LANGUAGE USE IN INTERETHNIC MARRIAGE CEREMONIES IN
GREATER ACCRA

BY

ANASTASIA NUWORSU

10282579

THIS THESIS IS SUBMITTED TO THE UNIVERSITY OF GHANA,
LEGON IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR
THE AWARD OF MASTER OF PHILOSOPHY DEGREE IN
LINGUISTICS

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DECLARATION

I, Anastasia Nuworsu, declare that except for references to works which have been duly cited and acknowledged, this thesis is the result of my original research carried out under the supervision of Dr. Evershed Amuzu and Dr. Grace Diabah of the Department of Linguistics, University of Ghana, Legon. I also certify that this dissertation has not been submitted in part or whole for the award of any degree elsewhere.

The names of individuals cited in this thesis are fictional. Any resemblance thereof to any existing name is adventitious.

....................................................... .....................................................
ANASTASIA NUWORSU                           DATE
CANDIDATE

....................................................... .....................................................
DR. EVERSHED AMUZU                           DATE
SUPERVISOR

....................................................... .....................................................
DR. GRACE DIABAH                             DATE
SUPERVISOR
DEDICATION

To the glory of God
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I am grateful to God Almighty for His grace, favour and strength to produce this work.

I appreciate my supervisors, Dr. Evershed Amuzu and Dr. Grace Diabah for their enormous contributions and valuable suggestions in shaping this work. I equally acknowledge all the lecturers of the department as well as the administrative staff for their various assistances in writing this thesis.

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I extend my gratitude to all the families and individuals who made their marriage ceremonies available to me as a source of data. To all my friends and the people who have contributed one way or the other to the success of this work, I say a big thank you and God bless you all.

Thank you.
ABSTRACT

Accra, the capital city of Ghana, is highly multilingual and has a fair representation of most of the major languages in the country. In this regard, a lot of intercultural activities are expected to occur. This study explores an underrated importance of language use in forming congenial relationships during intercultural encounters such as interethnic marriage ceremonies in Greater Accra. The study analyses how language is negotiated and used during these ceremonies. It reveals that the languages to be used for the ceremonies are often negotiated for prior to the day of the ceremony.

Using Fairclough’s (1995) model of Critical Discourse Analysis, the study shows language imperialism and misinterpretation as some of the problems associated with language usage within the context of interethnic marriage ceremonies. The study also examines the socio-pragmatic factors that inform the language choices of speakers during the course of the ceremonies following Myers-Scotton’s (1993) Marked Model. It shows that speakers make marked choices for the purposes of giving directives, to accommodate other interlocutors, to sing songs and for quotations.
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ABBREVIATIONS

CDA       Critical Discourse Analysis
CS        Codeswitching
MC        Master of Ceremony
MM        Markedness Model
RO        Rights and Obligations
CHAPTER ONE

GENERAL INTRODUCTION

1.0 Introduction

Language is an integral part of every speech community. It is a tool through which people express and communicate their thoughts, feelings, ideas and perform other linguistic routines. Therefore wherever people go they carry their language with them. It is said (Salzman 2004) that language forms part of a person’s culture. It is the most fundamental means of identifying people in relation to ethnic or cultural grouping.

A person’s ethnic group is usually associated with the language they speak. Waters (1990), in defining ethnicity, mentions that ethnicity is generally associated with shared features like ancestry, language, food and other cultural markers. This means that language is crucial to forming an ethnic identity. There are about seventy-nine ethnic groups co-existing in Ghana (Lewis 2009). These ethnic groups exist close to each other which attract a lot of interethnic interactions. The interactions between ethnic groups are higher at the urban areas.

Accra, as an urban area and also the capital of the country, has become an inhabitance for many ethnic groups. These ethnic groups migrate from their original homes into their new settlements with their language and culture, making Accra heterogeneous in language and culture. Because of the ethnic/cultural diversity in Accra, a lot of intercultural activities are expected to occur. One of the noticeable intercultural activities is marriage between
different ethnic or cultural groups. The purpose of this work is to look at how language is used during these interethnic activities.

1.1 Background to the study

Interethnic marriages have been a very common occurrence in many African countries of which Ghana is no exception. It is a prevalent societal reality given the over sixty languages (Guerini 2006) spoken by a population of about twenty-four million. Interethnic marriages play a key role in sustaining unity in diversity in the country. It makes room for cultural integration, it is a gateway for multilingualism and it reduces the risk of ethnic conflicts. This is because marriage is a universal phenomenon that cuts across cultures. It has received much attention in Africa because it is believed that, marriage does not just unite two individuals but families as well. Because of the status attached to the concept of marriage, it is performed as a ritual in most cultures with series of ceremonies held to mark it. In Ghana for instance, before two people can be declared and recognized as a couple, they will need to go through the customary or traditional marriage ceremony. The religious marriage ceremony is however optional. In recent times, there has been the introduction of marriage by ordinance (orthodox, Christian or Islamic) which involves the registration of a marriage under the intestate succession law (1985). This law allows the wife to be a part of her husband’s economic unit (Gedzi 2009).

Since marriage is a well celebrated institution that attracts a lot of respect, many preparations like food, drinks, venues, etc. are put in place in
order to have memorable ceremonies. Ubong (2010:334) comments that marriage ceremonies among the Ibibio of southern Nigeria are not only rites of passages but are also a sort of entertainment to the witnesses gathered. For this reason, the masters of ceremonies (MCs) or spokespersons are carefully selected for the programs. These speakers could be professionals, friends or family members but what is important is that whoever is chosen must be able to ‘run the show’. Again, Ubong (2010:335) mentions that diction is of a great significance to the ceremony hence a lot of consideration is taken into selecting spokespersons for both families. The language use of the spokespersons and MCs is very important to the ceremony, especially when the ceremony involves different ethnicities.

In selecting spokespersons for interethnic marriages, the linguistic repertoires of these persons are of great importance, not only must they have a rich language full of proverbs, metaphors, jokes etc., they must also have linguistic competence in the languages represented at the ceremonies. The spokespersons must consider the linguistic backgrounds of the audiences before making their language choices in order to keep them engrossed in the ceremony. The situation is far more interesting when an interethnic marriage ceremony is held in a multilingual urban center like Accra where almost everyone is a bilingual (Myers-Scotton 1993:33). Therefore, this work investigates how language is used during interethnic marriage ceremonies in Accra, focusing on how language is negotiated and the factors that influence these negotiations.
1.2 The Linguistic situation of Accra

Ghana, like many African countries, has a multifaceted linguistic setting which promotes multilingualism. This is because Ghana is estimated to have over sixty languages (Guerini 2006) of which eleven are taught and studied in schools (Agbedor 1996). Myers-Scotton (1993:33) confirms that because of the language situation in Africa, the average African “speaks at least one language in addition to his/her first language, and persons living in urban areas often speak two or three additional languages”.

Accra, just as other urban areas in Africa and the world has many languages co-existing. One can expect to hear different languages being spoken. As Dakubu (2009:19) puts it, “Accra can be characterized as operating with a system of four languages: English, Akan, Hausa, and Ga. These are the languages with the largest number of speakers in the city, and are by far the most likely to be spoken as second languages.” English is the official language of the country, Akan is the lingua franca and Ga is the indigenous language of natives of Accra. Hausa though not a native language of Ghana also has a high number of speakers. Languages such as Ewe, Mole Dagbani, Guan, among others are in use among the populace of Accra. The table below indicates the languages used in Accra and the number of people who use each of them.
Table 1: Linguistic Situation in Accra

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Language</th>
<th>Number of speakers</th>
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<tr>
<td>Akan</td>
<td>1,528,722</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ga</td>
<td>1,056,158</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ewe</td>
<td>775,332</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mole Dagbani</td>
<td>200,735</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Guan</td>
<td>73,409</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gurma</td>
<td>62,435</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grusi</td>
<td>48,822</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mande</td>
<td>28,656</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other languages</td>
<td>75,568</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Even though Dakubu (2009) has projected Hausa to be one of the languages with higher number of speakers in Accra, the report of the 2010 housing and population census did not list Hausa among the first five languages with a higher number of speakers. This is probably because Hausa is not an indigenous language of Ghana or there has been a drastic reduction in the number of speakers between the period of Dakubu’s (2009) study and the period the 2010 housing and population census was conducted.

As one of the busiest urban centers and also the capital of Ghana, Accra has a reasonable representation of the multilingual situation in Ghana. This is because members of the various ethnic groups in Ghana migrate here for economic and other reasons. This accounts for the multilingual nature of Accra. According to the Ghana Statistical Service Report (2012), there is a
representation of people from different parts of the country. This makes Accra the center for which many ethnic groups converge. Table 1 elaborates the language heterogeneity of Accra.

Despite the linguistic heterogeneity of Accra, not all the languages represented are used at the same level. From table 1, Akan has the highest number of speakers (1,528,722), it is the language with the biggest domain of use. It is the language mostly used in radio and television discussions and advertisements, at market places, in church sermons in many areas of Accra. Akan is the language of daily communicative events although Ga is the indigenous language of the people of Accra (Tsikpo 2010). Other languages like Ga and Ewe equally have slots in radio and television but it is not as frequent as Akan which is the lingua franca. The rest of the languages are used in in-group communication and as a means of identification for the speakers.

The multilingual nature of Accra encourages a lot of cross-cultural activities, this informs the study to choose Accra as a research site because it will be easier to record more interethnic marriage ceremonies in Accra.

1.3 Problem Statement

The motivation for the need to advance a research into the choice of language used during interethnic marriage ceremonies has come as a result of the few works done on the topic.

Cross linguistically, extensive research has been done into the study of language contact in various domains and settings. Again, much attention has
been given to situations of language contact in marriage settings but less attention has been given to the language use to celebrate marriage ceremonies involving people from different ethnic background.

Studies on interethnic marriages such as Machaka’s (2008) work on the people of Mansa, an urban area in Zambia, centers on only the language adopted for use by the couples and the children in these marriages. Gorenburg (2006) also did a statistical survey of families that are in ethnically mixed marriages in the Soviet Union. Most of the works done on interethnic marriages focus on the language the children acquire and use but not much attention has been given to the language used to officiate the marriage ceremony itself. Though Ubong (2010) studies marriage ceremonies among the people of Ibibio, he did not make mention of interethnic marriage ceremonies. This work will therefore fill in the gap in literature by analyzing the language used in carrying out interethnic marriage ceremonies.

1.4 Objectives of the Study

This study seeks to analyze an underrated importance of language use in forming congenial relationships during intercultural encounters such as interethnic marriage ceremonies in Accra. The study specifically looks out for the following:

1. To find out how languages are selected for use during interethnic marriage ceremonies.

2. To identify the factors which influence the selection of languages during interethnic marriage ceremonies.
3. To ascertain how potential language barriers are managed.

4. To examine the purposes of language choices during interethnic marriage ceremonies.

1.5 Research Questions

In order to fulfil the objectives, the study will attempt to find answers to the questions raised below.

1. How do people negotiate for languages during interethnic marriage ceremonies?

2. What factors influence language negotiations and choices during interethnic marriage ceremonies?

3. How do people manage potential language barrier if there is any?

4. What are the socio-pragmatic purposes for the language choices made during interethnic marriage ceremonies?

1.6 Significance of the Study

As indicated earlier, there is scanty literature on language usage in interethnic marriage ceremonies. Meanwhile, this phenomenon has become common in our society. Since language forms an integral part of our everyday interactions such as organizing marriage ceremonies, there is the need to explore how speakers make language choices to reflect their ethnic affiliations and at the same time create harmony during intercultural activities like interethnic
marriage ceremonies. A study into how language is used during interethnic marriage ceremonies will help extend our understanding of language choice and negotiation in intercultural interactions.

The findings of this study will help resolve communication issues in other intercultural communication events by observing how people in interethnic marriage ceremonies resolve their communication problems.

Generally, the study will add to existing literature on the topic. It will serve as a reference text on the study of language choice for future researchers.

1.7 Definition of key terms

The operational definitions for some key terms used in the study are briefly given below.

Language negotiation

The term language negotiation is used to express a discourse sequence which has the function of changing the language currently used in the discourse.

Language choice

The process by which a person or persons select from among a group of languages a particular one for communication purposes is language choice. The choice of a language is dependent on many factors such as participants, setting, topic under discussion etc. (Hymes 1989).
Interethnic marriage

This is used to denote a marriage between people from different ethnic and cultural backgrounds.

1.8 Organisation of Thesis

This thesis is structured in five chapters. Chapter one gives a general introduction to the study which includes the background and the linguistic situation of Accra, the problem statement, the objectives and the significance of the study. Some key terms used in the study are also defined under this chapter.

Chapter two reviews relevant literature under the themes: language, ethnicity and identity construction; language choice, negotiation and use in intercultural communication; language choice in other bilingual/multilingual interactions; and language negotiation in interethnic marriages. The chapter also discusses the Critical Discourse Analysis and the Markedness Model which form the theoretical basis for the data analysis of this study. The methods employed in data collection, sampling and transcription was discussed as well.

Chapter three and four consist of the analysis of data collected. Chapter three examines how language is negotiated while chapter four looks at codeswitching as a code choice.

The final chapter gives a conclusion about the study, highlighting the major findings as well as recommendations.
CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW, THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK AND
METHODODOLOGY

2.0 Introduction

This chapter presents a review of various works that give the background against which this study is conducted. It gives a general overview of language choice in interethnic interactions and other domains of language contact or multilingual situations where there is a need for negotiating language choice. Other works on interethnic marriages have also been reviewed. It also discusses the Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) and the Markedness model, the two frameworks within which data is analyzed. The last part of the chapter examines the methods employed, focusing on the research sites, the sampling methods, the procedures of data collection and the research instruments used. The chapter closes with a summary of the issues discussed.

2.1 Literature Review

This section reviews existing literature that is relevant to the work. This is done under the following sets of themes: language, ethnicity and identity construction; language choice, negotiation and use in intercultural communication; language choice in other bilingual/multilingual interactions; and language negotiation in interethnic marriages. Thus, the section gives a general overview and background to the analysis of how language is negotiated and used during interethnic marriage ceremonies in Accra.
2.1.1 Language, ethnicity and identity construction

The concept of ethnicity has no clear-cut categorization. Various scholars have defined it from numerous perspectives. Some argue that it is a social construct but not necessarily genetic as in the case of the concept ‘race’, which is more biological than social. Milroy (1987:107) defines ethnicity as “an individual’s sense of belonging to a distinctive group whose members share a common history and culture.” Similarly, Waters (1990) makes a distinction between ethnicity and race. She argues that ethnicity is generally associated with shared features like ancestry, language, religion, food and other cultural markers, while race is associated with the distinctions drawn from physical appearance, such as skin colour, hair texture, eye shape, etc. A more refined definition is by Fearon (2003:7) who listed some characteristics of a prototypical ethnic group as follows:

1. Membership is reckoned primarily by descent
2. Members are conscious of group membership
3. Members share distinguishing cultural features
4. These cultural features are valued by a majority of members
5. The group has or remembers a homeland
6. The group has a shared history as a group that is not wholly manufactured but has some basis in fact.

According to him, an ideal ethnic group must have as many of the features itemized above as possible.
The literature shows that an aspect of an individual’s identity is constructed through his /her ethnicity, and language obviously cannot be detached from this identity construction since language plays a major role in distinguishing ethnic groups. For instance, one of the ways of identifying an Ewe is by the language Ewe. Moreover, it has been established, (see Waters 1990, Fearon 2003) that ethnicity is a social construction that must involve communication through language and /or through other semiotic means. Therefore, it is necessary to review literature on language and ethnicity.

Some works that have been done in this regard include Iseke (2013) who presents a more recent review on the fact that identity is constructed through language. Her investigation into language, culture and identity negotiation amongst the Metis “indigenous people of Canada and Northern United States who speak Michif, a contact language created in the 1800’s under the forces of colonization” (pp. 92) indicated that it has now become a language of cultural practices, storytelling and family and community organization. In giving the linguistic background of Michif, she mentioned that due to colonial activities, Michif has been influenced greatly by French but British colonization in the 20th century did not influence the language, rather English is gradually replacing Michif. There has been a linguistic shift towards English which has now become the language of education, politics, and economic activities in Canada, leading to the suppression of the culture of the indigenous people. She indicates that speaking the indigenous language “instantly connects a person to the community, culture and worldview of the people but when speaking English one enters into a ‘noun-based’ language
that objectifies things and is disconnected from the indigenous worldview and the people” (Iseke 2013:109).

