

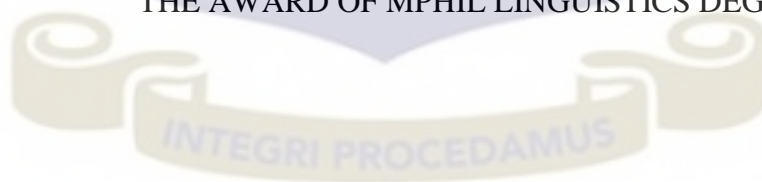
LANGUAGE CHOICE IN THE OKERE SPEECH COMMUNITY

BY

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DECLARATION

I Elizabeth Ama Agyakwa, declare that except for references to works that have been duly cited, this thesis is the result of my original research under the supervision of Dr. Evershed Amuzu and Dr. Grace Diabah and that it has neither in whole nor in part be presented for another degree elsewhere.

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DEDICATION

I dedicate this work to the memory of my late brother Alfred Kwame Agyakwa who passed on in June, 2015. I wish you were alive to witness this day but God knows best. May your soul rest in perfect peace.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

First and foremost, I thank the Lord almighty for helping me to achieve this goal. I feel so much humbled by the way my hardworking supervisors Dr. Evershed Kwasi Amuzu and Dr. Grace Diabah handled me, I thank them for their suggestions, pieces of advice and attitude towards me. Without them this dream would never have come true, I am so much indebted to them.

I am so much grateful to the chiefs and people of the Okere speech community especially the three research communities: Abiriw, Awukugua and Adukurom. I also thank Dr. Paul Agbedor, Dr. Yvonne Agbemetsoado and Dr. Mercy Bobuafor for their support during my difficult times.

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Lastly, my course mates Richard, Emma, Elias, Joseph, Joy, Francis, Tony and Stella need to be commended for their support and encouragement. I say a big thank you to you all.

ABSTRACT

This study investigates language Choice in the ɔkere speech community in the Eastern region of Ghana, ɔkere is a Guan language belonging to the Kwa language family. The study gives a broad perspective of language contact involving two unequal languages and the linguistic outcomes. This is done in reference to language shift and language maintenance. Instruments employed for data collection were questionnaires and unstructured interviews. Data was sourced from homes, churches, schools, hospitals and other public places in the three communities which are Abiriw, Awukugua and Adukurom.

The study brought to light the degree of bilingualism within the ɔkere speech community due to their exposure to languages such as Twi, Dangme, Ga, English, etc... which has resulted in a high incidence of competence in a variety of languages. In view of this, members of the ɔkere speech community have a variety of languages at their disposal to serve their communicative needs. The findings established that notwithstanding the urge for what Dolphyne (1982:52) describes as “group identification” members of the ɔkere speech community have adopted a peculiar pattern of language use to satisfy their communicative and economic needs. This however is a strategy by the ɔkere speech community to maintain their heritage language.

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CHAPTER ONE

GENERAL INTRODUCTION

1.0 Introduction

This thesis examines the language contact situation in three major Okere speaking communities in the Eastern Region. These are Abiriw, Awukugua and Adukurom. Most importantly, the study seeks to establish the various patterns of code choices and language use in all the three communities.

This chapter provides a general introduction to the study. It discusses the linguistic phenomenon of language contact and some of the notable outcomes such as multilingualism which triggers language choice.

1.1 Background to Language Contact

Language contact is a linguistic phenomenon whereby two or more languages interact in the same domain. It is a phenomenon that is widespread due to migration, colonialism, war, and intermarriages, and it will continue to exist because individuals and societies continue to migrate because of one reason or the other.

Not only does migration result in instances of language contact; it can also cause both individual migrants and migrant societies to be marginalized due to their demographic sizes, socio-economic power and political organizations.

In the midst of this human contact, the cultures of the 'host' speech communities and those of the migrants come into contact with their languages as the most crucial elements due to socialization. This may result in a lot of

linguistic influences such as borrowing, simplification, linguistic interference, and others.

These influences may lead to other linguistic phenomena such as bilingualism, multilingualism, code switching and code-mixing. Bilingualism or multilingualism is the ability of an individual or members of a speech community to speak two or more languages. According to Romaine (2000:13) bilingualism or multilingualism is widespread due to language contact that has resulted in the marginalization of languages of minority groups to primary domains. These minority speech communities are then pressurized to learn languages of the dominant ethnic groups as second languages for social integration.

Focusing on the linguistic situation in Africa, Batibo (2005:16) argues that the heterogeneous nature of the continent exposes Africans to so many languages, resulting in multilingualism.

Still on multilingualism, Trudell (2009:56) provides a different twist to the meaning of the concept of multilingualism by stating that “multilingualism in Africa is a gift” this description tells how the location of Africans geographically exposes them to many languages. Linguist such as Batibo (2005) argue that it is very rare to be monolingual in Africa due to the presence of many languages. In addition, Igboanusi (2009: 300) notes that “West Africa” of which Ghana forms part “is linguistically the most heterogeneous sub-region in Africa accounting for more than half of Africa’s 2000 languages.”

Narrowing the concept of multilingualism to Ghana, Dzameshie (1988:16) studies the linguistic situation in Ghana and states that there are between 45 to 60 indigenous languages in the country. According to him, some of these

languages are major languages backed by institutional support and assigned to formal public places while others are minority languages with no institutional support.

On the other hand, Dakubu (1996) cited in Adika (2012:151) states that there are 50 indigenous languages in Ghana. With regard to all the conflicting reports concerning the number of indigenous languages in Ghana, Bibiebome (2011: 25) posits that “one can safely put the number of languages in Ghana at more than 40”, a suggestion that is adopted by this study. This notwithstanding, it should be stated that the three major dialects of Akan (Akwapim Twi, Asante Twi, and Fante) are treated as separate languages in educational institutions.

Just like other multilinguals worldwide, individuals and multilingual societies in Ghana use languages available to them in diverse ways to serve their communicative needs. This procedure that allows multilinguals to choose languages from their linguistic repertoires to suit people they come into contact with, situations or a given context is known in sociolinguistics as language choice.

Language choice is an accepted norm worldwide especially in bilingual or multilingual societies because it gives individuals and societies the opportunity to make use of languages in their linguistic repertoire. Besides, just as monolinguals vary their styles in speech, multilinguals also make language choices as a way of using languages available to them to serve their communicative needs.

In Ghana, language choice is a familiar phenomenon in all speech communities. This is because of urbanization, industrialization, expansion of

education and the need for social integration present scenarios for choices to be made. In relation to these variables, individuals and speech communities make language choices that are unique and peculiar to the language ideologies of their speech communities.

Agyekum (2009:1) stresses that “though speech is free, there is a limit to the extent to which one freely uses language.” This underscores the fact that in a multilingual setting being able to make appropriate language choices is perceived as a sign of communicative competence. In support of this assertion Saville-Troike (1989:50) argues that multilinguals have no choice than to depend on language choice to utilize languages available to serve the communicative needs of the variety of people in their communities. Sridhar (1996: 51) shares the view of Saville-Troike (1989) by emphasizing that language choice is about “who uses what language with whom and for what purpose?” The explanation by Sridhar reiterates the need for members of multilingual communities to be communicatively competent enough to be able to use languages available to them effectively.

Nonetheless, Romaine (2000:51) posits that “[c]hoices made by individuals on everyday basis have an effect on the long-term situation of the languages concerned”. By this it is evident that the outcomes of one’s language choice can contribute to other linguistic phenomena such as language shift, language maintenance or even language death.

As stated earlier language choice in Ghana is a familiar phenomenon in all speech communities due to variables such as urbanization, industrialization and the expansion of education. These create contact situations as that of Okere, a minority speech community in the Eastern Region of Ghana. Members

of the ɔkere speech community thus use the languages available to them by making language choices to suit their communicative needs. This work therefore seeks to examine the linguistic outcomes of the language choice practices which exist in the ɔkere speech community so as to establish the state of ɔkere.

1.2 The Background of ɔkere and its Speakers

ɔkere is part of the great Guan family which belongs to the Kwa language family. Speakers of ɔkere originally settled in the valley of the White and Black Volta in the modern day Northern and Upper regions of Ghana. According to Bramson (1981:1) “[t]he term “Guan” is used to describe a group of closely related languages spoken by people living mostly in Ghana. These form a crescent which extends from Winneba on the coast to Bole in the North.” According to the Ghana Statistical Service (2013:62) “The Guan does not comprise a majority in any region but could be found in five out of the ten regions: Northern (8.6%), Volta (8.1%), Eastern (5.3%), Central (5.3%) and Brong Ahafo (4.1%). Some dialects of Guan are ɔkere or Kyerepong, Late, Gonja, Efutu, Nkonya, Nchumuru etc...”

On her part Animah (2015:2) argues that “ɔkere is a Guan word which means ‘binding’ or ‘fastening’.” She explains that the name ɔkere can be broken into two morphemes *kere* ‘tie’ and a prefix /ɔ/ that normalizes the verb *kere* ‘tie’ to ɔkere. Bramson (1981) alleges that the name ɔkere was changed to Kyerepong by the Akwamu who ruled the Guan communities. Due to this, non-natives call both the people and the language Kyerepong while the natives call their language and themselves ɔkere.

Figure 1 shows subgroups of Guan language in Ghana, they are grouped based on their geographical locations; Northern Guan (Northern and Brong Ahafo), Nkonya (Volta), Hill Guan (Eastern) and Coastal Guan (Central). The Okere speech community which is the focus of this study forms part of the Hill Guan subgroup in the Eastern region of Ghana.

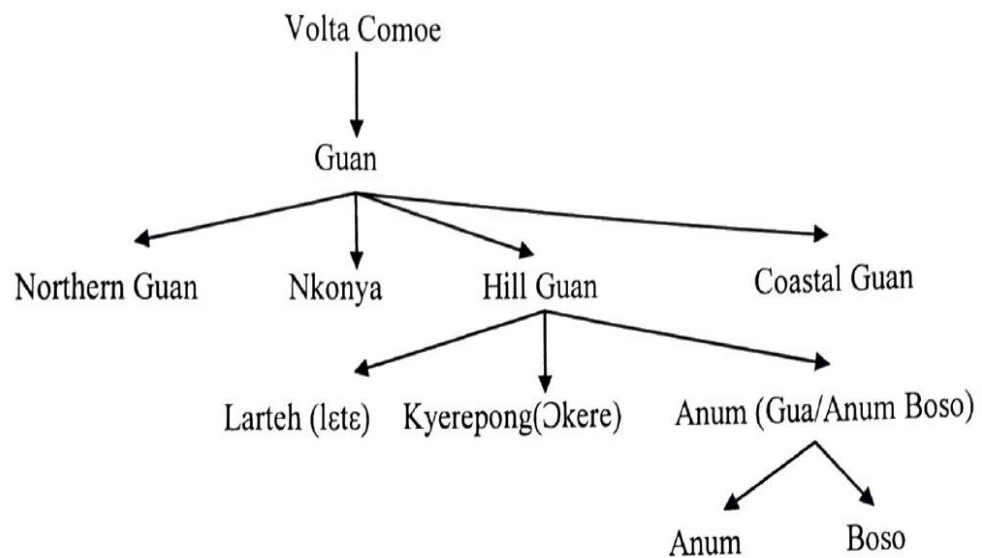


Figure 1: The Guan language subgroups in five regions of Ghana (Adopted from Animah 2015).

The 5.3% Guans in the Eastern region comprises Okere, Anum, Boso and Late. The Okere speech community is made up of seven towns and several villages dotted along the Adukurom, Koforidua road. Together they constitute the Nifa division of the Akuapem traditional council in the Akwapim North district of the Eastern Region.

Much is not known about the people of Okere and their language due to the Basel missionaries who settled at Akropong (a prominent Akan speech

community) and used Akwapim Twi, a dialect of Akan, for their activities (Bramson 1981:2). The ɔkere are mostly farmers scattered in the Eastern, Ashanti and Western regions of Ghana in search of farmlands because Akuapem, their home land, is a mountainous area.

