

SOCIOPRAGMATICS OF REQUESTS IN LOGBA

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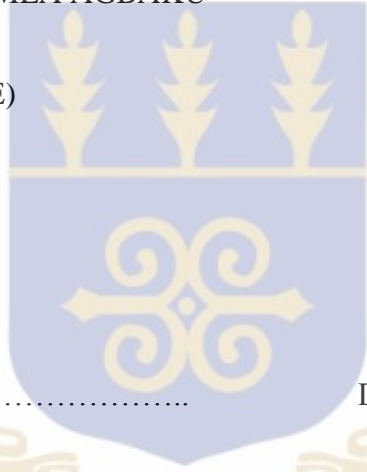
DECLARATION

I do hereby declare that with the exception of references that have been duly cited, this thesis is the result of my own research, and that it has not been presented either in whole or in part for another degree elsewhere.

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DEDICATION

THIS THESIS IS DEDICATED TO

MY MOTHER,

CHRISTINE AKU ASIGBETSE

AND

MAWUTOR, SENAM AND ETORNAM.



ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

This thesis has reached a successful completion due to the help and effort of a lot of people. I owe it a duty to thank each of you for the part you played. The first note of gratitude goes to my creator, protector and provider who is the source of my strength and without whose grace and favour I would not even have dreamed of a university education.

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ABSTRACT

This thesis investigates the sociopragmatics of requests in Logba, a Ghana-Togo Mountain language spoken in the Hohoe District of the Volta Region of Ghana. It aims at examining the use of request expressions in the language by systematically describing the various strategies and some socio-cultural situations where request expressions are used among the Logbas. The study shows that interlocutors' choice of request expression is contingent on variables such as gender, rank, age, power and distance. People who are lower in any of these variables are supposed to make requests to their higher level counterparts in ways that are not face-threatening. However, the higher placed ones are not obliged to make requests in similar fashion. Request expressions used in everyday interactions, sermons, arbitration in the chief's palace, financial transactions and ceremonies of various rites of passage were recorded and examined. Though the main theoretical framework adopted for this study is Watts' (2003) Politeness Framework, data was also analysed based on the sociolinguistic variable of GRAPD (Agyekum 2005) and the acronym SPEAKING (Hymes 1986). The study suggests that the use of politeness markers such as honorifics, endearment terms, and address terms are aimed at getting the attention of the requestee in order for the requester to achieve his/her request goal.

Keywords: requests, face threats, politeness markers, endearment terms.

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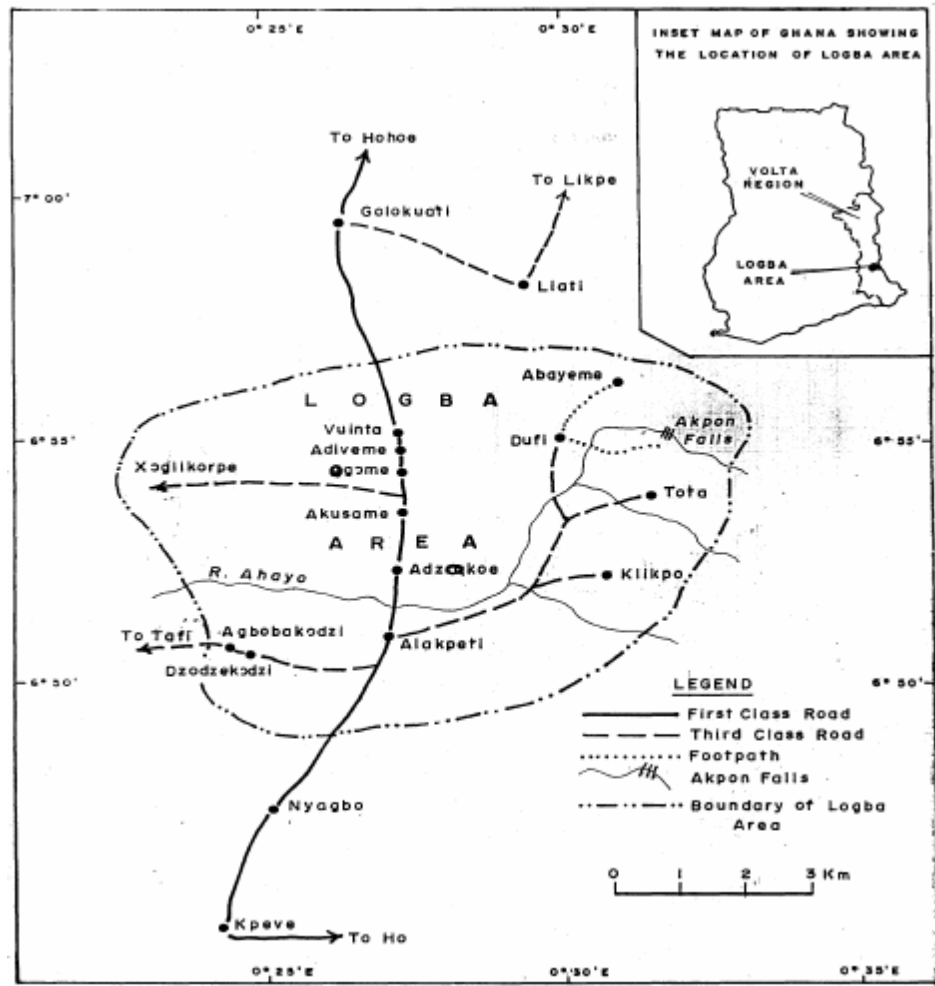
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FIG.1 MAP OF LOGBA AND SURROUNDING TOWNS



A map of Logba and surrounding towns. Adapted from (Dorvlo 2008: xvii).

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

1	First Person
2	Second Person
3	Third Person
ADR	Addressive Particle
AdT	Address Term
CLE	Chinese Learners of English
CM	Class Marker
COMP	Complement
CONJ	Conjunction
DCTs	Discourse Completion Tests
DEF	Definite Marker
DEM	Demonstrative
EFL	English as a foreign language
ESL	English as a second language
FUT	Future
HAB	Habitual Marker
INTER	Interrogative Marker
NEG	Negation
NOM	Nominalising Suffix
OBJ	Object
PL	Plural
POS	Possessive
PRES	Present Tense
PROG	Progressive

PST	Past Tense
Q	Question
SG	Singular
SM	Subject Marker
SUB	Subject

CHAPTER ONE

GENERAL INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

People communicate on a daily basis to express their thoughts, feelings and knowledge, as well as to fulfil their own needs. In many instances, speech acts are used to get the intended message across. Speech acts (directives) like requests are important in our communities because they serve as “preambles meant to prepare the way for the performance of an upcoming event either in favour of the speaker, addressee, both of them or a third person” (Agyekum 2005:1).

Requests are universal, in that, every speech community uses them in one way or the other. As a verbal exchange, it is dialogic involving a speaker and an addressee that is, a requester and a requestee. In a few instances, however, requests may be monologic as when in the privacy of our rooms or at prayer sessions we address petitions to an object of worship or reverence (Agyekum 2005). A request presupposes a requester and a requestee to whom the request is addressed and the expected benefit to be derived from the requestee’s compliance or response.

Requests fall under the category of directives, which are considered as attempts “to get the hearer to do an act which speaker wants hearer to do, and which is not obvious that the hearer will do in the normal course of events or hearer’s own accord” (Searle 1969:66). A request is thus defined as a directive speech act in which the speaker asks the hearer to perform an action which is very often for the exclusive benefit of the speaker (Trosborg 1995).

The Logba verb for request is *bú*. Requests are considered potentially damaging for the addressee's negative face, that is, the individual's need to have his/her freedom of action unimpeded (Brown and Levinson 1987:61). According to Sifianou (1992) and Trosborg (1995), requests consist of two main structures: the core request or head act and the peripheral modification devices. The head act consists of the main utterance which has the function of requesting and can stand by itself. They posit three main styles of requests in English namely: direct (e.g. Clean up the kitchen!), conventionally indirect (e.g. could you clean up the kitchen?) and non-conventionally indirect (that is, hints). A hint is an indirect request which is not part of a language, and hence requires more inferencing for the hearer to derive the speaker's requestive intent. An example is when one says: 'this room is dark'. This can mean that, the requester is asking the requestee to either switch on the light or open the window(s) for light to come in.

Request is a means of soliciting assistance. It may be expressed verbally or non-verbally in most cultures. Generally, request is more conveniently and effectively communicated through the linguistic medium, as a social behaviour (Odonkor 2001). Though a universal phenomenon its conceptualisation, norms of performance and interpretation may vary across cultures. In any speech community, request and its performance constitute a body of knowledge that members of the speech community must acquire in order to become socially integrated (Odonkor 2001). Children at Logba are queried for going about requests inappropriately. The acquisition of the knowledge and skills for request performance becomes more important

considering the fact that requests feature more prominently in our everyday verbal exchanges.

Requests are universal because every language and speech community employs one form or the other during communicative encounters (Agyekum 2005:1). However, the way they are employed and structured may differ from language to language but their functions may be identical. Thus, their social function consists of “getting the hearer to do something for the speaker or a third party, which makes them beneficial to the latter and costly to the former” (Searle 1969:66). Since requests threaten the hearer’s negative face by restricting his or her freedom of action (Brown and Levinson 1987), in order to make the requestee comply with a request, it is necessary to formulate it in a socially and culturally appropriate way.

In order for successful interaction to be accomplished and potential unwelcomed effects on the hearer to be reduced or softened, Bella (2012) opines that, the formulation of requests call for a great deal of both pragmalinguistic and sociopragmatic expertise on the part of the users. Moreover, the requester needs to possess both the knowledge of the linguistic resources for formulating a request in a particular language and knowledge of the contextual and sociocultural variables that render a particular pragmalinguistic choice appropriate in a particular speech situation (Bella 2012). Requests therefore, may present inherent difficulties for language learners, who need to know how to “perform requests successfully and to avoid the effect of being perceived as rude, offensive or demanding” (Uso-Juan 2010:237).

This thesis investigates the sociopragmatics of requests in Logba, one of the fourteen (14) Ghana-Togo Mountain (G.T.M) languages in Ghana. The work is as a result of a forty-five (45) day fieldwork in two of the towns at Logba namely: Logba Alakpeti and Logba Tota as well as the use of the researcher's native speaker intuition in gathering the data.

The opening chapter presents the general discussion concerning the location of Logba, the people and their origin. The chapter also presents the statement of the problem, research objectives, significance of the study and the research questions that guided the conduct of the study and the organisation of the entire work.

1.2 Background of the people and the language.

This section is concerned with the Logba language and its speakers. The speakers of Logba are found in several towns namely: Tota, Klikpo, Alakpeti, Adzakoe, Akusame, Ogome and Vuinta within the Logba traditional area. The succeeding sections below will throw more light on the people and their language.

1.2.1 The Logba language and its speakers

Dorvlo (2008) reports two etymologies for the term Logba. The first account is that, Logba is derived from two Ewe words *lo* 'collect' and *gbě* 'rubbish' and refers to those people who in the course of migration of the Ewes from Notsie in present day Togo were in front of the group and made the path by literally

‘breaking and collecting the thick vegetative undergrowth’ to facilitate the movement for the Ewes who followed.

Another account suggests that the name is from two Logba words, *la* ‘to make’ and *ogbá* ‘path’. Logba people were hunters who were residing outside the great walls of Notsie and at the time of the migration of the Ewes, they helped to make the path for the Ewes. It is believed that this name was as a result of the reference that the Ewes made to them when they heard them saying: *la ogbáá! la ogbáá!* ‘make the path, make the path.’ Since that time they have been referred to by the other ethnic groups as the Logba people (Dorvlo 2008).

Another account has it that Logba, also called Ikpana¹ is made up of two morphemes *-ikpa* ‘it is true’ and *anaa* (which is a question particle that is used in conversation when one wants to make a confirmation). The two morphemes, *ikpa* and *anaa* when put together become *Ikpana?* ‘is it true?’ (Dande 2011). The indigenes refer to themselves as Akpanawò. A male Logba is called Akpananyì and a female one is called Akpanadzè.

Concerning the order in which the speakers of the G.T.M languages came to the area, it is stated in one of the accounts that the Logbas and the Nyagbo people came to the area after the Tafi people. However, the Logbas were in the area even before the Avatime people settled at their present location (Dorvlo 2008).

Logba falls within the Hohoe administrative district. It is in the Afadjato South constituency in the Volta Region of Ghana. The people of

¹ Ikpana is the name the indigenes call their language.

Logba live in the following towns: Tota, Klikpo, Alakpeti, Adzakoe, Adiveme, Ogome, Akusame and Vuinta. Apart from these towns, there are other settler villages². Figure 1 is the map of Logba and surrounding towns. Most of the people of Logba are peasant farmers. The main agricultural produce are cassava, maize, yam, rice, plantain. Cash crops like cocoa, coffee, pear and oil palm are also cultivated on small scale.

1.2.2 The Origin of the People of Logba

Dorvlo (2008) asserts that, the widespread view among the Logba people is that, they migrated from Notsie with the Ewes as a result of the cruel rule of Agorkorli of Notsie. The migration story has it that, the early settlers in Logba first came to the area but due to the constant harassment and the unfriendly nature of the Ashantis who were occupying the land prior to the arrival of the Logbas, the latter decided to make a return journey to Sudan (William Asamoah, personal communication, January 5th, 2015). The issue of the Ashantis ever occupying the present day Logba territory is corroborated by the fact that, there is a mountain called *ozowo* 'Ashantis' and *ukpó* 'mountain'. The two are called *ozowokpo* 'Ashanti's mountain' where the Ashantis are believed to have lived. The Akan words for palm fruit '*abe*' and the act of giving birth '*wo*' among others are the same in Logba lending credence to some historical ties.

² Settler villages include Dufi, Abayame, Akpaɔaxɔ, Agbobakɔdzi, Xɔglikɔfe.

1.3 Statement of the Problem

The study of the Logba language and other G.T.M languages in the area of speech acts cannot be said to be advanced when compared with other Ghanaian languages like Akan. Dorvlo (2008:6) posits that, “Logba is one of the less studied languages among all the G.T.M languages”. Some of the works done on the GTM languages (which Logba is part of) are those done by (Greenberg 1966 & Egblewogbe 1992). Greenberg (1966) classified G.T.M languages as belonging to the Kwa sub group B of the Niger-Congo family. His classification was informed by certain features within these G.T.M languages which are common to the Niger-Congo family. These features are; the use of prefixes to classify nouns, their tonal nature, subject verb order, vowel harmony system. Egblewogbe (1992) on the other hand, argues that GTM languages are not different from Guan languages, that is, they belong together in the Guan family. Because of this, distinguishing Central Togo languages from neighbouring Guan languages poses a problem. Some works done predominantly on Logba are those done by Dorvlo 2008, A grammar of Logba (Ikpana) & Dande 2011, Language use in Logba.

None of these works mentioned above is done on speech acts. Thus, the researcher, informed by this, seeks to work on this area to set the tone for further studies in the speech act of requests especially in the G.T.M languages. Since requests are socio-culturally specific, the strategies employed by various societies may differ from one society to the other. These strategies used among the Logbas are what this study intends to unravel.

In Logba, there are norms regarding what is acceptable and expected as the right way of making a request. Anyone who deviates from these norms is

labelled as either disrespectful or communicatively incompetent (or both) in the language. Since speech acts (directives i.e. requests, for purposes of this study) serve many functions, it is important that this aspect of Logba is documented to serve as the trailblazer for studies into speech acts in the G.T.M languages in particular. This study is concerned with the use of request expressions among the Logbas based on the politeness theory propounded by (Watts 2003).

1.4 Research Questions

Data emanating from this study will provide a basis for finding answers to the following questions:

- What are the sociolinguistic variables which are considered when making requests in Logba?
- What are the various strategies employed and the verbal mitigators present in requests among the Logbas?
- What are some socio-cultural activities in which requests are used among the Logbas?

1.5 Research Objectives

The primary objectives of this study are to describe the sociopragmatics of request among the Logbas. In this regard, this research aims to:

- Identify the sociolinguistic variables which are considered when making requests in Logba.
- Examine the various strategies employed and the verbal mitigators

present in requests among the Logbas.

- Find out some socio-cultural activities in which requests are used among the Logbas.

1.6 Significance of the Study

Little linguistic research especially on the area of speech act of requests has been carried out in the language; as a result the benefits of this work are numerous. Prominent among them are the following:

- The study on completion will be a comprehensive work on the speech act of requests in Logba.
- It will add to existing literature in linguistics in general and the area of the study of requests.
- It will also serve as reference document for future researchers in the study of requests in other G.T.M languages and in Ghanaian languages as a whole.

1.7 Definition of Key Terms

Sociolinguistics refers to the relationship between language and its users.

Speech Event refers the use of language by participants in an interaction to arrive at a particular goal.

Speech Acts are actions performed through the use of utterances.

Locutionary acts (also called utterances Acts) are simply acts of uttering sounds, syllables, words, phrases and sentences from a language.

Illocutionary acts are those to do with the intention of the speaker in saying something and an act performed in uttering it.

Perlocutionary acts deal with the effects an utterance has on the addressee and hearer.

The Concept of Face is the public self-image of an individual.

Face Threatening Acts

An act that represents a threat to another person's self-image.

Face Saving Acts

When one says something that lessens the possible threats to another person's face.

Positive Face refers to the need to be connected, to belong and to be a member of a group.

Negative Face refers to the need to be independent and to have freedom from imposition.

Politeness means showing awareness of another person's face.

Pragmatics refers to speakers' or writers' meaning.

1.8 Organization of Work

This thesis consists of five chapters. The first chapter is preoccupied with the introduction of the thesis, with special emphasis on the language and the origin of its speakers, statement of the problem, objectives, research questions and

significance of the study. Definitions of some key terms are also mentioned in this chapter. Chapter two is devoted to review of relevant and related literature. The tenets of the framework used for explaining the data and the sources of data or the methodology are also mentioned in this chapter. The chapter ends with a summary. Chapter three and four present the analyses, interpretation and discussion of data in relation to the research questions. The sociolinguistic variables of the social class in Logba with the acronym GRAPD (Agyekum 2005) will be used to analyse some of the data. The presentation of data based on the various types of strategies employed in requests will end this chapter. Chapter four looks at another data presentation and discussion of excerpts on some ethnographic situations of requests among the Logbas. Excerpts on request expressions used in some traditional rites/ceremonies of passage will be analysed based on (Hymes 1986) acronym of SPEAKING. Chapter five concludes the work by looking at the summary of the work, findings and recommendations for future research.

1.9 Chapter Summary

Chapter one of this thesis has been devoted to the introduction of the thesis, laying special emphasis on the language and its speakers, the origin of the Logbas, statement of the problem, research questions, research objectives, significance of the study and definitions of key terms. This chapter concludes on how the thesis is organized.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW, THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK AND METHODS

2.1 Introduction

This chapter reviews some relevant studies that laid the foundation for the development and sustenance of the whole idea of speech act of requests. The framework within which the issues raised is to be discussed are also explained. In this regard, the rudiment of the Politeness Model by Watts (2003) is explained. Though adhering to this theory, Brown and Levinson's (1987) Politeness Theory will also be looked at since many politeness theories draw inspiration from it (Locher and Watts 2005). Some of the data will also be analysed based on the sociolinguistic variables of GRAPD (Agyekum 2005) to account for the choice of requestive language depending on who is speaking and to whom. Additionally, the acronym SPEAKING (Hymes 1986) will be explored for the analysis of requests involving some of the traditional rites of passage to complement the major framework adopted for this work.

2.2 Literature Review

The study of requests as a directive has attracted considerable attention across the globe. This study looks at some of the studies done in the speech act of requests on the African continent and other parts of the world. Some of the studies, which are language specific, have examined the speech act of request

patterns preferred by native speakers of Ghanaian, African and worldwide languages (Agyekum 2005, Akan; Obeng 1999, Akan; Odonkor 2001, Krobo; Mashiri 2001, Shona; Sulasi 2009, American English; Kiliçkaya 2010, Turkish).

Others have also undertaken comparative or contrastive studies that have examined the cross-cultural similarities and differences between two or more languages in the performance of the speech act of request (Dzameshie 2001, British English, 'Ghanaian English' and Ewe; Jallifar 2009, Iranian learners of English and Australian native speakers; Blum-Kulka and Olshtain 1984, Australian English, American English, British English, Canadian English, Danish, German, Hebrew and Russian; Blum-Kulka, Danet & Gheron 1985, Hebrew and English).

Apart from these, some researchers have also investigated second language learners' choice of strategies for realising the appropriateness of the learners' utterances for the communication situation (Keleve 1995, Anderson 2004, Sarfo 2011, Suh 1999). Another area that has attracted interest from researchers is the area where studies have been conducted on speech act usage among native speakers as well as learners of various languages (Al-Marani 2010, Hassall 2003, Umar 2004, Lee 2004, Cook 1985).

Longitudinal studies into the development of the speech act of requests have also been studied (Rose 2000, Félix-Brasdefer 2007, Flores-Solgado 2011, Schauer 2004, 2009, 2010).

2.2.1 *Request Patterns preferred by Native Speakers of Ghanaian, African and worldwide languages*

Agyekum (2005) considers the speech act of requests among the Akans (an ethnic group in Ghana). The aim of his study was to investigate the language of requests and the ethnographic situations under which requests are used among the Akans. He employs the ethnography of communication approach as the main means of collecting and analysing the data. The data were gathered from several Akan social interaction and communicative events. The use of questionnaires and recording of phone-in calls on Akan radio programmes and simulation in certain situations are the major sources of his data.