It has also been revealed that language proficiency affects the ethnic identity assigned to people. Brown (2009) explores how this assertion is exhibited among four Korean-American college students in the United States of America. Her findings indicate that constructing an “ethnic identity is not solely the individuals’ own decision but the fact that the public inevitably imposes an ethnic identity on them” (pp.11) and this is due to the physical features of an individual and the level of proficiency in the heritage language. Though all of her participants recognized themselves as Americans, they have to embrace the ‘hyphenated’ identity given to them as Korean-American by the society. However, high proficiency in the indigenous language alone does not assure a strong identity to a particular ethnic group. According to Ruby one of the participants in the research, Korean is just another language she has proficiency in just like Spanish. She has a strong sense of disassociation from being a Korean and this can be blamed on the ethnic stereotypes that are linked to minority ethnic groups in America.

Although most researchers categorize language as intricately related to ethnicity, Reyes (2010) argues that “there is no one-to-one correspondence between language and ethnicity but linguistic issues can be central to the construction of ethnic identities” (pp. 420). She attributes this claim to the fact that not all members of an ethnic group speak a particular language and not all ethnic groups have a particular language. In supporting her argument, she exemplified that both members and non-members of African-American ethnic group speak African-American English. Also, the Asian Americans have no
ethnic variety of a language but they can be allied to the mainstream American English and this she maintains complicates any anticipated link between language and ethnicity. However, her assertion cannot be generalized because in Ghana and perhaps Africa, most ethnic groups are identified and even named by the languages they speak. For instance in Ghana, the Akans speak Akan, Ewes speak Ewe, the Gas speak Ga and so on. Nonetheless an individual’s proficiency in a language may not entirely depend on his/her ethnicity but may also depend on the influence of the language of the immediate environment, the person’s personal interest, education etc.

In her book *Social motivations for codeswitching: Evidence from Africa*, Myers-Scotton (1993:152) confirms that “code choices negotiate a particular identity for the speaker in relation to other participants in the exchange” but do not model new persons out of these speakers. This attests to the assertion made by some scholars like Hymes (1962) that language is intertwined with culture or ethnic identification. It is in this light that Hymes (1962) proposed the model of Ethnography of Speaking, which links language to the culture of a group of people.

These works inform this current study in its examination of the possibilities of the influence of ethnic identity on language choices. It will help answer the question of whether or not a person’s attachment to a particular ethnicity influences his/her language choice.
2.1.2 Language choice, negotiation and use in intercultural communication

Language is an integral part of every activity of humans purposely for communication. Different cultures have different languages. Therefore, the language negotiated and used in communicating during first encounters with people from different cultures is important. Torras and Gafaranga (2002) concur to the fact that in intercultural interactions where there need to be negotiation of language choice, the initial language used to start a conversation can either make or break the conversation if the right language is not chosen.

Language choice and negotiation is a common but not adequately explored area of research into language use. One of the recent works in this area is Yoneoka (2011). In discussing language negotiation as an accommodation strategy invoked by individuals in customer service roles in Japan, Yoneoka (2011:92) suggested four factors crucial to initial language choice making:

1. The context of the interaction suggests a “default” language
2. Expectations and preconceptions based on interlocutor features may override the default language
3. Subtler visual clues may override the expectations and preconceptions
4. Personal preferences may override everything else

Just as has been suggested by other sociolinguists (e.g. Hymes 1962, Holmes 2000), the context of any communicative event influences the choice and content of a language. This is captured in Yoneoka’s first factor of initial
language negotiation. The default language in this situation suggested by her is the language of the immediate environment. The factor two is a backup when the choice of a default language fails. Here the speaker falls on the physical features and stereotypes of his/her partner to select a language. Then again the speaker may rely on other indirect clues like clothing or accent to select a language. Yet still, a person’s personal preference either to confirm an identity or rehearse a particular language can supersede all of the above mentioned factors.

Yoneoka’s paper stems from the main tenets of the Communication Accommodation Theory which proposes that, interlocutors use various strategies in communication either to converge or diverge from each other. In order to converge to a customer’s linguistics choice, the service provider must simply agree to the choice of his/her customer or by varying his/her own language choice in terms of accent, vocabulary and/or speed to achieve success in communication. Other accommodation strategies she listed include repetition, clarification, and use of gestures. She however, concluded that initial language negotiation is a skill and its strategies should be developed.

I have observed that professionals who are hired as spokespersons during the traditional marriage ceremonies of interethnic marriages exhibit initial language negotiation skills better than non-professionals.

Still within the domain of customer service interactions, Leung (2009) explores how workers interact with their linguistically diverse customers at a Chinese bakery in Philadelphia Chinatown. The study tries to discover how these workers negotiate, choose and use languages within this context. In the
paper, it was observed that Lee, one of the workers, addressed two Asian men with Mandarin Chinese based on stereotypical judgement of the appearance of these customers but the response was “huh”. Her switch to English did not seem to be an obvious choice for these customers since their response “what” meant they needed clarification. They however ended up ordering their goods in English. Later on the table these men were heard speaking Korean, indicating that guessing the language of a customer may not be right always.

In selecting languages for use, these two shop attendants (June and Lee) have been noticed to use Cantonese, their mother tongue, to express discontent. Mandarin is noted to be used to dramatize a situation to get a larger audience and to be well understood probably because it is the language of the surrounding environment. Another code is also selected to establish rapport while certain particular people are also addressed with a different code. They address non-Asian customers with English with the exception of one Caucasian pastor who switched from English by asking for coffee in Mandarin.

Yoneoka’s (2011) and Leung’s (2009) works are relevant to this study because they give me the idea of probing into how and when language choices are made and the purposes these choices serve.

2.1.3. Language choice in other bilingual/multilingual interactions

Bilingualism or multilingualism has been noted to be the fundamental outcome of language contact or interethnic interactions. This area of language use has been studied extensively in many domains.
One of the resultant manifestations of language use in bilingual or multilingual communications is codeswitching. The term codeswitching (CS) has been defined variously in different literatures, from the field of language acquisition to language contact and anthropology (Gumperz 1982, Romaine 1995, Holmes 2000, Woolard, 2004 etc.). The common proposition of these definitions is that CS is the use of two languages in the same conversation. The definition of CS adopted in this study is the alternation between two or more languages in the same discourse. Codeswitching (CS) or language alternation is a common feature of language use which cannot be ignored. For this reason, Forson (1988), cited in Amuzu (2012), called it the “third tongue” of bilinguals in Ghana. However, Amuzu (2005) suggests that it should be called the “first tongue” of bilinguals because of its persistent use especially in their in-group interactions. Studies (e.g. Myers-Scotton 1993, Sebba and Wootton 1998 and Zimmerman 1998) show that language alternation is not only pervasively used but it is also a social action that reflects peoples’ social identities such as education, ethnic, regional and national.

Review of literature in the motivations for codeswitching is important to this study because, codeswitching is one of the major means or strategies noted to have been adopted during interactions at interethnic marriage ceremonies for various purposes.

The findings in Amuzu’s (2012) research into the socio-pragmatics of conversational codeswitching in Ghana, reveal two kinds of CS routinely used by bilinguals, they are marked CS and unmarked CS. Educated Ewe speakers use Ewe-English CS “with no obvious attempt to attach special significance to any individual switches” (pp.8) to sometimes communicate solidarity and a
shared identity of being educated Ewe speakers. This means that CS itself is
used as the unmarked/expected code of communication. His work also shows
that “bilinguals in Ghana ‘love’ CS-specifically marked CS-because of the
stylistic possibilities it offers them” (Amuzu 2012:19). Although some
scholars (Asilevi 1990 etc.) argue that indigenous Ghanaian languages are
rapidly evolving into mixed languages because of the massive use of CS,
Amuzu (2012:20) on the other hand predicts that this can be slowed down if
speakers “continue to use marked codeswitching the way they do now”,
arguing that bilinguals have the mental capacity to keep their languages apart
as codes with separate identities and activate them depending on the purpose
of their utterances.

Asare-Nyarko (2012) adds that Akan-English CS serves several
practical purposes in church activities. As a ‘first tongue’, CS is used to lay
emphasis, create humour, utter quotations and make repairs. Some of these
functions are reflected in this study as a reason for which people make code
choices during interethnic marriage ceremonies. Asare-Nyarko identified three
types of CS: intra-sentential, inter-sentential and tag-switching used in church
activities sourcing from Milroy and Muysken (1995:8). She explained intra-
sentential CS as the switch between two languages in the same sentence. The
inter-sentential on the other hand is a switch between sentence boundaries and
the tag-switching has to do with the insertion of phrasal tag into an utterance.

Although Forson (1988: 184, cited in Amuzu 2012), indicates that CS
in a formal discourse is a marked choice and is “only an invitation to ridicule”,
Asare-Nyarko’s (2012) study reveals that people in Accra churches have a
positive attitude toward Akan-English CS.
Still within the scope of church, Albakry and Ofori (2011) look at the use of CS within Catholic masses and other informal discussions in Accra. Their findings indicate that Catholic churches with higher socioeconomic statuses conduct their masses in monolingual English while those with less socioeconomic statuses alternate between English and three major indigenous languages: Akan, Ga and Ewe. CS is however used in all informal and after mass discourses like making announcements.

Vanderpuije’s (2011) research on Ga-English codeswitching in Radio and Television advertisement discloses that CS in such a setting is used to communicate social and psychological messages about a product or service. It also communicates solidarity and in-group membership about a product with the target audience. The switch to the marked/unexpected code (English) in advertising shows modernity, prestige and lowers the negativity attached to a product especially branding traditional or herbal medicines.

Rose (2006) studies CS in the domain of classroom interactions in a high school at Western Cape, South Africa. Her purpose was to find the functions of CS in the classroom. She identifies that English serves as the unmarked choice probably because of the setting and Afrikaans is the marked choice because it has majority of speakers both teachers and students. Some of the functions of CS noted in her study include CS for clarification, humour, translation, expansion, confirmation, reprimanding and for difficulty in finding words. Examples of some of these functions will be seen later in chapter four of this current study.
In a related work, Yevudey (2013) also discusses the pedagogic relevance of CS in some classrooms in the Volta region of Ghana. His work reviews that the teachers understudied use both intrasentential and intersentential CS for explanations, introduction of English lessons, correction of pupils, for acknowledgement and calling on pupils, for repetition of sentences to facilitate understanding and vocabulary acquisition. CS thus enhances pupils’ understanding and participation as well as their academic performance. He highlights that teachers generally have positive attitudes towards CS in the classroom but those with a negative attitude towards it avoid using it in the classroom to some extent.

In the area of legal proceedings, Angermeyer (2006) examines codeswitching during informal legal proceedings in small claim courts in New York. He looks at how speakers of Haitian Creole, Polish, Russian or Spanish who have limited competence in English switch codes during legal interactions. His work displays that the use of codeswitching between English and Haitian Creole, Polish, Russian or Spanish by these non-English speakers is an attempt to participate directly in the interaction instead of using interpreters. CS is also used as an accommodation strategy to converge towards English-speaking participants.

Myers-Scotton (1993) gives a theoretical explanation for the socio-cognitive stimuli for codeswitching. With examples from African contexts, she argues that “all speakers have a ‘markedness metric’ an innate, internalized model which enables them to recognise that all code choices are more or less ‘marked’ or ‘unmarked’” (pp.151). She defined the unmarked code as the choices of linguistic varieties that are expected by the interlocutors
as the means of communication considering relevant situational factors like the social context and the speakers involved in the discourse. The marked codes on the other hand are the choices that are least expected and unusual to the interlocutors.

Giles (1979), in explaining the cognitive reasons for code-switching and other changes in speech, developed what he called the Communication Accommodation Theory (CAT). In this theory, he postulates two motivating factors that influence the change in codes in a discourse, these are convergence and divergence. He explains convergence as the conscious or unconscious means by which speakers modify their speech, their vocal patterns and their gestures to become similar to that of their interlocutors to show some identity or solidarity. Divergence on the other hand is when speakers purposely make changes to their speech away from their interlocutors to affirm their own identity or distant themselves. This means that people switch codes and other forms of communication either to be accepted as part of a group or to disassociate from it.

2.1.4 Language choice in interethnic marriage ceremonies

The few available works done on interethnic marriages focus on the languages children born to these marriages acquire and use or languages the couple adopt and or give up. Less attention has been given to the languages used to officiate and celebrate interethnic marriages.

The materials available on marriage ceremonies did not concentrate on interethnic ceremonies or how language is negotiated and used to manage the
One of the few articles on marriage ceremonies is Asare’s (2013) work on codeswitching by master of ceremonies at wedding receptions in La, a suburb of Accra. Her concentration was on how codeswitching is used for various pragmatic purposes at wedding receptions in La. Asare’s (2013) study shows that Akan-English codeswitching was used at the ceremonies as an expected/unmarked code choice as compared to Ga-English codeswitching because Ga is the native language of the people of La. She mentioned that “at wedding ceremonies in La, one is more likely to encounter Akan-English codeswitching than Ga-English” (Asare 2013:20) although La, in spite of its multilingual nature, is dominated by Ga speaking people. The use of Ga has become an unexpected/marked code choice by the MCs she studied and the use of Ga was to serve purposes such as to exclude third parties in a conversation, exert authority and for stylistic purposes. She cites an instance where the MC used Ga as a marked code to scold some children loitering around the buffet. She explains that the MC used Akan interspersed with English as the main language of the ceremony but used Ga to rebuke the loitering children around the table when it was time to serve food. This is one of the many instances where Ga was used as a marked code choice. She therefore concluded that Akan is gradually replacing the Ga language in its homestead.

Another work found on marriage ceremony is Ubong (2010) who researched into the traditional marriage ceremony of the people of Ibibio found in Southern Nigeria. In his study, though from the spectacles of theatre, he noted that marriage ceremonies are not only cultural rites. They are also social events that are performed as a source of amusement to the witnesses.
Therefore language is of great importance to the ceremonies; hence professional Masters of Ceremonies are needed. It is required of these Masters of Ceremonies to possess “negotiating skills, a wonderful command of language particularly figures of speech (what Aristotle described as embellished language), and bagful of jokes and wordplays” (Ubong 2010:335). Although there has been no mention of how the people of Ibibio perform interethnic traditional marriage rite, it is expected that much greater language skills would be required from the MCs who would oversee an interethnic traditional marriage ceremony among the Ibibio.

2.2 Theoretical Framework

This part of the study gives a brief discussion of Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) and the Markedness Model (MM), the frameworks within which data for this work is carried out. This section tries to explain the practical use of the theoretical frameworks in studying language use in discourses.

One of the main tenets of CDA is that any communication event is a social action that requires the use of language; hence CDA seeks to critically study the social inequalities such as dominance, discrimination and so on in these social actions that are expressed by the use of language. Since this study investigates language negotiation between different cultures, the issues of language imperialism, language dominance, language inequalities and language attitudes arise. These issues can be unravelled if texts from such communicative events are subjected to CDA. CDA will help reveal any form of social inequality that is exhibited by language use in such a situation.
The Markedness Model on the other hand, will help identify the social motivations for codeswitching since codeswitching has inherently become a part of the bilingual’s language usage. The MM differentiates between the unmarked code choices which are the most obvious or expected code choices and the marked code choices which are the least expected code choices of bilinguals’ communication. This framework will help reveal the purposes people hope to achieve with their code choices.

2.2.1 Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA)

The Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) is an interdisciplinary approach to language study. Disciplines such as Linguistics, Anthropology, Sociology and Philosophy use CDA in their analysis. It was pioneered by Teun van Dijk, Norman Fairclough, Gunther Kress, Theo van Leeuwen and Ruth Wodak in the early 1990s (Wodak 2001:4). The fundamental aim of CDA is to investigate social inequalities such as dominance, discrimination, power and control expressed, established or indicated by language use or in discourse (Wodak 2001:2) and to explore the links between language use and social practice (Jorgensen and Philips 2002). This theory is expedient to the study because, it will help reveal any form of social inequality that is exhibited by language use when two different languages meet and there is a need to negotiate for which one to use in a communicative event like interethnic marriage ceremony.
CDA as a theory has some ideologies that distinguish it from other theories of discourse analysis or language study. Fairclough and Wodak (1997: 271-80) review the main tenets of CDA as follows:

1. CDA addresses social problems.

2. Discourse constitutes society and culture.

3. The link between text and society is mediated.

4. Discourse is a form of social action.

According to Fairclough and Wodak (1997), CDA sees language as social practice which may display some social problems through its use. CDA hence studies language in the context of use. It examines the connection between language use and the cultural practices of the society. To critical discourse analysts, the social context of a discourse is crucial to the interpretation of the discourse, this will help disclose meanings that are not indicated overtly. As noted by Cook (1992:1, cited in Agyekum 2004:350), “discourse is not concerned with a language alone. It also examines the context of communication: who is communicating with whom and why; in what kind of society and situation”.