This migration to Akan speech communities, education, inter-marriages and contact with Akropong has influenced members of this speech community to the extent that almost every ɔkere is bilingual, speaking Akan and ɔkere (Bramson 1981:2; Dakubu 1988 cited in Obeng 1997: 67 and Animah 2015:6).

Two of my consultants, Nana Titiriku Bampoe and Nana Aduasa, argue that in the past the ɔkere were ruled by traditional priests called *Adadi* ‘land lords.’ Each *Adadi* presided over a clan, a practice which continued till the ɔkere speech community came into contact with Akans (Akropong) in the 17th century. This contact between the people of ɔkere and the Akans of Akropong had a great impact on the cultures of these two speech communities. Commenting on the contact situation between these two speech communities, Animah (2015:6) maintains that native ɔkere speakers learnt Akuapem Twi for social integration but the native Akan speakers of Akropong did not learn ɔkere. She further asserts that native ɔkere speakers became highly bilingual to the extent that some ɔkere speakers perceive Akuapem Twi as their mother tongue.

Due this, titles such as *ɔhene* ‘Chief’, *Asokwahene* ‘Chief drummer’ and *ɔkyeame* ‘linguist’ which are typical Akan terms are all found in the vocabulary of ɔkere. As stated earlier in page 9 the seven towns of ɔkere are: Adukurom, Apirede, Awukugua, Abonse, Aseseeso and Abiriw; It is important

to note here that, all seven ɔkere towns celebrate two main festivals; Ohum and Akwasidae, which are indigenous to only recognized Akan communities.

Out of the seven towns and villages, Abiriw, Awukugua and Adukurom were selected for the study because of their geographical locations. Abiriw the first research community is the nearest ɔkere speaking town to Akropong an Akan speaking speech community. Awukugua, the second research community, is an ancient ɔkere town located between Dawu and Adukurom both ɔkere speaking communities' while Adukurom, the third research community, lies along the main Somanya, Koforidua road.

1.3 Statement of the Study

Language contact is a linguistic phenomenon that can result in multilingualism. To use the languages available to them effectively, multilinguals make language choices which can result in either language shift or language maintenance. Studies conducted in languages such as Afrikaans (South Africa), Garifuna (Central America), Kabiye (Togo), and others demonstrate that language choice in some speech communities resulted in the adoption of strategies to maintain their indigenous yet minority languages. On the other hand, some communities such as Efutu (Ghana), Hausa (Saudi Arabia) and Koronfe (Burkina Faso) could not withstand pressure from the dominant languages so shifted to dominant languages.

The ɔkere speech community in Ghana is a minority ethnic group in the Eastern Region of Ghana. The location of this speech community is surrounded by speakers of Akan, Dangme and Ga, with Akan in the majority. Apart from this, education and Christianity have compelled members of this

speech community to be highly bilingual in Akan and ɔkere. In addition to this, the educated ɔkere is also competent in English too (Dakubu1988: 164). Moreover because of the presence of speakers of Ga, Dangme and Ewe, some natives of ɔkere speak these languages too in varying degrees of competence. In light of this linguistic situation, members of the ɔkere speech community are compelled to resort to language choices to satisfy their communicative needs.

Bramson (1981), Dakubu (1988), Animah (2015) and others have conducted studies on ɔkere but no study has been conducted on language choice practices at ɔkere. In order to fill this gap in the literature among other things, this study seeks to investigate language choice practices at ɔkere and subsequently establish the implications of this linguistic phenomenon.

1.4 Aims of the Study

This part of the study discusses the aims of the study, which serve as a guide to data collection and analysis.

1. To examine the implications of the presence of dominant languages such as Akan and English to ɔkere. This is because studies on language contacts have proved that language contact situations elsewhere have resulted in other linguistic phenomena.
2. To identify social factors that trigger language choice in the ɔkere speech community. With regard to language choices, individuals in multilingual communities do not make language choices in a vacuum but based on their communicative needs.

3. To determine variations in language use practices within the ɔkere speech community. Variation in language use patterns is key to this study so this question serves as a guide to the analysis of data collected.

1.5 Research Questions

These questions serve as a guide to the study.

1. What are the implications of the presence of dominant languages such as English and Akan to ɔkere?
2. Which social variables trigger language choice in the ɔkere speech community?
3. What variations exist in the language choice practices identified in the various ɔkere communities?

1.6 Significance of the Study

This study will be the first research on language choice in the ɔkere speech community. It will establish the dangers that dominant languages pose to minority languages and the need to encourage a lot of studies on minority languages to help maintain them. It will also bring to light the dangers that language policies pose to minority languages for interventions to save them from language death. More so the study will add to existing literature on language shift and language maintenance. In all this work will serve as a reference for studies on language shift and language maintenance.

1.7 Structure of Thesis

The thesis comprises five chapters. Chapter one focuses on preliminary issues such as: introduction, background to the study, statement of the problem, aims

and objectives of the study. Furthermore, research questions that will serve as a guide to the study, the significance of the study and a summary of the whole work.

Chapter two is in three major parts. The first part reviews related literature. The second part discusses the theoretical frameworks within which data will be analysed and the justification for the choice of those frameworks. The final part gives information about the research sites, techniques for sampling and methods for data collection. Chapter three is dedicated to data analyses within the tenets of Labov (1966) and Batibo (2005).

Chapter four presents sociolinguistic histories of nine respondents selected based on the analysis done in chapter 3. These nine respondents were selected based on their settlement patterns, linguistic repertoires and language proficiency. The objective for the presentation of these sociolinguistic histories is to provide an up close insight into people's linguistic life beyond the picture presented in chapter 3.

Chapter five ends the thesis by providing a summary of the entire study. It discusses key findings and makes recommendations for further research.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW, THEORETICAL FRAMEWORKS AND METHODOLOGY

2.0 Introduction

The chapter is divided into three parts; the first part reviews related literature in the context of minority and majority language contacts, language shift and language maintenance in some communities. The second part discusses the theoretical frameworks that underpin this research and the third part looks at the various data collection techniques, analysis, instruments and procedures employed. The chapter ends with a summary of issues discussed.

2.1 Literature Review

This review focuses on scholarly works done in books, journals, conference papers, articles, thesis and other sources relevant to the topic under study. It gives a broad perspective of language contact involving majority and minority languages and the linguistic outcomes, with particular reference to the linguistic phenomenon of language shift and maintenance.

2.1.1 Minority and Majority Languages

Minority languages are languages mostly confined or limited to primary domains in their speech communities. They are languages without requisite institutional support to make them attractive to other ethnic groups. In this regard, they are marginalized and accorded low prestige in relation to the dominant languages (Dzameshie 1988, Obeng 1997, Batibo 2005, Adika 2012, Nakayiza 2013, Gora 2014, Mumbembe 2016 inter alia).

Oyetade (2003:106) also refers to minority languages as “languages of local importance, which are equally useful in their respective states.” Based on Oyetade (2003), it is deduced that minority languages are crucial only in their localities but not in public domains. They are used in private places where the audience are just local people who all identify themselves by that language. This development can result in the linguistic phenomenon of language shift or maintenance depending on the attitudes of the minority speakers towards their heritage language.

On her part, Romaine (2000:35) states that, “minority languages” are those languages “with relatively smaller number of speakers living within a domain of a more spoken language, whose knowledge is usually necessary for full participation in society.” This assertion by Romaine (2000) reiterates the fact that minority languages are restricted and confined to their localities only, making it necessary for speakers to learn a majority language for social integration.

On the other hand, majority languages are normally languages with large demographic sizes, are used in public domains, enjoy a lot of prestige and are the preferred choices of language users. This trend influences the spread of majority languages in communities to become *lingua francas* or official languages of their countries. This phenomenon thus leads to majority languages enjoying some institutional support which increases their exposure to both print and electronic media to the detriment of the minority languages (Romaine 2000; Obeng 1997; Winford 2003; Batibo 2005 and Baker: 1993 *inter alia*).

The prestige attained makes majority languages instrumental in all spheres of life. This makes speakers of majority languages powerful with an overt pride, whilst speakers of minority languages are marginalized with a covert pride or in some cases, lack of self-esteem. This trend can influence speakers of the minority language to shift to the majority language just for social integration (Obeng 1997: 67).

2.1.2 Language Shift and Language Maintenance

Language shift is a linguistic phenomenon that comes about when a minority speech community decides to shift to a dominant language due to pressure. It is a process that starts gradually due to individual language choices made by members of a speech community to a point when the minority language is not used again. Abtahian (2009:1) states that language shift “is the process by which a speech community in a contact situation (i.e. consisting of bilingual speakers) gradually stops using one of its two languages in favour of the other.” Other scholars attribute language shift to choices made by individuals in a speech community. One of such scholars is Batibo (2005:87) who notes that “[l]anguage shift results when speakers, abandon their language, willingly or under pressure, in favour of another language which then takes over as their means of communication and socialization.” In relation to this argument, Romaine (2000:51) dwells on the stages of occurrence for language shift to provide a dimension to the meaning of language shift by establishing that “[l]anguage shift generally involves bilingualism (often with diglossia) as a stage on the way to eventual monolingualism in a new language.”

In the same vein Lenk (2007:5) opines that “[w]hen language becomes variable and minority and majority languages are used in the same social

contexts, language shift begins.” Which presupposes that language shift begins with struggle for space between two unequal languages (minority and majority) in some domains which eventually leads to an encroachment by the majority language.

The works of Abtahian (2009) Batibo (2005), Romaine (2000), and Lenk (2007) substantiate the fact that language shift occurs in a gradual process due to intense pressure on the minority language. This pressure stems from the need to learn a dominant language of socioeconomic importance for social integration.

On the other hand, while some speech communities are shifting to dominant languages, other speech communities adopt strategies to maintain their heritage languages. These speech communities adopt some linguistic phenomena that help them to use more than one language in their speech communities without necessarily shifting to another language. Some linguists such as Dyers (2004:54) opines that “language maintenance occurs when a language continues to be used across all generations, despite the presence of other languages also being used by a community.” A situation that attests to the fact that language maintenance dwells on its transmission from generation to generation without any break, because the maintenance of a language depends on its use. In support of this assertion Mumbembe (2016: 46) posits that “[l]anguage maintenance refers to the situation where members of the minority community always use their own language as a means of communication.” Arguing in the same dimension Fasold (1984:213) reiterates that the choice to shift depends on the individual speakers’ attitude towards their heritage language which they may decide to use or abandon.

In support of the claims made earlier, Batibo (2005:102) re-echoes that language maintenance is “a situation in which a language maintains its vitality even under pressure.” In relation to the definitions provided it is clear that, the maintenance of a minority language depends on the ability of its speakers to use strategies to maintain their heritage language even under pressure.

To some contact linguists, the choice to shift or maintain a language is the outcome of long term language use practices (Fasold 1984; Fishman 1972 &1991; Romaine 2000; Winford 2003; Batibo2005).

2.1.2.1 Language Maintenance in Some Selected Communities

This section discusses works done on some specific communities where they have been able to maintain their languages, notwithstanding the pressures on them.

1. AFRIKAANS, SOUTH AFRICA

Dyers (2008) argue that factors such as space, poverty, and social class can favour the maintenance of a language rather than a shift. He deduced this from his study on the state of Afrikaans in Wesbank, South Africa.

Some of his objectives were to investigate how high school learners in Wesbank township, South Africa, report on their use of, and attitudes towards, their first language, Afrikaans; and to use the findings to show how, given their particular situation, the language continues to be strongly maintained in this community, and remains an important index of both their group and individual identity.

Instruments employed for data collection were questionnaires, interviews and informal observations. A total of one hundred and sixteen subjects, mainly students of Wesbank High School, were used.

The main findings attributed the maintenance of Afrikaans to the following:

- 1) The dominant role of Afrikaans, the L1 of the majority, in key domains of language use in the township. Dyers (2008:55) explicates that in the Wesbank community, speakers of Afrikaans are in the majority. Moreover, Afrikaans is “taught as L1 and one of the official media of instruction” at school.
- 2) Furthermore, Dyers (2004:31) cited in Dyers (2008:55) notes that Afrikaans language is “perhaps the main marker of a “Cape Coloured” identity, particularly in the absence of a clear group culture and identity, given the huge diversity of the origin of this group.” Against this background, there is a powerful sentimental attachment to the language as a badge of individual and group identity.
3. Dyers (2008: 53) attributes the maintenance of the Afrikaans language in the Wesbank to the “socio – partial marginalization of the community.” He alludes to the type of buildings, number of schools, supermarkets, lack of recreational centres and employment to substantiate his argument that the community is marginalized (Dyers 2008:54).