The findings of Agyekum (2005) support the structure and concept of requests which he puts in three major parts namely: address forms, head acts and adjuncts to the head acts. The address form could be a title, kinship term or honorific. He avers that, honorifics are used as persuasive and deferential element and attention getter to prepare and convince the addressee. He also looks at the head act as the request itself while the adjunct to the head act is any external modification to the request. He identifies certain ethnographic situations in which requests as a speech act is used in the Akan culture. Some of these situations are: the swearing of *ntam* 'reminiscential oath', persuasion, asking for favours, requests between stranded travellers and drivers, requests between drivers and policemen and requests in permission. The structure and the use of honorifics in requests which Agyekum (2005) expounds is also found in requests in Logba making his work beneficial to the current study.

Obeng (1999) also looks at requests in Akan. His aim was to explore the linguistic and sequential structure of requests in Akan focusing on the

various strategies of requests and responses used by Akan speakers. His findings show that Akan speakers made both direct and indirect requests. He points out that direct requests in Akan occurred in the form of commands. They have a structure in which a noun phrase as an address form, is followed by verb in the imperative mood and another noun for a requested item or service. Below is the structure:

NP + V +NP + PP (after transitive verbs)

1. Ama, pagya nwoma no ma me.
 Ama, lift-up book the to me
 ‘Ama, give me the book.’ (Obeng 1999:63).

In the example above, the address form ‘Ama’ expresses familiarity with the addressee and so it has toned down the illocutionary force of the request. Address forms are extensively used in Logba requests as well, as they are thought of as mitigating strategies to reduce the force or command inherent in direct requests. The verbs used are usually in the imperative mood. They would begin with an overt subject (an address form) followed by a verb and then the requested item.

Obeng (1999) identifies two forms of indirect requests in Akan: conventional indirect requests and non-conventional indirect requests.

The conventional indirect request strategies in Akan comprise of hedging devices such as: *se erenha wo a* ‘if it won’t be too much of a bother to you’, *wobe tumi* ‘could you or is it possible for you...’, *mepa wo kyew* ‘I beg you’. Non-conventional indirect requests consist of hints, proverbs and metaphors. He explains that Akan society is collective in nature and as such

requests were neither considered as impositions nor face threatening to the requestee. He went on to argue that it is the high degree of interdependence that exists among members of Akan society that make them not to consider requests as face threatening or as imposition. Obeng (1999:60) posits that “although requests in Akan society may cause discomfort or inconveniences to a requestee, they are borne in the interest of group or societal cohesion”. Thus, if an Akan request involves an imposition on the requestee, the imposition will not be imposed by the requester but by the society as a whole because the Akan society encourages societal cohesion (Obeng 1999).

He further explains that, the relationship between the requester and the requestee and the nature of the item or services being requested are two key variables that influence the structure of the request. He points out that superiors or older people could directly or indirectly request subordinates or younger people to do certain things for them and the subordinates may not feel imposed upon. The subordinates may even feel honoured to undertake the requested action or provide the requested item. Superiors are on their part obliged to help subordinates, so a subordinate who refuses a request is seen as being disrespectful (Obeng 1999).

Also, if the item requested is “regarded as being so common that everyone in the society must have it, then, requesting such an item would be face threatening” (Obeng 1999:203). He cites the example of wooden mortar and pestle for pounding fufu and a broom as examples of such items. A major strength of Obeng’s (1999) study is that, it is descriptive and based on data he gathered by means of participant observation.

Odonkor (2001) uses natural data to conduct a study into the socio-cultural perception of requests among the Krobos by identifying the factors that affect requests. Data for his study were texts collected from live episodes with a few texts coming from historical documents. He employs the pragmatic approach and the use of ethnographic materials for his work. According to him, pragmatic approach is the attempt to interpret utterances of interactants in a verbal exchange where both speaker and the addressee interpret each other's utterances, taking into account the physical and social situations, knowledge of each other's background and social conventions (Odonkor 2001).

On the other hand, (Odonkor 2001:6) refers to ethnographic material as "some idiosyncratic information (social, historical, religious, political or cultural) of the Krobos that may assist the reader to understand the analysis". His findings put requests into informal, formal and religious requests. Informal requests comprise of sentential requests while formal requests comprise religious requests that are addressed to objects of worship or reverence.

His findings revealed that among the Krobos, not all request types are impositions and face threatening especially when these requests come from a superior (see also Obeng 1999). The Krobos' passion for communal life also makes requests to lose their threat to 'face' since they believe they are one another's helpers and keepers.

Mashiri (2001) examines request strategies in commuter omnibus discourse involving the bus crew (conductors, touts and drivers) and passengers in Harare (the capital city of Zimbabwe). He considers requests in commuter transport as a face threatening act (FTA). Hence, there is a need for the commuter crew to strategically shape their communication actions to

achieve their overall discourse goal of getting passengers to perform actions that are in their own interest with minimum resistance or confrontation. He considers the omnibus discourse very important for major reasons such as:

Firstly, it contributes to knowledge in one rather neglected area of research in sociolinguistics that is, communication in public transport discourse.

Secondly, the use of ‘a multiple model of discourse as an effective way of explaining linguistic choices’ (Dzameshie 1995:192).

Apart from these two major reasons he outlined for undertaking the study, his study also found out whether or not the requests used for male commuters differed in any way from those used for female commuters, and if they do, what the motivation for the distinction was. He gathered data from commuter busses travelling to three high-density suburbs and the other three from those travelling to low-density suburbs. Communication between commuter personnel and passengers were also recorded. He came out with the following findings: Firstly, most of the travellers including the drivers and conductors in Harare used morphosyntactic constructions. The hortative inflection ‘*let*’ and the inclusive first person plural subject ‘*we/us*’ occurred very frequently as mitigating markers. Below is an example he gave to illustrate this point:

2. ‘Let us push so that all of us may fit.’ (Mashiri 2001:89)

Secondly, young conductors in addressing passengers that they perceived as their age mates used slang terms in order to evoke solidarity. Consider the example below:

3. ‘Get in so that we may go, my acquaintances.’ (Mashiri 2001:90)

Thirdly, the commuter crew also softened their requests by using honorifics.

Below is an example to illustrate this point:

4. 'Get onto your bus happily our employers. Let's get on so that we leave immediately.' (Mashiri 2001:91).

Fourthly, the use of direct imperatives qualified by accounted statements and politeness markers. Consider this:

5. 'Please, push backward so that there is space for other people'. 'Those disembarking at the Police bus stop, move forward please to avoid delays that make others late for work.' (Mashiri 2001:92).

Other factors such as the perceived age, social class and gender of the addressee(s), the sex of the conductor and the cultural norms also determined the linguistic choices relating to requests and the responses to these requests. Mashiri (2001) concludes that, face preservation is only a means to an end: the attainment of the speakers' discourse goal. In other words, since requests are most often in favour of the requester, in the process threatening the face of the requestee, care must be taken in their formulation.

Sulasi (2009) looks at the use of request expressions in the film entitled "Princess Diaries" using the socio-pragmatic approach. The aims of the study were to describe the types of request expressions used by the characters of the film and to describe the factors that influenced the use of each type of requests used in the film. She employed a descriptive qualitative method. She gathered data from the utterances of the characters in the film and sorted out those containing request expressions of interest to her. The following are her findings:

There were 27 request expressions used by the characters in the film. Out of this number, she classified the requests expressions into five (5) major groups with the corresponding number of times they occurred in the film for each group. The groups and the number of times they occur are as follows: requests for action (12 times), requests for permission (7 times), requests for invitation (3 times), requests for proposal (3 times) and requests for offer (2 times). Other findings she makes are the factors that influence the use of request expressions in the film entitled 'Princess Diaries'. The factors are: social status, situation (time, place, feeling, etc.) and the relationship between participants.

Kiliçkaya investigates the pragmatic knowledge of Turkish EFL students in using certain request strategies. Data were collected through a type of Discourse-Completion-Test, an open item-verbal response only production questionnaire, elicited from 40 undergraduate Turkish EFL students. The findings of the study reveal that Turkish EFL students have linguistic means to operate pragmatically in various contexts while requesting. However, their success in the use of the request strategies in situations requiring certain levels of politeness was relatively not satisfactory. A statistical analysis of data shows that Turkish EFL learners tend to use more conventional direct strategies. In addition, the most indirect level/bald-on-record strategy also occurred while the nonconventional indirect level/off-record strategy almost never occurred except in one case. The findings also reveal that the indirect requests are the most frequently used type, which is in alignment with the findings obtained by Blum-Kulka et al. (1989) and Trosborg (1995). Kiliçkaya (2010) attributes the failure of Turkish EFL students to use requests appropriately to the very

limited range of forms presented to them by language learning/teaching textbooks and practice.

2.2.2 *Some Studies on Cross-Cultural Contrastive or Comparative Request Strategies.*

Dzameshie (2001) compares the behaviour of speakers of British English, 'Ghanaian English' and Ewe (a language spoken in the Volta Region of Ghana and some other West African countries) with regards to requests. He used discourse completion tests (DCTs) as the major data gathering instrument. The aim of his study was to investigate if there were cross-cultural and situational variations in the way requests were formulated by these groups of speakers coming from different cultural backgrounds and in different social contexts. The focus of the study was on the directness level in the formulation of requests by these three groups of speakers in different social situations. He identified three different strategies that speakers of English in Ghana used to perform requests namely: direct request strategies such as imperatives, need/want statements and hedged performance. Below are some of the examples he presented:

- *Imperatives*

6. 'Bring me the file of Mr. Ocran, please.'

7. 'Secretary, bring me Mr. Ocran's file.'

- *Need/want statements*

8. 'Please I would like you to post this letter for me.'

9. 'Professor, please, I would like you to sign this letter for me.'

Two other strategies Dzameshie (2001) identifies are: conventional indirect request strategies and non-conventional indirect request strategies.

- *Conventional indirect request strategies*

10. 'Can you put the light on?'

- *Non-conventional indirect request strategies.*

11. 'Jane, have you finished with my red pen yet?'

The findings of Dzameshie (2001) show that there are cross-situational and cross cultural differences in requests made by the three groups of speakers he investigated. British English speakers for instance, preferred indirectness in each of the situations while Ewe speakers preferred direct forms. He presented the following examples to illustrate these differences.

- *British English Speaker:*

12. 'Miss Green, could you get out Mr. Paul Ocran's file, please.'

- *Ewe Speaker:*

13. 'Dzifa, please go and bring me Mr. Ocran's file.'

He observed some similarities with regards to Ghanaian English speakers, in terms of their request behaviour to speakers of Ewe in two of the situations and to the British English speakers in two others situations. He suggests that speakers of 'Ghanaian English' were influenced by norms of both British English and Ghanaian Languages and that was why they show similarities to

both British English speakers and Ewe speakers. Another finding he made was that, there were two major factors that vary across the three groups and he calls them 'context internal' and 'context external' factors.

The 'context internal' factors include factors such as 'the degree of imposition of the request and the prerequisites for the request compliance' while the 'context external' factors include factors such as social power, social distance and the set of rights and obligations that hold between interactants. His study also shows that the three groups of speakers share some similarities in their selection of request strategies. He however, notes that Ewe speakers were more direct than British and 'Ghanaian English' speakers in their choice of request strategies. This study confirms that different cultures view politeness and indirectness differently. Again, different factors in different cultures prompt politeness. Thus, the theory of politeness by Brown and Levinson is not universal (Dzameshie 2001).

Jalilifar (2009) carries out a cross-sectional investigation into the request strategies used by Iranian learners of English as a foreign language and Australian native speakers of English. The participants of this study were 96 BA and MA Persian students and 10 native speakers of English. Data was collected by the use of a Discourse-Completion-Tests (DCTs). The DCT situations are based on two social factors which are social power and social distance. The findings of the study reveal that there is a pragmatic development on the part of EFL learners, particularly in the movement from direct to conventionally indirect strategies.

Learners with higher proficiency overuse indirect requests; while native speakers balanced between request strategies. The lower proficiency learners,

on the other hand, overuse the most direct strategy type. Despite the fact that Iranian EFL learners are sensitive to social power, the same could not be said of social distance. Jalilifar (2009) concludes that, the inability of Iranian EFL learners to observe social distance is as a result of insufficient sociopragmatic knowledge.

Blum-Kulka and Olshtain (1984) undertake a cross-cultural investigation of requests and apologies with the aim of establishing the similarities and differences between native and non-native speakers' realization patterns in these two speech acts in each of the languages studied. In all, eight different languages were investigated in the study. The languages (or varieties of the same language with regards to English) were Australian English, American English, British English, Canadian English, Danish, German, Hebrew and Russian.

Data for the study was taken from both native and non-native speakers. They enumerate the following goals for their study. Firstly, to establish native speakers' pattern of realization with respect to the speech act of requests and apologies relative to different social constraints in each of the languages studied (situational variability). Secondly, to establish the similarities and differences in the realization patterns of requests and apologies cross-linguistically relative to the same social constraints across the languages studied (cross-cultural variability). Finally, to establish the similarities and differences between native and non-native speakers realization patterns of requests and apologies relative to the same social constraints (individual, native versus non-native variability).

The main data gathering instrument was the discourse completion tests (DCTs). Informants were asked to complete discourse sequences in order to provide the speech act aimed at in the given context specifying the setting, the social distance between the interlocutors and their status relative to each other. The informants for the study were 400 for each language studied with equal number of male and female university students in their second and third years of study in other subject areas apart from linguistics. Requests were classified into the most direct (imperative) to the most indirect (mild hints).

The CCSARP's (Cross-Cultural Speech Act Realisation Patterns) results reveal that indirect requests are the most frequent type of requests in all the languages studied, however, it is also shown that there are marked cross-cultural differences in performing requests. For example, Blum-Kulka et al. (1989) assert that, under the same social constraints, speakers of Hebrew tend to be more direct in performing their requests than speakers of German who use more request modifications than speakers of other languages. It was also found that cultural factors interact strongly with situational ones. In short, there were cross-cultural universals as well as cross-cultural variability in the languages studied.

In another study, Blum-Kulka et al. (1985) confirm that requesting strategies were much more direct and forceful in Hebrew than they were in English. This probably explains why requests translated from English into Hebrew did not have the illocutionary force typical of Hebrew requests. Requests from Israeli children to adults and those addressed to hearers in positions of greater power were found to be less direct than those addressed from adults to children and to hearers who were in dominant positions. They

point out that, different types of request goals elicited different types of requests.

Requests for action, for instance, were most direct while requests for permission were least direct. Requests for information clustered in between these two extremes. In all, three main factors were found to determine the choice of request forms among speakers of Hebrew. They are:

- The type of request goal.
- The age of the hearer.
- The relative power of the hearer.

2.2.3 *Request Strategies Adopted by Second Language Learners*

Keleve (1995) cited in Anderson (2004) compares request forms used by native speakers of English and non-native speakers of English in Ghana. She observes that the following forms occurred in all the request situations she presented to the native speakers '*could you..., I would like to..., I was wondering if ..., I wonder if it might be alright ...*'. Non-native speakers of English, however, responded differently to the same situations. The sample situation below, for instance, elicited the following responses from non-native speakers of English in Ghana from Keleve's data:

Example: (Non-native responses)

14. Situation: *You are in a clothes shop. Request for assistance to choose*

clothes in the shop.

Request: a. Hello, em, I've found a dress around here. I am trying it on. Could you please help me decide whether it fits me well, Please?

Request: b. Hello, I want to buy this dress. I don't know, can you just look at it for me?

Request: c. Madam, how do I look in this suite? I am trying to buy it but I don't know if the fit is good.

Request: d. I'm trying to get this dress for a wedding next weekend. How about it? Is it alright?

15. Below are some of the native speaker responses to the same situations:

- a. I was wondering if you could tell me...
- b. Excuse me, can I just trouble you for a minuteI'm choosing...
- c. Could you just give me an idea...?

The data from Keleve (1995) show that non-native speakers of English made requests directly while native speakers made their requests indirectly as shown in the examples presented above. She came to this conclusion because she observes that when non-native speakers made requests, 'they were not sorry to bother their hearers' nor did they 'wonder if their hearers could do something for them'.

Thus, these formulaic expressions that make native speakers' utterances indirect did not occur in the non-native forms. She also observes that the past tense of the modal auxiliaries *could*, *would*, and *might* which helped to soften

what otherwise may sound impolite did not occur in the speech of non-native speakers of English in Ghana. One major limitation of Keleve's study is that, she over relied on data collected through role-plays for her study.

Anderson (2004) describes the request forms used by speakers of English in Ghana. Data for her study were gathered from speakers of English in Accra through observation of natural speech and administration of Discourse Completion Test questionnaires. She analyses a corpus of 1000 oral and written requests produced by informants. The following are some of the examples Anderson (2004) gives:

- *Attention Getters*

16. Excuse me, I would like a deposit slip. (Anderson 2004:158)

17. Good morning Madam, I want to ask you to sign my form for me.

(Anderson 2004:158).

18. Excuse me Sir, can I please have my form signed?

(Anderson 2004:158).

- *Passivization*

19. I was asked to come here from the general office for my form to be signed. (Anderson 2004:159).

20. Please, I was sent here to bring my registration form.

(Anderson 2004:159).

21. I have been asked to bring this form here. (Anderson 2004:159).

- *Past Forms*

22. Madam please, I wanted to ask you to sign my form.

(Anderson 2004:160).

- *Modifications*

23. I am sorry, but I want to make a deposit. Do you have any pay-in-slip?

(Anderson 2004:161).

24. Please, I want my faculty form signed. I brought it last week but it has not been signed yet. (Anderson 2004:161).

Other findings she made are summarised below:

- (i) Informants tend to use more imperatives and ‘want’ statements in the oral data than in the written data. In the written requests, modals (query preparatory forms) are used more frequently.
- (ii) In the oral requests where modals were not used frequently, lexical politeness markers such as ‘please’ and ‘kindly’, external modification address forms and attention getters are used as politeness indicators.

Anderson (2004) further identifies two major differences between data gathered from natural situations and those collected from the DCTs. In the first place, the responses to the DCTs were not representative of what respondents actually said in the spontaneous speech. Secondly, the written responses were shorter than the oral responses. These informed her conclusion that, oral data reflect the way English is spoken in Ghana.

Sarfo (2011) discusses the ways by which members of the Berekum Training College in Ghana refuse requests in English and how socio-economic status affects those refusal forms. He used observation as the main data gathering instrument. He also employs the ethnography of communication which indicates the various factors that influence our language choices and make communication event a successful one. He identifies three types of direct refusals. They include the following:

- *Definite or flat 'no' without any other form(s) of expression.*

The example he gave for this type is found below, where A is the requester and B, the requestee:

25. A. I am going to eat with you.

B. No. (Sarfo 2011: 6)

- *Definite 'no' with some other expressions.* For example:

26. A. Can I get your book for personal study?

B. No. Last year some students came for my books and did not return them. (Sarfo 2011:6)

- *Negative expressions without the 'no'.*

27. A. Jane, I am going to eat in one bowl with you.

B. (sharply) I'm not. (Sarfo 2011:7)

With regard to indirect refusals, he again identifies three major types including: excuses/reason, request for information or clarification and suggesting an

alternative. His findings reveal that, the two major types of refusals namely direct and indirect portray the attitude of the refuser to the refused. The use of indirect refusals is as a result of the refuser's regard for the face and interest of the requester. Direct refusals, however, are suggestive of the refuser's disregard for the requesters face needs. Direct refusals therefore mar relationships. The use of the direct refusal shows that the refuser may not care about what happens to their relationship (Sarfo 2011).

Suh (1999) also shows that Korean learners of ESL (English as a second language) differed from native speakers of American English in the use of the politeness strategies in requests. Using DCTs, she collected data from ten native speakers of American English and 20 Korean learners of English all of whom were students in a major university in the mid-western region of the U.S. Her data indicated that Korean ESL learners were not always able to use politeness strategies in the same manner as the native speakers of American English. She contended that, the differences result from a cultural difference between the two languages.

Her study confirms the distance-politeness theory proposed by Brown and Levinson that: social and psychological distances play important roles in selecting politeness strategies. This theory also claims that, the more distant the relationship between a requester and a requestee, the more polite strategy a requester will use. Conversely, if the requester's relationship with the requestee is both socially and psychologically close, the requester is more likely to use a less politeness strategy.

2.2.4 *Requests among Native Speakers and other Language Learner*

Al-Marrani and Sazalie (2010) conduct a socio-pragmatic study of polite request strategies made by Yemeni learners of English as a foreign language. The data was collected using a Discourse Completion Tests (DCTs). The respondents of the study were 196 undergraduate students. 98 of whom were males and 98 were females. The data were analysed according to the analytical framework proposed by Blum-Kulka, et al. (1989). The results of the study show that the participants employ different polite request strategies (direct, conventionally indirect and non-conventionally indirect) with softeners to mitigate the impact of request.

Yemeni EFL students tend to use conventionally indirect strategies more than other strategies when the social distance, social power and ranking of imposition are very high between the requester and the requestee. On the other hand, when the interlocutors have equal status and when the speaker has a higher status than the hearer, the participants prefer to use more direct strategies.