Van Dijk’s (1991) model of CDA distinguishes between the micro and macro structures of a discourse. He explains the microstructure as the linguistic element like grammatical structures, lexical items and other semiotic elements like gestures of a discourse. The macrostructure on the other hand deals with the external world of discourse .i.e. setting, participants and so on. These two structures he claims influence the comprehension of a discourse.
In the view of Fairclough (2001:121), CDA is not only a theory but a method of an analytical study of language or discourse used in social scientific research. He based this assertion on the fact that CDA is a hypothetical viewpoint on semiosis (all forms of meaning making which include pictures, symbols, signs, body language and verbal language). This semiosis is seen as one element of the material social process (interconnected networks of social practices such as economic, political, cultural, and so on) which results in various ways of analyzing language. To him, the role semiosis plays in the social practice should not be taken for granted but must be established through analysis though the importance may vary from one social practice to the other.

Despite the criticism against it (Schegloff 1998 and Widdowson 1995), CDA has become one of the popular approaches to the study of written or spoken text.

In discussing interethnic marriage ceremonies within this framework, a distinction is made between the micro and macro structures of discourse (van Dijk 1991). The microstructure in this context has to do with the use of metaphors and certain lexical items. The macrostructure considers the situation at hand (marriage ceremony), the setting (bride’s house or church) and the participants involved (spokespersons, priests, masters of ceremony, audience). It also looks at the themes that are expressed and the context in which they are expressed (language equality, language negotiation, language attitude) etc. Both the micro and macro structures of a communicative event have an influence on the interpretation given to a text (spoken or written). In summary, the meaning associated to a text is influenced by the context in which it is used. Nonetheless, this can be bidirectional in the sense that a text
can also influence the context. For instance, an utterance can change a context from formal to informal during an interaction.

Fairclough (1995) captures this in his three-dimensional model for critical discourse analysis: text, discourse practice and sociocultural practice. This is summarized in the figure below and an elaboration of each concept. Fairclough’s approach proposes that there is a relationship between texts and social practices which is manifested through discourse practices (such as interethnic marriage ceremonies). To him, a text forms part of the social and cultural practice which is mediated by discourse practice.

**Figure 1**

A framework of critical discourse analysis of a communicative event

(Extracted from Fairclough 1995:59)
2.2.1.1 Text

The text denotes any oral, written or visual linguistics element of a communicative event. In his analysis of a text, Fairclough (1995:57) states that it includes the vocabulary, semantics, grammar, phonology and writing system. He also considers the organization of texts in relation to sentence cohesion, turn-taking in a communicative event and the overall structure of a discourse.

In Kaplan’s (1990) opinion, he observes that the understanding of the morphology, semantics, grammar and phonology alone is not the ultimate means of interpreting a text but other factors such as the world view of the writer and recipient, the rhetoric intent, the coherence come into play. According to Halliday and Hasan (1989), a “text is a sign representation of a socio-cultural event embedded in a context of situation”. He argues that “text and context are so intimately related” that meaning or interpretation cannot be derived in the absence of each other. Similarly, Wetherill (1974:133) joins this assertion by stating that “any attempt to see a text as simply a collection of stylistic elements will tend to ignore other ways whereby meaning is produced”.

Van Dijk (2000) also asserts that the meaning associated to a text is given by language users but not in the text itself. In other words, each individual’s psychological and cognitive abilities affect the meaning given to a text (Fairclough 1995:59). This is a clear indication that a text is not produced and consumed (understood) in vacuum in accordance to Fairclough’s model but sociocultural factors such as audience, setting, topic and context affect it.
For instance, it is typically in the context of a marriage ceremony that a person can publicly say \textit{wɔn wíε yoo eei} “we are making love to a woman”. This is because this phrase is used to express the concept of performing marriage rites in Ga culture. Other public contexts will render this utterance face threatening. Also, the idea of buying a woman’s reproductive organ like any item on the shelves of a shop can be limited to the metaphoric use of the cultural practice of a man paying a ‘bride price’ before a woman becomes his wife.

2.2.1.2 Discourse practice

The discourse practice deals with the processes of text production and consumption in a communicative event as indicated in figure 1 above. It is the mediator between the linguistic element and the sociocultural influence in the interpretation of a text. It includes the various ceremonies performed to celebrate the concept of marriage in different cultures. Thus, it is through a discourse practice that people use language to produce and interpret texts.

Every discourse practice or communicative event constitutes a genre (political, economics, media, and marriage ceremony) and every genre has their own rules, norms, linguistic styles and so on that guide the use of language. In a communicative event such as marriage ceremony, there are some conventionalized traditions that are expected to be observed through the use of appropriate linguistic devices that form part of the sociocultural practice. When two different cultures meet under a communicative event like a marriage ceremony, it is expected that there is a blend of both cultures through text to foster unity since the theme of a sociocultural practice such as marriage
is to unite two families. In this study, the discourse practice constitutes the various ceremonies held to mark the sociocultural practice of marriage.

2.2.1.3 Sociocultural practice

The sociocultural practice refers to the wider social practice to which a communicative event belongs. It comprises religious worship, education, trade, politics, media, marriage and any social practice that involves the use of language. These social practices are performed or observed in different discourse practices depending on the society. For instance, if religious worship is a sociocultural practice then the individual ways of worshiping (such as in church, mosque, shrine etc.) are all discourse practices. These various types of worshipers pray (using written or spoken text) in different interactional contexts. The Sociocultural practice influences the meaning people assign to a text since every individual is shaped by their cultural background or language ideologies. The complete meaning of a text cannot be derived if any communicative event is analyzed without the consideration of the socio-cultural practice (Fairclough 1995:62).

In analyzing the language used during an intercultural communicative event, it is important to know the social and cultural backgrounds of the people involved, since different cultures have varied ways of expressing their beliefs, ideologies, knowledge and so on. Also, the language choice or preference of an individual is “entirely dependent on the wider social, political and cultural context of the interaction at hand” (Auer 2002: 8).
2.2.2 The Markedness Model (MM)

Myers-Scotton’s (1993) Markedness Model (MM) proposes that for every interaction, speakers have available an expected language choice but they make their code choices based on what they hope to achieve with these codes i.e. the choice of one linguistic variety over other possible varieties (Myers-Scotton 1998:4). The Markedness model originated from her ‘negotiation principle’ modelled after Grice’s ‘co-operative principle’ (1975). This principle states that: “Choose the form of your conversation contribution such that it indexes the set of rights and obligations [RO set] which you wish to be in force between speaker and addressee for the current exchange.” The RO set is a “theoretical construct for referring to what participants can expect in any given interaction type in their community” (Myers-Scotton 1998:23). The model suggests that a speaker chooses between a marked code which is the ‘unexpected’ code and an unmarked code which is the ‘expected’ choice in conversations. The distinction between marked and unmarked code choices help to explain the socio-psychological motivations for codeswitching. This theory rests on three maxims.

1. The unmarked-choice maxim: it states that “[m]ake your code choice the unmarked index of the unmarked RO [Rights and Obligations] set in talk exchanges when you wish to establish or affirm that RO set” (Myers-Scotton 1993:114). A speaker uses an expected code choice to change or maintain situational factors during a talk exchange.

2. The marked-choice maxim: this maxim directs speakers to “[m]ake a marked code choice which is not the unmarked index of the unmarked RO set in an interaction when you wish to establish a new RO set as
unmarked for the current exchange” (Myers-Scotton 1993:131). Here, a speaker makes an unexpected code choice to negotiate for another Rights and Obligation (RO) set in the place of the expected choice.

3. The exploratory-choice maxim: it states that “[w]hen an unmarked choice is not clear, use CS to make alternate exploratory choices as candidates for an unmarked choice and thereby as an index of an RO set which you favour” (Myers-Scotton 1993:142).

The unmarked-choice maxim suggests that a linguistic variety can be identified as unmarked within a continuum and this will index a specific RO set in an interaction which can be compared to other varieties that may also be in use (Myers-Scotton 1993:89). This maxim results in two types of unmarked CS: CS as a sequence of unmarked choices (sequential unmarked CS) and CS itself as an unmarked choice (unmarked CS). In sequential CS, each language used is the unmarked choice due to changing social or other conversational context requirements. Unmarked CS is the general pattern which carries the communicative intention. Switches within the unmarked CS do not necessarily have a special indexicality (Myers-Scotton 1993:117).

In contrast, the marked-choice maxim is when a speaker uses a marked/unexpected code choice to achieve a specific effect. According to Myers-Scotton (1993:132), the marked choice is used to “negotiate a change in the expected social distance holding between participants, either increasing or decreasing it”. This effect can be negative or positive. The effect is negative if it increases social distance but positive if it narrows social distance between interlocutors. The markedness of a code choice is strictly relative to the context of use.
The third maxim of the Markedness model is the exploratory-choice maxim. This maxim is used when speakers are not sure of the expected communicative intent or which code choice will help achieve their social goals. This means that speakers in a communicative event continue to alternate between codes until they find the appropriate code that will help achieve their reward. This type of CS “may occur in exchanges between strangers as well as in exchanges between acquaintances who meet in unconventional or unfamiliar settings” (Amuzu 2012:5).

Myers-Scotton believes that every society has norms or a set of social roles that guide interactants in making code choices considering the interaction type and the setting. These RO (Rights and Obligations) may change depending on some situational factors of a talk exchange.

This theory, like some other theories, has had its fair share of criticisms. Researchers like Woolard (2004) argue that codeswitching is not always a deliberate or a conscious choice but some speakers are sometimes not aware of its use in a conversation as this theory suggests.

2.2.3 Justification for the two models

This work combines Critical Discourse Analysis and Markedness model for the analysis of data. Codeswitching is a pervasive feature or means of language choice at interethnic marriage ceremonies. There is therefore the need to find out which of the codes in these switches are marked and unmarked and the reasons for these choices hence the need for the Markedness Model which discusses codeswitching in this regard.
CDA on the other hand helps to explain language usage in relation to the influence of socio-cultural practices and the social inequalities expressed by language usage in interethnic marriage ceremonies. It explains the where, why, what and how of a discourse.

2.3 Methods

This section handles the description of the research site and the approach to the collection of data. It also discusses the research instrument, the sampling technique and the data selection method used in the study.

2.3.1 Research Site

The study was conducted in randomly selected areas within the Greater Accra region where ceremonies involving people with different ethnic backgrounds are held. Greater Accra is chosen as the research site because it is the region of the nation’s capital and therefore highly cosmopolitan. This attracts people from various ethnic and language backgrounds, though the indigenous language is Ga.

The research covers areas within the Greater Accra Metropolitan Assembly which comprises the Accra Metropolis, Tema Municipal Area, Dangbe District and Ga District. The region lies in the south-eastern part of the country along the coast of the gulf of Guinea. The region, according to the report of the 2010 population and housing census, has a population of 4,010,054, which constitute 16.3% of the entire country’s population making it
the second highest populous region, after Ashanti region. The figure below is a map showing the various districts of the region.

**Figure 2**

Greater Accra Districts

Source: [http://mapsof.net/map/greater-accra-districts](http://mapsof.net/map/greater-accra-districts)

The research site (Greater Accra) is highly multilingual and has a representation of almost all the languages spoken in the country as shown by table 1. However, the languages involved in this study include Akan, Ga and Ewe. These languages are selected because they are the three most or highly spoken. They are also the languages in which the researcher is competent.
2.3.2 Sample Size and Sampling Procedure

The sampling method used in selecting the participants was the snowball technique (Biernacki and Waldorf 1981). This technique is a process by which participants are selected based on the recommendation of others.

Participants in the study were not selected based on any special preference like age, gender or ethnic background. They were selected depending on the role they played in addressing the audience during the ceremonies. Such participants included the spokespersons at the traditional marriage ceremonies, the priests, the Masters of Ceremonies (MCs) and anybody who addressed the crowd gathered to witness the ceremony.

Beneath is a table presenting a breakdown of all the ceremonies recorded, indicating the location and the languages involved.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location of ceremony</th>
<th>Language of the bride</th>
<th>Language of the groom</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Accra Newtown</td>
<td>Akan</td>
<td>Ga</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medie</td>
<td>Ga</td>
<td>Akan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Madina</td>
<td>Ga</td>
<td>Akan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Afienya</td>
<td>Ewe</td>
<td>Akan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grader Estate- Spintex</td>
<td>Ga</td>
<td>Akan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amasaman</td>
<td>Ewe</td>
<td>Akan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Legon</td>
<td>Ewe</td>
<td>Akan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pokuase</td>
<td>Ewe</td>
<td>Ga</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ashaiman</td>
<td>Ewe</td>
<td>Akan</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
As mentioned earlier, the sampling of the participants in this study did not follow any special sampling procedure. It was based on the availability of an interethnic marriage ceremony.

### 2.3.3 Technique for data collection

The study sourced data primarily from audio/visual recordings and unstructured interviews (see appendix I) granted to some participants during interethnic nuptials held in some parts of the region. These included the traditional marriage which is mostly referred to as the engagement, the white wedding and the reception. The facilitators who addressed the audience at the ceremonies were interviewed briefly to fish out the socio-pragmatics motivations for the choice of languages they used.

The process of data collection spanned a period of six months (from September 2014 to February 2015). In all, nine ceremonies were attended and recorded across the region. During the ceremony, participants for the study were interviewed. Each interview lasted between five and ten minutes following the interview guide in appendix I. The interview aided me to investigate some of the social motivations for the choice of code they make.

Personal observation was also employed. I observed and analyzed the way language is used by different speakers and for different purposes during the ceremonies. This was made easier and possible because, I put a recorder at vantage places usually beside the sound engineers while I use my phone to record the interviews I granted during the ceremony. Sometimes friends and acquaintances were used to record the audio of the ceremonies while I
conducted and recorded the unstructured interview. In order to acquire substantial data for this work within the time frame, I collected some video recordings of interethnic marriage ceremonies that were performed before the time of the research. The recordings were later listened to carefully to select context specific utterances and the language in which they were said.

The names of the participants especially the couples have been altered to protect their identities although some of them did not have a problem with revealing their identities. However, the pseudo names in this work are the names selected and used by the various spokespersons themselves during the ceremonies. Spokespersons at traditional marriage ceremonies are usually noted to adopt pseudo names to suit their desires and/or the occasion and most importantly to communicate a specific meaning. For instance, one spokesperson introduced herself as ‘Adom’ because she believed it was by the grace of God that they have gathered for the ceremony.

The nature of the data gathered involved longer sentences and even a discourse, this stemmed in spatial restraints. Hence, a free English translation was given instead of an interlinear glossing. A list of all the transcribed and translated extracts used in this work is shown in appendix II.

2.3.5. Selection and transcription of data

The recordings from the interviews and relevant utterances from the ceremonies were carefully and purposely selected, transcribed and translated. Thus, phrases that are insertions from a different language other than the main language of the discourse are selected to know why the speaker made such
insertions. Also, a string of discourses that involved solely one language is selected to know the reasons as well.

Because of the duration of the recordings of each ceremony which lasted over two hours, this work did not transcribe the entire ceremonies. Only utterances that are relevant to the analysis of this work were transcribed. The transcription of the data for the analysis in this study was done with the assistance of other native speakers who happened to be linguists as well. This selection was done purposively to meet the need of the research questions (c.f. 1.4) posed in the study (Cresswell 1994:148).

Because of the multilingual nature of the work, words in Akan are underlined, Ga words are italicised, Ewe words are in bold fonts and English words are in the normal font. This is to make it easier to distinguish between the languages represented in the work and make the fonts eye-friendly.

2.3.6 Methodological Problem

During the course of data collection, I encountered difficulties in transcribing the recorded audios because most of the recordings are characterized with noise from the audience which sometimes over shadows the actual speeches I intend to use as data.

2.5 Chapter summary

The chapter reviewed relevant literature to this study under the themes: language, ethnicity and identity construction; language choice, negotiation and
use in intercultural communication; language choice in other bilingual/multilingual interactions; and language negotiation in interethnic marriages. This discussion forms a general basis of how languages are negotiated and used in intercultural interactions.

The Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) and the Markedness Model were discussed as the theoretical framework with which data is analyzed. Some of the tenets of CDA have been mentioned. A distinction between the micro and macro structures of discourses was established. Three concepts of CDA: text, discourse practice and sociocultural practice were explained as the fundamental pillars used in analyzing discourses from Fairclough’s (1995) view. The marked, unmarked and the exploratory-choice maxims were discussed as the axioms of the Markedness Model framework. The sources of data used, methods and tools of collection and the approach of data analysis were also discussed.