Another factor which is not so crucial is the powerful role of Afrikaans in particular sectors of the economy of Western Cape, especially the agricultural sector, which is a major employer of less skilled workers.

His paper also proves that, contrary to the belief that pressure from marginalization and stigmatization can lead to a shift to the powerful official language for social integration: a group in the Wesbank of Cape town, South Africa somewhat prefers using Afrikaans the mother tongue of 'Cape Coloured' as a form of 'self and group identity' (Dyers 2008). Finally, Dyers (2008:67) establishes that, the maintenance of a language depends solely on the attitudes of the speakers towards their language. Dyers (2008) work makes it clear that some minority language speech groups are able to withstand all the pressures from dominant languages to maintain their languages. In line with the current study the implications of the presence of dominant languages such as English and Twi to Okere will be investigated, to establish whether the Okere speech community will be able to maintain their language or shift to one of the dominant languages.

2. GARIFUNA, CENTRAL AMERICA

Abtahian (2009) studies the sociolinguistic change in a Garifuna community in Belize with these objectives:

- 1) To examine the relationship between social and linguistic factors in considering the causes and effects of language shift, focusing on age variation in the speech community.
- 2) To examine the linguistic and social correlates of early language shift in Garifuna community in Belize.

Methods used for data collection were questionnaires, interviews, participant observations and peer interactions. A total of fifty-two subjects between the ages of five and eighty-one were used. She reports that her study was based on “a variety of methods culled from variationist sociolinguistics and language socialization research” (Abtahian 2009: 10).

Her findings prove that an apparent time¹ analysis demonstrate an externally motivated change in the variable [ch] that is evident for a shift to English the dominant language in the community. This variable is pronounced as an affricate [tʃ] by the youth which is an indication of an influence from English, the national language, whilst the old generation pronounces it as a fricative [ʃ] which is not a sound in Garifuna but an evidence of contact between Spanish and Garifuna in the past.

However, she explains that, there is a split in the behaviour of the youth aged between 30 and 40 referred to as the “transitional generation”, towards the two variables [ʃ] and [tʃ] due to language ideologies in the village which seems to favour the maintenance of the heritage language-Garifuna.

Additionally, the second sound change in progress, which she discusses is both externally-motivated (Garifuna and English contact) and internally motivated which to her is “an apparent change in progress” (Abtahian 2009:75).

She explains that the externally motivated change is an influence from American English on the realisation of the variable /r/ in Garifuna as a retroflex

¹ An apparent time in sociolinguistics refers to a characteristic that can be associated to a particular period of time.

approximant /ɹ/, as opposed to a tap/r/ or a flap /r/. The internally-motivated change is the deletion of the intervocalic [r] which she states is a change in progress and a linguistic marker.

Moreover, women in all the generations lead in this deletion of vocalic [r]. In addition, there is an evidence for style-shifting in the production of the variable [r]. Finally, she alludes to the fact that these are evidence of expansion but not a shift as it has increased the vocabulary of the speech community.

At the same time there seems to be the emergence of local pride in culture which is more pronounced among members of the Garifuna speech community who perceive Hopkins as the true hold out of Garifuna culture in Belize. Based on this, the maintenance of Garifuna in Hopkins is very positive. With regard to this current study some aspects of Abtahian (2009) work that informed the review of her work are the influence of a very powerful language, English on Garifuna, and the use of the sociolinguistic variationist approach in analysing data for the work. In relation to the current study one of the theoretical frameworks within which data for the study will be analysed is the sociolinguistic variationist approach. In addition, the study investigates the influence of English on Okere as well as the influence of an indigenous dominant language (Twi).

3. KABIYE, TOGO

Some works done relating to language maintenance include Essizewa (2006) who examines the sociolinguistic aspects of contact between two Niger-Congo

languages in Togo, Kabiye² and Ewe, in everyday communication in the Kabiye speech community.

The objectives of this study are mainly:

1. To investigate the patterns and domains of language utilization of Kabiye and Ewe in three Kabiye speech communities in Togo: Pude, Kara and Lomé.
2. A sociolinguistic analysis of contact between Kabiye and Ewe to determine the social and linguistic factors (e.g. prestige, pressure, wider communication) that constrain language usage in the Kabiye community.

He argues that speakers' use of Ewe in everyday communication is a reflection of the historical and the present socio-economic status of Ewe in the "market place" (Calvet 1992 cited in Essizewa 2006). He describes Ewe as a predominant language in Togo due to the demographic size of its speakers and the prestige attached to it. Essizewa (2006: 37) reports that "[t]hree million people (more than 65% of Togo's population) use Ewe as a second language." Apart from that, because of the location of the Ewe ethnic group at the south of Togo, Ewes came into contact with the Europeans very early. The result of this to Essizewa (2006: 37) is Ewe being perceived as a language of "modernity" and elitism in Togo.

² Kabiye is the name of the people as well as their language.

This development makes Ewe the preferred choice of all ethnic groups in Togo for inter-ethnic communication. This is so, due to the socio-economic status of Ewe in Togo.

On the Contrary, Kabiye is an ethnic group located in the north of Togo; Kabiye has a smaller demographic size compared to Ewe. The duration of contact between speakers of Kabiye and the Europeans was not long as compared to that of Ewes and Europeans. Apart from that, speakers of Kabiye did not have access to Western education due to a decree that limited the work of the missionaries only to the south (see Lange 1984 cited in Essizewa 2006:38).

A total of thirty subjects were drawn from Pude, Kara and Agoè, a suburb of Lomé. These three towns were selected for the following reasons; Pude is a small village in the Canton of Pya; Kara is the second city of Togo where majority of the population is Kabiye. Lastly, Agoè is a suburb in the city of Lomé where speakers of Kabiye in Lomé are concentrated.

These hypotheses were formed:

1. Use and proficiency of speakers in Kabiye and Ewe depend on the extent of exposure to each language, sex and age, and their attitudes towards both languages.
2. Ewe is spreading in the Kabiye community particularly in urban areas, and this will cause the level of Kabiye bilingualism to increase throughout the country.

He dwelt on questionnaires, interviews, observations and recording for data collection. However, he was silent on the framework used.

The findings reveal that the use of Ewe only, Kabiye only, and Kabiye and Ewe code-switching depends on the extent to which speakers are exposed to each of the languages, their sex, age group and attitudes towards both languages.

Also, the use of Ewe only, Kabiye and Ewe code-switching was more in Lome, the capital city, which is a predominant Ewe community. This is followed by Kara, which is an urban centre where the population of Kabiye is concentrated. The least of the three, for the use of Ewe only, and Kabiye and Ewe code switch is at Pude, a Kabiye village in the northern part of Togo. These revelations confirm the hypothesis formed by the writer.

Similarly, just like speakers of Kabiye in Togo, the speech community of Okere has borrowed a lot of cultural practices from Akans such as the celebration of Ohum, Akwasidae, Odwira festivals and chieftaincy system. To what extent this borrowing has influenced Okere will be established by the study. Besides this work substantiates the correlation between language use at domains and the linguistic phenomenon of language shift and maintenance which is relevant to the current study. With this in mind, one of the frameworks that underpins this study is Batibo's (2005) "triglossic structure model" which centres on language use at domains to identify whether members of the Okere speech community are shifting to dominant languages such as English and Akan or are maintaining their heritage language.

4. PORTUGUESE, SOUTH-AFRICA

Mcduling (1995) provides an account of the present state of Portuguese³ among the Portuguese community in Johannesburg. He also identifies factors influencing the maintenance of, and shift from Portuguese by the Portuguese community in Johannesburg.

He asserts that in South Africa, English is the widely accepted language. This is followed by Afrikaans in some domains, limiting the use of Portuguese.

The outcome of this is that, it has reduced the proficiency of the Portuguese youth in the Portuguese language whilst their proficiency in English has increased. In spite of this, he posits that certain variables seem to favour the preservation of the Portuguese language among the Portuguese community in Johannesburg. The techniques and procedures for data collection were personal observations, questionnaires and interviews. His subjects were a mixed up group of fifty-two, including school pupils, university students, students from two high schools and randomly selected adults.

His findings reveal an increase of bilingualism in English and Portuguese in everyday speech activities of the inhabitants of Portuguese. It was also identified that with the exception of one high school in South Johannesburg, Portuguese is not studied or used as a medium of instruction in South African schools.

Notwithstanding these signs, there are private schools where Portuguese is studied and Portuguese social and cultural organizations which

³ Portuguese language in South Africa.

are helping the Portuguese community in Johannesburg, South Africa to maintain their culture and traditions.

Furthermore, he reports that most of the Portuguese immigrants in Johannesburg still have contacts with friends and relatives back home. This development is an indication that the Portuguese community in Johannesburg still uses its mother tongue in social network.

All in all, the community's attitude towards their language and ethnic background remains positive. Bamgbose (1993:19), cited in Mcduling (1995: 171), comments that the attitude of the Portuguese community towards their language could play a positive role in the maintenance of their language, culture and traditions.

Thus, his findings confirm his hypothesis that although there is a shift in progress within the Portuguese community in Johannesburg (especially among the younger, third generation), some factors seem to restrain the shift. Interestingly, this current work focuses on individual case studies to determine how languages in respondents' linguistic repertoire are distributed, with this review it has been established that an individual's distribution of languages available to him within his social networks correlates with the state of the language.

5. UKRAINIAN, CANADA

Hudyma (2012) motivated by earlier studies which were conducted on Ukrainian in Canada, conducts a study on the maintenance of Ukrainian, a minority language in Saskatchewan, Canada with these objectives:

1. Introducing a range of socio-cultural factors and success of the Ukrainian language retention.
2. Investigating the effect of educational, community and family settings, on the Ukrainian language or shift; state of the Ukrainian language in Saskatchewan.
3. Studying language attitudes of Ukrainian speakers and their correlations with demographic factors.

Based on these objectives, three hypotheses were formed. She used the framework of earlier minority studies by Clyne (2003), Clyne & Kipp (1997 and 1999) Fishman (1966; 1980; 1991), Timm (1980), Weinreich (1964) etc... with special attention given to the attitudes of speakers towards their heritage language.

A total of eighty-two participants selected from the province of Saskatchewan from different educational and occupational backgrounds with students in the majority were used. She employed an online questionnaire as her main method for data collection.

Furthermore, she establishes that regardless of the fact that majority of the participants felt Ukrainian had no socio-economic values in their lives, they perceive it as crucial in cultural and family settings as a form of identity. This

notwithstanding, the pattern of language use in families by different generations of immigration is consistent with the one suggested by Fishman (1989) as a variable for language shift in most speech communities.

By the findings, all her hypotheses were confirmed. However, she notes that focusing on age - based variation in the speech community, there are different patterns in the use of Ukrainian language in Canada. He recommends that to retain Ukrainian in Canada more needs to be done about the use of the language. Hudyma (2009) dwelt on domains of language use to establish his findings which is in relation to the analysis of data for the current study.

The review of the works of Dyers (2008), Essizewa (2006), Abtahian (2009), Hudyma (2012) and Mcduling (1995) has brought to light that notwithstanding the fact that the contact between two unequal languages mostly have negative consequences on the minority language some minority language groups are able to withstand all the threats from a dominant language by adopting strategies to save their language from becoming moribund. The current study will establish the state of Okere with the expansion of education and Christianity that have led to the exposure of the youth to dominant languages such as Twi and English.

2.1.2.2 Language Shift in Some Communities

On the other hand, some communities are not able to withstand pressures on their languages so they shift to the predominant language. The next section focuses on communities which have shifted from their minority languages to the predominant language or a shift is in progress.

1. EFUTU, GHANA

Mensah (2008) investigates the role of Efutu and Fante in the socio-economic lives of the people of Winneba. She advocates that variables such as demographic size, lack of institutional support and prestige can lead to language shift. The objective of her study was to assess whether Efutu was really shifting to Fante or not.