Hassall (2003) investigates how Australian learners of Indonesian perform requests in a number of situations compared to Indonesian native speakers using data elicited by means of an interactive role-play. The non-native subjects of the study were 20 learners of Indonesian whose proficiency ranged from lower to upper intermediate. His findings show, among other things, that the query preparatory was the strategy that predominated in both groups' performance. Hassall also observes that want statements emerged early in the learners' performance and were used in inverse proportion to language proficiency.

Furthermore, higher proficiency appears to bring with it an increase in the use of conventionally indirect strategies, consistent with native language use. Similarly to want statements the use of non-conventionally indirect requests (hints) exhibit high frequencies in the earlier learning stages which, however, decline with increasing proficiency. With regard to this latter finding, Hassall (2003) suggests that these early learner hints may in fact be pseudo-hints, i.e. hints that lower level learners produce. The use of hints is as a result of their inability to phrase their requests appropriately rather than because of a strategic preference for indirectness. Generally, Hassall's findings indicate that learners appear to have access to the same request strategies, but they apply and distribute them differently.

Hassall (2003) maintains that the development of control over attention in selecting knowledge is not necessarily the sole most important task that learners have to face, since, according to his findings, the acquisition of new pragmatic knowledge is also a major task for L2 learners. In the case of his study such knowledge included the appropriate distribution of direct request strategies, the main target-like forms of internal modification and the selection of prefacing moves prior to direct questions.

Umar (2004) carried out a sociolinguistic study to compare the request strategies performed by advanced Arab learners of English to those strategies used by native speakers of English. A Discourse Completion Tests (DCTs) was used to elicit data from the subjects. The participants of this study were made up of two groups. The first group was composed of 20 Arab students enrolled in graduate English courses in four Arabic universities while the second group

was composed of 20 British students pursuing graduate programs in three British universities.

The findings of the study revealed that, when addressing equals or people in higher ranking positions, both groups resorted to conventionally indirect strategies. However, when addressing people in lower positions, the Arabic sample (composed of five Sudanese, five Saudis, five Egyptians and five Bahraini) employed more direct request strategies than the British sample even though the Arab participants have a wide range of different social norms.

Umar (2004) attributes this preference to sociocultural reasons since Arab learners of English may fall back on their cultural background when formulating their request strategies. However, what is worthy to note is that the results of this study cannot be generalized to all Arabic-speaking countries. As for the syntactic and semantic modifications of request strategies, it is found that the native speakers of English use more semantic and syntactic modifiers than their Arabic counterparts and hence their requests sound more polite and tactful.

Umar (2004) emphasizes the importance of the awareness of socio-pragmatic differences between Arabic and English and suggests the implementation of a variety of classroom drills and exercises such as role-play to enhance linguistic and cultural appropriateness of different speech acts. Umar (2004) further suggests that students should be implicitly and explicitly instructed to observe the role of social distance and social power in performing request. Learners of English should also be taught the proper syntactic and semantic techniques to modify their requests.

Lee (2004) took a naturalistic enquiry into written requests in emails sent by adult Chinese learners of English language to their teachers. She collects a corpus of 600 emails in the course of the academic year. The requests contained in the emails were analysed based on the CCSARP (Cross-Cultural Speech Act Realisation Project). Her findings were that when the teacher was a Chinese-speaking English teacher, 90% of the students used an alerter and a request move after the salutation. They mostly addressed their teachers by the first names with the word 'dear'.

Another finding she made was that CLE were inclined to the use of conventional direct strategies and requestive hints, as well as syntactic downgraders to soften the tone of the requests. She used the following linguistic expressions to exemplify conventionally direct strategies 'may I', 'is it possible to...?' to make the requests. She used the example below which is broken into request and potential grounder respectively.

- *Request*

28. 'I am a third year student. I hope you can help me to correct my covering letter (Lee 2004:66).

- *Potential grounder:*

29. 'as soon as possible because the deadline for submission is October 3.'
(Lee 2004:66)

Lee (2004) found out that CLE used almost the same conventionally direct strategies, requestive hints and syntactic downgraders when the teacher

was an English. However, CLE used more hedged and explicit performatives to Chinese teachers who also speak English than to English-speaking teachers. They used hedged expressions like ‘is it possible...?’ for Chinese teachers but, ‘would you’ for English teacher. Her conclusion is that, knowledge about requests (both oral and written) and being polite to people of different ranks is crucial in effective communication.

Cook (1985) explores the linguistic patterns for requesting directions. The data for this study were elicited from native English speakers and adult learners of English as a second language using a written role-play questionnaire. The frequencies of particular linguistic items used were analysed for the effects of age and sex of the addressee on the request forms speakers used. The findings showed that both groups of speakers varied their requests according to the age of the addressee and the degree of familiarity that existed between the speaker and the addressee

2.2.5 Longitudinal Studies of Learners Regarding Request Strategies

Rose (2000) studies the pragmatic development among three groups of primary school students in Hong Kong. The data in this study was collected by means of a cartoon oral production task designed to elicit requests, apologies and compliment responses. His results indicate an increase in the frequency of use of conventionally indirect requests with proficiency and more frequent use of direct strategies among the lowest proficiency group. However, minimal levels of development were attested to with regards to internal and external modifications as proficiency increased; specifically, a very restricted range of

external modifiers (mainly grounders) were found to be used solely among the most advanced learners of the sample.

Félix-Brasdefer (2007) examines the development of FL (Foreign language) requests of American learners of Spanish across three proficiency levels: beginning, intermediate and advanced. The data were elicited by means of an open role play for four different request situations and were analysed for head acts and request perspective as well as external and internal modification. Results indicate that beginners invariably display high frequencies of direct requests in all situations. The main linguistic means of realization of these requests were statements of need, imperatives and requests with an infinitive used as a main verb. However, a decline in direct requests and a matching preference for conventional indirectness was observed in the intermediate and advanced levels in both formal and informal situations.

Furthermore, learners were found to increase their repertoire of external and internal modifiers with increasing proficiency; for instance, an increase in the use of the conditional and the imperfect and a decrease in the use of the marker *por favor* 'please' were noted in the performance of the higher proficiency learners. Félix-Brasdefer (2007) identifies the performance of his learners with four of the stages of request development: (1) pre-basic, (2) basic, (3) unpacking of formulaic use, and (4) pragmatic expansion. According to Félix-Brasdefer (2007:276), the first two stages were found in the data of basic learners and the last two were representative of the intermediate and advanced learners.

Like Felix-Brasdefer (2007), Flores Salgado (2011) also analyses the development of pragmalinguistic and sociopragmatic competence of 36

Spanish EFL learners across three proficiency levels (basic, intermediate and advanced) focusing on the speech acts of request and apology. The data for her study were drawn by means of oral production task. The learners' performances were compared to those of 12 American English native speakers in order for base-line cultural data to be attained. With respect to head act, it was shown that direct strategies prevailed in early learners' production, but declined with proficiency. In addition, it was found that basic learners often opted for the imperative and added the marker *por favor* 'please' in order to mitigate the force of their requests. Furthermore, basic learners employed simple supportive moves which became more elaborate as proficiency increased.

Despite their restricted pragmalinguistic means, these early learners "demonstrated an unconscious awareness that the strategies of communicative action varied according to the context" (Flores Salgado 2011:208). However, all proficiency levels' participants were found to use grammatical devices which were sometimes inappropriate for the context and to lack certain pragmalinguistic means; for instance, as Flores Salgado contends, the past tense was almost never used as a syntactic mitigator even by advanced learners. Furthermore, even advanced learners demonstrated a tendency towards "over-explicitness in the use of supportive moves, which suggest inadequate sociopragmatic knowledge" (Flores Salgado 2011:212).

Schauer (2004, 2009, 2010) conducts a longitudinal study into the request development of German learners of English enrolled at a British university, using a multimedia elicitation task that contained 16 request scenarios investigating different status and imposition conditions. The data

were collected at three distinct times in the learners' stay in Great Britain shortly after their arrival, in the middle of their stay, and shortly before their return to Germany.

Concerning request strategies, Schauer (2004, 2009, 2010) found out that the learners' sojourn in the target context had a positive impact: in the final data collection session, the learners did not use the direct strategies (imperatives and unhedged performatives) that they had employed in the previous sessions. However, contrary to native speakers that dispreferred hedged performatives in all scenarios, the learners continued to use this strategy in high imposition interactions. Schauer (2004, 2009, 2010) attributes this to negative transfer from the learners' L1.

With regard to internal and external modifiers, Schauer's (2004, 2009, 2010) findings indicate that the learners' use of these modifiers was strongly influenced by individual learner differences. For example, "while all learners were found to increase their internal modifier repertoire during their sojourn, this did not seem to be the case for external modifiers" (Schauer 2010:101). Furthermore, supporting Barron's (2003) findings, Schauer's data suggest that lexical/phrasal modifiers are acquired earlier than syntactic ones.

Though all the works reviewed above are done on requests, none of them is done on Logba. Apart from this, requests in socio-cultural activities were also not investigated by any of the literature reviewed. These mark out the present study from the previous ones reviewed above.

2.3 Politeness Theory

This section looks at the theoretical approach employed in this study. This study adopts the Politeness Model by Watts (2003). Brown and Levinson's (1987) Politeness Model forms a major foundation for many politeness models.

According to Locher and Watts (2005:9-10), "Brown and Levinson's Politeness Theory provides a breadth of insights into human behaviour which no other theory has yet offered, and it has served as a touchstone for researchers who have felt the need to go beyond it". This study will first discuss Brown and Levinson's (1987) Politeness Theory as a way of setting the tone for Watts' (2003) Politeness Theory.

2.4 Brown and Levinson's (1987) Politeness Theory

Brown and Levinson's (1987) Politeness Model is one of the politeness models that attempts to explain the manner in which speech participants express politeness by concentrating on the strategies involved. Brown and Levinson are of the view that, "politeness is a way of reducing any form of aggressiveness between participants in a speech event to ensure effective communication" (1987:1).

The theory hinges on two basic properties namely: 'rationality' and 'face'. Rationality refers to "a mode of reasoning which guarantees interferences from ends or goals to a means that will satisfy those ends" (Brown and Levinson 1987:64). The other property which is key to Brown and Levinson's politeness model is the concept of 'face'.

Drawing on Goffman's (1967) notion of 'face' they explain that everybody has a 'face' that they deem necessary to maintain. Brown and Levinson (1987:61) explain 'face' as the self-image of a person. This self-image which is "emotionally invested can be lost, maintained or enhanced and must be constantly attended to in interaction". They assume that all adult members of a society have two kinds of 'face': negative and positive face and they try to maintain these two faces in the course of interaction.

Positive face seeks appreciation and approval from others, while negative face seeks autonomy (Brown and Levinson 1987). They further stressed that, in every society, there are certain kinds of actions that threaten a person's positive or negative face. Such acts that can threaten interlocutors' faces can be made more polite using (Brown and Levinson's 1987) politeness strategies. Requests or complains, for instance may be a potential source of threat to the hearers' negative face by imposing on him/her. An act that suggests disapproval and rejection or that which does not take the hearers' feelings or wants into consideration may be a potential source of threat to the hearer's positive face. Any of the above 'face threatening acts' could cause the speaker/hearer to lose face.

Since 'face' is potentially vulnerable to face threatening acts (FTAs), politeness strategies are used in human communication in an attempt to 'minimize' or mitigate the occurrence of these FTAs.

Politeness, then, is a kind of 'face-saving' or 'redress' strategy, which is intended to retain the speaker's/addressee's face in the course of interaction so that the speaker/addressee can relate to each other without either of them losing face. Brown and Levinson's (1987) Politeness Model identifies a number of

strategies people adopt to indicate positive and negative politeness. The strategies they proposed could be summarized into the following broad categories as cited in (Anderson 2004:69):

- Bald-on-record – a direct way of saying something.
- Positive politeness – an expression of solidarity.
- Negative politeness – an expression of restraint.
- Off-record politeness – the avoidance of unequivocal impositions.

However, Brown and Levinson's Politeness Model has received myriad of criticisms especially with the claim that positive face and negative face operate in most languages and cultures. Brown and Levinson (1987) averred that; the desire to protect negative 'face' and defend positive 'face' are important functions of politeness in all languages and cultures. This is what they referred to as universality.

Some scholars (for example, Matsumoto 1988; Ide 1989; Gu 1990; Mao 1994; Obeng 1999; Nwoye 1992) have all criticized the universality position of Brown and Levinson's theory. They averred that, it is not applicable to many Asian and African cultures. This theory according to these scholars is too individualistic and Western oriented. Nwoye (1992) for instance, criticized Brown and Levinson's concept of face in societies such as West Africa specifically among the Igbos where appropriateness of an individual's action is usually judged on the basis of his social status in a particular society.

Obeng (1999) posits that, the relationship between the requester and the requestee and the nature of the item or services being requested are two key variables that influence the structure of the requests. He pointed out that superiors or older people could directly or indirectly request subordinates or

younger people to do certain things for them and the subordinates may not feel imposed upon. The subordinates may even feel honoured to undertake the requested action or provide the requested item.

According to Locher and Watts (2005), Brown and Levinson (1987) Politeness Theory should be seen more of a face-work theory rather than politeness theory. This is because their theory is preoccupied with the “mitigation of face threatening acts. In addition, social behaviour considered to be “appropriate”, “unmarked” or “politic” would hardly be judged as ‘polite’ (Locher and Watts, 2005: 10).

Again, Watts (2003) departs from Brown and Levinson’s (1987) principle on the issue of universality and the equation of politeness to solely mitigating face threatening acts. To him, politeness conceptualizations are not universal but culturally situated. This is why to use a lay concept in one language as a universal concept for all languages and cultures is particularly inappropriate. As he puts it “there can be no idealised, universal scientific concept of politeness which can be applied to instances of social interaction across cultures, subcultures and languages” (Watts 2003: 23). I subscribe to the assertion by Watts (2003) that the issue of universality of politeness as advanced by Brown and Levinson (1987) does not apply in all cultures.

For instance, what is face-threatening to someone from another culture may not be face threatening to another from a different culture. In the Logba culture for instance, elderly people can make direct requests to younger people in the form of commands without any shred of ‘face’ threats. A chief can also make direct requests to any member under his jurisdiction. His subjects will rather feel happy for being requested to do something by someone in authority.

Watts (2003) adds that, Brown and Levinson's (1987) model does not consider the knowledge of the social situation the two speakers have, and their knowledge of what is polite in that particular discourse. That is, an utterance that is considered to be impolite by the Brown and Levinson's (1987) model can still be considered to be polite in certain speech situations.

Despite all these criticisms, Brown and Levinson's Politeness Theory is still relevant, especially in the Western World (see Gu 1990; Nwoye 1992). Brown and Levinson's Politeness Theory, is therefore seen as a 'reservoir' from where many other politeness theories draw inspiration since it has "served as a touchstone for researchers" (Locher and Watts 2005:9-10).

Locher and Watts (2005) further opine that Brown and Levinson's (1987) Politeness Theory has given scholars "enormous mileage because without it, we will not be in a position to consider the phenomenon of politeness as a fundamental aspect of human socio-communicative verbal interaction in quite the depth and variety that is now available to us" (2005:9). The contributions of Brown and Levinson's Politeness Theory are deemed indispensable in the area of studies into politeness. Other theories that have emerged still draw a lot from it. For any scholar to adequately delve into the area of politeness, there is the need to make reference to the Brown and Levinson's Theory as it "towered above most others and has served as the guiding beacon for scholars interested in teasing out politeness phenomena from examples of human interaction" (Locher and Watts 2005:9). Watts crowns it all when he writes "Brown and Levinson's work will undoubtedly continue to exert as much influence on research into the subject in the coming years as it has in the past" (2003:10).

In spite of the above praises showered on (Brown and Levinson 1987) concerning their Politeness Model, Watts (2003) has some reservations about their theory. Consider in the next section what Watts (2003) Politeness Model espouses.

2.5 Watts' (2003) Politeness Theory

Watts (2003:14) affirms that “all human cultures have norms of social behaviour that members will classify as mutually shared considerations for others”. He goes on to explain further that “a participant’s behaviour is evaluated as polite and impolite not merely on a matter of the linguistic expressions that he/she uses, but rather depends on the interpretation of the behaviour in the overall social interaction” (Watts 2003:8). The need to make this kind of distinction is also emphasized by (Eelen 2001) when he opines that every community has some established norms or conventions regarding actions or reactions that are desirable in a specific context. In view of this, an individual is considered polite when his actions or reactions are in consonance with these social norms or conventions.

Members of a community are able to analyse and evaluate their own behaviour in the light of the behavioural norm which is expected to be shared by all in the community. Fraser (1990:220) refers to this phenomenon as the “social norm view of politeness”. The social norm view of politeness is measured along some historically established rules of behaviour. Again, Watts (2003:9) stresses the acquisition of politeness as against being born with it as he puts it, “politeness is acquired; it is not something we are born with, but something we have to learn and be socialized into”.

At the heart of Watts (2003) politeness model is the issue of politic behaviour. Watts describes politic behaviour as “socio-culturally determined behaviour directed towards the goal of establishing and/or maintaining in a state of equilibrium the personal relationships between the individuals of a social group” (2003:20). He maintains that politic behaviour is that behaviour, linguistic and non-linguistic, which the participants construct as being appropriate to the on-going social interaction. The construction may have been made prior to entering the interaction, but is always negotiable during the interaction, despite the expectations that participants might bring to it (Watts 2003). Watts (2003) espouses that

... linguistic behaviour which is perceived to be appropriate to the social constraints of the on-going interaction, i.e. as non-salient, should be called ‘politic behaviour’ and the linguistic behaviour which is perceived to be beyond what is expectable, i.e. salient behaviour, should be called polite or impolite depending on whether the behaviour itself tends towards the negative or positive end of the spectrum of politeness (2003:19).

He continues to argue for a radically new way of looking at linguistic politeness. He aims to show that it is necessary to make a clear distinction between the common sense or lay notion of politeness and the theoretical notion of politeness. Watts (2003) classifies politeness into first order (politeness 1) and second order (politeness 2). He defines first order politeness (politeness 1) as the way lay members of a language community see politeness.

By first order politeness (politeness 1), we understand how participants in verbal interaction make explicit use of the terms ‘polite’ and ‘politeness’ to refer to their own and others’ social behaviour. In contrast, he looks at second order politeness (politeness 2) as the forms of social behaviour preserving mutually shared consideration for others. Politeness 2 makes use of the terms

'polite' and 'politeness' as theoretical concepts in a top-down model to refer to forms of social behaviour. Locher and Watts also refer to first order politeness (politeness 1) as the participants' and others' social behaviour and second order politeness (politeness 2) as forms of social behaviour (2005).

Watts (2003) looks at the terms *polite* and *politeness* and their varied equivalents in other languages in terms of the meanings associated with them from one group of speakers to another and even from one individual speaker to the next. Thus, his division of lay politeness (politeness 1) versus theoretical politeness (politeness 2) is especially critical for cross-cultural politeness research. According to Watts (2003), people might resort to the use of polite language expressions like the language a person uses to avoid being too direct, language which displays respect towards or consideration for others, or language that displays certain polite formulaic utterances like '*please*', '*thank you*', '*excuse me*' or '*sorry*'. On the other hand, some people may consider the polite use of language as, for example, '*hypocritical*', '*dishonest*' or '*distant*'. As regards a general level of polite behaviour, some people feel that polite behaviour is equivalent to socially correct or appropriate behaviour, while others consider it to be the hallmark of the cultivated person.

2.6 Agyekum's (2005) GRAPD Sociolinguistic Variables

These variables stand for the following as summarised below:

G-gender: This is about the sociocultural roles of males and females.

R-rank: It is about higher and lower ranked people.

A-age: How older or younger one is compared to the other.

P-power: The authority one has due to certain positions in a society.

D-distance: Refers to the intimacy/closeness that exists between interlocutors.

2.7 Hymes' (1986) SPEAKING Acronym

This acronym stands for the following as summarised below:

S-scene/setting: refers to the time and place of a speech act and, in general, to the physical circumstances.

P-participants: Speaker and audience.

E-ends: Purposes, goals, and outcomes.

A-acts: Acts refer to the verbal or linguistic constitution of an utterance

K-key: Clues that establish the tone, manner, or spirit of the speech act.

I-Instrumentalities: Forms and styles of speech. This is the channel that is used to send the message across.

N-norms: Social rules governing the event and the participants' actions and reactions.

G-genre: The kind of speech act or event.

2.8 Methods

The section deals with the research method and the description of the research site. It also discusses the research instruments and the data collection procedures.

2.8.1 Research Method

The study employs qualitative research method. A research is qualitative if it “describes events and persons scientifically without making use of numerical data” (Best and Kahn 2006:79). Specifically, the ethnography of communication approach to qualitative study was employed since the study dwelt on an aspect of culture. In other words, ethnography of communication was deemed the appropriate approach to this study because it enabled the researcher to record by participating in some activities or observing the people from their own cultural perspective as they go about their normal daily routine. This gives the researcher the opportunity to analyse the subject or issue from the cultural actor’s point of view (Silverman 1993).

2.8.2 The Population

The population for this study comes from Logba Tota and Logba Alakpeti. Logba Tota, the biggest of the Logba towns is located on the mountain of Aya. Logba Tota and Logba Klikpo are the only two towns that are not located on the major Accra-Hohoe highway. Logba Alakpeti is the commercial hub of the Logba traditional area. It has a market where Logbas and other peoples with different linguistic backgrounds come to buy and sell. Due to its strategic

location, there are many non-natives (settlers) living among the Logba Alakpeti people. This has led to the integration of words from Ewe in particular, into the Logba language making the variety spoken in Logba Tota and Logba Alakpeti to have some slight differences.