The next chapter is an analysis of how language is negotiated during interethnic marriage ceremonies.
CHAPTER THREE

LANGUAGE NEGOTIATION AND CODE CHOICES

3.0 Introduction

This chapter discusses matters relating to language negotiation and choice making. It looks at when and how languages are negotiated and selected to conduct interethnic marriage ceremonies. The research shows that making language choices usually begin long before the day of the ceremony. This is revealed through the linguistic repertoire of the spokespersons selected for the events (i.e. speakers are competent in both languages).

It also looks at some issues that are linked to making language choices such as competence, identity creation, and the availability of a lingua franca. All of these are discussed within the framework of Critical Discourse Analysis. The chapter ends with a summary of the discussion.

It order to distinguish between the languages used in this work, Akan sentences are underlined, Ga sentences are italicised and Ewe sentences are in bold fonts.

3.1 Competence as a factor in language negotiation and code choices.

The results of this study show that the issue of communicative competence cannot be ignored in intercultural communication. Speakers’ tacit knowledge about the grammar of a language and their ability to judge the acceptability of a well-formed sentence in a language influence the language choices made at interethnic marriage ceremonies (Hymes 1989). Just as CDA theory posits,
there are external factors like setting that influence language usage and the production and consumption of text. Therefore the competence of both the addressers and addressees are considered during the preparation towards the day of the ceremony. This is revealed through the kind of people chosen as spokespersons for each family on the day of the traditional ceremony. These spokespersons are usually people who have both languages and more in their linguistic repertoire. It is required of these spokespersons to possess great language skills, especially the use of figures of speech, jokes, wordplays, songs etc (Ubong 2010:335). Because the languages of the spokespersons are of great importance to the ceremony, ‘professional spokespersons’ and masters of ceremonies are sometimes hired for these occasions vis-à-vis using any ordinary member of the family.

The negotiation of language(s) to be used at the day of the ceremony is sometimes done between both families before the actual day. Example 1 below is a transcription of a recording from an interview granted by a monolingual Akan spokesman representing the groom’s family who are Akans. As a follow up question, when he was asked why he was selected as a spokesperson for an interethnic ceremony despite his monolingual status, he gave the response in example 1 below. This was recorded at New Legon on 5th September, 2014 involving an Akan groom and an Ewe bride. This spokesman has no knowledge of any language apart from Akan. He uses only Akan throughout the ceremony.
Example 1

(New-Legon. 5th September, 2014. Akan groom and Ewe bride)

spokesman ọmo maa yen aso tee se They made us aware that
dodo no ara te Akan kasa majority of them understand the
no. Se wonnte koraan anka Akan language. If they don’t
wɔbɛma y’aso ate na anka understand at all, they would
yɛahwehwe ɔkandini bi a have informed us so we look for
ɔte Avigbe te Twi na anka an Akan-Ewe bilingual to lead
yɛde no adi yen anim na the ceremony.
anka ɔabɛdi dwuma no.

In the above example, an Akan spokesman uses only Akan in a ceremony involving both Ewe and Akan ethnic groups because he has prior knowledge of the competence of his audience in the Akan language.

Other people also prefer to do their own investigations about the language background of both families and select their spokespersons appropriately. The excerpt 2 below is an extract from a recording of a traditional marriage ceremony at Afienya on 26th January 2015 between an Akan groom and an Ewe bride. Though the bride is an Ewe speaker, the venue for the ceremony was her uncle’s house and her uncle is an Ada speaker. With this knowledge, the groom’s family anticipated the use of Ada hence they chose a spokesman who is competent in both Akan and Ada. The interaction below is between the two spokespersons of both families during the announcement of the purpose of the gathering and the visit of the groom’s
family. Here, Ōdɔ openly and consciously made her choice of Ada though she started welcoming her guests in Akan

Example 2

(Afienya. 26th January, 2015. Akan groom Ewe bride)

ǀ Ōdɔ ǀ Yɛn ha deɛ bɔkɔ mo na mo ǀ Our home is peaceful, tell us
    ǀ       ǀ nam kwan so                     ǀ your purpose for this visit.
  Awaрешɔ ǀ yɛnso, yɛn amanneɛ a ne sɛ, ǀ We too, we are here based on our
    ǀ       ǀ yeaba. nhyeye biara a yɛ        ǀ previous discussion and
    ǀ       ǀ ne mo aka ato  holland amanneɛ ǀ arrangements with you. So I am
    ǀ       ǀ biara a yeadi ato  holland kwan ǀ here in peace.
    ǀ       ǀ bi a yɛ bɔ ato holland nti mebae ǀ
        ǀ a, bɔkɔ.

ǀ Ōdɔ ǀ Mepa mo kyɛw, mɛka Ada ǀ Please I would like to speak Ada
    ǀ       ǀ kakra                         ǀ a bit
  Awaрешɔ ǀ Me nso Ada no mete paa       ǀ I also understand Ada very well

Although Ōdɔ opted to speak Ada, it was only to address the bride’s family to inform them of the purpose of the visit of the groom’s family as the spokesman had indicated.

At another ceremony held on 5th September, 2014 at New Legon between an Ewe bride and an Akan groom, the mother of the bride opposed to the use of Ewe by her spokesperson. This was during the time of formal
exchange of greetings and the introduction of members of both families after the opening prayer.

Example 3

(New-Legon. 5th September, 2014. Akan groom and Ewe bride)

Do me abusua mmienu abom Family members, if we are bringing two families
ave no baako, fifia ṣutsu together as one, now the
wo fome le ale, nyɔnu groom’s family is at one side and the bride’s family
wo fome le ale is at the other side.

Bride’s mother Mepa wo kyew ka Twi Please speak Akan

Do me Barima no abusuafo no The family of the groom will bekyea yen. come and greet us (by
shaking of hand).

The bride’s mother opted for the use of Akan because it was the language negotiated for before the day of the ceremony. The choice of Ewe by the bride’s spokesperson could break the flow in communication as observed by Torras and Gafaranga (2002) that the wrong choice of language can make or break a conversation. Ewe would have been a wrong choice since the groom’s family who constituted half of the audience are not proficient in the Ewe language. The spokesperson of the bride was selected because of her proficiency in Akan. If she was not competent in the Akan language then both families would have resorted to the use of an interpreter as is the case with other ceremonies.
Negotiation of language choices can also be made overtly on the day of the ceremony. This is illustrated in an excerpt recorded on 26th February, 2015 at Accra-Newtown between a Ga groom and an Akan bride. She alternates Akan and English to create the awareness of language choices.

**Example 4**

(Accra-Newtown. 26th February, 2015. Ga groom and Akan bride)

Adom  
aha deε bɔkɔ no wo na wonam  
our home is peace, you are on a journey

Happy  
venso yeɓae a, yεnkuta no bɔne.  
We have also come in peace. Attention! To begin,

Yourself  
yεbaa no asomdwoe mu. Agoo!  
this a cross cultural marriage, so we will speak

Nea edi kan, this is a cross-cultural marriage. Enti yeɓeka  
Nkran kakra, Lagos Town kakra, a bit of Ga, Lagos Town,

Twi kakra, Amen oo! Brɛfo nso  
Twi, and English. Amen. If we get spiritual too, all to

ba mu a yeɓeka kakra. Spirit no  
the ecclesiastical brethren, they will give us the

nso ba mu a, all to the ecclesiastical brethren, they will give us the interpretation. Amen

Amen oo!

In the above excerpt, ‘Happy Yourself’ is creating the awareness of the possibility of language alternation or code mixing during the ceremony so her audience will not be surprised if there is any shift from the default language which is Akan. This speaker demonstrates the need for competence in more
than one language (bilingualism) during intercultural interactions by codeswitching when making her announcement.

Examples 3 and 4 are indicators that whenever there is a language negotiation, it is done just at the beginning of the ceremony, after the exchange of greetings. These two examples show that the default language used before further negotiations are made is Akan (the lingua franca).

Another language selection process observed is the repetition of the message by the same speaker in the two languages represented there. At a ceremony at Grader Estate held on 20th March, 2014 between a Ga bride and an Akan groom, the spokesperson of the bride in her initial language negotiation repeats the message in both Akan and Ga.

**Example 5**

(Grader Estate. 20th March, 2014. Akan groom and Ga bride)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dromo</th>
<th>You are welcome.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Yɛma mo akwaaba oo. Mesrɛ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>mo obiara anya nsuo anaa?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>crowd</td>
<td>Yes please</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mepa wo kyɛw yiw</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dromo</td>
<td>Please have you been served with water?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mɔ fee mɔ ena nu lo?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>crowd</td>
<td>Yes please</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>speaker</td>
<td>How are you all?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Nyɛ fee nye jee fee?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>crowd</td>
<td>We are good</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>wo jee jogbanŋ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dromo</td>
<td>We thank God so that</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>wɔmii da Yehowa shi ni nɔ fee nɔ</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
This speaker covertly negotiates the use of Akan and Ga in welcoming her guests. Throughout the rest of the ceremony, she consistently alternated between Ga, Akan and English while her other interlocutor, the spokesman for the groom’s family used Akan and few English insertions. Her use of Ga can be attributed to her linguistic competence in the language, creating a Ga identity for herself. The issue of identity construction and language choices will be discussed in the next section. She also uses Akan to communicate her association to the Akan ethnic group and to accommodate her guests.

### 3.2 Identity creation as a factor of language choice

Language is crucial in constructing an individual’s identity. Myers-Scotton (1993:152) asserts that the code choices speakers make negotiate a particular identity for them. Therefore, the issue of identity construction in relation to language use cannot be ignored. Identity in this context is the representation of individual beliefs in relation to discourses. Identity can also be the opinions of other people assigned to a person. Identity creation is a two-way concept: the
identity given to an individual by the society and the identity a person gives to him or herself. Brown’s (2009:11) findings concur that “ethnic identity is not solely the individuals’ own decision but the fact that the public inevitably imposes an ethnic identity on them”. When individuals make language choices or show a preference for a language, they consciously or unconsciously enact certain linguistic identities. The language choices people make therefore construct some social identities for them. These social identities such as education and social status could either be the individual’s choice or by the perception of others of him or her. Amuzu (2012:8) iterates this idea by stating that the use of Ewe-English codeswitching by educated Ewes communicates a “shared identity of being educated Ewe speakers”.

Culture on the other hand is embedded in language usage (DiMaggio 1997). That is, some features of a language such as the pervasive use of proverbs, metaphors, semiotics, tone and songs reflect the culture of that language and construct an identity for speakers. Hence, the cultural identity of a person is revealed through language. The example below is an excerpt from a traditional marriage ceremony involving an Akan bride and a Ga groom held at Accra-Newtown on 26th February, 2015. As part of the itinerary, the spokesperson for the groom’s family (Happy Yourself) was asked to introduce the members of her delegation. She talked about the Ga culture briefly before introducing them.

**Example 6**

(Accra-Newtown. 26th February, 2015. Ga groom and Akan bride)
Adom: We will begin with a brief introduction before we start the occasion. Happy-yourself! We will start from your end.

Happy Yourself: I need to make you understand a concept. In Ga tradition, father, mother does not sit in public. They send, they send delegates to perform the marriage rite therefore the leader of this delegation is Mama Esther...

In the example above, ‘Happy-Yourself’s brief talk about the Ga culture communicates her identity as a Ga. Her code choice of Akan does not necessarily associate her to Akan but maybe the result of an accommodation strategy since she was addressed in Akan. Even within her code choice of Akan, she switched to Ga to buttress her Ga identity.

A person’s identity can also be revealed through their reactions to a particular linguistic variety (Edwards 2009:146). The kind of attitudes people demonstrate towards the use of a language can communicate a convergence or divergence as postulated in Giles’ (1979) Communication Accommodation Theory which was reviewed in chapter two of this work. The example below is taken from a traditional marriage ceremony between an Akan groom and a
Ga bride at Amasaman-Medie on 7th February, 2015 during the presentation of items to the bride’s mother.

Example 7

(Amasaman-Medie. 7th February, 2015. Akan groom and Ga bride)

\[\text{Ọdọnaye: } \text{Yen maame, look me, hwè} \quad \text{Our mother, look at me, look}\]
\[\text{ha, ofaine kwɛmɛ bie aha mi} \quad \text{here, please let me have your}\]
\[\text{fioo. wɔmii sumɔ bo, okwɛ} \quad \text{attention. We love you, you}\]
\[\text{wɔbi ɛe ojɔgbanyɛ, wɔnyɛ} \quad \text{have raised our daughter into a}\]
\[\text{wɔwo bo nyɛɛ} \quad \text{good woman, and we cannot}\]
\[\text{pay you}\]

The bride’s mother was first addressed in Akan but she did not give her attention to the speaker until she was addressed in Ga. The interpretation that can be given to this reaction is that of divergence from Akan and convergence towards Ga. That is, she moves from Akan into Ga in order to create a Ga identity. This interpretation is given because prior to the start of the ceremony during an informal interaction in the kitchen of the house of the bride, a cousin to the bride addressed the elder sister of the bride in Akan and the elder sister of the bride gave the comment below (this example forms part of my personal observations though not recorded):

Example 7b

\[\text{Sisi} \quad \text{Kwe! mi ni okɛmi wieɛɛ Twi} \quad \text{Hey! Am I the one you speaking}\]
\[\text{le? wɔ shia le mli le awieee} \quad \text{Akan to? We do not speak Akan}\]
\[\text{Twi. Wɔ wieɛɛ Ga, Ayigbe aloo} \quad \text{in this house. We speak Ga,}\]
The bride later confirms that though the members of her family including herself have proficiency in the Akan language, they rarely speak it. This explains the reaction of the bride’s mother when she was being addressed in Akan though it can be argued that she was not paying attention when she was being addressed.

3.3 Lingua franca as a language of choice

Another means by which language choice and negotiation is done is through the use of a neutral language which is usually the lingua franca of the immediate environment. A lingua franca is any language that is adopted and generally used by the speakers of other languages for smooth communication. Crystal (1992: 35) defines it as a “language which has been adopted by a speech community for such purposes as international communication, trade, or education.” The status of English as the official language in Ghana cannot be limited to only the language of politics, (inter)national trade, medium of instruction in schools, legal procedures and administrative purposes but it is used as a lingua franca in some circumstances like interethnic marriage ceremonies that involve educated couples.

During interethnic marriage ceremonies in Accra, interlocutors have glided more towards the use of the English language, especially during the wedding ceremonies and occasionally during the traditional marriage ceremony. The use of English to officiate wedding ceremonies is a common thing. This can be attributed to the fact that the ‘white’ wedding is non-African
and since every culture comes with its own language, it is done in English. Also, the English language is seen as prestigious by most Ghanaians and thus comes with a certain kind of identity which people want to be associated with hence some traditional ceremonies use English. The illustration below shows how English was used by one of the couples during the exchange of vows between the couple though the entire service was organized using Ewe with English insertions which was interpreted into Akan. This was recorded on 20th December, 2014 at Amasaman between Jeff, an Akan groom and Julie, an Ewe bride, during the exchange of vows and the rings (each of the expressions in the examples have interpretations which were not indicated here).

Example 8

(Amasaman. 20th December, 2014. Akan groom and Ewe bride)

Pastor	Look onto your own vows.

Menye osɔfo yea gblo o. Nu yi le wo ọụtọ wo dzime ne ọgbọ da ọị be ụbọ ọchị do nugbe lae, se

Groom	I Jeff, offer myself completely to be your life eternal. I promise to love you with all my heart and to be unselfish in this love. I promise to stand by you in times of joy, trials and
sorrows. I dedicate my glory and honour to the lordship of Christ Jesus and I pledge myself in all that I am now to you and God, so help me God.

Pastor  
*Afem Julie, say this one, wo*  
*Lady Julie, say this one, you*  
*ŋụtụ ụlọ gake medzi be*  
*wrote it yourself but I want to*  
*maxle nwo ụche ụche ne*  
*read it out to you so everyone*  
*amesiame na se be wo ịụtụ*  
*will know you wrote it*  
*wo numenyae*  
*yourself.*  

Lady Julie, say this one, you wrote it yourself but I want to read it out to you so everyone will know you wrote it yourself.

Bride  
*Enye Julie, me xọ wo Jeff abe*  
*I Julie, accept you Jeff as my*  
*nloading kple nwo ụtsu*  
*lover and husband. I will hold*  
*egbe sia ọzi yi. Ne enyo o, ne*  
*you from now onwards. In*  
*egble o, le gakpọkpọme, le*  
*good, in bad, riches, in*  
*koọọkoome, le dọlele me, le*  
*poverty, in sickness, in health*  
*lamese me, mala wo, ma le*  
*I will love you. I will care for*  
*be na wo, mafa akọ nwo eye*  
*you, I will comfort you and*  
*naneke magble miadome o le*  
*nothing can separate us in the*  
*hoły name of God, Amen.*  

Mawu fe ọnụ kàkwe lọ me,

Amen.