She describes Efutu as an indigenous language spoken at Winneba in the central region of Ghana. It is surrounded by Fantes who speak Fante (a dialect of Akan). This situation has resulted in members of the Efutu speech community becoming bilingual, but this bilingualism favours Fante because domains where Fante is used are more than that of Efutu. For instance, the Fante language is the medium of instruction at school, church and other public places. She used Batibo's conceptual framework of marked bilingualism with questionnaires, observations and interviews as the instruments for data collection. However, the study was silent on the roles of English a powerful language in the world and the official language of Ghana in the shift situation at Winneba. The absence of this analysis to me did not make the outcome of the work reflective of the situation at Winneba, which is a cosmopolitan environment with educational institutions including a university. A situation that indicates that there are people from different ethno-linguistic backgrounds in Winneba which calls for the need to use a common language for communication. To fill in that gap one of the objectives of this study is the implications of the presence of English the official language of Ghana and Akan an indigenous dominant language on Okere.

From the discussions it is obvious that, language shift can be attributed to factors such as the presence of dominant languages, lack of institutional support, urbanization, exogamy, demographic size and attitudes of a speech community towards their heritage language.

2. HAUSA, SAUDI-ARABIA

Tawalbeh et.al (2013) advocate that social pressure, attitudes, institutional support, demographic factors and religion can influence individual choices of language, leading to language shift. These were ascertained based on a study conducted on the contact between minority Hausa and majority Arabic in the city of Mecca.

The study identifies two types of ethno- linguistic Hausa groups in Mecca: the poor illiterate Hausa and the literate Hausa referred to as Saudi-Hausa due to their residential status in Mecca.

According to them, this Saudi- Hausa speech community, the population for the study, consists of skilled workers and students who are gainfully employed and have been granted residential status in Mecca. The study was based on a social network model which was used to study immigrant groups in the Middle East (Al-khatib, Al-Ali 2010, and Al-Khatib 2001).

A total of hundred subjects with varying occupational and educational backgrounds living in the city of Mecca were used with the following objectives:

1. To explore the phenomenon of language shift or maintenance among the Saudi -Hausa community in the city of Mecca, Saudi-Arabia.

2. Measure the extent of language shift or maintenance among Saudi-Hausa as well as gain an insight into the effect of gender on language shift or maintenance.

Questionnaires, interviews, elicitation and personal observations were the methods and procedures employed for data collection. From the findings, Hausa speakers are clearly shifting from the use of Hausa towards the use of Arabic due to the following factors:

Firstly, members of the Saudi-Hausa speech community in Mecca have a negative attitude towards their heritage language Hausa, which has influenced the rate of the shift to Arabic.

Moreover, most of the members have forgotten their roots, customs and traditions, because of a break in correspondence between them and their families back home in Nigeria, which is an indication of a loss identity.

Furthermore, there is a reduction in the use of Hausa by the Saudi-Hausa in all contexts as indicated by the answers from respondents. In view of this, the next Saudi-Hausa generation's proficiency in Hausa will be very limited"

This substantiates the fact that the heritage language will be moribund in the near future. This was established by the respondents' use of Arabic in all contexts though in varying degrees. With regards to the community, the findings advocate that the use of Arabic in the community is high. This phenomenon, according to Tawalbeh et al. (2013) could be attributed to a regression in the use of Hausa by speakers of Hausa.

Besides, Tawalbeh (2013:139) notes that the acquisition of nationality status by many Saudi-Hausa during the eras of “King Faisal Bin Abdul-Aziz (1964- 1975) and King Khalid Bin Abdul-Aziz (1975-1982).” is also crucial for the shift to Arabic because with this legal backing to live in the country as a citizen, knowledge in the language of the country will enhance their integration into social life easily.

More so the findings reveal that one’s proficiency in Arabic assures one of an “improved employment” in Mecca (Tawalbeh 2013:139). A situation that leaves the Saudi-Hausa with no option than to shift to Arabic the dominant language.

In addition, an external pressure such as institutional support provided for Arabic in all spheres of life accelerated the need to learn Arabic to facilitate easy integration into the dominant Saudi-Arabia community.

The findings confirm the hypothesis formed by Tawalbeh et.al (2013) that social pressure, attitudes and religion can influence a shift to a dominant language. I believe that the findings of this study provides a background to the current study which will not only establish the social factors that have triggered language choice in the Okere speech community but will also look at the impact of the individual language choices to Okere.

3. INDIGENOUS MINORITY LANGUAGES, KENYA

Michieka (2012) alludes to the fact that languages die due to attitudes exhibited by speakers. She backs her allusion to this assertion, with a research on patterns of language use among a group of Kenyan youth. Her objective is

to establish whether multilingualism is thriving or local languages are threatened by a potential shift.

To achieve her objectives, she selected two hundred and forty Kenyan students from different backgrounds based on a convenience sampling technique; the main tool for data collection was a detailed questionnaire which sought to survey language use patterns among the youth.

She employed the ethnolinguistic vitality theory that posits that “the trend of language loss tends to follow a particular fixed pattern normally beginning with a forced or voluntary language shift followed by a gradual language or sudden language loss” (Allard & Landry 1992; Gal1992; Huffines 1980; Pandharipande 1992 cited in Michieka 2012).

Her analysis reveals that the preferred language choices of the youth in Kenya are English, and indigenous majority languages such as Kiswahili and Sheng. In recognition of this, at home and in interpersonal conversations Kiswahili, Sheng or code-mixing between English and Kiswahili are used by the youth. This implies, the replacement of indigenous minority languages with English, and indigenous majority languages like Kiswahili and Sheng at primary domains, or domains reserved for indigenous minority languages in Kenya.

Additionally, English the official language of the country is the preferred language choice in most domains, particularly formal domains, due to the heterogeneous nature of the country which has made it more convenient to use English in the immediate environment because one of the basic essences of communication is being able to comprehend which makes English the most

suitable language on such occasions thus increasing the functions and status of English in the country.

Likewise, due to urbanization, most families speak Kiswahili only or code mix between English and Kiswahili at home increasing the proficiency of children in Kiswahili to the detriment of their indigenous languages.

She also notes that although the youth are bilingual or multilingual, which enables them to switch from one language to another, their repertoire of languages does not include the indigenous minority languages, which to her, is not healthy for the maintenance of the indigenous minority languages. Michieka (2012) is really relevant to this study as it gives an idea about how language choice can lead to language shift which is one of the main objectives of this study.

4. KHOESAN GROUPS, BOTSWANA

Batibo (2015) dwells on the potency of the ethnic identity loss theory to examine the ethnic identity loss in Western Botswana, South Africa. His main objective was to examine patterns of ethnic identity loss in Western Botswana, and if such patterns followed the ethnic identity loss model⁴

To Batibo, the language situation in this context is both linguistically and culturally complex due to the coexistence of Bantu and Khoesan groups.

⁴ The ethnic identity loss model theory advocates that the shift from a minority language to a major language is characterized by four progressive features: linguistic, cultural, autonymic and ethnonymic identities.

Instruments used for data collection were questionnaires, interviews, tests and observations. The informants were drawn from the minority languages with fifty subjects from each ethnic group.

His findings reveal that the shift from the minority Khoesan languages to the majority Bantu language could be traced to Maslow (1943) theory of human needs, more than the ethnic identity loss model. By this he concludes that, the ethnic identity loss model can be distorted. Notwithstanding the fact that Batibo's paper centres on the ethnic identity loss model which is not in line with the current study his paper discusses the contact between minority and majority languages which is connected to the current study.

5. KORONFE, BURKINA FASO

Kedrebéogo (1998) conducts a research in the speech community of Koronfe. He focuses on the Koronfe speech community in the North of Burkina Faso, located in the provinces of Yatenga, Zondoma, Lorum, and Soum all in the northern part of Burkina Faso.

The goals for his study were:

1. To analyse the on-going sociolinguistic situation of that community and to assess the extent to which this speech community has actually shifted from Koronfe to the dominant language Moore.
2. To identify factors responsible for language shift.

The author used questionnaire survey, observations and interviews in collecting data for the study. Seventeen Koromba villages were the communities employed for the study.

These selections were based on their geographical locations with a total of five hundred and thirty-seven subjects of which 1/10 are aged twelve years and above.

In his findings, he cites two macro factors (external and internal) for the shift from Koronfe to Moore. He continues that the external factor is mainly historical, originating from the contact between Koromdo and Moose which can best be described as a master and servant Relationship-Moose the “Lords” and Koromdo the “Servants.” This development greatly influenced the Moose⁵; a group who already had a larger demographic size and a well- organized military group compared to Koromdo in all aspects including their language.

Moore gained a lot of prestige and controlled socioeconomic activities in the area making it a language needed for social integration to the detriment of Koronfe. The outcome of this situation, somewhat influenced the Koronfe speech community negatively, resulting in the following; members of the ethnic group developed a low esteem towards their ethnic group and their language, their attitudes towards their language was negative and the desire for exogamy rose to a high level, demonstrating how they wanted to identify with the Moose ethnic group.

Moreover, apart from taboos which were in Koronfe there was not much that could be used to identify Koronfe. Even the efficiency of the taboos was in doubt based on the behaviour of the younger generation who did not strictly respect them.

⁵ The people are Moose/Maoga and their language is Moore.

The findings made it clear that most of the parents had different first languages due to a cultural practice that allowed Moose men to marry Koromdo⁶ young ladies without any hindrances. In contrast, marriages between Koromdo men and Moose girls were based on the Koromdo men's proficiency in Moore.

The implication of this cultural practice made both parents of these exogamous marriages fluent in Moore increasing the tendency for the offspring of such marriages to speak Moore more than Koronfe. In this respect, most mothers speak Moore as a first language because one of their parents is a Moose or had already shifted to Moore.

The effect was a negative impact on the transmission of Koronfe to the younger generation which is evident by the ratio of the number of parents who indicated Koronfe as their first language and that of the children. The findings indicate that as many as five hundred and twenty-five parents speak Koronfe as a first language but only a hundred and fifty-three (28.49%) of their children speak it as a first language whereas as many as three hundred and eighty-four (71.50%) speak Moore as a first language.

Nonetheless, he reports of an increase in the use of both Koronfe and Moore for ritual purposes in the speech community. Also, the *Ayo* 'a spiritual head' is forbidden not to speak any other language apart from Koronfe when he takes office.

Lastly, the recent desire to create a "National sub commission for Koronfe" by Koronfe speech community and others are attempts to save the

⁶ Koromba is singular whilst Koromdo is plural for the people and their language is Koronfe

language. Interestingly the current study also discusses two languages whose statuses are not the same, one who is a conqueror (Akan) and the other the conquest (Ɔkere) which makes the review of this paper very crucial.

6. PUNJABI, PAKISTAN

Nawaz et.al (2012:73) conducts a study on Punjabi language in Pakistan to ascertain factors responsible for banishing Punjabi and a corresponding adoption of English language, though a wide section of the population is hostile to it. Based on this objective, he formed this hypothesis; language shift is burgeoned, motivated and accelerated by an implicit working of historical, cultural, social, economic and psychological factors.

To test the validity of this hypothesis, a questionnaire comprising ten questions was developed and administered to hundred subjects from different age groups, educational and social backgrounds. These subjects were mainly students and teachers from the University of Sargodha and ordinary people from Sargodha, Faisalabad and Lahore.

Their findings confirm the hypothesis formed. It reveals that, contact between the British and Punjabi speakers through colonialism, made Punjabi speakers inferior to English speakers in Pakistan. They reveal that, the British intentionally portrayed the culture of Punjabi as inferior and uncivilized whilst that of the British was portrayed as being civilized (Nawaz 2012: 73).

Another factor that made the English language attractive was the economic importance attached to the acquisition of English compared to the acquisition of Punjabi. A condition that made English speakers well positioned on the social ladder than monolingual Punjabi speakers.

Nawaz et.al (2013), reiterate that this resulted in the crave for ‘white collar jobs’ which demanded a proficiency in English, the official language of Pakistan. With regard to this study English the official language of Pakistan that has influenced the relegation of Punjabi to the background is one of the dominant languages being discussed. However, this study does not only discuss the influence of English the official language of Ghana but discusses the presence of an indigenous dominant language to Okere.

