number of poverty reduction policies and pro-poor programmes aimed at improving the lives of the poor, vulnerable and excluded (see Republic of Ghana, 1998; 2003; 2005; 2011; 2013). Pro-poor strategies implemented include the Livelihood Empowerment against Poverty (LEAP), National Youth Employment Programme (NYEP) and the District Assembly Common Fund for PWDs.

Ghana’s Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Protection (MoGCSP) initiated the LEAP programme in 2008 with the aim of eliminating poverty in the short-term and supporting long-term human capacity development. The LEAP initiative provides cash and free health insurance support to extremely poor households across the country. The selection criteria of eligible households included households with poor elderly persons and persons with disability who are unable to work. Although the free insurance policy covers the cost of health care for the beneficiaries, the cost of assistive devices for PWDs such as crutches, callipers, prostheses, lenses and hearing aid are not covered (Ghana Federation of the Disabled (GFD), 2008).

The NYEP was initiated in 2006 with the intention of reducing the rate of unemployment among the youth in the country. The initiative was motivated by the 26 % rate of unemployment among the youth. The programme aims at providing training to encourage entrepreneurship among the youth. As stakeholders, the Ghana Society of the Physically Disabled was tasked to train persons with disabilities in the area of chalk production with a €5million support from Danish International Development Agency (DANIDA). This support was used to establish the Aso-Kente factory (Ministry of Youth and Sports, 2013). However, according to the Ghana Federation of Disabled (GFD), there was inadequate participation of PWDs in the design and implementation of the project, leading to its collapse (GFD, 2008).

The Persons with Disability ACT, ACT 715, was passed by Ghana’s Parliament in 2006. In line with this, each District

Assembly is tasked to allocate up to 2 % of its share of the District Assemblies Common Fund (DACF) towards PWDs support and activities (Republic of Ghana, 2011). There is, however, evidence to suggest that access to the fund by PWDs has been challenging. It is difficult to monitor the number of PWDs who have benefited from it and the quantum of funds allocated to them.

To address this problem, the National Council on Persons with Disability (NCPD) was instituted in 2010 and guidelines were developed for the disbursement and management of the fund. Consequently, in accordance with the guidelines, all District Assemblies (DAs) were directed in 2011 to open a special bank account for the lodgement of the PWDs/DACF. Although this policy has been implemented since 2011, there have been few studies that assess the performance of the policy in order to inform the implementation process. The Annual Progress Report on the Implementation of the Ghana Shared Growth and Development Agenda (GSGDA) (2010-2013) (Republic of Ghana, 2013) recommended studies of this nature. This paper therefore seeks to explore the implementation issues around this policy and recommend measures to improve the implementation process by focusing on four districts, namely Ga West Municipal Assembly, Ho Municipal Assembly, Assin North District Assembly and Adansi South District Assembly.

Study context

Article 252(2) of the 1992 Constitution of the Republic of Ghana mandates Parliament to annually allocate not less than five per cent (5 %) of central government's revenue to the District Assemblies for development. The monies are expected to be paid into the District Assemblies' Common Fund (DACF) in quarterly instalments. Each District Assembly is required to allocate 2 % of its share of the Fund to PWDs within its jurisdiction.

The aims of the DACF for PWDs are to: a) minimise poverty among PWDs especially those outside the formal employment sector; and b) enhance their social image through dignified labour. Thus, the fund seeks to empower PWDs economically, through the

improvement of their sources of livelihood along with providing educational support for children, students and apprentices with disabilities. Again, the fund is to be channelled into the capacity building of various Organisations of Persons with Disabilities (OPWDs) to advocate for the right of their members, sensitise them on disability issues as well as provide technical aid and assistive devices for PWDs (Republic of Ghana, 2011).

Under the guidelines for disbursement of the DACF to PWDs, each MMDA is required to establish a Disability Funds Management Committee (DFMC) for the purposes of managing the fund. Generally the committee is responsible for vetting applications received from PWDs and OPWDs, monitoring and supervising the utilisation of the fund, and presenting reports on the management of the fund to the District Assembly and the NCPD.

Study methodology

In order to explore the decision-making processes around the allocation of the DACF to PWDs as part of the implementation arrangements at the district level, the case study approach to data collection and analysis was adopted. Consequently, officers of the District Assembly and PWDs shared their experiences with the implementation of the policy in the form of stories and narratives. The analysis focused on the period from 2011 to 2016, the period during which the NCPD developed and implemented the guidelines for the disbursement of the disability component of the DACF.

The study employed in-depth interviews with key officers who are directly involved in the the allocation and disbursement of the DACF. For each of these District Assemblies, the officers interviewed were the Municipal/District Chief Executive, Coordinating Director, Finance Officer, Planning Officer, Directors of Community Development and Social Welfare and the Budget Officer. For each Assembly, ten Assembly members were randomly sampled and interviewed.

The study also used key informants to identify leaders of PWDs who, with the assistance of the Directors of Community Development and Social Welfare, arranged focus group discussion meetings with the PWDs. Following the focus group discussions, the team visited PWDs who had used their support to set up

businesses and had further interviews at their business sites.

Profile of selected districts

Out of the 10 administrative regions in Ghana, four were randomly selected out of which one Assembly each was chosen for the study. The four Assemblies are the Ga West Municipal Assembly in the Greater Accra Region, Ho Municipal Assembly in the Volta Region, Assin North District Assembly in the Central Region and Adansi South District Assembly in the Ashanti Region (see Figure 1).

Ho Municipality

According to the 2010 Population and Housing Census 7,636 persons in the Ho municipality, representing about 4 % of the total population had disabilities (Ghana Statistical Service, 2014; Ho Municipal Assembly, 2010). A disaggregation of the data indicated that sight-related impairments constituted the most common type of disability in the municipality, accounting for almost 29 % of all disabilities. This was followed by physical and emotional disabilities, each of which accounted for about 19 %. The census data also indicated that, in relative terms, females with disabilities (4.5 %) were slightly more than males with disabilities (4.1 %).

Ga West Municipality

Persons with disability formed 2.5 % of the total population in the Ga West Municipality in 2010. Ten per cent had hearing difficulty. The proportion of female disabled persons (2.6 %) was relatively higher than their male counterparts (2.4 %). This included sight and physical disabilities, which formed 50.4 % and 19.4 % respectively. Whereas speech was the major disability among the males (58.8 %), sight was the commonest among the females (56.2 %). Furthermore, 51.4 % of these persons with disabilities were employed although only 50.7 % had attained basic level education. About 56 % of those employed had emotional disability while 59 % of the unemployed recorded emotional disability.



Figure 1: Map of Ghana showing study districts

Source: Department of Planning, Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology, 2016

Assin North Municipality

The number of persons with various types of disabilities in the Assin North Municipality was 7,539 and this accounted for 4.7 % of the total population (Ghana Statistical Service, 2014). As is the case in Ho, sight-related disability was the most common, accounting for a quarter of all disabilities in the district. This is followed by emotional disability with 19 % and physical disability with 16 %. The prevalence rate of disability was marginally higher among females than males. The proportion of the total district population that suffered from one form of disability or another was 4.8 % among females and 4.6 % among the males.

Adansi South District

The 2010 Population and Housing Census revealed that 3,633 persons in the Adansi South district, representing 3.1 % of the total population had disabilities (Ghana Statistical Service, 2014). The percentage of disabled persons in the district (3.1 %) was relatively higher than the regional and national averages of 2.6 % and 3.0 % respectively. Also, there were slightly more males (51.8 %) with disabilities than females (48.2 %).

Findings and discussion

A number of very important issues emerged from the study need policy attention. The findings suggest that the implementation of this policy cannot be said to be successful. The issues include inadequate compliance with the implementation of the guidelines by the District Assemblies, inconsistency in the data organisation for the disbursement of the fund and limited coverage of beneficiaries. The rest are inadequacy of the amount disbursed, petty trading being dominant reason for making request by PWDs, the allocation of fixed amount for different purposes, and the allocation of monies without any clear purposes stated. These are discussed next.

Inadequate compliance with the implementation guidelines

Metropolitan, Municipal and District Assemblies commonly fail to adequately comply with central government directives (Adarkwa & Adamtey, 2007; Dasmani, 2014) and this was found to be the case with the Guidelines for the Disbursement of the 2 % DACF allocation to PWDs. The focus groups discussions with PWDs in all the four districts revealed that the Assemblies did not fully comply with the directives issued by the NCPD. The inadequate compliance came in two main forms. The first was that the MMDAs were reluctant to release the funds to PWDs and the second was delays in the release of the funds by the Assemblies.

The Minister for Local Government and Rural Development had to write to all MMDAs to fully comply with the directives. In the letter, the Minister noted as follows:

My attention has been drawn to the non-compliance with the Guidelines issued in January 2010 on the disbursement of the two per cent (2 %) District Assemblies' Common Fund to persons with Disability by most Assemblies in spite of this Ministry's reminder letter dated 16th July 2010 and 4th May 2011. For the avoidance of doubt, this Ministry would like to invite the attention of all Assemblies to the provisions in the Guidelines and to ask for your strict compliance with the various sub-headings therein. Hon. Regional Ministers are kindly requested to instruct their Regional Monitoring Teams to also take up the inspection of the operations of the Fund in the Assemblies as part of their monitoring activities and submit a special report on the management of the fund to the Ministry. (Ghana Federation of Disabled, Ho, 2015)

We found that in line with the Minister's letter to the MMDAs, Associations of PWDs demanded to know the extent to which MMDAs had complied with the directive. Those in Ho for example made a formal request to the Ho Municipal Assembly on this issue. In their letter of inquiry, it is noted that:

The National Secretariat of the Ghana Federation of the Disabled (GFD) would like to inquire of the Ho Municipal Assembly's compliance with the Directive from the Honourable Minister of Local Government and Rural Development to all Honourable Regional Ministers and informing all Metropolitan/Municipal/District Chief Executives to ensure compliance with an earlier directive to open

Adamtey, R. Oduro, C. Y. & Braimah, I./ *Implementation challenges of social protection policies*
separate Bank Account for the 2 percent of DACF
for PWDs. (Ghana Federation of the Disabled, Ho,
March 2016)

In the discussions with the officers of the District Assemblies, they noted that they had complied with the directives but added that delays in the release of the DACF to them had resulted in their own delay in disbursing the PWD component. The PWDs and the central government described these delays as ‘noncompliance.’ Some of them also noted that the Assemblies used the fund for emergency situations and later made resources available to be disbursed to PWDs.

Inconsistency in data organisation for the disbursement of the fund

The study revealed that there were inconsistencies in how the various districts organised their data on the allocations made to PWDs. This can undermine coordination, monitoring and evaluation at both the regional and national levels. For example, the Ho Municipal Assembly organised their data to show the amounts requested by PWD and amounts approved for them. There is additional information explaining the nature of the support and the purpose or use to which the amount requested would be put. For the Assin North District, the data were organised under the following columns: name of the disabled person, gender, community, type of disability, purpose of the request and amount approved. Significantly, a column had also been created for either the signature or thumbprint of the recipient. In the other Assemblies, no provision had been made for the PWD’s signature to testify that they had received the support.

In terms of general information on PWDs in the districts, it was only the Assin North District that had comprehensive data. The Department of Social Welfare of the Assin North District had a comprehensive register to record the biographical data and other important information about each PWD, including their names and residential addresses, telephone contacts, type of disability, date of

disability and occupation. The rest included the level of education and the assistance required.

Limited coverage of beneficiaries

The data from the GFD, which were corroborated by discussions with the focus groups, suggest that the coverage of PWDs for support was limited. There are a good number of PWDs who had not been identified in the various districts (see Figures 2 and 3).

As shown in Figures 2 and 3, and based on the data provided by the Ghana Statistical Service (2014), PWDs to be supported in the Ho Municipality were 1970 people with physical disability, 872 deaf and 2929 blind people. Out of these numbers, Ho could only support 3 %, 4 % and 4 % respectively for these numbers. In the Assin-North District, 1230 PWDs had physical disability, 790 had hearing/deafness challenges and 1870 had sight disability, yet the Assin-North could only support 14 %, 26 % and 16 % respectively. This low coverage was not different from what we found in the Ga West Municipality and the Adansi South District (see Figures 2 and 3).

While the beneficiaries were few, we also found that the geographical coverage was limited as many of the beneficiaries were from the major towns and the district capitals. Many PWDs in the rural settlements and villages remote from the district capitals were not covered. This finding is supported by one of the high profile officers at the Ho Municipal Assembly. In the view of this officer,

As at 2011 about 80 % of beneficiaries of the DACF were in the Ho Township. What about other settlements in the Ho Municipality? This raises questions about whether adequate numbers of PWDs are covered under the programme (High profile officer, Ho, March 2016).

In a discussion with leaders of the GFD, one of them noted that ‘there could be many disabled persons residing in the smaller settlements scattered all over the districts that could not be reached due to poor accessibility. Many of the roads are in very bad condition and there are no transport services to enable us identify and register them’ (Leader, GFD).

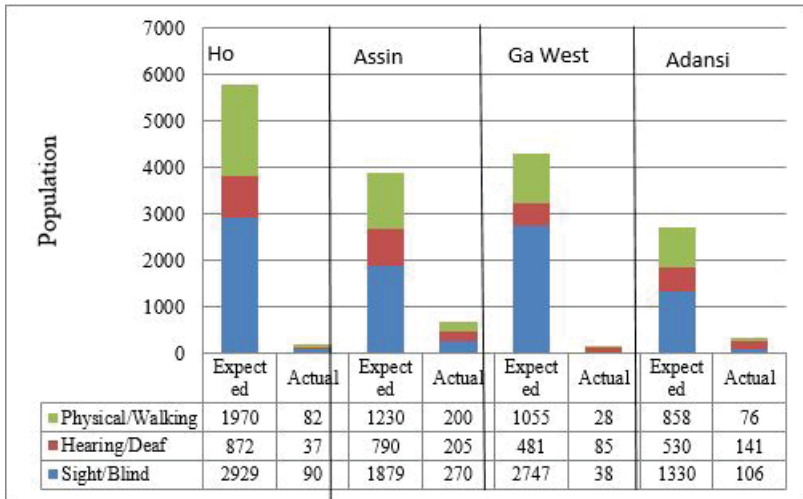


Figure 2: Population of PWDs and actual numbers of beneficiaries of the fund from 2011 to 2015.

Source: Authors’ construct, August 2017

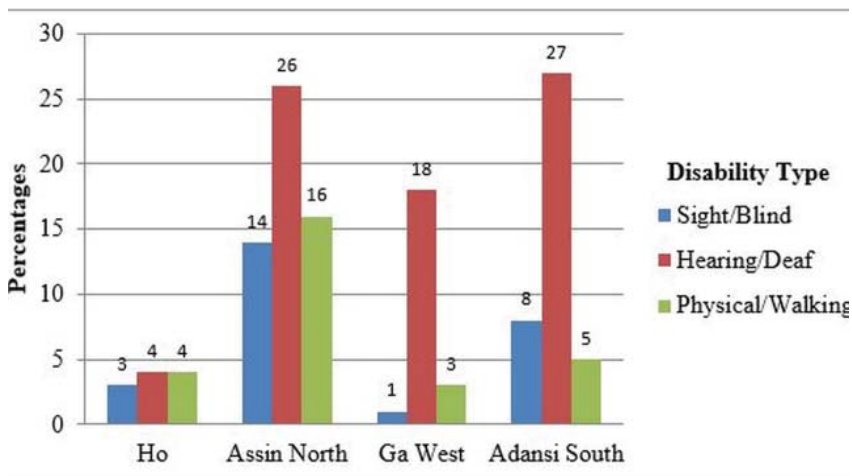


Figure 3: Actual proportions of beneficiaries of the fund from 2011 to 2015.

Source: Authors' construct, August 2017

We found similar reasons from all the districts, all suggesting that there could be many persons with disability who had not yet benefitted from this policy.

Insufficiency of disbursed amounts

In about 80 % of the cases, the full amount that the PWDs requested was not approved. The question this raises is whether the approved amounts could have the necessary impact by enabling PWDs undertake planned activities. In the case of Ho, the data on disbursements during the 1st and 3rd quarters of 2014, and the 1st and 2nd quarters of 2015, all confirm the fact that the full amounts were not approved. The disbursement data in the 1st quarter of 2014 and 2015 show that up to 35 % of PWDs did not receive up to half of the amounts they requested for educational/vocational training. In the same period, up to 95 % of PWDs did not receive up to half of the amounts they had requested for them to engage in income generation activities. For example in the Assin North District, in the 2nd quarter of 2011, out of the 14 beneficiaries who were deaf, only

one was allocated GHC¹500² (i.e. about USD 119.62) for trading purposes. The remaining beneficiaries received between GHC100 and GHC250 for activities such as soap making, hairdressing, welding, dressmaking and carpentry.

This concern has been raised by the various GFDs in all the districts. For example, in Ho, the Disability Fund Management Committee indicated in their report to the Ho Municipal Assembly that:

The Committee observed that the amounts allocated to each individual for income generation activities were not making the needed impacts because they were small. It was also observed that group income generation activities were better because they attracted higher amounts that could sustain their projects (GFD, Ho, March 2016).

During the last quarter of 2011, two applicants in the Ho Municipality who requested for GHC3000 and GHC2000 were both given GHC300 each. About 80 % of the PWDs interviewed in all the districts indicated that their major challenge was that they were not given the full amounts they needed to enable them achieve the purposes for which the funds were requested. Some of the views expressed include the following:

I requested for GHC2500 to put up a kiosk to sell my flowers. I was given GHC300 and because this is not even up to half of the money I needed, I have used it for feeding (Person with Walking Difficulty, Ga West, March 2016).

I wanted GHC2000 to buy hair dryers and washers for my salon but they gave me only GHC200. I have bought just the washer and a chair but I cannot use

1 GHC stands for Ghana Cedi.

2 The averaged GHC-USD exchange rate for the period under review was GHC4.1798= 1 USD.

them so they are in my room covered with dust and I do not know when I will get the additional money to be able to set up and start work (PWD, Ho, March 2016).

Seed capital for petty trading as dominant reason for making request

About 80 % of the applicants under income generation activities requested for seed capital for petty trading. The petty trading activities essentially involved ‘buying-and-selling’. One of them noted thus ‘I am already selling plastic containers and I wanted some more money to expand my business.’

Although these petty trading activities/businesses have the potential to make the applicants earn income directly, they do not have strong multiplier effects in terms of creating jobs for others. According to the Keynesian argument of multiplier effects, there is the need to invest in ventures that can create direct jobs. This implies investing in production rather than retailing. This way, it is possible to sustain the investment.

Allocation of the same (fixed) amounts for different purposes

Another finding was that the Assemblies made a flat or uniform allocation to all PWDs in spite of the fact that the applicants needed the support for different purposes. For example, during the 2nd quarter of 2011, Assin North gave all 20 visually impaired applicants GHC300 each although the purposes for their requests differed. While some wanted the support for trading, others wanted it for fish-farming and or livestock production. This brings into question the allocation criteria used. In fact in Ho, a request was made for GHC1000 for fish farming and the Committee noted that the amount requested fell below the technically feasible sum of GHC35000. The purpose was changed to petty trading and GHC1000 was granted. This suggests that the GHC300 given for fish farming in Assin North was unrealistic.

In some cases, the same activities were indicated as reasons for requesting the support and yet the amounts given varied. For

example, in the Assin North's 2nd quarter of 2011 allocation, we found that allocations of GHC100, GHC200, GHC300, GHC500 and GHC600 were made to the beneficiaries for the same activity. Similar cases were recorded in the last quarter of 2012 when beneficiaries for farming were given between GH200 and GHC325. Those for trading were given between GHC200 and GHC250. Similar allocations were made in Assin North during the 3rd and 4th quarters of 2014. The same was reported for the April 2015 allocations where each beneficiary was allocated GHC400 for activities ranging from education (payment of bills) to trading, assistive devices and farming.

Unclear purpose yet allocation of different amounts

Although the guidelines specify that allocations should be made in line with the various objectives, the study found that some of the Assemblies did not strictly comply and made allocations to PWDs without stating the purpose. For example in the 1st Quarter of 2012, Assin North made allocations for assistive devices without indicating the kind of device. The allocations made ranged between GHC400, GHC500, GHC600 and GHC1000.

We also found that some allocations were made with 'no purpose' stated in Ho. Although by 2011, the guidelines had spelt out the purposes to include income generation activities, education, vocational training and apprenticeship, health assistive needs as well as organisational development, we found that allocations were done with no purpose in September 2012 and July 2012. Amounts allocated ranged between GHC100 and GHC800. The same was done in the last quarter of 2015. So what was the basis for the allocations then?

Similarly, in the 2nd quarter of 2013, Assin North made allocations ranging between GHC200 and GHC500 without any purpose indicated yet there were variations in the amounts allocated to PWDs. For example, out of the 72 beneficiaries, one person was allocated GHC500 and another allocated GHC400 without any clear basis.

In the view of the GFD and some high profile officers of the Assembly, this could affect the policy in two ways. The first is that the poverty reduction objective of the policy might not be achieved. The second is that this practice could be an avenue for corruption. One of them noted that:

The purposes for allocating the funds need to be stated so that we will be able to know if the fund is making the necessary impacts in that direction. It will also make it possible to hold fund managers and District Assemblies to account and help to eliminate corrupt practices (PWD, Ga West, March 2016).

How the money is allocated is questionable if you just state that it is for assistive devices. We need to know what kind of assistive devices and for whom. We must know the types of disabilities here so that we can determine those who need what kind of assistive devices (PWD, Adansi South).

We found a model in Ho that is worthy of emulation. Here, a request was made for GHC1400 in 2013 to purchase clutches, callipers and shoes for 10 people at GHC140 each. The Fund Management Committee approved and granted the request following cost confirmation from the Orthopaedic Hospital at Nsawam and the Committee ensured that the cheque was paid to the Hospital. Similarly, Ho specified the assistive devices in the 1st quarter of 2014 and 1st quarter of 2015 for purposes such as the replacement of artificial limb, purchase of special glasses for person with low vision, purchase of wheel chair, support for corrective surgery and physiotherapy. Given that PWDs who need the various types of assistive devices are known, the Ho model facilitates monitoring and evaluation.

Measures to improve implementation of the policy

Compilation of database of all PWDs in all the districts in Ghana

The study recommends that all MMDAs must undertake a complete survey to map out all PWDs within their jurisdictions. This mapping exercise must produce a database of all PWDs with their bio-information including the categories/forms of disability. Based on the forms of disability, the profile must present an analysis of the capacities and capabilities of each of them in terms of the kind of economic activities they can engage in. Data so gathered can then be used to direct the fund to support PWDs in more productive businesses that have the potential to yield multiplier effects on other PWDs. Those who cannot do anything due to the nature of their disability, could then be given direct cash transfers for survival. While this database can help increase the coverage of beneficiaries, PWDs will see themselves as being part of the community's development process and this can encourage them to participate actively in the process. In addition, the distribution of meagre amounts can be eliminated and more viable projects can be funded to attain impactful results.

Implementation of uniform format by all districts for allocating the DACF to PWDs

The National Commission on Persons with Disability needs to develop a uniform format for use by all Assemblies to record all allocations of the District Assembly Common Fund made to beneficiaries. This template can serve monitoring and evaluation purposes. It can also be used by the Disability Fund Management Committee to present annual reports to the general assembly. It will also aid in monitoring at the national level and to evaluate the utilisation of the fund. Issues of allocation without purpose can be addressed. To further yield positive results and improve transparency, the Assemblies must be given basic training of expected mode of recording fund allocation at the district level. Punitive measures should be instituted against non-compliant districts that misapply or

misdirect allocated funds. This way, the work of the Disability Fund Management Committee, officials of both the Department of Social Welfare and Community Development and the District Assembly will be made easier, less complicated and more transparent.

Provision of support in the form of kits, equipment or inputs rather than cash

In order to minimise the misapplication of funds by PWDs, the Assemblies together with their Departments of Social Welfare and Community Development might want to provide the support in the form of kits, equipment and inputs that are needed by the PWDs. The Assembly can procure inputs such as hair dryers, sewing machines, tables and chairs for the PWDs. PWDs who apply for funds to set up hairdressing salons can be given the hairdryers and the other inputs needed. Similarly, seamstresses and tailors can be given sewing machines. Those who receive this seed support must be made to make future contributions back to the district Disability Fund to make it more sustainable. Beneficiaries must also be made to employ other disabled persons as apprentices and train them to ensure the multiplier effect of the allocation on other PWDs.

Mobilisation of PWDs in cooperatives for support

District Assemblies and their Social Welfare and Community Development Departments might consider adopting the model we found in the Ho Municipality to provide support for PWDs. In the Ho model, PWDs had been mobilised into groups and supported to engage in the production of handicrafts for sale. This model has a number of benefits. Firstly, it makes for the efficient application of the funds even if they are not very substantial amounts. Secondly, such production centres and the groups can pool their energies to support one another. Thirdly, they can serve as centres for cost-effective apprenticeship training for other PWDs. Finally, these centres could provide opportunities for communal living, which can produce and strengthen social capital among PWDs.

Engagement of private consultants to undertake regular monitoring and evaluation

For the effective monitoring and evaluation of the impact of the DACF on PWDs and to understand how the District Assemblies are faring, the Assemblies need to engage private consultants to periodically undertake this exercise. While this approach can allow the Assembly to receive a more balanced account on their performance, it will also relieve the Assemblies of the burden of research capacity and make them concentrate on their core mandate of providing basic services to their citizens and poverty reduction efforts.

Mobilisation of resources through awareness creation by faith and religious groups about PWDs

Among the ways that District Assemblies can raise additional resources to support PWDs is to use faith-based and religious groups in the districts. Through the Social Welfare and Community Development Departments, the Assemblies could set up Joint Community Development Committees charged with the responsibility of creating awareness about disability, involvement of the entire community to support PWDs and seeing to the mobilisation of financial and other resources to support PWDs. Membership of these committees should be drawn from each of the various religious or faith-based groups in the district, the various categories of PWDs, and the traditional authority. Additionally, the Director of the Social Welfare and Community Development Department, Coordinating Directors of the Assemblies and three elected representatives from the General Assembly should serve on these committees. As a starter, all faith-based and religious groups should be encouraged to either make voluntary contributions or allocate to the welfare of PWDS a specified percentage of the funds they realise from their members' weekly contributions. This strategy could produce a number of benefits. The first is that it can change the negative perception that the society has about disability given that some even see disability as punishment for one's evil

doing in the past pre-birth life or present lifetime. Secondly, the involvement of faith-based groups in the life of PWDs can increase the society's acceptance of and love for PWDs. The third potential beneficial consequence is that it can strengthen the bond between abled and disabled persons and engender the constant flow of voluntary contributions, from within and outside the community, to the cause of PWDs in the districts.

Conclusion

Our study set out to explore Ghana's implementation of a policy of 2 percent of the District Assembly Common Fund meant for PWDs in four districts. The findings have shown that, through the improvement of their sources of livelihood along with providing assistive devices for many PWDs, the policy has the potential to contribute in many ways to empower PWDs economically. The implementation process is, however, fraught with many challenges. Findings from this study contribute to increase our understanding of the evidence that access to the fund by PWDs has been challenging. The issues confronting the implementation of this policy include inadequate compliance with the implementation guidelines, inconsistency in data organisation for the disbursement of the fund, limited coverage of beneficiaries and the inadequacy of amounts disbursed. The rest are allocation of the same amounts for different purposes, allocations made with no clear purposes stated and many of the PWDs requesting the money for petty trading that might not produce adequate multiplier effects.

In order to improve the implementation of this policy, the following policy steps might help: the need to compile database of all PWDs in all the districts in Ghana, the implementation of uniform format by all districts for allocating the DACF to PWDs, the provision of support in the form of kits, equipment or inputs rather than cash and the mobilisation of PWDs in cooperatives for support. In addition, District Assemblies must engage private consultants to undertake regular monitoring and evaluation of the implementation of this policy to enable them understand the performance of the policy. District Assemblies must also mobilise

additional resources through awareness creation with faith and religious groups about PWDs.

It must be noted that it is unlikely that the policy can contribute towards improving the lives of PWDs as long as the issues identified in this study remain unresolved. The policy impact will be inadequate unless the implementation arrangements are made effective. This study confirms a well-known problem in Ghana and in many poor countries, which has more to do with the implementation of policies than the inadequacy of policies. The implementation of policies should therefore be given the needed attention by all stakeholders. Once this is done, the aims of the DACF for PWDs which is to minimise poverty among PWDs especially those outside the formal employment sector might be achieved and the social image of PWDs can be enhanced as envisaged by the policy.

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Acculturation and integration: Language dynamics in the rural north-urban south mobility situation in Ghana

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Abstract

This paper examines the role acculturation plays in the acquisition of Akan as L2 among young female migrants of northern Ghana origin (*Kayayei*), in their host communities in the south. While the literature is replete with studies on the migration of *Kayayei* to urban markets in the south, many of these studies are concerned with either sociological factors or economic ones or even health. Very little research has focused on the linguistic dimension of rural-urban migration in Ghana. Under the basic assumptions of Schumann's Acculturation Model, a socio-psychological model of L2 learning, this paper employs mixed methods (structured interviews, participant observation) to investigate Akan as L2 acquisition among *Kayayei* in three highly multilingual urban markets in Ghana. The analysis of the data revealed that whereas social dominance patterns do not seem to affect acculturation among *Kayayei* in Akan acquisition and use in the selected urban markets, other social and psychological factors, e.g. size of immigrant group, residence, and length of period of stay/hope of return to home origin which tend to result in limited/full integration, do. The findings of this paper resonate with Hammer's (2017) finding about the relationship between sociocultural integration of migrants and the extent of their use of L2, i.e., that L2 learners with higher levels of acculturation tend to have higher levels of proficiency in the L2.

Keywords: language and migration, Ghana, Akan acquisition, acculturation, *Kayayei*

Introduction

Ghana is a highly multi-ethnic/multilingual community with varying degrees of sociolinguistic vitality (Anderson & Ansah, 2015; Ansah, 2014). According to Lewis et al (2017), there are over 80 languages in Ghana spoken by a population of about 27 million. Accra, the capital of Ghana has become the melting pot not only for all these ethnolinguistic groups in Ghana but also for other migrants from the West African sub-region and indeed, other parts

of the world.

The last twenty years have seen the southward movement of mostly young females from the northern parts of Ghana into the southern cities of Accra, Kumasi, Takoradi, and others for long-term, short-term, or seasonal stays, to engage in various activities of economic value, popular among which is the carrying of load (for a fee) around markets in these cities (Anamzoya, 2001). This has resulted in the naming of this group of migrants as *Kayayei* (head porters), the plural form of '*Kayayoo*', a compound word which is derived from two languages: Hausa and Ga. The first morpheme, '*kaya*' comes from the Hausa word for 'luggage'. The second morpheme, '*yoo/ye*' is the Ga word for 'female' (Coffie, 1992). Thus, a '*Kayayoo*' (plural -'*Kayayei*') is a female who carries luggage for a fee or for commercial purposes.

This paper focuses on *Kayayei* from three urban markets in Accra, the most urbanised and capital city of Ghana. The markets are: Agbogbloshie Market, Madina Market and Dome Market. The Madina community and its market were established in the late 1950s when a group of migrants were given land to settle (Quarcoop et al 1967, Ntewusu, 2005). The Agbogbloshie Market/community is a fairly recent settlement emerging in the late 1990s (Awumbilla et al, 2013). Located close to the Central Business District of Accra, it has become the destination point of many migrants in the city of Accra. The Agbogbloshie community and market have been merged in a way that makes separating the business and residential settlements difficult. Finally, the Dome market is located within Dome-Kwabanya also in the Greater Accra Region. Unlike the Madina and Agbogbloshie settlements, the Dome town is not a typical migrant community. The town itself is inhabited by indigenous people and permanent migrant residents. However, the outlying settlements have been dominated by migrants who come to work in the market. Most of the residents in Dome are traders but a small number are civil servants.

These markets were selected because they are popular for both wholesale and retail distribution of major staple foods in Ghana

which are brought in from different parts of Ghana and even beyond, e.g. Burkina Faso, Niger, Nigeria and Togo. Secondly, large migrant communities have sprung up around them, making them and their surrounding communities fertile sites for academic research, particularly, migration research. Not surprisingly, there have been many studies that have focused on these communities (Awumbilla et al, 2013; Ntewusu, 2005; Anamzoya, 2001). Nevertheless, these studies have not focused on the linguistic dimensions to migration. In other words, even though *Kayayei* have perceptively been studied by social scientists from different perspectives (Agarwal et al, 1997; Apt et al, 1992; Ardayfio-Schandorf & Kwafo-Akoto, 1990), there is very little research on the linguistic dimensions to migration in Ghana. This paper is a modest contribution to address this imbalance.

Migration has profound sociolinguistic consequences because it alters the demographic balance of both the sending and receiving communities (Kerswill 1994, 2006). For example, while migrants tend to form an ethnolinguistic minority which has to relate sociolinguistically to a new ‘host’ community on the one hand, on the other hand, the host community, which becomes transformed by the arrival of migrants, also has to relate to the migrant community. The relationship between language and identities (e.g. ethnic identity, social class, gender) is well documented in ethnolinguistics and sociolinguistics (Ansah & et al, 2017; Omoniyi & White, 2006; Antaki & Widdicombe, 1998).

It has been argued that in every case of migration, except where a homogeneous group of people moves to an isolated location, language or dialect contact ensues (Thomason & Kaufman, 1988; Trudgill, 1986, as cited in Kerswill, 2006, p.19), and cultural and linguistic integration become a vehicle for social cohesion in language contact situations. Research has shown a strong relationship between migration, integration and language. In other words, language is a central component of interaction, assimilation and integration of immigrants into their host societies (Esser, 2006, p.7). For instance, language constitutes both the medium of everyday communication and a resource, particularly in the context

of education and the labour market. Thus, there is a growing body of literature now which addresses different dimensions of the language and migration nexus.

Nevertheless, most of these studies focus on international migration (Capstick, 2011, p.8; Trajkovski & Loosemore, 2006). In the African context, Büscher et al (2013) have investigated the relationship between language and identity in migratory situations and found a high rate of self-reported bi/multilingualism among Lingala migrants in Goma in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) where L1 speakers of Lingala in Goma claimed to always complement their L1 with other languages that are considered necessary for survival in the city. The researchers' conclusion was that even though migrants maintain a minimum use of their home language in order to signal a national identity, in reality, they hardly use the L1 in the host community. This finding appears to be in direct contrast to what happens in other migratory contexts within Africa where migrants (attempt to) use a second language to either signal national identity or do cross-cultural business but where the L1 is mostly used in the host community outside work context (Vigouroux & Mfwene, 2008).

Vigouroux (2013) has examined the relationship between language practice and labour in the context of migration (among Lingala immigrants in Cape Town, South Africa) and found that language plays a role in facilitating migrants' access to the job market and that lack of competence in a particular language may prevent migrants from making use of their occupational knowledge and experience acquired at home or indeed, from applying for positions within the labour market of the host community. Thus, the significance of language for the immigrants' integration into host societies or their successful engagement in economic activities in the host societies cannot be overemphasised.

The concepts of integration and assimilation explain the cohesion and stability of the component parts of the social structure. Integration is a two-way process. On the one hand, migrants have to accept the norms and cultures of the host societies (receiving communities). On the other hand, these host communities have

to respect migrants' dignity and their distinct identity, and more importantly, to take them into account when formulating policies. In the second language learning literature, the desire to learn a second language or otherwise has been closely linked to the learners' desire to integrate or assimilate into the culture of the second language community. Similarly, it has also been argued that the migrants' desire to integrate into host communities will be indexed by their willingness to learn the language of the host communities. The level to which the migrant attains the language of the host community (L2) has been linked to the migrant's ability to acculturate, adjust or adapt their social psychological selves to the socio-cultural realities of the speakers of the language of their host community (Hammer, 2017; Chizzo, 2002; Schumann, 1978).

Acculturation

The term 'acculturation' has generally been used by social anthropologists to describe the social changes and cultural contacts between different communities (Barjesteh & Vaseghi, 2012). In other words, acculturation describes the dual process that affects the members of two or more cultural groups in contact as each adapts to the presence of the other (Berry 1997, cited in Barjesteh & Vaseghi, 2012).

In the Second Language Acquisition (SLA) literature, the acculturation theory/model is an attempt to identify the causal variable(s) in Second Language Acquisition within the context of learning without instruction, (usually in immigration conditions), and in the environment where the second language can be mastered without study and instruction. Schumann (1978) defines acculturation in second language learning as the social and psychological integration of the learner with the (culture of the) Target Language (TL) group. The theory typically models second language acquisition by members of ethnic minority, e.g. immigrants, migrant workers or children of such groups, in natural contexts of majority setting.

This model holds that the degree to which L2 learners acculturate to the culture of target-language group generally depends on such social and psychological factors as social dominance patterns,

enclosure, cultural similarity, attitude and motivation. One of the basic assumptions of this model is that L2 learners would acquire the Second Language (SL) only to the degree that they acculturate to the culture of the second language.

Of all the social and psychological factors identified by Schumann, social dominance is the most relevant to this paper. Schumann's Social Dominance theory is based on inter-group social hierarchy. According to Pratto et al (2006), human societies tend to organise as group-based social hierarchies in which at least one group dominates others. In other words, in inter-group relations, one or more groups are said to be dominant if they disproportionately enjoy greater positive social value and desirable material and symbolic resources, e.g. socio-political and economic power, including wealth, access to education, healthcare, quality food, good housing.

By default, social dominance tends to be reflected in language dominance -dominant cultures tend to have dominant languages in language-contact situations. This is because the languages of dominant groups tend to have more socio-economic and political capital/value. For instance, they tend to be recognised by governments as the languages of education, media and national communication or *lingua francas*. They also tend to receive sponsorship from government for development. Consequently, dominant languages tend to have high levels of vitality which further reinforce their dominance and facilitates their transformation into L2 for many people in the community (see Table 1 below for language dominance patterns in Ghana).

According to the acculturation model of second language learning, the only condition under which L2 learning thrives is when the culture of the second language learning group is equivalent (neither dominant nor subordinate) to that of the target language group. This is because both dominance and subordination (whether the second language learning group is dominant or subordinate to the target language group) will create a social distance between the two groups, causing resistance to learning the TL. With over eighty (80) ethnolinguistic groups spread across ten (10) in Ghana, social dominance is inevitable.

While some ethnolinguistic groups enjoy national dominance, others enjoy local or regional dominance. Again, the dominance is determined by a variety of factors including linguistic vitality and socio-political status. For instance, with an indigenous population of about 49% of Ghana's total population, recognition by government as a medium of education in many lower primary schools in Ghana, widespread use in privately-owned media (TV and radio), Akan enjoys a high level of vitality and has become a dominant national group. Even though no other ethnolinguistic group in Ghana enjoys the kind of dominance Akan does at the national level, there are other dominant language groups nonetheless, especially at the local or regional levels. For example, Dagbani has a sizeable number of both native speakers and L2 speakers in northern Ghana and is also the indigenous and dominant language in the third largest city of Ghana, Tamale. Further, it is government-sponsored and used as a medium of instruction in education in the Northern Region, the largest administrative region in Ghana. However, not all the language groups from which the *Kayayei* migrate to Accra have social dominance. In the light of the claim in the acculturation model regarding dominance patterns and second language acquisition, this paper will examine the relationship between social dominance patterns and Akan as L2 learning among *Kayayei* in Accra.

Predictably, many criticisms have been levelled against the acculturation model of L2 learning (Larson-Freeman, 2007; Ellis, 1994; Farhady, 1981). For instance, the fact that the model focuses on social and psychological determinants only, leaving out other equally important factors in L2 learning, e.g. cognitive factors, has been documented (Barjesteh & Vaseghi 2012). Again, Farhady (1981) bemoans the difficulty in operationally defining or experimentally testing the concept of acculturation.

In spite of these criticisms, this model has been applied/adopted by many researchers to the investigation of L2 acquisition, especially, in migration situations. For instance, Chizzo (2002) studied the effects of acculturation on English (ESL) learning by a young Arab migrant in the United States of America. Again, Hammer (2017) has investigated the relationship between the level

of integration among Polish migrants in the UK and their level of proficiency in English. Her study revealed that participants with higher levels of acculturation had higher levels of proficiency in English. Other social factors under acculturation that were found to affect the proficiency levels among participants included social network profile and length of residence.

In this paper, I re-examine some basic assumptions of Schumann's Acculturation Model, a socio-psychological model of L2 learning in the context of Akan learning and use by young female migrants (*Kayayei*) who live and work in three urban markets in Ghana. In the light of the assumptions of Schumann's acculturation model of second language learning and findings from previous studies, this paper interrogates the roles social dominance patterns play in the acculturation to and learning of Akan as L2 among *Kayayei* in the urban south of Ghana. Specifically, the paper examines whether or not migrants who are originally from sociolinguistic groups with high social dominance are more likely to acculturate to Akan, the dominant language of their host community than their counterparts from sociolinguistic groups with less vitality. Thus, this paper is guided by the following research questions:

- (1a) What role does social dominance patterns play among the *Kayayei* in learning and using Akan?
- (1b) Are migrants from sociolinguistic groups with high levels of vitality in northern Ghana more likely to acculturate to Akan than their counterparts from sociolinguistic groups with less vitality?
- (2a) What is the level of acculturation among the *Kayayei* in their host communities?
- (2b) How does the level of acculturation affect their acquisition and use of Akan, the dominant language in their host community?