In the above example, Jeff said his vows in English and it was interpreted into Ewe but Julie said her vows in Ewe and an Akan interpretation was given although the mutual language of communication between the couple is Akan.

The question is, if marriage vows are to be said and understood by the couple
and not the audience, why not choose a mutual language? Jeff is fluent in both Akan and English but he chose to say his vow in English to his bride who is not very fluent in English but quite competent in Akan. Julie on the other hand also selected and used Ewe because it is the language she can articulate her desire suitably in as indicated by the pastor during an interview.

The Critical Discourse analyst will evaluate Jeff as projecting himself as educated and aligning himself with the English by discriminating against his native language Akan because of the prestige attached to English. The reactions of the audience, i.e. their chants of words like ‘sweet voice, good English, wow’, made this obvious. Both Jeff and Julie have exhibited some level of discrimination in terms of their language usage. While Jeff neglected his language for English, Julie was also not ready to let go of her language, Ewe, for another because of her attachment to her ethnicity (feeling ‘at home’). It can also be argued that Jeff’s choice of English is simply a reflection of his desire to use the expected code choice for wedding ceremonies especially for the exchange of vows. But Julie’s choice of Ewe which is a departure from English is simply an acknowledgement of her lack of proficiency in English.

Interethnic marriage ceremonies that do not involve Akan families also use the Akan language to officiate the ceremonies. For example, a traditional marriage ceremony held at Pokuase on 3rd April 2014 between a Ga groom and an Ewe bride mixed Akan, Ga and English.

The exchange of greetings and the presentation of some of the items were done in Ga by both spokespersons. The groom’s spokesperson alternated
between Akan and Ga for the rest of the activities because she is a native speaker of Akan but the bride’s spokesperson who is a native speaker of Ewe maintained the use of Ga. The only instance of the use of Ewe was when the bride was asked about her knowledge of the groom and whether the items should be received on her behalf.

This is an indicator that language usage during interethnic marriage ceremonies especially the traditional ceremonies in Accra is not necessarily dependent on the brides’ languages as the perception has been. Language choice and use often depends on the status of the language as a lingua franca although the hosts of the ceremony may try to welcome their guests in their language before further negotiations are made. This finding is in line with Asare’s (2013) assertion that people in interior La, an area noted to be dominated by Ga speakers, expect the use of Akan-English codeswitching more than they would expect Ga-English codeswitching at wedding receptions.

3.4 The use of language interpretation as a language choice

The concept of language interpretation is defined by Nolan (2005:2) simply as “conveying understanding”. The definition of language interpretation adopted for this work is the transfer of the semantic content of an expression from one language into another. The language being interpreted is the source language (SL) and the language interpreted into is the target language (TL). According to Jones (1998), there are two main ways by which language interpretation can be done. That is either simultaneously or consecutively. According to him, the
simultaneous interpretation involves a fast rapid interpretation by the TL speaker alongside the SL speaker. This is usually done with the aid of machines but with the consecutive interpretation, the interpreter speaks after the SL speaker finishes or pauses usually after two or three sentences. There is turn taking within the consecutive mode of interpretation which does not occur with the simultaneous mode of interpretation. The consecutive mode of interpretation is used in the interethnic marriage ceremonies attended that involve language interpretation. Nolan (2005:4) mentions that the consecutive means of language interpretation is the oldest until the introduction of sound equipment in recent times to aid the simultaneous method of interpretation.

Language interpretation can be done by just one bilingual who utters the same thing in different languages or by a ‘middleman’ interpreter. But whatever the choice is, there are some basic qualities/ skills an interpreter needs to possess in order to interpret. The fundamental prerequisite of an interpreter is bilingualism. Bell (1991:38-41) indicates that the interpreter must be communicatively competent in both the source and target languages. Since culture is interwoven with language, it would be more appropriate for the interpreter to not only be communicatively competent in both languages but also well informed about the cultures of both languages.

Literature shows that there is an undisputable connection between language and culture so in situations where interlocutors do not share the same culture or language, some communication problems are bound to occur (Sapir 1958, Hymes 1962, Hall 1976). In the view of Vermeer (1987), cited in Kocbek (2008), interpretation is an intercultural transfer, so the interpreter needs to be an intercultural expert blending the cultures of both the source and
the target languages. However, it is rare to find absolute bilinguals who can express themselves equally in both languages on a particular topic putting into consideration the cultural foundations of both languages (http://www.languagescientific.com/).

Critical Discourse Analysts assert that each lexical and grammatical item of a language has a cultural background within which it is said. For this reason, “when two people from different languages and cultural backgrounds communicate, they have different social assumptions about how a conversation should go, which can cause a breakdown in communication” (Huang et al 2012). This leads to miscommunication which is a common feature found in intercultural communication. Cokely (1992) discusses five types of miscues that are likely to occur during language interpretation: omissions, additions, substitutions, intrusions, and anomalies. Müller-Jacquier (2000) also identifies social meaning or lexicon, (in)directness, register, non-verbal means of expression among others as the sources of intercultural miscommunication. In the opinion of Nolan (2005:67), the most common setback in interpretation is interpreting figurative or idiomatic language literally without the source language’s implicated meaning. He exemplifies the interpretation of a French expression “jouer les empêcheurs de danser en rond” (to be a spoilsport) by an English interpreter as “going around in circles”.

One common problem that results from the use of language interpretation during interethnic marriage ceremonies is the misinterpretation of some ideas or concepts. This is evidenced in the following exchange.
Example 9

This excerpt is extracted from an engagement ceremony between Jeff, an Akan groom, and Julie an Ewe bride. Majority of the members of both families are not communicatively competent in both languages hence the need for an Akan-Ewe bilingual interpreter to interpret from Ewe into Akan or from Akan into Ewe. This was recorded on 20th December, 2014, at Amasaman.

MC ɲdi ya, tefeyike meaɖo fia,  
Interpreter anopa yi, ɔfa a Ɂen aduru yi,  
MC meaxɔ aɖanu ɖoɖo ɖeka we will take one advice each  
Interpreter afutusɛm baako baako One piece of advice  
MC elabe game yi ɖe me xoxo because we are out of time already  
Interpreter efiri se mmere atia Ɂen dada because we are already out of time  
MC Ametsitsiwo meawɔ ve ve The elderly will have two  
ve gake ɖe ko woanɔ kpuie representatives but it must be short  
Interpreter mpayimfoɔ nso Ɂeŋye Ɂo The elderly will also have two  
mmienu. Mmienu firi Ɂabaa  
o afam Ɂna mmienu opportunities. Two from the  
nso firi Ɂbarima Ɂo afam bride’s side and two from the  
University of Ghana http://ugspace.ug.edu.gh
In the last part of the excerpt, there is a total misrepresentation of a concept in the source language into the target language. In the view of a critical discourse analyst, this misinterpretation has a cultural influence. The metaphoric use of blinking of the eyes to express time by the Ewe MC was not familiar to the interpreter probably because he did not know that Ewe uses body-part metaphors to express time. If he had understood the expression *aɖabafofo* ṭo ‘three blinks’ in relation to time, the nearest interpretation he could have given will be *simma mmiensan* ‘three minutes’ or *simasini mmiensan* ‘three half-minutes’ as some Akans will say it. But a more precise figurative transliteration that would reflect the concept of representing time with a body-part metaphor will be *aniɓatete mmiensa* ‘three blinks of the eyes’.

This explains the assertion in Fairclough’s (1995) model of CDA that a text is not produced and consumed (understood) in a vacuum, but sociocultural factors such as topic, context, each individual’s psychological and cognitive abilities affect the meaning as demonstrated above.

The second reason for this misunderstanding could be attributed to the context of use of the expression *aɖabafofo* ṭo ‘three blinks’. In this context, the discussion was about giving two people the opportunity to advise the couple. Since the meaning of text is influenced by the context of use, it was
easier for the interpreter to interpret adabafofo eto ‘three blinks’ as nipa mmienia ‘three people’.

Another obvious issue with language interpretation is either the addition or omission of some information by the interpreter. Consider the following extract from the MC’s utterance in example 9 above: ametsitsi wo meawae ve ve ve gake de ko woanɔ kpuie ‘the elderly will have two representatives but it must be short’. This was interpreted as: mpayimfoɔ nso venye no mmienu. Mmienu firi ɔbaa no afa mu na mmienu nso firi ɔbarima no afa mu nanso vesre mo bebre afutusem no nye ntiatiatia ‘the elderly will also have two opportunities. Two from the bride’s side and two from the groom’s side but please the advice should be very short’.

Looking at the above extract, there has been an addition of extra information given by the interpreter which was not originally in the speech of the MC. The expression mmienu firi ɔbaa no afam na mmienu nso firi ɔbarima no afam ‘two from the bride’s side and two from the groom’s side’ which is a detail of how the advice would be taken from the audience was not outlined by the MC of the occasion but the interpreter went out of his way to give this extra information.

An incidence prominent about language interpretation in the course of this research is that prayers said during these ceremonies are not interpreted. This is possibly because the discourse practice of prayers within the sociocultural practice of religious worship attribute the act of praying to be a communication to a supernatural being (God) who understands all languages. However, members of the audience who understand the language of the prayer
give comments such as ‘Amen’, ‘in Jesus name’ during the prayer but everybody responds amen when the prayer ends.

Codeswitching has been noted as one of the persistent features of language choice and use at the interethnic marriage ceremonies. Because of its persistency during the ceremonies, this will be discussed exclusively in chapter 4.

### 3.5 Linguistic imperialism as an outcome of language choices

Linguistic/language imperialism is the imposition of a dominant language on other languages (Philipson 1992). Phillipson constructed his argument on the fact that the spread of English to Europe and other parts of the world through the global teaching was an act of linguistic imperialism. According to Philipson, whenever there is the act of linguistic imperialism, there is not only the imposition of the dominant language but the imposition of culture comes alongside. This, he claims endangers their culture and their indigenous languages.

Language imperialism also occurs within indigenous languages of a country. The situation is not different in Ghana. The GSS Report 2012 shows that Akan is the most dominant language in Accra with about 1, 528, 722 speakers out of the total population of 4,010,054, overtaking the regional language Ga with 1, 056, 158 speakers (see also table 1). Akan is also the dominant ethnic group in Ghana with 47.5% of the entire population of the country. The use of the Akan language instead of Ga in Accra is not only at
the level of trade and other economic activities but it is also in the area of
interethnic marriage ceremonies.

The example below is extracted from a traditional marriage ceremony
between an Akan groom and an Ewe bride at New Legon on 5th September,
2014. Both families agreed to use Akan because the spokesperson of the
groom’s family is a monolingual Akan. At the ceremony, the bride’s family
was asked to produce a witness apart from the parents of the bride. The bride’s
family was a little hesitant because they did not prepare for it and perhaps it is
not the usual practice in their culture. So the spokespersons of the bride’s
family addressed the bride’s parents in Ewe saying:

Example 10

Dɔ me xeya blɔtwɔ fe nue ta This is an Akan tradition

me tso de dzi. so let’s comply.

This example confirms the assertion that when language imperialism occurs, it
is not only a dominant language that is imposed but a part of the culture of that
language is also imposed since culture and language are intertwined. This was
overtly expressed by the spokesperson for the bride’s family.

Language imperialism is sometimes unconsciously expressed through
the linguistic choices people make in addressing multilingual gatherings. Most
of the Pastors and MCs observed at interethnic wedding ceremonies in this
study exhibit language imperialism through the use of English and Akan in the
sermons and reception programs. In an interview with one MC at a wedding
reception at Lashibi (Tema community 16) on 22\textsuperscript{nd} November, 2014,
involving an Ewe bride and Akan groom, she made the assumption that
everyone in Accra speaks and understands Akan, especially the people in that community. She mentioned that even the Ewes in the community speak Akan so she does not give a second thought to using Akan when addressing the gathering. This explains why she uses English and Akan in making her announcements during the time of photography in example 11 below.

**Example 11**

MC  Parents of the bride.  Parents of the bride.

*mepa akyew, ɔbaa no abusuafoɔ* Please the family of the bride

*mɔnyɛ* ready  should get ready.

In the example above, the MC addressed the family of the bride who are Ewe speakers in Akan confirming her assumption that they understand Akan. The proponents of CDA identifies that there are social problems embedded in language usage. Some of these social problems include language inequalities which is evidenced through language imperialism discussed in this section.

**3.6 Chapter summary**

The chapter explored how language is negotiated and used during interethnic marriage ceremonies. It showed that language negotiation is usually done long before the day of the ceremony because of the linguistic inventories of the people selected to spearhead these ceremonies. Although the linguistic competences of these spokespersons are considered, some people overtly make their language choices on the day of the ceremony. Others unconsciously communicate their language choices through their language use.
Some issues relating to language choices and use were discussed. The issue of linguistic competence was viewed as a factor that influences language choices. This means that a person’s knowledge and the frequency of use of a language determine the language choices they make in addressing multilingual crowd. Also, the kind of identity an individual hopes to create for him or herself may determine the language choices they make.

What has not been discussed in the chapter is the phenomenal role that codeswitching seems to play at these ceremonies. It will be discussed fully in the next chapter, looking at the types of codeswitching and the social motivations for which people switch codes.
CH 4

4.0 Introduction

As mentioned earlier, this chapter discusses a common and very persistent feature of language use at interethnic marriage ceremonies which is codeswitching (CS). CS, as previously defined in chapter two, is the alternation between two or more languages in the same discourse. As a facet of multilingualism, CS has become a very significant tool of communication in recent times. For that matter, Amuzu (2005) calls it the ‘first tongue’ of a bilingual while Asilevi (1990:2) describes it as a “linguistic symbiosis which has increasingly become a communicative praxis and socially accepted as a feature of daily conversational discourse in all aspects of informal interactions.” This feature of language use is so common that it is not peculiar to only intercultural communicative events. Communicative events that involve bilingual individuals from the same cultural backgrounds exhibit CS.

Although CS is one of the means of language choice and negotiation within interethnic marriage ceremonies in Accra, its use extend beyond a language negotiation process. CS occurs even within discourses in which a language has already been negotiated. Therefore this chapter discusses CS under the maxims of the Markedness Model (see section 2.2.2) to identify the reasons behind these switches. It will begin by looking at the instances where marked code choices are used. This is when speakers of a communicative event least expect the use of the language that has been used. The chapter will then look at unmarked code choices which are the instances where the
language used is expected or obvious to the participants. It finally discusses exploratory CS. This type of CS is when speakers explore a number of languages before selecting a suitable one.

4.1 Marked code choices

A marked code choice is used by speakers to negotiate a new RO and “dis-identify” with the expected RO set in a conversation (Myers-Scotton, 1993: 131). The principle of the marked code choice directs speakers to “[m]ake a marked code choice which is not the unmarked index of the unmarked RO set in an interaction when you wish to establish a new RO set as unmarked for the current exchange.” In summary, speakers use marked code choices to achieve specific effects. Some of these effects are outlined below.

4.2.1 Songs

Songs are an integral part of our culture and language usage. Many ideas and concepts are expressed through songs. In contemporary Ghana, musicians sing songs about politics, the economy, societal issues and so on. Songs have some influences on the language usage during interethnic marriage ceremonies. This is because most songs already have their generic languages. Selecting a particular song means choosing the language in which the song was sung. Though some people may like to translate the song into the language of their choice, it alters the meaning and/or the rhythm. Therefore most people prefer to sing a song in its original language though the meaning may be unclear to others. The example below shows the use of a marked choice of Ewe to sing a song.
Example 12

(Pokuase. 3rd April, 2014. Ga groom and Ewe bride)

This interaction is an extract from a traditional marriage ceremony during the presentation of the ring and Bible to the bride at her house. The family of the bride, who happens to be the host of this ceremony, is Ewe and to accommodate the groom’s family, Ga was selected to organise the ceremony. Though Ga is the language chosen to be used, the spokesperson of the bride sang a song in Ewe.