In conclusion, the rejection of their culture for a foreign culture is the main factor for their shift from Punjabi to English. In comparison of the review to this study authors such as Mensah (2008), Tawalbeh et. al (2013), Michieka (2012), Batibo (2005), Kedrebéogo (1998) and Nawaz et.al (2012) have proved that the various speech communities shifted to dominant languages due to socioeconomic factors, negative attitudes towards their languages, conquests and the use of dominant languages at home. The stage however is now set for the outcome of the contact between Okere, Twi and English.

2.1.2.3 A summary of review

From the discussions it is obvious that language shift can be attributed to factors such as the presence of dominant languages, lack of institutional support, urbanization, exogamy, demographic size and attitudes of a speech community towards their heritage language.

However, positive attitudes demonstrated by a speech community towards its heritage language can lead to language maintenance notwithstanding the presence of a dominant language.

With regard to literature reviewed, this study will add up to works done on language shift and language maintenance in three aspects. Ultimately the study aims at establishing the extent to which speakers of ɔkere are exposed to dominant languages such as Akan and English and its implications to ɔkere.

Secondly, it will identify social factors that have triggered language choice in the ɔkere speech community. These two will help unravel the variations in language choices across the three communities.

2.2 Theoretical Framework

This section of the study discusses the frameworks within which data for the study is analysed. These are Batibo's (2005) "triglossic structure model," and Labov's (1966 and 72) Sociolinguistic Variationist Approach. The section elaborates the use of these theories in the context of this study.

2.2.1 The Triglossic Structure Model

Batibo's (2005) "*triglossic structure model*" sums up patterns of language use in multilingual speech communities. He explains that in multilingual settings such as Africa due to the heterogeneous nature of the continent coupled with colonization there are some peculiar patterns of language use. He notes that these patterns of language use demonstrate how multilinguals assign languages to domains based on the prestige, status and functions of these languages in the society. Based on these factors, languages used by multilinguals are accorded codes such as, High (H) and Low (L) to depict the domains they are assigned to.

Batibo continues that these patterns of language use in multilingual communities have a binary sort of relationship, whereby some languages are coded High (H) in some context but Low (L) in other contexts.

Batibo (2005:16) establishes that, the “triglossic structure model” is a structure that can be looked at as a doubly overlapping diglossic structure, involving a relationship of two languages. This is demonstrated in Figure 2.

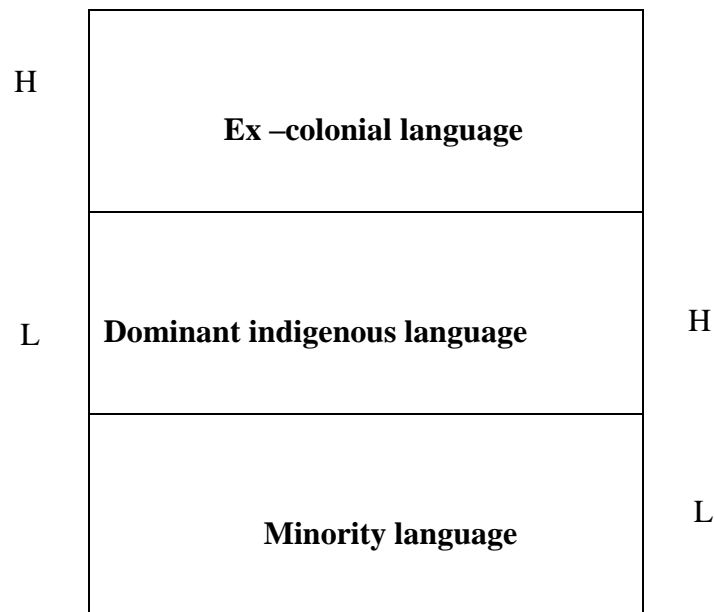


Figure 2: A typical triglossic structure of language use in an African country

2.2.1.1 Official and technical medium (Ex-colonial language)

The ex-colonial languages are exoglossic languages such as English, Portuguese, French, German, Spanish and Italian. These languages are languages of Africa’s colonial masters but were adopted by Africans as official languages of their various countries. For his study, he limited the languages to three: English, Portuguese and French. These languages per the model are the most prestigious languages in the linguistic repertoire of Africans.

Batibo (2005:17) states that these ex-colonial languages are used in all high-level official dealings like international relations, diplomacy “and official government business.”

They are also associated with better employment and higher social status in the various African countries. The prestige attached to them ranks them as the most prestigious languages in the linguistic repertoire of Africans. On that basis, they occupy the top of the model and are assigned to secondary domains. By this status they are accorded the High (H) code.

In the context of Ghana, English the official language of Ghana, occupies the topmost position. It is a language of high prestige and status worldwide, in his discussions on the prestige and status of these ex-colonial languages, Batibo (2005:20) states that, “[t]he prestige of ex-colonial languages, particularly English, has increased in recent years due to their association with modernity and technological advancement, information flow and internationality.” Dzameshie (1988:17) confirms this in his study on the status of English in Ghana and states that “... English is the language of government, administration and official communication...” Adika (2012: 151) supports this claim by stating that “... English in Ghana has been expanding against the backdrop of an intensely multilingual environment.” This reiterates the dominance of these ex-colonial languages in Africa. The study will discuss the presence of dominant languages such as English and Akan in the Okere speech community and the implications.

2.2.1.2. *Lingua Francas (indigenous dominant languages)*

At the middle level are indigenous dominant languages which are described by Batibo (2005:21) as "... not only demographically superior but also socio-economically prestigious." He states that, the extensive use of these dominant languages make them the preferred choice for inter-ethnic communication. In the same perspective Batibo (2005: 21) advocates that the prestige and status enjoyed by these dominant languages have augmented them to be assigned "*areally*" "*nationally*" and "*regionally*" roles in their countries. He however explains that these roles are assigned based on the language policies of their specific countries. He calls them *nationally dominant languages* when they are assigned national roles and *regionally dominant languages* when they function across a region. Likewise, they function as *areally dominant languages* when they are confined to specific areas in their countries.

He states that due to the expansion of these dominant languages they are accorded the High [H] code compared to the minority languages and Low [L] code compared to the ex-colonial languages. Batibo reiterates that these *areally dominant languages* are the cause of "language shift and death among minority languages." Adika (2012:15) confirms the assertion made by Batibo with his description of the dominance of indigenous dominant languages this way "[t]hese indigenous dominant languages are mostly learnt by speakers of other languages as a second language due to its economic importance."

In the context of this work Akan,⁷ a language belonging to the Kwa family of languages is the indigenous dominant language being discussed. Obeng (1997:64) posits that “of all the Ghanaian languages Akan has the largest amount of written texts including creative literature, and it’s therefore studied and documented.” Likewise, Batibo (2005:23) classifies Akan as an “*areally dominant language*” in Ghana. This underscores the extent to which speakers of ɔkere are pressurized to learn Akan as a second language.

2.2 1.3. *Minority languages*

The lowest on the structure are indigenous minority languages. These languages, by their name have smaller demographic sizes, and are confined to primary domains. Batibo (2005:23) considers such languages as “...marginalized and are often considered by their speakers as being of no value for social or economic advancement.” This situation leaves speakers of these minority languages, with no option than to learn a second language. Batibo (2005:24) says it better this way, “[t]he speakers are forced to learn or use one of the dominant languages or the respective ex-colonial language” for social integration. They are accorded the Low (L) code compared to both the dominant indigenous languages and the ex-colonial languages. ɔkere is the minority language in this study at the lowest level of the structure, the study will analyse the dominance of English and Twi (a dialect of Akan) in the context of language choice in the ɔkere speech community.

Notwithstanding the roles played by these languages, Batibo (2005; 26) argues that, these languages do not operate solely in the various domains as

⁷ Akan has about twelve dialects but only three of these dialects are institutionalized: these are Fante, Akuapem Twi and Asante Twi. In this work Twi and Akan are used interchangeably. Fante is also treated as a separate language to emphasize the linguistic complexity of Africa.

have been described but somewhat complementing each other in the various domains due to factors such as identity, status and prestige. In discussing language choice within this framework, the dynamics between English, Akan and Okere will be discussed.

2.2.2 The Sociolinguistic Variationist Approach

The Sociolinguistic Variationist Approach was introduced by Labov (1966 and 1972) as a systematic way of analysing language. The main focus of this theory is the significance of social variables in relation to linguistic variables and variation in language. Bauer (2011:2) advocates that, “sociolinguistics” is basically about studying the speakers’ two or more ways of saying the same thing...”

It is a theory that is crucial to the quantitative study of languages. This is because the use of this theory allows the linguist to quantify a social variable to a linguistic variable.

Hudson (2006: 146) reviews five main stages for the application of this theory. These are:

1. Selecting speakers, circumstances and linguistic variables.
2. Collection of texts.
3. Identifying the linguistic variables and their variants in the texts.
4. Processing the figures
5. Interpreting the results.

In relation to the selection of participants, visits to schools, markets, and other places in the community gave me the opportunity to select participants from those domains to help unravel language choices at those domains. In all a total of 90 participants of equal gender thus 45males and 45 females with varying educational backgrounds, aged between 11 and 60 years were selected based on their occupations. These are six each of Students, Teachers, Traditional Rulers, Farmers and Traders from the three communities. After this I administered a twenty –four item questionnaire which centred on participants' bio-data, linguistic repertoire, language proficiency and domains of language use. This was done to identify the correlation between respondents' linguistic backgrounds and their language choices.

At the third stage I set out to identify some variables and I identified that respondent's geographical location and educational backgrounds were indexical to their language choices.

The fourth stage is described by Hudson (2006:152) as the stage for processing figures by calculating the frequency “of each variant in each text, and comparing the figures of different texts.” At this stage language choices of the various participants at the various domains were analysed using the SPSS software. The results were calculated and figures compared to identify the discrepancies among the social classes and the three communities.

The fifth stage is the stage where the linguist interprets his figures; in this regard the results were then calculated and interpreted. The interpretation helped to establish language choice patterns in each of the three selected

communities and the motivations underlying the preference of a language at a domain were also established.

2.2.3 The Justification for two Models

These two theories; Batibo (2005) triglossic structure model and the Sociolinguistic Variationist Approach (1966 and 1972) are the theories for the analysis of data for this study. These two theories will complement each other to establish patterns of language use at Okere. The essence of this is to ascertain whether language choices by individuals at the various domains will lead to the maintenance of Okere or a shift to the dominant language (Akan).

The justification for this combination is that in a study of language choice, patterns of language use and how languages are assigned to domains based on prestige, status and functions will be encountered. In this respect, text from the study when analysed within the tenets of Batibo (2005) triglossic structure will unravel the nature of contact between English, Akan and Okere in the Okere context.

On the other hand, language choices dwell on social variables, besides the responses made by respondents need to be quantified to draw conclusions for the study. This therefore calls for a framework that focuses on social variables and the systematic quantification of text as professed by Labov's (1966) sociolinguistic variationist theory.

2.3 Methods

This section of the study discusses the research communities and the approach used in the collection of data. In addition, the research instruments, sampling

techniques, data selection methods and the procedures for analysing data are also discussed.

2.3.1. Research Community

As stated earlier the study was conducted in three selected communities within the Okere speech community of the Akuapem traditional area in the Eastern region of Ghana. These are Abiriw, Awukugua and Adukurom. These communities were selected based on their geographical locations. These are shown in Figure 3 below.