In short, Logba Tota and Logba Klikpo which are not along the main road, speak almost the same variety while Logba Alakpeti and the other towns namely: Logba Adzakoe, Logba Adiveme, Logba Ogoame, Logba Akusame and Logba Vuinta also speak a different variety with some of their words absent in the Tota and Klikpo variety. For the researcher to adequately find out the various request expressions in the Logba language (i.e the dialects of the Logba language), I decided to do the study taking a town each from these two sets (groups) of Logba towns. Thus, I chose Logba Tota and Logba Alakpeti.

2.9 Data Collection Instruments

The data collection instruments used for this study are participant observation, interviews, role play and the use of discourse completion tests (D.C.Ts).

2.9.1 Participant Observation

Participant observation is the method that employs vision as its main means of data collection with the researcher's active involvement. The researcher's pre-occupation was to watch, listen, and record what he observed rather than asking questions about them. Although observation as a tool is time consuming, it is believed to be one of the best tools used for data collection in

research works of this nature. Data for the research was collected at Logba, precisely Logba Tota and Logba Alakpeti. Data was gathered at places where people used the language and request expressions of interest to me were spontaneously produced. I recorded communicative events where request expressions were used such as traditional ceremonies or rites (naming, puberty, marriage, funeral, etc.) with an electronic recorder, a field note and a pen.

Data was also gathered at other places where the language was used spontaneously. The researcher's task was to identify the various request forms and the styles employed by the speakers in the course of their speeches. Some places where data were collected include the chief's palace, community centres, schools, homes, markets, lorry parks and streets.

During the period of the observation, I occasionally employed the "rapid and anonymous survey method" (Coates 1993:5) in which I sometimes played the role as a buyer. I asked questions that bothered on the socio-cultural life related to requests in Logba and then noted the responses which were later written in the notebook or sometimes recorded the conversations with the electronic recorder-LG KP 500 (see appendix 2 for some of the recordings). For ethical reasons, I always told those whose interaction I recorded about the study I am undertaking and they freely gave me their consent to use the conversations I recorded.

2.9.2 Interviews

Apart from observation, the researcher also conducted interviews to obtain information on the use of request expressions in Logba to seek clarification on

some of the forms encountered. I did some informal interviews because it allowed the respondents free room to respond to my questions confidently. These responses helped me to analyse the issues without only resorting to the use of my native language speaker's intuition, although my knowledge, experience and my native language speaker intuition also formed part of the data collection processes. This method enabled the researcher to electronically record the voices of the informants as well as the styles and strategies employed in their requests.

2.9.3 Role Play

This is where a scenario is specified and informants are asked to act out the specific roles verbally. The greatest strength of role-plays lies in the fact that, they give the investigator the chance to examine the speech act behaviour in its full discourse context. This makes role-plays a much richer source of gathering data. With this method, the investigator may have the chance of observing the specific strategies employed by informants in specific contexts.

2.9.4 Discourse Completion Tests (D.C.Ts)

D.C.Ts are written or oral questionnaires containing a series of brief situational descriptions, followed by short slots with empty spaces for the speech acts under investigation. Informants are asked to write out what they would say in a given situation in the empty spaces. Olshtain and Cohen (1983) used this method in their study of apologies in Hebrew and English. It was also used for

most of the studies in the Cross-Cultural Speech Act Realization Project (CCSARP) (Blum-Kulka et al. 1989).

One advantage of this method is that, it allows the researcher to control specific variables of the situation, thus giving coherence to findings, which might have been very difficult otherwise. Thus, if the investigator wants to test the effects social status, age or gender of the informants have on the linguistic choices they make in a given situation, it is possible to include these in the question descriptions, thus leading informants to consider these factors in their responses. In addition, the DCTs questionnaires if designed carefully are highly effective means of gathering a large number of cross-sectional data within a very short period.

One of the limitations of the DCTs is that, researchers who use it have observed that DCTs constrain the type and amount of talk that informants produce. Thus, the responses are confined by the amount of space provided on the page and the time allowed for each response (Rose and Ono 1995). These studies also show that what people claim that they would say in hypothetical situations in DCTs is not necessarily what they will say in real life situations.

I adopted these sources of data collection because, I did not expect one single source to provide me with all the necessary insights into the request forms used among the Logbas. Samples of these DCTs can be found in appendix 1 of this thesis.

2.10 Chapter Summary

This chapter is preoccupied with the goal of reviewing some relevant and related literature in the area of speech act of requests done on the African

continent and other parts of the world. The review was categorised into five thematic areas namely; (a) request patterns preferred by native speakers of Ghanaian, African and worldwide languages, (b) cross-cultural contrastive or comparative request strategies, (c) request strategies adopted by second language learners, (d) requests among native speakers and other language learner, and (e) longitudinal studies of learners regarding request strategies. The chapter also examined two major politeness theories; Brown and Levinson's (1987) Politeness Theory and Watts' (2003) Politeness Theory, the theoretical frameworks adopted for this study. Agyekum's (2005) sociolinguistics variables, GRAPD and Hymes' (1986) SPEAKING acronym were also explained in this chapter. The chapter ended with the sources of data for the thesis and the data collection instruments.

CHAPTER THREE

SOME REQUEST EXPRESSIONS AND STRATEGIES AMONG THE LOGBAS.

3.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the use of request expressions among the Logbas. Sociolinguistic research has shown that social variables such as gender, age, educational and socio-economic status affect language choices to a large extent (see Barbieri 2008; Hudson 1996). The present study of request expressions used among the Logbas will be critically analysed using Agyekum's (2005) GRAPD sociolinguistic variables. Some of the strategies within which Blum-Kulka and Olshtain (1984) analysed their Cross-cultural Speech Act Realisation Pattern (CCSARP) findings concerning mitigators will also be discussed in relation to the everyday request strategies of the Logbas.

3.2 Sociolinguistic Variables

Various factors are considered when making requests. These factors may determine a speaker's choice of words when addressing someone. For instance, in the Logba culture, parents can make requests to their children in the form of commands but not vice versa. The participants in any request event pay attention to these variables. Let us briefly consider the application of these variables in requests among the Logbas.

3.2.1 Gender

Until recently, women were not accorded the same equality in rank to men in the Logba culture. This prevented women from having a say in critical issues. This stems from the fact that, men were the sole bread winners of their families. Thus, males were accorded more respect than females in that the females were regarded as belonging to the males and this culminated in the low levels of female education. The general view was that, even if females were educated, they ended up in a man's kitchen. This view about females continues to affect how they make requests to their male counterparts especially those they are not very close to as they had to couch their words in ways that will not portray them as disrespectful. Agyekum (2005:4) captures this phenomenon when he states that among the Akans "if a woman fails to use the appropriate persuasive language in request to her husband, she is considered disrespectful and the face threat and imposition are heightened".

Though the economic and political power of females have grown over the years through women empowerment campaigns, females are still considered as playing second fiddle to men in the Logba culture though not as pronounced as it used to be. This manifests itself in the ways females make requests in apologetic and persuasive fashions. Let us look at this situation where a woman during a community meeting at Logba Tota requested to be allowed to make a submission.

30.	Ì	kpé	té		i - nà		dzé
	1SG	know	COMP		CM-person		woman
	abé	mó	bè	gake	má	ḍekúkú	ma
	palm	NEG	ripe	CONJ	1SG	beg	1SG

yáyí té ani tá mú fé ibè tsìbì
 want CONJ 2PL give 1SG too time little
 té mí dá iló ikpè.
 CONJ take say matter one

‘I know that women’s contributions are not considered seriously but, I also want to be given a little time to make a submission’.
 (Logba Tota 17/1/15)

From excerpt (30) above, the woman in question knows that women’s views are considered ‘feeble’ as she captured it in the Logba proverb: *inàdzé abe mó be* ‘a woman’s palm fruit doesn’t ripe’ which literally means ‘women don’t have a say’. As a result, she decides to use a coaxing strategy, that is, not requesting for plenty of time but something minimal *ibe tsìbì* ‘little time’. She does that in the bid to be given the chance to make her point. Another area where gender is playing in the woman’s submission is the use of the word *amú fe* ‘me too’ which has a socio-pragmatic meaning among the Logbas. These *amu fe* ‘me too’ and its second person singular counterpart *awú fe?* ‘you too?’ are generally not used by men when they want to make a point at a gathering of people.

3.2.2 Rank

This has to do with “social ranks like being rich, belonging to a royal family, being a boss or director of a corporation/company, holding a traditional or political [position] rank, as very important aspects of a person’s personality” (Agyekum 2005:4). These people because of their positions (ranks) are able to make requests in ways that do not consider whether the requestee’s face could be threatened or not. Instead, these subordinates rather feel happy that someone

highly ranked in the society is requesting them to do something for them (see Obeng 1999).

However, when subordinates are requesting things from people who are higher than them in terms of rank, they are mindful of the address terms, right titles and the use of honorifics that society accords them to avoid causing face threats to them. We can have an example like this in a conversation between a chief and a palace attendant (P.A) during a visit to the chief's palace when some tourists went to familiarise with him on 3rd March, 2015.

31. **Chief (higher ranked):** Kpo zhí ndà a mlà mú
 go take drink DEF bring 1SG
 mpa étsí kpanta
 bed under right now

‘Bring me the drink from under the bed right now?’

P.A (lower ranked): Ma ðékúkú má nú.
 1SG beg 1SG hear

‘Please, I hear.’ (Man walked towards the room)
 (Logba Tota 3/3/15)

Due to the rank and the authority the chief exudes, he can ask any member under his jurisdiction to perform services for him without any face threat to the addressee. Instead, the subjects see service to the chief an honour. It is seen in the above example that, though the chief did not preface his request with any respect term like *má ðékúkú* ‘I beg’, there was no face threat at all. However, the requestee replied using *má ðékúku* ‘I beg’ to conform to the Logba’s concept of politeness. If he had answered the chief without the respect term, he would have been sanctioned appropriately. This is in consonance with the

findings of Obeng (1999) that people in authority can request those in the lower levels to do something for them without 'face' threats.

3.2.3 Age

Another important sociolinguistic variable that affects requests in Logba is age. Children and young adults are supposed to use language that is devoid of coercion but full of respect when making requests either from their parents or any other elderly person. They are also not supposed to mention the bare names of their addressees. A child's request may not be complied with because of the use of improper requestive language. On the contrary, adults can request the young ones to do things for them without recourse to couching their words appropriately because when an elderly person requests a young person to do something for him or her, it is not considered to be potentially face threatening.

This aspect of hierarchical requests among the Logbas applies to Akans as well. Agyekum (2005:5) avers that in Akan, "if children are requesting things from their parents, they have to use deference expressions while parents may minimise deference expressions when making requests from their children". It is also noteworthy that people of the same age can make requests to each other without being scolded unlike the hierarchical one mentioned above. It must be emphasised that, though age is a factor in the excerpt below, other sociolinguistic variables like distance, rank, etc. (the man in question is a teacher) also played a part in the girl's request not being complied with.

The scenario below illustrates the essence of age among the Logbas where a girl requests a man to give her his phone to make a call.

32. **Girl (18 years):** Tà mú awú fon ε tɛ́ n
 give 1SG 2SG phone DEF CONJ 1SG
 dzì amú tsi
 call 1SG father

‘Give me your phone to call my father.’

Man (33 years): A mó bù ivà kruaa
 2SG NEG respect thing at all.

‘You don’t respect at all (man walks away).’

(Logba Tota 3/1/15)

The inability of the girl to accord respect to the man in relation to his age qualifies the girl as disrespectful. She eventually fails to get her request complied with. The acceptable way would have been for the girl to use an address term followed by another respect term like the one found in (33) below:

33. Fo Akami, má dɛ́kúkú tamú awú fon
 AdT name 1SG beg give 2SG phone
 ε tɛ́ ñ dzì amú tsí tsibi
 DEF CONJ 1SG call 1SG father little

‘Brother Akami, please give me your phone to call my father.’

(Logba Tota 3/1/15)

If the girl had earlier couched her request as found in (33) above, there was every possibility that her request goal would have been achieved. As pointed out earlier, if the requester were of the same age with the requestee, the requestee would not have said anything to the effect that she does not respect. Requests from children to adults as found in example (32) above irrespective of gender is against the socio-cultural norms of the Logbas. The word *tsibi* ‘small’ serves as softening and coaxing (mitigator/downtoner) strategy to tell the

addressee that she realises the inconvenience she is causing and that she will not use much of his airtime.

3.2.4 Power

Power is another important sociolinguistic variable that affects requests among the Logbas. Powerful people can make direct requests to less powerful people. On the other hand, less powerful people cannot directly request their powerful counterparts to do something for them since the Logba culture frowns on such practices. The argument being advanced here is that, the father-child relationship that exists between these two people in excerpt (34) below is such that the father is more powerful by virtue of being the one who begot her, per the Logba culture. Let us examine this excerpt between a man and his daughter which I recorded when I visited them during the data collection for this work.

34. Đúmà kanyi ε kábá, a mó kpè té
 switch off light DEF fast 2SG NEG know COMP
 billi ε bó zó agú u?
 bill DEF FUT go up Q
 ‘Switch off the light immediately, don’t you know that the bill will go
 up?’ (Logba Alakpeti 28/10/14)

Because of the fact that the father has more power per the Logba culture than the girl, he could make this kind of request in the form of a command. This form of making a request cannot be made vice versa.

3.2.5 Distance

This refers to the intimacy that exists between interlocutors. The more intimate people are, the more they make requests from each other in an informal manner, and what should have been considered as FTAs may no longer be so (Agyekum 2005). It is very difficult to make requests from people you are meeting for the first time. Also, in cases where two people have been coming across each other daily in a community but there is no established intimacy between them, the act of requesting between them must be done cautiously to avoid any ‘face’ threats. The point being established in relation to distance here is that, for one to effectively make polite and non face threatening requests among the Logbas, he/she must critically choose his/her words based on who they are talking to and how best they can formulate their requests. This conversation I recorded between teacher A and teacher B who are both Logbas in the same school for five years explains how distance plays out. Teacher B is older than teacher A.

35. **Teacher A:** Yé a kpí banki ε dzu ε
 CONJ 2SG go bank DEF come DEF
 tá yayí oṅkpè mlà mú. Amú
 let search something bring 1SG 1SG.POS
 yó mì zhì kruaa
 skin NEG good at all
 ‘Give me something (money) if you go to the bank. I don’t have any money on me.’

Teacher B: Yòo má nú. Ovi abé a yáyí?
 okay 1SG hear how much 2SG need
 ‘I hear. How much do you need?’ (Logba Tota 30/10/14)

Though one of the teachers, (B) is older than the other, the younger one, (A) did not find it difficult to make a direct request *yé akpí banki é dzue ta yayí onkpè mlà mú* ‘give me something (money) if you go to the bank’ from the older one. The older whose face was not threatened in any way responded in the affirmative with a question of how much he needed *yò manú. Ovi abé a yáyí?* ‘I hear. How much do you need?’ This is due to the intimate relationship between these teachers. It could also be that; the older teacher also takes money from the younger one which consequently bridged the gap (distance) between them. Though I alluded to the premium Logbas put on age earlier on, intimacy ‘relaxes’ age in a way. Again, teacher B could not have made his request in the above fashion if there were many elderly people present at the time of his request.

3.3 Orientation in Requests

Agyekum (2005:5) states that “requests can be viewed in terms of the participant whose perspective (their point of view in relation to the request) is much crucial to the performance of the request”. He identifies four types of orientation namely; addressee oriented, speaker oriented, speaker and addressee oriented and [request for permission for third party assistance]. Data from Logba will be analysed based on these orientations.

3.3.1 Addressee Oriented

In addressee oriented requests, the requester requests the addressee to perform the action and therefore sees the addressee as the one whose face is more under threat. In view of these possible ‘face’ threats, the requester must do everything

possible to soften or lower the impact of the request imposition. Mostly, the “second person pronoun *you*” is the personal pronoun used in this situation (Agyekum 2005:6). Examples (36) and (37) are instances where a woman wanted her fellow woman to buy fish for her from the market, and a father asking the son to fetch water for him respectively.

36. Afadze ε má tá wú uzugbó a tányi akpá né
 Madam DEF 1SG give 2SG head 2SG can fish buy
 mlà mú gù o vù ε nù u?
 bring 1SG from CM market DET in Q
 ‘Madam, please, can you buy fish for me from the market?’
 (Logba Alakpeti 2/1/15)

37. Kofi, sà n dú mlà mú té nó
 Name fetch CM water bring 1SG CONJ drink
 ‘Kofi, fetch water for me to drink.’ (Logba Tota 26/3/15)

In example (36), the requester is appealing to the woman, *Afadze ε* to buy fish for her which benefits only the speaker. She also used the respect term *ma tá wú uzugbó* ‘I beg’ as a way to alleviate or soften the illocutionary force of the request. The use of the address term *Afadze ε* ‘the landlady’ is preferred over *udze ε* ‘the woman’. The use of *Afadze ε* is more formal and shows respect. In example (37) on the other hand, the benefit goes to the father but the use of the respect term is absent because adults can make direct requests to children without face threats among the Logbas.

3.3.2 *Speaker Oriented*

In speaker oriented requests, the requester seeks approval from the requestee to be given the opportunity to do something. The benefit goes to the requester. This means that personal pronouns such as “*I* and *we*” are used (Agyekum 2005:6). Let’s examine the following below for both ‘*I*’ (1sg) and ‘*we*’ (1pl) in examples (38) and (39) respectively with data from Logba:

38. Má tanyì awú afòkpá a fé zó sòlime ozumè e?
 1SG can 2SG shoe DEF wear go church tomorrow Q
 ‘Can I wear your shoe to church tomorrow?’ (Logba Alakpeti 26/10/14)

39. Atsí bí tanyì awú bokitsi ε mí sá ndú
 1PL FUT can 2SG bucket DEF take fetch water
 odzú ε nù u?
 river DEF in Q
 ‘Can we use your bucket to fetch water from the stream?’
 (Logba Alakpeti 3/1/15)

In (38), the addressee is making a request as to whether he can use someone else’s shoes. It is speaker oriented because; the benefit of the request goes to the requester (speaker). On the other hand, the benefit in (39) goes to the group hence the use of the second person plural *atsí* ‘we’.

3.3.3 *Speaker and Addressee Oriented*

This is the situation where the requester wants the addressee to perform an action together with him/her. It is an addressee inclusive act that is, both speaker and addressee (Agyekum 2005). In other words, the speaker makes a request to the addressee to collaborate with him to perform a duty. This is

captured in the talk of the youth leader of Logba Tota during one of their meetings as he requested all and sundry to be involved in arresting the dwindling fortunes of their wards' education as found in (40) below:

40. I hía té amú kpé awú atsí dzí ná atsú
 3SG important COMP 1SG CONJ 2SG. 1PL stand on 1PL.POS
 ebitò a suku kpí - go yó.
 children DEF school attend NOM skin
 'It is important that you and I (we) make our children's education a
 priority.' (Logba Tota 26/3/15)

In example (40), the speaker uses the word *we* (you and I), that is, inclusiveness to denote requester-requestee inclusiveness in salvaging the downward trends in the education of their wards. In other words, the speaker requests everybody including himself to take action sooner than later. Though this can be seen as an advice, it is also a request in that he is asking everybody including himself to do something to achieve a certain goal. Mashiri (2001) also found this strategy in his study where the use of morphosyntactic constructions was common in requests to passengers. The inclusive 1st person plural subject and object '*we/us*' occurred very frequently as mitigating markers. This suggests that if the speaker had directed the request to the addressees without including himself, it would have been 'face' threatening. (It must be noted that, the speaker per his status, has no difficulties whatsoever in seeing his wards' through education). To have included himself, he had mitigated the effect of his utterance so that one may not infer something to the effect that he is directly referring to those who are finding it difficult to pay their wards' school fees.

3.3.4 Request for Permission for Third Party Assistance

This refers to a “situation where the requester wants the addressee to give room or concession for a third party to perform an action. It could be a third party who is within the environment or afar” (Agyekum 2005:6). It is more of permission from someone to be allowed to ask a third party say, one’s son, to perform an action in the interest of the speaker. The example below will further illustrate this point.

41. Ma tá wú uzugbó, ma yáyí té n tó awú
 1SG give 2SG head 1SG want CONJ 1SG send 2SG
 bí ε té ó nε’ avà mlà mú.
 child DEF CONJ 1SG buy medicine bring 1SG.OBJ
 ‘Please, I want to send your child to buy medicine for me.’
 (Logba Tota 23/12/14)

One feature of this type of request among the Logbas is that, it is the addressee in this case, the father, who now asks his son to perform the action in favour of the requester. In view of this, the requester prefaces his request with *Ma tá wú uzúgbó* ‘I beg you’ not meant for the son but the father because the compliance or otherwise of the request is contingent on the father’s decision.

3.4 Sequence of Requests

Data gathered from Logba will be analysed based on the sequence of requests proposed by Blum-Kulka and Olshtain (1984:200-205). The main segments of requests within the sequence are:

- Address terms
- Head acts

- Adjunct to the head act

Data from Logba was assembled, studied and conclusions drawn on the structure of request speech act. It was found out that the analyses corresponded to those proposed by Blum-Kulka and Olshtain (1984:200-205). These are explained below with examples from Logba.