**Sumɔɔm**

*Mibi yoo le mike Yesu mii ha le ni eke fâ egbalashile gbe le.*

*I’m giving my daughter Christ for her marital journey.*

**Song**

*Yesu ko anye nye məzə hati*

*Christ shall be my only my co-traveller*

*Dzidzə me mayi, agagbɔ kplii*

*With Him shall I go and return in joy*

*Eya ko me makpɔ agbemɔ le,*

*In Him alone shall I find the way to life*

*Eyae yrana afe kple dziwo 2x*

*He blesses those far and near 2x*

**Oduɛwu**

*Halleluyah! Obi se se woko baabi na yɛto dwom na wonnim to a, eno ara ne se wode “do dea da” na wode ahye mu. Mepa wo kyɛw ma*

*Halleluyah! Someone said if you go somewhere and you do not know the song being sung just insert ‘do dea da’ into the rhythm. Please raise*
This example is an instance of using a marked code for a stylistic purpose. The speaker’s (Sumɔɔmɔ) switch to a marked code changes the RO set of the discourse so she pre-informed her interlocutors about her decision to sing in Ewe before her switch to the marked code. Since the spokesperson of the bride has accepted the use of Ga throughout the ceremony, her switch to Ewe becomes a marked choice and this has unintentionally excluded the Ga family. To bridge the social distance the song has created, the spokesperson of the groom has to teach them the strategy for singing an unknown song using Akan which is not the language of either of the families.

The reason for Sumɔɔmɔ’s switch could be that she did not readily have available a Ga song that will appropriately convey the message she hoped to send across since every song carries a message. It can be argued that her choice of an Ewe song could reflect her ethnic identity and covertly serve as a reminder to the other interlocutors that she has not abandoned her cultural background despite her choice of Ga. The other instance for which this spokesperson used Ewe again was to inquire of the bride whether the items should be received from the groom’s family.

Sometimes, some of the songs used during these ceremonies are not to convey any special message but are sang as a canticle to retell what has already been said. For instance, in narrating the pain she felt when she lifted a hamper to be presented to the mother of the bride, the speaker in the example below switched from Akan to Ewe to sing about her experience.
Example 13

(Pokuase. 3rd April, 2014. Ga groom and Ewe bride)

The spokesperson of the groom who is an Akan-Ga bilingual sang an Ewe song as part of her presentation of items to the family of the bride.

*Adayɛwu*  
Merepaga* ya ade yi na weight*  
bi a ewɔ mu no, mema so a  
enye vie, enti ema mete nka  
paa wɔ me mu, ênna ema  
me kae Pentecost dwom bi a  
gbaa years back

*Song*  
Mawu me ku oo ele agbe la  
God is not dead, He is alive

Blema Mawu me ku oo ele agbe  
The ancient God is not dead, He is alive

Me se ṣɔkɔ le ta nye me  
I feel Him in my head

(mo nto no Ayibge mu mma me)  
(sing it in Ewe for me)

Mete nka wɔ me mu  
I feel Him in my neck

Mete nka wɔ me kɔn  
God is not dead, He is alive

Mawu me ku oo ele agbe la  
The ancient God is not dead, He is alive

Blema Mawu me ku oo ele agbe  
He is alive

agbe (dancing agbadza\(^1\))

The song is a reminder of the feeling the speaker had when lifting the hamper of bottles of wine. It was not performed to convey any specific message but it

\(^1\) The traditional dance of the Ewe (Aŋlo) ethnic group
is as a result of the lexical prompting effect of the word te nka ‘feel’; this informs her decision to sing in Ewe. This example has the same language background as Example 12 above but this speaker alternated between Akan and Ga with few English switches. Her use of Ewe in a song is an unexpected choice. Though this song has its Akan equivalent, she still used a marked code Ewe to converge towards the ethnic background of the bride but because she is not competent in the Ewe language, she has to sing some lines of the song in Akan.

4.2.2 Accommodation

According to Giles (1979), code choices are made either to converge or diverge away from a speaker. Interlocutors in interethnic marriage ceremonies also make language choices to accommodate the social and ethnic identities of their interactants. Code choices for this purpose are usually marked choices. For instance, during a ceremony at Pokuase on 3rd April, 2014, between a Ga groom and an Ewe bride, the spokesperson of the bride used Ga instead of Ewe throughout the ceremony because her other interlocutors did not understand Ewe.

Example 14

Sumɔɔɔɛ  wo ye bie nee nɔŋŋu ni wo na gbɔi no hewɔ wo baa ɔa ame ni noni hewɔ ame ba ni ame kɛe wo. ofaine nye jee fee? We were just here and we realised we have visitors so we will greet them and they will tell us why they are here. Please how are you?

ɔɗawɛwɔ  wo bie jogbaŋŋ, nye hu nye We are fine, how are you also?
Although there is no CS in the example above, the first speaker who is the host has covertly made a marked code choice vis-à-vis her ethnic background of Ewe. The choice of Ga in this context became a marked code because both families would have negotiated for a language interpreter as is the case in other ceremonies (see section 3.4). Nonetheless, she later used Ewe which has now become a marked code because of her previous choice of Ga, to sing (see 4.2.1.2) and to inquire from the bride whether the items should be accepted on her behalf.

Another instance is during a ceremony at Lashibi (Tema Community 16) involving an Ewe bride and an Akan groom, the priest used mainly English in his sermon because he said it is the language policy of the church. But he inserted a few Ewe and Akan phrases in his utterances. This he explained was to make the families represented feel at home at his Parish.

**Example 15**

(Ashaiman. 22nd November, 2014. Akan groom and Ewe bride)

This example is an extract from the preaching of a wedding ceremony during which the pastor was advising the bride.

**Pastor** You need to be patient with your husband, if he wrongs you don’t say today Ampadu **eku.** Confront him gently like a

**You need to be patient with your husband, if he wrongs you don’t say today Ampadu is dead.** Confront him gently
In order for the pastor in the above example to accommodate and identify himself with a section of his congregation who are Ewe speakers, he used a marked code in his utterance in spite of his Akan background to decrease the social distance between himself and a section of his congregation.

4.2.3 Metaphor

As has been stated earlier (c.f. 3.1) the linguistic competence of an individual influences his/her language choices. Therefore one of the fundamental reasons for CS is the need to fill a lexical (or semantic) gap. This function of CS cuts across every field of language use. Interethnic marriage ceremonies are no exceptions. The extract below shows how a speaker uses a marked choice (English) to elaborate on a metaphoric use of flower in a traditional marriage ceremony between an Akan groom and an Ewe bride.

**Example 16a**

(New-Legon. 5th September, 2014. Akan groom and Ewe bride)

This utterance was made by the spokesperson of the bride after the spokesperson of the groom has expressed their family’s interest in a flower planted in her house.

This flower is more than hibiscus, if you have it in your house, the white man will say it blossoms.
In the utterance above, the speaker used English as marked code to give a specific meaning which she might otherwise not achieved in a monolingual Akan utterance. The monolingual translation of the utterance above is given in 16b below.

**Example 16b**

Anima Saa nhwiren yi εyε fε koraa
sene hibiscus, se wo
nyaa no wo fie a, σburoni
beka se ehyeren se

This flower is more beautiful than hibiscus, if you have it in your house, the white man will say it shines.

(P.c. Anima Wiafe-Akenten June 10, 2015)

It is evident from the English gloss of the monolingual Akan translation that hibiscus does not have an Akan equivalent hence the inevitable need for a switch. Another notable truth is that there is no single lexical item that captures the meaning of blossom in Akan. The dictionary meanings of the word ‘blossom’ include beauty, growth, flourish, and sprout and so on. The Akan equivalent of blossom given by an Akan dictionary (Akrofi et al 1996) is nhwiren, onyin mfiase ‘flower, growth beginning’ or nhwiren a εyε fε ‘a flower that is beautiful’. Therefore the speaker’s use of a marked code was not only because of her linguistic incompetence in Akan but also the need for the use of an appropriate term to exert an impact. In this regard, it can be said that a marked code is used to fulfil a lexical need.

Another explanation that can be given to the illustration above is the metaphoric usage of the hibiscus flower. The speaker in example 16a above did not just liken the bride to a flower as in every other marriage ceremony.
She specifically mentioned the hibiscus flower to gain certain effects as indicated by Saaed (1997:346) that metaphors are rhetoric devices used at certain times to gain certain effects. The conception of metaphorical expressions cannot be acquired superficially. One needs to have the understanding of the literal meaning and the conceptual and cognitive facts about the world as the theory of CDA posits. Also, in the opinion of Agyekum (2005:148), “there is no one to one correspondence mapping over the individual words and their meanings” so in order to understand and appreciate why a woman is equated to a hibiscus one must first know the hibiscus flower. Taking a look at the hibiscus flower, it has large beautiful petals that brighten its environment. Beside its beauty, the hibiscus plant is renowned for beverages and an ingredient for some food items and medicines. In the same way, a woman in a marriage is not only appreciated for her beauty but her multipurpose nature as a wife, a mother, a homemaker and so on. As a follow up of her intended meaning, she outlined the purposes the bride (flower) will serve in a monolingual speech below.

Example 16c

Do me Sɛ ɛnyini na ɛye fi a, If it grows and becomes beautiful.
Opanyin Wiafe ne fie no Opanyin Wiafe’s house will smell good, it will be beautiful, it will be
bɛye hwam, ɛɓɛye fɛ, ɛɓɛye someone who has humility, it will be
obi a ɔwɔ ahobrasee, ɛɓɛye be someone who has the love of
obi a Kristo dɔ nkoaa na Christ.
ɛwɔ ne mu.
The utterance above buttresses that fact that the speaker did not just compare the bride at this ceremony to a hibiscus flower but she intended to communicate a specific meaning.

4.2.4 Quotations

People can make language choices based on the kind of information they hope to convey. One of such means is by reciting what has already been said either directly or indirectly. Direct quotation involves reiterating the exact words of the information somebody has already given out. Myers-Scotton (1993:117) attests that the use of CS for quotations makes the narration more vivid.

The example below is an extract from a preaching at a wedding ceremony at Royal House Chapel, Obetsebi-Lamptey Circle, involving an Akan groom and an Ewe bride. During the preaching, the pastor shared a story of how a certain man always ascribes praises to his wife anytime he was complimented. In order for the pastor to put across the message in the story accurately he switched to a marked choice to directly quote the words of the man in his story.

Example 17

(Royal House Chapel. 6th September, 2014. Akan groom and Ewe bride)

Pastor I pray that each and every one of you here, particularly Ike and Joy would be able to say ‘Nyame adom ene me yere adaworma enna mete senea’ I pray that each and every one of you here, particularly Ike and Joy would be able to say ‘I am who I am because of God’s grace and the help of my
English is usually the language for wedding ceremonies, so the pastor’s departure from English to Akan was to directly quote the phrase of the man in his story and capture the meaning adequately.

The example shows that the man, whose words were being quoted by the pastor, appreciates his wife’s contribution to his current state. This means that the man acknowledges that the roles of the wife outlined by the Bible in Proverbs 31:10-23 and by the society as a home maker influence him positively. These roles which include the provision of food, emotional, spiritual and financial support etc., if not well performed could be of a negative effect to a husband.

4.2.5 Directives

Data from this study shows that people make language choices to stress a point or to get the attention of the other interlocutor(s). Giving a directive occurs when a speaker wants other interlocutors to do something for them. Directives come in the form of giving direct or indirect commands, orders, instructions and requests.

The example below is an extract from a traditional marriage ceremony during the presentation of items to the mother of the bride. The speaker noted that she did not have the attention of the bride’s mother so she called out for her using Akan but was not successful so she switched to the use of Ga. In the extract, the spokesperson for the groom switched from Akan to Ga to request for the attention of the bride’s mother by asking her to look at her. The language used during the ceremony by both spokespersons was mostly Akan.
The spokesperson for the bride used Ga to address the family of the bride usually in repeating what has already been said in Akan by the spokesperson of the groom. Therefore, the switch to Ga by the spokesperson of the groom to address the mother of the bride is a marked choice.

**Example 18**

(Medie, 7th February, 2015. Akan groom and Ga bride)

**กดɔnayɛ:** Sweet mother ṭɔ hɔ? Aww maame, mahu ṭɔ yi m’akoma atɔ me yamu esani ɛs bosome nkron akwantuo no enye ade ketewa. Yɛn maame, look me hwɛ ha, ofaine kwemɔ bie aha mi fioo, wɔ sumɔ bo, okwe wɔbi le ojagbang, ɛnɔnyɛ wo wo bo nyɛmɔ.

**ɛdɔnayɛ:** Sweet mother are you there? Sweet mother I feel relieved when I see you because the nine months journey is not an easy one. Our mother, look at me, please give me a little of your attention, we love you, you have raised our daughter into a good woman, and we cannot pay you

The inability of the mother of the bride to respond to her first call in Akan may be attributed to the fact that either she was not paying attention or she simply could not get linguistically stimulated by the Akan language. Another reason could be the issue of her ethnic identification with the Ga language (c.f. 3.2). The mother of the bride in this example has the same background as that of example 7a and 7b where the sister of the bride stated that their family do not identify much with the Akan language. The use of the marked code though negotiated a new RO set decreased the social gap between the speaker and the
addressee. More so, the use of the marked choice achieved the expected reward the speaker was hoping to gain because she was able to get the attention of her addressee.

In another instance, a pastor who was officiating a wedding ceremony between an Akan groom and an Ewe bride used Ewe and it was interpreted into Akan. When he wanted to enforce silence among the congregation, he made a marked choice of English indexing a new RO set.

Example 19

(Amasaman. 20th December, 2014. Akan groom and Ewe bride)

Pastor  Ne enye be ame aɖe dzeshi If somebody knows any reason
nuyrayra aɖe sita me dze be for which these two cannot be
woa yra srɔɖeqe ya dzi o la, joined together in holy
the whole place must be very matrimony, the whole place must quiet. This is a question I be very quiet. This is a question I want everybody to hear the want everybody to hear the question very well. I will start question very well. I will start again, ne be ame aɖe again, if somebody knows…
dzeshi…

The pastor saw the need to switch from Ewe which is the unmarked choice for the discourse to English (marked) to instil silence among a congregation. The reason for his choice of English is because he is aware that a section of his audience does not understand Ewe and waiting on the interpreter to interpret into Akan might not give him the outcome he hopes to achieve. Though it can be argued that English is usually the language of weddings and hence
unmarked, this is not the case with this ceremony. The main language used was Ewe, the facilitators of the ceremony like the pastor and the MC spoke Ewe and an Akan interpretation was given. This corresponds with Myers-Scotton’s (1993:132) assertion that “whether a choice is marked is strictly relative”. Although the pastor’s use of a marked code negotiates a new RO set and increases the social distance between himself and the congregation, his purpose was achieved because the congregation became very quiet immediately.

4.2.6 Ethnic stereotyping

The stereotypes associated with a particular ethnic group can inform the choice of language in order to achieve the purpose of usage. There is the stereotype that the Ga language is characterised with profanity. For example, the phrase ɔwɔn wiε yoo ‘we are making love to a woman’ is culturally accepted at marriage ceremonies without threatening the face of anybody. For this reason, some interethnic marriage ceremonies that do not involve Ga speakers have people chanting this phrase from the audience. Usually, one person throws the question: ‘what is happening here?’ Example 20 presents a scenario of how ethnic stereotyping is exhibited at traditional marriage ceremonies.

Example 20

(New-Legon. 5th September, 2014. Akan groom and Ewe bride)

This interaction ensued at the arrival of the groom’s family to the ceremony grounds while being seated. Though neither of the families of the marriage
ceremony is a Ga, people in the crowd who understand Ga made such remarks.

Voice from outside  Agoo ee  Knocking!
Do me  Amee ee  Come in!
Voice from outside  Agoo ee  Knocking!
Do me  Ye se amee ee  We are saying come in!
Voice1(from the audience)  mën afeo ye bié?  What is happening here?
Voice2(from the audience)  wɔŋ kpee yoo!  We are welcoming a woman!
Voice3(from the audience)  wɔŋ wic yoo!  We are making love to a woman!

The phrase wɔŋ wic yoo ‘We are making love to a woman’ is actually the phrase used to express the payment of the bride price of a woman. The phrase is peculiar to the Ga language and any other rendition or translation into another language makes it totally unacceptable. Every language has a way of expressing it. Akan for instance uses the term gye aware which literally means to ‘collect marriage’ or ye ṣbaa ho ade ‘perform a woman’s rites. The speaker who made this utterance may want to sound profane but not threaten the face of anyone hence she used a marked code to reduce the level of face threat an Akan or Ewe translation may carry.

4.2.7 Humour

As already mentioned, a marked code choice can have a positive or negative effect on the interlocutors (cf. 2.2.2). It becomes positive when it narrows the social distance between interlocutors as exemplified below.
Example 21

(Grader Estate. 20th March, 2014. Akan groom and Ga bride)

The speaker in this example is the spokesperson for the bride. After she received the money for the knocking from the groom’s family, she made this remark:

Dromɔ Efie biara se woko mu a, wobo
kɔkɔkɔ, se woammo kɔkɔkɔ a, yefra wo fiafitɔ, ewi oo ewi.
(crowd giggles)

When entering every house you need to knock. If you do not knock, you are called a thief, thief oo thief.