Methods

Mixed methods (e.g. structured interviews, participant observation) were used to collect data for analysis. As participant observers, the researchers¹, visited the selected markets like regular customers going to do business in the markets. We first walked around the market to observe how other customers engaged the *Kayayei*. Each researcher then hired a *Kayayoo* and interacted with her. Subsequently, additional *Kayayei* were hired by each researcher under the pretext that he/she did not want to mix together certain items that had been bought in the same pan. Eventually, all the hired *Kayayei* were brought together at the carpark of the market in order to offload the groceries into a parked vehicle. Observations were made with regard to how the *Kayayei* interacted with one another. Notes were also taken on small note pads which also served as grocery list books.

With regard to the interviews, a total of one hundred and eighteen (118) young female migrants² were interviewed over a ten-day period (December 2014) across the three markets. The *Kayayei* who were spotted in the markets carrying head pans (the major tool for carrying goods in the markets) and looking for job opportunity were engaged, their consent sought and subsequently interviewed. They were paid as though they had been hired for the duration of the interview. The data were collected with the aid of a well-structured interview guide. The interviews were structured to elicit information on respondents' basic demographic characteristics, period of stay in Accra, residence in their host communities, etc. There were also questions on respondents' choice of language in their interactions with both customers (at work) and friends (both at work and outside of work).

¹ The data on which this paper is based were collected as part of a larger, collaborative research that was funded by the Office of Research, Innovation and Development (ORID), University of Ghana, Legon. The team consisted of two sociologists, two linguists and four graduate students serving as research assistants

² The age distribution of the *Kayayei* was 10-43 years. However, the majority (72%) were between the ages of 10 and 30 years.

The research instrument was the same for all respondents. Face-to-face interviews and observation were adopted as the procedure for collecting primary data from our respondents. Whereas the interviews allowed for the elicitation of specific information, observation enabled the researchers to ascertain for ourselves the languages spoken amongst the *Kayayei* in their line of work. The interviews were conducted largely (but not solely) in the Twi dialect of Akan and Mole-Dagbani languages. This is because whereas the Twi dialect of Akan appears to be the dominant language of these markets (Ansah et al 2017), majority of the *Kayayei* were from the Mole-Dagbani ethnolinguistic groups e.g. Dagomba, Mamprusi and Nanumba. All data collected through interviews were either audio-recorded or hand-written. The data were analysed using SPSS to run simple descriptive tests (frequencies and cross tabulations).

Findings

Social dominance and Akan acquisition

In all, 94% (111 out of 118) of the migrants self-reported as speaking one of eight (8) languages³ from northern Ghana, as their L1. Of this, 54.2% spoke Dagbani/Mampruli, 15.3% spoke Sissala, 8.5% spoke Tampilima, 7.6% spoke Gonja, 3.4% spoke Wale, 2.5% spoke Frafra/Dagaati, 1.7% spoke Hausa, and 0.8% spoke Kasena as their first language³. Figure 1. below represents the first languages of the *Kayayei* we studied across the three markets.

³ While admitting that it would have been best to use the convention/linguistic and politically correct terms for the se languages, we would rather not go into what that debate. Consequently, we have chosen to reproduce the exact information participants provided during the interview.

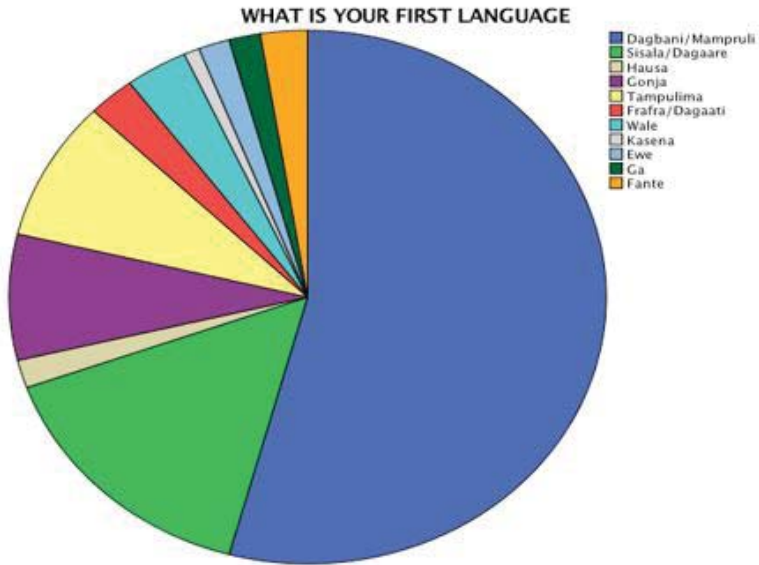


Figure 1: First language background of Kayayei

It is important to stress that these languages have different social dominance status compared to each other as seen in table 1 below. Whereas the dominance may be measured in terms of the sociolinguistic vitality of these languages (the number of native speakers) in some cases, (e.g. Frafra), it may also be measured in terms of their socio-political status, e.g., whether a language is government-sponsored, i.e. used in education, broadcasting, etc. (e.g. Kasena). Yet in other cases, social dominance is attributable to both sociolinguistic vitality and socio-political status, (e.g., Dagbani). Indeed, Dagbani, Frafra and Kasena are dominant languages in northern Ghana. They are spoken widely as L2 across northern Ghana. This notwithstanding, Akan, the main language in the markets in the south where the *Kayayei* migrate to, is a dominant language not only southern Ghana but indeed across the country and even beyond (Ansah, 2014). Table 1 below illustrates the social dominance patterns of *Kayayei* L1s in relation to Akan.

Table 1: Dominance patterns (Sociolinguistic vitality and sociopolitical status) of Kayayeɪ L1s and Akan

Akan: about 12,000,000 natives (49.1% Ghanaians); 44% L2 speakers; government-sponsored
Dagbani: 1,160,000 natives; government-sponsored
Frafra: 720,000 natives; not sponsored
Kasena: 250,000 natives; government-sponsored
Gonja: 230,000 natives; government-sponsored
Sissala: 180,000 natives; government-sponsored
Wala: 140,000 natives; not sponsored
Tampulima: 43,205 natives; not sponsored

Based on the assumptions of the social dominance argument of the acculturation model, one would expect that only *Kayayeɪ* from dominant ethnolinguistic backgrounds from the north, i.e. Dagbani, Frafra and Kasena, representing 57.5% of the 118 *Kayayeɪ*, would have the social proximity to acculturate to Akan because of the equivalence in dominance. However, the data showed on the one hand that 77% of the 118 participants self-reported as speaking Akan as a second language while 89% of them self-reported as using Twi/Akan⁴ to transact business with clients. This finding suggests that whichever way one looked at it, there is evidence of acculturation across board - there is evidence of acculturation by *Kayayeɪ* from non-dominant language groups. The remaining 11% self-reported as using English and gestures to communicate with clients because they had been in the city for barely a month and did not have enough Akan to transact business in it.

⁴ Twi is the most widely spoken dialect of Akan both as L1 and L2. Very often, many lay people have treated Twi and Akan as synonymous.

Further, in order to establish that the learning of Akan (if it occurs) takes place in their host communities, the *Kayayei* were asked to indicate whether they knew Akan before migrating to their current location. While 32% (step-wise migrants) responded in the affirmative, 61% responded in the negative, and 6.8 % made no comment. Participants who reported as speaking/using Akan were further asked to indicate where they learned Akan from. Again, while 8.2 % indicated that they learned it in Kumasi, 91.8% self-reported as learning it from Accra, where they presently reside. Both Table 2, which summarises the L2 spoken by the participants, and Figure 2, which is a cross tabulation of ethnolinguistic (L1) background and L2 spoken, corroborate the suggestion that among young female migrants (of northern origin) in urban markets in southern Ghana, social dominance patterns appear not to affect acculturation and L2 acquisition.

Table 2: L2 spoken by *Kayayei*

<i>Akan (Twi)</i>	91	77%
<i>English</i>	4	3.4%
<i>Tampulima</i>	2	1.7%
<i>Gonja</i>	1	0.8%
<i>No L2</i>	16	13.6%
No response	4	3.4%

Thus, in answering questions 1(a & b) - whether social dominance patterns play any role in learning and using Akan among the *Kayayei* and whether migrants from sociolinguistic groups with high level of vitality in northern Ghana are more likely to acculturate to Akan than their counterparts from sociolinguistic groups with less vitality, we may conclude thus: (a) Social dominance patterns appear not to influence acculturation (learning of Akan in the urban markets) among young female migrants of northern origin (*Kayayei*). (b) the sociolinguistic vitality of migrants' original ethnolinguistic group appears not to affect their

tendency to acculturate to Akan.

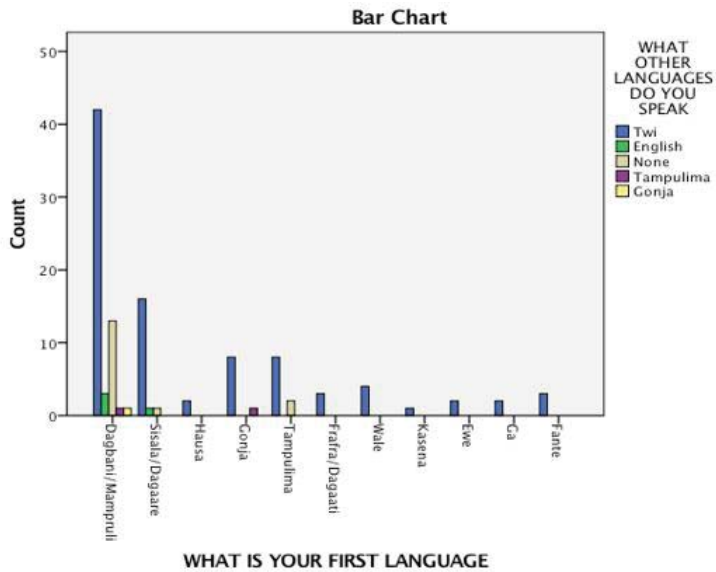


Figure 2: A cross tabulation of L1 background and L2 spoken

The level of acculturation and Akan acquisition and use

To answer questions 2 (a & b): what the level of acculturation among the *Kayayei* in their host communities is, and how the level of acculturation affects their acquisition and use of Akan, A number of factors were examined. First, the patterns of residence in relation to migrants' workplace - whether they were diffused and mingled with other community members in their host communities were studied.

In all, 52 (44%) of the 118 migrants self-reported as working at Agbogloboshie market, 31 (26%) at Madina market and 31 (26%) at the Dome market. Four (4) respondents did not indicate their place of work. Perhaps, this is because some of the migrants shuttle between market centres depending on need and job opportunities. Interestingly, 57 (48%), 30 (25%) and 31 (26%) of the migrants

reported as living in residences in and around Agbogbloshie, Madina and Dome markets respectively. This suggests that the Kayayei appear to form linguistic islands (typically, in groupings along ethnolinguistic lines) in their host communities (Ansah et al, 2017), i.e. they appear not to intermingle with the other members of their host communities, thereby limiting their contact with Akan to the domain of business. Thus, it may be concluded that there is a low level of acculturation among the *Kayayei* in their host communities, and that for many *Kayayei*, they only use Akan as a language for specific purposes.

With regard to the relationship between the level of acculturation and the acquisition and use of Akan among the *Kayayei*, the data analysis revealed that the level of acculturation affects L2 (Akan) acquisition among the *Kayayei*, i.e., *Kayayei* who have a high level of acculturation tended to acquire and use more Akan than those who have not. We identified the length of stay in the host community as one key factor that was closely connected to the level of acculturation. It appeared that the longer migrants have stayed in the host community, the more opportunity they have to acculturate, i.e., interact with the host community and therefore learn their language. The data showed that *Kayayei* who had stayed in Accra longer (8 years and above) appeared to have become totally acculturated and used only Akan, the dominant language of the market in their line of business. However, migrants who had lived in the host community for a short time (1-12 months) used more languages (including gestures, what they called sign language) in their line of business in the markets. See Figure 3 below.

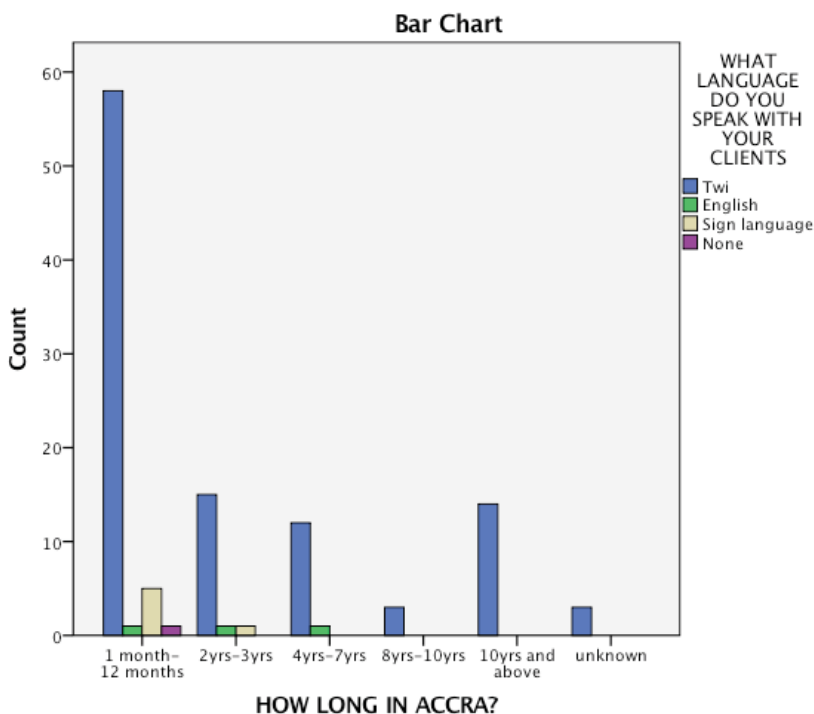


Figure 3: Length of stay and acculturation

It is important to mention that while many of these migrants claimed to speak Akan, it was found out that neophyte migrants (who had lived in their host communities for 1-12 months) who were the least acculturated knew only formulaic Akan for the purposes of transacting business in the markets. They could not hold any meaningful conversation outside their line of business (Ansah et al, 2017). Indeed, in certain instances, they would resort to code-switching or even the use of gestures in order to ease communication between them and their clients. However, migrants who had lived in their host communities longer were fluent and comfortable in using Akan both in their line of business and outside business.

Conclusion

This paper has re-examined some basic assumptions of Schumann's acculturation model, a socio-psychological model of L2 learning in the context of Akan as L2 acquisition among young female migrants of northern origin (*Kayayei*) in three highly multilingual markets in urban Ghana. Specifically, the paper focused on the role of social dominance patterns as well as the level of acculturation in Akan as L2 acquisition among *Kayayei* in the selected urban markets. The analysis of the data revealed that social dominance patterns do not seem to affect acculturation among *Kayayei* in Akan acquisition and use in the selected urban markets.

However, other social and psychological factors, (namely, size of immigrant group, residence which tends to result in limited/full integration, and length of period of stay/hope of return to home origin) appeared to affect Akan as L2 acquisition among the *Kayayei*. In other words, whereas the level of ethnolinguistic vitality or socio-political status of *Kayayei*'s L1 background does not appear to influence their willingness to learn and use Akan in their host communities, where they settled in the host communities appeared to affect their integration levels and ultimately their motivation to learn and use Akan.

For instance, on the one hand, *Kayayei* who lived within their host communities together with people from other ethnolinguistic communities, as well as those who have lived in Accra for more than 12 months reported as using Akan more and appeared to have more competence in Akan. On the other hand, *Kayayei* who settled among other migrants from their own ethnolinguistic backgrounds tended to form linguistic islands in the host communities. This results in limited integration into their host communities (acculturation), and it ultimately affects their acquisition and use of Akan. The findings of this paper resonate with Hammer's (2017) finding about the relationship between sociocultural integration of migrants and the extent of their use of L2.

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Corporate identity on the Web: The case of telecommunication companies in Ghana

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Abstract

The corporate website is an official communication medium for the construction of corporate identity. This study explores an important feature of corporate websites, the About Us section, within the framework of Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) to establish how corporate identities are constructed, the discursive strategies used in constructing those identities and how ideology, hegemony and power inform the corporate identities and the discursive strategies used in enacting the identities. Data for the study are from the websites of the four leading telecommunication service providers in Ghana. The study has established that a glocalised corporate identity that is informed by Eurocentric capitalist ideology is constructed by the companies. The discursive strategies employed in enacting identity include the inverted pyramid structure of the narratives, interdiscursivity and binarity. It was also found out that the ideology that underpins the identities constructed created a power fluidity that resulted in hegemonic paradox.

Keywords: corporate identity, Critical Discourse Analysis, glocalisation, ideology, telecommunication companies

Introduction

The interest in the study of identity, especially with regard to how identity is constructed through discourse, has become integral to critical inquiries and research in a number of disciplines in the arts and social sciences. The consequence of this myriad of multidisciplinary interest in identity is that quite a generous number of perspectives have been adopted in examining this phenomenon. Amongst these approaches is the discourse analytic approach. A discourse analytic approach to identity is fruitful in that, as Hall (1992) stresses, discourse is essentially a group of statements that

constitute a way of representing. An analysis of a discourse therefore offers an opportunity to examine how identity is constructed and enacted.

This study is interested in examining what has been referred to in the literature as corporate identity (Liu & Wu, 2015; Balmer, 2001; Stuart, 1999). Balmer (2001) has pointed to the multidisciplinary interest in the study of corporate identity. He argues that there is a ‘cross-fertilization taking place among various literatures’ (p. 249) when it comes to interest in the study of corporate identity. This cross-fertilisation is *consensus gentium*¹ of the fact that the use of multidisciplinary approaches in examining the phenomenon will result in a more holistic examination. This is vital because of the recognition that identity, in general, and corporate identity, in particular, are important to organisations. Corporate identity is important to organisations because, as defined by Balmer (2001), it is ‘the way in which an organisation’s identity is revealed through behaviour, communications as well as through symbolism to internal and external audiences’ (p. 241). A corporate identity is therefore the self-image which an organisation enacts itself for its audience. The corporate identity is vital for the existence of the organisation because the identity constructed defines the fundamental basis of the interaction that goes on between the corporate body and the individuals for which it exists and serves.

Corporate identity as a concept is viewed as ‘a multi-faceted conceptualisation of an organisation’s structure, roles and values’ (Evangelisti-Allori & Garzone, 2010, p.12). This implies that knowing an organisation, especially in terms of what it stands for stems from an understanding of its corporate identity. The entire organisation, particularly in terms of its agenda, is defined by its corporate identity. The corporate identity therefore provides a stable platform from which the organisation projects itself and relates to others and also allows others to relate to it. Identity is crucial because, as Moingeon and Ramanantsoa (1997) argue, ‘to know the identity of a person is to be able to identify him or her – to distinguish him or her from others and to recognise him or her

¹ A point of consensus and general acceptance

as a unique individual' (p. 283). As a corollary, in a competitive environment such as the telecommunication industry in Ghana, the need for the creation of unique corporate individuals becomes a matter of survival for the corporate entities involved. These unique corporate identities can be enacted discursively.

Another perspective on corporate identity is provided by Larçon and Reitter (1979), as cited in Balmer (2001). They present corporate identity as a 'set of interdependent characteristics of the organization that give it specificity, stability, and coherence' (p. 291). Encapsulated in this definition of corporate identity is the foregrounding of the functional dimension to corporate identity. This is to say that Larçon and Reitter's definition of identity is hinged on the function to which identity can be used to perform within the context of the business and corporate world. The implication of highlighting the functional dimension of corporate identity (its specificity, stability and coherence ascribing nature) is that in the discursive construction of identity, entities adopt narrative strategies that are anchored on these attributes. This line of reasoning as reflected in Larçon and Reitter's definition of corporate identity is hard to dispute. This is because their reasoning recognises that what is intrinsic to the concept of identity is the idea of stability. An identity must be stable so that it forms the foundation for predictable values as well as predictable action (Burke & Stets, 2009). In examining the discursive construction of identity in a given narrative therefore, one must pay critical attention to the nature of the image which is appropriated to create the stable identity for the entity involved.

Another important area that this study relates to is the nature of empirical studies that have been conducted on corporate identity. Liu and Wu (2015) have pointed out that the study of corporate identity has been facilitated by a number of genres, chiefly amongst these being promotional discourses within the corporate world. Other genres that have been used to bring the discourse analytic perspective to bear on corporate identity include financial reporting and organisational communication.

Although the genres mentioned so far are all expected, in the sense they are traditionally the genres associated with the corporate world, there have been some studies which examined this phenomenon in the light of more modern and recent genres. Amongst these is a study conducted by Coupland (2002). Coupland's study examined how a socially responsible identity is constituted on a corporate website. Examining corporate identity as it is enacted through web sites is a fertile endeavour, given the fact that websites are one of the most important points of contact between individuals and other entities and corporate organisations (Park & Reber, 2008).

Further, Coupland (2002) draws important parallels between such genres as mission statements and letters to shareholders on the one hand and corporate websites on the other. He notes that corporate websites are an important arena of official communication. The implication therefore is that corporate websites are a significant medium through which organisations officially provide information to targeted audiences. But perhaps, the most salient remark that Coupland makes within the context of this study is that corporate websites present a 'manufactured image available for interpretation' (p. 2). The image manufactured through the website is meant to construct a certain favourable identity for the organisation. One cannot but view the corporate website as an 'arena for the construction and display of identity' (p. 2). In consequence of this, it becomes important that we examine the strategies that are used in this medium to construct as well as enact corporate identities.

One feature that makes an examination of strategies for constructing corporate identities an intriguing and worthwhile endeavor is the fact that corporate websites have an audience with diverse interests. This diversity of interest means that corporate websites have come to be used as a medium for cultivating and maintaining relationships between corporate bodies and the public as a whole. A study by Park and Reber (2008) on Fortune 500 companies' use of websites revealed that these corporate bodies employ dialogic features in their websites to build as well as maintain relationships between the companies and their varied

audience. Enclosed in the dialogic features of the websites are web resource addresses that house varieties of information appealing to different sections of their large audiences. This feature is made possible by the nature of the medium itself – the website. Suffice it mention that websites do not constitute the single medium for the construction of corporate identity on the Web. Ruellea and Peverelli (2016) note in a study on the discursive construction of identity that social media sites have become an essential forum for the construction of group identity broadly and corporate identity in particular. This study is also interested in the corporate website, but its focus is not on the entirety of the resources found on websites. Rather, the study examines the *About Us* section of the websites. The focus here stems from the observation that this section of the websites is the platform that is used to present a narrative about the corporate body of interest. The interest therefore is to examine how this feature is used discursively to construct and enact an identity for the company. This focus will again allow for a critical look at the kinds of strategies that are used in constructing and enacting these corporate identities.

Exploring the niche

Research into the use of the web to construct identities discursively is not new. For instance, Liu and Wu (2015) have examined the discursive construction of corporate identity from a glocalisation perspective. Their study examined the discursive construction of corporate identity on the web by 10 energy companies operating in China and the US. The work revealed that the companies employed both global and local patterns in constructing their corporate identities. Coupland (2002) also used discourse analysis to examine the construction of a socially responsible corporate identity on the web. His study presents the argument that a socially responsible identity is constructed through a language of morality. For their part, Park and Reber (2008) undertook a study that looked at how corporate bodies use the Web to both establish and maintain relationships between themselves and the public. What these studies have all demonstrated is that new

insights into the construction of corporate identities can be gained when we investigate the websites of corporate bodies. This study intends to contribute to our understanding of corporate identities as they are constructed on the web. In spite of the fact that this study is similar to the studies that have been cited above, it is important to state clearly that it is in no way a replication. This study's focus is on the strategies that are used in constructing identities on the websites of corporate bodies and it also examines how ideology, hegemony and power inform the construction of corporate identity. Another justification for this study is that, a review of the literature on corporate identity construction on the web reveals the dearth of studies that have looked at this area in relation to companies in Ghana. The study therefore examines the construction of corporate identities by corporate bodies in Ghana on the web so as to draw attention to how the peculiarities of the socio-cultural environment in this part of the world may influence the corporate identities constructed.

Research questions

This study is guided by the following research questions:

1. What identities are constructed in the *About Us* section of corporate websites?
2. What strategies are used to discursively construct corporate identities in the *About Us* section of corporate websites?
3. How do ideology, hegemony and power inform the discursive construction of corporate identity?

Methodology

Data

The data for this study comprise the *About Us* sections extracted from four telecommunication companies operating in Ghana. The four companies are MTN Ghana, Vodafone Ghana, Millicom Ghana (Tigo) and Airtel Ghana. According to the information on Ghana's National Communications Authority's website, there are six (6) telecommunication companies operating

in Ghana as of February 2017. Out of this number, only two (2) were excluded from this study. Two criteria were used in selecting the companies from which data were derived for this study. The first criterion was network coverage. The study decided to cover those telecommunication companies that had nationwide coverage. This is because to establish how the socio-cultural context of Ghana impacted the corporate identities being constructed through these websites, it is important for the company to be aware that it is addressing the entirety of Ghana and this awareness would be guaranteed if a company has nationwide coverage. The second criterion used in deciding the data source was the market share of the telecommunication companies in terms of both voice and data subscription. A high number of subscribers means that the companies concerned have a large target audience to communicate with through their respective websites. This awareness again will have an influence on the kinds of identities that are constructed on the websites. Statistics from the National Communications Authority as of February 2017 indicate that for voice and data subscription, MTN had 51.65% and 57.26 % respectively; Vodafone's stood at 21.48% and 12.97% respectively; Tigo, 13.15% and 13.83% respectively; and Airtel 11.54% and 14.43% respectively. These four (4) telecommunication companies therefore accounted for close to 98% for both voice and data subscriptions in Ghana, with Expresso and Glo Mobile accounting for the remaining 2%. It was also revealed that both Expresso and Glo do not have nationwide coverage. In the light of the set criteria for selection and in consideration of the facts retrieved from the National Communications Authority's website, the decision was made to restrict the data sources to MTN, Vodafone, Airtel and Tigo.

Processing of data

The *About Us* section which is housed within the homepages of the websites of the companies mentioned above was extracted from the sites and saved as a word document. Each *About Us* is a narrative averaging 100 words in length. The narratives generally give a description of each company and outline their mission and

the vision statements. The data, now in Microsoft Word format were then used in the analysis. For MTN, Tigo and Vodafone, there were no hyperlinks embedded in the narratives. These were therefore straightforward when it came to converting them to the Word formats. However, for Airtel, it was realised that hyperlinks were embedded in the *About Us* section. These links served as deictic markers and directed visitors to specific information about the company. The researcher therefore had to retrieve the information embedded in each of these hyperlinks in so far as it relates to the narrative of the *About Us*.

Framework of analysis

The study employed a Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) framework. CDA, according to Wodak (1996), is an approach to discourse analysis that highlights the substantively linguistic and discursive nature of social relations of power in contemporary societies. At the locus of critical discourse analysis is what Wodak and Meyer (2008) term the critical impetus. This critical impetus is focused on bringing to light the interconnectedness of phenomena. The assumption is that within every form of discourse are embedded meanings and beliefs that do not overtly make themselves manifest and can only be revealed by the process of critical enquiry. The need to pay attention to the interconnectedness of phenomena within the framework of CDA is fed by a far more fundamental and wholly-accepted assumption – that language, which finds expression in discourse, is essentially social practice. This fundamental assumption becomes the premise for arguing that the social norms, beliefs and conventions of a given social structure shape the language in use and as such, the language in use cannot but reflect and express the beliefs, norms and conventions of that socio-cultural context and structure. This is not to say that language being a social practice means that it is a mere mirror of social structure. Wodak and Meyer (2008) point to the dialectical relationship between language (discourse) and society. Language does not just reflect and reinforce social conventions, it also serves as the axiom of social change and transformation.

The implication of this framework of analysis then is that it allows the study to transcend a mere description of the social practice – the *About Us* discursive practice – by providing a lens through which to examine how the identities are constructed and how the strategies used in constructing such identities express the symbiotic relationship between social structure and language as social practice. Further, van Dijk (2008) has argued that CDA moves beyond the relationship between discourse and social structure to evaluate general social representations of values, norms, attitudes, ideologies and knowledge. This makes CDA a suitable framework for examining the latent meanings that lie beneath identities that have been discursively constructed by the telecommunication companies in the narratives. For, it is argued that values, norms attitudes, ideologies and knowledge constitute the building blocks of any given identity. These then, when expressed in language will come to constitute the identity of the subject of a piece of discourse. A further advantage afforded by CDA is that it provides a framework for a study of the narratives (text) within context. This reflects the generally accepted notion of discourse as a social practice since social practice is action within a given context. To understand how identity is constructed in the text means to understand the social context of the narrative of the *About Us* section.

Two other concepts are woven into the fabric and the practice of CDA and have implications for this study. These are power and ideology. The concepts of power and ideology have dictated the choice of analytical framework. According to Wodak and Meyer (2008), critique, which arguably is the defining element of CDA, ‘regularly aims at revealing structures of power and unmasking ideologies’ (p. 8). Ideology is a ‘coherent and relatively stable set of beliefs or values’ (p. 8) whilst power, in the view of Weber (1980), cited in Wodak and Meyer (2008) is ‘the chance that an individual in a social relationship can achieve his or her own will even against the resistance of others’ (p. 28). From the explanations of both power and ideology given above, it can be argued that identity is a function of these two concepts in the sense that they define and constrain the kind of identity that is constructed by an individual, and in this

case, an entity. The set of stable beliefs and the estimation of what can be achieved in spite of resistance become the fulcrum of an identity. Within the context of this study therefore, CDA is used to investigate how power and ideology define the identity constructed by these telecommunication companies and how the identities give expression to power and ideology.

Common anchors of corporate identity of telecommunication companies in Ghana

Telecommunication companies in Ghana, which are at the center of the enquiry into corporate identities and how they are constructed, employ a common discursive strategy which serves as the structuring framework for the construction of their individual identities. This framework resembles an inverted pyramid. This inverted pyramid is not identical with the concept as found in journalistic writing where the focus is on the hierarchical arrangement of information to reflect relative importance (Thompson, White & Kitley, 2008). Rather, within this inverted pyramid on corporate websites, we find that the companies first construct a broad globalised/ international identity which effectively serves as the foundation, an important credibility fulcrum around which the more localised identities of the companies are then constructed. These localised identities arise from the immediate social structure within which the companies exist. This strategy results in the construction of a glocalised identity (Liu & Wu, 2015) which ties the company to the two cultural contexts within which it exists. What is at the apex of this strategy for identity construction is a narrative that indicates the extent to which the specific company is woven into the fabric of a larger and more global entity. For Vodafone-Ghana for instance, the opening of the discourse about the company makes clear that it is ‘an operating company of Vodafone Group Plc’ and goes on to add that this company exists in other places such as Europe, the Middle East, Africa, Asia Pacific and the United States.

The length to which the discourse goes to situate the entire identity of companies on their status as global entities indicates that there is premium in this image. By highlighting their presence

around the corners of the globe, the companies succeed in building an image of success not only in providing services to markets more advanced than the Ghanaian one but as having had an important hand in the creation of the First World conditions that exist in these places, the Global North. This finding departs from the conclusions made by Liu and Wu (2015) that multi-national corporations operating in China demonstrate ‘local preferences in ethical identity construction’ (p. 58). This strategy therefore implicitly implies that the presence of the company within the socio-economic context of Ghana will lead to the creation of such conditions in the country. This strategy – hinging and subsuming the corporate identity on a more global entity – appears to be a strong image marketing strategy given the argument that people in the developing world in general hold the view that international corporations and anything that originates in the West have greater worth and have greater credibility.

The strategy that has been adopted and as described above, can be envisioned to succeed in presenting a credible corporate identity to audiences. Seen in this light, the identity that is being constructed by Ghana’s major telecommunication companies is informed by a Eurocentric ideology. Within this Eurocentric ideology is a schema (van Dijk, 1998) of *first world-third world* which confers credibility on the First World and as such, allows the identity to be constructed around this schema which then facilitates the appropriation of its most important feature – credibility. Further, by constructing an identity that is rooted within this schema, the discourse allows itself to be shaped by this ideology. Therefore, it can be concluded that the discursive construction of corporate identity here is an instance of how discourse reproduces social domination and gives legitimacy to an established ideology instead of challenging and confronting that ideology (Wodak & Meyer, 2008; Billig, 2003).

In spite of the above arguments, the strategy adopted also has implications that may result in the construction of a negative self-image. By highlighting the foreign roots of a company, the narrative also underscores the position that the company has a

culturally and socially inorganic relationship with the society that is now its host. Highlighting the non-Ghanaian identity and hence the foreign identity of the companies creates a socially distal relationship between the companies and their immediate social structure. This approach to the construction of the corporate identities results, to an extent, in the construction of a self-image that foregrounds the profit-making aspect of these companies. This tangent to the narrative of self-constructed identity by the companies has the propensity of negating other attempts within the same narrative to conceal the here-for-profit aspect of the identities of these telecommunication companies.

A last word on the pyramidal structure, which is used as the strategy to shape the narrative about self, will focus on what corresponds to the tip of the pyramid. From the data, it is observed that the narrative concludes by tying the entity to a well-defined set of goals and objectives. These goals and objectives characterise the companies in that they legitimise their existence by ascribing to them a defined sense of purpose. The objectives that are projected here are those that position the company as the provider of what is needed by the consumer. This strategy allows the corporate body to shift the narrative from itself onto its target market, thereby creating the impression that it is its market, the individual consumer of its products, that is its focus. By simultaneously making itself peripheral and the consumer central in the discursive enactment of its own identity, it succeeds in concealing its true purpose as a profit-centred entity. It is also telling that this significant shift in the narrative occurs at the tip of the pyramid. This is because it helps create the impression that all that is contained within the body of the inverted pyramid is a rudimentary stage in an evolutionary process ending in the finished article at the tip of the inverted pyramid. In other words, the structure of the narratives helps create the impression that the entire narrative, prior to the point where the objectives have been stated, is a foundation for the flourish at the end. The real intent of the narrative is the positioning of the individual and his or her needs as the objective of the entity, the reason for which the entity exists. This therefore helps in constructing an identity of

individual centeredness for the company whilst hiding its overall objective as a profit-making company.

Heterogeneity of the corporate identity of Ghana's telecommunication companies

Despite the impression of homogeneity of identity that has so far been created as a result of the focus on the generality in terms of the discursive strategy for the construction of corporate identity, it will be eons from the truth to argue that the four (4) telecommunication companies in Ghana that are the focus of this investigation have a homogeneous identity. The analysis from this point onwards will therefore turn its focus to the individual corporate identities that have been constructed through the narratives on these companies' websites.

Regarding MTN, perhaps, the most important feature of its corporate identity and manner in which that identity is constructed is the enacting of a binarity that allows the company to create a horizontal relationship with Ghana, its market. This binarity allows the discourse to forge an equivalence between MTN and Ghana which in turn establishes the context for the company to position itself as an equal partner in 'Ghana's economic growth and development'. By creating this equivalence and horizontal relationship, the capitalist intentions that gave birth to and continually shape the actions of the company are masked. What is presented through the narrative is an entity whose interest is not profit-making but one whose focus is the facilitation of the development of Ghana. Even the provision of telecommunications services, which is the primary objective of the company and as such is at the centre of its identity, is subsumed within its constructed identity as a partner in development. This is what is clearly implied when the narrative points out that 'creating sustainable corporate social investment initiatives' is at the core of its mission. The narrative therefore succeeds in linking the corporate identity of the company to the wider narrative of development championed by different Ghanaian governments and international agencies whose true interests are not in the making of profits.

The strategy adopted therefore is interdiscursive – for as Bhatia (2010) points out, interdiscursivity essentially is the ‘function of appropriation of generic resources, primarily contextual in nature, focusing on specific relationships between and across discursive and professional practices as well as professional cultures’ (p. 33). What is found within the narrative is an appropriation of the discourse of development, specifically its lexicogrammar. This appropriation, it must be argued, is driven by an awareness of the greater visibility of the discourse of development as well as its positive themes within the socio-cultural context of Ghana. The interdiscursivity is therefore employed here to persuasively confer credibility on the identity being constructed for the company.

On the surface, it will therefore appear that the discourse in this instance is de-hegemonic since the relationship is horizontal. It is not. For, within the context of the binarity, the company presents itself as the agency that will bring about the economic development that the country needs. This essentially is an expression of power, the ability to bring about socio-economic transformation, which results in the construction of a hegemonic relationship between the company and Ghana, the social structure within which its identity is constructed. Hegemony, as Simon (1982) succinctly defines, is the ‘organisation of consent’ (p. 21). This consent allows for a dominance that does not rise out of force but out of ideology; where ideology is understood as ‘the process through which the dominant ideas within a given society reflect the interests of a ruling economic class’ (Stoddart, 2007, p. 192). Within the concept of globalisation which constitutes the overall context of the discourse, the economic ruling class is the West. It is the West that authors the narrative of development and creates the dialectic of First versus Third Worlds. This dialectic is at the core of the ideology that is appropriated within the discourse to create the hegemonic relationship between MTN-Ghana and its market, Ghana.

Therefore, in spite of the use of the principle of binarity to create equivalence between Ghana and MTN, the narrative still succeeds in ensuring that the identities of the two entities

are not dialectically opposed but complementary. It creates this complementary identity by means of a strong metaphor – the vehicle. Ghana in terms of physical identity is a space that is static, motionless and settled. MTN is projected as a vehicle full of motion, movement and an instrument of freedom. The vehicle goes where the individual owner drives it to. To the individual customers then, the identity of MTN is that of a company whose purpose is to afford subjects the means to do whatever it is they desire to undertake. By creating an intrinsic relationship between itself and agency, the company succeeds in making itself appealing to the individual. This image is further reinforced when the narrative states that the company is the vehicle that ferries customers to a ‘bold, new Digital World’. The company is therefore presented as a benevolent organisation that enhances the existence of the individual by introducing him/her to that which is critical to their self-improvement – ‘a new Digital World’. Although it is the case that the company enacts a servile identity for itself to create the impression that the individual customer is the one in the position of power, the reverse is what is achieved. This seeming paradox is what Wodak and Meyer (2008) draws attention to when they argue that ‘suggesting how happy people will become if they buy specific consumer products is also an exercise of power; marketing provides us with a large body of knowledge of powerful techniques’ (p. 9).

Another angle from which the principle of binarity is used to construct contrasting yet complementary identities to create a strong corporate identity for MTN is that of growth, especially in the economic sense. The narrative presents Ghana as an entity in need of economic growth. Ghana is therefore ascribed with an identity that positions her as young, evolving and in need of help. This general characterisation allows the individual who is the actual customer of MTN to see himself/herself as someone who needs growth and improvement. That help can only be provided by an entity that is economically mature. For this reason, MTN is presented as mature in the sense that it is ready to provide what is needed for the growth and development of Ghana. The narrative therefore presents the company as an accomplished company that is

itself the finished product, ready to help the country climb the ladder of economic growth and maturity. The contrasting identities created for the two entities – Ghana and MTN – by means of this approach do have implications in regard to the nature of the social distance between the company and Ghana, the market it is here addressing. By creating a stark difference between itself and Ghana when it comes to economic identity, the narrative succeeds in creating a distal relationship between MTN and Ghana, a distal relationship between itself on the one hand and the Ghanaian consumer on the other.

If MTN constructs an identity that presents it as a state, in the sense of a brand that needs no adjustments to fulfil its role as an equal partner in one sense and the more accomplished partner in another, then Vodafone, the next focus of the analysis, constructs an identity of an entity that is fluid and progressive. The following extracts from the data will be used to demonstrate how this dynamic identity is constructed in the narrative.

- a. We are the *second ranked* operator in mobile with *a huge potential* to take over the market.
- b. As a corporate body, we value our customers and *constantly build key relationships* with the private sector and government.

In extract (a), two phrases stand out as evidence of the fluid and progressive identity that the company constructs for itself through this narrative. ‘Second ranked’ is an admission of the view that the company still needs growth that will ensure that it rises to the highest position within the Ghanaian market. The second phrase, ‘a huge potential’ also expresses this identity of the progressive entity which is yet to peak in terms of its development. In extract (b), the same image is expressed in ‘constantly build key relationships’. A company that is young and growing and yet to peak is one that many Ghanaians are easily likely to associate with. This is because this narrative place the identity of the company within the larger

developmental narrative that constructs Ghana's identity as a country that is underdeveloped and yet full of potential and as such needs growth, progress and development. The construction of this identity in the narrative therefore creates a proximal relationship between Vodafone and Ghanaians since the two share a dyadic identity and a common aspiration.

The argument that the company, through the narrative, constructs an identity that shrinks the social distance between itself and its target market is further reinforced through an anthropomorphism that gives human agency to the company. The following extracts from the data will help make this point clearer.

- a. *We* are the second ranked operator in mobile telephony...
- b. As a corporate body, *we* value our customers...

By using the inclusive personal pronoun, *we* in this narrative, the company is no longer thought of as a passive and non-human entity, but one that is alive. The most important human attribute that the company acquires because of the anthropomorphism is that of speech. This allowed the company in the narrative to directly address the audience of the narrative in the first person. This ability to directly address the audience through speech creates an important social conduit that allows the company to relate to the individual at a personal level. It is this ability to relate at the personal level between the company and the individual, it is argued, that closes the social distance between the company and its target market.