3.4.1 Address Terms

In order for a speaker to get his addressee to comply with a request, he must address the requestee in a formal way by using the proper address forms. Bearing in mind the status of the addressee, the speaker may refer to the addressee as *atsisa* ‘uncle’, *tasu/ama ugune* ‘aunt’, *anandze* ‘grandmother’ or *anansa* ‘grandfather’. In most cases, these address terms are followed by terms of respect such as *ma dekúkú /mà tawu úzúgbó* ‘please/I beg you’. Consider example (42) below:

Ten boys who were playing football were asked to make a request to their king to buy a ball for them through the oral discourse completion test at Logba Alakpeti on 15th February, 2015. This is how one of them made the request:

42. Atsú onunkpá ma dekúkú nè bɔɔl tà tsú ozúme
 1PL king 1SG beg buy ball CONJ 1PL tomorrow
 ‘Our king, please, buy a ball for us tomorrow.’
 (Logba Alakpeti 15/2/15)

From example (42) above, it must be noted that, the address term is *onunkpá* ‘king’ which is followed by a term of respect *ma dekúkú* ‘please’. If the boy had not couched his request in that way, he would have been scolded for being

disrespectful and communicatively incompetent in the Logba speech community. These terms (address and respect terms) are used as “softeners and persuasive terms in discourse either formal or informal, used to request the addressee to do something” (Agyekum 2005:7).

Logbas also cherish the use of in-group terms as address terms like *atsú ahá dzè* ‘our clanswoman’ or *atsú ahá nyì* ‘our clansman’. Other address terms common among the Logbas are: *ambie* ‘my child’, *ambi ogà* ‘my daughter-in-law’, *ambi gù* ‘my son-in-law’, *atsu onunkpá* ‘our king’ among others. When someone who belongs to the same clan with another wants to make a request, such as sending the other on an errand, this is how the request is made:

43. Ahá nyì, bà té n tó wú útròmè.
 Clan man come CONJ 1SG send 2PL work
 ‘Clansman, come let me send you.’ (Logba Tota 20/11/14)

With the use of this address term, *ahá nyì* ‘clan’s man’ the requester has elevated or identified with the requestee to enhance compliance. It is also important to note that, the mere mention of the name of the addressee like *Kofi* or *Ama*, when making requests establishes solidarity. This is only applicable to equals in terms of age, rank, status, etc. The elderly can use this to the younger ones but not vice versa.

3.4.2 Head Act

This is the main reason behind the request. If the other two segments (address term and the adjunct to the head act) are present without the head act, there will be no request made. In other words, it is an obligatory part of the request and what the requester seeks the requestee to do.

Let us use the same example as used for address term in (42) above which appears as excerpt (44) below:

44. Atsú onunkpá, má ɖɛkúkú nè bɔɔl tá tsú
 1PL king 1SG beg buy ball CONJ 1PL
 ozúme
 tomorrow

‘Our king, please, buy ball for us tomorrow.’

In example (44) above, *nè bɔɔl tà tsú* ‘buy ball for us’ is the main request to their king. The use of other modifications like *atsu onunkpá ma ɖe kúkú* ‘our king, I beg’ is geared towards making his request culturally acceptable to the requestee.

3.4.3 *Adjunct to the Head Act*

An adjunct is any attachment to the head act so as to give reasons for the request “to make it viable” (Agyekum 2005:9). Blum-Kulka and Olshtain (1984:204) explain that “the speaker might choose to support or aggravate the speech act by external modifications. External modification does not affect the utterance used for realizing the act, but rather the context in which it is embedded, and thus indirectly modifies illocutionary force”. They further explain that, head adjuncts may take various forms which may include the following: (a) checking the availability, (b) getting a pre-commitment, (c) grounder, (d) sweetener, (e) disarmer, (f) cost minimiser. These forms that precede the main request speech act are further explained below with their examples from the Logba data.

3.4.4 Checking the Availability

The essence of checking whether the item or service being requested is available is to reduce the face threat of the requestee. This is done by finding out tactfully even before the request (the head act) is made. In order to be sure of success, “the speaker prefaces his/her main speech act with an utterance intended to check if the precondition necessary for compliance holds true” (Blum-Kulka & Olshtain 1984:204). Brown and Levinson (1987:40) state that “one gives a prior indication that a request may be coming up and this may be done by means of a ‘pre-request’, a turn that typically checks out whether some precondition for a request are available”. This is aimed at preventing a possible embarrassment to the requestee. If the speaker finds out that the item being requested is unavailable, it becomes unnecessary to make the request. Examine the excerpt below between requester A and requestee B:

45. **A:** Má dékúkú awú tonká a à blò unámè
 1SG beg 2SG stew DEF 2SG prepare yesterday
 ε ó sé loo?
 DEF 3SG finish INTER
 Mà yáyí tsìbì té mí kpé i - mbí.
 1SG need little CONJ take eat CM rice
 ‘Please, did you use all the stew you prepared yesterday?
 I need a little for my rice.’

B1: Ee ò bò mó sé nú.
 Yes 3SG available NEG finish NOM
 ‘Yes I still have some. It is not finished.’

B2: A mò bán kaba. Kpanta atsì mí ógango
 2SG NEG come fast right now 1PL take rest .

ε kpé ivà.

DEF eat thing

‘You didn’t come early. We used the rest for food.’

(Logba Alakpeti 2/1/15)

In this interaction, requester A makes the utterance as a way of checking if the stew is not finished. When the requester is sure of getting the item as found in the positive answer of B1, it is only then he is sure of the availability of the item that he continues with the actual request. It would have been embarrassing to the requester and requestee alike, if the speaker had made a request without checking the availability or otherwise. On the contrary, if the speaker were to have the answer in B2, the request for the stew would not have been necessary. In this case, the requester would have saved both his face and the requestee’s face. As a face saving strategy for the requester, B2 chose to say *amò bá nú kàbà* ‘you did not come early’. This means that, if the speaker had arrived earlier, no matter the quantity of the stew left, he would have had some. This mitigates any possible face threat to the requester.

3.4.5 Getting a Pre-Commitment

The speaker precedes the request by an utterance that can count as “an attempt to obtain a precommittal” (Blum-Kulka and Olshtain 1984:205). The requester, in the case of borrowable items like, money, pressing iron, axe, etc., assures the addressee of bringing back the item requested as soon as possible. By this, he commits himself to his own words. This is illustrated with the example below:

46. Afadze ε má mí awú avì ε fashí
 Madam DEF 1SG take 2PL axe DEF split

adzayí. Má mí a mlà kpanta.
 Firewood.SING 1SG take DEF bring right now
 ‘Madam, may I use your axe to split firewood. I will bring it back
 right now.’ (Logba Tota 28/10/14)

In example (46), the requester has committed himself to returning the axe after use. The second part of the request *Má dzú a mlà kpanta* ‘I will bring it back very soon’ is meant to assure the owner of the safety of the axe and to save the owner the inconvenience of having to go for it herself, should she also need it urgently. There are two speech acts used in the above example; a directive and a commissive. The first part *afa dze ε té mí awú avi ε fashí adzayí* ‘Madam may I use your axe to split firewood’ is a directive (request) and the second part *Ma dzú a mlà kpanta* ‘I will bring it back very soon’ is a commissive (promise).

3.4.6 *Grounder*

This is the reason for making the request. It also gives explanation to the main request. The explanation must be convincing enough to persuade the requestee to render the service or give out the item. The grounder may come before or after the head act in Logba. The two strategies are exemplified below:

47. Má tá wú uzúgbo a ba tsó atsú kanyí ε
 1SG give 2SG head 3PL come cut 1PL light DEF
 unáme iyé okplè má yáyí té m ba dzé
 yesterday 3SG CONJ 1SG want CONJ 1SG come see
 Ghana kpé South Africa bɔɔl ε awú vá
 Ghana CONJ South Africa match DEF 2PL place
 ‘Please, our electric power was disconnected yesterday so, I want to
 watch the match between Ghana and South Africa at your place.’

48. Má ɖəkúkú má yáyí tɛ m ba dzé Ghana
 1SG beg 1SG want CON 1SG come see Ghana
 kpé South Africa bɔɔl ε awú vá ibotɛ a ba
 CONJ South Africa match DET 2PL place CONJ 3PL come
 tsó atsú kanyí ε unámè
 Cut 1PL light DEF yesterday
 ‘Please, I want to watch the game between Ghana and South Africa
 with you because our electric power was disconnected yesterday.’
 (Logba Tota 27/1/15)

Example (47) brings the grounder, the reason for going to watch the match at someone else’s end rather than in his own house. The statement, ... *aba tsó atsú kanyí ε* ‘our electric power was disconnected’ is put at the initial position before the head act *má yáyí tɛ m ba dzé Ghana kpé South Africa bɔɔl ε awú vá* ‘I want to watch the match between Ghana and South Africa with you’.

In example (48), the requester prefaced his request with the head act before giving a reason (grounder) for the request. These two strategies are used among the Logbas as a means of indicating politeness. Whichever one is adopted, the messages and the understandings are the same.

3.4.7 Sweetener

In this strategy, the speaker raises the addressee “by expressing exaggerated appreciation of the hearer's ability to comply with the request, which lowers the imposition involved in the request” (Blum-Kulka and Olshtain 1984:205). Let’s examine the excerpt below:

49. Amú bí ε bà, mà nú té a mó trò
 1SG child DEF come 1SG hear COMP 2PL NEG refuse
 utròmè kruaa. Bó né iḍa a ta né akpá
 work at all come get money DEF CONJ buy fish
 mlà mú
 bring 1SG

‘My child, I heard you don’t refuse to go on errands at all. Come for the money and buy fish for me’. (Logba Alakpeti 3/11/14)

The use of the address term *ambí ε* ‘my child’ is to establish solidarity between the speaker and the addressee. He then exaggerates the quality of the requestee by introducing the sweetener, *amó trò utròmè kruaa* ‘you do not refuse to go on errands at all’ which is to mitigate the imposition (if any) involved in the request and as a coaxing strategy. The addressee feels proud of the quality associated with him and complies with the request. It must be emphasised that, this strategy is used for younger ones or among people of the same age. When a younger person uses it for an older person, it is considered impolite and ‘face’ threatening among the Logbas. For instance, if a child says to his father:

50. M̃ kpè té à tányi mú akontá m̀ gblà
 1SG know COMP 2PL can 1SG maths DEM teach
 ibotè i - nashína ò kpè té ahá tséj
 CONJ CM everybody 3PL know COMP people old
 go ε petée à kpè ivà.
 NOM DEF all 3PL know thing

‘I know you can teach me this mathematics problem because everybody knows that the elderly are knowledgeable.’ (Logba Tota 20/3/15)

The child would have put his father on the spot if the father also knows that he would not be able to solve the problem. This will thereby increase his father’s ‘face’ threat, hence it is considered impolite.

3.4.8 *Disarmer*

The addressee is aware of the possible discomfort his/her request is likely to bring to the hearer and a likely refusal so he tries to mitigate it. This is captured by (Blum-Kulka and Olshtain 1984:205) when they state that “the speaker indicates his/her awareness of a potential offence, thereby attempting to anticipate possible refusal”. The example below comes from a man asking his employer to give him salary advance.

51. Má gá wú ágbá tsìbì, má tá wú uzúgbó a
 1SG pay 2PL bother little 1SG give 2PL head 2PL
 tányì mú iḍa tá yé abòbí ε ó kú ε
 can 1SG money give CONJ moon DEF CM die DEF
 té à là iyè amú úgúgà nù u?
 COMP 2SG remove 3SG 1SG salary in Q
 ‘I will bother you; please can you give me an amount of money so that
 you deduct it from my salary at the end of the month?’
 (Logba Alakpeti 22/3/15)

The speaker aware of a potential offence to the addressee, he decided to use the words *má gáwu ágbá tsìbì* ‘I will bother you a little’. This means that should the speaker’s request be turned down, it wouldn’t be a surprise because he already knows he is offending (disturbing/bothering) and that, there is the possibility of refusal.

3.4.9 *Disarmer and Cost Minimiser*

The speaker indicates consideration of the ‘cost’ to the hearer involved in compliance with the request (Blum-Kulka and Olshtain 1984). The argument

here is that, the requester in the process of the request may make certain demands that could be ‘costly’ to the addressee. The speaker foreseeing this chooses his words in a way that mitigate the possible cost. Let’s examine the excerpt in (52) below:

52. Yé í fía wú fè mì tsé mú . M̀ kpè
 CONJ 3SG pain 2PL too take forgive 1SG 1SG know
 té ivà a awu kò á tanyi ε blò tá mú.
 that thing DEF 2PL only 2PL can 3SG do CONJ 1SG
 Má yáyí té à bó yúε fufui tá mú úqòbè.
 1SG want COMP 2PL come pound fufu CONJ 1SG evening
 ‘Pardon me even if I bother you. I know you are the only one who can
 do it for me, I want you to come over to my house to pound fufu for me
 in the evening.’ (Logba Tota 22/3/15)

In excerpt (52) above, the requester prefaces his request with a cost minimisers *Yé í fía wú fè mí tsé mú* ‘pardon me even if I bother you’ and an utterance that is meant to raise the abilities of the requestee as being the only person among the lot capable of performing the task for him *m̀ kpè té iva awú ko a tanyi ε blò tá mú* “I know you are the only one who can do it for me”. This leaves the addressee with no option than to comply with the request.

3.5 Request Strategies

Requests are grouped into two major categories namely; direct and indirect. Indirect requests are further sub-divided into conventional indirect requests and non-conventional indirect requests.

3.5.1 Direct Requests

Obeng (1999) reports that direct requests in Akan are in the form of command sentences. In particular, they ‘tell’ the requestee to do the requested action or provide the requested item. The verbs used are in the imperative mood. Most of these direct requests begin with an overt subject and address form followed by a verb and then the requested item/service. He gave the syntactic structure of direct requests in Akan as found below:

NP (+address) +V (+imperative mood) + N (requested item/service) + (S¹(+Justification))¹. (Obeng 1999:62).

This syntactic structure has the NP being a vocative or an address term followed by a verb in the imperative mood, then, the main request speech act and finally the justification for the request. The structure of direct requests in Akan (Obeng 1999) above also applies to direct requests in Logba. The example below illustrates the above syntactic structure in Logba.

53. Aku, sà n - dú tà mú té nó
 Name fetch CM water CONJ 1SG.OBJ CONJ drink
 ‘Aku, fetch water for me to drink.’ (Logba Tota 28/12/14)

As pointed out in the structure, the NP may be a vocative (a term that can be used to address someone like *Aku*) and a verb in the imperative mood *sa* ‘fetch’. This is followed by the requested item *ndú* ‘water’ and the reason for the request, *té nɔ* ‘to drink’. Obeng (1999) gave example (54) below in Akan to illustrate this point where AA (husband) is 40 years and AM (wife) is 39:

54. **AA:** Ama, pagya nwoma no ma me.
 Ama lift-up book the to me
 ‘Ama, give me the book.’

AM: Eni.
 ‘Here-is-it.’
 Here is it.

AA: Mo.
 ‘Thanks.’

AA: Ama, give me the book.

AM: Here is it.

AA: Thanks

Let us examine the excerpt from Logba below where a man asks his wife (Adzo) to grind pepper for them to eat.

55. Adzo gò tonká a kabakaba té atsí kpé
 Adzo grind pepper DEF very fast CONJ 1PL eat
 ivà a
 thing DEF
 ‘Adzo be very fast and grind the pepper for us to eat.’
 (Logba Alakpeti 20/3/15)

In example (55), the husband’s request has some traces of compulsion in it. This is because, if the word *kabakaba* ‘very fast’ is used among the Logba’s, it’s akin to putting pressure on the addressee. However, the use of the address term *Adzo* is meant to establish rapport, closeness and as a softener. Also, the use of the 1st person plural inclusive term, *atsi* ‘us’ is seen as a mitigator

thereby reducing the illocutionary force of the request. The imperative nature of the verb *gɔ̀* 'grind' in (55) above makes it a direct request.

Obeng (1999) states that the use of day names such as *Adzo*, *Kofi*, *Ama*, *Komla* and other names for addressing people also indicate positive politeness. Simply put, when one mentions the name of a requestee, the illocutionary force becomes minimal. Many people who do not have the same socio-pragmatic orientation may be tempted to think the husband is impolite or that he is imposing his request on *Adzo*, his wife, therefore a threat to her negative face. This is because his request is "direct and neither preceded nor followed by any strong politeness marker" (Obeng 1999:63). Since the conversation is between intimates i.e husband and wife, "little social negotiation or attention to linguistic marking of politeness" is required (see Wolfson 1986 cited in Obeng 1999:63).

The request strategy employed by the man in example (55) lends credence to the point made earlier to the effect that, requests could be made directly by certain people (by using a down toner such as address term, honorifics, etc.). These people may not be considered impolite and may not be seen as threatening the requestee's negative face. With regard to this example, asking one's wife to grind pepper for use by all of them is neither face threatening to self nor to the wife, even if the request is made in a command form.

Another example of request is given below where the requestee directly makes a request but, unlike example (55) this one is prefaced with a politeness marker before the day name with a kinship deferential address form *atsisa*

‘uncle’. The example below comes from a man aged 36 (requester) to another who is 29 years (requestee). This excerpt was recorded at Logba Alakpeti.

56. Atsisa Koku, tà mú awú polish ε té mí blò
 Uncle Koku give 1SG 2PL polish DEF CONJ take make
 amú nfokpá a yó. Ñ drè.
 1SG Shoe.PL DEF skin 3PL dirty

‘Uncle Koku, give me your polish to use for my shoes. They are dirty.’
 (Logba Alakpeti 3/11/14)

It can be seen from the utterance in (56) that, the request is made in an imperative fashion with the use of the verb *tà* ‘give’ but, the use of the deferential address term *atsisa* ‘uncle’ tones down or mitigates the illocutionary force of the request. Also, the requester called the requestee uncle, although he is older than the requestee. This is because the two people in question are not intimate friends. This strategy is meant to establish solidarity between them. Though, older people can make direct requests to the younger ones, there are some exceptions as illustrated by this example. A critical examination of the excerpt in (56) shows a grounder suffixed to the head act, that is, the reason for requesting for the polish, *ñ drè* ‘they are dirty’. This is meant to court the sympathy and cooperation of the requestee leading to compliance. Whenever the day-name of the requestee is not known, it is more polite to use a social category term based on the sex of the addressee as an address term. It is more appropriate to refer to one as *osa a* ‘the male/man’ or *udze ε* ‘the female/woman’ instead of using attention getting words such as *hey!*, *hè!*, etc.

Again, it must be pointed out that, only older people can use these forms to younger people not vice versa. People of the same age group can also use these (*osa a*, *udze ε*) among themselves. The old ones do not use them at all instead, they use *afa sa a* or *afa dze ε* forms which are equivalent to the landlord and the landlady respectively.

3.5.2 *Conventional Indirect Requests*

Weizman (1989:74) notes that with “conventional indirect requests the hearer is guided by some grammatical or semantic devices, used conventionally for that purpose”. The following are some strategies used among the Logbas.

- The speaker/requester uses words such as *á bó tanyí* ‘could/can you’ in making their requests rather than making imperative statements which are considered impolite.
- Another strategy used as conventional indirect request strategy is through the use of hedging devices such as *yé m̀ ga wú agba* ‘if it won’t be too much of a bother to you’ and respect terms such as *má tá wú uzugbó/má d̀ékúú* ‘Please, I beg’ when making requests.

Such words and expressions in Logba as *yé mi ga wu agba* ‘if it won’t be too much of a bother to you’, *abo tanyi* ‘could you’, or *yé i bi nyɔnzhi tá wú ε* ‘is it possible for you’, *ma ta wu uzugbo/ma d̀ékúú* ‘please/I beg you’ are used as hedging devices’. Hedging devices such as address terms, honorifics, endearment terms, bonding terms among others indicate politeness and non-imposition of the request on the requestee.

An important address term style among Logbas is the prefacing of the name of the first child of the individual. For instance, if the first child of a couple is called *Komla* ‘the day name for male Tuesday borns’ then, the father can be called *Komla tsí ε* ‘Komla’s father’ and the mother called *Komla ma* ‘Komla’s mother’. The academic and professional titles of these children are also used in some instances. The use of these address terms have certain positive and negative implications in that, the behaviour or attitude of these first children when used has some pragmatic connotations.

If *Komla* is a highly accomplished person say a professor, doctor, lawyer, nurse, etc. then saying *Komla tsí ε* ‘Komla’s father’ or even *Profesa tsí ε* ‘Professor’s father’ uplifts the positive face of the addressee. It is not the case when *Komla* is a hardened and a notorious criminal. Let us examine this utterance from a woman to *Kodzo*’s mother during a misunderstanding.

57. Awú Kodzo ma fè a ló dzì amù bí
 2SG Kodzo mother too 2SG PROG call 1SG child
 ε tε oyú u?
 DEF COMP thief Q

‘You, *Kodzo*’s mother too, is calling my son a thief?’