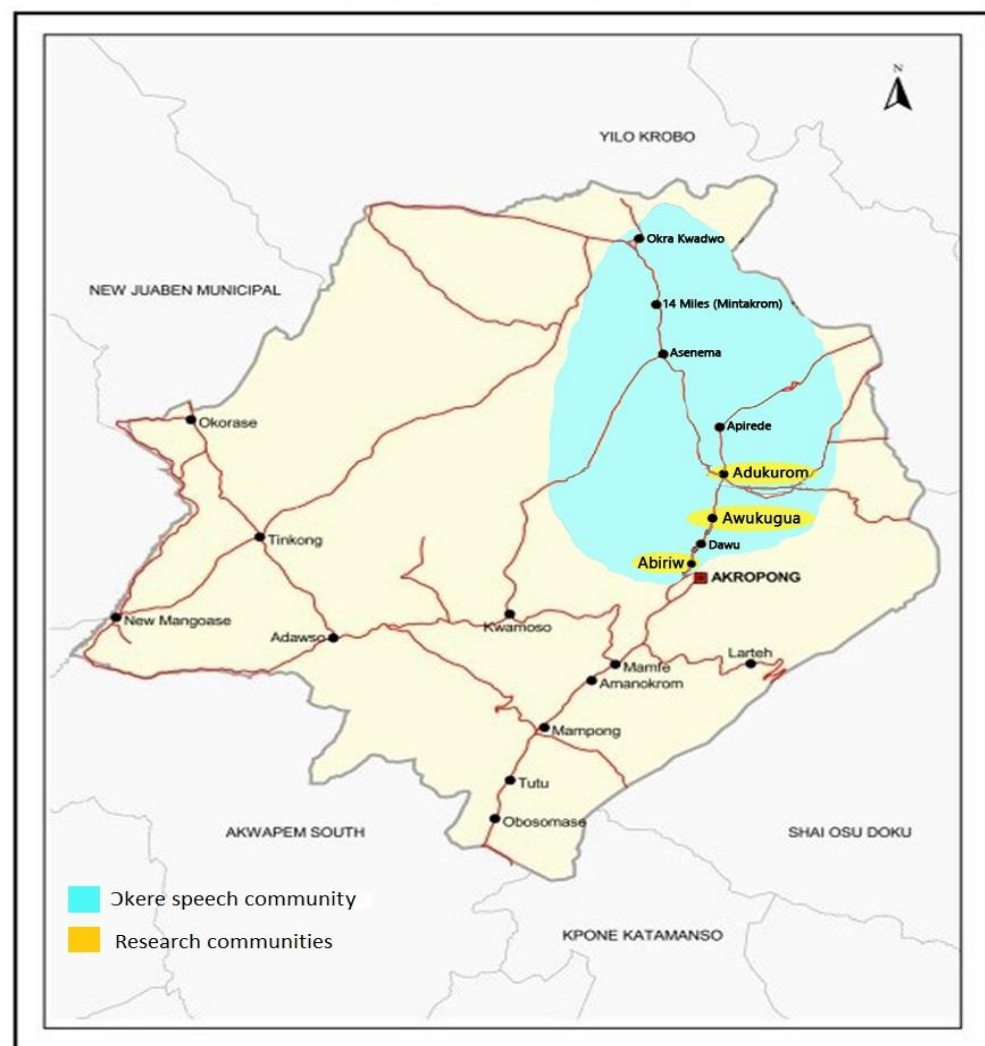


Figure 3: A map of Akwapim North district showing the three research communities (Adopted from Ghana Statistical service 2010).

ABIRIW

Abiriw, one of the communities selected for the study, is located near Akropong, an Akan speech community. Its selection will help determine the degree of exposure to Akan in the Okere speech community (between Akan and Okere) at Abiriw and how far the contact with Akropong has influenced language choice at Abiriw. According to the Akwapim North district Assembly, Abiriw has a population of 5,124.

One of my consultants, Opanyin Kofi Adade Larbi, an opinion leader and a native of Abiriw, opines that almost everybody at Abiriw is bilingual due to formal education, intermarriages and the proximity to Akropong. He describes members of the Abiriw speech community as very hospitable hence the metaphorical expression *Ɔsen kese a ogyee ahɔho* ‘The big bowl that accepts the stranger’ written boldly at the entrance of the Chief of Abiriw palace.

According to him, this label sums up how the generosity of the speech community has ended up to being relegated to the background by their host (Akans from Akropong). Ironically, the inscription is written in Akan but not in Okere depicting the pattern of language choice advocated by Batibo (2005).

Abiriw and Akropong are separated by just a street. Akropong is the capital of the Akwapim North district. It is a cosmopolitan town whilst Abiriw is a small town with a few public and civil servants who are mainly teachers and policemen. The two communities share a common lorry station. Apart from that, most of the members of the Abiriw speech community either attend school or work at Akropong.

AWUKUGUA

Awukugua is another research community for the study. It is located between Dawu and Adukurom. It was selected because of its traditional beliefs. It is believed to have been the capital of the Okere state in the past. Awukugua is a community with a population of about 3,097 (Akwapim North District Assembly). Just like Abiriw, members of this speech community are predominantly farmers and traders. Nana Titiriku Bampoe, a sub-chief of Awukugua and one of my consultants, narrated that the Okere state was reorganized by the Akyems in the 16th century. He explained that the Akyems, an Akan ethnic group also in the Eastern region of Ghana, helped to drive away the Akwamus who were harassing the Okere in the 17th century. After the defeat of the Akwamu, the Okere speech community made the Akyems, who settled at Akropong their over lords till today. Nana Titiriku Bampoe reiterated that this contact greatly influenced the Okere speech community to be bilingual in Akan and Okere.

ADUKUROM

Adukurom is the third community selected for the study; it is the capital of the Okere speech community and has a population of 9, 4441 (Akwapim North district Assembly) It is the third largest town after Akropong and Mampong per the Akwapim North district Assembly rating for population projections in 2014. Nana Duasa an Adadi of Adukurom attested to what Nana Titiriku Bampoe of Awukugua had narrated about the Okere speech community and how they came into contact with Akans. He states that the introduction of chieftaincy changed the political organization of Okere. He elaborates that the

position of an Adadi is now a landlord who formulates rules for the chief to implement. He however, added that presently, the two work hand in hand to complement each other.

Adukurom is more heterogeneous than the other communities selected for the study because of its location. It lies along the Somanya, Koforidua main road and shares boundaries with Awukugua and Somanya, a Dangme speech community. Furthermore, there are a lot of Ewe settlers who are predominantly farmers, most of the women are traders who buy from the surrounding villages and towns to sell making members of this community multilingual.

It was selected due to its location and multilingualism to check the influence of these variables on their language choices. Adukurom is the only Okere community that celebrates Odwira in addition to Akwasidae and Ohum, Odwira in Akan means purification or cleansing.

2.3.2 Sampling Size and Sampling Procedure

The stratified random sampling technique was used for selecting subjects for this study. This sampling procedure involves the researcher conducting preliminary studies to use in stratifying his population into smaller groups called stratum for a good representation of the population involved into professions, ages, geographical locations etc... (As de Vos et.al 2011:230).

In that light, thirty participants were selected from each research community for the study. These participants were selected based on their ethnicity as members of the Okere speech community and natives of their specific communities. Besides that, their occupations and educational backgrounds were also considered. In all ninety respondents made up of

traditional rulers, teachers, students, traders and farmers aged between 11 and 60 were selected. These ninety participants were categorized based on their ages and occupations into five strata. In relation to the stratification each stratum has six members.

2.3.3 Techniques for Data Collection

Data for the study was sourced from schools, churches, markets, homes and other social places through preliminary studies. A twenty-four item questionnaire divided into four broad sections was distributed to the 90 respondents (see appendix). The questions dwelt on participants' language background, linguistic repertoire, language proficiency and language use at domains, apart from that nine respondents who were selected based on the revelations made in chapter 3 were also interviewed in chapter four.

The process of data collection started from June 2016 to March 2017. A total of twenty different places were visited. This included three basic schools, three markets, six homes, six churches and two hospitals. During these visits questionnaires were distributed and interviews were also conducted. Each participant was interviewed for a maximum of fifteen minutes and a minimum of ten minutes depending on participant's level of education.

2.4 A Summary of the chapter

This chapter reviewed related literature relevant to the study under the following themes: majority and minority language contact, language shift and maintenance in some communities, the theoretical frameworks within which data will be analysed. These are; sociolinguistic variationist approach and Batibo (2005) triglossic structure model. Also sources of data used, methods

and instruments used for data collection, techniques and procedures for analysis of data were also discussed. The next chapter discusses variations in language choice at Okere.

CHAPTER THREE

VARIATIONS IN LANGUAGE CHOICE AT OKERE

3.0 Introduction

The chapter discusses data gathered from a 24 item questionnaire administered to 90 respondents. The questions were divided into five sections to establish patterns of language use and attitudes of members of Okere speech community to their language. The questions centred on participants' biographical information, linguistic repertoire, language proficiency, domains of language use and attitude towards Okere. All these were aimed at gathering adequate and appropriate data on respondents' bio data, settlement patterns, educational background and attitudes towards Okere. These were done to identify the motivations for language choices in the three communities. The questions were discussed in Twi since I am a native Akan speaker and all the participants were bilingual in Twi and Okere.

3.1 Biographical Information

The objective for this information is to unravel the link between respondents' background, settlement patterns, linguistic repertoire and patterns of language use. Besides that, data gathered will also assist in identifying the implications of the presence of dominant languages such as English and Akan to Okere.

Table 3.1: Biographical information of respondents

Table 3.1 gives detailed biographical information about respondents to link respondents' linguistic behaviours to their backgrounds.

		Frequency	Percentage (%)
Gender	Male	45	50.0%
	Female	45	50.0%
Age	11 – 20 years	18	20.0%
	21 – 30 years	18	20.0%
	31 – 40 years	18	20.0%
	41 – 50 years	18	20.0%
	51 – 60 years	18	20.0%
Education	None	7	7.7%
	Basic	27	30.0%
	Secondary	33	36.7%
	Tertiary	23	25.6%
Occupation	Trader	18	20.0%
	Student	18	20.0%
	Traditional ruler	18	20.0%
	Teacher	18	20.0%
	Farmer	18	20.0%
Place of residence	Abiriw	30	33.3%
	Awukugua	30	33.3%
	Adukurom	30	33.3%
Place of birth	Okere-speaking area	55	63.3%
	Twi-speaking area	25	28.9%
	Sehwi-speaking area	3	3.3%
	Ga-speaking area	4	4.4%
	Brosa-speaking area	3	3.3%

Father's hometown	Okere-speaking area	77	85.6%
	Twi-speaking area	9	10.0%
	Ewe-speaking area	2	2.2%
	Wale-speaking area	1	1.1%
	Anum/Gwa-speaking area	1	1.1%
Mother's hometown	Okere-speaking area	76	84.4%
	Twi-speaking area	14	15.6%

As shown on table 3.1, 90 respondents were used; this was made up of 45 males and 45 females. Each community was represented by 30 respondents made up of 15 males and 15 females, ages of respondents ranged between 11-60 years. To get a fair representation of respondents the ages were categorized into five; 11-20, 21-30, 31-40, 41-50 and 51 -60. Each range has 18 respondents (20%) of the total number of 90 respondents. In relation to respondents' occupations, each of the three communities has 6 (7%) respondents each of teachers, traditional rulers, traders, students and farmers.

The educational background of respondents is very crucial to this study because one of the tenets of Batibo's "triglossic structure model" is the presence of a foreign language, specifically an "ex- colonial language" in the linguistic repertoire of an educated African. Dakubu (1988:164) also argues that majority of members of Okere speech community are competent in English since "formal education was established there over a decade" an argument confirmed by Animah (2015:6). In this regard, the study will examine the linguistic repertoires of both the educated and the uneducated respondents to identify how one's level of education has an impact on his or her linguistic repertoire and language choice.

In relation to respondents' educational background the data indicates that 83 which represents 92% of the total number of respondents have acquired formal education while 7, constituting (8%) have had no formal education. This buttresses the assertions by Bramson (1981:2), Dakubu (1988:164) and Animah (2015:6) that there is a high literacy rate among members of the Okere speech community.