A ubiquitous self is part of the corporate identity that is constructed by Vodafone through its narrative. This ubiquity is not in the sense of spatial ubiquity which is attained by means of a narrative that portrays the company as existing within every geographic space within Ghana; thereby highlighting the width and breadth of its network coverage but is rather constructed by a focus on the variety of telecommunications services the company provides. The narrative points out that the company is 'the only total communications solutions provider – mobile, fixed lines, internet,

voice and data'. This strategy used in constructing a ubiquitous identity helps the company draw attention to the products that it wants to market to its target customers so that a strong association is formed, in the minds of the audience, between the company and the products that it sells. Also, by highlighting the variety of the services and products that it has, the company succeeds in constructing a brand that is inclusive in the sense that it places itself in a position that ensures that it takes care of the varied needs of its customers. And perhaps most importantly, the image of the company as the provider of solutions to all sorts of telecommunications problems is vital in the sense that it serves as a powerful counter-balance to the company's identity as a progressive and growing entity. This counter-balancing allows the company to still maintain a credible identity (the mature identity) and at the same time not antagonise its market by constructing a narrative that suggests a vertical relationship between the company and its market.

Some of the observations that have been made about the strategies as well as the corporate identities of MTN and Vodafone hold true for both Airtel and Tigo (for instance, the glocalisation of corporate identity). But as would be expected of any instantiation of discourse that is promotional and situated within a competitive environment, the discovery of enacted identities that are unique should be viewed as a matter of course. In this light, the analysis proceeds to point out the identities that are unique to these two other companies and the strategies used in the construction of those corporate identities.

The point has been made within this discussion that the telecommunication companies employ language that deliberately masks the real purpose of their existence – money/profit; and have instead adopted an interdiscursive strategy that allows them to define themselves as partners in development. This is not the case with Tigo and to a varying degree, Airtel. The following phrases extracted from the data from Tigo's website helps in highlighting this difference in identity and the strategy employed to construct that identity.

*Emerging market, affordable, 30 million customers,
business model, affordable rates, affordability,
subscribers, 180 million people*

These phrases clearly point to the construction of a corporate identity that foregrounds profit which is more in tune with the capitalist ideology that births corporate entities including telecommunication companies in general. The discourse makes no attempt to hide the ‘for-profit identity’ of the company and as such situates the company’s own identity within the notion of the business model. This then allows the company to define the individuals and organisations for which it provides service to as *customers/subscribers* and the entire socio-cultural as well as economic context within which it exists and operates as an *emerging market* – a place for maximising profit. This explains why the company’s vision is to have ‘180 million people’ which will ensure that the company becomes ‘the *most consumed* digital service provider in urban areas’ For Airtel also, the focus is on enacting an identity that projects it as a commodity for consumption by ‘customers, top talents, businesses’.

From the analysis in the preceding paragraph, it is clear that the ‘for-profit identity’ constructed by these two companies, as well as the strategies used in constructing that identity, is informed not by the ideology which underpins the discourse of development and the First/Third Worlds schema. Rather, it is shaped by the capitalist ideology which emphasises profit maximisation. The capitalist ideology which underpins the discursive construction of corporate identity within the discourse gives rise to two seemingly opposed hegemonic situations. When the two telecommunication companies present themselves as products designed to conform to the needs of the customer, a hegemony in which the identity of the company is defined by the customer arises. In this situation, the customer is in the position of power. This is because the customer effectively is the individual defining the identity of the company in a way that aligns the company’s identity with that of the customer. On the other hand, and at another level, the companies have presented themselves as the providers of services, the owners of services

that the customers desire to consume. The companies in this case present themselves as possessing something that the consumer desires and can only have at the dictates of the company. In this case, the power that establishes the vertical relationship is in the hands of the company. This gives rise to a hegemony, which is the reverse of the hegemony established when the companies enact an identity in which they are a product. This state results in an oscillation of power. The oscillation of power has therefore resulted in the creation of a hegemonic paradox where both actors within the narrative assume dominant and dominated status.

The focus of this discussion has been to examine the discursive construction of corporate identity within the *About Us* section on the websites of the four leading telecommunication companies in Ghana. The specific concerns have been to (a) reveal what corporate identities are constructed (b) examine the strategies used in constructing the identities and (c) investigate the ways in which ideology, power and hegemony inform both the identities constructed and the discursive strategies used in constructing these identities. The analysis has established that the corporate identity constructed is a glocalised identity. This glocalised identity ensures that the companies are associated with the credibility provided by the West and yet retain an identity that allows them to be integrated into the social structure of its immediate context – Ghana. The analysis has also established that MTN and Vodafone enact a human-centred identity that masks their corporate mandates and instead, enacts a development-partner identity for them. Tigo and Airtel maintain a ‘for-profit identity’ instead. In terms of the discursive strategies used in constructing identity, the analysis has further revealed that the inverted pyramid structure of the narratives, interdiscursivity, binarity, as well as metaphor, are the strategies deployed by the four major telecommunication companies in Ghana. Additionally, the discussion has argued that Eurocentric ideology and the ideology of capitalism underpin the identities constructed as well as the discursive strategies used. These ideologies allow the fluidity of power – power in the discourse oscillating between the companies and the consumers of the discourse (Customers) – which results in

a hegemonic paradox.

Conclusion

This paper has, through the framework of CDA, examined the construction of corporate identity on the web. The specific objectives of the paper were to examine how the four (4) leading telecommunications companies in Ghana construct their corporate identities through the *About Us* section hosted within the websites of these companies, what corporate identities these companies construct as well as how ideology, power and hegemony influence the identities constructed through the *About Us* section. Interdiscursivity, binarity and metaphor were found to be the leading strategies for the construction of corporate identity. In terms the kinds of identities enacted, the study revealed that the companies constructed a glocal identity and that this glocal identity was informed by a First World – Third World schema. It was also revealed that although there were points of convergence with regard to the kinds of identities constructed by the companies, the companies' identities were largely heterogeneous.

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Agreement and syncretism in Esahie¹

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Abstract

This paper investigates the inflectional system of the nominal domain in Esahie (Central-Tano, Kwa, Niger-Congo) by focusing on *agreement* and *syncretism*. It offers a comprehensive description of these inflectional phenomena in an attempt to test and account for the strength of the inflectional system of an otherwise under-described language. It shows among other things that morpho-syntactic features including *number*, *person*, *animacy*, and *case*, all enter the Esahie agreement system in various contexts. Adopting Corbett's (2006) criteria for canonicity of agreement, this work demonstrates that, in Esahie, *DP-internal* agreement is more canonical than *anaphora* agreement. A general paucity of inflection marking is argued to account for the several instances of syncretism in Esahie. Furthermore, this work demonstrates that syncretism is pervasive in the pronominal system of Esahie. Collected largely through elicitation from native speakers, the Esahie data discussed in this work provides empirical support for the *irreducibility hypothesis* proposed by Stump (2016). Hence, on the theoretical level, this work argues for adopting a *paradigm-based* approach to inflectional morphology over a *morpheme-based* approach to inflectional morphology.

Keywords: Esahie, agreement, syncretism, inflectional morphology, paradigm

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Muabɔ̀ɛdwire

Sɔ krataa he te krataa bɔ ɔniana dumaa nwɔ dwire nu inflekhyin wɔ Esahie (Tano-Afiã, Kwa, Niger-Kongo) dwudwole nu bɔ ogyi *agriiment* ne *sinkritisim* sɔɔ. Krataa he botae yeɛ ole kye ɔsɔ inflekhyin nu anwosere wɔ Esahie dwudwole n'anu. Yiti, sɔ krataa he mma ngyeregyerenu paa bɔ ɔfa *agriiment* ne *sinkritisim* nwɔ. Ɔmaa ye nwɔ kye *number*, *person*, *animacy* ne *kase* nkoraati wura Esahie *agriiment* nu dwire wɔ nekaa sorɔŋo sorɔŋo. Se ye di Corbett (2006) si aa, yekɔ nwɔ kye, ɛwɔ Esahie dwudwo le nu ne, *DP*-nu *agriiment* nwɔ ye se tra *anafɔra* nu *agriiment*. Sɔ krataa he sã da yi adi kye sinkritism gyasile-nu-dwire sone wɔ Esahie nu. Esahie dwudwole nu mpenzeempenzeenu bɔ y'aye wɔ sɔ krataa he di Stump (2016) ye *irreducibility* adwenkyere ne nwɔ adanzeɛ. Se ɔba ye tiɔri nu aa, sɔ krataa he kyire hiale bɔ ohia kye ye kɔ nia *inflekhyinaa mɔfɔlogyi* nwɔ dwire wɔ *paradaim* atɛɛ so tra kye ye kɔ fa ye wɔ *mɔɔfim* atɛɛ so.

Nzemfua titiri: Esahie, *agriiment*, *sinkritisim*, *inflekhyinaa mɔfɔlogyi*, *paradaim*.

Introduction

This paper sets out to investigate and provide a comprehensive description of agreement and syncretism in Esahie, a minority language of Ghana² (and Cote d'Ivoire) which is highly understudied, especially in the domain of morphology³. By means of this description, we hope to test, and provide an account of, the strength of the inflectional system especially of the nominal domain in Esahie, hence we focus on an aspect which has been ignored in previous research (cf. *Grammatical properties/Sociolinguistics of Esahie* section), as an attempt to fill a gap in the literature.⁴

On the theoretical level, we will provide evidence in favor of a paradigm-based approach to inflectional morphology, in which paradigm structure is seen as crucial in defining a language's inflectional morphology, rather than a morpheme-based approach to inflectional morphology, in which paradigms are seen as

2 The 2013 speaker population statistics (i.e. the number of speakers per language) as provided by *Ethnologue* (www.ethnologue.com) for Ghana, reports 299,000 speakers for Nzema, 305,000 speakers for Esahie, 745,000 speakers for Gã, 1,160,000 speakers for Dagbani, 3,820,000 speakers for Ewe, and 9,100,000 speakers for Akan.

3 Apart from the work on the *noun class system* (Broohm 2017), the (inflectional) morphology of Esahie has not been explored at all.

4 In this paper we use the standard abbreviations listed in the Leipzig Glossing Rules <<https://www.eva.mpg.de/lingua/pdf/Glossing-Rules.pdf>> and additionally:

ANIM	Animate	AUG	Augmentative	CD	Clause-final determiner
CONJ	Conjunction	DP	Determiner phrase	HAB	Habitual aspect marker
IA	Item-and-Arrangement	INT	Intensifier	NOML	Nominalizing affix
RP	Resumptive pronoun	SVO	Subject Verb Object		

merely epiphenomena of morphotactics and consequently playing no significant role in the definition of a language's inflectional morphology.

The paper is structured as follows: we first present the theoretical framework that grounds this work, and introduce Stump's (2016) *irreducibility hypothesis*. Next, we provide a brief grammatical and sociolinguistic overview, in order to situate Esahie in its proper typological setting, and proceed to give an overview of previous research in morphology (morphological theory). We then introduce the notion of agreement, spell out what constitutes canonical agreement (Corbett 2006), and proceed to compare and contrast two types of agreement in Esahie with respect to canonicity: *DP-internal* agreement and *anaphora* agreement. Subsequently, we discuss syncretism and how it can be typologized from an explanatory perspective, focusing on two kinds of syncretisms that obtain in the nominal domain of Esahie.

Theoretical framework

Traditionally, the function of inflection, as opposed to derivation, has been widely viewed as a mechanism for encoding phrase-level properties and relations on its heads, which are (inflected) word forms (cf. Stump 2001). Structural relations such as government and agreement are sensitive to inflectional categories (such as number, person, case, gender) and its features (e.g., "plural", "first person", "accusative", "feminine") which are organized into inflectional paradigms.

In morphology, there are basically two theoretical approaches to inflectional paradigms: *morpheme-based* approaches⁵ in which paradigms are simply ways to visualize different word forms without any further theoretical relevance, and *paradigm-based* approaches in which inflectional morphology makes essential reference to the structure of paradigms. In the morpheme-based

⁵ In morpheme-based theories, the morpheme is seen as the basic unit for morphological analysis. The *Item-and-Arrangement* theory (Hockett, 1954) is one of such morpheme-based theories. An underlying assumption of this (concatenative) theory is that in an "ideal" morphological system, each morpheme contributes/bears one and only one meaning, and each meaning is associated with one and only one morpheme.

approach, the “grammatical and semantic content of an inflected word form is fully determined by its representation as a combination of morphemes” (Stump, 2016, p. 13). For example, the meaning of the Italian past tense (preterite) verb *ballavo* ‘I danced’ is conceived as sum of the meanings of the three morphemes the word can be segmented into, as shown in (1).

- (1) balla-v-o
 dance-PST-1SG
 “I danced.”

In this approach, which Stump (2001, p. 1-3) labels “lexical-incremental”, morphology is seen as word-internal syntax (Lieber, 1992, vii) and not as an autonomous component of grammar, distinct from syntax. This approach is able to adequately describe words formed by concatenative exponents like the ones in (1). However, our analysis will show that the approach does not provide an adequate account of other types of formal exponence. The lexical-incremental approach may be represented in the form of (2a) where the arrow means “determines”, hence: the three morphemes determine the grammatical and semantic properties expressed by the word *ballavo*, i.e., “I danced”.

- (2) a. *balla* ‘dance’ + *v* PST + *o* 1SG → “I danced.”
 b. “I danced.” → *balla-v-o*

In the paradigm-based approach (“inferential-realizational”, according to Stump’s [2001, p. 1-3] classification), on the contrary, the order of determination is reversed, as represented by (2b). In this approach, it is not the morphemes that determine the grammatical and semantic content of the word. Rather, it is the properties of the word which determine the formal exponents, or, as Stump (2001, p. 32) puts it, “a word’s association with a particular set

of morphosyntactic properties determines a sequence of rule applications defining that word's inflectional form." The location where this association takes place is the paradigm. The paradigm cell determines which formal exponents are necessary in order to express the properties: they may be concatenative morphemes as in (1), processes such as umlaut, ablaut or reduplication (as in [15b], cf. *DP-internal Agreement* section), or the assignment of specific tones. If two paradigm cells determine the same rules for formal exponence syncretism occurs (cf. *Syncretism* section).

This is where the *irreducibility hypotheses* originates from (cf. Stump 2016). "The irreducibility hypothesis entails that there are morphological significant generalizations that are, irreducibly, about whole word forms and their content (about paradigm cells)" (Stump, 2016, p. 27). Put differently, some generalizations or regularities in a language's inflectional system cannot be attributed to any specific aspect of the word form but only to paradigm structure, among which are certain instantiations of agreement, and syncretism. The match between syntax and morphology is apparent where elements within a syntactic domain show agreement. By contrast, syncretism is a reflection of a mismatch between syntax and morphology. In this sense, both phenomena, agreement and syncretism, are strongly connected and will be analysed here in order to provide evidence in favour of the paradigm-based approach.

Grammatical properties/Sociolinguistics of Esahie: State of the art

Esahie has been alternatively referred to as Asahyue, Sanvi, Sefwi, and Sehwi, and coded in *Ethnologue* as [ISO 639-3: sfw]. Esahie belongs to the Northern Bia family of the Central-Tano subgroup (Dolphyne & Dakubu, 1988). Esahie is genetically close to Aowin and Nzema and falls in the same language family as Anyi as shown in the Kwa language family tree in Figure 1 below.

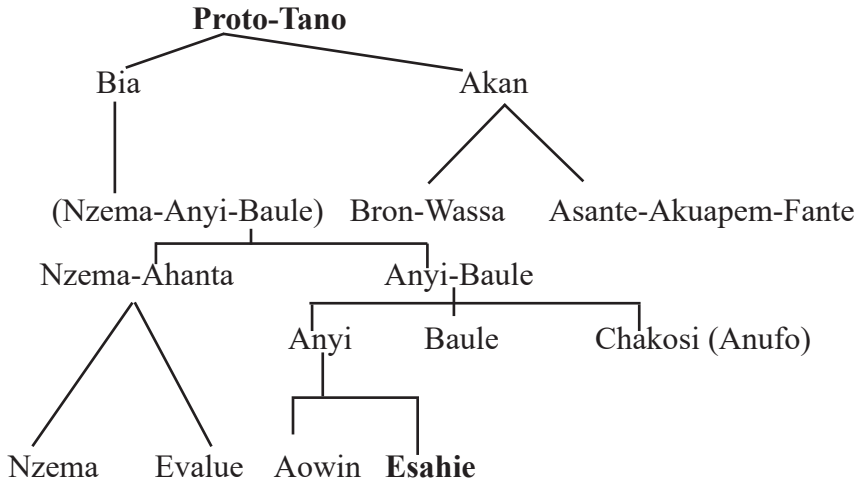


Figure 1: Kwa language family tree (Dolphyne & Dakubu, 1988, p. 56)

As shown in Figure 1, the first split under the Bia language group is between Nzema and Ahanta, on one side, and Anyi and Baule, on the other side. Thereafter, Anyi, Baule, and Chakosi split from each other. Anyi then also splits into Anyi (Aowin) and Esahie (Sehwi). There are two dialects of Esahie (Ntummy & Boafo, 2002). The *Anhwiaso* dialect, which is spoken in the extreme east of the area, that is, east of the River Subraw in towns like Sehwi-Anhwiaso, Sehwi-Bekwai, and Asawinso, and the *Wiawso* dialect, which is the major variety in use, in the wider area, westwards of the River Subraw. Data used in this work are mainly drawn from the latter variety.

In terms of phonological features, Frimpong (2009) points out that Esahie is a tonal language with two basic contrastive tones: a high tone (relatively high pitch) marked with an acute accent (´), and a low tone (relatively low pitch) marked with a grave accent (`), adding that tone plays both grammatical and lexical roles⁶.

6 In terms of grammatical roles, tone in Esahie may be employed to signal various T-A-M and polarity values

Syntactically, Esahie, like Akan, and indeed many other Kwa languages (Broohm, 2014; Aboh & Essegbey, 2010a), is a strictly SVO language. As a nominative-accusative language, the agent precedes the verb and the patient follows the verb in a simple transitive clause (see 3a). The subject of an intransitive clause also precedes the verb, as exemplified in (3b).

- (3) a. Salo po-le ataadeε ne.
 Salo[SBJ] wash-PST dress[OBJ] DEF
 “Salo washed the dress.”
- b. David la-le.
 David[SBJ] sleep-PST
 “David slept.”

Morphologically, it would be most suitable to categorize Esahie as typologically and predominantly isolating, in consonance with what has been observed generally for Kwa (Broohm, 2017; Aboh & Essegbey, 2010b). As such, one characteristic feature of Esahie is that it has a fairly limited inflectional morphology. Consequently, lexical DPs are not inflected for *case*, but only for number, as is seen in example (4).

- (4) a. Kyía⁷ a-hye e-bote.
 dog PFV-catch SG-rabbit
 “A dog has caught a rabbit.”
- b. E-bote a-hye kyía.
 SG-rabbit PFV-catch dog
 “A rabbit has caught a dog.”

⁷ *kyía* ‘dog’ is zero-marked in the singular.

It is instructive to mention, however, that the Esahie pronouns inflect for *case* (nominative, accusative). Notwithstanding the case-sensitivity exhibited by the pronominal system, Broohm (2017) observes that, relatively speaking, Esahie has suffered a stronger deal of morphosyntactic decay especially in its nominal inflection system, resulting in a general paucity of inflection marking. This observation is crucial because the two phenomena under investigation in this paper both involve inflection marking.

Agreement

Alternatively referred to as *concord*, agreement has been defined as “some systematic covariance between a semantic or formal property of one element and a formal property of another” (Steele, 1978, p. 610). Essentially, agreement has to do with the (morphological) matching of feature values between two separate elements within a certain syntactic domain.

While the element which triggers or determines the agreement has been referred to as the *controller*, the element whose form is determined by the agreement, on the other hand, has been referred to as the *target*, and the syntactic context in which agreement occurs has also been referred to as *domain* (Corbett 2003, p. 198). Agreement *features* refer to the specific attribute or property around which agreement revolves, i.e., the morphosyntactic property in which the agreeing elements covary. Case, as an agreement feature, could have several values including “nominative”, “accusative”, “dative”, “instrumental”, and so on, depending on the language. Figure 2 provides a summary of the relevant aspects of agreement, as discussed above.

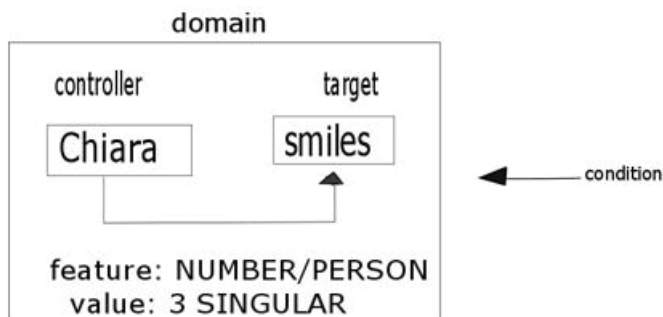


Figure 2: Agreement model (adapted from Corbett, 2006, p. 5)

Having introduced some of the relevant aspects of the phenomenon of agreement, we shall now proceed to illustrate it with examples from European languages. In the English example (5), the noun *file* functions as the controller whilst the demonstrative functions as the target. Similarly, in (6) the predicate *loves* (target) agrees with the subject *John* (controller) with respect to number and person. In the French and Italian examples below, there is *gender/number* agreement between the noun and definite article (in [7]) and *gender* agreement between the noun, indefinite article and modifying adjective (in [8]). The targets of (6-8) are characterized by concatenative morphology, the target in (5), *these*, is not: in (5) number is expressed by vowel and consonant alternations (*this* [ðɪs] SG vs. *these* [ði:z] PL; transcriptions for British English).

- (5) these file-s.
DEM.PL file-PL - Number Agreement (English)

“These files.”

- (6) John love-s candie-s.
John[SG] love-3SG candy-PL - Number/Person Agreement (English)

“John loves candies.”

- (7) l-a table.
 DEF-SG.F table(F)[SG] - Gender Agreement (French)

“The table.”

- (8) un-a bell-a casa.
 INDF-SG.F beautiful-SG.F house(F)[SG] - Gender/Number Agreement (Italian)

“A beautiful house.”

From the examples given above, we observe that the domain of agreement could be the DP (as in [5], [7], [8]) as well as a higher-order structure (e.g., the clause, as in [6]).

The gamut of syntactic relations that can be signalled via agreement morphology varies cross-linguistically. Since agreement varies within and across language(s), some patterns of agreement may be seen as epitomizing more “canonical” cases of agreement than others. Consequently, there has been a debate on whether or not anaphora relations (i.e., the determination of the form of anaphoric pronouns) also forms part of agreement. As Corbett (2003) notes, over the years, there has been a growing consensus in the literature that anaphora relations can be analysed in terms of agreement morphology. As a follow-up to this, Corbett (2006) proposes indicators that constitute the criteria for defining the relevant aspects of “canonical agreement” (i.e., prototypical cases of agreement), such that if any agreement pattern falls short of this, that pattern may be described as “non-canonical”. Corbett’s main criteria are summarised in Table 1.

Table 1: Selection of Corbett's canonicity criteria (Corbett, 2006, p. 8-27)

Controllers	Targets	Domains	Features	Conditions
1. Canonical controllers are present (rather than absent).	3. Canonical targets are bound (rather than free).	7. Canonical domains are asymmetric (rather than symmetric).	9. Canonical features are lexical (rather than non-lexical).	11. Features have no choice of feature value
2. Canonical controllers overtly express agreement features.	4. Canonical targets express agreement via inflectional marking (rather than via clitics or free forms).	8. Canonical domains are local (rather than non-local)	10. Canonical features having matching values (rather non-matching values).	
	5. Canonical targets obligatorily mark agreement.			
	6. Canonical targets agree with a single controller.			

In the next subsection we shall discuss agreement properties of Esahie.

Agreement in Esahie

As hinted earlier, Esahie, as an isolating language, is characterized by a limited system of inflection marking. A corollary of this is that, unlike languages such as Swahili and French, where verbs (overtly) agree in person and number with their subjects, in Esahie, and indeed many other Kwa languages, including Akan, Ga, Ewe, Nzema (Osam, 1993; Aboh & Essegbey, 2010b), subject-

predicate agreement is not morphologically overt. We illustrate this in the examples below.

- (9) a. Awo tè a-kɔlaa pa.
 Awo COP SG-child good
 “Awo is a good child.”
- b. Awo ne Blue tè ŋ-gɔlaa pa.
 Awo CONJ Blue COP PL-child good
 “Awo and Blue are good kids.”
- (10) a. Mè krò nitse-sũá-ɛ.
 1SG.SBJ love.HAB thing-learn-NOML
 “I love studying.”
- b. O krò nitse-sũá-ɛ.
 3SG.SBJ love.HAB thing-learn-NOML
 “S/he loves studying.”

We notice in (9-10) that in Esahie there is no overt realization of agreement between the verbs and the subjects in terms of *number* and *person*. In (9a, b) the copular verb does not change in form independently from the singular or plural feature of the subject. In (10a, b), we observe that the verb remains the same irrespective of the person value of the subject pronoun.

Turning to agreement within the DP, since Esahie is predominantly genderless⁸ and caseless⁹, the only relevant morphosyntactic feature that could be possibly examined is *number* (cf. *DP-internal Agreement in Number* section). However,

8 Although the *animacy* system in Kwa is in a way analogous to *gender* in Romance languages, Broohm (2017) shows that as a result of the non-existence of *animacy-based* agreement in Esahie, it would be wrong to classify Esahie as a “gender-sensitive” language.

9 *Case*, on the other hand, cannot be said to be non-existent in Esahie. Its realization, however, is restricted only to the pronominal system, where it is typically marked syntactically via its position in the sentence, rather than via overt morphological exponence. However, there is also morphological exponence, see Table 7

in anaphora agreement, as we shall see later, there are further agreement features to be considered (cf. *Number; person, animacy, and case agreement of anaphoric pronouns* section).

DP-internal agreement (in number)

As Ameka and Dakubu (2008) rightly observe, there is an interesting split as far as plural formation and nominal classes in Kwa are concerned. They observe that within the Tano group of languages (to which Esahie belongs), there is usually number concord. With specific reference to Esahie, Broohm (2017) confirms this observation and notes that the Esahie DP exhibits some level of agreement morphology as far as number (plural) marking is concerned.

Agreement marking in Esahie may occur between the noun and the head (demonstrative) determiner, as well as between the noun and other (nominal) modifiers within the DP such as adjectives, where the noun functions as the controller while the remaining elements function as targets. In the examples that follow, we shall see how this works.

- | | | | | | | |
|------|----|---------------|-----|----|-----------------------|--------|
| (11) | a. | Bakaa | hé | b. | M-makaa ¹⁰ | hé-mo |
| | | stick | DEM | | PL-stick | DEM-PL |
| | | “This stick.” | | | “These sticks.” | |

In example (11a, b), we observe that the complement noun and the head demonstrative agree in number, albeit using different markers. In the examples that follow, we shall attempt to introduce other modifiers (demonstratives) into the DP, to be able to better understand how number agreement works within the DP (Broohm, 2017, p. 20).

¹⁰ The initial consonant /b/ in *bakaa* assimilates totally with the plural prefix /m-/.

- (12) a. Boaen tenden hé. Singular (Ø-marked)
 sheep tall DEM
 “This tall sheep.”
- b. M-moaen n-denden hé-mə. Plural (nasal-marked)
 PL-sheep PL-tall DEM-PL
 “These tall sheep.”
- c. * M-moaen tenden hé.
 PL-sheep tall DEM
- (13) a. Bowie kwekwa~kwekwa hene. Singular (Ø-marked)
 bone dry~INT¹¹ DEM
 “That (very) dry bone.”
- b. M-mowie η-kwekwa~kwekwa hene-mə. Plural (nasal-marked)
 PL-bone PL-dry~INT DEM-PL
 “Those dry bones.”
- c. *M-mowie kwekwa~kwekwa hene.
 PL-bone dry~INT DEM
- (14) a. E-woo pri hé. Singular (vocal-marked)
 SG-snake big DEM
 “This big snake.”
- b. N-woo m-bri hé-mə. Plural (nasal-marked)
 PL-snake PL-big DEM-PL
 “These big snakes.”

¹¹ The reduplication has intensifier function (INT).

c.* N-woo pri hé.
 PL-snake big DEM

In the examples (12b, 13b, 14b), we observe agreement between the controller nouns and the target modifiers (i.e., adjectives and demonstratives). More importantly, we notice that whilst the demonstrative appears to invariably select the suffix *-mɔ* in the plural irrespective of the form of plural marker (in this case a nasal prefix *n-*) borne by the controller noun, the adjective (when marked for the plural), usually shares the same marker and marker distribution (i.e., prefix) with the controller noun. Note that the plural prefix /n/ is a homorganic nasal, and therefore it assimilates in place with the consonant that follows it. This accounts for the variation in the form of the marker in different phonetic contexts. The ungrammaticality of examples (12c, 13c, and 14c) points to the fact that agreement marking is obligatory in these contexts.

With respect to the discussion of morpheme-based versus paradigm-based approaches (cf. *Theoretical framework* section), in the examples (11-14), plural number agreement is always expressed by affixation, hence, the morphology can be accounted for in terms of morpheme-based morphology. In (15), however, things are different.

- (15) a. Sɔ sɔna tɛɛ he.¹²
 DEM person bad DEM
 “This bad person.”
- b. Sɔ menia tɛɛ~tɛɛ he-mɔ.
 DEM person(PL) bad~PL DEM-PL
 “These bad people.”

The sentence in (15b) is the plural version of (15a). In the controller noun *menia* “people” the plural feature is inherent to the lexeme:

¹² The double demonstrative strategy appears to increase the “specificity and givenness” of the modified entity.

plurality is expressed via suppletion. In the targets, the plural agreement feature is expressed in three different manners: overtly as the suffix *-mɔ* on the clause-final demonstrative *hemɔ*; via reduplication in the adjective *tɛtɛɛ*; not at all on the clause-initial demonstrative *sɔ*. Hence, in (15) a morpheme-based approach, which requires morphemes with plural meaning on the words in agreement, cannot adequately describe the Esahie agreement system.

Reduplication is particularly instructive in this sense: *tɛtɛɛ* contains two identical syllables. Thus, it is impossible to assign the meaning “plural” to the first and the meaning “bad” to second syllable (cf. [16a]) or vice-versa. Contrastingly, the paradigm-based approach is perfectly in line with the data: the paradigm cell in which the adjective *tɛɛ* “bad” is associated with the plural feature determines the application of the reduplication rule, consequently, (16b).

- (16) a. *tɛɛ* “plural”??? + *tɛɛ* “bad”??? → “bad (plural).”
 b. “bad (plural).” → *tɛɛ~tɛɛ*

In (17-20) we provide further examples for constructions in which the agreement feature is not always expressed by concatenative morphology. We begin with multiple adjectival targets in (17) and (18).

- (17) a. Brasua kɔkɔɛ kama ne.
 woman light.skinned good-looking DEF
 “The good-looking light-skinned woman.”
- b. M-mrasua ŋ-kɔkɔɛ kama~kama ne-mɔ.
 PL-woman PL-light.skinned PL~good-looking DEF-PL
 “The good-looking light-skinned women.”

- (18) a. Tena bre pri ne.
 cloth black big DEF
 ‘The big black cloth.’
- b. N-dena bre m-bri~m-bri ne-mɔ.
 PL-cloth black PL-PL~PL-big DEF-PL
 ‘The big black cloths.’
- c. N-dena bre m-bri-kua ne-mɔ.
 PL-cloth black PL-big-AUG DEF-PL
 ‘The large black cloths.’

In example (17b), the plurality feature is overtly expressed on the controller noun *brasua* ‘women’, as well as on all agreement targets (i.e. the determiner, the adjective of quality *kama* ‘good-looking’ [via reduplication], and the colour adjective *kɔkɔrɛ* ‘light-skinned’). Contrastingly, in example (18b, c), the plurality feature is overtly expressed on the controller noun, the determiner, and the size adjective *pri* ‘big’ (even redundantly by concatenative morphemes and reduplication, cf. [15, 16]), but not on the colour adjective *bre* ‘black’. As far as the overt expression of agreement feature on targets is concerned, colour adjectives in Esahie exhibit an ambivalent behaviour.

In (19) and (20), we consider the behaviour of quantifiers and numerals in agreement morphology, respectively.

- (19) a. M-mrandeɛ ɲ-dikaa~ɲ-dikaa pɛ̃.
 PL-gentleman PL-PL~PL-short many(PL)
 ‘Many short gentlemen’
- b. M-mrandeɛ n-den~n-den ne-mɔ-mu-nyɔ.
 PL-gentleman PL-PL~PL-tall DEF-PL-all-2
 ‘Both tall gentlemen.’

allow both RPs and gaps in certain positions (Klein, 2014). In this section, we examine NP resumption as instance of agreement in Esahie. Particularly, we consider NP resumption in two types of \bar{A} -operations: relativized clauses and focalized constructions. As we shall see, in both types of constructions, RPs agree with moved antecedent NPs. We begin by examining the co-referentiality exhibited between NPs and their modifying relative clauses.

Relative clauses

Relative clauses in Esahie typically have the structure in (21).

(21) a. [_{IP} Me-nwũ-ne [_{NP} brasua_i [_{CP} bɔ [_{IP} Aseda gya-le-ye_i nen.]]]]

1SG-see-PST woman REL Aseda marry-PST-3SG.ANIM.ACC CD

“I saw the woman whom Aseda married.”

b. [_{IP}[_{NP} Brasua_i [_{CP} bɔ [_{IP} o_i-gyale-le Aseda] ne] fi Boako.]

woman REL 3SG.ANIM.NOM-marry-PST Aseda CD be.from Boako

“The woman who married Aseda is from Boako.”

These examples exhibit the salient morphosyntactic properties of Esahie relative clauses. In (21a) the object of the verb *nwũ* “to see” is made up of an initial NP (the antecedent or the head) followed by an embedded clause. This NP + relative-clause structure functions as the object of the sentence. In (21b) the NP + relative-clause structure functions as the subject of the sentence. In either case, the antecedent NP occurs on the left periphery of the clause and is followed by the relative clause marker *bɔ*. The relative marker is then followed by a complement IP that is in turn followed by the clause-final determiner *nen*, which is the same as the definite determiner in Esahie.

Inside the complement IP in (21a) is the RP *ye* “him/her” which is co-referential with the head NP and agrees with

it in *animacy, number*,¹⁵ *person*, and *case*. The controller in this agreement relation is the head NP *brasua* “women”, the RP plays the role of target. The RP occupies the canonical position of the relativized element (i.e., the object position in this case). In (21b) it is the subject position in the relative clause that is relativized, and we see a subject RP *o-* “s/he” in the subject position in the complement clause. Functioning as the target, the resumptive pronoun, similarly, agrees with the controller (i.e, the antecedent head NP) in *animacy, number, person*, and *case*: {3SG, ANIM, NOM}. The domain of agreement is intra-sentential (within the clause).

Focalizations

Another \bar{A} -operation that licenses agreement via NP resumption is focalization. In Esahie, and indeed many other Kwa languages (Akan: Korsah, 2016; Yoruba: Adesola, 2010), gaps are disallowed in extraction sites in certain contexts. As Broohm (2014) observes, the RP is always obligatory when the argument in focus is ‘animate’ and ‘human’. In the example(s) below, we consider both subject and object resumption as a concomitant of an \bar{A} -operation of focalization.

Non-focused sentence

(22) a. Kofi fõã-ne Yaa.

Kofi chase-PAST Yaa

“Kofi chased out Yaa.”

15 Even in syncretic forms, if an antecedent singular NP is replaced with its syncretic plural counter part, the form of the RP changes to reflect the change in number (i.e. number agreement). There is a different pronoun for stone and stones. This is illustrated in the example below:

(X)	a.	<i>Nyɔboe_i he</i>	<i>bɔɔ</i>	<i>ɔ_i-tɔ-le</i>	<i>aseewo</i>	<i>nen.</i>
		stone	DEM REL	3SG.INANIM.NOM-fall-PST	ground	CD
		“This stone that fell on the ground.”				
	b.	<i>Nyɔboe_i he-mɔ</i>	<i>bɔɔ</i>	<i>be_i-tɔ-le</i>	<i>aseewo</i>	<i>nen.</i>
		stone	DEM-PL	REL 3PL.INANIM.NOM-fall-PST	ground	CD
		“These stones that fell on the ground.”				

Table 2: Canonicity of agreement in Esahie

Canonicity criteria	DP-internal agreement	Anaphora agreement
1. Controller is present.	√	√
2. Controller overtly expresses agreement features.	√	X
3. Expression of agreement on the target: <i>bound > free</i>	√	√
4. Expression of agreement on target: <i>inflectional marking (affix) > clitic > free word</i>	√	X
5. Target obligatorily marks agreement.	√	√
6. Target agrees with a single controller.	√	√
7. Domain is asymmetric.	√	√
8. Domain is local.	√	X
9. Feature is lexical (rather than non-lexical)	X	X
10. Features have matching values.	√	√
11. Features have no choice of feature value.	√	√

From the data discussed above, we notice that a DP-internal complement noun, such as *boaen* “sheep” in (12), functions as the controller of (number) agreement within the DP, whilst an (antecedent) referent NP, such as *Kofi/Yaa* in (22), functions as the controller of anaphora agreement. In both instances, the controller is present, implying that both are equally canonical (criterion 1). With respect to agreement within the DP, we also observe that whilst the controller noun typically expresses the number feature overtly via the plural prefix [m-] in *mmoaen* “sheep” as in (12b), on the contrary, in anaphora agreement, the controller, i.e. the referent NP, does not overtly express the relevant feature(s). DP-internal agreement is therefore more canonical (criterion 2).

In terms of the morphological distribution of the agreement marker(s) expressed on the targets, we notice that in both types

of agreement, agreement markers (i.e. *affixes* in DP-internal agreement and *clitics* in anaphora agreement) are bound rather than free (criterion 3). Given the canonicity ranking: *inflectional marking (affix) > clitic > free word* (cf. Corbett, 2003, p. 113), the expression of agreement in DP-internal agreement targets (affixes) is more canonical than expression of agreement in anaphora agreement targets (RP clitics) (criterion 4).

Relative to the obligatory expression of agreement on the target(s), we notice that while DP-internal modifiers (targets of DP-internal agreement) overtly express agreement, RP clitics (targets of anaphora agreement) covertly express the same, so either way, agreement is obligatorily expressed by/in the target, both are therefore equally canonical in this regard (criterion 5). Also, targets of both types of agreement agree with single controllers, an (antecedent) referent NP in the case of anaphora relations and a noun in the case of DP-internal agreement. The data discussed above shows no evidence of multiple controllers. They are at par in this regard (criterion 6).

The assumption of the distinctive roles of controllers and targets implies as an inherent asymmetric relation, rather than a balanced or symmetrical relation. The controllers (i.e. *antecedent referent NPs* and *DP-internal complement nouns*) determine the form of the targets (i.e. *RP clitics* and *DP-internal modifiers*) and the reverse is not possible (criterion 7). Domains: DP-internal agreement is local, since it is at the phrasal-level, while anaphora agreement is non-local since it is beyond the clause¹⁷. DP-internal agreement is therefore more canonical (criterion 8).

The features in both types of agreement are based mostly on formal assignment from outside rather than being purely lexical (with the exception of *animacy*) (criterion 9). Features in both types of agreement are therefore equally canonical. As expected, agreement features for types have matching values (criterion 10).

¹⁷ As Corbett (2006) explains, agreement at the phrasal/clausal level is local, whilst agreement beyond the clause is non-local.

Finally, we see no effect of the conditions on the choice of the values and, hence, no differences between DP-internal and anaphora agreement (criterion 11).

Given the facts summarised above, we conclude that in Esahie, DP-internal agreement (with respect to number) is more canonical than anaphora agreement. According to Corbett (p.c.), this conclusion fits perfectly into what is expected, “since the bonds within the DP are closer than any external ones”. Anaphora agreement, nonetheless, is more interesting because of the heterogeneity of the interacting features. In the light of the discussions provided above on the operation and canonicity of agreement in Esahie, we consider the inflectional system of the Esahie nominal domain as fairly robust.

Having evaluated the strength and robustness of the inflectional system of the nominal domain in Esahie against *agreement*, we now proceed to look at *syncretism* in the nominal domain, as a point of contrast, showing the paucity of inflection marking in the nominal domain of Esahie. The purpose of this contrast is to provide a comprehensive account of the inflection marking in the nominal domain of Esahie.

Syncretism

Syncretism raises a number of issues against the fundamental assumptions of morpheme-based approaches. With syncretism, “a single form serves two or more morpho-syntactic functions” (Baerman et al, 2005, p. 2). Put differently, two or more cells within a word’s paradigm are occupied by a single form. Syncretism arises where the morphology of a language fails to show a distinction that is made in the syntax.

Instances of syncretism are typically found in person/number marking in verbal paradigms and case marking in nominal paradigms. In Rumanian, for instance, verbs of all classes exhibit syncretism of the first person singular with the first person plural form in the imperfect tense, hence, number syncretism, see Table 3 below.