The speaker in the example above alternated between Ga and Akan in her previous utterances. Ga and Akan are the unmarked codes for the ceremony but her switch to a marked code Ewe to express a word for a ‘thief’ fiafitɔ got the crowd laughing. This example shows that sometimes a marked choice can be the use of a single word in another language. The translation of a single word for thief in the marked code got the audience laughing.

Agyekum (2009:66) is of the view that jokes and humour can be an indirect way of communicating implicit meanings that would have been a face threat to the addressees. The speaker in the example above employed this strategy to iterate the importance of knocking when entering the homes of people.

4.2.8 Acronym

One of the rare functions of marked choices observed in this work is the formation of acronyms from the names of some of the items presented to the
bride. An acronym is a word formed from the initial or first few letters of a phrase. At the traditional marriage ceremonies, speakers formulate meanings to the letters of the names of some of these items. See examples below.

**Example 22**

(Madina. 28th December, 2014. Akan groom and Ga bride)

This is at the time the spokesperson for the groom presented the ring to the spokesperson of the bride.

It is well .yahoo ring, enn David we have our ring, today and Astwei are Rising Into David and Astwei are New Glory. (RING) Rising Into New Glory

It is obvious that the switch to English in the above example is neither for the reasons of linguistic incompetence nor the need for a lexical word. In my opinion the switch is to give a meaning to the letters of the word ‘ring’. This is so because Akan has a word for ring, ‘kawa’ which is equally made up of four letters and is commonly used. However, her use of English is to enable her spell out the meaning of each of the letters in the word RING as Rising Into New Glory. It could also be the case that the spokesperson has not sat down to coin meanings to the letters of ring in Akan which is ‘kawa’.

Sometimes the switch is not only motivated by just the coinage of meaning for items presented at the ceremony but also for the replacement of words which may perhaps be taboo words in the language and liable to cause face threats. Taboo words are words or expressions which have societal and
cultural prohibition on their use (Agyekum 2010). Below is another example of a switch to a marked choice to form an acronym.

**Example 23**

(Pokuase. 3rd April, 2014. Ga groom and Ewe bride)

This is during the time the spokesperson of the groom was informing the audience about the contents of the suitcase they brought for the bride.

Ωdɔyewu  wɔke nice pants ewomli. We have put nice pants in it. They say Precious Asserts Need Tight Security.

In the example above, the speaker made a marked choice of English to express ladies’ underwear. In as much as she may switch codes from Ga to English to explain the meaning coined for pants which is PANTS- Precious Asserts Need Tight Security, she also possibly made the switch to avoid the use of a rather taboo word. Despite the stereotype that the Ga language is noted to contain a lot of profane words, the Ga word for pant *pioto* has a limit to its use. The socio-cultural context for which *pioto* can be used is at the domain of the home and among females only. Therefore it becomes offensive to use the word *pioto* during a formal gathering where men (both old and young) are present. With this knowledge, she switched to English to tone down the level of face threat the Ga equivalent of pants may have caused. Through consultation, a more polite equivalent of pants in Ga during a formal gathering is the phrase *shishiwonin* ‘something worn under’ (p.c. Agartha August, June 12, 2015) but this is not often readily available in the lexicon of speakers until second thoughts.
4.2 Unmarked code choices

A language variety can be identified as unmarked if it is the choice expected by the speakers. It guides speakers to make their code choices in relation to the unmarked index of the unmarked RO set in a conversation whenever they wish to establish or affirm that RO set. As has already been mentioned (see section 2.2.2), unmarked code choices result in two types of unmarked CS namely: CS itself as the unmarked choice (also known as unmarked CS) and a sequence of unmarked choices (sequential CS). These are exemplified below according to the functions observed.

4.1.1 Unmarked CS

The unmarked CS as indicated previously involves “a continuous pattern of using two (or more) languages” (Myers-Scotton 1993:117). Switches here follow a to-and-fro pattern which generally carries the communicative purpose. Amuzu (2012:5) explains that “if CS itself is an unmarked choice, it means that the bilingual language variety in itself is the default medium of the given type of interaction”. This type of CS was noted to fulfil the function of humour through the narration of jokes.

Jokes are a prevalent means of language use that entertain the audience at marriage ceremonies. This iterates Ubong’s (2010:335) point that masters of ceremonies (MCs) used at marriage ceremonies in Ibibio must have languages full of jokes since marriage ceremonies are social events that are performed as a source of amusement to the witnesses. Jokes are employed in interethnic marriage ceremonies to talk about things concerning marriage, give advice and so on. Nonetheless, the concentration of this subsection is the language
choices engaged in creating these jokes. Example of CS in narrating jokes is shown below.

**Example 24**

This speaker is the spokesperson for an Akan groom who visited the house of a Ga bride to perform the traditional rites. When she presented the items for the appreciation of the parents of the bride, she advised men about fatherhood and how children bother their mothers.

(Madina. 28th December, 2014. Akan groom and Ga bride)

It is well _Ni mi baa nɛɛ ni mi ta trotro mli le, mami ko ta mi masei ehi ebi ye enɔ. Mihe yoghurt etawɔ ni eye eko, gbekɛbii shwieɛ mɔ hie ashi. Egbla enine ni emani tswa le. na bra bi nso te me nkyɛn a ɛta ɛtɔmɔ, ɛnɛ akwadaa no se maa makpe._

_There was a woman carrying a child sitting beside me in the trotro on my way here. I bought yoghurt and the child requested for some. A gentleman bought pastry and the child cried out for some. Another person bought popcorn and the child wanted that too. Then we heard a call out ‘Kaneshie! Odorkor’! Kaneshie! Odorkor! Akwadaa no se, maa maye Kaneshie! Odorkor!’ and the child insisted on eating that one too. Then the mother said_
This example shows the use of CS itself as the unmarked choice (also known as unmarked CS) for narrating a joke. The speaker, having knowledge of the language background of her audience, mixed both languages so everyone could have a clue of the joke and the addressees are not surprised at the back and forth use of Ga and Akan. In unmarked CS, each switch does not necessarily have a special indexicality (Myers-Scotton, 1993: 117) or social meaning. This means that there is no special significance attached to the individual switches but the rapid alternation of Akan and Ga could imply that the speaker was treating CS as the default medium of communication (Amuzu 2012:8).

4.1.2 Sequential CS

As noted by Myers-Scotton (1993:114), when the situational factors such as the topic, context or addressee of a conversation change the unmarked RO set may also change. When this happens, a speaker will switch codes to index a new RO set. Sequential CS is the alternation between two or more languages which are, “in their respective right, unmarked or expected for the given interaction type” (Amuzu 2012:5). Example 25 shows how sequential CS is realized based on a situational factor such as a change in the theme of a message.

Example 25

(Madina. 28th December, 2014. Akan groom and Ga bride)

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3 Suhum and Nsawam are also names of towns in the Eastern region.
This discourse involves ‘It is well’ the spokesperson for the groom and Peace the bride’s spokesperson during the announcement of the arrival of the groom’s family. Before the commencement of the ceremony, the groom’s family need to seek permission through a formal knocking on the door of the bride’s house.

1. It is well  
   Ha ni eshe wekumei ade  
   Let it reach the family that we
   ake wo hie wo agboshimo,  
   have our knocking, is that not
   anaa enye saa? Ye kura yen  
   it? We have our knocking
   knocking

2. Peace  
   Ameke ke abote mọ ko shia  
   They say if you enter
   mli le sani ashi agbo.  
   somebody’s house you have to
   Nohewọ ame hie ame  
   knock so they have their
   agboshimo.  
   knocking

3. It is well  
   Peace ole? Agboshimo he  
   Peace you know? Knocking is
   hia  
   necessary.

   (turning to the crowd)

   Obiara a ompẹ  
   Anyone who does not like
   knocking no, ọbẹhụ George Walker
   Bush da koro.

   Nohewọ ke oye bi ye shia ni  
   So if you have a child at home
   ele agboshimo, tsoṣẹmọ le  
   who does not know how to
   ko ni ele agboshimo.  
   knock, teach him/her how to
In turn 1, ‘It is well’ used Ga in addressing the family of bride through Peace to formally inform them about their knocking but when she was not sure she has articulated well her thoughts, she used Akan-English CS to clarify her uncertainty. Peace in turn 2 also used Ga to echo the message of ‘It is well’ to her family. Then in turn 3 ‘It is well’ used Akan to address the crowd when she wanted to sound informal and create humour, by so doing she calls for a new RO set. Then again she switched back to Ga to advise the crowd altering the relationship between her and the crowd from informal to formal. The change in the situational factors; in this scenario the context (change from informal to formal) makes the switches in example 25 sequential CS. As compared to unmarked CS in example 24 where there is no specific social meaning attached to the switches.

4.3 Exploratory CS in language negotiation

Exploratory CS as explained in sub-subsection 2.2.2 is where speakers alternate between two or more languages in order to select an appropriate language. This type of CS is used when speakers are not sure of what the unmarked code is and explore a number of codes to help achieve their social goals. Amuzu (2012) exemplifies the use of this type of CS in an interaction between strangers who might not be certain of each others language or between acquaintances who find themselves in an unfamiliar setting.

Myers-Scotton (1993:142) argues that this type of CS is the least common. This is because the unmarked RO set for a given interactant in a
given exchange is obviously derived from the situational factors available. It means that the circumstances such as the setting, participants etc. surrounding a particular talk exchange can determine the choice of a code so it is uncommon for people to now explore which language(s) to use. It has also been observed in this work that exploratory CS is rare during interethnic marriage ceremonies. The reason is that the language(s) used during the ceremonies are often negotiated for prior to the day of the ceremony so there is no need for speakers to explore for languages at the day of the ceremony. Though Myers-Scotton (ibid) mentions that exploratory CS is common within intercultural exchanges where there is a clash of norms, this is not the case with interethnic marriage ceremonies performed in Accra (exploratory CS is not common).

4.4 Chapter summary

This chapter dealt with issues regarding CS as a language choice during interethnic marriage ceremonies using the markedness model of Myers-Scotton (1993). It revealed that people made language choices for various motives. The reasons for CS in this chapter were modelled after the four types of CS outlined in the Markedness Model.

While the unmarked CS was used with no obvious meaning attached to each switch, the sequential CS was used to change a situation from formal to informal. The marked CS on the other hand performed a number of functions which include the purposes of ethnic identity, lexical need, accommodation, quotations and ethnic stereotyping. However, an example of the exploratory
type of CS was not identified. Because interethnic marriage ceremonies involve the negotiation for languages to be used prior to the day of the ceremony, it is common for speakers to make marked code choices for various reasons and this explains why exploration CS was not found.

CS has been argued by scholars like Forson (1988), Asilevi (1990) etc. as a phenomenon used in informal settings and that its use in a formal discourse is “only an invitation to ridicule” (Forson 1988: 184, cited in Amuzu 2012). However, this work and other works reviewed in chapter two like Asare (2013), Yevudey (2013), and Angermeyer (2006) have shown that the use of CS is equally pervasive in formal settings like the marriage ceremonies, classroom learning and teaching, and court proceedings. This is an indication that CS itself is gradually becoming the ‘first tongue’ of a bilingual (Amuzu 2005).

The next chapter concludes the thesis. It gives a summary of the chapters, outlines the major findings and recommends areas for further research.
CHAPTER FIVE

CONCLUSION

5.0 Introduction

The purpose of this study was to explore language negotiation and use in interethnic marriage ceremonies in Accra. The main objective of the study was to identify how languages were negotiated and the factors that affected the negotiations. Using the theory of CDA, some problems of language negotiation like misinterpretation and language imperialism that were unconsciously expressed were revealed. The study also displayed how the understanding of culture helped in the interpretation of a text. The study, through the framework of the markedness model, also identified the creation of humour, giving directives and singing songs as some of the reasons for which code choices are made.

This concluding chapter presents an overview of the entire study. It gives a summary of all the chapters of this study, outlines the major findings and gives recommendations for future researchers.

5.1 Summary of the Study

In this section, I present a chapter-by-chapter summary of the thesis.
Chapter one presented a general overview of the thesis. It discussed the linguistic status of Accra revealing the multi-ethnic nature of the capital which paves the way for interethnic and cross-cultural activities. It explained the problem that led to this study and the questions that guided the research. It further outlined the objectives, the significance and the organization of the thesis.

In chapter two, collections of literature that were relevant and guided the thesis were reviewed under the themes: language, ethnicity and identity construction; language choice, negotiation and use in intercultural communication; language choice in other bilingual/multilingual interactions; and language negotiation in interethnic marriages. The Critical Discourse Analysis and the Markedness Model frameworks were explained in the chapter. Finally, the methods and techniques used in gathering data for the work were also discussed.

Chapter three considered issues pertaining to language negotiation and choices. It delved into when and how languages are negotiated for the ceremonies and the factors that influenced these language choices like competence and identity creation. The chapter finally looked at linguistic imperialism as a result of language choice and negotiation.

The chapter four examined CS as a language choice during interethnic marriage ceremonies. It outlined the four types of CS in Myers-Scotton (1993): unmarked CS, sequential CS, marked CS and exploratory CS. The social purposes for each of these types were also discussed.

In what follows, I highlight the major findings made in the work.
5.2 Summary of key findings

The findings presented here are in relation to the four research questions that formed the foundation to this study. The findings from this study show that language negotiation during interethnic marriage ceremonies is sometimes done prior to the day of the ceremony, at other times it is done spontaneously on the day of the ceremony. This is in relation to the question of how language is negotiated (see section 1.4). Data revealed that language choices during interethnic traditional marriage ceremonies in Accra do not necessarily depend on the language of the bride as has always been expected.

Because language forms an integral part of the ceremony, the spokespersons used for these ceremonies are carefully selected. It is required of these spokespersons to possess negotiating skills and at least a fair knowledge of the languages represented at the ceremony. Hence language use and negotiation in interethnic marriage ceremonies is a skill that must be learnt. Professional spokespersons exhibit this skill more than non-professionals. This observation is in line with Yoneoka’s (2011:101) assertion that language negotiation is a skill that must be developed consciously.

The study also observed that not only does the level of competence affect people’s language choices but the ethnic affiliation or identity they hope to create for themselves has a great influence on language use. This is simply because language cannot be detached from ethnicity and identity creation. People make language choices to reflect their ethnic identities since interethnic marriage ceremonies bring people from different ethnic backgrounds and
those backgrounds must not be lost or overshadowed by the other ethnic
groups present. Therefore, linguistic competence and identity creation are
factors that influence language choice and negotiation during interethnic
marriage ceremonies (c.f. research question 2 in section 1.4).

In order to respond to the question (question 3 in section 1.4) of how
language barrier is resolved, it was noted that some speakers preferred to use a
lingua franca especially English while others opted to adopt a language
interpreter. However, the use of a language interpreter is characterised by the
problem of misinterpretation and addition of some of the meanings expressed
by the original speaker.

Language imperialism was also noted as a problem associated with
language use during interethnic marriage ceremonies. When this happened,
speakers of a majority language unconsciously impose their language and
culture on the speakers of other languages. Akan was noted to be the language
that was mostly imposed on other languages like Ewe.

Finally, it was observed that speakers displayed a persistent use of
codeswitching in their utterances. The switches from one language to the other
served various socio-pragmatic purposes. In relation to the Markedness Model
(Myers-Scotton 1993), these code choices were usually the
marked/unexpected because there were often prior negotiations of languages
before speakers inclined to digress from those already negotiated languages.
Some of the reasons for the marked code choices were to create humour, give
directives, make a direct quotation, to accommodate other speakers and sing
songs. This finding answers the fourth research question raised in section 1.4.
5.3 Contribution to knowledge

As already indicated in section 1.6, there is scanty literature on the language used in interethnic marriage ceremonies. This study has therefore contributed to filling the gap in literature by providing evidence on some of the issues pertaining to language use in interethnic marriage ceremonies.

For instance, the study has shown that the language(s) to be used at the ceremonies are negotiated days before the day of the ceremony. At other times, the language is negotiated spontaneously on the day of the ceremony. But whatever the option, the spokespersons for the ceremony are selected based on their linguistic competence in the languages represented at the ceremony.

Also, the study has revealed that the use of language interpreters and the use of a lingua franca are some of the means of language barrier resolution. Nonetheless, the use of language interpreters is characterized with the problem of misinterpretation of some concepts.