(Logba Tota 4/11/15)

The son of the woman (questioner) was accused of stealing plantain. When everybody was discussing the issue, the woman overheard *Kodzo*’s mother also engrossed in the matter. Angered by that, she made the utterance in (57) above *Awu Kodzo ma fε?* ‘even you *Kodzo*’s mother?’. The point must be reiterated that, the generally known address term for the woman in question is *Kodzo ma* ‘*Kodzo*’s mother’. These kinds of address forms have some sociopragmatic effects because, *Kodzo* is a criminal who has been imprisoned

severally and that, his mother should not be the one to be speaking about a theft case involving others. This shows that, address terms having to do with the names of first children can function as both uplifting the positive image of the addressee and also used to attack the face of the hearer.

The excerpt below with endearment or bonding term comes from someone who wanted his friends of the same age range with him, to relocate to a better place rather than where they had previously earmarked for a tent during a preparation towards a funeral at Logba Tota on 16th January, 2015.

58. Atsú able, má tá nú uzúgbó yé mì gagba
 1PL own 1SG give 2SG head CONJ NEG disturb
 atsí mi kpí ná akpanta a okuina í sò boŋ?
 1PL take go lay tent DEF somewhere 3SG flat rather
 ‘Our people, I beg you if it won’t be of a bother to you, could we rather erect the tent at a place that is more levelled?’ (Logba Tota 16/1/15)

In (58), the use of the inclusive term *atsú able* ‘our people’ has some communicative implications. It helps to establish some togetherness (bonding) among all including the requester thereby mitigating any face threats that may be inherent in the request. Apart from this, the requester also uses *má tá nú uzúgbó* ‘I beg you’ as a politeness marker. The use of the words *ye mi ga agba* ‘if it won’t be of a bother’ is to show that, the requester knows that he is bothering the addressees and being aware of this, he tones down his request of any form of imposition.

Also, among the Logbas, suffixing a request by the word *loo?* is very important, in that, it functions both as non-imposition marker and seeking enquiry as to whether it is possible to achieve request compliance. In short, it

changes what would have been a declarative statement (direct request) into an interrogative one. The example below further illustrates this point.

59. Má kpé
 1SG. SUB eat
 ‘I will eat’
60. Má kpé loo?
 1SG SUB eat INTER
 ‘Will I eat?’

In example (59), the speaker is emphatic or makes a declarative statement (direct request) that ‘he will eat’. On the other hand, in (60), the speaker requests to know if he will be given the food. This second one i.e (60) is such that, should the request not be honoured (complied with) by the requestee, there will be little or no ‘face’ threats at all since he was not imposing his request. The requester was also ready to have a positive or a negative answer. Another example of conventional indirect request is found in example (61), where the requester makes a request to a group of friends without mentioning anybody’s name.

61. Ìnà okpè ó tanyi aboé ε rí mlà a?
 person one 1SG can goat DEF catch bring Q
 ‘Can someone bring the goat?’ (Logba Tota 16/1/15)

The use of the indefinite generic third person pronoun *ìnà okpè* ‘someone’ puts the option to any member of the group. Should anyone of them comply, it no longer has any imposition but, a personal decision. This example is indirect because, the request comes in the form of a question as to whether someone can bring the goat or not. Being an interrogation, it can either have a positive or

negative response. This mitigates the face threat unlike the situation where the requestee makes a direct request.

Also, this example appears very direct but, the fact that nobody's name is mentioned makes it to lose its directness. Obeng (1999:71) avers that among the Akans "the indirect use of the pronoun [someone] is common among intimate friends but rare in interactions involving non-intimates and people with unequal status". This finding in Akan by Obeng (1999) is also true of Logba where the use of *inà okpè* 'someone' is used among intimates and equals in terms of age, status, etc.

Other common hedging devices or in-group terms used among the Logbas as non-conventional indirect request strategies include: *amú ugune* 'my sister', *amú ugusa* 'my brother', *amú aha nyi* 'my clan's man' *amú aha dze* 'my clan's woman', *amú bi ε* 'my child', etc. The use of honorifics is another important hedging device employed among the Logbas. Agyekum (2005:369) defines honorifics as "specialised address and reference forms used to show politeness and competence in language and culture".

Honorifics "sort of remind the addressee of his status or ranking in the community" (Odonkor 2001:47). On her part, Irvine (1998) defines honorifics as forms of speech that signal social deference, through conventionalised understandings of some aspects of the form-meaning relationship. All the above definitions share in common the use of appropriate address forms and deference towards certain people within a particular culture.

There are various traditional titles used among the Logbas for their chiefs. Some of them are provided below:

62. O - nunkpá nán - gò
 CM king big NOM
 ‘Paramount Chief.’
63. E - dzé ε o - nunkpá
 CM Female.PL DEF CM king
 ‘The queen mother.’
64. Asafotε ‘Youth leader.’

The following examples were taken from the town crier (gong-gong beater) when he delivered two messages from the *asafotε* ‘the youth leader’ and the *onunkpa dze ε* ‘the queen mother’. The messages beckoned all the males and females of the town to wake up to clear the sides of the main road that leads to the town and the females to sweep the town respectively which I recorded on 8th January, 2015.

65. Asafotε té ó ló vé, i- nà
 title say 3SG PROG leave CM - person
 osá okpèshíokpè tó mi ifiamì té atsí
 male everyone CONJ take cutlass CONJ 1PL
 kpí là ogbá a
 go remove road DEF
 ‘The youth leader said he is going, every male is to meet him with cutlasses to clear the bush engulfing the road.’ (Logba Tota 8/1/15)
66. O - nunkpa dzé ε té ó ló vé, i - nà
 CM king female DEF say 3SG PROG leave CM person
 dzé okpèshíokpè tó mí fionfio té atsí gbà
 female everyone CONJ take broom CONJ 1PL sweep
 ogbò á nù.
 town DEF in

‘The queen mother said she is going, every woman is to take a broom and meet her to sweep the town.’ (Logba Tota 8/1/15)

These two examples above are some of the ways reference can be made to powerful people through the use of honorifics among the Logbas. The use of the honorifics *asafotse* ‘youth leader’ and *onunkpá dze* ‘queen mother’ are seen as powerful titles. This means that when a powerful person requests you to do something among the Logbas, it comes with all the urgency it deserves. It is also important to note that, the youth leader and the queen mother may be younger than some of the people in the community but in the case of traditional political authority, premium is put on status more than age.

3.5.3 *Non-conventional Indirect Requests*

Non-conventional indirect requests involve ambiguity, obscurity and prolixity (Grice 1975) in the requester’s utterance. “The requester specifically and intentionally employs ambiguous and vague strategies to convey a meaning that differs in some way from the utterance meaning” (Obeng 1999:71). The hearer’s pragmatic competence plays a major role in determining a meaning beyond the mere utterance. He/she must detect that the requester intends something in-depth than the mere meaning of the utterance. In other words, the addressee must be able to get the hint of the utterance. For instance, if a friend asks another ‘*you are still wearing a jacket?*’ on a sunny day, he is simply asking him whether he is not feeling hot while everyone else is sweating.

Different cultures interpret utterance meanings differently. In this vein, for non-conventional indirect requests (hints) to achieve their intended motives, the interlocutors must have a common pragmalinguistic background.

Let's examine the utterance in (67) between two former classmates who I will call Senam (female) and Etonam (male). They are of the same age but, different statuses. Senam is a medical doctor and Etonam, a pupil teacher.

67. **Senam:** Tsitsiε awú asinu ε á nyònzhi
 the way 2PL handwriting DEF 3SG good.PAST
 atsú suku ibè ε, à la zhi ányé ε?
 1PL school time DEF 3SG still good same Q
 'Is your handwriting as good as it was when we were in
 school?'

Etonam: Kpanε boη á nyadzetsí fiε. A yáyí
 now rather 3SG look better than 2SG want
 i - nà okpè té ó ηónyì ivà
 CM person one CONJ SM write something
 tá wú u?
 CONJ 2PL Q
 'It looks even better now. Do you want someone to write
 something for you?'

Senam: Ee má yáyí i - nà okpè té ó
 Yes 1SG want CM person one CONJ SM
 ηonyi aha enyí ε tá mú ukplo
 write people name.PL DEF CONJ 1SG table
 a yó
 DEF skin
 'Yes, I want someone to write the names of people at the
 table for me.'

Etonam: Má ηonyì a tá wú.
 1SG.OBJ write DEF CONJ 2SG
 'I will write them (the names) for you.'

Senam: À nyintsé fofo.
 2SG thank very much
 ‘Thank you very much.’ (Logba Tota 13/3/15)

The requester, Senam, aware of the fact that, she is of the same age with Etornam, could not directly make a request to him. Being age mates signifies equality in that respect. (As pointed out earlier, equals must go about their requests tactfully to lessen face threats unlike non-equals, say a father requesting his child to do something). Instead, she chooses to use hints by giving compliments about Etornam’s handwriting as far back as when they were in school together. The addressee understanding the hint in the speaker’s utterance, asks the question *a yáyí té inà okpè té o ηɔnyi ivà tá wú u?* ‘do you want someone to write something for you?’. The understanding here is that, Etornam is willing to offer himself for the write up, should he be asked to do so. His question was accordingly answered *ee, má yáyí inà okpè té ó ηɔnyi ahaa enyi ε tá mú ukplɔ a yó.* ‘Yes, I want someone to write the names of the people at the table’. Etornam then offers to do the writing. This is an indirect utterance employed by Senam to prevent any possible face threats.

It must be emphasised here that Senam really wanted Etornam to write for her but it would have been an imposition on the addressee, and a subsequent non-compliance would have threatened the speaker’s face as well, hence, the use of the circumlocution. Senam shows her appreciation as she has achieved her communicative goal. Giving the equality in age between the two interactants above, a direct request would have depicted Senam pragmatically incompetent and impolite per the Logba culture.

3.6 Chapter Summary

This chapter examined the use of request expressions and strategies among the Logbas. These request expressions used among the Logbas were critically analysed using Agyekum (2005) GRAPD sociolinguistics variables. The acronym which stands for *G*-gender, *R*-rank, *A*-age, *P*-power, *D*-distance, were accordingly seen to have some major effects in the way Logbas make requests. For instance, it was revealed that the way women use language when requesting something from their male counterparts differs from when they request from other women.

Again, rank and power were also seen to affect requests among the Logbas. While a powerful person by virtue of being a chief or even a father can make direct requests, lower ranked and less powerful people cannot make direct requests to their higher ranked counterparts. Age, another variable considered in this chapter was seen in the excerpts provided to play a role in the choice of requestive expressions. The last of the variables that is, distance, was about less face threats between intimates which is not the case for people who hardly know each other when making requests.

In addition, data from Logba were assembled and analysed based on Blum-Kulka and Olshtain's (1984) Cross-cultural Speech Act Realisation Pattern (CCSARP). Under this, strategies for mitigating requests were analysed from the Logbas' point of view. The other preoccupation of this chapter was request strategies namely direct, conventional indirect and non-conventional indirect request strategies. With direct strategies, Logbas use down toners and address vocatives such as *amú bie* 'my child' *aha nyi* 'clan's man', etc. to establish solidarity and avoid face threats. Some of the conventional indirect

requests strategies used among the Logbas include *kuku de go* 'to beg', *ye mi ga agba* 'if it won't be of a bother', *atsú able* 'our people' as hedging devices and pre-request strategies before the head act. In terms of non-conventional indirect requests, the requester uses a sweetener as well as making use of circumlocution and expects that the requestee uses his/her pragmatic competence to decipher what is being requested of him/her.

CHAPTER FOUR

REQUESTS IN SOME SOCIO-CULTURAL ACTIVITIES AMONG THE LOGBAS

4.1 Introduction

Requests, as a directive speech act, are performed regularly. Nevertheless, there are some formal institutionalised request forms for some socio-cultural events among the Logbas. This chapter examines some of these ethnographic domains (socio-cultural events) of requests and some of the request expressions used in each of these ethnographic situations. Particular attention will be paid to requests in commercial transactions, requests during some traditional rites of passage, requests in sermons among others.

4.2 Requests in Commercial Transactions

Commercial places are one of the important domains where request expressions are used. This is because there are two sets of people, mostly a buyer or a customer and service provider (seller) who come into contact with each other. Sellers, for instance, make use of certain persuasive words to attract buyers to their wares. Buyers, on the other hand, also have their own language in coaxing the sellers to agree to sell their wares at certain prices that will be in their benefit. People who also wish to buy, sometimes on credit, must use certain special words that can make the sellers or service providers to be sympathetic to their plight.

Another area of interest which is categorised under commercial has to do with how requests between transport providers (drivers and their assistants or conductors) and travellers or passengers are formulated. Again, commercial

transactions involving a farmer and a labourer will also be discussed. Due to the nature of the towns, especially Logba Tota, vehicles seldom go there, hence, drivers and passengers alike use hortative devices and other in-group terms to accomplish their request goals (see also Mashiri 2001). Let us look at some of these domains critically starting with requests in markets.

4.2.1 Requests in Market Centres

The main motive here is to look at some of the requestive language (words) sellers and buyers use to arrive at their goals. The excerpt below will explain this type of request as identified among the Logbas with respect to buying and selling. In this excerpt, a seller wanted to tell a buyer to come and buy from her rather than from other competitors.

68. Amú asisi ε, má mí ivà vuvò mlà á
 1SG customer DEF 1SG take thing new bring 2SG
 mó bó dzé e?
 NEG come see Q

‘My customer, I have brought new wares. Won’t you come over and have a look at them?’ (Logba Alakpeti 2/12/14)

The example in (68) illustrates a seller who does not want to put a buyer in an uncomfortable situation. She decides not to outrightly call the potential buyer by name to come over and buy. Instead, she chooses to be indirect. She shouts, *Amú asisi ε* ‘my customer’ to draw the buyer’s attention. The use of ‘my customer’ as an address term is preferred because it establishes solidarity between the buyer and the seller. Another approach employed in example (68) above is the use of the phrase *ivà vuvò* ‘new things’. She seeks to tell the buyer that, wherever she is heading does not have anything new comparable to her place. The buyer should therefore not bother herself to ‘comb’ the market. Her

place is the one and only last stop. *A mo bó dzé ε?* ‘won’t you come over and look at them?’ also forms a core part of her request to the buyer. This approach (question) is to purge her request of any force should the buyer feel so.

Let’s examine the example below, where a tomatoes seller tactically requests a buyer to come over and buy from her. This excerpt was recorded on 5th February, 2015 during my visit to the Logba Alakpeti market where I acted as a buyer, as a seller requested a buyer (me) to come over and buy from her.

69. Kpanε à mó ló bà amú va kruaa. Idzè
 now 2SG NEG ADR come 1SG side at all today
 bo ná ùmè té n dò wú.
 come walk here CONJ 1SG add 2SG
 ‘Now you don’t come close to me at all. Today come over, I will give you more.’ (Logba Alakpeti 6/12/15)

The excerpt in (69) above is aimed at telling the buyer to come and buy from her. This, the seller purposefully devises a strategy to achieve. She begins by *kpanε à móló bà amú va kruaa* ‘these days you don’t come closer to me at all’ as a strategy to lure the buyer to her. She continues to say *Idzè bo na ùmè té n dò wú* ‘today come over, I will give you more’. With this assurance coupled with the earlier strategy, the requestee finds it expedient to finally settle on buying from the requester.

Another important aspect of trading domain has to do with how people who want to buy on credit go about their requests so as to court the sellers’ willingness and sympathy to sell to them on credit. Let us examine example (70) where a man wants to buy on credit.

70. Idzè amú yó mì zhì kruaa. Ta mú akpá
 today 1SG skin NEG good at all give 1SG fish

ye ma zò peya ovù adzí má mí idá
 CONJ 1SG sell pear market day 1SG take money
 a mlà wú.
 DEF bring 2SG

‘I don’t have money today. Give me fish and I will pay you after selling pear on the market day.’ (Logba Tota 18/10/14)

The man begins by saying *idzè amú yó mizhì kruaa* which literary means that ‘today I don’t have money’ before making the real request *tam akpa a* ‘give me fish’. This means that, the man in question (the buyer) is known to the seller as one who does not buy on credit hence, he prefaces his request in that manner. He continues to give a strong assurance (pre-commitment) to the seller that just after selling on the next market day, he would defray his debt. If the person were a usual creditor from the woman, he would have couched his request differently in most cases.

Let us consider the excerpt in example (71) below where a man who always buys on credits and pays later goes about his request. This excerpt was recorded on 14th December, 2014, when I visited a friend whose mother sells bread. I later spoke to the buyer about my study and he consented.

71. Oṅkpe mo má amú yó o? Tà mu
 something NEG available 1SG skin Q give 1SG
 abóló akpè, à bó nú amú anú kábá.
 bread one 2SG FUT hear 1SG OBJ mouth soon
 ‘Do I still owe you? Give me a loaf of bread, you will hear from me (I will pay) as soon as practicable.’ (Logba Tota 14/12/14)

In the above excerpt, the man begins by posing a question to the seller as to whether he was no longer owing her. The questioner (requester) must wait for a brief moment to listen to the answer before he continues to make his request.

Mostly, if the answer is in the affirmative, it gives the questioner (requester) the green light to now make his request.

4.2.2 *Requests between Passengers and Drivers*

Apart from requests used in buying and selling, another major area where requests are used is on commercial vehicles. The uniqueness of these requests among the Logbas need to be mentioned especially when it is getting late in the evening. As pointed out in the introductory sections of this thesis, Logba Tota is not along the major road. This makes access to vehicles problematic at all times. Passengers and drivers alike have adopted special requestive language that they use to achieve their aim of getting more people on board beyond the capacity of the vehicle. In example (72) below, the passenger requests the driver to make haste to take the last passenger who is also among the group of those moving together, even though the vehicle is already full to capacity as said by the driver.

72. **Driver:** Ukló ε ó yí, ma nú zhí i-
 Vehicle DEF 3SG full 1SG NEG take CM
 nàshínà dò.
 anyone again
 ‘The car is full, I will not take anyone again.’

Passenger: Atsí bí zu yawo, iboté atsú
 1PL FUT get down then CONJ 1PL
 pétée atsì lí ná.
 all 1PL PROG walk

‘Then we shall get down because we are walking together.’

Driver: Tì zú nú. Tà nú té ò
 NEG get down 2PL allow 2PL CONJ 3SG
 ve fè te atsí sà.
 pass in CONJ 1PL go
 ‘Don’t get down. Let him enter so that we go.’

(Logba Alakpeti 23/12/14)

By virtue of the communal and group feelings (see Obeng 1999) exhibited by the Logbas, leaving one person behind while the other members of the group leave can be judged as unfriendliness and enmity towards the one who couldn't get a seat. Armed by this, they successfully employed a strategy to indirectly 'threaten' the driver that should he not take their friend, they were all going to get down. This 'threat' can also be seen as an indirect way of telling the driver to take their friend at all cost. The driver, not wanting to wait any further for other passengers to come on board, will have no option than to give in to their request.

The extract in (73) below shows an instance where a driver, who wanted to overload his vehicle with passengers, got the passengers already on board to kowtow to his request.

73. Má tá nú uzúgbó atsi shá zò tsibì
 1SG give 2SG head 1PL push go little
 tɛ atsú áblé agangó ε tɛ a vè fé.
 CONJ 1PL own rest DEF CONJ 3PL pass inside
 'Please, let us push a little for the rest of our people to come onto the car.' (Logba Alakpeti 23/12/14)

In the first place, the driver prefaces his request with the respect term *má ta nu uzugbo* 'I beg you'. This is to bring himself lower than any person on the vehicle. Apart from this, he uses the hortative inflection *ta* 'let' and the 1st person plural *atsi* 'us' as an approach where he also includes himself just to signal the passengers that he is also involved in the movement to create space for the rest.

The use of the inclusive 1st person plurals ‘we/us’ is a powerful tool in requests among the Logbas to signify solidarity and inclusiveness (see Mashiri 2001). He also uses the word *tsìbì* ‘a little’ as a mitigator and a downtoner. This suggests that he is not telling the passengers to move too much but just a little. With the use of this word, he neutralises the gravity and the illocutionary force of his request to the point that everyone will be willing to comply with it.

Another tactic used by the driver can be found in the words *te atsú ablé agangó ε* ‘for the rest of our people’. He is telling the passengers already on board that those who are to join are members of their community or their own, not different people. If any person already seated raises any objection to the driver’s request of allowing more people to enter, that person is perceived as not having ‘we feelings’. His objection is also no longer seen as one to the driver’s request rather to those who were to join. Most drivers are aware of these socio-pragmatic devices so they capitalise on them to drive home their requests to take more passengers than expected.

4.2.3 *Requests Involving Farmers and Labourers/Farmhands*

As pointed out in the introductory section of this thesis, majority of the people of Logba (Logba Tota and Logba Alakpeti for purposes of this thesis) are farmers. Due to the relatively small scale nature of the farms, farmers do not use machinery and other sophisticated farm implements. Instead, the use of human effort in the form of hired labour is used. Though most of the labourers are paid, the acceptance or otherwise of these labourers to work for someone in his farm largely hinges on the use of requestive language devoid of force. These requesters (farmers) make use of coaxing address terms to get these

labourers (requestees) to work for them. The excerpt below is between a farmer and a labourer at Logba Tota recorded on the 17th of March, 2015 to illustrate this point.