**Table 3: Imperfect paradigms of Rumanian verb forms
(Stump, 2001, p. 215)**

	<i>a cânta</i> “to sing”	<i>a auzi</i> “to hear”
1SG	<i>cântá-m</i> “I sing”	<i>auziá-m</i> “I hear”
2SG	<i>cântá-i</i> “you sing”	<i>auziá-i</i> “you hear”
3SG	<i>cântá</i> “she/it sings”	<i>auziá</i> “she/it hears”
1PL	<i>cântá-m</i> “we sing”	<i>auziá-m</i> “we hear”
2PL	<i>cântá-ți</i> “you sing”	<i>auziá-ți</i> “you hear”
3PL	<i>cântá-u</i> “they sing”	<i>auziá-u</i> “they hear”

As earlier stated, case systems also easily lend themselves to syncretism. In the Yir-Yoront (Pama-Nyungan Australian language) data provided below, while words such as “foot” or “leg” have distinct forms for *absolutive*, *ergative* and *dative* case, words such as “arm” and “armpit”, on the contrary, fail to make the expected distinction between ergative and dative. Words in the latter category are clearly instantiations of case syncretism, see Table 4.

Table 4: Case syncretism in Yir-Yoront (Alpher 1991, cited in Baerman, 2007, p. 1)

	“foot”	“leg”	“arm”	“armpit”
ABS	thaml	kumn	puth	ngamrr
ERG	thamarr	kumalh	putha	ngumurr
DAT	thamarriy	kuman	putha	ngumurr

It is instructive to mention at this point that the typology of syncretism may be approached from a formal and/or an explanatory perspective(s). From a formal perspective, syncretism may be typologized as being simple, nested or contrary (Baerman et. al, 2005, p. 13-16). For purposes of space and theoretical alignment, however, this paper approaches the subject only from an explanatory perspective. Adopting an explanatory approach to the typology of syncretism, Stump (2016) proposes three typologies of syncretism: *natural-class* syncretism, *directional* syncretism, and *morphomic* syncretism.

In *natural-class syncretism*, syncretic forms in a lexeme’s paradigm share a common feature and could be seen as constituting a natural-class. Instantiations of this kind of syncretism involve cells that have a common feature value (say, singular number). Let us consider the Italian example in Table 5.

Table 5: Present tense paradigms of the Italian verb *ballare* “dance”

	PRS.IND	PRS.SBJV
1SG	ballo	balli
2SG	balli	balli
3SG	balla	balli
1PL	balliamo	balliamo
2PL	ballate	balliate
3PL	ballano	ballino

The syncretic forms of Italian verbs as shown in the shaded cells in the table all share a common value in number (singular), tense (present) and mood (subjunctive), hence, they form a natural class. As Stump (2016) points out, instances of natural-class syncretism, as observed in the Italian verbal paradigm, may be explained either as being simply a reflection of a kind of impoverishment in the rules of exponence, resulting from the fact that the morphosyntactic distinction relevant for syntax and semantics are simply unavailable for realization by the language's (inflectional) morphology, or preferably, as cases of underspecification, in which case the syncretic forms may be seen as being underspecified for, e.g., person (as in Table 5).

In *directional syncretism*, there is a sort of “parasitic” relation, since one cell appears to rely on another for its realization. One member of such a relation may be seen as the determinant member of the syncretic pair while the other is seen as the dependent member. In the Italian example shown in Table 6, syncretism can be said to be directional because the third person plural form (the dependent, “parasite”) is parasitic to the third person singular form (the determinant).

Table 6: Present paradigm of *màgnare* “eat” in Italian, Verona dialect (Bondardo, 1972, p. 150)

	SG	PL
1	màgno	magnémo
2	màgni	magne
3	màgna	màgna

The Rumanian example shown in Table 3 is another example of a directional syncretism. In this case, the first person singular form is dependent on the first person plural form, historically marked in the Romance languages (and, generally, in the Indo-European languages) by the bilabial nasal /m/.

In addition to situations where syncretic forms constitute a coherent class of morphosyntactic properties (natural-class syncretism), and situations where pairs of syncretic forms exhibit a sort of directionality (directional syncretism), there are also instances of syncretism where the relation between pairs of syncretic forms may be seen as symmetrical, in that neither pair derives its exponence from the other pair. This type of syncretism has been called *morphomic* or *symmetrical* syncretism (Stump, 2016, p. 179).

The data on syncretism discussed above challenges the morpheme-based approach and provides further evidence for the paradigm-based approach presented in Section 2.0. In order to account for the ergative/dative syncretism in Yir-Yoront (Table 4) and the third person singular/plural syncretism in Italian (Verona dialect) (Table 6) paradigms are “irreducible” because they identify patterns in which two different paradigm cell license the same word forms. For the third person singular/plural syncretism in Italian, morpheme-based accounts would try to model the relationship between content and formal exponence in the following way (cf. [2a] in the *Theoretical framework* section):

- (23) a. *magnà* “eat” + \emptyset 3SG??? \rightarrow “he eats.”
 b. *magnà* “eat” + \emptyset 3PL??? \rightarrow “they eat.”

The assumption that there is a zero morpheme which has two different grammatical meanings (3SG vs. 3PL) is highly problematic because it violates the principle of morpheme-based approaches that the “grammatical and semantic content of an inflected word form is fully determined by its representation as a combination of morphemes”. Contrastingly, it is perfectly correct to assume that the two different paradigm cells are associated with the same inflected word form (cf. [2b] in the *Theoretical framework* section):

- (24) a. “he eats.” \rightarrow *magnà*
 b. “they eat.” \rightarrow *magnà*

Hence, paradigms play a crucial role in explaining the interaction between inflectional morphology and other modules of grammar.

Syncretism in Esahie

In this section, we examine various instances of syncretism in Esahie, and attempt to provide an analysis of these instances in the sense of Stump's (2016) typology. In particular, we consider instances of syncretism in the pronominal system (cf. *Syncretism in the Esahie pronominal system* section) as well as in some frozen nominal forms in Esahie (cf. *Number syncretism in nominal forms* section).

Syncretism in the Esahie pronominal system

In this section we limit our discussion to syncretism within the pronominal system of Esahie. We first examine case, animacy, and person syncretism, and then proceed study number syncretism.

Case and animacy syncretism in personal pronouns

Notwithstanding that lexical DPs are not marked for *case*, the Esahie pronominal system is sensitive to case. For the pronominal system, the relevant distinctions are made for nominative and accusative case. In Table 7 below, based on data collected in a fieldwork, we show the various case/animacy paradigms of the pronominal system. Cells with syncretic forms are shaded with the same grey-scale values for purposes of identification. From the table, we observe that there are several instances of syncretism in the pronominal system of Esahie. Chief among them are third person forms. First, in Esahie – unlike in Akan (Asante) (Korsah, 2016) – there is no animacy distinction in the third person paradigm. With respect to case, we notice that similarly, there is no distinction between first person nominative and accusative forms (neither in singular nor in plural number), second person plural nominative and accusative forms, as well as third person plural nominative and accusative forms: indeed, in none of the plural pronouns.

Table 7: Case and animacy syncretism in Esahie

	Nominative		Accusative	
	Singular	Plural	Singular	Plural
1	me	yε	me	yε
2	ε	εmɔ	wɔ	εmɔ
3 +ANIM	ɔ	bε	yε	bε
3 -ANIM	ɔ	bε	yε	bε

The syncretism in animacy, evidenced by the lack of distinction with respect to animacy across the entire third person paradigm, may be explained as instantiation of natural-class syncretism, in that each set of syncretic forms, say the set of third singular nominative forms, constitutes a coherent class of morphosyntactic properties, collectively identifiable by the feature {3SG, NOM}.

Alternatively, this syncretism may also be conveniently attributed to underspecification, or as resulting from an impoverishment in the inflectional system of Esahie by which morphosyntactic distinctions that are relevant for syntax and semantics are unavailable for realization.

The syncretism in case as observed in the form pairs of 1SG nominative/accusative form, 1PL nominative/accusative, 2PL nominative/accusative, and 3PL nominative/accusative may be typologized as representing directional syncretism, because there appears to be a sort of parasitic relation. König (2008) observes that in African languages with an accusative (as opposed to ergative) alignment, as is the situation in case-marking African languages, nominative is the unmarked or default case. She explains that the nominative case is unmarked on three levels - in morphology, function, and citation. It is morphologically unmarked because it is typically zero-marked, and functionally unmarked because it is used in a wider range of contexts.

Assuming along the lines of König (2008), we argue that the accusative forms of the each pair (in Table 7) rely on its nominative counterpart for its realization. This type of syncretism can arise as a corollary of a property mapping that causes the morphosyntactic property set: {1SG, ACC}, {1PL, ACC}, {2PL, ACC} and {3PL, ACC},

which are relevant for syntax and semantics to be realized by means of the morphology that is usual for realizing a contrasting property set: {1SG, NOM}, {1PL, NOM}, {2PL, NOM} and {3PL, NOM}, respectively.

The mapping of property that results in this kind of syncretism is illustrated in Table 8 below. We see here that the cells of the content paradigm, (the requirement of syntax) outnumber the cells in form paradigm (the morphological realizations).

Table 8: Property mapping in case syncretism

Content Paradigm	Paradigm Linkage	Form Paradigm
<ME, {1SG, NOM}>	→	<me, {1SG, NOM}>
<ME, {1SG, ACC}>	→	
<Yε, {1PL, NOM}>	→	<yε, {1PL, NOM}>
<Yε, {1PL, ACC}>	→	
<εMɔ, {2PL, NOM}>	→	<εmɔ, {2PL, NOM}>
<εMɔ, {2PL, ACC}>	→	
<Bε, {3PL, NOM}>	→	<bε, {3PL, NOM}>
<Bε, {3PL, ACC}>	→	

We now proceed to look at number syncretism still within the pronominal system. We analyse a different class of data – reflexive pronouns. The motivation for separating this section from the one earlier discussed is that, here, a different (explanatory) typology is proffered to account for this type of syncretism.

Number syncretism in reflexives

In this section, we consider Esahie reflexive pronouns. These reflexives are free pronouns formed via the concatenation of personal pronouns (such as ‘my/your’) and the form for “self” with a [[pronoun_{ACCUSATIVE}] + [“self”]_{REFLEXIVE}] morphological structure. Different from personal pronouns, reflexive pronouns present evidence of another kind of syncretism: number syncretism, limited to 2PL and 3PL forms, which show no distinction. Let us consider Table 9.

Table 9: Number syncretism in reflexive pronouns

Person	Singular	Plural
1	me-nwō “myself”	yε-nwō “ourselves”
2	wɔ-nwō “yourself”	bε-nwō “yourselves”
3	ye-nwō “him/her/itself”	bε-nwō “themselves”

The syncretism observed in the 2PL and 3PL reflexive forms could be described as an instantiation of morphomic syncretism, i.e., the relation between pairs of syncretic forms may be seen as symmetrical, in that neither pair derives its exponence from the other pair. None of the syncretized property sets, neither {2PL, REFL} nor {3PL, REFL}, has a stronger claim to the shared morphology than the other property set.

Number syncretism in nominal forms

Another instance of syncretism in Esahie is number syncretism in nominal forms. It appears that the semantic feature of animacy plays a crucial role in accounting for this instance of syncretism. While animate nouns tend to make distinctions in

number, inanimate ones are, by tendency, syncretic. This observation is in consonance with Alber and Rabanus' (2011) *animacy hierarchy hypothesis* according to which the more animated a category – the fewer the number of syncretisms. Osam (1996) proposes a similar hierarchy for Akan. This constraint explains why the examples in the shaded cells in Table 10, which all refer to inanimate reference objects, make no distinction in number, though required by syntax. It is instructive to point out that this shows the interplay between inflectional morphology and syntax-semantics.

Table 10: Number syncretism in Esahie nominal forms

Gloss	Singular	Plural
“building”	sua	sua
“stone”	nyɔboɛ	nyɔboɛ
“squirrel”	ebote	mmote
“thief”	awienie	awiefɔɛ
“rope”	yamaa	yamaa
“food”	alie	alie
“war”	koɛ	ahɔɛ
“day”	kyĩã	kyĩã
“farm”	boo	boo
“child”	akɔlaa	ɲɔlaa
“land”	asee	asee
“leaf”	nyaa	nyaa

This kind of syncretism could be simply attributed to a deficiency in the inflectional system of Esahie, such that the morphosyntactic distinctions relevant for syntax and semantics are simply unavailable for these lexemes. Alternatively, these instances of syncretism may be accounted for as natural-class syncretism involving underspecification. The syncretic forms may thus be seen as being underspecified for number, since their true value becomes clear only when they are used in context. We prefer the latter account, because the former cannot be sustained in the light

of the fact that, in principle, morphological number distinctions are available in the Esahie inflectional system.

From the two cases of syncretism that have been examined, it becomes clear that paradigms are crucial to inflectional morphology. The Esahie data, therefore, provides empirical support for the *irreducibility hypothesis* proposed by Stump (2016), which asserts that some morphologically significant generalizations irreducibly pertain to whole word forms and their content (paradigms), rather than to stems, affixes, morphotactics, or syntagmatic operations. In (25), we model syncretism in Esahie in the paradigm-based approach exactly as we did for the Italian dialect in (24):

- (25) a. “stone.” → *nyɔboe*
 b. “stones.” → *nyɔboe*

Conclusion

This work set out to investigate two inflectional issues in Esahie – *agreement* and *syncretism*. In this work, we have shown that features including *number*, *person*, *animacy*, and *case* all enter the Esahie agreement system in various contexts. Adopting Corbett’s (2006) criteria for canonicity of agreement, this work has shown that in Esahie, *DP-internal* agreement is more canonical than the various instances of *anaphora* agreement. Overall, the inflectional system of the nominal of Esahie could be described as fairly robust, relatively speaking. As we hope to have shown from our analyses of agreement and syncretism, the Esahie data provides further empirical support for Stump’s (2016) irreducibility hypothesis, which proposes that some morphologically significant generalizations irreducibly pertain to whole word forms and their paradigms, rather than to stems, affixes or morphotactics. Hence, on the theoretical level, although admitting that there are many other ways to account for these mappings, we believe that a paradigm-based approach is more adequate for modelling inflectional morphology than a morpheme-based approach.

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The governmentality of journalism education in Ghana

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Abstract

This study evaluates the role of two state regulatory regimes in shaping journalism education at a public university in Ghana. Focusing on the mandates of the National Council for Tertiary Education (NCTE) and the National Accreditation Board (NAB), the work demonstrates how these institutions monitor, evaluate and shape the curriculum of the undergraduate program in communication studies at the University of Cape Coast. Based on Foucault's concept of governmentality, the paper shows that the journalism program designed by both faculty and state regulatory regimes for the University of Cape Coast, as in many other universities in sub-Saharan Africa, is still primarily focused on media-centric, developmentalist and instrumentalist approaches, and pays little attention to critical theory and transcultural aesthetics. The fusion of these theoretical perspectives into the communication education curriculum is crucial for empowering students to unmask practices that perpetuate social inequality, dominance, power asymmetry and hegemony in society in order to transform it in positive ways.

Keywords: governmentality, journalism education, power, regimes of control, university

Introduction

This paper evaluates the role the state as the chief sponsor of higher education plays in shaping journalism education at the University of Cape Coast (UCC), Ghana, an institution established in 1962 by Ghana's first president Kwame Nkrumah. The work interrogates how the government of Ghana, through its regimes of control, exercises its authority over the means of production in the academy. The paper examines the political economy within which higher education works in the country, focusing on the mandates of two of its bodies: the National Council for Tertiary Education (NCTE)

and the National Accreditation Board (NAB). My overarching goal is to deconstruct how these systems of control monitor, evaluate, and shape the knowledge economy in communication education at UCC's Department of Communication Studies, birthed in 2010.

This work fills an important gap in the literature on governmentality studies in higher education, in general and journalism education, in particular, in sub-Saharan Africa. Existing works on the subject have focused on Anglo-American perspectives (Peters et al., 2009). For instance, Gorman's (2012) critical analysis of the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) examined the power relations shaping the directions and practices of higher education in twenty-first century America. The author observed that the existing milieu of accountability is primarily dominated by the neoliberal assumption that higher education works best when governed by market forces alone. For Gorman (2012), this assumption reduces higher education to a market-mediated private good and thus erodes the virtues of higher education as one that enables students to receive a broad education, contributes to knowledge for the public good and empowers students to become society's critics and social conscience.

Sadly, the subject of governmentality in Africa's journalism education is under-studied. Despite the burgeoning literature on the subject, little is known about the role governmental agencies play in regulating journalism education on the African continent as is exemplified in the current work by Goodman and Steyn's (2017) *Global Journalism Education in the 21st Century*. The volume contains reports of only two countries in Africa, namely South Africa and Egypt. There is, however, an expansive body of works on professionalism and professional identity (Aldridge & Evetts, 2003; Bossio, 2011). For instance, Diedong's (2008) newsroom study of two newspapers in Ghana has shown that Ghanaian journalists aim to be guided by their belief in their code of ethics, honesty, transparency, and cooperation with their media organization; a clear idea of human rights and commitment to uphold them; courage in the face of threats of the powerful; and personal convictions of right and wrong. Yet professional standards

in Africa, Ogundimu, Oyewo and Adegeke (2010) have observed, are low due to serious challenges confronting journalism education in the sub-region. These include lack of quality and rigor, poor sequencing of the curricula, and little focus on practical internships. I agree with Boafo (1988) that journalistic standards in sub-Saharan Africa can be improved if the conditions of service of journalists and the technical resources they work with are also improved. This means that journalists should be prepared to exhibit professional performance worthy of enhanced social recognition and prestige. Boafo (1988) also noted that African governments should promote quality journalism education by creating and maintaining a congenial political climate for the profession to thrive. Nonetheless, the crucial role African governments need to play to promote quality journalism education on the continent lacks serious scrutiny in the literature. This paper attempts to do so by evaluating how regulatory regimes that supervise higher education in Ghana shape the work of communication educators at the University of Cape Coast.

The rest of the paper is organized into six sections. The first succinctly discusses the idea of governmentality as the conceptual framework undergirding the work. Next I contextualize the study through an overview of journalism education in sub-Saharan Africa and survey the political economy of higher education in Ghana. The third strand takes a critical look at the political superstructure, composition and functions of Ghana's NTCE and NAB, and more important, how contemporary bureaucratization and corporatization give meaning to learning and the exercise of intellectual freedom in Ghana. Some scholars have argued that the grand narratives of economics have led to the crisis of the university and have compromised its self-critical nature (Bert, 2011). The fourth section explores how the systems of control and accountability supervised mainly by NAB have shaped the curriculum design of UCC's Bachelor of Arts degree in Communication Studies. I will demonstrate that the program is based on media-centric, instrumentalist and developmentalist philosophies that pay little attention to critical theory and aesthetics of transculturalism. The

fifth and sixth strands make recommendations and conclude the paper, focusing on the fusion of critical theories in the curricula of journalism education in Ghana and suggest the adoption of transcultural aesthetics as an approach to negotiate change and diversity in the field.

Governmentality as a concept

Governmentality is concerned with the art of governance, or more specifically, how people are made governable through the examination of their conduct (Chamberlain, 2014). The concept was developed by the French philosopher Michel Foucault to analyze the operation of governmental power, the techniques and practices by which it works and the rationalities and strategies invested in it (Foucault, 1997). Governmentality thus encourages the examination of how power in different groups, organizations and institutions operates subtly and on multiple levels to influence the behavior of a population (Miller & Rose, 2008). The goal of the examination, Foucault (1997) wrote, is to instill discipline and responsibility in the governed. This is often achieved through systems of technology and instrumentality, evaluation, monitoring and calculation. Governmentality is, therefore, a technology of power because it examines practices of governance based on their methods and objects of control (Gorman, 2012).

Although Foucault identified sovereignty as a vital form of power, his writings focused more on capillary power, or rather, the taken-for-granted manifestations of power in state institutions such as the prison, school and hospital. With Bentham's idea of the "Panopticon" as his guide, Foucault (1995) wrote in *Discipline and Punish*, in particular, that the primary function of institutions is to instill discipline, insist on conformity and alter behavior. He stressed that institutions act as panoptic apparatuses by performing two main tasks: (a) binary division and branding and (b) technologies of power. In the context of higher education, they control the granting of accreditation to both public and private tertiary institutions by creating a binary line between accredited colleges and non-accredited colleges. As I will show in this work, the mechanism

of differentiation ensures that regulatory bodies insist on quality assurance by checking poor standards of educational objectives. They also act as laboratories of power by acting as systems of ordered procedures for the production, regulation, distribution, circulation and operation of statements. Using legal and policy documents, sets of evaluation criteria and protocol of expectations, they punish and/or reward academic institutions that comply or do not comply with their instructions. As seats of authority guiding the functions of academic institutions and reporting them to government, all bodies under their supervision are in “a state of consciousness and permanent visibility that assures the automatic functioning of power” (Foucault, 1995, p. 201). The surveillance is totalizing in that it guarantees compliance even in the absence of it.

States thus are interested in the practices of tertiary institutions because they sponsor the programs of these institutions. Through agents, such as national accreditation boards, the state enables, supports, teaches, models and regulates higher education (Brandt, 1998, p. 166). Brandt argues that it is the sponsors who underwrite occasions of literacy learning and use, and therefore, it is they who set the terms for access to literacy. This power enables them to reward compliance. She writes, “Sponsors are a tangible reminder that literacy learning throughout history has always required permission, sanction, assistance [or] coercion” (p. 167). Obligations toward sponsors of literacy by universities run deep because the sponsors shape, and, to a large extent, affect what, why and how the academy ought to behave. For example, the government of Ghana, at the time of writing this paper, had placed a ban on employment in the nation’s public tertiary institutions in response to conditions by the International Monetary Fund (IMF), despite constant complaints by university management to lift the ban. Often state sponsors insist that the regulatory regimes check constantly the relationship between higher education and development (Bailey, 2014).

Overview of journalism education in Africa

Journalism education in Africa, like many professional programs, is heavily dependent on Western scholarship. The Norwegian scholar Skjerdal (2012) has argued that “an important issue for any journalism program in Africa is the question of whether journalism should be taught according to an established Western tradition, or in a distinct African way” (p. 24). For Skjerdal, communication education in Africa appears to be in conflict with Africa’s unique ontologies and epistemologies. This challenge may be attributed to the preference of many African scholars for Western models and the dearth of Afrocentric frameworks guiding communication education. Earlier works (e.g., Murphy & Scotton, 1987; Boafo, 1988) critique a seeming contradiction by African scholars who criticize Western education and yet have been unable to develop their own home-grown models. Murphy and Scotton (1987) noted that despite efforts by the African Council on Communication Education (ACCE), the only continental organization of communication educators founded in 1976, the training of African communication experts continues to face a number of challenges. There are arguments over the form of training and the non-African domination of the program. By the mid-70s, much of the debate focused on the lack of relevance for Africa’s development (Murphy & Scotton, 1987).

The training was fundamentally anchored on the idea of developmentalism. Ghana’s first president, Kwame Nkrumah, for example, was committed to developing the country through a robust press education. This, he felt, was needed to mobilize the new Ghana toward a singular developmental agenda. Formal journalism, Boafo (1988) wrote, started in February 1959 with the establishment of Ghana Institute of Journalism (GIJ) in 1959. Its mandate was two-fold: to provide formal and systematic training in journalism and to foster development of an independent cadre of journalists to play an active role in the emancipation of the African continent (Boafo, 1988). In view of this ideological agenda, GIJ and the then School of Communication Studies (SCS) designed curricula targeted at the Ghanaian élite. Courses included—and

still do—print and broadcast journalism, mass communication, communication research methods, public relations/advertising and social psychology. Today, besides these two training institutions, communication training in Ghana has experienced a massive explosion.

One thing, nonetheless, is certain about the curricula of some communication departments in Ghana. Ever since the overthrow of the first president, they appear not to be anchored on any “specially recognized state policy [that is] integrated into national development planning” (Boafo, 1988, p. 70). Boafo concluded that a new curriculum needed to be designed toward creating among journalists and teachers awareness and knowledge of the socio-cultural, economic and political realities of the rural environment. He urged scholars and curriculum designers to revise the content, style and structure of communication curricula in Ghana. Ansu-Kyeremeh’s (2014) latter mapping of trending approaches to communication theories and methods of inquiry in Ghana is one such response to the call. The work advocates a fusion of indigenous Africanist thought systems into theoretical and methodological formulations of communication scholarship.

Earlier attempts at heeding Boafo’s (1988) call, however, seem to have focused more on professionalism. This is why James (1990) urged colleagues not to blindly imitate the global culture of the journalistic profession because not all training from the West may be useful to the development of the African continent. He proposed that rather than simply teach print and broadcast journalism, more effort was required to contextualize these courses within development communication scholarship, which according to him, should be in touch with the grassroots. He also urged African communication educators to reconsider the quality of language education they give to their students. “An examination of the syllabuses of communication schools reveals that much of the language proficiency of journalists,” he regretted, “is invariably left to general studies programs and writing skills and allowed to blossom through the writing of news and feature articles for the schools’ newspapers or magazines which are issued

at predetermined intervals” (p. 10). In his view, language training must focus on the receptive and expressive skills of learners to improve their communicative competence. This competence, he stressed, is crucial for communication students to deal with problems of structure, style, register and tone. James (1990) proposed that journalism schools in Africa should encourage local language proficiency.

There also is the question of the quality of training on the continent. For instance, with the exception of South Africa the syllabi of eastern and southern Africa emphasize the acquisition of skills in print and broadcast journalism, advertising and public relations. Boafo and Wete’s (2002) sponsored work by the United Nations Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) shows that communication curricula across Africa face serious setbacks. These include a deficit of experienced faculty, low salaries and inadequacy of teaching and learning resources. In addition, many textbooks are written by foreigners, mostly from Europe and North America. The content of these publications, Boafo and Wete (2002) observed, bears little impact on the social, political, economic and cultural reality of many African countries. Concerns to rethink the nature of communication pedagogy in Africa are critical because they have implications for the quality of graduates the educational system trains. As the scholars noted, the central concern in curriculum development is the establishment of a consistent relationship between general goals, on the one hand, and specific objectives to guide teaching, on the other. The mode of evaluating content, the authors proposed, should be guided by the following questions: What is the purpose of knowledge? What should be the aim of communication training? What curriculum design will most effectively implement the fundamental goals of the profession and what content (knowledge) should all students learn?

Skjerdal (2012) recently proposed three models for teaching journalism that are rooted in the lived experiences of Africans. These are journalism for social change, communal journalism and journalism based on oral discourse. The first, he said, is used in Africa as a vehicle for national unity and a tool for breaking

with the colonial past. It is a kind of revolutionary or advocacy journalism. Because of its nation-building ethos, this type of journalism, he posited, “endorses journalistic interventionism and rejects an objectivist epistemology” (p. 643). The second model, communal journalism, is rooted in the community and its core values. To Skjerdal, training based on communal journalism recognises that journalists are members of the local community, and that their professional identity is second to their communal identity. This model presupposes a specific ontology of being which places public interest over individual interest. The third model, oral discourse journalism, derives its impetus from what tends to be the romanticization of indigenous African communication practices. These include oral tradition and folk culture (e.g., communal storytellers, musicians, poets and dancers). In addition to Skjerdal’s models, I propose, just as Ansu-Kyeremeh (2014), communication education should be strongly rooted in the ontologies, epistemologies and hermeneutics of African societies.

The political economy of higher education in Ghana

Higher education in Ghana is mainly financed by the Ministry of Education, the Ghana Education Trust Fund, funds generated internally by tertiary institutions and international donors (Somuah, 2008). Over the last decade, the sector has witnessed significant growth in various aspects. These include widening access and participation, expansion of academic facilities, a transformative policy environment and innovative funding approaches to increase the financial sustainability of institutions (Atuahene & Owusu-Ansah, 2013). According to Edu-Buandoh (2010), Ghanaian public universities “were all fashioned on the University of London structure,” and were made to focus “on liberal courses and a few technical and professional courses” (pp. 59-60). Edu-Buandoh’s (2010) thesis is that university education in Ghana began as a foreign intervention. What appears to be different in many public universities in Ghana today, than it was in the early years of a post-independent Ghana, she stressed, is the gradual shift from liberal programs to technical/vocational education. This new

focus required that the government make university education a lot more accessible.

The government of Ghana issued a white paper in 1991 to reform tertiary education by the University Rationalization Committee (URC). Following the recommendations of the URC and the subsequent government white paper on the report, three regulatory agencies were established. These are the National Council for Tertiary Education (NCTE), the National Accreditation Board (NAB) and the National Board for Professional and Technician Examinations (NABPTEX) (Atuahene & Owusu-Ansah, 2013). Universities in Ghana are empowered to set their own priorities for academic programming, curriculum content and structure, teaching philosophy and research agenda subject to requirements by the National Accreditation Board (NAB) and the National Council for Tertiary Education (NCTE). The type and nature of academic programs are, however, restricted by the law establishing the university, NCTE guidelines for program introduction and by accreditation (Gondwe & Walenkamp, 2011).

The next sections explore the panoptic role of the NCTE and NAB and go on to demonstrate how their supervisory powers shape the work of communication educators in Ghana.

The National Council for Tertiary Education of Ghana: Structure and mandate

The National Council for Tertiary Education (NCTE) is the brainchild of the Ministry of Education, the government body in charge of tertiary education in Ghana. It was established by Act 454 of 1993 of the Parliament of the Fourth Republic of Ghana. As the sector with a huge portfolio comprising policy, planning and monitoring, the ministry took prudent steps to empower the NCTE to “deal with specific issues such as salary problems or the use of internally generated funds” (Bailey, 2014, p. 6) for tertiary institutions in the country. According to Bailey (2014), the establishment was modeled on the UK University Grants’ Committee, a funding agency. She reports that the Council receives 95% of its funding from the government, all of which is allocated

to the Secretariat and the remaining 5% of its operational costs is covered by contributions from tertiary institutions. NCTE also has the responsibility to act as a “buffer” between the government and tertiary education institutions, especially in respect of academic freedom and autonomy of institutions. Table 1 specifies the core functions the Council performs in supervising the activities of funded public tertiary institutions under its watch.

Table 1: Core functions of the National Council for Tertiary Education

Regulatory	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Determines norms and standards for higher education institutions, the equivalence of qualifications between institutions, credit accumulation and transfer procedures. • Registers, licenses, and/or accredits new and existing public/private tertiary institutions. • Accredits new and/or existing academic programs of public and/or private institutions.
Distributive	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Determines budget allocations for tertiary institutions and/or the sector as a whole. • Distributes financial resources from the state to institutions, units or individuals in the sector. • Monitors expenditure at both institutional and sectorial levels.
Monitoring	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collects and analyzes system and institutional level data, including the development of performance indicators. • Tracks developments and trends in the system as well as performance quality of institutions against the norms and standards set for the sector or against stated national goals or system targets.
Advisory	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provides expert and research based advice to policymakers and other tertiary education leadership in government and institutions, either proactively or reactively in response to specific requests. • Comments on or formulates draft policies on behalf of the ministry responsible for tertiary education. • Provides advice/ recommendations to the relevant body on the licensing and accreditation of tertiary institutions and that of their programs.
Coordination	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enables interactions between key stakeholders and policy spheres. • Promotes the objectives of tertiary institutions or the sector to the market and within government itself. • Plans strategically the financing of tertiary education. • Develops data and knowledge flows between different system-level governance roles.

Source: Bailey (2014)

As will later be shown, norms, standards, and national goals formulated by the Council are too general and insufficiently context-specific. This notwithstanding, it is important to note that the Council grapples with funding for conducting research, and has difficulties sometimes in asserting its autonomy and independence (freedom from political interference by the state) (Bailey, 2014, p. 26).

The authority of the National Accreditation Board

The National Accreditation Board of Ghana was established by the Provisional National Defense Council Law (PNDC) 317 of 1993. It was later replaced by the National Accreditation Board Act 744 of 2007 (Bailey, 2014). The mission of the Board, according to its official website, is to provide the best basis for establishing, measuring and improving standards in tertiary education in Ghana. To this end, the Board seeks:

- To provide a systematic and rational basis for establishing, monitoring and improving standards in tertiary education through developing benchmarks for accreditation and quality assurance and ensuring proper operations in tertiary institutions.
- To facilitate the development of accredited public and private tertiary institutions toward the attainment of Presidential Charter.
- To determine the equivalences of both local and foreign tertiary and professional qualifications.

The Board also ensures that its operations for service delivery are guided by the values of professionalism, accountability, responsiveness, integrity, and transparency. For example, in awarding accreditation to a new institution, the Board insists that any person or organization applying to establish a tertiary institution shall be required to follow the procedures set out in its policy documents in order to facilitate the process of accreditation

and the operation of the institution. It also insists that the applicant institution shall first seek and obtain affiliation to operate under the supervision of a recognized mentoring institution which shall award its certificates before accreditation is granted. Table 2 shows three specific requirements set up by NAB for granting accreditation to an applicant institution. These cover authorization, institutional accreditation, and program accreditation.

Table 2: Requirements for tertiary accreditation by the National Accreditation Board

Authorization	<p>A letter of application to the National Accreditation Board (NAB).</p> <p>Response from NAB including definition of the various categories of tertiary educational institutions, within two weeks of receipt of application.</p> <p>Choice of name of institution based on 2 above shall be in consultation with NAB.</p> <p>Registration of the institution at the Registrar General's Department.</p> <p>Purchase, completion and submission of Authorization Questionnaire (NAB/INFO A.1).</p> <p>Payment of an appropriate fee.</p> <p>Institutional visit by the relevant NAB Committee where facilities are in place at the institution, within 30 days after receipt of payment.</p> <p>Decision by NAB.</p> <p>Communication of decision within 30 days of institutional visit.</p> <p>Application for review of decision, if any, within 30 days of communication.</p> <p>Communication of Board's decision on the review application within 14 days after the next immediate Accreditation Committee meeting acting on behalf of the Board.</p>
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<p>Institutional accreditation</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proof of affiliation to be provided before further processing for accreditation. • Purchase, completion, and submission of institutional accreditation questionnaire (NAB/INFO A.2) • Payment of an appropriate fee. • Institutional visit by the relevant NAB Committee within 30 days after receipt of an application the Board considers complete • Visit by NAB experts on physical facilities, library and finance within 30 days after the Committee’s visit. • Communication of NAB’s decision within 90 days of the Committee’s visit and proof of affiliation (<i>See NAB Guidelines for Affiliation</i>). • Application for review, if any, within 30 days of communication.
<p>Program accreditation</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Purchase, completion and submission of relevant NAB questionnaire on program accreditation (NAB/INFO A.3). • Payment of an appropriate fee. • Composition of program accreditation panel by the Board and assessment of program(s) offered/to be offered within 60 days on receipt of an application the Board considers complete including payment of an application fee. • Submission of panel assessment reports to NAB within 14 days of panel visit. • Submission of panel report(s) to the institution for comments within 14 days upon receipt of report(s). • Response to panel report(s) by the institution to NAB. • Reaction of panel chairperson to the comments on the report by the institution within 30 days on receipt of institution’s comments. • Recommendation of accreditation committee to the Board at its next immediate meeting upon receipt of panel chairperson’s reaction to institution’s comments. • Decision by Board on the recommendation of the accreditation committee at the next immediate Board meeting. • Communication of decision within 14 days after the Board’s decision. • Application for review, if any, within 30 days of communication of the Board’s decision.

Source: National Accreditation Board (2011)

In ensuring that all accredited institutions meet normative standards set up by the Board, NAB undertakes a review of the institutions at least once every five years. This requirement, according to the Board, provides an opportunity for both the institution and the Board to evaluate the performance of a particular institution with respect to the satisfaction of threshold quality standards and growth. The Board does so by ensuring that an accredited institution submits a self-evaluation report detailing the institution's vision and mission statements, organization and governing bodies, academic and non-academic staff, number of colleges/faculties/schools, programs of study and program details. For example, with respect to program details, the Board requires that an institution seeking reaccreditation must submit the following items:

- Program accreditation and re-accreditation history;
- Students' enrolment history (for the past five (5) years or since last accreditation);
- Number of academic staff (emphasizing full-time, part-time and visiting by ranks for the past five (5) years or since last accreditation);
- Different sessions/mode for the running of programs (e.g., evening sessions, weekend sessions, distance learning option, sandwich sessions, regular sessions).

Faculty evaluation takes into account the mode of employment (full/part time), highest qualification and year obtained, area of specialization, rank (tutor/lecturer/senior lecturer/associate professor/professor) as well as years of experience in teaching and research. For example, each faculty member is required to provide details of published work in the last five years including research publications, books, technical reports and international conference presentations/papers. Pendell (2012) notes that faculty evaluation processes have serious professional outcomes for faculty members and serious legal ramifications for the university if it is not properly

done. She suggests that best practices in faculty evaluation are important for protecting communication faculty, department chairs and their universities. Her seven-point recommendation points to the need for the evaluation of communication faculty to be clearly defined and specific, systematic, regular, and goal-driven.

The Board also requires that all funded institutions provide details on student and academic affairs. It obliges institutions to make available statistics about student populations, admission procedures and requirements and mandatory courses. It is important to note that the National Accreditation Board also ensures that institutions seeking reaccreditation welcome students' participation, dissent and/or complaints, as well as make room for engagement in co-curricular/extra-curricular activities (see the World Bank report for a comprehensive discussion on higher education in Africa in Materu, 2007; cf. Sanya, 2013). My observation over the last decade (as both a student and faculty member) indicates that students' investment in extracurricular activities rarely add to their credits. Activities such as sports, dance competition and debates are often difficult to evaluate by faculty as part of general assessment in many public universities in Ghana. It must also be noted that some students do not participate in extracurricular activities for narrow reasons. In short, there is no agreed upon framework for assessing extra-curricular activities students engage in in a number of public universities in Ghana.

The next strand of the paper unmasks hidden ideologies and values embedded in the curriculum of the Bachelor of Arts Communication Studies of the University of Cape Coast.

An evaluation of UCC's Bachelor of Arts in Communication Studies program

The undergraduate communication studies program of UCC was designed in 2010 by faculty to improve and expand the university's range of disciplines. Initially conceived as a mass communication program, it specializes in print and broadcast journalism as well as public relations and advertising. The program is the result of the input by the Academic Board of the university,

recommendations from media practitioners and other competent institutions, key among which is the National Accreditation Board (NAB), the final arbiter. As already noted, the accreditation of new programs is a difficult task. To be sure, it involves a great deal of rhetorical aptitude. The designers of the curriculum had to persuade NAB about the rationale, employment prospects, as well as the target group of the program (e.g., high school graduates, personnel from the Ghana Education Service, polytechnics and colleges of education). As I have already discussed, these requirements are important for determining whether the goals set by the department meet the development agenda of the state.

Planners of the curriculum argued for accreditation on two grounds: the need to train more skilled media practitioners and expand students' job prospects. They held that a rigorous training in communication in contemporary Ghana was urgent to reflect changing trends in the media landscape. Faculty maintained that it was important to augment the numerical strength of media personnel in the country because of the deregulation of the airwaves and the consequent proliferation of FM radio stations and privately-owned television outlets. According to them, there has arisen the need for a training opportunity for persons who have drifted into journalism more out of enthusiasm and the pressure to find a means of living than professional commitment. They argued that the envisaged program would enable practicing media professionals to go for regular refresher courses. This effort, they said, was important to keep media practitioners informed of the continually changing trends in the media landscape. The training was thus envisaged to create employment opportunities for students and media professionals to take up positions in the media and raise media practice in Ghana to acceptable standards that can compare with best practices around the world. For these reasons, the program seeks to meet four main objectives:

1. To train human resource in communication studies.
2. To equip students with knowledge of current trends in

communication studies.

3. To equip students with theoretical resources and skills for doing self-reflection of their practices as communication practitioners, and
4. To equip students with skills that will enable them to engage in research in communication studies (Edu-Buandoh, 2016, personal communication). Even though the intentions of the designers of the newly accredited program were noble as they sought ways to create job opportunities for their students and enhance communication systems in the country, it may be helpful to note that this effort, nonetheless, satisfies the developmentalist agenda (Zeleza, 2003). A closer look at the four-pronged objective above reveals that the focus of the program is on the acquisition of skills which, the designers hope, can “equip” graduates to attain self-development and help in the process of nation-building. In other words, the emphasis of the program from its early conception appears to be utilitarian in scope. Table 3 is a sample of the first two years of the undergraduate communication program in the university under review.