Table 3.1 also sheds some light on respondents' parental history. The data reveals that a total of 76 (84%) respondents from all the three communities have parents who are both native speakers of Okere. In contrast 14 constituting (16%) of the total number of respondents stated that they had parents from different ethno-linguistic backgrounds. To be specific this group of respondents have one parent being a native speaker of Okere and the other from one of the following language backgrounds. Akan, Wale, Ewe and Anum. Abiriw recorded the highest of 5 respondents as against 3 respondents at Awukugua and 1 respondent at Adukurom whose fathers are from Akan backgrounds. The other 5 respondents have fathers from Ewe, Wale and Anum speaking areas. Responses for mother's hometown show that 76 representing (84%) of respondents have parents who are both native speakers of Okere. On the other hand, 14 representing (16%) of respondents also reported that, their mothers are native speakers of Akan. Abiriw and Adukurom recorded the highest of 6 respondents each out of these 14 respondents while Awukugua recorded 2 respondents. Similarly data on father's hometown shows that as many as 77 representing (86%) of respondents claimed that their fathers were native speakers of Okere, while 13 representing (14%) respondents reported that their fathers were from Akan, Ewe, Wale and Anum backgrounds.

The data reinforces the claim by Bramson (1981) Dakubu (1988) and Animah (2015) that there is a high literacy rate at Okere. Another essential socio – cultural information presented by the data is the high incidence of endogamous marriages among members of the Okere speech community. A situation that presupposes that Okere is the choice for intra-group activities within primary domains.

Furthermore, Table 3. 1 reveals that majority of respondents 55 representing (61%) were born in the Okere speech community, while 35 representing (39%) of respondents were born outside the Okere speech community. The data clearly shows that majority of respondents who claimed to have been born outside Okere speaking areas were born in Twi speaking areas. Other language areas such as Ga, Brosa and Sehwi were also recorded. The breakdown is, 4 representing (4%) respondents were born in Ga speaking areas, and 3 representing (3%) respondents each for Brosa and Sehwi speaking areas. With regard to the three communities, 16 representing (53%) respondents from Adukurom claimed to have been born at Okere speaking area while Abiriw recorded 19(63%) respondents of its total respondents who were born in Okere speaking area, the highest number of 20(67%) respondents were recorded at Awukugua. However, majority of the 35 (39%) respondents who were born outside Okere were born in Twi speaking areas. Both Adukurom and Abiriw recorded 9 (30%) respondents each of such respondents while Awukugua recorded 7(23%). Moreover, the settlement patterns of respondents were also discussed to find out the influence of other languages on their language choices. Table 3.2 has data on respondents' last town of residence before resettling home.

Table 3.2: Cross tabulation of respondents' last town of residence before resettling home

Data in table 3.2 presents detailed information on respondents' last town of residence before resettling home. The rationale for this data is to get a comprehensive knowledge on respondents' exposure to languages and the influence of these languages on their patterns of language choice.

Last town of residence before moving			
Place of residence		Frequency	Percentage (%)
Abiriw	Okere-speaking area	1	3.3%
	Twɔ-speaking area	11	36.6%
	Sehwi-speaking area	0	0.0%
	Ga-speaking area	3	10.0%
	Dangme-speaking area	1	3.3%
	Efutu-speaking area	0	0.0%
	Brosa-speaking area	0	0.0%
	Not applicable	14	46.7%
Awukugua	Okere-speaking area	4	13.3%
	Twɔ-speaking area	7	23.3%
	Sehwi-speaking area	0	0.0%
	Ga-speaking area	4	13.3%
	Dangme-speaking area	2	6.7%
	Efutu-speaking area	1	3.3%
	Brosa-speaking area	2	6.6%
	Not applicable	10	33.3%
Adukurom	Okere-speaking area	2	6.7%
	Twɔ-speaking area	10	33.3%

Sehwi-speaking area	3	10.0%
Ga-speaking area	5	16.7%
Dangme-speaking area	0	0.0%
Efutu-speaking area	0	0.0%
Brosa-speaking area	1	3.3%
Not applicable	9	30.0%

3.2.1 Respondents Settlement Patterns

A critical analysis of the data in table 3.2 shows that Adukurom recorded the highest number of 21(70%) respondents who migrated from home followed by Awukugua with 20 representing (67%) of respondents and Abiriw with 16(53%) of respondents. The data demonstrates that a substantial number of respondents in all the three communities reported to have lived in Twi speaking areas. Abiriw recorded the highest of 11(37%) of respondents, while two communities Awukugua and Adukurom recorded 10 representing (33%) of respondents each. The remaining respondents migrated to places such as Ga, Dangme, Brosa and Sehwi speaking areas with this breakdown; Abiriw recorded 3 respondents who alleged that they migrated to Ga speaking areas, while Dangme and Okere recorded 1 respondent each. Likewise, Awukugua recorded these settlement patterns; 4 representing (13%) settled at Okere speaking areas, while another 4 respondents also settled at Ga speaking areas and 2 respondents each for Dangme and Brosa speaking areas. Similarly, 1 respondent reported to have lived at Efutu speaking area. Besides respondents from Adukurom also settled at these places Okere recorded 2 respondents, while 3 respondents settled at Sehwi speaking areas, Ga speaking areas

recorded the highest of 5 respondents and 1 respondent claiming to have settled at Brosa speaking area.

Still on migration, it is empirical to note that migration plays a major role in bringing to environments where languages such as Twi, Ga, Dangme, Brosa, and Sehwi are spoken which calls for the use of a lingua franca for communication. Evidence of this contact situation is shown in the data of this study. The outcome of these migrations brought these immigrants into contact with members of other speech communities which influenced the need for a lingua franca for communication, increasing the number of languages in their linguistic repertoire as displayed in table 3.3.

Table 3.3: Cross tabulation of respondents Linguistic Repertoire

Batibo (2005:16) argues that Africans are multilingual because they are exposed to many languages. In relation to this I sought to find out the number of languages spoken by respondents. Table 3.3

		Number of languages spoken	
		Frequency	Percentage (%)
Abiriw	Two	2	6.7%
	Three	13	43.3%
	Four	9	30.0%
	Five	3	10.0%
	Six	3	10.0%
Awukugua	Two	4	13.3%
	Three	13	43.3%
	Four	9	30.0%
	Five	4	13.3%
	Six	0	0.0%
Adukurom	Two	4	13.3%

Three	15	50.0%
Four	8	26.7%
Five	3	10.0%
Six	0	0.0%

3.3.1 Linguistic repertoire of respondents

Data gathered in table 3.3 lends credence to the intensity of multilingualism in Okere. This is evidenced by data gathered from all the three communities. Specifically, Abiriw recorded the highest of 28 representing (93%) of respondents in Abiriw who have knowledge in 3 or more languages while both Adukurom and Awukugua recorded 26 (87%) each. The rest of all three communities had knowledge in 2 languages, Abiriw recorded 2 respondents representing (7%) of respondents, while Awukugua and Adukurom recorded 4 respondents each (13%) each. It is interesting to note that only two respondents out of the 81(90%) respondents who claimed to be competent in three or more languages had no educational background. Apart from that, one language that all 79 respondents who claimed to be competent in three or more languages recorded was English which signifies that the acquisition of English was through formal education. On the other hand, three respondents of Abiriw claimed to be competent in six languages which is the highest recorded.

The findings revealed that none of the respondents was monolingual which reaffirms the conviction that monolingualism is rare in Africa due to the presence of many languages. The next discussion is on respondents' language of proficiency.

3.4 Language Proficiency

Respondents were asked about their proficiency in languages they speak, so as to ascertain their degrees of competence in languages mentioned in their linguistic repertoires. This will help unravel the implications of presence of dominant languages such as Akan and English to Okere in the three communities.

Table 3.4: Cross tabulation of Abiriw respondents' language proficiency

The proficiency level of languages spoken by Abiriw respondents is displayed in table 3.4.

Abiriw			
Language Proficiency		Frequency	Percentage (%)
First language of proficiency	Okere	19	63.3%
	Twi	11	36.7%
	Ewe	0	0.0%
	Brosa	0	0.0%
Second language of proficiency	Okere	10	33.3%
	Twi	18	60.0%
	Ga	0	0.0%
	English	1	3.3%
	Fante	1	3.3%
	Brosa	0	0.0%
	Wale	0	0.0%
	Anum	0	0.0%
Third language of proficiency	Okere	1	3.3%
	Twi	1	3.3%
	Ga	0	0.0%

Ewe	1	3.3%
English	23	76.7%
Fante	0	0.0%
Pidgin	0	0.0%
Dangme	1	3.3%
Hausa	1	3.3%
Not applicable	2	6.7%

3.4.1 Language Proficiency of Abiriw Respondents

Data in table 3.4 signifies that a significant number of 19 respondents representing (63%) at Abiriw are most proficient in ɔkere their heritage language than all languages in their linguistic repertoire. Apart from that, Twi recorded a substantial number of 11 (37%) respondents. The outcome of this data portrays the degree of bilingualism at Abiriw which can be attributed to the proximity of Abiriw to Akropong which has led to the sharing of some social amenities by the two communities (Animah 2015:6). By this it is not surprising that 18 of respondents at Abiriw ranked Twi as the second language they were most proficient in among languages in their linguistic repertoire. Furthermore 10 which is (33%) of respondents ranked ɔkere as the second language they were most proficient in.

In the same perspective, 1 respondent said English was his second language of proficiency while another chose Fante. On another note, data for third language of proficiency obviously shows English as an additional language to the indigenous languages by recording 23(77%) of respondents to become the third language respondents reported to be proficient in.

Table 3.5: Cross tabulation of Awukugua respondents' language proficiency.

Table 3.5 has data on Awukugua respondents' levels of language proficiency.

Language Proficiency		Awukugua	
		Frequency	Percentage (%)
First language of proficiency	Okere	23	76.7%
	Twi	6	20.0%
	Ewe	1	3.3%
	Brosa	0	0.0%
Second language of proficiency	Okere	7	23.3%
	Twi	19	63.3%
	Ga	2	6.7%
	English	1	3.3%
	Fante	0	0.0%
	Brosa	0	0.0%
	Wale	0	0.0%
	Anum	1	3.3%
Third language of proficiency	Okere	1	3.3%
	Twi	3	10.0%
	Ga	1	3.3%
	Ewe	0	0.0%
	English	18	60.0%
	Fante	1	3.3%
	Pidgin	0	0.0%
	Dangme	1	3.3%
	Hausa	0	0.0%
	Not applicable	5	16.7%

3.4.2 Language Proficiency of Awukugua Respondents

Data in table 3.5 shows Okere the heritage language recording the highest percentage of competent speakers i.e. 23 respondents representing (77%) of respondents of total number to be the language that respondents are most proficient in. Twi ranked second by recording 6(20%) respondents and Ewe recorded 1 respondent again.

With regard to second language of proficiency the trend started at Abiriw continued. Twi recorded 19(63%) to dominate with Okere trailing behind with 7 which represents (23%) of respondents. A few respondents chose Ga, English, and Anum.

In relation to third language of proficiency the language abilities of respondents at Awukugua showed that a majority of 18(60%) respondents claimed that among languages available to them English ranked third. Likewise, 3 (10%) respondents ranked Twi as their third language of proficiency.

In other respects, languages like Dangme, Okere, Ga and Fante recorded 1(3%) of respondents each.

Table 3.6: Cross tabulation of Adukurom respondents' language proficiency.

Table 3.6 provides data on respondents of Adukurom level of competence in languages in their repertoire

Language Proficiency		Adukurom	
		Frequency	Percentage (%)
First language of proficiency	Okere	23	76.7%
	Akan	6	20.0%
	Ewe	0	0.0%

	Brosa	1	3.3%
Second language of proficiency	Okere	6	20.0%
	Akan	22	73.3%
	Ga	0	0.0%
	English	0	0.0%
	Fante	0	0.0%
	Brosa	1	3.3%
	Wale	1	3.3%
	Anum	0	0.0%
Third language of proficiency	Okere	1	3.3%
	Akan	2	6.7%
	Ga	0	0.0%
	Ewe	0	0.0%
	English	21	70.0%
	Fante	0	0.0%
	Pidgin	1	3.3%
	Dangme	1	3.3%
	Hausa	0	0.0%
	Not applicable	4	13.3%

3.4.3 Language Proficiency of Adukurom Respondents

Data for language proficiency at Adukurom as shown in table 3.6 followed the same trend as it did at Abiriw and Awukugua. Out of the 30 respondents, 23(77%) bilinguals and multilinguals indicated that they were most proficient in Okere than any other language. Twi was ranked second with 6(20%) respondents while, Brosa recorded 1(3%) respondent. Similarly, the picture for second language proficiency too did not change. Twi dominated followed by Okere with languages such as Brosa and Wale trialling behind. English again recorded majority of 21(70%) respondents to be ranked third by respondents in

the hierarchy of language proficiency. Furthermore, Twi, Pidgin, Okere and Dangme which were also mentioned recorded insignificant percentages.