In addition, the study has shown that whenever different cultural groups come into contact under the same communicative event, there is the problem of language imperialism - speakers of majority languages like Akan unconsciously transfer their language and culture on speakers of other languages.
5.4 Limitations

There are areas that this study could not cover due to some constraints.

First and foremost, the study could not involve some other languages spoken within the Greater Accra region. This is due to the restriction of the languages in the researcher’s linguistic repertoire.

Another problem is the uneven distribution of the ceremonies recorded across the region. Some districts recorded a higher number of ceremonies than others. For instance the Dangbe district recorded three ceremonies while the Accra Metropolis recorded only one (see figure 2). Since the sampling procedure used in data collection was the snowball technique, it was difficult to regulate locations of these ceremonies. It was not within my control to determine the venue or type of marriage ceremony. I only attended the ones I was privy to hence the problem of uneven representation of all the districts in the region.

5.5 Recommendations for Future Research

The scope of this study covered language negotiation and factors that influence language choices during interethnic marriage ceremonies in Accra. Due to the constraints limiting this study (see section 5.4), I would to suggest some possible areas for further research.

I would like to propose that a similar research should be carried out in the northern part of the country since the northern part of Ghana is noted to have many languages.
A comparative study could also be carried out at another multilingual city like Kumasi where Akan is highly dominant to find out if Akan is transferred on the other ethnic groups living there.

Also, enquiry into the language socialization of children born to interethnic marriages is worth considering.

Again, a cross-cultural negotiation of languages can be considered in other domains to display the similarities and differences in language negotiation and choice making.

Although this work is purely qualitative, it is important to do a quantitative study which involves a larger data that will give a fair representation of all the districts in Accra.

5.6 Concluding remarks

Language usage in intercultural marriage ceremonies is a universal phenomenon that cannot be overlooked. Since language is an important tool of communication that reflects people’s identity in intercultural exchanges, much attention should be attached to the language choices made during interethnic marriage ceremonies. Since marriage is a union between two parties (including the extended families), it is important that the language(s) used is one that will promote solidarity and leave a lasting impression on the participants.
APPENDIX I

UNSTRUCTURED INTERVIEW GUIDE

a) What is your ethnic or language background?

b) How many languages do you understand and speak?

c) Which of these languages are you highly competent in?

d) Which language do you frequently use?

e) Which language(s) do you run the church service in? (for the Priests or Pastors only)

f) Are you aware of the language background of your audience?

g) Why do you choose the language(s) you use in addressing your audience?

h) Do you think you have achieved the purpose for which you select your language(s)?
APPENDIX II

SELECTED RECORDINGS FROM THE CEREMONIES

New Legon, 5th September, 2014 (Akan groom and Ewe bride)

1. Spokesman ɔmo maa yɛn aso tɛɛ sɛ They made us aware
dodɔ ɔ no ara te Akan kasa that majority of them
no. Sɛ wɔntɛ koraa anka understand the Akan
wɔbɛma y’aso ate na anka language. If they
yɛahwehwe skandini bi a don’t understand at
ate Ayigbe te Twi na anka all, they would have
yede no adi yɛn anim na informed us so we
anka ɔabɛdi dwuma no. look for an Akan-

They made us aware that majority of them understand the Akan language. If they don’t understand all, they would have informed us so we look for an Akan-Ewe bilingual to lead the ceremony

2. Dɔ me abusuafoɔ, sɛ yɛreka Family members, if we are
abusua mmienu bringing two families together
abom aye no baako, as one, now the groom’s family
fifia ɲutsu wo fome is at one side and the bride’s
le ale, nyɔnu wo family is at the other side
fome le ale

Family members, if we are bringing two families together as one, now the groom’s family is at one side and the bride’s family is at the other side

Bride’s Mepa wo kyɛw ka Please speak Akan
mother Twi
Dɔ me Barima no abusuafoɔ The family of the groom will
3. Do me xeya blутwo fe nue ta me This is an Akan tradition so
tso de dzi. let’s comply.

4. Do me Saa nhwiren yi, еyε more than This flower is more than
hibiscus, сε wonya no wо wo hibiscus, if you have it in
fie a, обuroni bεka сε е-
your house, the white man
blossom will say it blossoms

5. Do me Se еnyini na еye fe a. If it grows and becomes
Opanyin Wiafe ne fie beyε beautiful, Opanyin Wiafe’s house
hwam, е beyε fe, е beyε obi will smell good, it will be
a сωω аhobraseε, е beyε beautiful, it will be someone who
obi a Kristo do nкоaa na has humility, it will be someone
єωω ne mu. who has the love of Christ.

6. Voice from outside Agoo ee Knocking!

Do me Amee ee Come in!

Voice from outside Agoo ee Knocking!

Do me Yєse amee ee We are saying come in!

Voice 1(from the audience) мєнι аfєөє Ѩє What is happening here?
bic?

Voice2 (from the audience)  ωη kpee yoo!  We are welcoming a woman!

Voice3 (from the audience)  ωη wic yoo!  We are making love to a woman! (Literal meaning)

Afienya, 26th January, 2015. (Akan groom and Ewe bride)

1. Ṣọ Ṣọ Yẹn ha de bọkọ mo na mo nam kwan so
Aware so Yẹn nso, yẹn amanẹ a ne se, yẹaba, nhye hye
biara a yẹ ne mo aka ato họ, amanẹ biara a
yẹadi ato họ, kwan bia ya bo ato họ nti mebae a,
bọkọ,

 Ṣọ Ṣọ Me pa mo kyẹw, mẹka
Aware so Me nso Ada no mete paa

Please I would like to speak Ada a bit
I also understand Ada very well

Accra-Newtown, 26th February, 2015 (Ga groom and Akan bride)

1. Adom aha de bọkọ na wo na our home is peace, you
wonam are on a journey
We have also come in peace. To begin, this a cross-cultural marriage, so we will speak a bit of Ga, Lagos town, Twi, and English. Amen. If we get spiritual too, all to the ecclesiastical they will give us the interpretation. Amen oo!

2. Adom We will begin with a brief introduction before we start the occasion.

I need to make you understand a concept. In Ga tradition, father, mother does not sit in public. They send, they send delegates to perform the marriage rite.
Grader Estate, 20\textsuperscript{th} March, 2014 (Akan groom and Ga bride)

1. **Dromo**  
   Yɛma mo akwaaba oo. You are welcome.
   Mesre mo obiara anya n suo anaa?
   Crowd Mepa wo kyew viw Yes please
   Dromo Mɔ feɔ mɔ ena nu lo? Please have you been served with water?
   Crowd Ofaineɛ heɛ Yes please
   Dromo Nye feɛ nye jee jee? How are you all?
   Crowd wo jee jogbaŋŋ We are good

   **Dromo**  
   wɔmii da Yehowa shi ni nɔ  
   feɛ nɔ aya nɔ feɛɛo ke wo  
   egbeĩ kroŋkroŋ le hie  
   nyam. No hewɔ wo ye wo  
   osofo Reverend Batsa ye bie.
   We are thanking God so that everything will end beautifully to the glory of His holy name.

   Yɛwɔ yen osofo Batsa wɔ  
   ha. nɔ na ɔde dwumadie  
   no nyinaa behye Awurade  
   nɔs mu sɛnea biribiara We have our pastor Batsa here.
   He is the one to commit this occasion into God’s hand so everything will end beautifully.

2. Dromo

Efi biara se woko mu a.

Woko koko ko se woammo

koko ko a, yeire wo fiafito.

ewi oo ewi. (crowd giggles)

When entering every house you need to knock. If you do not knock, you are called a thief, thief oo thief.

(Amasaman-Medie. 7th February, 2015. Akan groom and Ga bride)

1. Ɔdɔnaye

Yen maame, look me,

hwe ha, ofain akwem

bie aha mi fioo. wɔmii

sumo bo, okwe wɔbi le

ojogbaŋŋ, woŋyan

wɔwo bo nyɛm

Our mother, look at me, look here, please let me have your attention. We love you, you have raised our daughter into a good woman, and we cannot pay you

2. Sisi

Kwe! mi ni okem wiɛɛ

Twi le? wo shia le mli le

awieee Twi. Wɔ wiɛɛ Ga,

Ayigbe aloo Blɛfo.

Hey! Am I the one you speaking Akan to? We do not speak Akan in this house. We speak Ga, Ewe or English.
3. **Sweet mother are you there?**
   Aww mother I feel relieved when I see you because the nine months journey is not an easy one. Our mother, look at me, please give me a little of your attention, we love you, you have raised our daughter into a good woman, and we cannot pay you

(Asasaman. 20th December, 2014. Akan groom and Ewe bride)

1. **Pastor**
   Look onto your own vows.
   Menye osɔfo yea gblæ o. Nu yi le wo ŋutɔ wo dzime ne ŋlo da ṣi be yako do nugbe lae, se
   It is not what the pastor has said. It is what you have written down from your hearts as vows to each other, listen.

**Groom**
I Jeff, offer myself completely to be your life eternal. I promise to love you with all my heart and to be unselfish in this love. I promise to stand by you
in times of joy, trials and sorrows. I dedicate my glory and honour to the lordship of Christ Jesus and I pledge myself in all that I am now to you and God, so help me God.

Pastor  
*Afena Julie, say this one, wo*

Lady Julie, say this one, *you*

*ŋutɔ́ ṣlɔ́ ɖe ɡake meḍzi be mɔ̀xɔ̀ ɖe ɖe ɔ̀ ne*

*ŋutɔ́ əusie ɔ̀mɔ̀ ɡa wo ŋutɔ́ ənumenyae*

*Bride*

*Enye Julie, me xɔ̀ wo Jeff abe ʋe ʋl ɔ̀t ɔ̀l ɔ̀t ɔ̀rkle srɔ̀ŋye ŋutɔ́tsɔ́.*

*I Julie, accept you Jeff as my lover and husband. I will hold you from now onwards. In good, in bad, riches, in poverty, in sickness, in health I will love you. I will care for you, I will comfort you and nothing can separate us in the holy name of God, Amen.*

*Mawu fe ŋkɔ̀ kɔkɛ la me, Amen.*

2. MC  
*ŋdi ya, tefeyike meaŋɔ fia,*  

*this morning, at this stage of the
ceremony, this morning, at this stage of the ceremony

we will take one advice each
deka

deka

one advice

because we are out of time already

because we are already out of time

The elderly will have two representatives but it must be short

The elderly will also have two opportunities. Two from the bride’s side and two from the groom’s side but please the advice should be very short

I will give everyone three seconds

only three people

If somebody knows any reason for which these two cannot be
me dze be woa yra srɔdɛŋe ya dzi o la, the whole place must be very quiet. This is a question I want everybody to hear the question very well. I will start again, if somebody knows…

ade dzeshi…

(Lashibi. 22nd November, 2014. Akan groom and Ewe bride)

1. MC Parents of the bride. Parents of the bride.

mepaakyew, ɔbaa no abusuafɔɔ monye ready Please the family of the bride should get ready.’

2. Pastor You need to be patient with your husband, if he wrongs you don’t say today Ampadu ɛku. Confront him gently like a dove.

You need to be patient with your husband, if he wrongs you don’t say today Ampadu is dead. Confront him gently like a dove.

(Madina. 28th December, 2014. Akan groom and Ga bride)

1. It is well Ni mi baa nɛɔ ni mi ta trotro There was a woman carrying mli le, mami ko ta mi masei a child sitting beside in the
trotro on my way here. I bought yoghurt and the child requested for some. A gentleman bought pastry and the child cried out for some. Another person bought popcorn and the child wanted that too. Then we heard a call out ‘Kaneshie! Odorkor! Kaneshie! Odorkor!’ and the child insisted on eating that one too. Then the mother said fool you will eat ‘Suhum! Nsawam’!

2. It is well

Let it reach the family that we have our knocking, is that not it? We have our knocking knocking

They say if you enter somebody’s house you have to

---

4 Kaneshie and Odorkor are names of suburbs in Accra.
5 Suhum and Nsawam are also names of towns in the Eastern region.
Nohe\(\omega\) am\(\epsilon\) h\(\epsilon\) am\(\epsilon\) knock so they have their agboshim\(\omega\).

It is well Peace ol\(\epsilon\)? Agboshim\(\omega\) he Peace you know? Knocking is h\(\epsilon\)a necessary. (turning to the crowd)

Obiara a om\(\epsilon\)pe knocking Anyone who does not like no, cb\(\epsilon\)hu George Walker knocking will see George Bush da koro. Walker Bush one day.

Nohe\(\omega\) ke oye bi ye shia ni So if you have a child at home ele agboshim\(\omega\), ts\(\omega\)sem\(\epsilon\) le who does not know how to ko ni ele agboshim\(\omega\). knock, teach him/her how to knock.

3. It is well y\(\epsilon\)kura y\(\epsilon\)n ring, \(\epsilon\)n\(\epsilon\)n David we have our ring, today and Astwei are Rising Into David and Astwei are New Glory. (RING) Rising Into New Glory

(Pokuase. 3rd April, 2014. Ga groom and Ewe bride)

1. Sum\(\omega\)\(\omega\)\(\omega\) Mibi yoo le mike Yesu m\(\iota\) I’m giving my daughter ha le ni eke f\(\iota\) egbalashile Christ for her marital journey.
gbe le. hew\(\omega\) mala ye So I will sing in Ewe.
ayigbe m\(\iota\).

Song Yesu ko anye nye m\(\omega\)\(\omega\) Christ shall be my only my h\(\omega\)t\(\omega\) co-traveller
Dzidzɔ me mayi, agagbɔ kplii
With Him shall I go and return in joy

Eya ko me makpɔ agbemɔ le,
In Him alone shall I find the way to life

Eya yran afe kple dziwo 2x
He blesses those far and near 2x

Halleluyah! Obi se sε ɔ kplii
Halleluyah! Someone said if you go somewhere and you
wokɔ baabi na yɛto dwom na wonnim to a, eno ara
na do not know the song being sung just insert ‘do dea da’
ne se wode “do dea da” na wode ahyɛ mu. Mepa wo
into the rhythm. Please raise kyɛw ma dwom no so bio
the song again and let me na mento bi mma wo.
help you sing.

2. Ḍɔɔyεwu
Merepɛgya ade yi na weight
When I was lifting this
bi a ɛwɔ mu no mema so a, thing, the weight made me
ɛnyɛ ye enti ɛma mete nka feel so much pain at my
paa wɔ me mu, ɛnna ɛma me back. It reminds me of an
kae Pentecost dwom bi a old Pentecost song.
ghaa years back

Song
Mawu me ku oo ele agbe la
God is not dead, He is alive

Blema Mawu me ku oo ele agbe
The ancient God is not
dead, He is alive
Me se ṭkɔ le ta nye me  \hspace{0.5cm} I feel Him in my head
(mo ntoto avibge no ma me) \hspace{0.5cm} (sing it in Ewe for me)
Mete nka wo me mu \hspace{0.5cm} I feel Him inside of me
Mete nka wo me kon \hspace{0.5cm} I feel Him in my neck
Mawu me ku oo ele agbe la \hspace{0.5cm} God is not dead, He is alive
Blema Mawu me ku oo ele agbe (dancing agbadza⁶) \hspace{0.5cm} The ancient God is not dead, He is alive

3. Sumɔɔmɔɔ wɔ ye bie nee nŋŋ ni wɔ \hspace{0.5cm} We were just here and we
na gbɔi no hewɔ wɔ baa \hspace{0.5cm} realised we have visitors so we
ŋa ame ni nɔni hewɔ ame \hspace{0.5cm} will greet them and they will
ba ni ame kee wo. \hspace{0.5cm} tell us why there are here.
ofainε nye jee fee? \hspace{0.5cm} Please how are you?
Ωδγνου wɔ bie jogbany, nye hu \hspace{0.5cm} We are fine, how are you also?
ye jee fee?
Sumɔɔmɔɔ wɔ hu wɔ bie jogbany \hspace{0.5cm} We are fine too

4. Ωδγνου Woke nice pants ewomli. \hspace{0.5cm} We have put nice pants in it.
Ακεε Precious Asserts \hspace{0.5cm} They say Precious Asserts Need
Need Tight Security \hspace{0.5cm} Tight Security.

⁶ The traditional dance of the Ewe (Aŋlo) ethnic group
(Royal House Chapel. 6th September, 2014. Akan groom and Ewe bride)

1. Pastor  I pray that each and every one of you here, particularly Ike and Joy would be able to say “Nyame adom εne me yere ada ṣe nea mete yi”.  I pray that each and every one of you here, particularly Ike and Joy would be able to say ‘I am who I am because of God’s grace and the help of my spouse’.
REFERENCES