**Table 3.1: A sample of a four-year Bachelor of Arts in Communication Studies
First Year**

	SEMESTER. I			SEM. II			
Course Code	Course Title		Credits	Course Code	Course Title		Credit
CMS 101	Introduction to Mass Communication	Core	3	CMS 102	History o f the Ghanaian Mass Media	Core	3
CMS 105	New Communication Technologies	Core	3	CMS 104	Introduction to Writing for the Mass Media	Core	3
CMS 105A	Communicative Skills	Core	3	ENG 105B	Communica-tion Studies	Core	3
AFS	African Studies	Core	2	ASP	African Studies	Core	1
IRC 101	In formation Retrieval	Core	1	LED\L ESS\LS C	Liberals		2
Subj B		Core	3	Subject B			3
Subj C		Core	3	Subject C			3
Total							

Source: Faculty of Arts, UCC (2013-2016) Brochure

**Table 3.2: A sample of a four-year Bachelor of Arts in Communication Studies
Second Year**

SEMESTER I				SEMESTER II			
Course Code	Course Title		Credit	Course Code	Course Title		Credit
CMS 202	Theories of Comm.	Core	3	CMS 210	Foundations of Comm. Research	Core	3
CMS 203	Feature Writing (Print)	Core	3	CMS 209	Editing and Graphics of Comm.	Elective	3
CMS 204	Foundations of Broadcasting (R/TV)	Elective	3	CMS 215	Radio Program Writing Prod.	Elective	3
CMS 208	Introduction to advertising (PRAD)	Elective	3	CMS 206	Marketing Foundations for Public Relations and Advertising	Elective	3
Subj B		Core	3	Subj B		Core	3
Subj C		Core	3	Subj C		Core	3
Total			18	Total			18

Source: Faculty of Arts, UCC (2013-2016) Brochure

The heavy emphasis on skills development in the structure of this communication curriculum is indicative of the crisis many universities across cultures are grappling with. It is a crisis that betrays the self-critical nature of university education as universities are coerced by the panoptic apparatuses of the state to produce human labor in the service of the economy. In “Truth, power,

intellectuals, and universities,” the South African philosopher Bert (2011) cautioned that university programs are currently controlled by the master discourses of economics, corporatization and bureaucratization. What this means for program administrators and faculty of communication departments is that they can offer little resistance as their practices (e.g., roles, pedagogy, terms and conditions of service and grading schemes) are monitored by regimes of power. The essence, Berth (2011) notes, is to determine whether their professional conduct is in tandem with development objectives. For example, apart from seminars in African Studies and Liberals, all the courses in the first and second years of the communication program of UCC expose students to a somewhat skill-based education. A similar claim can be made of the third and final years of the program except that the curriculum recognizes that an exposure to the geopolitics of media systems in Africa and media law, for example, are crucial for students to develop critical awareness of their field of study. This state of affair, in my view, is the result of the systems of control set in place by state regulatory agencies to ensure that students are given “employable” skills.

It may, however, be helpful to note that a fixation on skills makes communication training somewhat instrumentalist in scope. A consequence of this focus is that often both faculty and students see communication education as a means to an end. This is perhaps the result of a century-old pedagogy of quantitative functionalist sociology championed by Paul F. Lazarsfeld. In his book, *The Invention of communication* (1996), the French sociologist Armand Mattelart warns us against a pedagogy that is putatively media-tropic. According to Mattelart (1996), a media-centered education “engenders a reductive vision of the history of communication” (p. x) because it blinds us to the realization that communication is much more than the study of media systems as some communication programs would have us believe. He goes further to argue that communication pedagogy must arouse in individuals the idea that communication is an ideology and “a system of thought and power and as a mode of government” (p. xi). His book is a classic articulation of how systems of technologies

such as telecommunications, railway systems and time were used and controlled by the world's powerful nations like the United States, France and England to maintain hegemony and dominance during the first and second world wars.

The idea that a technical education is the goal of modernity may thus be a myth. For while it guarantees conquest over the conditions of human existence, an instrumentalist view of communication education alone is inadequate. According to Heidegger (1993), too much focus on technology as doing (*techné*) rather than as revealing (*alētheia*) or enframing (*Gestell*), for instance, can lead humanity to disastrous consequences. Technology could make individuals become uncritical of technology itself, and what it does or makes (*Gegenstand*). Technology, Heidegger (1993) suggested, is, therefore, in a lofty sense ambiguous. It can be a good servant, and yet a bad master. The internet has wrought such a positive influence on trade and industry, transportation (maritime, rail, aviation, etc.), medicine, education and almost all sectors of interpersonal relationships. Yet we cannot discount how the technology is being abused in the hands of the wily for personal gains. So, on the one hand, technology is a saving power; on the other hand, it is a leviathan. Excessive emphasis on the technical perspective of communication education could make it lose its critical luster. I join Odhiambo et al. (2002) in proposing that the training in Africa should involve seminars in critical theory, interpersonal and intercultural communication and ethics rather than the narrow focus on media and journalism which have dominated the training in communication education for far too long in sub-Saharan Africa.

Recommendations

The incorporation of critical theory into journalism education in Ghana is strongly recommended. Critical theory writ large is a critique of society. It is an approach that examines society in a dialectical way by deconstructing political economy, domination, exploitation and ideologies. Critical theories such as postcolonialism, critical political economy, cultural studies

and poststructuralism emphasize the discursive nature of communicative phenomena. They recognize that the many ways individuals tend to narrate their stories or the artifacts they produce as evidence of their communication skills are not disinterested; they are culturally, ideologically and politically motivated. Introducing critical communication theories in the curricula of journalism education is, therefore, crucial for empowering students to unmask formal and informal institutional practices that enable, shape and perpetuate inequality, dominance, power asymmetry and hegemony in society. As Craig (1999, p. 149) notes, a critical tradition of communication studies must confirm “that reflective discourse and communication theory itself have important roles to play in our everyday understanding and practice of communication.” Its goal is to transform society in positive ways.

For instance, Edward Said’s postcolonial theory is of immense importance to media studies. In his work “Islam as news”, Said (1980) extends the thesis he develops in his magnum opus *Orientalism* (1979) and provides evidence of Western media’s deliberate distortions of Islam for politico-economic ends. In his view, the media and the West not only license patent inaccuracy but also express ethnocentrism, cultural and racial hatred for the East. This, he argues, is caused by two main forces: the making of an image and its use to create a monolithic worldview of the East. He observes that the West’s understanding of the East is completely distorted and often based on caricatures and exaggerations of evil, masqueraded in terrorism, anarchism, oil turmoil, and misrepresentation. Writing within the context of the geopolitics of expansionism between the forces of the US and former world empires France and Britain, Said notes that the US relies often on skewed media reportage to sustain its interest in the East. Interestingly, the same media, he writes, looks favorably on the activities of Israel in the same region because Israel is America’s ally. It is this myth, Said laments that the Western media turns into realities by showing frightening mobs, the concentration on Islamic punishments and barbarism as justifications for occupying the East.

Critical theory such as Said's postcolonial theory is of mammoth importance to students of journalism and media studies in sub-Saharan Africa in order to enable them to understand the hidden and taken-for-granted inequalities in society. The essence of this type of education, Splichal (2008) notes, enables students to "question existing conditions in terms of their historical preconditions and future possibilities" (p. 20).

Journalism educators need to also appreciate the aesthetics of transculturalism at work in the twenty-first century. Transculturalism is a way of life in which some individuals find ways to transcend their previous cultures in order to explore and examine other cultures (Grunitzky, 2004 cited in Hepp, 2015, p. 1). It is made possible by globalization and mediatization. Because this epoch continues to be marked by cultural flows, mobility, and transnationalism (Appadurai, 1996), it is important that such institutional practices as pedagogy, theory, assessment practices, and curriculum development that shape the work of communication educators are constantly viewed as transcultural. Such recognition is important so that program administrators and governmental agencies may accommodate change, adaptation, and diversity through constant negotiation, transparency, and self-reflexivity. Transcultural competence in professional journalistic practice is thus the competence required to make sense of the implications values from other cultures have on institutional practices. What gets accepted eventually as normative ways of understanding journalism education in differing contexts is a function of how they are understood by actors in specific institutions and the nature of quality assurance systems they enable.

Conclusion

In the context of Ghana, quality assurance systems in journalism education are fraught with a number of challenges. One difficulty is that it is not discipline-specific. Because national councils and state regulatory boards that superintend professional practices in the academy focus more on accountability to government than on the disciplines, the requirement takes away attention from the

fact that quality assurance of the many professional communities constituting the academy needs to be discipline-specific. To be sure, this is a daunting task because quality assurance protocols are onerous to stakeholders. However, my call to develop discipline-based quality assurance processes derives from the idea that academic communities, the epistemologies that shape their work, and the texts they produce can be best “measured” within their own material modes of production. The African Council for Communication Education (ACCE), for instance, can be consulted by the regulatory bodies of member states to map out standards specific to the field.

Further, quality assurance in Ghana is insufficiently transcultural. In view of the increasing relevance of globalization, global outsourcing of labor (Smith, 2012), and growing graduate mobility (Brady & José, 2009), the emergence of a set of global standards for understanding professional practices and students’ capabilities is desirable. In the context of journalism education, what standards, norms, and criteria will reflect the quality of an international journalism education? Though the National Council for Tertiary Education has also established several links with institutions across the globe such as Carnegie Corporation of New York; Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA); Netherlands Organization for International Cooperation in Higher Education (NUFFIC) and The World Bank, increased partnerships among organizations such as the Association of American Colleges and Universities (AAC&U), Association of African Universities (AAU), and Association of West African Universities (AWAU) will be very useful. For example, how will ACCE partner the International Communication Association (ICA) and the National Communication Association (NCA) of the United States and the Association of Communication Administrators (ACA) to achieve the goal of global education, citizenship, and development?

Only time will tell how the panoptic gaze of state apparatuses will be reconfigured. As public universities on the African continent have begun to adopt a market model, it is becoming clear that a

number of African states are renegotiating their terms of institutional control (Makungu, 2009). The government of Ghana, for example, “has charged the universities to come out with strategies that would make the universities generate their own funds to supplement what the government offers for running the universities, and also place the universities on par with businesses on the world market” (Edu-Buandoh, 2010, 59). This marketization discourse has led public-funded universities in Ghana to formulate their own corporate strategic plans. The move is a response to the World Bank’s (2010) blueprint for improving on the financing of higher education in Africa. The context directing journalism education in Ghana is thus clear: it is instrumentalist. It serves the purposes of the state. Although useful for promoting a developmental agenda, this type of education can hardly be “truly decolonized, autonomous,” and “committed to the pursuit of intellectual excellence” because it does the bidding of its paymasters (Zezeza, 2003, p. 113). Some scholars have thus called for a shift in paradigm (Taylor et al, 2004). This shift in journalism education is important for constantly engaging the critical edge of the training in order to engender in students a heightened sense of responsibility and reflexivity toward the people they intend to serve.

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Language socialisation practices of children in multilingual Accra, Ghana

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Abstract

This paper examines the language socialisation experiences of children in the extensive multilingual and culturally hybrid ‘compound houses’ located in three suburbs of Accra. It seeks to unravel the influence socialising agents’ practices and attitudes have on children’s language choices and usage patterns. Blending the practice view of Community of Practice with the Ethnography of Communication model, it analyses the children’s language socialisation practices within the various communities, focusing on how the socialising agents’ practices shape children’s language choice, use and practices. Using semi-structured interviews and participant observation, data were gathered on language choice, use and attitudes from fifty purposively selected participants who reside in six compound houses. The data reveal that the children’s experiences at home are overshadowed by the language(s) used in the macro- environment. As a result, individual bilingualism does not necessarily show the presence of the parents’ ethnic language. The findings further show that socialising agents’ perceptions and attitudes motivate language shift and reinforcement among children.

Keywords: bi/multilingualism, language maintenance/shift, language socialisation, socialising agents

Introduction

Language, the primary symbolic medium through which cultural knowledge is communicated, negotiated, transformed

and reproduced, plays a very vital role in the socialisation process across all cultures. A number of scholars, such as Ghimenton et al. (2013), Ildikó (2010), Delgado (2009), Garrett and Baquedano-López (2002) and Gleason (1988), assert that children acquire and develop language only when the human infants are raised in an interactive social context, which has the required linguistic inputs the children need. In the past decades, language socialisation studies by Suzuki (1999), Ochs (1988), Schieffelin and Ochs (1986a, 1986b), Gleason and Weintraub (1978) have broadened our understanding of the numerous ways through which the development of language and socio-cultural competences in children are facilitated simultaneously for them to become competent members of their speech communities.

Although Ghana's national capital, Accra, is an ethnically Ga¹ city, the increased scope of rural-urban migration, over the past decades, has resulted in the creation of a highly multilingual community with (im)migrants in the metropolis. According to the 2010 Census report, 2,793,679 million people are (im)migrants in Accra (Ghana Statistical Service, 2012). These people have migrated with various ethnic languages other than Ga, the ethnic language of the capital. The existence and interaction of these languages have compelled some residents to learn some other language(s) in addition to their own ethnic ones. However, a number of residents still use their ethnic languages solely in various communicative contexts at home.

'Compound houses'² in certain suburbs of Accra, the capital of Ghana, such as Accra Newtown, Madina and Nima, are places explicitly characterised with multiple language contact situations at both individual and community levels. As a result, most children found in these houses experience social settings which reflect either language influence or interference that leads to language reinforcement, shift, loss or maintenance. Makihara (2013, p.1), in explaining some likely causes of language change and shift in

1 Ga is used to refer to the natives of Accra as well as the indigenous language spoken by these people.

2 Compound houses are structures that accommodate two or more households within a single compound. They depict the Ghanaian concept of communal living.

Rapa Nui on Easter Island of Chile, stresses that ‘language and community change through the friction of daily interaction.’

Taking the above into consideration, the present paper examines the language socialisation experiences of children in various social interactions within these multilingual and multicultural compound houses. The study focuses on how interrelated socialising agents’ language choices and usage are to children’s language socialisation practices and demonstrates how the attitudes of various agents influence children’s language learning and usage patterns. Additionally, it discusses the notion of language vitality, bi/multilingualism, ideology and identity and their correlation with language maintenance, reinforcement and/or shift in the communities. To understand the communicative activities, linguistic practices and language socialisation of the children, some related studies on the subject are first evaluated. A discussion of the theoretical framework underpinning the study then follows. The subsequent sections deal with the methods used in gathering data for the study, the presentation of the findings of the study and the discussion of the language socialisation practices in the multilingual communities chosen for the study. The final section is the conclusion.

Related studies

Children’s language acquisition and the development of their socio-cultural competence have been the focus of many language socialisation studies. A number of scholars, for example Huang (2011), Minks (2010), Gleason and Nan (1998) and Schieffelin and Ochs (1986a, 1986b), who have studied these phenomena attach great importance to the correlation between socio-cultural and pragmatic analyses of the language socialisation processes of children and language learners in general. This section reviews some previous literature on trends in children’s language development, language socialisation, multilingualism, language maintenance and/or shift.

Language development and language socialisation

Ochs and Schieffelin (1986a, 1986b) explain language socialisation as an interaction between a child and a caregiver with the aid of language. They argue that for a child to function effectively within a speech community, importance should be placed on the simultaneous development of language and cultural competencies. This, they believe, depends on the expertise of the individual caregivers to positively affect the child to acquire the structures of a language as well as its functions and social distribution across defined situations. They envisage the language socialisation as a process which encompasses acquiring a language and knowledge of its function and social distribution.

In a similar vein, Gleason (1988) emphasises how language is acquired interactively through dialogue and social interaction with others. She reveals that when parents engage their children in interpersonal and social activities, explicit and subtle information about the language is transmitted to the children. Her findings suggest that language socialisation includes a blend of language exposure, acquisition, development and cultural transmission which occur either explicitly or implicitly and, in most cases, both ways. Therefore, a child's language choice and use reflect not only competency but, also, the positive or negative influence of parents.

On the other hand, Cook (1999) postulates that the participation structure in Japanese classroom interaction helps socialise Japanese children to the culturally important skill of attentive listening. This, she believes, shapes children's public speaking abilities to express their views subjectively. She notes that these school children are able to develop cognitive and social skills simultaneously. In all these cases, the communicative events were based on the use of the same language variety within the same context of caregiving. Therefore, this study will discuss the language socialisation practices that encompass how children learn language(s) within the same complex communicative context but from multiple agents and varied events.

Language choice and multilingualism

Baquedano-Lopez and Kattan (2007) explain multilingualism to involve the acquisition and use of two or more languages in contexts where the forms make meaning. In their view, multilingualism is a trait of the individual that depends on the linguistic situation of the community. With regard to the analysis of how children are socialised to use multiple forms of language within a multilingual community, Howard (2003) demonstrates how children in Northern Thailand use the Standard Thai and Kam Muang simultaneously during interaction at school. He asserts that though Standard Thai (ST) is the official school language, the children are socialised into language hybridity in the classroom. According to him, to be regarded as using language appropriately for the classroom, kindergarten children are instructed to speak politely in their native language, Kam Muang, but to use honorific particles of Standard Thai. This communicative competence, Howard stresses, reflects the community's positive perceptions about the assigned roles for the languages. In effect, children's code-mixing behaviour in the classroom is considered to be their readiness to learn the linguistic structures of Standard Thai – vocabulary, grammar and pronunciation. In his view, the school environment exhibits a positive attitude to the phenomenon which leads to bi/multilingualism, hence the language and socio-cultural modes of teaching and care giving are rooted in the cultural values of the Lanna people of Northern Thailand.

Guerini (2007), on multilingualism and language attitude in Ghana, notes that English is assigned higher prestige and is perceived as the only language worth investing in (both financially and cognitively) from childhood, at the expense of local languages. She believes that most local languages have been learnt in a spontaneous way from home, school and the multilingual environment; hence the linguistic repertoire of non-Akan speakers is more complex with three or four languages than the native Akan³ speakers. She adds that the minority language speakers are motivated to develop a good command of dominating languages in addition to their native language because of the real and perceived socio-economic value,

³ Akan is the dominant Ghanaian language in the country. Almost half of the population speak it as their L1 (GSS 2012), and many others use it as a lingua franca.

increased access to education and job opportunities for a better living that these dominant languages offer.

For her part, Minks (2010) notes that language use in the community of Corn Island (off the Caribbean coast of Nicaragua) demonstrates how children are socialised into multilingual abilities. Presenting historical, ideological and structural perspectives on the multilingual use of language, she observes that the language socialisation on the Island is a communal responsibility of parents, older siblings, other members of the family and the community. These people help the younger children acquire linguistic and socio-cultural competence based on the agents' competence and perception about which language would best serve the interest of the children in the future. Minks adds that many parents with an additive view of language maintain contexts for their children to learn more than one language. A few parents who have a subtractive view of language explicitly shift repertoires without sometimes even realising the shift. She observes that the use of English and Spanish words and phrases in caregivers' register is an index of a positive attitude to multilingualism in the language socialisation process on Corn Island. She concludes that language is a pool of communicative resources that is used to socialise children into a heterogeneity of expressions within and across the languages present on the Island, which are Spanish, Miskitu and Creole English.

Luykx's (2003) study supports the idea of an explicit positive attitude of socialising agents towards bi/multilingualism. She examines language socialisation in terms of gender and avers that although the young children (boys and girls) are exposed to both Spanish and Aymara by their bilingual parents, the children use Aymara because it is the dominant language within the community. She reveals that the children acquire the sound system, morphology and grammatical rules of their mother tongue and speech styles suitable to their gender. The children, Luykx further notes, develop the good communicative strategy of showing politeness in a bilingual context and competence through observation and imitation of their parents, grandparents, siblings and other neighbours during interaction within the speech community. She concludes

that mixing and switching between two languages are explicit in this speech community because most children grew up with at least a bilingual parent who demonstrates such a practice. On the basis of these works, the present study probes the occurrence of bilingualism/multilingualism in children's language socialisation processes within the selected multilingual houses in Accra.

Language maintenance and/or shift

Language contact has been understood as a situation within a speech community in which two or more languages circulate and struggle for linguistic space (Batibo, 2005; Garrett, 2004). The situation occurs as a result of factors such as migration, urbanisation and colonisation, as groups from different cultures and linguistic backgrounds come into contact. The possible result of this situation translates into bilingualism, multilingualism, language maintenance, loss and/or shift by speakers. Language maintenance and/or shift are explained as language contact situations in which a speech community may decide to keep their respective languages in all domains, agree to take and use a new language in all domains or use the newly acquired language in specified domains (Batibo, 2005). Thus, language maintenance and/or shift are viewed as a social process because both evolve around identity and ideology.

In a language socialisation study of the role of language ideology in the maintenance of Spanish, Pease-Alvarez (2003) probes the role of parent's convictions, experience, cultural practices and social positioning on children's Spanish language socialisation among 63 young people of Mexican descent and their family members in Eastside California. She finds that parents have positive thoughts about English-Spanish bilingualism and native language maintenance. Mothers, she argues, claim sole responsibility for the acquisition and maintenance of the Spanish language among the families observed. However, the findings reveal that the competitive changing linguistic values assigned to some languages encourage some parents to consciously use only English language with their children as a means of preparing them for life outside their homes.

Sarkar and Park's (2007) case study on parents' attitude towards Korean language maintenance in Montreal reveals that the Korean immigrant children's ability to maintain the Korean language is largely influenced by the positive principles, mindset and attitude of their parents. They add that the children's high proficiency in the Korean language is strongly connected to the development of their cultural identity in the speech community.

In Ghana, Bibiebome's study (2010), on the loss of popularity of the Ga language in most suburbs of Accra, investigates language shift and maintenance in the city. He argues that Accra has now become a vibrant multilingual society where Ga, the ethnic language, competes with other Ghanaian languages in various linguistic domains. According to Bibiebome, the interference of other languages in the use of Ga has resulted in a possible shift from its previously dominant use to other languages such as Akan, English, Ewe and Hausa, in many linguistic domains including the home, church, market and school. He notes that majority of settlers in Accra do not lose their native languages. Rather, they reinforce them with Akan, English or another dominant language which may not be Ga. In his conclusion, he asserts that most residents in Accra have developed the urge of using Akan and English in most communicative domains due to the dominance and prestige associated with these languages. This reveals a language shift process in Accra.

In addition to these major studies, Tsikpo (2010) investigates the linguistic behaviour of children of Ewe origin in Accra. He argues that the Ewe language, a minority language within the study area, is put to restricted use. Using Auberger's language shift and maintenance model (Batibo, 2005), Tsikpo shows that some parents with Ewe ethnic background have negative attitudes to their mother tongue thus they consciously socialise their children to the use of various Ghanaian languages other than Ewe, their native language. This practice, he explains, seems to result in an implicit functional role assignment to languages, according to the dominance of the code in the community or a language shift phenomenon which is influenced by the parents' and/or guardians' educational level. He

further observes that parents' shift to English and Akan as socialising codes will enable the children to adjust to communicative events in the speech community they find themselves.

These studies mainly focused on dyadic language socialisation of children (soothing, play, etc.) within limited groups – siblings, caregivers, parents or teachers and revealed a trend in the linguistic and communicative practices of the children studied. While the above studies certainly provide various useful models for the present inquiry to demonstrate how socialisation practices, structure of participation and attitudes about language(s) affect children's language use, it is observed that language socialisation practices of children within Ghanaian multilingual contexts has received little or no attention from the academy. A critical look at these children's language use pattern points out that the children acquire linguistic resources from people of different linguistic and socio-cultural backgrounds. This is done through observation, imitation and role play. Hence, the present study explores the extent to which the varying compositions of the communicative situations contribute to the language socialisation of Ghanaian children living in selected multilingual communities. Further, it will provide an indication of whether children of the current generation are being assisted to reinforce, shift or maintain their ethnic languages.

Theoretical framework

The Ethnography of Communication approach is based on the notion that communicative activities are blends of culture and patterns of language usage which aid speakers to learn and attain communicative competence to communicate effectively within a speech community (Saville-Troike, 2003; Hymes, 1962). The speech community is viewed as 'groups that shared values and attitudes about language use, varieties and practices' (Morgan, 2014, p.1). This framework proposes three main dimensions for the analysis of the patterns of the communicative activities as: communicative situation, communicative event and communicative act. These dimensions are explained as follows:

The communicative situation of a speech is the context within which communication occurs although there may be great diversity in the kinds of interaction which occur there. The communicative event is the basic unit for descriptive purpose and the communicative act is generally coterminous with a single interactional function of a statement, request or command that may be either verbal or non-verbal. (Saville-Troike, 2003, pp. 23-24)

According to Saville-Troike (2003), the status, composition, event and act are crucial units which combine to account for how language and linguistic forms and patterns are selected and used in interactions within a speech community. By adopting both communicative situation and communicative event models, we try to show that the households, compounds, environs and playgrounds in Accra New Town, Madina and Nima are not only encouraging fields for language socialisation, but are also avenues for the development of linguistic practices. We focus on how socialising agents' attitudes shape children's language choice and use in various communicative domains.

Also of particular importance to this paper is the practice view of Community of Practice, which is concerned with how the children and their socialising agents participate in various social activities within the speech community as practice, rather than the children being trained to achieve competence (Wenger, 1998). We use the practice view to discuss the various instances of interactions within which the children demonstrate some of the linguistic practices. The blend of the two models creates an essential opportunity for us to explore the various means for the development and use of the acquired linguistic practices by the children.

Methods

The study is sited within three suburbs of Accra namely: Accra Newtown, Madina and Nima. These three suburbs are chosen because they are fairly representative of the multilingual status of Accra. In addition, they provide an avenue for close social network

ties and neighbourhood interconnections. Two of the three suburbs (i.e. Madina and Nima) have Zongo⁴ communities with brisk socio-economic conditions that reflect environments in which several languages are in contact situation every day. Socially, all the three areas are densely populated with people from all walks of life and many residing in compound houses where families share basic facilities. In terms of infrastructure, social amenities and education, Accra New Town (formerly known as Lagos Town) and Madina generally have a number of offices, stores and relatively well-resourced schools. The common languages for communication here are Akan, Ewe, Ga and English, with other languages such as Dangme and Hausa in the background. Madina is more vibrant commercially than Accra New Town. Nima is a typical Zongo community with congested settlements. The area is noted for brisk commercial and social activities (parties, marriages, etc.). Hausa is the lingua franca of the Nima community.

Fifty participants including thirty children and twenty adults were involved in the study. The adults were aged 25 and above, while the children were between 5 to 10 years old. The children, who were the focus of the study live in six purposively sampled compound houses, where they interact with multiple members of the compound houses and others in the larger environs on a daily basis. In all, ten children were selected from each suburb. Audio and video tape recordings of routine interactions of the children and adults in varied communicative situations and events were used to gather data on participants' language socialisation practices. Data were collected from July to December, 2014. Participants' bio-data, information on children's experience with language use in the communicative contexts, as well as the adults' attitude to language choice and use were extracted through semi-structured interviews with the help of an interpreter in all the communities, when needed. The interviews with all adult participants lasted for approximately thirty minutes each. Additionally, participant observation was undertaken to establish the language practices and

4 Zongos are slum settlements within African cities and big towns. The occupants of these settlements are predominantly but not exclusively Muslim immigrants from Northern Ghana.

linguistic behaviours of the children during various communicative events (play, conversation, etc.). During the observation, 60 minutes was spent with the children each time they were observed, as they interacted with one another and with adults in the various situations.

Findings and discussion

Compound houses as speech community and communicative situation

The selected compound houses in Accra New Town, Madina and Nima as speech communities have members (children and adults) who live communally and have shared values and facilities. Although members may have different cultural and linguistic exposures, they interact regularly, using their ethnic language(s), negotiating or adopting a common language in specific contexts. With regard to complex communicative environments, three different groups were identified from the data: households/homes (immediate family), neighbourhoods (adults, teenagers, peers) and the external environs. Within the households are various codes such as: Akan, Ewe, Hausa, Gurene, Chamba, Larteh, Gonja, Dangme, Ga, English, and Kotokoli. This information suggests to us that the communicative situation is a multilingual context where each language competes for usage. We observe that one or multiple socialising agents consciously or unconsciously socialise the children to one or more of these languages through events such as play, conversation and dialogue. Sometimes, the codes are not necessarily the parents' ethnic language(s). Samples of languages that families use with their children are demonstrated in Table 1.

Table 1: Linguistic repertoire of sampled families in study areas

Suburbs	Accra Newtown			Nima			Madina		
Households	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I
Languages spoken at home with children	Akan English	Hausa Akan Ga	Ewe Akan	English	English Akan Ewe	Gonja Chamba Dagbani	Gurene	English Larteh Akan	Dangme Ewe Ga
Ethnic Language/L1	Akan	Chamba - Kotokoli	Ewe	Akan	Ewe Akan	Gonja Chamba	Gurene	Larteh	Dangme

Source: Field data

Again, owing to the different languages available within the homes, it appears that the socialising agents select a language/code which allows for the maximum participation by all within a specified domain.

Another feature worth noting about the communities is the ethnic composition of the various families. Within Accra New Town, Madina and Nima, twelve families with the same ethnic background and eighteen families of mixed ethnic background create an immediate communicative situation for the children’s language socialisation and an opportunity for negotiation and choice in language use. Of these thirty families, nine families use only Ghanaian languages (Akan, Ewe, Ga, Gonja, etc.) in interacting with the children at home in all domains such as giving instructions, assisting in children’s homework and reprimanding. An example of how socialising agents’ language choice affects a child’s language choice is when Mr. A, an Akuapem (Akan sub-group), on all the visits, used the Akuapem dialect to give compliments to his 7-year old child after he had finished supervising the child’s homework. By so doing, the child learns and uses Akan at home. This results in the child’s frequent use of Akan in interacting with other interlocutors. For example, Mr. A congratulates his child saying⁵:

5 Abbreviations used in this paper are as follows: 1 – First person, 2 – Second person, 3 – Third person, DEMONS – Demonstrative pronoun, IMP – imperfect, MP- motional prefix, OBJ – Object, PART – Particle, PL – Plural, PREP – Preposition, PROG – Progressive, SG – Singular.

1. *Mo! wo-a-yɛ ade!*
Good! 2SG-PERF-do thing
'Good! You have done well.'

Mr. A praises his child in Akan for accomplishing his work neatly. This practice is often seen in the child's speech as there seems to be a reciprocal use of Akan with parents. On the other hand, twenty-one families use Ghanaian and non-Ghanaian languages simultaneously or only a non-Ghanaian language, especially English, in varied interactive domains. For instance: A Dangme mother uses Akan to call her child to the dining table. Below is the interaction:

2. Mum: *Emmanuel! Emma! be-di banku.*
Emmanuel! Emma! MP-eat banku
'Emmanuel! Emma! come and eat banku.'
Emmanuel: *Yoo, Maa.*
Ok, Mama
'Ok, Mama.'

In (2), Emmanuel and his mother interact in Akan, when she is inviting the boy to eat but she uses English to reprimand him, as seen in (3) below:

3. Mother: Emma, stop what you are doing! Shame!
Emmanuel: (stopped what he was doing) Ok

The mixed ethnic background families consist of parents from culturally and linguistically diverse groups with varied ethnic languages. During interactions, some of these families use a third language or accommodate to the children's language. Accommodation arises in contexts where a speaker has to intentionally use a language that the child is comfortable with. In instances where one of the parents has acculturated to the partner's language, that language is used as the language of the home. For instance, in one of the homes, the father's ethnic language is Chamba, while the mother's is Ga. Since the father is fluent in Ga as well, Ga is used as the language of the home, as seen in (4).

4. Father: *Kotei, tɛ Nii hã mí*
 Kotei, call Nii PREP 1SG
 ‘Kotei, call Nii for me.’
 Kotei: *Nii, ofaine onukpa a-tɛ bo*
 Nii, please man be-call 2SG
 ‘Nii, please daddy is calling you.’

More interesting than this is when the families adopt a third language other than the parents’ ethnic language(s) to socialise the children. For instance, in one household with an Akan mother and an Ewe father, they use a third language, English, for communication among themselves and with their children in and outside the home. This is in consonance with Dako and Quarcoo’s (2017, p.24) finding that English is gradually assuming L1 status in Ghana as more parents choose to speak it at home. An example of such an interaction is provided in (5).

5. Mother: Maame, come and do something for me.
 Maame: I don’t want to come. Aseda is eating all
 my food so I don’t want to leave the food
 with her.
 Mother: Learn to share.

Another feature of the language practices observed is that even in households where parents have a common language, they sometimes use the dominant language of the community (which is different from their own common language) to socialise the child(ren). Some of the families in Nima use Hausa while those in Accra Newtown and Madina mostly use Akan and/or English, depending on the families’ choice.

We realise that in some homes (families), the eldest children have some languages in their repertoire which the younger ones do not have. For instance, the eldest children of two families visited in Nima speak Gurene or Chamba with their grandmothers, Hausa and Akan with their parents, and Hausa or Akan or English with their siblings. The younger children within these same families speak only Hausa with their grandmothers, and Hausa and Akan

with their parents. Interestingly, all the four single parent families socialise their children to their ethnic language whereas the remaining households use various languages depending on their preferred language choice and the domain of interaction.

A quality worth noting is how neighbours in the compounds and the multiethnic and multilingual environs create the linguistic opportunity where some children, if not all, learn and use a variety of language(s) outside their immediate family settings. The data reveal that majority of the children are socialised to use the dominant language(s) of the suburbs, irrespective of the ethnic language(s) of their parents, or they use English, as a way of assisting them to effectively communicate within and beyond the communities.

We observe that to enable children participate in communicative events, from time to time, some socialising agents (neighbours, peers, siblings, etc.) accommodate or adjust to the children's language choice. For instance, example (6) below illustrates how a hospital attendant who is a non-native Akan speaker adjusted to Joe's (a 6-year old boy) language choice. During the interaction, the hospital attendant quickly changed from using English to Akan, when she realised that Joe was not answering the questions she had asked him. This scene occurred in front of Joe's house in Madina.

6. Joe: *Obroni!* *Obroni!* *Obroni!*
 'White person! White person! White person!'
 Hosp. Attendant: *Biibiini!* *Biibiini!* *Biibiini!*
 Black person! Black person! Black person!'
 What's your name? Do you like me? Give
 me five.⁶
 Joe: *Mama* *tɔ* *shoe* *wei* *ma* *me.*
 Mother buy shoe DEMONS give 1SG.OBJ
 'Mother, buy this shoe for me.'
 Mother: His name is Joe.

⁶ A high five

Hosp. Attendant: Joe, *Wo-pe me anaa wo-pe paneε?*
 2SG-like 1SG.OBJ or 2SG-like needle

Ma me five!
 Give 1SG.OBJ five

‘Do you like me or do you like the needle? Give me five.’

As part of the accommodation process, the hospital attendant repeated the question in Akan to create an enabling context for the child, where the latter could then use the shared language to answer the former’s question. The child chose to ignore her and speak Akan with his mother.

The hospital attendant’s Akan utterance to Joe is pragmatically inappropriate, which betrays her non-native speaker status.⁷ In spite of her inadequacies, she still willingly adjusts codes in order to attempt to make meaningful conversation with Joe. As seen in Example 6 above, the communicative event involved multiple participants who have various languages in their repertoire. It, also, illustrates how Joe interrupts the conversation with a request to his mother using Akan, but a swift answer by his mother rescues the situation for the conversation to continue.

Further, we demonstrate that the structure of participation during interactions is multi-party, rather than dyadic, since the communicative act involves more than two interlocutors. Not all the participants are necessarily caregivers of the child(ren) as espoused by Ochs and Schieffelin (1986a, 1986b). Thus, the children are routinely exposed by many people to the opportunity for learning diverse languages. This situation orients the children to be multilingual so they can easily be integrated into the larger communities of interlocutors. In view of this, we argue that the children’s language socialisation process in the compound houses creates a communal environment for practising and building rapport rather than individualistic acts of imitating adults (such as parents and caregivers).

7 The correct expression should be *wope m’asem anaa wope paneε?* ‘Do you like me or do you like the needle?’

Wope me? translates correctly as ‘Would you like me as a girlfriend?’

Multiplicity of languages

There are thirteen languages in the six compound houses visited, thereby making them multilingual contexts which require, to an extent, the children learning new utilitarian codes. Eleven of these languages are indigenous Ghanaian languages – Akan⁸, Ewe⁹, Larteh, Gurene, Ga, Dangme, Kotokoli, Chamba, Gonja, Dagbani and Wala, and two are non-indigenous languages –Hausa¹⁰ and English. The eleven languages are spoken as first languages or ethnic languages of the various adult participants. The multidirectional nature of the communicative events in these compound houses demands children’s knowledge and use of different languages depending on the interlocutor’s competence, choice and topic. English, the official language of Ghana, is used at home and within its external environment (beyond the home). It is mostly used in schools. As a result, in the compound houses and their environs, the children learn languages and construct identities from at least one of the socialising agents, if not all. In one household, children actively practise alternating between multiple languages in their interaction. Ewe is used with only one member of the family (grandmother) while Akan and English are used with other members, parents and siblings.

We realise that few mothers (17% of our sample) use predominantly English, while majority (83%) of them use Ghanaian languages with the children. On the other hand, 27% of the fathers use English while 63% of them use the various Ghanaian languages in socialising children at home. Significantly, within the communities, parents make use of more than one language during a single conversational interaction with children. This language use pattern was captured at home during conversation, when assisting children with their assignments, pampering, scolding children and during play time. In the extract presented in (7) below, a mother and a father use two languages (Akan and English) as they try to assist

8 Akuapem, Asante and Fante were the varieties identified within the compound houses.

9 Evedomegbe, Tongu, Anlo and Gengbe were the varieties of Ewe used within the compound houses.

10 Hausa is a Chadic language. Even though it is not indigenous to Ghana, there are Ghanaians who speak it as their L1.

their eight-year old child with her homework.

7. Child: Maa! Maa! Maa!

Mother: Yeeeeeeessss!

Father: Why is she making noise like that?

Child: They have given me home work but I don't understand.

Father: You don't understand doesn't mean you should make noise. Let me see.

Child: They say box plus box is equal to four.

Mother: Eiiii!*box plus box is equal to four?*

Hmmm! εεεε sukuu-foɔ

Hmmm today student-PL

mo-a-ba deε, me deε me-n-hu so o.

3PL-PERF-come TOP 1.SG TOP 1SG-NEG-see top PART.

Fa kyere wo papa.

Take show 2SG.POSS father.

'Students of today, as for me, I don't understand it.

Show it to your father.'

Father: Box plus box is equal to four, it means you need to add two things to get four.

Wo-de two bε-hyε box baako mu na wo-a-kan

2SG-take two FUT-put box one in CONJ 2SG-CONS-count

two bio a-hyε another box mu

two again CONS-put another box in

'You first count two and put it into one box and count another two and put it into another box.'

Is that okay?

Child: Ok Dad, one, two, three, four ...

Generally, we observe that fathers use more English in their conversation with their children than mothers do. For example, in a household at Madina, Mr. J uses English with his children as seen in (8).

8. Mr. J: Eugene! Why have you put that sound in the speaker? It is so loud.

Eugene: Ah Dad! I was playing music. It is not intentional.

Mr. J: Reduce it. It makes a lot of noise.

Eugene: (presses the button to decrease the sound). Is it ok now?

In all these contexts and events, we note that participants produce shared language skills which are reflective of the interactive status of the community.

Language vitality

Our data reveal that in the multiplicity of languages in the three suburbs, there are only five languages which are in active use in all domains where the children interact and practice – home, school, playground, game centres and the neighbourhood. These are Akan, English, Ewe, Ga and Hausa. The use of English, Akan and Hausa appears widespread in all the communicative domains because in the communities, as shown in the data, they are used as lingua franca by speakers who, otherwise, do not have a common medium of communication. Also, they are the most commonly used languages by socialising agents to establish and maintain interactions. Their use is reflected in children's interaction at play, school, game centres, etc.

Interacting with participants during the interview and participant observation, we note that Akan and Hausa are widespread not only because they have a lot of speakers but also because of their use as the main languages of trade within the communities. English, on the other hand, is considered the most prestigious language because of its official and educational value in the country. Many participants stressed that English is the language of power and security. The adult participants expressed positive views regarding the future implications for their children's ability to speak English. Thus, they hold the view that there is the need for one to invest in English acquisition in order to secure a brighter future for one's children. Though Ewe and Ga are considered to be less powerful than the other languages mentioned earlier, some

children use them especially when they want to exclude others from the conversation. This is illustrated in (9).

Background: Six children were watching a movie on a desktop computer when, suddenly, the issue of who would operate the computer came up. Among them were two children who could speak Ewe and Ga in addition to English and Akan. As the discussion unfolded, the duo used Ewe instead of English or Akan. This is how their conversation went:

9. Akos: We have to watch both parts one and two of this movie. Then we can summarise it for Auntie Kate.

Joe: Mamle will type it so that we can have an organised work.

Amet: She doesn't know where the characters are hiding. Hahahahaha!

Mamle: (laughed) Amet! Agbe mele asi-wo o.
Amet life NEG.have hand-POSS NEG
'Amet! You are bad.'

Amet: Nyatefe ko meto.
Truth FOC 1SG.tell
'I just told the truth.'

Mamle: Ne mili koa ke midodo na miadokuiwo.....
If 2PL.be.there FOC then 2PL.work giving 2PL.POSS.selves

'You always want us to be engaged.'

Once the two started using Ewe, the rest of the children felt excluded from the discussion. The other participants are, however, not motivated to learn Ewe since it is a small in-group language. This confirms Guerini's (2007) findings that speakers of non-dominant Ghanaian languages are multilingual with more than three languages in their linguistic repertoire.

We, also, notice that the use of English is more common among the younger children (6 years and below) as compared to the older ones of 8 years and above. This may be attributed to the

increased use of English in pre-school and the growing trend of parents' use of English as medium of communication with children at home. Another reason is that some parents, peers and other adults expose the children to English language-mediated interactions at home and within the community as their first language or second language in some cases. This trend is supported by Ayoola and Soneye's (2016) study of Yoruba-English bilingual children in Nigeria. An instance of this practice is given in examples 4 and 5 cited earlier. The practice, also, confirms Bibiebome's (2010) study that Ga is losing its popularity in Accra and Tsikpo's (2010) study that parents socialise their children to languages that are different from their ethnic languages.