74. Amú osa awú uma ubó ε nù i yí adzi
 1SG man 2PL mother farm DEF in 3SG full day
 mɔ atsi kpí ló iye?
 when 1PL.SUB go clear 3SG
 ‘My man, your mother’s farm is bushy. When shall we go and clear it?’
 (Logba Tota 17/3/15)

The farmer (requester) begins by getting the labourer’s (requestee’s) attention by using an address term, *amú osa* ‘my man’. She further makes the labourer aware that it is none other but his mother who wants him to weed her farm for her. In the case where the requestee refuses to grant the woman’s request, it would mean that, he has refused to help his mother. Moreover, the woman employs another strategy where she puts the option of when will be convenient for the requestee. This is to tell the labourer that, she is not forcing him. It also functions as preventing any face threats. Finally, the woman employs the inclusive term *atsi* ‘we’ denoting he will not go alone, but she will go to the farm with him which also tones down the request. All these strategies are meant to help the woman to achieve her request goal.

4.3 Religious Requests

These types of requests will be viewed from two major perspectives; Christian and Traditional Religions, which are the two major religions in the area of the study. The aim is to document the idiosyncrasy of requests used among the Logbas when a priest requests his congregation to do something and the

requestive language of a traditional priest during supplications and pouring of libation to the gods.

4.3.1 Requests in Sermons

A great number of Logbas are Christians within several denominations. Priests as well as other officials including the announcers have a way of appealing to the members of a congregation when they expect them to do something either for themselves, the church or a third party. In the example below, the priest tells the congregation to stay away from evil and rather get closer to the Lord.

75. Tá nú té atsí dá atsú u - dzì ε
 let 1PL COMP 1PL open 1PL CM heart.PL DEF
 tá Omawu té ó vè fé.
 CONJ the Lord CONJ 1SG pass in
 ‘Let us open our hearts for the Lord to enter.’ (Logba Tota 4/1/15)

The request by the priest to the congregation is such that he includes himself among those supposed to open or avail themselves hence the use of the phrase *tá nú* ‘let us’ which serves as an inclusive term, mitigator and a downtoner to purge his request of any illocutionary force should the members of the congregation feel so. The priest chooses to use this inclusive term rather than *dá nù* ‘open your’ (excluding him) to avoid any needless pragmatic interpretation or being misconstrued. The argument here is that if he hadn’t included himself, it would have meant that he is considering the entire congregation, sinners, and that he is the only pious one among them. With his approach, nobody would have any qualms with him.

Another aspect of Christian activities where requests are prevalent is in the area where members are asked to donate and make offerings. Requests in

this area are done mostly by people who have coaxing and persuasive skills to get people to give out freely. More often than not, the requests are also in the form of questions. Below is an example of this type where a man gives a reason for the offertory before making his request in a question form.

76. **Man:** Atsí yáyí té atsì dò suku útsá tá
 1PL want CONJ 1PL build school house CONJ
 atsú ebiwɔ a. Atsí tanyì e dò o?
 1PL children DEF 1PL can 3SG build Q
 ‘We want to put up a classroom block for our children. Can we build it?’

Congregation: Ee, atsí bí dó e
 Yes 1PL FUT build 3SG
 ‘Yes, we shall build it.’ (Logba Tota 4/1/15)

From example (76) above, the requester tells all and sundry (including himself) that there is the need for a new and a befitting classroom block for their wards. He goes on to make a request by questioning the ability of the people (including himself) as to whether they can put up the building. *Atsí bí dó e?* ‘can we build it?’ is simply requesting of everybody hence, the use of the inclusive term *atsi* ‘we’ to give out in their numbers to achieve that goal. The fact that members of the congregation answer in the affirmative indicates that his request goal has been achieved. This also means that, the requestees themselves have resolved to build a new classroom block for their wards rather than being brought under duress to do so.

4.3.2 Requests in Pouring Libation

Some of the reasons behind pouring of libation among the Logbas are for supplication, thanking, averting an ominous danger, requests, etc. Pouring libation involves several sequences of acts such as commissives and expressives, therefore, emphasis will be on that part of the libation where requests are made to the gods.

Mostly, pouring libation is undertaken by the traditionalist. During the beginning of the planting season, libation is poured to the gods to request good health and rainfall to interchange with sunshine to lead to bumper harvests. During the harvesting season, especially yam harvest, the people of Logba Tota crown their harvests with the *idzɔ kpɛ ádzí* ‘yam festival’.

77. Etsiwɔ a atsí mí dzí n igbálí tsú. Atsí
 father.PLU DEF 1PL NEG call 2PL wrong top 1PL
 bú i yó nu intsé nyangbo kpɛ eví té
 request CM skin in strength rain CONJ sunshine CONJ
 aɖoli andà ivá dǔ ibè ime nù.
 change eachother thing plant time DEM in
 ‘The forefathers, we have not called you for the wrong reasons. We ask for strength, rainfall and sunshine to interchange each other during this planting season.’ (Logba Tota 21/2/15)

In example (77), the core requests are that, the forefathers should give them strength, rainfall and sunshine. These are meant to help them (the requestees) achieve a certain goal (end), in this case, bumper harvest.

4.4 Request Expressions Used in Certain Traditional Rites/Ceremonies of Passage

Requests also feature prominently in certain rites. The language of request differs from one traditional ceremony to the other. This part of the thesis is concerned with some rites of passage and the request language used in each of them. The ceremonies discussed in this thesis are; marriage ceremonies, puberty rites, naming ceremonies and requests in funeral rites.

The SPEAKING acronym (Hymes 1986) will be used to analyse the excerpts of these ceremonies and locate them (the excerpts) within the Logba language and culture.

4.4.1 Requests during Marriage Ceremonies

Among the Logbas, marriages are contracted not only between the couples involved but the families of the bride and the groom. For this reason, during the marriage ceremony, only friendly language and one devoid of impoliteness is used. The rationale is that, should anything be said that poses face threats to a family, it also affects the other family in the long run. Only people who are communicatively competent in the culture are allowed to be the main speakers for both sides to prevent any communicative blunders as per the Logba culture.

In the example below, the spokesperson for the bride chooses his words painstakingly to request for the rest of the items yet, avoiding face threats to promote solidarity between the two families. I recorded the excerpt below at a marriage ceremony held at Logba Alakpeti on 28th March, 2015. The participants were the families of the bride and the groom.

78. I blò té atsú egúwò a má tanyin ivà
 3SG make COMP 1PL husband.PL DEF 3PL can.NEG thing
 a pétéé là gu ukló ε nù. Iye okplè
 DEF all remove from vehicle DEF in 3SG CONJ
 atsí bí tá ogbá té a tó i - nà
 1PL FUT give way/road CONJ 3PL send CM person
 okpè té ò dḡ ukló ε nù dzè.
 one CONJ 3SG again vehicle DEF in check

‘It seems that our husbands could not bring everything down from the vehicle. For this reason, we want to ask (request) them to send someone to check again.’ (Logba Alakpeti 28/3/15)

Example (78) above was said at the point of the marriage ceremony when the groom and his family were to present all that they were supposed to give to the bride’s family as part of the marriage rite. It must be reiterated that, utterances during marriage ceremonies are full of several speech acts including commissives such as promises and declaratives. The researcher’s preoccupation was to decipher the aspect of the speeches having to do with requests. The request in (78) is found in the words ...*té a tó inà okpè té ò dḡ ukló ε nù dzè* ‘...that they send someone to check in the vehicle again.’

The instrument³ the spokesperson used to request the groom’s family to provide all the items on the marriage list⁴ was tactical. By saying, *iblò té* ‘it appears’ is suggestive of the fact that, he could be corrected if he was making a mistake. This is a friendly and face saving approach to requesting them to provide the items in full. On the other hand, if he had said *ivá a mi fón* ‘the

³ Instrument, as defined in the SPEAKING model.

⁴ Marriage list comprises all the material things the husband to be is supposed to buy for the bride and her family as part of the marriage ceremony.

items were not up to the number, that would have been a direct attack with its accompanying face threats.

Apart from this, the speaker also uses solidarity term *atsú egúwɔ a* 'our husbands' even before the marriage is formally contracted. It is to reiterate the fact that the marriage is almost contracted (due to some rites performed prior to the grand marriage ceremony) and that they have become one people, except that the right thing must be done. He did not also emphatically say the other family should provide the remaining item, he only asked that someone should be sent to check in the vehicle. During the period of rechecking, a representative can then approach and explain the anomaly to the bride's family behind closed doors.

4.4.2 Requests during Naming Ceremonies

Seven days after delivery, the nursing mother, the child, husband and other family members of both sides (participants) converge in the house of the head of the man's family (the setting) to formally recognise and welcome the arrival of yet another member of the family. This ceremony is important, in that, until this rite is performed, the child is still seen as a stranger or visitor who could leave them at any time.

Though the child at this period is completely oblivious of the goings on around him/her, this ceremony is significant because it is the first point of socialization and teaching him/her some morals. For instance, the child is told to be truthful at all times irrespective of the consequences. Usually a drop of alcoholic beverage and water are used. The child is expected to decipher between the taste of the two drinks which also means he/she must be able to

draw the line between right and wrong at all times. The above are the major goals (ends) of naming ceremonies among the Logbas.

Mostly, requests in this domain are made to both babies and the ancestors. I recorded the excerpt in example (79) below during a naming ceremony held at Logba Tota on 5th March, 2015.

79. Atsí bú gu awú vá dzí idzè tsú tɛ a
 IPL request of 2PL side from today top COMP 2SG
 dò ikpá ogbámá ibè sha ibè nù.
 follow truth behind time every time in
 ‘We request you that, you remain truthful at all times.’
 (Logba Tota 5/3/15)

Though the child cannot make anything out of what is said, the belief among the Logbas is that, the child imbibes everything. The key and the acts of these speeches are always requestive as found in the opening statement *atsi bú gú awú vá* ‘we request you’. The request is made as if it is to someone who has the ability of responding to it. Below is also an example requesting the protection of the ancestors and everybody present to make it a point to bring up the child in the right way according to the norms of the Logbas.

80. Anyɛ atsi bú gú etsíwɔ a pétée kpé
 same 1PL ask from forefather.PL DEF all CONJ
 i - nàshínà ò tsí umè ɛ tɛ, atsí
 CM everybody 3SG sit DEM DEF COMP 1PL
 pétée atsí dò tɛ ebitsi ɛ ó dzú
 all 1PL help CONJ child DEF 1SG become
 i - nà dúkpá ozúmé.
 CM person good tomorrow
 ‘The same way we request the ancestors and everybody here present to help in bringing up the child to become useful to us in the future.’
 (Logba Tota 5/3/15)

In this example, the speaker is making a request to the ancestors and formally bringing all and sundry on board, to make the child grow into somebody who will be an asset rather than a liability to the entire community.

4.4.3 Requests in Puberty Rites

Puberty rites form an important part of the lives of females in Logba. It is performed to formally introduce the ladies who are mature for marriage to prospective suitors. Though some of the core values of it are lost, it is still performed as a key component of the Logba culture. In the past, this rite was meant for only virgins (K. Akumah, personal communication, March 5th, 2015). In recent times however, people who are even already married take part.

This rite is revered so much among the Logbas that, should a female not go through it before she passes on, it is still performed for her before she is buried. The belief is that in the next world, she will only be married if she passed through the puberty rite in the world before. In the past females were supposed to dress half naked, however, the initiates must cover themselves very well these days. Mostly, the participants are all females of a particular family, be it biological sisters or females belonging to the same extended family, go through it at the same time. One significant moral lesson about this rite is that it teaches the females the virtues of a good wife.

Older and respected women are those employed to take them through these lessons. Whether one is already married with children or not, the message is the same for all of them. It is the puberty rite that makes one a member of the community of women. Request for good behaviour from the initiates towards everybody especially their husbands is said mostly when beads are being tied

around their wrists, necks and knees. Example (81) below shows the typical request made to them.

81. Dží idze tsú zó, a dzú i - nà udzé.
 stand today top go 2SG become CM person female
 dzagbagba té a dzè awú gù kpé
 endeavour CONJ 2SG look 2SG.POS husband CONJ
 awú ebitwo a vá enzhi. Tò tá té
 2PL.POS children DEF side well NEG allow COMP
 ogò ó nya a. Đú ogà dúpá.
 hunger 3SG get close 3PL be wife good

‘Henceforth, you have become a woman. Endeavour to look after your husband and children very well. Don’t allow them to be famished. Be a good wife.’ (Logba Tota 29/12/14)

These kinds of requests do not have conspicuous address terms, respect terms, etc. As stated earlier on, the aged are also not obliged to use respect terms to those they are older than. The last request statement in example (81) *dú ogà dúpá* ‘be a good wife’ also comes last as the summary of all the virtues of a good wife. That is to say that, if you are a good wife, you will keep the home neat, cook for your husband and children, not commit adultery, and stay clear of anything abhorred by a virtuous wife.

4.4.4 Requests in Funeral Rites

Another area where requests are used is in the organisation of funerals. Like many Ghanaian communities, funerals are considered crucial among the Logbas. For this reason, different anniversaries/ceremonies such as the first anniversary, tenth anniversary, etc. are marked for the dead. The essence of these is to show how much of a loss the departure has caused the family. More

importantly, it is to tell people that the dead was a very good person to the family in particular and to others as well.

It is also believed that, when the necessary rites are not appropriately observed, the dead out of anger could wipe out the entire family. Due to the communal feelings among the Logbas, every family becomes involved in the funeral of a dead person in the community. The excerpt in (82) below comes from an informant reminding another person (the hearer) of the first anniversary of a departed person of the community.

82. **Informer:** Até n tá wú i kpè go té
 3PL 1SG give 2SG SM know NOM COMP
 ozúme a bá dá atsú tsí ε
 tomorrow 3PL FUT raise 1PL father DEF
 Kwami ékpé ε
 Kwami year DEF
 ‘I am to inform you that, tomorrow marks the first
 anniversary of our father, Kwami.’

Hearer: Yòo ma nú. Wa a té má nyá umó.
 okay 1SG hear tell 3PL COMP 1SG be DEM
 ‘I hear, tell them that I will be there.’
 (Logba Alakpeti 11/1/15)

The impersonal nature of this request is very common especially when it has to do with funerals. The informants most often than not are younger than the informed but the use of overt politeness markers by these younger informants are absent. It is also believed that the one who sent the informant is either older or higher ranked, say, a chief, an elderly person in the family, etc. so the language used to make the report must not deviate from the language used by these people.

Although example (82) is not formally making a direct request to the hearer, the understanding is that the family of Kwami is requesting him to be part of the first anniversary celebration. The statement, *a té n tá wú ikpe go té* ‘they say I should inform you that’, can be seen as informational but it is a request utterance. The hearer, having the pragmalinguistic knowledge of the people and for that matter the utterance, treats the information as a request to him to be present at the venue of the ceremony. He answers thus, *yoo ma nú, wa té má nyá umɔ* ‘I hear, tell them that I will be there’.

It is also possible that, the hearer would have been aware of the impending anniversary but, as per the culture of the Logbas, formally informing the person is tantamount to the fact that, his presence will be highly appreciated.

4.5 Requests during Arbitration

Settlement of dispute in the chief’s palace is very common among the Logbas. The chief’s palace is seen as the final authority in the community. Most often, cases reported range from petty thefts to quarrels. The relatively low gravity of these cases make them not to be taken beyond the adjudication role of the chief and his elders (traditional court). Another reason why people resort to or prefer to settle their differences in the palace is the virtue of oneness Logbas extol. If issues such as those mentioned above are taken to the law court, the complainant is seen as either downplaying the adjudication role of the traditional rulers or unnecessarily bent on disgracing the accused and the entire family. For all these to be prevented, the traditional court system is regarded as very potent in dealing with these issues. Though arbitration (judgement) has

several speech acts in it, this study was concerned about that point/part where requests are made of the parties involved in the case.

In the excerpt below, a man lodged a complaint to a sub chief of Logba Tota after arresting a thief red-handed in his farm. After everything, the accused accepted responsibility and pleaded guilty. The chief then pronounced his judgement to the culprit as captured in example (83).

83. Abó dzú nda idá a ta ε, iyé ama
 2SG back drink money DEF CONJ 3SG 3SG after
 a bó tá efeshi okpè, abé nda odzafi okpè kpe
 2SG FUT give ram one palm drink keg one CONJ
 Schnapp tumpà inyò. Ye anye ilo ílí dzú ε atsí
 schnapp bottle two CONJ such case again happen 3SG 1PL
 bí mi ina zó ité ovú ε nù. Imè
 FUT take person go front market DEF in DEM
 té ígà atsú pétée ivà.
 CONJ read 1PL.OBJ all thing

‘You will give back the money he used to buy the drinks to him, after which, you will give one ram, a keg of palm wine and two bottles of schnapps. If any of such cases happen again, we shall take it to the law court. This should be an eye opener to all of us.’ (Logba Tota 4/2/15)

There are a number of requests in the above utterance. The first one has to do with asking/requesting the culprit to refund the money the complainant used to buy the drinks to report the incident. This is captured in the statement, *abó dzú nda a idá a te* ‘you will give back the money he used to buy the drinks to him’. The complainant had to buy a bottle of drink to make the complaint as one cannot go to the chief’s palace with such issues with empty hands. This money goes back to the complainant. It must also be emphasized that, the number of

bottles the culprit buys are always more than that the complainant sends to the chief as part of lodging the complaint.

The other request made by the chief was for the man to give out certain things such as a ram, a keg of palm wine and two bottles of schnapps. These items go to the chief and his elders for sitting through to bring the matter to a successful end. This is seen as thanksgiving offering.

Finally, the chief sounded a word of caution to the entire gathering irrespective of their age, gender or status in the society. The chief requests everybody to learn a lesson from the case. As a warning, he reiterates the point that should any such case happen again, they would take it to a superior court so that the person faces all the consequences that go with that. From the example (83), one can conclude that, during arbitration among the Logbas, there are three basic lessons one learns. Refunding the cost incurred by the complainant, paying for the cost of the judgement and a request to the entire gathering (community) not to indulge themselves in such acts again.

4.6 Chapter Summary

The main points in this chapter have been the domains and the request language used in each of them. The first domain looked at commercial activities. Under this broad heading, requests in market centres and how passengers and drivers (including conductors) make requests on vehicles was investigated. Moreover, religious requests also fell under this chapter where requests during sermons and the use of requests in pouring libation as sub headings were also explored.

This chapter also examined request expressions used in certain ceremonies or rites. Particular mention was made of requests during marriage

ceremonies, requests during naming ceremonies, requests in puberty rites and requests in funeral rites. Request during arbitration was the final issue this chapter addressed. It was revealed that, each of the socio-cultural activities discussed in this chapter had a particular way requesters went about their requests in order to achieve their request goals.

CHAPTER FIVE

CONCLUSION

5.1 Introduction

The aim of this thesis was to examine the socio-pragmatics of requests among the Logbas. It looked at the various strategies and the ethnographic situations of the use of requests among the Logbas. The main theoretical framework employed was Watts' (2003) Politeness Model however, data were also analysed based on the acronyms GRAPD (Agyekum 2005) and the SPEAKING acronym (Hymes 1986). In the following sections, a summary of the various chapters will be given. The chapter will conclude by outlining the findings and making recommendations for future research.

5.2 Summary of Chapters

Chapter one of the thesis has been devoted to the introduction of the thesis, laying special emphasis on the language and its speakers, the origin of the Logbas, statement of the problem, research questions, research objectives, significance of the study and the definition of key terms. This chapter concludes with how the thesis is organized.

Chapter two reviews relevant and related literature and explained the tenets of the frameworks used for analysing the data. The main theoretical framework adopted for this thesis is the Politeness Framework by Watts (2003). The works reviewed were categorized and they included the following:

Language specific studies that have examined the speech act of request patterns preferred by native speakers of Ghanaian, African and worldwide languages (Agyekum 2005, Akan; Obeng 1999, Akan; Odonkor 2001, Krobo;

Mashiri 2001, Shona; Sulasi 2009, American English; Kalickaya 2010, Turkish).

Other studies discussed are those that have undertaken comparative or contrastive studies that have examined the cross-cultural similarities and differences between two or more languages in the performance of the speech act of request. These include: (Dzameshie 2001, British English, 'Ghanaian English' and Ewe; Jallifar 2009, Iranian learners of English and Australian native speakers; Blum-Kulka and Olshtain 1984, Australian English, American English, British English, Canadian English, Danish, German, Hebrew and Russian; Blum-Kulka, Danet and Gherson 1985, Hebrew and English).

Apart from these, some researchers like (Keleve 1995, Anderson 2004, Sarfo 2011, Suh 1999) have also investigated second language learners' choice of strategies for realising the appropriateness of the learners' utterances for the communication situation.

Another area of literature reviewed was on studies that have been conducted on speech act of requests among native speakers as well as learners of various languages. Some researchers considered in this area were (Al-Marani 2010, Hassall 2003, Umar 2004, Lee 2004, Cook 1985).

Longitudinal studies into the development of the speech act of requests such as (Rose 2000, Félix-Brasdefer 2007, Flores-Solgado 2011, Schauer 2004, 2009, 2010) were reviewed to give the researcher first-hand knowledge of what has already been done in the area of speech act of requests. The sources and the data collection instruments were also mentioned in this chapter.

Chapter three was concerned with the discussion of some request expressions and strategies among the Logbas. The main areas this chapter dealt

with were the sociolinguistic variables of GRAPD; gender, rank, age, power and distance (Agyekum 2005). These, being determinants of requests were analysed with appropriate examples from Logba.