Linguistic practices

In these diversified linguistic environments, parents are aware of the existence of individual and community bilingualism/multilingualism. This is because language learning and communicative practices in the homes contrast sharply with what transpires in the compounds and their environs. Words from different languages are used during communicative activities, characteristic of code-mixing. There are also practices that lead to language shift and/or maintenance in the communities. Hence, the parents explicitly and/or implicitly socialise the children to these practices.

Code-mixing

The use of code-mixing is prevalent among both adults and children in the home, at play, at school and in the larger community. Code-mixing refers to 'any instance of interchanging usage of two or more languages within the same conversation or discourse by the same multilingual speaker' (Wolff, 2000, p.5). In this sense, code-mixing may take the form of transferring words and phrases from one language into another language during interactive events. In the compound houses in all the suburbs, code-mixing is bidirectional. The adult participants code-mix when interacting with the children, while the children code-mix among themselves and in their interaction with adults. Many parents confirmed that

they code-mix in interactions with the children.

The code-mixing pattern found in children's speech within the three communities is discourse-related insertion. Participants insert a lexical item from one language while predominantly using another language during most of their interactions. They use either two Ghanaian languages or a Ghanaian (for example, Akan, Ga, Dangme or Ewe, etc.) and a non-Ghanaian language (for example, Hausa or English), depending on the codes the speaker has in his or her repertoire. The dialogue between Akosua and Doris, in (10), is an instance of code-mixing among two young girls in one of the suburbs. The example illustrates participants' discourse-related insertion during communicative events. In the dialogue, Akosua (A) and Doris (D) are considering the food they should eat for lunch that day.

10.A: ενε, mo-m-ma yεn-ni jollof.¹¹

Today 3PL-IMP-let 3PL-eat jollof

'Let us eat jollof today.'

D: Ooh! Ah!, Wo-pe jollof-sεm *too much*.

Ooh! Ah!, 2PL-like jollof-matter

'You like talking about jollof issues too much.'

In (10), D intra-sententially mixes Akan with English knowing very well that A will understand what she means. D's use of the English phrase 'too much' in this exchange signifies her ability to use both codes. The intra-sentential mix is common within all the communicative events because it involves the incorporation of single words or phrases (noun, verb, adjective, etc.). The data seem to suggest that the use of code-mixing within the houses and their external environs is because parents want the children to easily understand structures in the various languages. Again, it is seen as an indicator of the research participants' display of their

¹¹ A West African dish prepared using rice, vegetable oil, tomato sauce, pepper and meat or fish.

multilingual competencies.

Another instance of discourse-related insertion was observed during a misunderstanding between some boys and girls who had returned from school in Accra Newtown. A woman, who was observing the scene, tried to settle the matter. She then asked what the matter was, in English. One of the younger girls was proving stubborn, so the woman retorted:

11. Woman: *What are you going there for?*

Girl: *I am going to kyekyere this thing.*

tie

Woman: Wo-re-kɔ kyekyere dɛn?
2SG-PROG-go tie what?

‘What are you going to tie?’

Girl: This thing.

There is the insertion of an Akan verb, *kyekyere*, which means ‘to tie’. Also, (11) illustrates the bilingual ability of the girl and her interlocutor, the woman. It reveals how interlocutors sometimes accommodate to the speaker’s language choice. Following the girl’s use of the Akan word, *kyekyere*, ‘to tie’, the woman shifted from the initial use of English to Akan. Interestingly, the girl shifted back to the use of English in her response.

Bilingualism/multilingualism

Bilingualism or multilingualism is another language practice that prevails in the households and the external environments. Bilingualism is a term which refers to the use of two languages of an individual (Wu, 2005). Multilingualism, on the other hand, may be defined as one’s ability to speak more than two languages (Baquedano-López & Kattan, 2007). The two terms can be used for an individual, to refer to the individual’s competence in the use of two or more languages. When used to describe the society, bilingualism or multilingualism refers to the use of at least two languages in a given speech community. At home, school or play,

inside and outside the compound, the children take advantage of their engagement in both dominant and non-dominant language-mediated interactions to learn and acquire new language(s) hence their bilingual or multilingual abilities enable them to easily socialise and communicate meaningfully.

It is observed that the children get access to multiethnic interconnectivities where they are immersed in the use of multiple languages. Consequently, the children make effort to improve their English and learn dominant language(s) from one another and the socialising agents, as their repertoire encompasses more than two languages (Ghanaian and non-Ghanaian language combination) which they have the opportunity to use on daily basis. This characteristic is demonstrated in the children's language use patterns within the various communicative events – play, conversation, etc. For instance: Kofi, a boy in Nima, is multilingual in four languages, namely Kotokoli, Hausa, Akan and English. He uses any of these languages with his interlocutors, depending on their available linguistic codes and the topic under discussion.

Again, Maame S, a native of Larteh, who is a bilingual (in Larteh and Akan), transmits her language and culture to her children by telling them stories in her ethnic language (L1), Larteh. On one of such occasions, when she was using Larteh to tell a story, she switched to the use of Akan at some point. To explain her action, Maame S said that she changed to Akan because two other children who had joined later did not understand Larteh. This case illustrates how adults within the communities are sensitive to children's linguistic competencies and adjust to these competencies. During the discussion, Akan was the main code used. The children actively participated in the communicative event by answering questions in Akan on lessons learnt from the story.

In Accra Newtown, a mother explicitly uses two languages (English and Akan) with her child. Example 12 illustrates how she uses the two languages.

12. Mother: *Brother, greet madam. Say 'Good morning'.*

Mother: kɔ kyea madam.

Go greet madam

'Greet madam.'

Ka sɛ 'Good morning'.

Say COMP good morning

'Greet good morning.'

This practice of individual bilingualism or multilingualism is a response to the children's ability to participate actively in activities of the home, compound houses, school, their environs and the larger communities to which the children are exposed daily.

In Nima, a speech community with shared values (cf. Saville-Troike, 2003), children use Hausa as a medium of communication in most situations, throughout playtime in the environs. A switch to Akan or English is preferable only when they realise the interlocutor cannot communicate with them in Hausa. It is evident that Hausa is a home language for majority of the children in Nima but not necessarily their ethnic language. It is used as the lingua franca for most immigrants from Northern Ghana who have settled in Nima. Thus, Hausa is the language commonly used by both adults and children in addressing each other, giving instructions, reporting, insulting, etc. hence its use encourages many children to actively participate in communicative events. In addition, we notice that though all children observed in Accra Newtown and Madina have the dominant languages, English or Akan, in their repertoire, these two languages were not actively used among the children in Nima.

Language shift and/or maintenance.

Batibo (2005) explains language maintenance and/or shift as a language contact situation in which a speech community may use their respective languages in all domains or prefer to learn and use a new language in all domains or use the newly acquired language in specified domains. Despite the fact that some parents motivate their children to learn their ethnic language(s) by using it/them as a medium of interaction at home with their children, the dominance

of Akan, English and Hausa in the communities greatly influences children's socialisation patterns. Some of the parents, thus rather socialise the children to these dominant languages – English, Akan and Hausa, at the expense of their own ethnic languages. For instance, an Akan couple in Nima uses Hausa with their child in all domains, but uses Akan with one another. Such practices appear to account for the mismatch in children's first language and their parents' ethnic language. Some parents with the language maintenance view buy story books and beginner's readers in their ethnic languages for their children. This effort gives the children an opportunity to have a shared repertoire with their parents at home and its environs.

Attitudes regarding children's language learning and use

The participants' language use pattern suggests a fluid correlation of socialising agents' language practice and attitudes. Twelve parents out of twenty (i.e. 60%) have a positive attitude towards their children's individual bilingualism, especially their ability to use English in various domains. The expectation is that with those linguistic skills, the children would easily cope in various socio-economic settings. A parent in Accra Newtown had this to say:

13. Accra Newtown parent (2:00 pm) 18/08/14

When my child speaks English, I become so excited because it is the language which is used at many official functions. It is the official language of the country. I have actually invested in it so that in the near future my child could secure a white-collar job.

This assertion lends support to Dako & Quarcoo's (2017) finding that, on account of its prestige, parents feel compelled to use English at home instead of their own native languages. This observation also corroborates Andoh-Kumi's (1997) finding that some parents get disappointed when they realise that their children learn their own native languages at school.

It was evident that a few parents (5) felt anxious and tensed that their children's use of English would appear to give rise to lack of knowledge of their cultural values, which are embedded in their language(s). This group of parents set great store by the development of their cultural and social identity. It appears that if their children cannot speak their indigenous languages, it will become very difficult for them to integrate into their home environment (home village/town). This is what one parent had to say:

14. Nima parent (3:30 pm) 23/08/14

I do not want my village folks to insult me for not doing the right thing. If I do not socialise my children with Asante-Twi and the children get to Kumasi, which language will they speak with my mother who cannot speak English or Ga? I feel those parents who socialise their children with English or another language rather than theirs are not proud of their first language, but my husband and I are proud of our language.

In this scenario, the lack of opportunity to speak the ethnic language of one's parents means lack of shared values as one may not be accepted as a member of the speech community, particularly in the home village/town.

Still fewer parents (only three out of twenty) are neutral as they are indifferent to their children's ability to speak more languages inclusive of their ethnic language. For this group, so long as the children can cope with the language contact situation at home and in the school, they are fine.

15. Madina parent (1:30 pm) 24/08/14

You know that no matter how well I speak English with my children, they may not be as good as the children who are native speakers. Their English will never be like the native English children because

they are Ghanaians who have their ethnic languages. For English, when they go to school, I am very sure that their teachers will teach them to make up for the skills they lack.

From the observations and discussions with the children, it is evident that the children's ability to actively participate in the various communicative events and situations is largely related to language choice patterns of parents and other socialising agents. As a result, children's language socialisation practices, language use patterns and ability to actively participate during communicative events depend largely on the positive and negative experiences that co-exist in the multilingual environments and how the socialising agents perceive the languages and people who use such codes.

In the case of lack of proficiency in English, Akan, Hausa, Ewe or Ga, some of the children who could not actively interact with their peers felt the need to learn one of these languages. Some of the older children contend that their use of English is a sign of prestige. Its use puts them in the privileged class within the communities. The various attitudes of the parents, neighbours and peers towards the language socialisation of children in this study confirms what Pease-Alvarez (2003) identified in her study of parental ideologies on children's Spanish language socialisation. She asserts that some parents abandon the use of Spanish and shift to the use of English with their children. She adds that these parents prioritise the need for work outside the speech community over identity development.

Conclusion

In this paper, we have discussed the prospects of children learning language(s) and developing bi/multilingual abilities in Ghana with a focus on compound houses in Accra, which are multiethnic and multicultural contexts suitable for these abilities. It is shown that the children's language experiences in the households are different from, and are sometimes overshadowed, by the language used in the macro environment. Majority of children in the compound houses of Accra New Town and Madina use

English in all domains, while children in Nima use English largely in the school but not within their informal social networks. Three languages – English, Akan and Hausa, are the active and predominant languages used in all the informal communicative events within the compound houses in all the three suburbs, with Ewe and Ga having some restricted domains of use (in-group languages). In the compound houses, the children’s language choices and use reflect, to some extent, their parents’ shift from socialising the children to use a Ghanaian language as a first language to English. Again, some parents use dominant languages, such as Akan and Hausa, to the disadvantage of their ethnic language(s). However, few parents reinforced their ethnic language in their children’s repertoire. Over time, and in response to one’s ability to participate in most, if not all communicative events in the speech community, the children were motivated to learn multiple languages, where Akan and/or English is/are constant, while Hausa is peculiar to those who reside in Nima. To cope with the diversity of their play groups and topics for discussions, the children code-mix during interactions. The communicative contexts, events, as well as the socialising agents’ language choices combine to play a crucial role in the development of bi/multilingual abilities of children. These abilities are not always reflective of the parents’ ethnic languages. In this regard, we encourage an ethnographic study on how the language socialisation practices aid the children’s literacy and numeracy development at school.

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Gender bias in media representation of political actors: Examples from Nigeria's 2015 presidential election

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Abstract

As in other parts of the world, the Nigerian news media, in its coverage of electioneering, has been accused of marginalizing female politicians. To establish the veracity of this claim, we examined how Nigerian newspapers reported campaign activities of the major presidential candidates during Nigeria's 2015 presidential election. Using the theories of media framing and market-oriented journalism, we undertook content analysis of 194 editions of three randomly selected newspapers—The Punch, The Guardian and the Daily Sun. The findings confirmed a media framing that marginalized female politicians as Nigerian newspapers gave prominence and intense coverage to male presidential aspirants as opposed to their female counterparts.

Keywords: Nigeria's 2015 presidential election, gender and politics, media coverage electioneering, media framing.

Introduction

In every democratic society, the media is considered significant because of its roles in informing, sensitizing, and mobilizing the populace. Given the popularity and acceptance of democracy as the modern form of governance in most countries of the world, political activities often and naturally enjoy media preference in terms of reportage (Graber, 1996). The significance of the media is particularly eminent during elections wherein

the need for information to empower the citizens to participate in politics becomes critical. The objective reporting of political matters by the media further enables the electorate to be familiar with the issues and information germane to governance, those who control the affairs of the state, or those who are aspiring to rule (Dimitrova, Sheheta, Stromback & Nord, 2014). The media drives electioneering processes and enables the masses to make informed political decisions and take judicious action in terms of electing leaders.

During the election time, citizens are likely to rely heavily on the media to get information about aspiring political leaders and party candidates. The information around manifestoes and the ideological stance of each aspirant would arm the electorate to take the right decisions at polls. However, the objectivity of journalists in reporting socio-political issues often determine the level of trust the citizens have in the media to serve the political system (Oso, 2012; Bucy, D'Angelo & Bauer, 2014; Carkoglu, Baruh & Yildirim, 2014). Lack of objectivity is an ethical problem. Journalists are expected to detach themselves from authorial influence, political ideology, personal opinion, or partisan stance (Nassanga, 2008; Oso, 2012; Adaja, 2013). In a situation where the journalist is driven by these negative values, the citizenry become the prime victims as they may be fed with skewed information capable of influencing them to give the news story wrong interpretations and take wrong decisions that may have grave consequences for the political system. One of the ways in which journalists could violate the moral principle of fairness (Ayodele, 1988; Nassanga, 2008; Tucher, 2009) during elections is the manner in which they represent the political candidates. Factors such as ownership, ethnicity, religion, political affiliation, commercial proposition Agbalajobi (2010) and gender chauvinism could drive journalists to sacrifice fairness during the coverage of elections. For instance, it has been argued that female presidential candidates are silent in electoral races and the media are blamed for this absence (Thorsten, 2005; Ette, 2017). This phenomenon implies that females do not enjoy the privilege of being well represented in the presidential

race (Ette, 2017) and are, therefore, deprived from enjoying the freedom of free expression and inclusion that underscore the values of a true democracy.

The problem

The phenomenon of unequal gender representation in Nigeria's political framework is not debatable. Most of the high-profile political seats such as the National Assembly leadership, the position of the Vice-President and the exalted office of the President are, seemingly as a default, occupied by males (Inter-Parliamentary Report, 2007; Sankore, 2017). It has been observed that gender inequality in Nigerian politics seems to have been institutionalized as only 5.6% of members of the 8th National Assembly inaugurated on June 9, 2015 are women. This figure indicates that "Nigeria has the lowest representation of female parliamentarians in Africa and the tenth lowest out of 190 parliaments globally" (Sankore, 2017, p. 56). Although there was a time when Nigeria produced the first female speaker (Patricia Etteh) for the House of Representatives, her tenure was short-lived as a result of intense political intrigues. To buttress this lack of equity in the gender representation in Nigerian politics, Ajayi (2007) and the Inter-Parliamentary Report (2007) have also observed and documented the lack of intense competition between the male and the female political candidates vying for the same political seat. In his argument regarding unequal gender representation, Ryan (2013) has blamed this situation of skewed male-female representation and eventual emergence and re-emergence of male dominance in the Nigerian political terrain on the lack of balanced and intense media coverage of female candidates in electoral contests.

Gender imbalance in Nigeria is not limited to political representation; it is a phenomenon that affects all societal spheres in the country. Scholars (e.g. Salawu, 2006; Mudhai, Wright & Musa, 2016) have argued that, unlike the case in Kenya and South Africa with improved gender representation, the Nigerian media environment, especially with regard to training and practice, is plagued with social and cultural practices that discriminate

against women; and is skewed with respect to media ownership, practice, access and use, especially as the overall media terrain is dominated by men (Ngwu, 2015). Also, while executing the Amnesty Programme in the Niger Delta of Nigeria, the political actors and concerned government agencies grossly marginalized women: Palliative measures to the militancy crisis in the Niger Delta were applied without addressing the issue of gender in the conceptualization of strategic political and economic stability in the region as government employed a purely masculine approach to the problems (Amusan, 2014). Despite the gender-dominated political terrain, in 2015, Nigeria's political history recorded a landmark as the first female presidential candidate, Professor (Mrs.) Comfort Oluremi Sonaiya, took part in the electoral contest under the banner of the KOWA Party (the Vanguard [Nigeria], 18 March 2015). But how the media represented Mrs. Remi Sonaiya as a female presidential candidate is still a subject of debate.

To investigate the foregoing argument that women have not been fairly represented by Nigerian media, scholars such as Oyesomi and Oyero (2012) conducted a newspaper coverage of female politicians but limited the investigation and analysis to the 2011 gubernatorial elections just to find out the visibility of female politician-candidates in Nigerian politics. The study reported low media coverage of female participation in politics. Also, Ette (2017, p. 1480) examines the spatial representation of Nigerian women politicians in the news media of Nigeria during the 2015 general elections. The findings of the study show that "women do not only occupy limited space in the news media but are also marginalized in political news despite decades of advocacy for gender equality". Ette, therefore, argues that the limited visibility of women in political news encourages marginalization and "reinforces assumptions that 'only men do politics'". The author also inferred that Nigerian news media, with its scant attention given to women in politics, "reinforces patriarchal understanding of politics and consequently highlights the manifest and latent obstacles that women encounter in the political arena" (p. 1480). Other scholars (e.g. Fatile, Olufemi, Ighodalo, Igbokwe, Chiyeaka, Oteh & Chukwuemeka, 2012;

Ugwuede, 2014) in similar studies also captured the challenges of female politicians' participation which have resulted in the low visibility of female politician-candidates at elections. The common trend established by the studies was that as a result of the lack of financial capacity and socio-cultural beliefs, female political candidates themselves believe that there are no opportunities for them to hold influential political positions. This phenomenon could also contribute to the low media attention female politician-candidates receive at election times.

Despite various studies on participation of women politicians and media attention they receive (e.g. Quadri, 2015; Isika, 2016; Ette, 2017), how Nigerian newspapers represented the only female presidential candidate during the 2015 presidential elections in Nigeria in terms of the degree and nature of media attention the female politician got compared to her male counterparts has not received ample scholarly attention. This study, therefore, carried out a gender-based comparative analysis of media coverage of the presidential candidates during Nigeria's 2015 presidential election with a view to establishing the difference, if any, in how Nigerian newspapers reported electioneering activities of the only female presidential candidate and those of her male counterparts. The selected presidential candidates are Comfort Oluremi Sonaiya of the KOWA Party, Goodluck Ebele Jonathan of the People's Democratic Party (PDP), and Muhammadu Buhari of the All Progressives Congress (APC). Muhammadu Buhari is a former military Head of State from 31 December 1983 to 27 August 1985; Goodluck Jonathan served as Governor of Bayelsa State from 2005 to 2007 and Nigerian Vice-President from 2007 to 2010, while Mrs. Oluremi Sonaiya, a retired Professor of French Language and Applied Linguistics, never occupied any exalted political office. The presidential candidates were selected for two reasons: One, Mrs. Sonaiya was the only female candidate in the election and first in Nigeria's political history; two, while Goodluck Jonathan was the flag bearer of the ruling party (PDP), Muhammadu Buhari was the presidential candidate of the mega-opposition party (APC).

It was believed that the three candidates, given their political peculiarities, would attract more media attention and could reflect patterns of media coverage of political actors of the presidential election. To achieve the study objectives, we answered this core research question: *What is the degree of prominence, especially in terms of gender-based difference in coverage, given to the presidential candidates by the selected newspapers?* To answer this question, we also tested the Null Hypothesis (HO): *There will be no statistically significant difference in the scores for the male aspirants and the female aspirant in terms of media coverage they received during Nigeria's 2015 presidential election.* Findings of this study did not just reveal the nature and degree of coverage given to the political candidates but also established the level of balance and fairness exercised by the Nigerian newspapers in their representation of the sole female presidential aspirant compared with her male counterparts. The study provided further basis for understanding whether or not Nigerian news media ensures gender parity in serving the nation's democracy, particularly in how they report political matters.

Literature review

Media and coverage of electoral contests

While an election is one of the fundamental components of democracy because of the ballots through which citizens choose their government representatives, the media provides the platform for public debates and exchange of political ideals and ideologies. Of course, the media cannot be left out of electioneering and general electoral activities. It plays a critical role in the political system by providing a link between politicians and the citizens (Atkinson & Krebs, 2008). In supporting this assertion, Ace Project (2012) submits that modern-day elections are impossible without the media. Right from the era of colonialism to the current democratic dispensation, the media has consistently served as an important avenue for political education and information dissemination. The media as an institution serves as the channel of communication and information for the electorate. In espousing this critical position of

the media in the electoral process, Ibraheem, Ogwezzy-Ndesikka and Tejumaiye (2015) contend that the media has the power to control and condition the thinking of the electorate, especially during an election year when they have to make choices among different political candidates seeking public offices. This implies that the media serves as agent of power and political control and can influence the perceptions of the electorate about the political system and their government representatives.

While reporting electioneering activities, journalists serve as gatekeepers (Shoemaker, Eichholz, Kim & Wrigley, 2001; McKain, 2005; McQuail, 2007; Barzinlai-Nahon, 2008) who decide which information, ideologies, or political aspirants receive prominence and are reported in positive tones. The extent to which journalists adhere to the principles of fairness, balance, and objectivity in applying the news selection criteria (Shepard, 1999; McGregor, 2010) defines the quality of information the electorate get during elections. As much as balanced and fair representations of all political aspirants and their manifestoes would arm the electorate to take guided decisions and choose the right leaders, skewed and biased representations of political aspirants could have grave consequences for the democratic project as citizens are likely to make wrong decisions that could spell doom for the political system.

Review of some empirical studies on media and coverage of gender during electoral contests

It is considered particularly important to explore the myriad of arguments and some existing studies on the issue of gender in media coverage during electoral contests. According to Thorsten (2005) the media employs a gender filter in the coverage of election and the reporting of political candidates. This gender filter is an instrument of exclusion or integration that the media employs in representing both genders vying for the same electoral seat. As reported by Anorue, Obayi and Onyebuchi (2012) and Oyesomi and Oyero (2012), although the media coverage given to female political candidates is usually low, the tone used by media to report

the female candidates are somewhat favorable. The implication is that even though the female politicians are likely to be reported in a more favorable tone compared to how men are reported, women-politicians may not enjoy the same level of prominence their men counterparts enjoy. A study in Kenya by African Women and Child Future Service (2013) is similar to the Nigerian case. The authors find that 1% of what is seen or read in the print and broadcast media was about female politicians in contrast to reports on the male politicians which were aggregated at 74%.

In studies in the Western context, however, male and female candidates received almost equal attention from newspapers (Hayes, Lawless & Baitinger, 2014; Hayes & Lawless, 2015). The authors, however, fail to clarify if there are gender-biased tones in media coverage of the candidates. A study by Aalberg and Jenssen (2007) in Norway investigated the media coverage of male and female political candidates during electoral contests. It was recorded that the media gave 42.2% coverage to women contesting in an election, a finding that seems to confirm Hernes' (1987) assertion that Norway is not a male-chauvinist state. However, the study also established that, influenced by how the media represents the male political candidates, the electorate see male politicians as being more knowledgeable, convincing and trustworthy than the female aspirants. This could provide a scenario that is contrary to what obtains in Nigeria where women have remained under-reported and perpetual victims of cultural discrimination and failing statehood (Ette, 2017; Onyenwere, 2017).

It could be inferred from the foregoing empirical evidence that, overall, female political actors do not receive the same level of treatment by the mass media. However, scholars have argued that the media could not be totally blamed for this seeming bias, as other factors could be responsible. For instance, Aluaigba (2015) posits that the funding of candidates in an electoral contest is a necessity for media coverage of political candidates. This implies that he who pays the piper calls the tune; without sufficient funds, there will be inadequate media coverage of electoral activities. Using empirical evidence to explain the gender disparities in the media coverage of

politics, Agbalajobi (2010) conducted a study and found a twist, shifting the blame away from the media. The study linked unequal media coverage of gender in political race to lack of financial backing, political violence, lack of self-confidence, and illiteracy. The research finding could imply that to be politically strong in the media coverage of electoral contests, political candidates, regardless of their gender, should have strong financial backing, technical capability to handle the violent dramas that might come up, and have good educational qualifications.

As reported by the Vanguard newspaper [Nigeria] (23 March, 2015), with only five days to 28 March 2015 elections, major political parties, friends and well-wishers of those contesting for elective offices spent N4.9 billion (about 24.6 million USD then)¹ on advertisement alone. The details provided by the report show that only the ruling party (PDP) and the main opposition party (APC) had stronger financial capacity than other parties. Based on this evidence that huge amount of money was invested in advertisement by most of the political parties to participate in electoral contests, it can be inferred that the media cannot be totally blamed for projecting certain presidential candidates more than the others. The literature has shown that across the world, there are always instances of gender disparity in how the media projects political actors, especially during elections, but this phenomenon could vary from one country to another or from one period of time to another. Therefore, there is still the need to investigate how the media represented the political aspirants in Nigeria's presidential election of 2015, which marked the first time in Nigeria's political history when a political party (i.e. The KOWA² Party) would field a woman as its presidential flag bearer in the person of Professor (Mrs.) Comfort Oluremi Sonaiya (Isika, 2016). Compared to

1 The exchange rate during the period leading to the 2015 elections was N199.257 to 1USD. Therefore, N4.9 billion times \$199.257 would give 24.6 million USD.

2 KOWA is not an acronym, but is written in capital letters. It is a word that has different meanings in different Nigerian languages. For example, in Igbo, KOWA means "explain". The word could also mean "openness" and "transparency". In Hausa, KOWA means "everybody". This suggests "all of us are members", "our own party". In Yoruba, KOWA means "let it come". This could suggest "let the good life come". It could also suggest "positive change", the party's main campaign mantra during the 2015 general elections.

previous studies on Nigeria's 2015 general elections, our current study is unique in terms of its emphasis. For instance, while Ette's (2017) study focused on news media representation of Nigerian women candidates during the 2015 general elections, our study is more specific as it focuses on how the Nigerian newspapers reported Mrs. Sonaiya, the only female presidential candidate, compared to how the media reported the flag bearers of the ruling party (Goodluck Jonathan of PDP) and the mega-opposition party (Muhammadu Buhari of APC).

Theoretical framework

Two theories are adopted for this study—the Media Framing and the Market-Oriented Journalism theories. Framing, as related to the mass media, is defined by McCombs (2004, p. 87) as the selection of, and placing emphasis on, particular attributes for the news media agenda when talking about an object, an issue, or a person (i.e. the fact of cutting and trimming a news story in order to filter it and shape it as the sender wishes). Entman (2007) explains that to frame is to select some fragments of social issues and make them more significant and salient than others in a communicating context. The primary aim of framing is to promote or suggest causal interpretation, definition, moral evaluation, or treatment of a perceived reality. The nature of these framing elements would always influence the interpretation that the audience would give to the communicated message. Another definition is provided by Severin and Tankard (2001), who define framing in news media as the process of structuring news content through selection, emphasis, inclusion, exclusion, and elaboration. The media actors decide what to emphasize, what to suppress or what to exclude from the media content (Druckman, 2001; Scheufele & Tewksbury, 2007).

The underlying tenet of the media framing theory is that the mass media uses frames to structure and draw attention of the mass audience to certain public issues in such a manner that does not only communicate the salient issues of the day but also dictates the media's preferred slants that may influence how the audience perceive the issues. The theory operates on the notion that

journalists' influence on selection and salience (i.e. how an issue or person is characterized in a news report) in terms of variables such as placement and space, can have an impact on how the mass audience interpret the story (Entman, 1993; Scheufele & Tewksbury, 2007). In other words, the journalists, acting as gatekeepers, select certain frames of public issues which could influence how the audience think about or react to such issues in the context supplied by the media. Since the assumption in our current study is that Nigerian newspapers would exhibit unequal gender representation in their framing of political aspirants during the 2015 general elections in Nigeria, the Media Framing Theory is, considered appropriate for the study. The theory guided our selection of units of analysis and construction of the content analytical categories.

The second theory we selected for this study is the Market-Oriented Journalism Theory of news production. The theory, as noted by McManus (2005), is premised on the notion that media outfits are business-oriented and profit-driven. In other words, for the media to survive, they seek revenue to publish news. The interest and the cost of uncovering and reporting an event constitute the core tenets of the market-oriented journalism theory. McManus (2005) anchors the principle of the market-oriented journalism theory on the proposition, among others, that the probability of an event becoming what the media selects as news is directly proportional to the expected breadth of appeal of the story to the larger audiences and what advertisers will pay to reach the audience. Based on the tenets of this theory, it becomes clear that it is not just about reporting news but also about reporting news and events that will bring economic benefit to the news agency. This, in the context of this study, suggests that for the electoral activities of candidates to be reported or publicized, political candidates are supposed to run campaigns, hold political rallies, establish projects and pay the media to report such events. In other words, to receive the media attention and consequently become popular among the electorate, an aspiring politician will have to pay the media.

The relevance of the market-oriented theory to this study

is based on the fact that there is a connection between the framing theory and the market-oriented journalism theory especially in the gatekeeping process (Shoemaker, Eichholz, Kim & Wrigley, 2001; Shoemaker, 2006). While making editorial decisions, there are some external variables that affect what journalists select as news and how such items selected are framed. These variables include market forces, political alliances, and influence of competitors, (McManus, 2005; Shoemaker & Vos 2009; Reese & Ballinger, 2001; Ojebuyi, 2012). This connection provides the basis for understanding how variables such as market orientation affect the final product that the news media gives to the audience (Ferrucci, 2015). As a matter of fact, all media organizations are, to a certain extent, market-oriented (Beam, 1998; Beam, 2001). The media outfits in Nigeria are profit-oriented given the fact that the media industry in the country operates in a neo-liberal context that encourages profit-driven enterprises (Akinfeleye, 2008; Ojebode, 2009; Olorunnisola, 2009). This suggests that the amount of prominence or coverage the media selected for this study gave to the political candidates might, to a degree, be determined by the financial capability of such candidates or their parties.

Methodology

Method and materials

The primary aim of this research was to establish the extent of gender disparities in the media coverage given to Oluremi Sonaiya, the presidential candidate of the KOWA Party as opposed to the coverage given to Goodluck Jonathan of the People's Democratic Party and Muhammadu Buhari of the All Progressives Congress party. We employed content analysis as the research method focusing on the print media. Initially, six newspapers were purposively selected based on the criteria of geographical appeal, wide readership base, and national coverage. The selected newspapers are The Nation, the Vanguard, The Guardian, The Nigerian Tribune, The Daily Trust, and The Daily Sun. Out of these six, three newspapers (i.e. The Punch, The Guardian, and the

Daily Sun) were randomly selected for final analysis. A total of 375 editions were purposively selected from 15 November 2014 to 20 March 2015 because the period marked the peak of electoral activities in Nigeria (BBC News, 2015). Only editions that reported political stories, articles or pictures of the presidential candidates were first considered. Through a systematic random sampling, 194 editions were finally selected from the purposively selected 375 editions, with a sample size of 194 stories calculated based on the simple model as shown below:

$$n = \frac{N}{1 + N(e)^2}$$

Where, n = the required sample size.

N = Total population of the study

e = the expected error (0.05)

1 = Constant

$$n = \frac{375}{1 + 375(0.05)^2}$$

$$n = \frac{375}{1 + 375(0.0025)}$$

$$n = \frac{375}{1 + 0.9375}$$

$$n = 194$$

From the total sample of 194 editions of the selected newspapers, we looked for pure editorial contents on political stories (i.e. hard news, features, and editorials). To complement the editorial contents, we also considered the extra-editorial components (e.g. paid adverts, personality profiles, and profile pictures) that

related to Muhammadu Buhari (APC), Comfort Olueremi Sonaiya (The KOWA Party), and Goodluck Jonathan (PDP). We got a total of 565 content matters that we finally analysed.

Unit of analysis and content categories

Our choice of the unit of analysis and content categories for coding and analysis was guided by the tenet of the Media Framing Theory, which explains that selection and salience (i.e. how an issue or a person is characterized in a news report) in terms of variables such as placement and space, can have an impact on how the mass audience interpret the story (Entman, 1993; Scheufele & Tewksbury, 2007).

Each news story, article, or picture on the presidential candidates of the three political parties (KOWA, PDP, and APC) was the unit of analysis that we analysed. In order to establish the extent of coverage and prominence given to the candidates, we used **story placement, formats, and amount of space** given to an individual story. These three variables are components of the *macroconstruct* of framing journalists often use to construct news stories in a way that “resonates with existing underlying schemas among their audience” (Scheufele & Tewksbury, 2007, p. 12). Further, we disaggregated the story formats into editorial contents (i.e. hard news, features/soft news, and editorials) and extra-editorial contents (i.e. advertisements, profile pictures, and personality profiles). What informed this disaggregation was our belief that the selection of the extra-editorial content would be influenced more by profit-driven preference as espoused in the tenets of Market-Oriented Journalism Theory. The content categories are explained as follows:

Placement of the reports: This was the positioning of the news items on the pages of the newspapers whether on the front, inside, or back of the newspapers:

- a. *Front page:* any of the story formats about the candidates found on the first page.

- b. *Back page*: any of the story formats about the candidates found on the last page.
- c. *Inside page*: any of the story formats about the candidates found on the inside pages of the newspapers.

Format: This refers to the type of news or stories that were used to report the presidential candidates. Here, we have two formats: editorial contents (hard news, features/soft news, and editorials) and extra-editorial contents (advertisements, profile pictures, and personality profiles).

- a. *Hard news*: These are current news stories reporting the political activities of the presidential candidates. They are straight-forward news typically believed to be factual and unbiased, and not to have been sponsored by news actors.
- b. *Editorials*: These refer to the newspaper judgement or opinions on the presidential candidates.
- c. *Features*: They are extended stories in the column sections that directly or indirectly refer to the presidential candidates.
- d. *Personality Profiles*: These are interviews and autobiographies of the candidates done to promote the political credentials of the candidates.
- e. *Advertisements*: These are sponsored messages which were meant to promote political interest of the affected presidential candidates.
- f. *Profile Pictures*: These are pictorial representations of the presidential candidates; they were used solely to project the image of the aspirants.

Space: This refers to the size or length of the story formats on the pages of the newspaper. Space could be captured in the following ways:

- a. *Short length*: These are stories with the size below mid-point of the newspaper.
- b. *Medium length*: These are stories that do not extend beyond the mid-point of the page of the newspaper.
- c. *Long length*: These are stories with the size above the mid-point of the page of the newspaper.

Validity and reliability of the instrument

In order to gather appropriate and relevant data for this study, the instrument to be used for the research was tested for validity and reliability. Thus, an inter-coder reliability test was conducted among two coders. As Wimmer and Dominick (2011) explain, the inter-coder test helps the researcher to achieve an objective and reliable result. We used Holsti's (1969) formula for the inter-coder reliability test as presented by Wimmer and Dominick (2011):

$$\text{Reliability} = \frac{2N}{N_1 + N_2}$$

N represents the number of coding decisions with which the two coders agree where N1 and N2 are the total number of the coding decisions by the first coder and the second coder respectively. The inter-coder reliability test was carried out on 10% of the selected stories. As decided by two independent coders, the test showed **0.81** reliability index. This means that the coding sheet was reliable and capable of producing valid results as the two coders agreed on almost all the content categories applied to the sample selected.

Results

We presented the results according to the categories of **placement**, **space**, and **format**. These are the components of *macroconstruct* of framing (Scheufele & Tewksbury, 2007) that guided our analyses. We also accounted for extra-editorial contents (i.e. advertisements, profile pictures, and personality profiles) that could be functions of the financial strength of the candidates or

their political parties rather than being subjected to pure editorial manipulation by journalists. Overall, a total of 565 content matters on the three presidential candidates were analyzed. From the gender perspective, our findings show an imbalanced structure in the pattern of media attention the three candidates received during the 2015 electioneering.

Placement As presented in Table 1 below, Muhammadu Buhari got 37.9% and 45.7% of front-page and back-page reports respectively; Goodluck Jonathan got 62.1% of front-page reports and 54.3% of back-page reports. As expected, given the trend already established in the literature, Sonaiya did not receive any coverage on the front and back pages of the selected newspapers. The scanty eight reports on her constituting only 1.4% of the total items analysed were found on the inside pages of the newspapers.

Table 1: Placement of coverage given to the presidential candidates

CANDIDATES	PAGES			
	Front	Inside	Back	Total
	F (%)	F (%)	F (%)	F (%)
Buhari	24 (37.9)	218 (46.8)	16 (45.7)	258 (45.7)
Jonathan	41 (62.1)	239 (51.1)	19 (54.3)	299 (52.9)
Sonaiya	0 (0.00)	8(1.7)	0 (0.00)	8 (1.4)
Total	66 (100)	464 (100)	35 (100)	565 (100)

Space

The extent of media coverage given to the three candidates based on space allocated as presented on Table 2 indicates that,

overall, Jonathan got the most media space (n = 299; 52.9%) among the three candidates. From the gender angle, however, the two male candidates got more media space than did the female candidate. Jonathan was given more space with 54.5% of long-length reports and 54.1% of short-length news stories while Buhari was given 44.1% of long-length stories and 44.0% of short-length stories respectively. Conversely, Sonaiya recorded only 1.4% of long-length stories and 1.8% of short-length stories.

Table 2: Percentage coverage given to the presidential candidates based on space

CANDIDATES	SPACE			
	Long	Medium	Short	Total
	F (%)	F (%)	F (%)	F (%)
Buhari	126 (44.1)	84 (49.4)	48 (44.0)	258 (45.7)
Jonathan	156 (54.5)	84 (49.4)	59 (54.1)	299 (52.9)
Sonaiya	4 (1.4)	2 (1.2)	2 (1.8)	8 (1.4)
Total	286 (100)	170 (100)	109 (100)	565 (100)

Story formats (editorial content)

The story formats used by the selected newspapers to report the three candidates also portrayed frames of gender bias. As shown in Table 3, apart from receiving the least coverage across all the story formats, Sonaiya did not get any coverage in terms of hard news. Conversely, Jonathan (54.0%) and Buhari (46.0%) received substantial amount of hard news coverage by the newspapers. Curiously, Sonaiya got her scanty media coverage only through features (n = 4; 2.6%). Perhaps because of his incumbency status, Jonathan received the highest amount (n = 154; 53.5%) of media

attention across all story formats.

Table 3: Percentage coverage given to the presidential candidates based on story formats (editorial content)

Candidates	Hard News	Features	Editorial	Total
	F (%)	F (%)	F (%)	F (%)
Buhari	58 (46.0)	72 (46.2)	0 (0.00)	130 (45.1)
Jonathan	68 (54.0)	80 (51.3)	6 (100)	154 (53.5)
Sonaiya	0 (0.00)	4 (2.6)	0 (0.00)	4 (1.4)
Total	126 (100)	156 (100)	6 (100)	288 (100)

Formats (extra-editorial contents)

In order to provide the probable link between commercial interest and editorial decision in the context of media framing and gatekeeping, we also accounted for frames of media coverage based on the extra-editorial contents (advertisement, profile pictures, and personality profiles of the candidates). As presented in Table 4, a similar pattern of coverage for the editorial contents also manifests here with Sonaiya receiving only 1.4% of the total coverage compared to the amounts of coverage given to Jonathan (52.3%) and Buhari (46.2%). Specifically, Jonathan had a total of 95 (53.1%) advertisements; Buhari had 84 (46.9%), while Sonaiya had none.

Table 4: Percentage coverage given to the presidential candidates based on extra-editorial contents

Candidates	Adverts	Personality Profile	Profile Picture	Total
	F (%)	F (%)	F (%)	F (%)
Buhari	84 (46.9)	22 (41.5)	22 (48.9)	128 (46.2)
Jonathan	95 (53.1)	29 (54.7)	21 (46.7)	145 (52.3)
Sonaiya	0 (0.00)	2 (3.8)	2 (4.4)	4 (1.4)
Total	179 (100)	53 (100)	45 (100)	277 (100)

We further tested the null hypothesis (Ho): There will be no statistically significant difference in the scores for the male aspirants and the female aspirant in terms of media coverage they received during Nigeria’s 2015 presidential election. In order to do this, we conducted an independent-samples t-test at 0.005 level of significance. As reported in Tables 5, 6 and 7, we compared the extent of disparity in the amount of media attention given to Sonaiya and her male counterparts—Buhari and Jonathan.