Apart from these, orientation in requests was also looked at in this chapter. Particular mention was made of addressee oriented, speaker oriented, speaker and addressee oriented and request for permission for third party assistance. In addition, some of the data from Logba were examined based on the sequence of requests by Blum-Kulka and Olshtain (1984). They included address terms, the head acts and adjuncts to the head act. The final preoccupation of chapter three was request strategies where data analysis was grouped under the sub headings; direct requests, conventional indirect requests and non-conventional indirect request strategies.

Chapter four looked at some socio-cultural activities where requests are used among the Logbas. The first issue was about requests in commercial transactions. This was subdivided into the following: requests in market centres, requests between passengers and drivers and requests between farmers and labourers/farmhands.

This chapter also touched on religious requests. Under this, requests in sermons and requests in pouring libation were investigated. Excerpts on request expressions used in some traditional rites/ceremonies of passage such as requests during marriage ceremonies, requests in naming ceremonies, requests in puberty rites and requests in funeral rites were analysed based on Hymes' (1986) acronym of SPEAKING. Requests during arbitration concluded the chapter.

5.3 Findings

The major findings of this study are based on the analysis of data in chapter three and chapter four. The findings are also based on the three research questions that guided this research. In the first place, it was established that, gender, rank, age, power and distance feature strongly in requests among the Logbas. For instance, children and young adults could be directly requested to do things without face threats.

Also, differences exist between requests by women, that is, whether they (women) are among males or females. It was also established that, powerful and higher ranked people could make direct requests to their subjects without recourse to the possible face threats inherent in their requests.

Moreover, the use of mitigators or downtoners as strategies to lessen the illocutionary force in requests to avoid face threats was also seen to play a significant role in daily requests among the people of Logba.

Finally, it also came to the fore that, each of the socio-cultural activities examined has a language of request that is different from the other.

5.4 Recommendations for Future Research

Even though this research was conducted in Logba, it does not encompass the entire Logba towns. It dwelt on only two of the towns viz. Logba Tota and Logba Alakpeti to the exclusion of the other towns. Future researchers should consider the entire Logba area in order to arrive at an exhaustive conclusion. Since this research is a qualitative one, other researchers should employ the quantitative approach to compare in graphical terms the most and the least users (men, women and children) of the aforementioned request strategies.

A comparative study involving Logba and any G.T.M languages can also be carried. This is to ascertain whether or not the request strategies, mitigators and the use of requests in socio-cultural situations found among the Logbas are the same in other G.T.M languages.

APPENDIX I**DISCOURSE COMPLETION TESTS (QUESTIONNAIRES)**

Instructions: Twelve scenarios (situations) are described below in which you are expected to make a request on different occasions. Please read them carefully and write out what you are to say in real life scenarios (situations).

Situation 1

You are at a store and want to buy something on credit from an elderly store keeper. What will you say?

.....
.....

Situation 2

You want to ask someone of your age to buy something from the market for you. What will you say?

.....
.....

Situation 3

You wish to ask an older person to allow you to use his/her phone to call someone. What will you say?

.....
.....

Situation 4

You want to ask for money from your husband/wife to buy something. What will you say?

.....

.....

Situation 5

You want to ask your child to do something for you. What will you say?

.....

.....

Situation 6

You want to ask your friend of the same age to allow you send his child on an errand. What will you say?

.....

.....

Situation 7

You have a meal in a restaurant; and you want the waiter/waitress to bring you the bill. What will you say?

.....

.....

Situation 8

You want to ask a friend of the same age to accompany you to a place. What will you say?

.....
.....

Situation 9

Your electricity has been disconnected and you want to watch a football match in some one's house. What will you say?

.....
.....

Situation 10

You want to ask a seller to tell you the prices of her wares (items). What will you say if the seller is:

(i) Younger.....

.....

(ii) Older.....

.....

Situation 11

If you were a driver's mate (conductor), what would you say to passengers on the vehicle in order to make way for more passengers to come on knowing that the vehicle is already full to capacity?

.....
.....

Situation 12

You are very hungry and you want your wife to cook something for you. What will you say?

.....
.....

Name (**Optional**).....Age: 16-25, 26-35, 36-45, 46-55, 56+

SEX	M	F

Thank you very much for your time and help.

APPENDIX II

TRANSCRIPTION OF SELECTED RECORDINGS

When one engages in a continuous stretch of discourse he/she makes use of different speech acts such as declaratives, assertives, expressives, commissives and directives. This thesis is concerned with only one type of these speech acts namely; directives (requests). The researcher's preoccupation was to transcribe only the request expressions in the utterances.

1. A young man (aged 25) asks his senior brother (aged 27) to allow him wear his pair of shoes to church. This was recorded at Logba Alakpeti on 26th October, 2014.

Má tanyì awú afòkpá a fé zó solime ozumè e?

‘Can I wear your shoe to church tomorrow?’

2. A father (aged 39) requests his son (aged 14) to fetch water for him to drink. This was recorded at Logba Tota on 26th October, 2014.

Kofì, sà ndú mlà mú té nó. ‘Kofi, fetch water for me to drink.’

3. The youth leader (aged 31) urges his colleagues at a meeting, to take their wards' education seriously. Recorded at Logba Tota on 26th March, 2015.

I hía té amú kpé awú atsí dzí ná atsú ebitò a suku kpí go yó.

‘It is important that you and I (we) make our children's education a priority’.

4. A woman, 34 years, requests for an axe from another woman (aged 34) to be used to split firewood. This was recorded at Logba Tota on 28th October, 2014.

Afadze ε má mí awú avì ε fashí adzayí. Má mí a mlà kpanta.

‘Madam, may I use your axe to split firewood. I will bring it back right now.’

5. A father (aged 43) who is more powerful as per Logba culture, requests her daughter (aged 17) to switch off the light. This was recorded at Logba Tota on 28th October, 2014.

Đúmà kanyi ε kábá, a mó kpè té billi ε bó zó agú u?

‘Switch off the light immediately, don’t you know that the bill will go up?’

6. A male teacher, A (aged 33) makes a direct request for money from another male teacher, B (aged 41) even though there is distance between them by virtue of their age difference. This was recorded at Logba Tota on 30th October, 2014.

Teacher A (younger): *Yé a kpí banki ε dzu ε ta yayí onkpè mlà mú.*

Amú yó mì zhì kruaa.

‘Give me something (money) if you go to the bank.

I don’t have any money on me.’

Teacher B (older): *Yòo má nú. Oviabé a yáyí?*

‘I hear. How much do you need?’

7. A man (aged 33) corrects a girl (aged 18) to request in the acceptable way at Logba Tota on 3rd January, 2015.

Fo Akami, má dèkúkú ta mú awú fon ε té n dzì amú tsí tsibi.

‘Brother Akami, please give me your phone to call my father.’

8. A chief (aged 72) who is higher ranked (for being a traditional ruler) requests the palace attendant, less ranked (aged 47), to bring liquor from under the bed. This was recorded on 3rd March, 2015 at Logba Tota.

Chief (higher ranked): *Kpo zhí undà a mlà mú mpa étsí kpanta.*

‘Bring me the drink from under the bed right now?’

Palace Attendant (lower ranked): *Ma dèkúkú má nú.* ‘Please, I hear.’

9. Boys (aged between 15 and 20) request their king (aged 68) to buy ball for them at Logba Alakpeti on 15th February, 2015.

Atsú onunkpá, má ðekúkú nè bɔɔl tá tsú ozúme.

‘Our king, please, buy a ball for us tomorrow.’

10. Two male masons (aged 37 and 39) request a woman to give them her bucket to fetch water from the stream. This was recorded at Logba Alakpeti on 3rd January, 2015.

Atsí bí tànyì awú bokitsi ε mí sá unqú odzú ε nù u?

‘Can we use your bucket to fetch water from the stream?’

11. A girl (aged 18) makes a direct request to a man (aged 33). The age difference between them renders her request inappropriate. This was recorded at Logba Tota on 3rd January, 2015.

Girl (21 years): *Ta mú awú fon ε tɛ’ n dzì amú tsi.*

‘Give me your phone to call my father.’

Man (33 years): *A mó bù ivà kruaa.* ‘You don’t respect at all’

12. A man (aged 40) requests the father (aged 44) of a boy (aged 17) to allow him to send his son to buy medicine for him (the requester). This was recorded on 23rd December, 2014 at Logba Tota.

Ma tá wú uzugbó, ma yáyí tɛ n tó awú bí ε tɛ ó nɛ’ avà mlà mú.

‘Please, I want to send your child to buy medicine for me.’

13. An older clansman (aged 53) calls a younger clansman (aged 25) to send on an errand at Logba Tota on 20th November, 2014.

Ahá nyì bà tɛ n tó wú útròmè. ‘Clansman, come let me send you.’

14. A woman (aged 47) requests for an opportunity to make a submission at the community centre at Logba Tota on 17th January, 2015.

M̀ kpé tɛ inàdzé abé mó be gake má ðekúkú ma yáyí tɛ ani tá mú fɛ ibè tsìbì tɛ mí dá iló ikpè.

‘I know that women’s contributions are not considered seriously but, I also want to be given a little time to make a submission’.

15. A young man (aged 22) asks a woman (aged 38) for stew. This was recorded at Logba Alakpeti on 2nd January, 2015.
 Young man: *Má dèkúkú awú tonká a à blò unámè é ó sé loo?*
 ‘Please, did you use all the stew you prepared yesterday?’
 Woman: *Ee ò bò mó sé nú.* ‘Yes I still have some.’
 Young man: *Mà yáyí tsibì té mí kpé imbí.* ‘I need a little for my rice.’
16. A woman (aged 42) requests another woman (aged 39) to buy fish for her from the market. This was recorded at Logba Alakpeti on 2nd January, 2015.
Afadze é ma tá wú uzugbó a tányi akpá né mlà mú gù ovù é nù u?
 ‘Madam, please, can you buy fish for me from the market?’
17. A young man (aged 21) wants to watch a football match between Ghana and South Africa in a man’s house due to power cut in their home. This was recorded at Logba Tota on 27th January, 2015.
Má tá wú uzúgbo a ba tsó atsú kanyí é unáme iyé okplè má yáyí té m ba dzé Ghana kpé South Africa bɔɔl é awú vá.
 ‘Please, our electric power was disconnected yesterday so, I want to watch the match between Ghana and South Africa at your place.’
18. A husband (aged 41) requests his wife (aged 36), to be fast to grind pepper to be used to eat. This was recorded at Logba Alakpeti on 20th March, 2015.
Adzo gò tonká a kabakaba té atsí kpé ivà a.
 ‘Adzo be very fast and grind the pepper for us to eat.’
19. A boy (aged 13) requests his father (age 42) to teach him. This was recorded at Logba Tota on 20th March, 2015.
M̀ kpè té à tányi mú akontá m̀ gblà ibotè ina sha ina ò kpè té aha tséngo é petée à kpè ivà.
 ‘I know you can solve this mathematics problem because everybody knows that the elderly are knowledgeable.’

20. An employee (aged 30) requests his employer (aged 55) to give him salary advance. This was recorded at Logba Alakpeti on 22nd March 2015.

*Má gá wú ágbá tsìbì, má tá wú uzúgbó a tányì mú onkpè tá yé
abòbí ε ó kú ε τε à là iyè amú úgúgà nù u?*

‘I will disturb you; please can you give me an amount of money so that you deduct it from my salary?’

21. A woman (aged 61) requests a boy (aged 18) to come to her house to pound fufu for her in the evening. This was recorded at LogbaTota on 22nd March, 2015.

*Yé í fíá wú fê m̀ tsé mú . M̀ kpè té ivà a awu kò á tanyi ε blò tá
mú. Má yáyí té à bó yúε fufui tá mú úqóbè.*

‘Pardon me even if I bother you. I know you are the only one who can do it for me, I want you to come over to my house to pound fufu for me in the evening.’

22. A boy (aged 17) requests his uncle (aged 43) to give him his black polish to polish his pair of shoes. This was recorded at Logba Alakpeti on 3rd November, 2014.

Atsisa Koku, tà mú awú polish ε té mí blò amú nfokpá a yó. N drè.

‘Uncle Koku, give me your polish to use for my shoes. They are dirty.’

23. A man (aged 51) calls a girl (aged 19) to be sent to buy fish for him at Logba Alakpeti on 3rd November, 2014.

*Amú bí ε bà, mà nú té a mó trò utròmè kruaa. Bó né idà a ta né akpá
mlà mú.*

‘My child, I heard you do not refuse errands at all. Come for the money and buy fish for me.’

24. A father (aged 37) asks his daughter to fetch water for him to drink. This was recorded at Logba Tota on 28th December, 2014.

Aku, sà unqú tà mú té nɔ. ‘Aku, fetch water for me to drink.’

25. A man (aged 41) was appealing for funds in church to build a classroom block for their children at Logba Tota on 4th January, 2015.
Atsí yáyí té atsi dò suku útsá tá atsí ebiwɔ a. Atsí tanyì e dò o?
 ‘We want to put up a classroom block for our children. Can we build it?
Ee, atsíbí dó e. ‘Yes, we shall build it.’
26. A sub-chief (aged 62) pours libation requesting the ancestors to give them rainfall and sunshine for their crops to grow well. This was recorded at Logba Tota on 21st February, 2015.
Etsiwɔ a atsí mí dzí n igbálí tsú. Atsí bú I yó nu intsé nyangbo kpɛ eví té aqoli anqà ivá qú ibè imɛ nù.
 ‘The forefathers, we have not called for the wrong reasons. We ask for strength, rainfall and sunshine to interchange each other during this planting season.’
27. The spokesman during a marriage ceremony strategically requests the groom and the entire family to provide the items on the marriage list in full. This was recorded at Logba Alakpeti on 28th March, 2015.
I blo té atsí egúwò a má tanyin ivà a pétéè là gu ukló ε nù. Iyε okplè atsí bí tá ogbá té a tó inà okpè té ò qò ukló ε nù dzè.
 ‘It seems that our husbands could not bring everything down from the vehicle. For this reason, we want to ask (request) them to send someone to check again.’
28. Naming ceremonies are important in the Logba culture. They formally welcome the child into the members of the community. An old man (aged 72) speaks on behalf of other people gathered during a naming ceremony requesting the child to remain truthful at all times. This was recorded at Logba Tota on 5th March, 2015.
Atsí bú gú awú vá dzí idzè tsú te ta dò ikpá ogbámá ibè sha ibè nù.
 ‘We request you that, you remain truthful at all times.’
Anye atsí bú gú etsiwɔ a pétéè kpé inashina ò tsí umè ε te, atsí pétéè atsí dò te ebisi ε ó dzú inà qúkpá ozúmé.

‘The same way we request the ancestors and everyone here present to help in bringing up the child to become useful to us in the future.’

29. Puberty rites are observed to usher girls into womanhood. An old woman (aged 78) requests initiates during a puberty ceremony to be good wives and virtuous women. This was recorded at Logba Tota on 29th December, 2014.

Dzì idze tsú zó, a dzú inà udzé. Dzagbagba té a dzè awú gù kpé awú ebiwo a vá enzhí. Tò tá té ogò ó nya a. Đú ogà dúkpá.

‘Henceforth, you have become a woman. Endeavour to look after your husband and children very well. Don’t allow them to be famished. Be a good wife.’

30. A male informant (aged 38) delivers a message to an old man (aged 72) about first anniversary celebration at Logba Alakpeti on 11th January, 2015.

Até n tá wú íkpe gò té ozúme a bá dá atsú tsí ε Kwami ékpé ε.

‘I am to inform you that, tomorrow marks the first anniversary of our father, Kwami.’

Yòo ma nú. Wa a té má nyá umó. ‘I hear, tell them that I will be there.’

31. A chief (aged 73) who is higher ranked makes a rulling to the effect that, the accused must defray the cost the complainant may have incurred in reporting the case. This was recorded at Logba Tota on 4th February, 2015.

Abó dzú nda idá a ta ε, iyé ama a bó tá efeshi okpè, abé undaodzafi okpè kpe Schnapp tumpà inyò. Ye anye ilò ílí dzú ε atsí bí mi ina zó ité ovú ε nù. Imè té ígà atsú pétée ivà.

‘You will give back the money he used to buy the drinks to him, after which, you will give one ram, a keg of palm wine and two bottles of schnapps. If any of such cases happen again, we shall take it to the law court. This should be an eye opener to all of us.’

32. A female seller tactically requests a buyer to come and buy from her, other than from other sellers. This was recorded at the Logba Alakpeti market on 6th February, 2015.

Kpane à mó ló bà amú va kruaa. Idzèbó ná ùmè té n dò wú.

‘Now you don’t come close to me at all. Today come over, I will give you more.’

33. Buying on credit is common among the Logbas because of the communal nature of the towns. A man (aged 47) who wanted to buy fish on credit from a woman (aged 40) tells her when payment will be made. This was recorded at Logba Tota on 18th October, 2014.

Idzè amú yó mì zhì kruaa. Ta mú akpá ye ma zò peya ovù adzí má mí iqá a mlà wú.

‘I don’t have money today. Give me fish and I will pay you after selling pear on the market day.’

34. A man (aged 52) who wanted to buy bread on credit from a woman (aged 54) decides to assure the seller of prompt payment. This was recorded at Logba Tota on 14th December, 2014.

Oṅkpe mò má amú yó o ? Tà mu abólo akpè, à bó nú amú anú kábá.

‘Do I still owe you? Give me a loaf of bread, you will hear from me (I will pay) as soon as possible.’

35. This conversation is between a driver (aged 43) and passengers (aged between 26 and 35) concerning his car being full and passengers also devising a strategy to get the driver to take them even though his car is already full to capacity. This was recorded at Logba Alakpeti on 23rd December 2014.

Ukló ε ó yí, ma nú zhí ina sha ina dè. ‘The car is full. I will not take anyone again.’

Atsí bí zu yawo iboté atsú pétée atsì lí ná. ‘Then we shall get down because we are walking together.’

Tì zú nú. Tà nú té ò ve fê te atsí sà. ‘Don’t get down. Let him enter so that we go.’

The same driver in (36) above requests of the passengers on board to push for other passengers to come on.

Má tá nú uzúgbó atsì shá zò tsìbì te atsú áblé agangó ε te a vè fě.

‘Please, let us push a little for the rest of our people to come onto the car.’

36. A woman (aged 44) requests a young man (aged 23) to go and clear her farm. This was recorded at Logba Tota on 17th March, 2015.

Amú osa awú uma ubó ε nù i yí adzi mɔ atsì kpí ló iyε?

‘My man, your mother’s farm is bushy. When shall we go and clear it?’

37. A pastor (aged 53) tells a congregation to accept the Lord. This was recorded at Logba Tota on 4th January, 2015.

Tá nú té atsí dá atsú edzi ε tá Omawu te ó vè fě.

‘Let us open our hearts for the Lord to enter.’

38. A quarrel between two women aged between 37 and 38. This was recorded at Logba Tota on 4th January, 2015.

Awú Kodzo ma fě a ló dzi amù bí ε té oyú u?

‘You, Kodzo’s mother too, is calling my son a thief?’

39. A man (aged 43) asks his colleagues (aged between 28 and 45) to relocate to a different place to erect a tent during preparation towards a funeral. This was recorded at Logba Tota on 16th January, 2015.

Atsú able, má tá nú uzúgbó yé m̀ gagba atsí mi kpí ná akpanta a okuina í s̀ boŋ?

‘Our people, I beg you if it won’t be of a bother to you, could we rather erect the tent at a place that is more levelled?’

40. A man (aged 66) requests members of a group to catch his goat for him at Logba Tota on 16th January, 2015.

Ìnà okpè ó tanyi aboé ε rí mlà a? ‘Can someone bring the goat?’

41. The town crier (aged 42) informs all males and females to meet the youth leader and the queen mother to clear and sweep the bush along the road. This was recorded on 8th January, 2015 at Logba Tota.

*Asafotse té ó ló vé, inà osá okpé sha okpé tó mi ifiamì té atsí kpí là
ogbá a.*

‘The youth leader said he is going, every male is to meet him with cutlasses to clear the bush engulfing the road.’

*Onunkpa dzé é té ó ló vé, inà dzé okpè sha okpè tó mí fionfio té atsí
gbà ogbò á nù.*

‘The queen mother said she is going, every woman is to take a broom and meet her to sweep the rubbish in the town.’

42. A woman (aged 34) devises a strategy to get a male former class mate (aged 34) to help in writing names of donors at a table during a funeral. This was recorded at Logba Tota on 13th March, 2015.

Tsitsie awú asinu é á nyònzhi atsú suku ibè é, à la zhì ányé é?

‘Is your handwriting as good as it was when we were in school?’

Kpane boj á nyadzetsí fie. A yáyí inà okpè té ó ñonyi onkpè tá wú u?

‘It looks even better now. Do you want someone to write something for you?’

Ee má yáyí inà okpè té ó ñonyi aha enyí é tá mú ukplò a yó.

‘Yes, I want someone to write the names of people at the table for me.’

Má ñonyi a tá wú. ‘I will write them (the names) for you.’

À nyintsé fofo. ‘Thank you very much.’

43. A female seller (aged 41) requests a male buyer (aged 33) to come and have a look at her wares which she (the seller) describes as new. This was recorded at the Logba Alakpeti Market on 2nd December, 2014.

Amú asisi é, má mí ivà vuvò mlà a mó bó dzé e?

‘My customer, I have brought new wares. Won’t you come over and have a look at them?’

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