Table 5: Results of t-test on the media coverage and prominence of Buhari and Sonaiya

Variable	Sample	Mean	Std. Dev.	T	P-Value	Remark
Buhari	12	64.42	66.3			
				.834	.001	Sig
Sonaiya	12	2.0	2.412			

First, in Table 5, we present the t-test results indicating

disparity of media coverage between Buhari and Sonaiya. The t-test results show that there was a significant difference in the scores for Buhari (M=64.4, SD=66.3) and Sonaiya (M=2.0, SD=2.4); $t=0.834$, $p = 0.001$. The P-value as presented in Table 5 shows that the result is not greater than 0.005. The results suggest that Buhari received more media attention than did Sonaiya.

Table 6: Results of t-test on the media coverage and prominence of Goodluck Jonathan and Sonaiya

Variable	Sample	Mean	Std. Dev.	T	P-Value	Remark
Jonathan	12	74.5	66.3			
				.823	.001	Sig
Sonaiya	12	2.00	2.412			

The t-test results on Table 6 show that there was a significant difference in the scores for Jonathan (M=74.5, SD=66.3) and Sonaiya (M=2.0, SD=2.4); $t=0.823$, $p = 0.001$. The results statistically means that Jonathan and Sonaiya significantly differ again on the coverage and prominence level they got from the media. In other words, the newspapers reported Jonathan far more than they reported Sonaiya.

Table 7: Results of t-test on the media coverage and prominence presidential candidates

Variable	Sample	Mean	Std. Dev.	T	P-Value	Remark
Male	12	139.1667	126.37666			
				.830	.001	Sig
Female	12	2.00	2.412			

Table 7 compares the coverage and prominence given to Sonaiya and the two male presidential candidates—Buhari and Jonathan. The t-test results on Table 7 indicate that there was a statistically significant difference in the scores for the male aspirants (M=139.16, SD=126.37) and the female aspirant (M=2.0, SD=2.41); $t=0.830$, $p = 0.001$. Therefore, our hypothesis is rejected.

Male and female presidential candidates significantly differed on the coverage and prominence of media coverage they received: the male candidates received more media coverage and prominence than the female candidate did.

Discussion

As established in this study, the selected Nigerian newspapers (i.e. *The Punch*, *The Guardian*, and *the Daily Sun*) skewed their attention in favor of the male presidential aspirants giving comparatively insignificant attention to the only female candidate during the 2015 presidential election in Nigeria. As expected, while the two male presidential aspirants (Jonathan and Buhari), were reported frequently on the front and back pages of the newspapers, the female aspirant (Sonaiya) did not feature at all on the front and back pages of the newspapers. It is also curious to note that Sonaiya was reported only eight times on the inside pages representing just 1.7% of the total of 464 of reports found on the inside pages whereas Jonathan (n =239, 51.1%) and Buhari (n = 218; 46.8%) still got more reports on the inside pages. A similar trend is recorded for the length of the stories where Sonaiya got the least attention out of the three presidential aspirants: The two male candidates—Jonathan (n = 299; 52.9%) and Buhari (n = 258; 45.6%)—got more space than did Sonaiya with only 1.4% of the total space.

Overall, the t-test results suggest that the media coverage of the presidential candidates in Nigeria's 2015 presidential election on the basis of gender was significantly slanted and as such there is disparity in the coverage of the male and female presidential candidates. Specifically, our results suggest that the Nigerian newspapers have the tendency to report and foreground male-politicians more than female-politicians during election campaigns.

In terms of the formats of news stories reported about the three presidential candidates, the same trend of skewed attention by media is established. From all the 288 editorial contents analyzed, Mrs. Oluremi Sonaiya of the KOWA Party got negligible four reports representing just 1.4% of all formats of reports by the newspapers.

This is a sharp contrast to the amount of media attention given to the other two male presidential candidates—Goodluck Jonathan of the People’s Democratic Party (PDP) and Muhammadu Buhari of the All Progressives Congress (APC) who got 154 (53.5%) and 130 (45.1%) respectively of the editorial contents. Apart from being under-reported generally, Sonaiya did not get any newspaper report in the form of hard news, whereas Jonathan (54.0%) and Buhari (46.0%) were reported in the hard news formats. The few reports in editorial content Sonaiya got came only through features (n = 4; 2.6%). This is also extremely marginal compared to the amount of feature stories coverage given to Buhari (46.2%) and Jonathan (51.3%).

In addition, the extra-editorial contents (adverts, personality profiles and profile pictures) that were analyzed reflected gender bias and provided the basis for explaining the link between commercial interest and editorial decision as complex constructs in the overall media framing and gatekeeping process (Reese & Ballinger, 2001; Shoemaker, Eichholz, Kim & Wrigley, 2001; McManus, 2005; Shoemaker & Vos 2009). The finding shows that more shares of the extra-editorial content were given to both Jonathan (n=145; 52.3%) and Buhari (n = 128; 46.2%) compared to less than 2% coverage given to Sonaiya. Although, extra-editorial media contents are not expected to be influenced by pure journalistic values but by the advertisers, who must have paid for the contents to be published (Beam, 2001), the low coverage given to Sonaiya in both editorial and extra-editorial formats suggests that there is a link between the commercial capacity of a news subject and the amount of favorable media attention such a news subject receives (Ferrucci, 2015). News format is part of the macroconstruct journalists employ to frame social reality (Scheufele & Tewksbury, 2007). Each news format has its editorial relevance and functions. Naturally, for instance, hard news is a news genre that is believed to be factual, unbiased, and not to be sponsored. It is a news format that usually occupies the front pages of newspapers, and is expected to fulfil the social responsibility function of the news media. On the other hand,

newspaper contents such as adverts, profile interviews, and profile pictures are usually sponsored by the individuals being reported (Deahl, 2017). Paying more attention to hard news, which tends to serve the democratic political system, provides support for public order and enhances security of the state, suggests that the media is socially responsible (McQuail, 2007).

The slightly higher amount of reports recorded by Goodluck Jonathan ahead of Muhammadu Buhari could be attributed to the influence of incumbency. During the election campaigns that this study covered, Goodluck Jonathan was the sitting President of Nigeria and fielded as the presidential flag bearer of the ruling PDP. While Buhari enjoyed the widespread goodwill and strong support of his party (APC), a mega-coalition of different opposition parties that emerged from the terrible disintegration of the PDP, resulting in its (APC's) victory during the election (West Africa Network for Peace-building [WANEP], 2014), Jonathan enjoyed the benefits of incumbency for being the flag bearer of the ruling party. The combined political and financial strengths of the two parties (APC and PDP) could define the media coverage received by their respective presidential candidates and their performances at the presidential polls.

The trend of coverage established in this current study where the female presidential aspirant was neither reported on both the front and back pages of the newspapers nor given coverage in hard news format has some implications. One, the newspapers have tactically used some forms of frames (placement, space, and format) that marginalized the female candidate while male candidates were given prominence. This is because news stories on the front and back pages of newspapers attract more readerships and give more prominence to the news subjects and actors compared to inside-page stories. Two, the fact that Sonaiya was not reported in the hard news format might suggest that the monetary factor had exerted some influence on the media coverage of presidential candidates. Perhaps, the frequency of times Sonaiya could sponsor some adverts had influenced the number of stories done on her campaign, her visibility being limited only to profile interviews and profile

pictures.

These two phenomena have implications for both Media Framing Theory (McCombs, 2004; Druuckman, 2007; Entman (2007) and the Market-Oriented Journalism Theory (McManus, 2005; Ojebode and Owacgiu, 2013). For instance, as Entman (2007) explains, media framing comes to effect when news editors select some fragments of issues of public interest or report some individuals and make them more significant and salient than others in a communicating context. Also, Chong and Druckman (2007) believe that frame in news reporting is not only about the words and phrases the journalist uses to construct certain social reality, but it is also about use of visual elements and the presentation styles that the news reporters or their editors employ to present an issue or a news actor. In reference to the findings in our current study, the nature of the frames used by the selected newspapers to report the presidential aspirants, where the male candidates enjoyed greater prominence in terms of placement and frequency of coverage, could have some effect on the decisions of the electorate at the point of casting their votes for the respective candidates. In other words, the male candidates (Jonathan and Buhari) that got more attention from the news media, compared to the female aspirant (Sonaiya) that received insignificant media attention, won more votes from the electorate—**APC's Buhari:** 15,424,921; **PDP's Jonathan:** 12,853,162; **KOWA's Sonaiya:** 13,076 (*Independent National Electoral Commission* [INEC], 2015).

Further, the Market-Oriented Journalism Theory posits that modern journalism is not just about reporting news; but it is also about giving prominence to events or personalities that will bring economic benefit to the news agency. Of course, it has been empirically established that variables such as market orientation affect the final contents that the news media gives to the mass audience (Ferrucci, 2015). Therefore, for electoral activities of the presidential aspirants to be reported by the news media, the political candidates must have sponsored their campaigns, political rallies, profiles interviews, and pictures the media reported. As Aluaigba

(2015) and IPC (2015) have unanimously stated, in order to have intense media coverage of electioneering, which could mean a stiff electoral competition, the political candidates would need to have some financial backing. . The foregoing position reaffirms the findings by Agbalajobi (2010), who traced the unequal media coverage of gender in political race to the lack of financial strength among other factors. Our current findings also corroborate this view. Given their political affiliations, the flag bearers of the ruling PDP and the mega-opposition party APC respectively—Buhari and Jonathan—were expected to be in stronger financial positions to influence the media compared to Sonaiya, who was sponsored by a relatively weaker and smaller political party—KOWA.

Our current study has further reinforced the arguments put forward by Oyesomi and Oyero (2012) and Ette (2017) that the media's projection of female aspirants in politics is low as opposed to that of the male politicians. The implication is that this biased media coverage naturally puts the female aspirants at the disadvantaged position during electoral contests. It should be noted, however, that the findings in our current study present a scenario contrary to what Hayes and Lawless (2015) found from their a study of newspaper coverage of the 2010 US House of Representative mid-term election. Their study established that male and female candidates received almost equal mention in the newspapers. This difference could be attributed to the contextual peculiarity of most of African countries including Nigeria, where women are culturally regarded as being inferior (Mudhai, Wright and Musa, 2016). Hence, they are not expected to take dominant roles in politics and public administration of the patriarchal setting (Ette, 2017).

Conclusion

In this study, we have examined, from the media lens, the construct of gender which has been debated by scholars to be a disadvantage to the females, especially in the political terrain. Our findings show a wide disparity between male and female politicians in terms of the amount of attention they receive from the news media

during electioneering. Nigerian newspapers gave prominence and intense coverage to male presidential candidates while they underreported the female presidential candidate. We infer that apart from the hackneyed stereotype that women are always marginalized in politics, the disparities in the media coverage of male and female candidates during political contests could be a reflection of the financial strength of the two genders to dominate the media space, which could eventually determine their level of success during elections. It is, therefore, recommended that the institutions responsible for the regulation of the electoral process in Nigeria, and in other African countries with similar trends, to provide a mechanism that empowers both male and female politicians in such a way that they both have equal advantages during electioneering.

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Corruption is a big issue: A corpus-assisted study of the discursive construction of corruption in Ghanaian parliamentary discourse

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Abstract

The paper examines the discursive construction of corruption by Ghanaian parliamentarians. It uses as dataset a 1.9 million-word corpus of Hansards of debates and committee reports between 2005 and 2016. It draws on the frame theory and employs a corpus-assisted discourse studies (CADS) approach to explore the language of parliamentarians (MPs) in order to investigate how Ghanaian parliamentarians frame corruption. The paper attempts to answer the question: how do Ghanaian parliamentarians construct the subject of corruption in their debates and interactions? The paper finds that MPs discursively construct corruption as a huge systematic social canker that hinders socio-politico-economic development of Ghana. This suggests that stronger measures and more formidable parliamentary commitment are needed to fight corruption. The paper has implications for parliamentarians' fight against corruption in Ghana.

Keywords: frame, discursive construction, corruption, corpus-assisted discourse studies (CADS), Ghanaian parliamentary discourse

Introduction

Based on the assumption that 'language does not just passively reflect a pre-existing social reality [but] is an active agent in constructing that reality' (Christie, 2002, p. 16), this paper examines how Ghanaian parliamentarians construct corruption through their discourse on the floor of Parliament and in committee reports. Corruption in Ghana has attracted increased attention from politicians, the media, stakeholders, civil society organisations and the Ghanaian public. In the Transparency International's Corruption Perception Index (CPI) of 2012, Ghana scored 45%. It scored 46%

in 2013; 48% in 2014; 47% in 2015 and 43% in 2016 on perceived levels of public sector corruption. The 2016 score was the lowest, for which Ghana became the ‘second worst decliner’ in the index (Transparency International, 2017; Ghana Integrity Initiative, 2017; Starr FM, 2017). In 2015, Ghana was said to be the second most corrupt country in Africa (*Starrfmonline*, 2015). Corruption is perceived as highly pervasive in both public and private sectors of Ghana. Ghana’s legislature, the institution mandated to fight corruption, has been accused of corruption by some of its own MPs and other citizens (Ballentine, 2015; Gadugah, 2017; *Graphic Online*, 2017). In fact, it is suggested that Ghanaians voted out the incumbent president in the 2016 elections due to rampant corruption (Transparency International, 2017, p. 3).

The Parliament of Ghana is considered ‘the accountability institution in the fight against corruption in Ghana’ (Kan-Dapaah, 2015, p. 1). In other words, the Parliament of Ghana is mandated to check and fight corruption ‘and make its practice a high risk, low-gain activity’ (Kan-Dapaah, 2015, p. 17). But what does ‘corruption’ mean and how is it constructed in the Ghanaian political or legislative context? It is believed that national and cultural differences affect how different countries and people perceive and define corruption (Rose-Ackerman & Palifka 2011, pp. 233-272). The way corruption is defined and constructed is important because how it ‘is defined affects how it is viewed, which policy approaches are adopted, and which approaches are deemed to be legitimate’ (European Commission, 2011, p. 5). This is because the course of action one adopts to deal with a given problem is largely a function of one’s world-view.

Using a corpus-assisted discourse studies (CADS) approach and the frame theory, this paper examines the ways in which Ghanaian MPs construct corruption in their discourse. The paper addresses the following questions:

1. In what ways is corruption linguistically defined, described and constructed?

2. What are the frequent topics or themes that emerge from the construction of corruption by MPs?
3. Are there any cross-genre variations in terms of the description of corruption in the sub-corpora used for the study?

Answers to these questions will help unearth the importance Ghanaian parliamentarians attach to the issue of corruption in Ghana, given that they claim to fight it.

Some studies on corruption

In its 2015 world development report, (World Bank Group, 2015, p. 60) defines corruption broadly ‘as the use of public office for private gain’. The report further states that corruption exists in many forms:

Bribery, fraud, extortion, influence peddling, kickbacks, cronyism, nepotism, patronage, embezzlement, vote buying, and election rigging are all examples of actions that fit under that umbrella term ... A common response to all forms of corruption is to view them as acts committed by autonomous individuals: a bureaucrat takes a bribe; a traffic cop shakes down a driver; a judge sells his decision World Bank Group (2015, p. 60)

These perspectives on corruption are shared by Lambsdorff (2007, p. 16). For his part, Klitgaard (1998) defines corruption as:

the misuse of office for unofficial ends and includes Bribery, Extortion, Influence Peddling, Nepotism, Fraud, Embezzlement and the use of Speed Money which is money paid to government officials to speed up their consideration of a business matter falling within their jurisdiction¹.

¹ See also UNDP 2008 for full typology of corruption

Andvig, Fjeldstad, Amundsen, Sissener & Soreide (2000, cited in Rohwer, 2009, p. 42) have also identified four kinds of corruption, namely: (i) bribery – payments in money or kind, including kickbacks, commercial arrangements or pay-offs, which are usually made for the purposes of influencing decisions of public and private officials; (ii) embezzlement – the theft or stealing of resources; (iii) fraud – ‘an economic crime that involves some kind of trickery, swindle or deceit, ... manipulation or distortion of information, facts and expertise by public officials for their own profit’; and (iv) extortion – extracting money and other resources by using coercion, violence or threats of force. Contributing to the debate, Rose-Ackerman and Palifka (2016, p. 8) have identified nine forms of corruption:

- i. bribery – direct exchange of money, gifts or favours which violates rules relating to performance of duties, among others;
- ii. extortion – demanding bribes or favours before performing official duties;
- iii. exchange of favours – exchange of one broken rule for another;
- iv. nepotism – favouring one’s relatives or close associates;
- v. cronyism – preferring members of one’s group;
- vi. judicial fraud – judicial decisions based on the above-mentioned corruption types;
- vii. accounting fraud – deception regarding sales or profit;
- viii. electoral fraud – manipulation of electoral results;
- ix. public service fraud – any activity that undermines legal requirements of public service delivery.

Corruption can be characterised as ‘grand’ or ‘petty’ based on the value of the transaction involved. ‘Grand’ corruption (also called ‘political corruption’) occurs inside the high corridors of political power and at senior management levels; while ‘petty’ (also called ‘administrative’) corruption occurs at the lower levels of power and implementation of policies, where public officials and the public meet (U4, 2017, pp. 1-2). The former usually involves large amounts of money and benefits, while the latter involves petty sums of money and other essentials.

Ghana’s legislature, through the National Anti-Corruption Action Plan (NACAP), proposes a definition of corruption that improves upon the existing ones, viz: ‘the misuse of entrusted power for private gain’² (see Report of the Committee on Constitutional, Legal and Parliamentary Affairs on the NACAP (2012-2021)). The Committee recognises that even though this definition is ‘an improvement on the World Bank’s definition, [it] is not comprehensive enough to cover all types and instances of corruption’. This acknowledgement is crucial since there is also corruption in the private sector. The definition (including the others given above) says little or nothing about the dynamics of private sector corruption, and the intertwining nature of state and private spheres in relation to corruption (Brown & Cloke, 2011, p. 118). The definition ‘does not fully communicate the sense in which corruption can be thought of as a danger to the political community’ (Bukovansky, 2006, p. 199). The difficulty in getting a comprehensive definition of corruption stems from definers wanting to have a simple straightforward definition. While this paper does not offer a specific definition of corruption, it proposes the following. The definition of corruption should go beyond a simple-sentence construction. Definers should aim at giving not only all-encompassing simple-sentence definitions but also sub-definitions that cover specific forms and instances of corruption. Again, definitions of corruption must capture private sector corruption as well as draw the lines between public and private sector corruption.

2 This definition was borrowed from Transparency International (2010). Cf. Brown and Cloke (2011, p. 118)

This is necessary because there are people in the private sector, including ‘members of political parties who do not hold office but still have significant influence’ on the decisions of public officials (Bukovansky, 2006, p. 192).

Corruption has been studied from different perspectives, including perceptions and experiences of it (for example, Transparency International Corruption Perceptions Index, 2016, 2017); and its measurement (Rohwer, 2009; Heinrich & Hodess, 2011). It has also been studied from governance, prevention and control standpoints (Gray, 2011; Joutsen, 2011; Michael Koker, 2011). The effects of corruption on national development have been assessed (Rose-Ackerman & Palifka, 2016, p. 29), and corruption has been described as having ravaged the African continent (Lawal, 2007, p. 7). Rose-Ackerman and Palifka (2016) have investigated the frequency, forms, causes and consequences of corruption. Rose-Ackerman and Palifka (2016, p. 29) state that ‘countries with higher levels of corruption have lower levels of human development’, while the UNDP (2008, p. 14) asserts that ‘corruption and underdevelopment are intrinsically linked and likely to reinforce each other’. There is a strong correlation between corruption and economic growth and productivity (Lambsdorff, 2003, 2004). One thing is clear from the various studies on corruption: they indicate that corruption hinders development.

In Ghana, corruption has been studied and discussed variously: the perceptions of corruption (e.g. Transparency International, 2012, 2013, 2014, 2015); the causes, consequences and control of corruption (Afesorghor, 2016); and the effects of corruption on economic growth and development (Abbey, 2005; Sakyi, 2011) and the fight against corruption (Gyimah-Boadi, 2002; Kan-Dapaah, 2015). In his study of the *Role of Parliament in the fight against corruption*, Kan-Dapaah (2015) concentrates on Parliament’s role in scrutinising, debating and approving the government’s budget statement, including the subsequent monitoring of how budgetary allocations to ministries, departments and agencies (MDAs) are expended.

While the above-mentioned studies provide strong evidence of the perception of corruption around the world, including Ghana, and indicate measures being put in place to fight it, with the exception of Bukovansky (2006), none has looked at corruption from a linguistic/language point of view to enable us to see how corruption is framed or constructed. Lack of such studies deprives us of access to the thought processes and the mind-sets of the legislators who make anticorruption laws. Having access to legislators' mind-sets will inform us about their understanding of corruption. This is crucial because one thing to consider when assessing whether existing measures for fighting corruption are effective is the legal framework (UNDP, 2015, p. 77). Therefore, assessing how Ghanaian parliamentarians, as lawmakers, frame corruption is essential.

Theoretical framework: Frame theory

The paper is underpinned by frame theory. According to Oliver and Johnston (1999, p. 2), frame theory originated from Gregory Bateson (1954) through his study of communicative interaction and was later introduced to sociological research by Ervin Goffman (1974; 1981). Whereas Bateson was concerned primarily with non-verbal encounters, Goffman was more interested in linguistic encounters (Hale, 2011, p. 2). For Oliver and Johnston (1999, p. 1), 'frame theory is rooted in linguistic studies of interaction, and points to the way shared assumptions and meanings shape the interpretation of any particular event'.

From the sociological and linguistic perspectives, 'frame' has been defined variously. Also called interactive frame, it 'refers to a definition of what is going on in interaction' (Tannen & Wallat, 1993, p. 59), based on which we interpret what people are saying or doing. It is a mental representation of events (Coulthard & Johnson, 2007, p. 24). A frame indicates the context of an interaction (Hale, 2011) as a serious matter or a play, a joke or a fight. It emerges in and is constituted by verbal and nonverbal interaction (Tannen & Wallat, 1993, p. 60). The definitions conceptualise 'frames as fundamental cognitive structures which guide human understanding

and construction of reality’ (Mchakulu, 2011, p. 23). The suggestion is that without frame, it will be difficult to understand interactions, for interactions are understood based on our knowledge of how things are organised.

According to Gitlin (1980),

Frames are principles of selection, emphasis and presentation composed of little tacit theories about what exists, what happens, and what matters ... persistent patterns of cognition, interpretation, and presentation, of selection, emphasis, and exclusion, by which symbol-handlers routinely organize discourse, whether verbal or visual. (p. 6)

This quotation implies that people can select, emphasise and exclude aspects of objects of interests so as to satisfy specific interests. People can legitimise and illegitimise issues of concern. Similarly, by framing corruption in particular ways, MPs are either legitimising or illegitimising corruption.

For the purpose of this paper, I will adopt Entman’s (2004, p. 5) definition of framing as ‘selecting and highlighting some facets of events or issues, and making connections among them so as to promote a particular interpretation, evaluation, and/or solution’. In this sense, frame refers to the presentation of ‘an issue in a specific light and from a specific perspective’ (Anne-Katrin, 2009, n.p). This definition is appropriate for my study because of the assumption that by selecting, highlighting, elaborating or excluding some aspects of corruption and its practice in Ghana, MPs are promoting particular interpretations, evaluation and the kind(s) of solution needed to fight corruption. Again, ‘framing affects what we pay attention to and how we interpret it’ (World Bank Group, 2015, p. 28). The use of the frame theory will allow us to appreciate the thought processes of Ghanaian parliamentarians with respect to corruption.

Because of its concerns with discourse, frame theory can be and has been applied to a variety of discourses, including media and

political discourse/communication (Matthes, 2009; Carta, 2015) and parliamentary discourse (Mchakulu, 2011). In the news media, frame is considered to be ‘an abstract principle, tool, or schemata of interpretation that work through media texts to structure social meaning’ (Reese, 2001, p.14). Whereas Tuchman (1978) is credited with the introduction of frame theory into news media, Entman (1991, 1993, 2004, 2010) is considered the ‘foremost theorist on media framing’ after his ‘study of US news treatment of two plane crashes’ and his explications of media framing thereafter (Lilleker, 2006, p. 82). One key study that gives a fair idea of the extent of research in media framing is Matthes’ (2009) content analysis of media framing studies in the world’s leading communication journals in which he analyses 131 studies of framing in fifteen (15) different journals. The study indicates that media framing research has known phenomenal success in the West in general and the United States in particular. Political framing has also been quite extensive in Europe and elsewhere. Semetko and Valkenburg’s (2000) content analysis of press and television news of framing European politics, and Vreese, Peter and Semetko’s (2001) cross-national comparative study of frames in the news about the launch of the Euro further reveal the considerable amount of framing research in European politics.

While frame theory may not have been applied so vigorously in the African context, as compared to the West, a few researchers have employed the theory in their studies in the African media context (Eko, 2004; Alozie, 2007; Chuma, 2007; Jacobs & Johnson, 2007; Mchakulu 2011). However, the same cannot be said about research on framing in Ghana. More specifically, hardly has any research employed frame theory and corpus linguistic analytical tools to study the construction of corruption in an African context. This paper, thus, makes an important contribution to the literature on corruption and framing.

Data and method of analysis

The study uses as data four sub-corpora of Hansards (official, near verbatim reports of proceedings of parliament) and reports,

namely: (1) State of the Nation Address debates (SONADs), (2) debates on bills, (3) questions to ministers and (4) committee reports. They cover the nine-year period 2005- 2016. Three reasons account for the choice of the period, namely: (1) the availability of data; (2) corpus representativeness, that is, having enough data that could reasonably be representative of parliamentary debates and committee reports; and (3) its capacity to ensure intra- and cross-genre diversity and variability.

Table 1: Data size

Sub-Corpora	Tokens
Debates on bills and other issues	1,142,213
State of the Nation Address Debates (SONADs)	626,336
Committee reports	233,287
Oral questions to ministers	160,160
Total	1,909,058

Debates on bills and other issues: when a bill (proposed law) is submitted and laid before Parliament and given the first reading (where the Speaker of Parliament reads out the full title of the bill), the bill is referred to the relevant committee of Parliament. The committee examines the contents of the bill and submits to Parliament a report on the bill. When the committee submits the report, Parliament debates the principles of the bill presented in the memorandum accompanying the bill and the report of the relevant committee (see Sagoe-Moses, Armah & Sarfo-Kantankah, 2016). Apart from scrutinising bills, committees also investigate issues of national interest and submit the reports for parliamentary debate. Forty-three (43) of such debates form the corpus of the debates on bills and other issues.

SONADs: the president of the Republic of Ghana annually presents an address (State of the Nation Address (SONA)) to the Parliament of Ghana on the socio-politico-economic wellbeing of

the country. After the address, MPs debate the content of the address. The SONADs are transcripts (38 instances) of parliamentary debates on the SONA.

Committee reports: these are reports on bills and other issues of national interest. This sub-corpus consists of 97 reports from 22 different committees of parliament.

Oral questions to ministers: as part of their rights and privileges, MPs can ask questions of ministers. The Standing Orders of Parliament (2000, see Orders 60-69) allow MPs to ask ministers questions of public interest with which the ministers are officially connected or for which they are responsible, among others. After a question has been answered, starting from the MP who asked the question, MPs can ask supplementary questions regarding the answer/response that was provided by the minister. The *oral questions to ministers* sub-corpus consists of 31 instances of questions to ministers.

The different sub-corpora were used to investigate the relative frequency of *corruption* (and its variants) in the different sub-corpora, and further examine variations within the Ghanaian parliamentary discourse genre. The data were cleaned to exclude ‘stretches of text which do not correspond to any uttered statements in the actual proceedings’ (Mollin, 2007, p. 191), that is, metafunctional information, including headers, time and non-linguistic information to indicate particular forms of behaviour (such as *rose*, *applause*, *interruption*).

The paper employs a corpus-assisted discourse studies (CADS) approach, a discourse study approach that makes use of corpus methods and tools as and when necessary (Partington, 2010). Combining the discourse analysis approach with the corpus approach helps to shift between the linguistic context and ‘the social, political, historical and cultural context of the data’ (Gabrielatos & Baker, 2008, p. 33), or the ‘textual, the situational and socio-cultural environment of linguistic expressions’ (Bednarek, 2006, p. 10). It, thus, helps to ‘uncover linguistic patterns which can enable us to make sense of the ways that language is used in the construction of *discourses* (or ways of constructing reality)’ (Baker, 2006, p. 1).

The study uses *Wordsmith Tools version 6* (Scott, 2012) to analyse the data through wordlists, keywords and concordances. Whereas wordlists and keywords provide a quantitative analysis of a corpus, concordances afford us a qualitative analysis (McEnergy & Hardie, 2012).

A wordlist/frequency list is a list of ‘all words appearing in a corpus’, specifying ‘for each word how many times it occurs in that corpus’ (McEnergy & Hardie, 2012, p. 2). The wordlist tool enabled the researcher to obtain the number of running words (tokens), including the frequency of each word, in each of the sub-corpora. The wordlist for each of the sub-corpora also helped the investigator to perform a keyword analysis by comparing the various wordlists. Keywords are words that are statistically more frequent than expected when one wordlist is compared with another (Baker, 2006). Keywords indicate the ‘aboutness’ of the corpus, or what the corpus is about (Bondi, 2010, p. 7). Concordances helped to qualitatively analyse the word *corruption* in context by examining its collocates. Concordance is a ‘display of every instance of a specified word or other search term in a corpus, together with a given amount of preceding and following context for each result or “hit”’ (McEnergy & Hardie, 2012, 241). Collocates are words that typically co-occur with a specified word; collocates form the context/co-text of a specified word (the node). Examining the co-text of the node in a concordance line provides the semantic/discourse prosody of the node word. Semantic/discourse prosody refers to the ‘consistent aura of meaning with which a form is imbued by its collocates’ (Louw, 1993, p. 157). Thus, in this study, *corruption* was concordanced in order to examine its collocates and associated semantic prosody and make it possible to explore the ‘subtle element of attitudinal’ and ‘semantic meaning’ associated with *corruption* (Sinclair, 2004, p. 145).

Analysis and discussion

This section is structured into five parts, namely: the frequency of the word *corruption* in the corpus, the description of *corruption*, the collocates of the adjectives *corrupt* and *anti-*

corruption and the causes and types of corruption, as found in the corpus.

Frequency of the occurrence of *corruption* in the data

The word *corruption* with its variants occurred 453 times in the corpus (Table 2): *corruption* (361), *anti-corruption* (61), *corrupt* (26), *corrupted* (03), *corrupting* (01) *corruptly* (01).

Table 2: Frequency of ‘corruption’ in the sub-corpora

Corpus	raw frequency	normalised frequency (%)
Debates on bills and other issues	91	8.00
State of the Nation Address Debates	260	41.51
Committee reports	99	42.44
Oral questions to ministers	03	1.87
Total	453	93.73

In order to indicate the frequency of *corruption* in each of the sub-corpora, normalised or relative frequency using 100,000 as the base of normalisation was employed. The normalised frequency was calculated as follows (see McEnery & Hardie, 2012, p. 49):

$$NF = (\text{number of examples of } \textit{corruption} \text{ in each corpus} \div \text{size of each corpus}) \times (\text{base of normalisation})$$

For example, the normalised frequency of *corruption* in the SONADs is calculated as:

$$NF = 260 \div 626,336 \times 100,000 = 41.51.$$

This means that *corruption* (with its variants) occurred 41.51 per 100,000 running words in the SONADs. Table 2 shows that *corruption* occurred mostly in committee reports (42.44/100,000 words), followed by SONADs (41.51/100,000 words), then debates on bills and other issues (8/100,000 words) and questions to ministers (1.87/100,000 words).

Characterising corruption through its collocates

This section explores the collocates of *corruption* in order to explicate how corruption has been defined by Ghanaian MPs. The analysis is based on noun, adjective and verb collocates which characterise corruption. The assumption is that, by selecting and highlighting certain words and expressions that describe or define corruption (Entman, 2004), MPs are promoting certain kinds of interpretation and meaning of corruption. How MPs frame corruption will affect the attention they pay to it and how they deal with it, for ‘framing affects what we pay attention to and how we interpret it’ (World Bank Group, 2015, p. 28) and ‘the way a problem is defined has a major effect on the kinds of “solutions” that are proposed to cope with it’ (Mayer, 1996, p. 444). The section, therefore, examines the phraseology of corruption by studying its collocates, as represented in Table 3. The table contains those collocates that appeared three or more times in the corpus.

Studying the collocates of *corruption* is important because a central factor that influences ‘what readers understand and remember (i.e., their interpretations) is the frequency of specific collocations and the semantic/discourse prosodies they communicate’ (Gabrielatos & Baker, 2008, p. 21). The collocates in Table 3, especially the adjectives, prosodically construct corruption negatively and draw attention to the negative aspects and dangers of corruption.

Table 3: Noun, adjective and verb collocates of corruption

Collocate	Frequency	Collocate	Frequency	Collocate	Frequency
Nouns					
<i>Corruption as a problem</i>		<i>Fight against corruption</i>		<i>Attributes of corruption</i>	
Issue(s)	29	Fight	70	Perception	4
Canker	9	Measures	15	Allegations	3
Menace	3	Action	8	<i>Definition of corruption</i>	
Nation-wrecker	3	Initiatives	8	Definition	4
Enemy	3	Commitment	7	Abuse	3
Threat	3	Plan	6	<i>Others</i>	
Bane	3	Transparency	6	Drug(s)	9
<i>Entities/agents of corruption</i>		Information	5	Activities	6
Government	21	Accountability	5	Laundering	6
President	13	Law	4	Convention	5
Institution	9	Steps	4	Service	4
Agencies	8	Strategies	3	Judgement	4
People	8	Ethics	3	Terrorism	4
Ghana	6	Education	3	Talking	4
Country	17	Programmes	3	Rights	4
Media	5	Policy	3	Duty	3
Companies	4	Mandate	3	Governance	3
Society	4	Protocol	3	Activity	3
Nation	4	Commission	3		
CHRAJ	4	War	3		
Officers	4	Power	3		
Officials	3				
<i>Object of corruption</i>					
Money	8				

Adjectives		Verbs
<i>Magnitude/degree of corruption</i>	<i>Effects of corruption</i>	<i>Fight against corruption</i>
High 6	Public 19	Fight(ing) 92
National 6	Harmful 4	Combat(ing) 17
Global 3	<i>Behaviour</i>	Tackle 9
Endemic 3	Concerned 5	Talk 9
Extensive 3	Committed 5	Deal 6
Widespread 3	Perceived 3	Report 6
Complex 3	<i>Others</i>	Address 5
Systematic 3	Private 3	Preventing 4
Multidimensional 3	Legal 3	Eradicate 3
Serious 3	Civil 3	Wage 3
Institutional 3		<i>Empowering agencies</i>
Critical 3		Strengthen(ing)10
		Foster 5
		Empower 4

The majority of the adjectives indicate the magnitude, that is, levels of corruption and extent of spread (it is ‘high’, ‘national’, ‘endemic’, ‘extensive’, ‘widespread’, ‘complex’, ‘systematic’, ‘multidimensional’, ‘serious’, ‘institutional’ and ‘critical’). Considering corruption as ‘complex’ and ‘multidimensional’, for instance, implies that there is some difficulty in fighting it and calls for a high level of commitment to fight it. ‘Systematic’ implies that corruption exists in a methodical and organised manner. It means corruption has been ‘institutional[ised]’ and it is perpetrated deliberately, which reinforces its complexity. Also, ‘widespread’ and ‘extensive’ suggest a high incidence of corruption in Ghana, as ‘endemic’ presumes its permanent presence.

A number of nominal collocates index corruption as a hindrance to the quest for development: it is seen as a ‘canker’, a ‘menace’, a ‘nation-wrecker’, a major ‘bane’ of, an ‘enemy’, an ‘impediment’ and a ‘threat’ to Ghana’s socio-politico-economic

development. These negative characterisations of corruption ‘represent losses’ (Krishen et al., 2014, p. 744). The associated terms of corruption suggest that ‘curbing systemic corruption is a challenge that will require stronger measures, more resources and a longer time horizon’ (Langseth, 2016, p. 39). When problems are enormous, stronger measures are needed to solve them. Verbs such as ‘fight(ing)’, ‘combat(ing)’, ‘tackle’, ‘eradicate’, and ‘wage’ war appear to measure up to the enormity of the problem of corruption. For example, ‘fight(ing)’ and ‘combat(ing)’, which are the most frequent verbs in the dataset for this study, suggest, metaphorically, battle/warfare, struggle and a major and sustained effort in dealing with corruption. The instruments needed to fight corruption include transparency, right to information, accountability, law, ethics and education. Other nouns index corruption in terms of entities/agents/agencies of corruption, that is, perpetrators of corruption and those mandated or supposed to fight it. These are the ‘government’, the ‘president’, ‘institution(s)’ such as ‘CHRAJ’, ‘agencies’, the ‘people’, the ‘media’, ‘companies’, the entire ‘society’, among others.

The June 2014 report of the Parliamentary Committee on Constitutional, Legal and Parliamentary Affairs on the National Anti-Corruption Action Plan (2012-2021) states that

The Committee is convinced that corruption exists in both the public and private sectors of our country. It operates and exists in dark and opaque systems and societies. It hates light, participation, and accountability. It frowns at questions or scrutiny. It is an enemy to openness, transparency and suitability. It befriends greed, avarice and selfishness. It cannot survive in a system of good governance or a clean and just society.

The Committee further recognises that ‘corruption is one of the most severe impediments to development and growth in transition

and emerging economies'. From the data above, it appears that the MPs recognise that Ghana's underdevelopment is (partly) due to 'massive' corruption. They acknowledge in their discourse the view that there is a strong connection between corruption and economic growth and productivity (Lambsdorff, 2003, 2004; UNDP, 2008; Rose-Ackerman & Palifka, 2016). In this sense, the MPs appear to appreciate the need to protect the public good, which brings to attention a republican political thought, namely, "'political virtue" entails that one's love and ambition is thoroughly linked with the good of one's city [country]' (Sparling, 2016, p. 161). This suggests that the MPs have a virtuous desire to fight for and safeguard the good of the country, for 'when people have virtue, they consider all their actions to be for the republic' (Sparling, 2016, p. 161), even though, as we will see later, such show of commitment by MPs appears to be superficial.

Corruption is a public policy issue. Therefore, how the MPs frame corruption is important, because 'public policy manipulates framing by stressing values or facts with apparent relevance to an issue' (Krishen et al., 2014, p. 744). For de Vreese (2005, p. 60) 'emphasizing positive or negative aspects of an issue [has] the ability to influence public support for policies'. The negative framing of corruption points to the urgency of the issue of corruption and is a call to action. According to Anne-Katrin (2009, n.p), 'negative frames are possibly better able to elicit strong reactions from the audience than positive frames'. Framing corruption negatively is to draw MPs' attention to the issue of corruption and admonish fellow MPs to take it seriously, as 'negative information attracts more attention from the recipient than positive information' (Krishen, Raschke, Kachroo, LaTour & Verna, 2014, p. 745, p. 752). Consequently, one can argue that describing corruption in strong negative terms discursively demonstrates that corruption is a big problem, and shows a high level of commitment to stamp it out, because 'messages that are designed to make the audience feel guilty can have the effect of making people think more carefully about an issue' (Anne-Katrin, 2009, n.p). This is crucial for the

identification and employment of specific means of engaging corruption.

Whereas there is a sense of commitment on the part of MPs to deal with corruption, there are certain other expressions that question such a commitment. To refer to corruption as ‘alleged’, an ‘allegation’, a ‘perception’ or an ‘indiscretion’ suggests some doubt about its actual existence, and suggests a weak commitment to fight it. It further suggests the complexity and legal implications of dealing with the issues of corruption.

Even though there appears to be a general consensus that corruption exists in Ghana, MPs seem to have difficulties agreeing on which institutions are corrupt. For instance, in a reaction to a statement by Mr. Emmanuel A. Gyamfi (NPP MP, Odotobiri) that ‘corruption [was] everywhere’, Mr. Governor K. Agbodza (NDC MP, Adaklu), on a point of order, said: ‘Mr Speaker, the Hon Member just said that there is corruption everywhere. Is there corruption here in Parliament as well?’ (Hansard 28 November 2013/Col. 1627). The reaction from Mr. Agbodza draws attention to critical statements and sweeping statements about corruption. This reaction reflects the paradox of the discussion of corruption in Ghana. Even though people (including political leaders) complain about corruption and its dangers to national development, the same leaders have often called for evidence when people allege corruption. As Mr. Osei Kyei-Mensah-Bonsu (the then Minority Leader) puts it ‘if a person alleges corruption, the burden is on him to prove [it]’ (Hansard 17 July 2014/Col. 1843). Often this burden of proof is too heavy for those who allege corruption. In another instance, the Speaker of Parliament maintains that the accusation of corruption ‘must be scientific and statistical, if there is any such research’ (2 March 2011/Col.1930), and that ‘to say on the floor that somebody is corrupt without substantiating is not proper on the floor of this House’ (17 July 2014/Col.1843). This brings into focus the legal implications of the exposure and the fight against corruption. Of course, in the legislative context, MPs’ statements must be based on facts, proof and truth. MPs making sweeping statements may

be attributable to the fact that they have parliamentary immunity, which allows them to say pretty much anything that they would not be able to say or do outside Parliament³.

Noun/nominal collocates of the adjective *corrupt*

An examination of the data indicates that *corrupt* as an adjective collocated with several different kinds of nouns to index various themes of corruption. Twenty-six (26) instances of the use of *corrupt* were found in the data.

Table 4: Noun collocates of the adjective *corrupt* and the categories they index

Category, Noun collocates	Frequency
Behaviour/activities	
Practices	09
Conduct	01
Acts	01
Means	01
Entities/agency	
People	02
Government	04
Company	02
Somebody	02
Institution	01
Corporate entity	01
Everything	01
Workers	01

Two main topics are indexed by the use of *corrupt* as an adjective. These are behaviour (deed) ('conduct', 'practices', 'acts') and an entity/agency ('people', 'somebody', 'presidency', 'government', 'institution', 'company', 'corporate entity', 'workers'), that is, the deed and the perpetrator. The most

³ Over the years, parliamentary majority-minority has alternated between the National Democratic Congress (NDC) and the New Patriotic Party (NPP): 2nd Parliament 1997-2001 – NDC 133, NPP 61; 3rd Parliament 2001-2005 – NPP 100, NDC 92; 4th Parliament 2005-2009 – NPP 128, NDC 94; 5th Parliament 2009-2013 – NDC 115, NPP 108; 6th Parliament 2013-2017 – NDC 151, NPP 120. Note that the NPP boycotted the 1st Parliament, 1993-1997..

frequent collocate is 'practices'. The noun 'practices' indexes corruption as an established or habitual way of doing things, which corroborates 'endemic' as a collocate of corruption. In other words, the performance of duties has become corrupt in an established manner, as in: 'corrupt practices in this country', 'corrupt practices in the district', 'all manner of corrupt practices'. The way things are managed and people's behaviour (*conduct, acts*) is described as corrupt. The perpetrators, that is, agents of corruption, include the presidency (e.g. 'the Presidency is the second most corrupt institution'), the government ('the Government is corrupt'), other corporate entities ('describing that corporate entity as corrupt', 'the company is corrupt') and people ('people are corrupt', 'somebody is corrupt'). These collocates brand people's behaviour and entities as corrupt.

Out of the 26 instances of *corrupt*, 24 appeared in debates on the floor of parliament, while only two (2) occurred in committee reports. This implies that the characterisation of entities/agencies and conducts as corrupt appears more in debates on the floor of parliament than in committee reports, which suggests that MPs' debates on corruption personalise the issues more than in committee reports. This could be attributed to the dialogic nature of the debates.

Collocates of *anti-corruption* and topics they index

Anti-corruption describes anything that is designed to oppose, inhibit, eradicate, discourage, combat or prevent corruption, especially in political contexts. The categories and collocates of *anti-corruption* indicate the presentation of ways of fighting corruption, namely, initiatives, agencies and instruments needed to combat corruption. While the first looks at activities, programmes and projects needed, the second pays attention to the agencies that are mandated to fight corruption, and the last recognises the legal approach to combating corruption.

Table 5: Noun collocates of anti-corruption and categories they index

Category, collocates	
Initiatives	
Measures	10
Initiatives	7
Action plan	4
Mandate	3
Strategies	2
Activities	1
Education	1
Programme	1
Function	1
Work	1
Agencies	
Agency/agencies	8
Institutions	4
Body/bodies	3
Coalition	3
Section	1
Instruments	
Laws	2
Legislative framework	1
Systems	1

Among the sub-corpora, *anti-corruption* appears more frequently in debates on bills (28 occurrences) and committee reports (21), but less frequently in the State of the Nation Address debates (SONADs) (12). This could be attributed to the fact that anti-corruption measures are considered to be more formal and official in the committee reports and debates on bills than in the SONADs.

Causes and types of corruption as observed by MPs

In their debates and committee reports, Ghanaian parliamentarians have identified several causes of corruption. They include the following:

- i. facilitation payments (GAN Integrity, 2016, p. 1), such as clients buying fuel or hiring vehicles to take Lands Commission officials to the field to work (Hansard 20 November 2013/Col.1245).
- ii. lack of the country's capacity to manage finances and execute programmes for which funds have been borrowed. In other words, excessive borrowing leads to corruption (Hansard 22 July, 2015/col.3331).
- iii. Parliament's inability to 'exercise proper scrutiny over public procurement processes', as 'public procurement is the biggest avenue through which corrupt practices take place in every country' (Hansard 26 November 2013/Col.1403).
- iv. sole-sourcing, which is said to have 'become the norm' and 'an avenue through which all manner of corrupt practices are being undertaken on the blind side of Parliament' (Hansard 26 November 2013/Col.1403), for where procurement is sole-sourcing, it creates a recipe for serious corruption (Hansard 25 February 2011/Col.1692)
- v. lack of transparency and accountability in the oil industry (Hansard 27 February 2012/Col.1544), where vast oil and gas resources have driven corruption and exploitation in countries such as Nigeria (Hansard 4 March 2010/Col.1638).
- vi. manual admissions in secondary schools, which the computerised placement system sought to eliminate (Hansard 4 March 2011/Col.2133/4).

- vii. the governance systems in Ghana, which ‘breed bureaucracy, corruption and abuse of power and poverty’ (1 March 2011/Col.1769).
- viii. ‘appointments or state capture of appointments’ where political activists are appointed ‘to certain positions which invariably leads to abuse of office or misuse of office’ (3 March 2011/Col.1999/2000).
- ix. the leakages, known as quiet corruption, in certain institutions like the Ministry of Health and the Ministry of Education, leakages in some financial dealings and so forth (3 March 2011/Col.2000).
- x. judgement debts (2 March 2012/Col. 2080).
- xi. hiding identities of beneficial owners of companies, which ‘has the tendency of fuelling global corruption, money laundering, movement of illicit money inflows into countries and terrorism financing’ (Report of the Committee on Constitutional, Legal and Parliamentary Affairs on Companies (Amendment) Bill, 2016).
- xii. the public copying the behaviour and practices of corrupt leaders, for ‘corruption is actually a function of what people do; it is the action and inaction of people and when they see their leaders doing good things, they will do good things, when they see their leaders doing bad things, they will do bad things’ (Hansard 10 March 2015/Col.1548/9).
- xiii. Ghanaians’ tolerance and lack of condemnation of corrupt practices and corrupt officials.
- xiv. lack of understanding of actual levels of corruption both in the private and public sectors.
- xv. inadequate appreciation of the complex mix of factors implicated in corruption.
- xvi. lack of public participation in the development and

implementation of anti-corruption measures.

- xvii. failure to foster local ownership in the formulation and implementation of the various strategies.
- xviii. lack of effective and sustained coordination in the implementation of anti-corruption measures.
- xix. lackadaisical government commitment to, and limited support for the implementation of Anti-Corruption Strategies.

(for points ix-xv, see Report of the Committee on Constitutional, Legal and Parliamentary Affairs on the National Anti-Corruption Action Plan (2012-2021))

The various causes outlined here suggest different kinds of corruption (see Andvig et al., 2009; Rose-Ackerman & Palifka, 2016), including: bribery and extortion (e.g. (i) above) or petty corruption, political corruption ((ii)-(v) (see U4, 2017, pp. 1-2)), nepotism and cronyism (e.g. (viii)), public service, institutional or accounting fraud (e.g. (ix)), fraud through judgment debts (x). One observation from the debates and committee reports is that MPs have not been able to identify and give an elaborate list of the types of corruption as they pertain to the Ghanaian cultural context and situation.

Conclusion

By examining parliamentary debates and committee reports, this paper has sought to examine the ways in which Ghanaian parliamentarians discursively construct corruption. Parliamentarians acknowledge that corruption is prevalent in Ghana. They describe corruption through linguistically negative expressions that construct corruption as evil, wide-spread and difficult to eradicate from the Ghanaian society. They admit that corruption has major negative impacts on Ghana's socio-political-economic development and that it needs to be combatted. However, the MPs appear to be silent on corrupt practices relating to vote

buying, electoral integrity and political financing, among others, which directly affect them. The strong negative descriptions of corruption imply that completely combating corruption requires stronger, sustained measures, more resources and a longer time frame. The thematic areas of corruption broached by MPs are, among others: objects of corruption (behaviour/deed, money and agents/perpetrators of corruption); causes and types of corruption in Ghana; ways of fighting corruption, including the activities, agencies and instruments needed to fight it.

While there appears to be no difference in terms of how MPs see corruption across the different sub-genres considered for this study, one main difference is that, in their debates, MPs seem to personalise the issues of corruption (that is, government/majority and opposition/minority MPs attack each other as being corrupt), something which is absent in committee reports. This could be attributed to the fact that whereas the committee arena is characterised by ‘consensus and national interest’, the plenary arena (e.g. debates in the chamber) is typified by partisanship and ‘the inherent trait of politicians to (for the purposes of retaining their seats) show concern for the interests of constituents and gain personal reputation and popularity’ (Srem-Sai, 2014, n.p). In other words, the attacks are the result of political point scoring. Again, references to anti-corruption measures are more frequent in committee reports and debates on bills as compared to the state of the nation address debates (SONADs). This could be because committee reports and debates on bills appear to be more formal than the SONADs. The implication is that a more serious parliamentary work occurs during committee meetings than in the debates in the parliamentary chamber. One thing that comes up in this study is that MPs have not been able to give an elaborate list of the types of corruption based on Ghanaian cultural norms and/or jurisdictions elsewhere. In other words, MPs must be able to state the specific types of corruption that can be found in Ghana. MPs should also be able to present a comprehensive definition of corruption that captures private sector corruption since in their

own words ‘there is also corruption in the private sector’⁴. In doing so, MPs should define the boundaries between public-sector and private-sector corruption. This will immensely help in the fight against corruption.

⁴ See Report of the Committee on Constitutional, Legal and Parliamentary Affairs on the NACAP (2012-2021))

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Local reception of global media texts: Telenovelas as sites of cultural mixture in Ghana

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Abstract

Telenovelas have had phenomenal success as global media texts, but their continuous export to Africa has significant cultural implications. Using hybridity theory and Stuart Hall's encoding/decoding model of audience reception, this paper assessed the extent to which *Simply Maria*, an 'indigenised' telenovela of Mexican origin, influenced the local identity of Ghanaian viewers and the mechanisms through which this occurred. Interviews with regular viewers revealed that the telenovela shaped views about personal identity. This occurred through internalisation, value-based evaluations and identification with characters. Viewers decoded the telenovela from a negotiated position, a development which calmed the homogenising currents of globalisation feared by cultural theorists.

Keywords: telenovela, cultural globalisation, indigenisation, television landscape in Ghana, hybridity.

Introduction

The globalisation of culture often connotes the internationalisation of mass media. Inevitably, understanding the dynamic response of local cultures to global influence has preoccupied anthropologists (Stewart, 1999), communication scholars (Abubakar, 2013) and other social science researchers over

the past few decades. Not only does this demonstrate heightened interest in globalisation, it also testifies that globalisation is a matter of concern for various disciplines.

This paper interrogates the sociocultural impact of media globalisation in Ghana by examining the extent and mechanisms through which telenovelas may influence the cultural identities of audiences. The paper is organised into thematic sections that explore the imperatives of cultural globalisation, television globalisation and local reception of telenovela as global texts. The theoretical underpinning, methodology and findings of the research are further discussed in the rest of paper, leading to conclusions being drawn.

Supported by satellites, the Internet and other contemporary media technologies, media texts (images, videos, audios) flow steadily across national borders and connect audiences worldwide (Kraidy, 2002). Such global media texts present important cultural encounters in local communities. Often, it is feared that these encounters will leave local cultures corrupted, adulterated and unauthentic through a process of cultural imperialism (Morley, 1992). On the contrary, other scholars (Massey, 1992; Tomlinson, 2012) argue that this is not the case, as some elements of local identities have their basis in material and symbolic resources which are not necessarily local but are still authentic because places and cultures are no longer bound to be homogenous.

Notwithstanding, global media texts shape local culture, although the nature and extent of influence cannot be predetermined for all local areas (Kaul, 2012). The influence of television on cultural values and identities in particular is well documented (Chalaby, 2016; Morales & Simelio, 2015; D'Silva, 2000). However, following the commoditisation of television viewing and the concomitant shift in media business models, Morley (1992, p. 207) argues that the public provision of information, education and entertainment translates 'into a "regime of value" determined by the cash nexus', thereby rendering television's contributions to public culture divisive.

Additionally, contrary to cultural proximity postulations, domestically produced television content has not triumphed over

foreign media content in many parts of Africa. Unlike in Europe and Latin-America where longitudinal studies in individual countries have revealed that audiences have strong affinity to local and regional productions (Ksiazek & Webster 2008), the situation in Africa is different. Media audience in Africa largely prefer foreign (Western) content and local producers are shaping media output according to audience preference (Endong, 2014; Haynes, 2011). The reverse scenario is also possible as audience preference for foreign content can and may be the result of media producers' priming of such content.

In Ghana, the television landscape has evolved rapidly from the handful of analogue free-to-air stations in the 1990s to the current situation of ninety three (93) authorised television stations, with majority being satellite broadcasting free-to-air (NCA, 2017). TV services in Ghana may be transmitted over cable, terrestrial wireless or satellite platforms. Migration from analogue to digital broadcast also commenced in Ghana in 2016. These developments have occasioned and continue to fuel intense competition among television stations for audience attention and corresponding advertising revenue. In response, many television stations in Ghana have resorted to the importation of foreign media content in a bid to boost viewership and ratings.

Many television stations in Ghana have turned to the telenovela, a genre of long-form melodrama, to attract and retain viewers. Although this is not an entirely new practice, the primetime broadcast of telenovela by television stations in Ghana has soared in recent years (Adia, 2014), and for the first time (July 2016 to April 2017) in Ghana, a Mexican telenovela was broadcast in an indigenous Ghanaian language, Twi¹. Originating from Latin America, telenovelas have known phenomenal success as global media texts as they are consumed in more than one hundred and thirty (130) countries around the world (Acosta-Alzuru, 2010). This long-form melodrama is also well-accepted in many of these countries. The success of the telenovela is due in part to its

1 The indigenous language of the Akan people in Ghana. It is the most commonly used local language in Ghana.

melodramatic nature and emotive content. Additionally, telenovela has become a social movement and catalyst of social change which has been successfully adopted for behaviour change communication for development projects in parts of Africa and Asia (Tufté, 2003).

As television genre, the telenovela is distinctive for its strong ties to the culture and society of its country of production (Havens, 2004). Inadvertently, categories of telenovela audience (women) fond of these global media products, imitate the clothing and hairstyle shown in these long-form melodramas (Touré, 2007). Similarly, sections of viewers also adopt new relationships and family values from telenovelas (Werner, 2006). The appropriation of telenovelas by audience has immense potential for influencing behaviour as they become part of everyday life for many people (Adia, 2014).

It is apparent from the burgeoning discourse that the telenovela continues to receive scholarly attention as an important global media product with the capability to influence aspects of local identities. However, whilst its popularity and connection to globalisation are well known, the reception of telenovela in local areas is less uniform and sparsely researched, especially in Ghana. Additionally, earlier works (Adia, 2014; Touré, 2007; Wener, 2006) show that telenovela influence African cultural identities in ways that are yet to be fully appreciated. Further, not much is known about audience reception of locally formatted telenovela in Ghana as this is still an emerging trend. In consequence of the dearth of research in this field, the current paper focuses on the extent to which telenovela viewing affects the cultural identify of sections of Mexican telenovela viewers in Ghana. In connection to this primary interest, this paper further explores the mechanisms through which the influence occurs.

This study is relevant because as the production and consumption formats of telenovela evolve, new studies are necessary to understand local audience reception of such global texts. Of primary significance to this study is the understanding of how individual media consumers incorporate global media content into their personal lives. Additionally, whilst it maybe be

inconclusive to accuse global media texts as unfairly mixing with pristine local culture, it is important to understand how such texts shape audience's identities as forces of globalisation.

Television globalisation

The meaning of the word 'globalisation' is elusive, argues Hamelink (2012), as it means different things, at different levels to different kinds of people. However, it may be generally described as the processes through which more people across distant areas become connected in more and different ways. The nature of this connection can be as simple as doing or experiencing the same sort of thing (Lechner & Boli, 2012). Globalisation is also viewed in part as a social consequence of technological progress and internationalisation of media (Kraidy, 2002; Ambirajan, 2000). Consequently, television and film have gained notoriety as powerful media forms and forces of globalisation (Woodward, 2001).

Broadcast television and movies have since the 1960s allowed viewers in different countries to enjoy the same programmes but this has intensified with globalisation and we can now speak of a global television industry which is a mosaic of international production and distribution networks with the content value chain at its core (Chalaby, 2016). This trend became distinct mainly in the 1990s when a gamut of factors including rising industrial complexity, deregulation measures, economic growth and trade liberalisation made it a profitable and acceptable strategy for media organisations to search for television content from international sources (Chalaby, 2016). New technology and consumer demand and preferences also progressively led media firms to concentrate on those activities that helped them retain a competitive advantage, thus further contributing to the globalisation of television content (Chalaby, 2016). Alongside this development, according to Tomlinson (2012), is the 'indigenisation' of many television genres and formats, notably the Brazilian soap opera and the Mexican telenovela which have undeniably increased the extent to which people's everyday lives are experienced through the media across the globe.

The globalisation of television has created a situation where major corporations are trading across national borders and establishing a homogenous culture of consumption (Kaul, 2012). This raises concerns about the influence of global media in local areas and the priorities of those who control and direct global media output or products. Following from this, the television appears to have lost its place as site for the construction of national community (Turner, 2001). Instead, it is perceived as a medium for westernisation in many countries in Africa including Ghana.

Cultural globalisation

Despite being a well-researched concept, there is no one generally accepted definition of culture. However, the understanding of culture has evolved over the years and a contemporary definition of the concept will be the shorthand description of Hofstede (1991, p. 5) that ‘Culture is the collective programming of the mind that distinguishes the members of one group or category of people from others.’ Individuals and groups with a common culture also share the same beliefs, morals, knowledge, custom and values. The distinctive cultural elements or characteristics of individuals and groups form their cultural identity (Kaul, 2012). Cultural identity, according to Kaul (2012), is a sense of self that individuals derive from their formal or informal membership in groups that transfer and inculcate knowledge, attitudes, beliefs, values, traditions and ways of life. Cultural identities are relatively stable but may change overtime, a situation which evokes emotion for many local people because of the concomitant loss of heritage. Changes in cultural identity are interlaced with privilege and power and are negotiated through communication.

To a large extent, cultural globalisation is seen as a corollary to the globalisation of media because the mass media has become the purveyor of global information (Movius, 2010). The consequences of globalisation, however, span cultural interactions and may disrupt stable identity structures at personal, national and global levels (Magu, 2015). Crane (2011, p.1) defines cultural globalisation as the ‘cross-border flows of national and transnational

cultures.’ However, rarely do cultural phenomena that flow across borders incorporate all nations of the world or all continents. This is due, in part, to large diversities in national cultures and also, in part, to the imbalances in terms of power, wealth and resources for disseminating and appropriating cultural products (Crane, 2011).

Globalisation of culture suggests an increasing integration of nations in the world system following the evolution of modern transportation means, economic ties, the formation of multinational corporations and the prevailing global market conditions (Raikhan, Moldakhmet, Ryskeldy & Alua, 2014). Investigating the interaction between culture and globalisation in a modern world, Raikhan et al. (2014) point to the perpetuation of cultural identity loss as a consequence of cultural globalisation. In other words, local areas are becoming inundated with international culture, a situation that may douse the latter through assimilation, absorption and dissolution.

At present, fuelled by the ever-increasing intensification in the global flow of media products, strong currents of globalisation exert a homogenising influence on local culture. Accordingly, concerns about loss of unique local cultures, and a concomitant loss of identity, exclusion and even social conflict are rife. However, local responses to global media texts vary and may involve straddling distinct cultures and negotiation of cultural differences which lead to cultural hybridity - a cultural action that accommodates in-betweens (Kraidy, 2002).

Hybridity is essentially a form of adaptation to foreign culture (Ishak, 2011). It is a common theme in post-colonial discourse which explains cultural mixture and critiques cultural imperialism (Kraidy, 2002). Meanwhile, there is the tendency to either celebrate cultural hybridity as emancipatory or condemn it as ambivalent because the hybrid is neither entirely new nor original (Burke, 2009).

Local reception of telenovelas

The telenovela is a television genre literally meaning ‘television-novel’. Telenovelas have become global media texts

because of the scale of their presence in different countries and different languages around the world (Acosta-Alzuru, 2010), but also because of the interdependence in the telenovela value chain (production, transportation and marketing) which involves corporations interacting across borders (Chalaby, 2016). The globalisation of television has affected the distinct flavour of Latin-American telenovela, as the genre is repackaged and transformed in order for it to serve multiple and diverse audiences in different settings. Havens (2004) notes that in pursuit of foreign revenues which have come to represent the lion share of telenovela sales, Latin American producers have sought to open up new markets and to develop co-production and formatting arrangements including the remake of telenovelas with local actors. This reflects the integration of cultural and economic activities on a global scale (Baltruschat, 2002).

Audience experiences with global media are not even as globalisation itself is occurring simultaneously across the world but with different consequences. Accordingly, researchers continue to examine closely audiences' experiences with global media. An analysis of the consumption pattern of telenovelas shows that these global media texts facilitate identity construction (Morales & Simelio, 2015; Adia, 2014). Global media changes local identities in dynamic ways by altering the symbolic environment subtly through television (D'Silva, 2000).

As ideological re-presentations, media texts are borne of culture. Hence, the broadcast of foreign media texts in local areas may obfuscate local experiences, knowledge and tradition. Whilst this is true, Tomlinson, (2012) and Magu (2015) aver that local cultures are not necessarily victims of globalisation because cultures can also adopt and integrate globalisation's attractions. However, much remains to be known about this resilience of local cultures as globalisation intensifies.

The telenovela in Ghana

Ghana is a West African nation located on the Gulf of Guinea. The country has a liberal, diverse and vibrant media

landscape. Telenovela is a popular television genre in Ghana (Adia, 2014). Emerging in the 1990s and initially shown by only a few private television stations, telenovela has, with time, become part of the regular television content for nearly all major television stations in Ghana. Currently there is competition for telenovela viewership and this is driving innovation among local television stations.

In response to the competition, some television stations in Ghana have sought to indigenise Latin American telenovelas by formatting the broadcast language into a local Ghanaian language (Akan/Twi) and instituting studio discussions of issues raised in the telenovela after each episode. Indigenisation is a Third World philosophy or concept which is reflected and sometimes institutionalised in sensitive sectors (education, law, media, economy) of the Global South to upset cultural imperialism. Indigenisation of media products is complex and elusive to define because a program can be produced locally but with foreign format or ideas (Endong, 2015). As a result, indigenisation of media products is a divisive issue. Nevertheless, its capacity to combat cultural imperialism is not in doubt. Endong (2015, p. 110) notes, 'indigenisation may be viewed as a form of cultural rigidity or purism but the idea that culture is bound to change discredits its cultural protectionist claims.'

Much of the contestation about media indigenisation could be avoided if it were seen as a transformative process of making foreign media products native. This process is similar to *glocalisation* (mixture of global and local), but while *glocalisation* strives for balance and inclusiveness, indigenisation seeks to transform and domesticate. Changing the original Spanish language of *Simply Maria* (*Simplemente Maria*) into an indigenous language gives the telenovela an indigenous touch, but this does not necessarily make the end product indigenous, hence the operative term 'indigenised' telenovela.

The local language scene in Ghana is diverse with various ethnicities laying claim to different indigenous languages. Twi, an indigenous dialect of the Akan ethnic group, is the most spoken among the 42 to 55 local languages in Ghana (Dako, 2002). Prior to

the broadcast of *Simply Maria* in Twi, Latin-American telenovelas in Ghana were broadcast in English, the country's official language, and incidentally the language of Ghana's former colonial master. Consequently, English is the main language for broadcasting in Ghana, particularly television broadcasting although some television stations broadcast some programmes in indigenous Ghanaian languages.

The promotional strategies for the telenovela in Ghana are equally innovative as these include open air viewing (amphitheatre style), radio promotions and street floats. These Latin-American productions are broadcast at primetime (usually from 8: pm to 9: pm local time). The productions span many months with about three hundred episodes, each episode lasting from 45 to 60 minutes. Whilst there is no gainsaying that telenovelas are attractive global media products, the manner in which these foreign cultural products have been appropriated and promoted by local television producers contributes to the popularity of the genre among television viewers in Ghana.

Theory

Hybridity theory

Hybridity theory, according to Kraidy (2002), is a productive theoretical orientation for communication and media studies in the attempt to deconstruct the complicated subtleties of cultural globalisation. Hybridity theory is a post-colonial theory marked by a sense of 'double consciousness and 'in-betweenness' regarding how local cultures react to foreign influence. Hybridity theory was posited by Homi K. Bhabha to describe the subversion of single, purist notions of identity, in favour of multiple cultural positions. Bhabha explains hybridity as a 'third space' emerging from the synthesis of cultural differences (Alexander & Sharma, 2013).

Hybridity is often associated with related concepts such as creolisation and syncretism; all these concepts are commonly used in the domain of cultural mixture and they denote the dynamics of global social developments (Stewart, 1999). Hybridity theory focuses on modes of media production and creativity, economic

and political aspects of culture, and the meaning of values. As such, it relies on global cultures, nations, cities, communities and individuals as units of analysis (Crane, 2011).

Hybridity is a historical feature of adaptive living cultures all over the world (Appiah, 2006). In Africa, hybrid identity has become a 'deep ambivalence towards global popular culture' (Strelitz & Boshoff, 2008, p. 237). Large multinational media companies employ the concept of hybridisation and adaptation to attract diverse audiences in different countries rather than simply marketing homogeneous cultural units worldwide. Critics argue that hybridity still contributes to hegemony by encouraging the reproduction and maintenance of a new world order (Crane, 2011). This implies that hybridity serves both a political and economic agenda.

Studies that have used hybridity theory to explain the intersection of globalisation and cultural mixture include Gomarasca (2013), Kalra, Kaur and Hutnyk (2005) and Kraidy (2002). Using hybridity theory for this study provides an opportunity to demonstrate particularities of Ghanaian television audiences' receptiveness to the cultural influences of locally formatted or indigenised Mexican telenovela.

Stuart Hall's encoding/decoding model

Audience reception studies are concerned with how audiences negotiate meaning differently in specific cultural contexts, and the encoding/decoding model is a significant contribution to the understanding of this process (Castleberry, 2016; Movius, 2010). The encoding/decoding model was developed by Stuart Hall, a cultural theorist. Hall avers that whilst communication essentially occurs through a process of encoding by a sender and decoding by a receiver (encoding/decoding model), encoded meanings can be decoded to mean something different from the sender's intent (Hall, 1993).

Stuart Hall identified three different positions or codes that may be used by audiences (receivers) when decoding meanings

within cultural texts, particularly televisual. These are; dominant-hegemonic position, negotiated position and oppositional position (Hall, 1993). Hall's main purpose for putting forward the different positions is to explain the influence of power and domination in the communication process (Castleberry, 2016).

At the dominant-hegemonic position, receivers associate with the sender's preferred point of view. This is called dominant-hegemonic position precisely because the codes used are in dominance (global). Dominant/preferred reading occurs when the sender and receiver operate with the same assumptions, rule set and cultural biases because their frame of meaning can be located very close to each other. It is at this position of decoding that the transmission of cultural ideas to viewers' minds may occur (Hall, 1993). The negotiated position is when viewers decode the televised messages within the context of the dominant cultural and societal views. At this position, messages are interpreted in a sense different from the dominant reading or the hegemonic position. Viewers in the negotiated position may not necessarily decode messages within the hegemonic frame of meaning but are familiar enough with the social context to be able to sufficiently decode cultural texts in an abstract sense.

Lastly, oppositional reading is when viewers decode televisual or messages in the manner that it was purported to be decoded, but rather based on the viewers' personal or societal beliefs, viewers may identify another, unintended meaning within the message. This last position is contrary to the global or dominant reading, hence its oppositional nature (Hall, 1993).

The encoding/decoding model shows that audiences are active and reception is associated with differentiated interpretation. This theory has been variously used to explore audience reception (Livingstone & Ranjana, 2013), globalisation of culture (Lizardo, 2006) and cross-cultural influences of media content (Biltereyst, 2002). Schroder (2000) criticizes the encoding and decoding model of audience reception as unidimensional and overly focused on ideology. However, as audiences in western and non-western

contexts employ different patterns of interpretation and demonstrate dissimilarities in media use when encountering western media products (Movius, 2010), the encoding/decoding model is suitable for explaining the active role of television viewers within the wider circuit of cultural encounter.

Bhabha's hybridity theory and Hall's encoding/decoding model constitute the theoretical underpinning of this study. Hybridity theory conveys the ambivalence associated with the adaptation of global cultural products such as the television in local contexts. The encoding/decoding model, on the other hand, explains how media audience are active and reception is associated with differentiated interpretation. Hybridity theory and the encoding/decoding model complement each other in this paper. For, hybridity theory focuses on the text (*Simply Maria*) whereas the encoding/decoding model is centred on audience reception. Together, these two theories present a suitable framework for interrogating both the mechanisms and extent of the homogenising influence of indigenised telenovela on television audience.

Methodology

A qualitative approach was adopted for the study and a single case study design was used. This approach and design are suitable for studies in communication and culture (Lyndloff & Taylor, 2002). Madina, an urban suburb of Accra located in the south-eastern part of Ghana and in the Greater Accra Region, was selected as the study site. Madina was a suitable study site because it is an urban settlement with significant demographic diversity. Using interviews and focus group discussion, data was obtained from residents of Madina who watched *Simply Maria* (*Simplemente Maria*).

Sample adequacy is still a divisive issue in qualitative research. Sandelwoski (1995) avers it ultimately comes down to researchers' judgment and experience in assessing the quality of the information obtained against the uses to which it will be put. This study involved twenty-five (25) respondents identified using the snowball sampling strategy. The sample size for this study is

justifiable as it is sufficient to guarantee thick, rich data but also theoretical and data saturation as Onwuegbuzie and Leech (2007) suggested.

Snowball sampling strategy was suitable because it helped the researchers to locate more viewers of *Simply Maria* by relying on a network of previously identified viewers. This sampling strategy involved the identification of an initial respondent and then the involvement of other respondents based on referrals from previously identified respondents. The first respondent was found watching television in a hair dressing saloon at the study site. This subject was selected after preliminary interrogations had revealed that the subject was interested in telenovelas and had been a regular viewer of *Simply Maria*.

The final sample consisted of 18 female respondents and 7 males. The domination of females in the sample is characteristic of telenovela research (Morales & Simelio, 2015; Adia, 2014; Touré, 2007; Werner, 2006) as females tend to enjoy this melodrama genre more than males. Majority of respondents were young, had basic formal education and were predominantly engaged in the informal sector. A focus group discussion of 9 respondents, and 16 in-depth face-to-face interviews were used for data collection from April to June 2017.

Simply Maria is a remake of a 1989 telenovela with the same title. The modern version was produced for Televisa (in Mexico) and premiered in Spanish in 2016. In Ghana, *Simply Maria* is the first Mexican telenovela to be broadcast in a local language. The Mexican telenovela was formatted in Twi, the most widely spoken local language in Ghana, thus adding another dimension to the domestication of telenovela in Ghana. *Simply Maria* was aired for one hour (8 pm to 9 pm) for ten months (July 2016 to April 2017) on United Television (UTV). UTV is a commercial television broadcaster owned and operated by U 2 Company Limited. The station has nationwide coverage and is accessible in both analogue and digital terrestrial free-to-air television every minute of the day (24/7). *Simply Maria* was shown three days a week (from Friday to Sunday) with repeat broadcast on Tuesday, Wednesday and

Friday at 4 pm local time each day. Each episode of *Simply Maria* on UTV was immediately followed with a studio discussion of the main theme and issues emerging out of that particular episode. The telenovela was also promoted on radio, social media (Facebook, YouTube) and on the streets of some major towns in Ghana. The hype and subsequent popularity of *Simply Maria* make it a suitable case for investigating audience reaction to global texts in Ghana.

Findings and discussions

Extent of influence

Telenovelas by themselves are appealing because of their melodramatic nature, but the local language formatting, studio discussion and intense promotion of *Simply Maria* drew more people to participate in this vogue culture. Through the thematic analysis by the focus group and in-depth interview responses, it was realised that watching *Simply Maria* influenced the cultural identity of viewers. *Simply Maria*, as a product of popular culture, shaped the views of audiences about cultural values. However, the broadcast of *Simply Maria* in Twi made it a hybrid text, and transformed the genre from a distinctively Latin-American and global product into a mixed text comprising Ghanaian (language) and Latin-American (setting, cast and storyline) cultural elements. This mixing is a form of cultural adaptation (Appiah, 2006) which is creative but leads to ambivalence towards global culture (Strelitz & Boshoff, 2008), characteristic of hybridity.

Nevertheless, *Simply Maria* had cult following. Responses revealed that relatives and friends in different areas of Ghana could hold telephone discussions to catch up on episodes when they missed the broadcast schedule. Some parents even encouraged their young adult children to join the watch party because of the embedded social messages in the telenovela.

One interviewed respondent indicated:

I watched it with all my children and we had our own discussions afterwards. I have a sister in Kumasi [a major

city in Ghana]. Sometimes, I call her to narrate and discuss episodes with her if she missed one due to power cut or some other reason (Verbatim interview response).

The study also revealed that representations of social and personal issues such as class discrimination, self-determination and patience as shown in *Simply Maria*, shaped viewers' personal views about challenges faced in their personal lives. This outcome of the study is consistent with the observation of D'Silva (2000) that global media influences local identities in dynamic ways. One respondent who had no formal education and worked as a hairdresser stated that she no longer saw her lack of formal education as an impediment because Maria (main character in *Simply Maria*) became a successful fashion designer without classroom education. The respondent further indicated that the actions of Maria have motivated her to start schooling.

She added that:

Maria was determined to learn tailoring and go to school afterwards. I have also taken to that. Look [pointing at textbook]; that is my book. I have started going to school (Verbatim interview response).

Another respondent contemplating ending a romantic relationship also indicated that he was motivated to stay in the relationship because the tables might turn and circumstances could improve as it happened for Alejandro and Maria in *Simply Maria*.

I wanted to stop dating my girlfriend for some time. I was thinking that she was not serious, but latter [after watching *Simply Maria*], I realised that it was just a little misunderstanding so I have decided to continue with the relationship (Verbatim interview response).

The extent to which *Simply Maria* influences local cultural identities is manifested in how the telenovela, as a form of popular culture, shapes the views of the audience. Although *Simply Maria*

is not the only telenovela or global media text which audiences are exposed to, the cultural influence of *Simply Maria* is deep and it may lead viewers to cultivate new attitudes, beliefs, values and ways of life. Although, personal identity is the part of culture most influenced by the telenovela, the spread of culture through television could destabilise national and global level identities structures as well (Magu, 2015).

Additionally, audience reception of the text (*Simply Maria*) was differentiated as posited by Stuart Hall under the encoding/decoding model. This study found that audience's reception of the mixed cultural encounter in *Simply Maria* was mainly from a negotiated position and this has implications for the appropriation of cultural values embedded in the text. Also, while confirming earlier studies (Morales & Simelio, 2015; Adia, 2014) that demonstrated that global media texts facilitate identity construction among audiences, the current study shows that the influence of telenovela on cultural identity is strong and most evident at the personal level. It is, however, possible for the influence to move to the community and national levels owing to the cult following enjoyed by *Simply Maria* and the domestic conversations that ensued among viewers. Additionally, the scope of influence may be due to the plot and unambiguous end of *Simply Maria*. The telenovela has a climax and definitive end that ensure that the stories close after a number of episodes and several months of viewing. In the case of *Simply Maria* in Ghana, the broadcasters of the telenovela began the promotion of a new telenovela with a different focus almost immediately after *Simply Maria* had been brought to total closure.

The mechanisms through which the influence occur

The cultural identities of viewers of *Simply Maria* were found to be influenced through identification with characters, value judgement of representations and internalisation of desirable behaviour presented in the telenovela. The processes identified are neither mutually exclusive nor sequential. Regarding identification, viewers of *Simply Maria* readily associated with characters, their roles and the circumstances they faced in the telenovela owing

partly to the ‘indigenisation’ of the telenovela. Further, rural life, relocation and adjustment of migrants in cities, jealousy and faith in God as shown in the telenovela are already familiar issues in Ghanaian society. The translators of the telenovela also used the names of local market centres and bus stations, jargons and folk songs which brought the context and content of *Simply Maria* still closer to local viewers. Commenting on this, one respondent said;

I have not been to school, but I understand when you speak English to me. I can even give some response. But you know their [telenovela characters] English is heavy, it has slangs and all that, so the Twi translations made me really understand and enjoy it [*Simply Maria*] (Verbatim interview response).

In addition, viewers used Ghanaian culture as touch stone to make value judgments about the conduct, intention and actions of characters in *Simply Maria*.

Maria had a child with Alejandro, but the family of Alejandro did not like Maria just because she was from a poor background. It happens (Verbatim interview response).

Another respondent stated that:

It [the telenovela] shows how women preparing for marriage should conduct themselves, such as how to live with difficult sisters in law, the temptations, trials, and tribulations are there (Verbatim interview response).

The verbatim response is evidence of how viewers compare the conduct of characters on screen with real life situations in Ghanaian society. Respondents even described a protagonist in the telenovela, Vanesa, as ‘evil’ and possessed by witchcraft because she was mean to Maria. During post-broadcast discussions, acts of characters such as infidelity, lying and betrayal were also variously condemned as immoral. That is another demonstration of how

viewers engage in a process of comparing what happens on the screen with their own social reality and judged the characters mostly based on Ghanaian cultural standards and personal principles.

Another important process which extended the influence of telenovela on personal identity is the internalisation of behaviour and attitudes shown in the telenovela. Many viewers identified with and, drew lessons from, the conduct of Maria, Pablo and Alejandro in the telenovela.

A respondent quipped,

I learnt to be patient from *Simply Maria* because Maria was patient on many occasions. Pablo also liked to listen too often to everyone, but I will not do that. I will go with what I know in my heart is right for me. So patience and following my heart are what I have learnt from this (Verbatim interview response).

Some viewers, however, took exception to the conduct of Maria in some circumstances. One respondent remarked,

Maria made a lot of mistakes. Often, she could speak up and say ‘gentleman I don’t like what you are doing to me’ but instead she would keep quiet for the sake love for her man. She could not complain because her fiancé’s family did not like her. That kind of silence in a relationship is not good (Verbatim interview response).

The responses demonstrate that through the mechanism of internalisation, audience learnt new values or reinforced existing ones such as patience, self-belief (guts), submission and resolution.

The findings show that viewers of *Simply Maria* negotiate the meaning of representations and adapt aspects of cultural values to shape their own identities. This happens at different levels, but first of all, the reformatting of *Simply Maria* in an indigenous Ghanaian language made it more attractive and meaningful. As a

result of this adaptation of the telenovela as opposed to adoption, there was no evidence of the perpetuation of cultural identity loss as a consequence of cultural globalisation as suggested by Raikhan et al. (2014).

The local language broadcast and subsequent post-broadcast studio discussions made *Simply Maria* more appealing to viewers and stymied the hegemonic reading of the text. Consistent with the position of Hall's encoding/decoding model of audience reception, at this negotiated position, audience decoded issues such as tolerance, submission and resistance in the abstract sense but complexly situated and condemned or appropriated such tendencies from the Ghanaian cultural perspective. This is possible because at the negotiated position, viewers mount barriers and deconstruct dominant codes which disturb the homogenising effect of global texts.

Further, the broadcast of *Simply Maria* in a local Ghanaian language (Twi) significantly transformed the text from an entirely global product to a mixed one. Although this has cultural and economic imperatives (Baltruschat, 2002), it dulled the distinctively Latin American flavour of the text to an extent (Havens, 2004), thereby making it a mixed culture or hybrid text easily negotiated and appropriated by local audience.

Suffice to say, through hybridisation, local cultures may be brushed but not doused or obfuscated as feared by critics of cultural imperialism. Following from this, the contribution of television to national culture may have changed but it is not lost. The shaping of television content to suit local audience preferences, as suggested by Endong (2014) and Haynes (2011) and confirmed by the indigenisation of *Simply Maria*, can therefore be seen as an important, even essential adaptation mechanism in Ghana.

Conclusion

The showing of *Simply Maria* marked an important era of telenovela broadcast in Ghana as it is the first Mexican telenovela to be telecast in a local Ghanaian language. By reformatting the original Spanish language of *Simply Maria* to Twi, producers indigenised the

telenovela, dulling its distinct Latin American flavour. Invariably, *Simply Maria* influenced the individual identities of viewers as it became part of established popular culture that shaped personal views and values.

The indigenisation of *Simply Maria* also made it hybridised and viewers' reception was mainly at a negotiated position. The hybridisation and negotiated interpretation reflected in the mechanisms of influence, namely identification with characters, value judgement of representations and internalisation of behaviour desirable to viewers, subverted the homogenising effect of *Simply Maria* as a global text. This implies that indigenisation and hybridisation may be suitable modes of adapting to, and managing, the strong currents of cultural globalisation as globalisation shows no sign of slowing down or sparing anything in its path.

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