3.4.3.1 Comparison of data in tables 3.4, 3.5 and 3.6

An analysis of data gathered on language proficiency brings to light some striking similarities across the three communities. Firstly, the data reiterates the highly held opinion by Batibo (2005:1) that multilingualism is intense in Africa than any other continent in the world. This is evidenced by the number of languages, listed in respondents' linguistic repertoire; in all three communities being investigated majority of respondents declared that they had varying degrees of competence in three or more languages.

Okere seemed to be a highly ranked language in terms of speakers' proficiency in all three communities. Abiriw recorded 19 (63%) of respondents while Awukugua and Adukurom recorded a significant number of 23 (77%) each. Although majority of the respondents migrated to other parts of the country at a point in time, the data indicates that they still used their language which could be traced to their parents as indicated in table 3.1. More so, there is a clear indication that the influence of Twi on Okere is more intense at Abiriw, the nearest community to Akropong which is a prominent Akan community, than the other two communities.

Besides, the data further indicates that the acquisition of exoglossic languages such as English and French correlates with respondents' educational background to affirm the assertion by Batibo (2005) that foreign languages such as English, French, Portuguese etc... are acquired through formal education. This is evidenced by the data in table 3.1 which shows that 81

representing (90%) of respondents had varying degrees of competence in English. Interestingly, only 2 representing (7%) of respondents who acquired formal education had no competence in English which to me is not real. A revelation which is unusual because they reported to have acquired formal education up to the level of Middle form four.

In another respects, 3 respondents representing (10%) of respondents from Abiriw revealed that they have varying degrees of competence in six languages. From all the three communities, this appears to be the highest percentage of multilingualism in the data. This can be attributed to migration as all three respondents migrated to Accra, Tema and Asamankese in Accra and Eastern regions of Ghana to live there at a point in time before resettling home.

Data on Adukurom presents the same results as that of Awukugua. A majority of 26 respondents, which is (87%) of respondents have competence in three or more languages. Besides 4 (13%) of respondents stated that they speak only 2 languages, an issue worth discussing is that no respondent is monolingual which buttresses the claim that monolingualism is rare in Africa due to high levels of linguistic heterogeneity in the continent.

Over and above that, the data reinforces the claim by Fishman (1991) and Clyne and Kipp (1999) that the home is crucial to language maintenance, as shown in table 3.2. It is clear that notwithstanding the fact that as many as 50 representing (56%) of respondents across all the three communities migrated from home to towns were Akan, Brosa, Sehwi, Ga, Ewe and Dangme are spoken but they are all proficient in Okere their heritage language. How

these languages available to respondents are utilized in the various domains will be discussed in the next section of the study.

3.5. Domains of Language Use

According to Romaine (2000:35) “multilinguals” use languages available to them to serve their communicative needs just as monolinguals vary their “styles” to signal a choice. In that light, I sought to know how members of the ɔkere speech community use the languages available to them in domains such as home, church, market, workplace, school and hospital. The essence of this is to establish social factors that trigger language choice in the ɔkere speech community.

Table 3.7: Cross tabulation of language use at home

Data in table 3.7 provides language use patterns with three different kinsmen at home. The outcome is a signal that the home remains the main place for language maintenance.

	Language use at home					
	ɔkere	Twi	ɔkere & Twi	Ewe	Pidgin	Brosa
Abiriw						
Parents	25	5	-	-	-	-
Siblings	16	7	4	1	2	-
Friends	12	3	15	-	-	-
Awukugua						
Parents	23	7	-	-	-	-
Siblings	19	4	6	1	-	-
Friends	16	2	12	-	-	-

Adukurom						
Parents	21	6	2	-	-	1
Siblings	17	4	8	-	-	1
Friends	15	10	4	-	1	-

3.4.1 Language use at home

A critical look at patterns of language use at home in table 3.7 depicts a trend that presupposes that parents are transmitting ɔkɛrɛ, their heritage language to their children at home, in all the three communities. Abiriw recorded the highest of 25 (83%) respondents who claim to use ɔkɛrɛ at home with their parents, Awukugua follows with 23 (77%) and Adukurom 21 (70%) respondents. The other languages Ewe, Pidgin, and Brosa recorded figures that did not make any significant impact. Still at home language use with siblings still declares ɔkɛrɛ as the dominant language but compared to that of parents the youth aged between 11 and 20 years prefer using Twi more than ɔkɛrɛ. An indication of exposure to Akan more than ɔkɛrɛ which can be attributed to formal education that makes the Akwapim dialect of Akan a language studied at school in the Eastern region of Ghana. Abiriw recorded 16 representing (53%) of respondents who use Twi at home with their siblings, Awukugua recorded 19 representing (63%) of respondents. In a similar way, ɔkɛrɛ recorded 17(57%) of respondents at Adukurom. Twi recorded 7 respondents as against 2 and 4 respondents for Awukugua and Adukurom. In the same order the choice of language for friends follows the same trend with ɔkɛrɛ recording the highest of 17(57%) at Awukugua while Adukurom follows with 15(50%) respondents and Abiriw recorded 12(40%) of respondents. The use of

Twi with friends recorded the highest number of respondents at Adukurom compared to Abiriw and Awukugua. However, the trend changed with the use of Okere and Twi with friends in the same domain. Both Abiriw and Adukurom recorded the highest number of 15 respondents, followed by Awukugua with 12 respondents and Adukurom recorded 4 respondents. A comparison of patterns of language use at home depicts a trend that is normal with other researches on language shift and maintenance which projects the aged as the transmitters of Okere at home which to me creates a bond between kinsmen. It also demonstrates that the youth are exposed to other languages more than the aged.

Table 3.8: Cross tabulation of language use in the community.

Data for language use in the three communities is shown in table 3.8

	Language use in the community						
	Okere	Twi	Okere & Twi	Twi & Ga	Ga	Fante	English
Abiriw							
Friends	17	10	1	-	-	1	1
Awukugua							
Friends	22	4	4	-	-	-	-
Adukurom							
Friends	19	4	5	1	1	-	-

3.5.1 Language Use in the Community

A comparison of data from the three communities displays a pattern that makes Okere the dominate language in the neighbourhoods of the three communities. Awukugua recorded 22 representing (73%) respondents while

Adukurom recorded 19(63%) and Abiriw with the least number of 17 which represents (57%) of respondents. However, the use of Twi in the three communities does not change as the picture of the influence of Twi on ɔkere at Abiriw is becoming clearer. Abiriw recorded 10 representing (33%) of respondents as against 4 respondents each recorded at Awukugua and Adukurom. The data reiterates the assertion made earlier that the influence of Twi on ɔkere is intense at Abiriw than Awukugua and Adukurom. Along the same line, data at Awukugua reveals that the use of ɔkere is also intense at Awukugua more than Abiriw and Adukurom. In other instances, respondents became bilingual by using both ɔkere and Twi in the community. In relation to the use of two languages in the community Adukurom had the highest number of 5(17%) respondents, and Awukugua recorded 4(13%) respondents with Abiriw recording only 1 (3%) respondent who uses two languages together in the community.

All in all, Abiriw and Adukurom exhibited some similarities in language use patterns by recording a variety of languages. Abiriw recorded English and Fante, (a dialect of Akan) while Adukurom recorded Ga and a combination of Twi and Ga. The choices of languages in this domain reflect the locations of Abiriw and Adukurom which are nearer other speech communities with different languages while Awukugua is situated in between two ɔkere towns.

Table 3.9: Cross tabulation of language use in church.

Data for language use in church is displayed in table 3.9

	Language use in church				
	Okere	Twi	Okere & Twi	Twi & English	Twi, English & Okere
Abiriw					
Church congregation	-	15	2	13	-
Church group meetings	-	27	-	3	
Awukugua					
Church congregation	3	15	3	8	1
Church group meetings	-	30	-	-	-
Adukurom					
Church congregation	-	14	3	11	2
Church group meetings	-	21	-	9	-

3.5.2. Language Use in Church

The pattern of language use at church as shown in table 3.9 is sharply divided into two. Two languages formed the majority; the use of solely Twi, followed by the use of Twi and English. The use of two languages recorded 13 respondents at Abiriw, 8 at Awukugua and 11 respondents at Adukurom. Other respondents at Awukugua and Adukurom however reported that they use two indigenous languages Okere and Twi but the numbers were insignificant. In the same sequence, the use of three languages Twi, English and Okere together were also recorded at Awukugua and Adukurom.

Surprisingly the same respondents exhibited a different linguistic behaviour by being monolingual this time, in language choice for church group meetings. As displayed, a substantial number of 27(90%) of respondents at Abiriw, while all the 30(100%) respondents at Awukugua reported using Twi for group meetings at church.

Likewise, Twi recorded 21representing (70%) of respondents at Adukurom. In a related move, the use of two languages Twi and English for group meetings at church recorded 3(10%) respondents at Abiriw and 9(30) at Adukurom. The data demonstrates how gradually the same respondents who used Ɔkere at home and in the immediate environments are now relegating Ɔkere to the background in favour of dominant languages. Within the same domain there are two patterns exhibited, whereby language use with congregation looks more formal than that of group meetings. In all three communities Awukugua is the only community that recorded the use of monolingual Ɔkere in church with congregation.

Table 3.10: Cross tabulation of language use in school.

The data in table 3.10 presents language use at school by 18 respondents who are students.

	Language use at school						
	Ɔkere	Twi	Twi & English	English	English & Ga	Pidgin	N/A
Abiriw							
School friends	-	3	-	2	-	1	24
School teachers	-	-	-	6	-	-	24

Awukugua							
School friends	2	2	-	1	1	-	23
School teachers	-	-	-	6	-	-	24
Adukurom							
School friends	-	1	3	1	-	1	24
School teachers	-	-	-	6	-	-	24

3.5.3 Language Use at School

The correlation between one's educational background and his patterns of language use as displayed in table 3.10 is crucial to this study. In this respect, language choice at school will substantiate the relevance of the 'triglossia structure model' to the study. This question targeted only the 18 respondents from the three communities who are students.

The outcome shows that respondents use different languages with their teachers and friends at school in all the three communities. Responses from Abiriw show that students use a variety of three languages at school with their friends these are Twi, English and Pidgin. Reciprocally, students at Awukugua use Okere, Twi, English and a combination of English and Ga with friends. On the other hand, respondents at Adukurom use languages such as Twi, English, Pidgin and a combination of Twi and English with friends. Surprisingly the same group of respondents who displayed competence in a variety of languages suddenly became monolinguals in their classrooms. They strictly adhered to the language policy at school which makes the speaking of an indigenous language prohibited till it is time for the study of Ghanaian language as a

subject. Even with the study of Ghanaian language there are restrictions. In the case of the Okere speech community it is the Akwapim dialect of Akan. I believe that the outcome establishes that the school is an institution which physically is part of the community but with a culture that makes it different from other domains in the community. These disparities of language use patterns in the school environment give a clue of the restrictions in the classroom which especially with teachers which is official so demands the use of an official language while that with friends had no restrictions.

Table 3.11: Cross tabulation of language use at the market

Table 3.11 presents data on language use at the market in the three communities.

Language use in the market				
	Okere	Twi	Okere & Twi	N/A
Abiriw	10	18	1	1
Awukugua	17	7	6	-
Adukurom	17	5	8	-

3.5.4 Language Use in the Market

Table 3.11 gives an idea about the economic importance of the various languages in the linguistic repertoire of respondents. The data indicates that at Abiriw 18 respondents representing (60%) claim to use Twi at the market, in a similar fashion, Awukugua recorded 7 respondents who also said they use Twi at the market while Adukurom recorded 5 respondents. On a similar note, the use of Okere at the market, recorded 10 respondents at Abiriw, and 17

representing (57%) at both Adukurom and Awukugua. The data again reinforces the dominance of Twi at Abiriw which makes Twi a language of economic importance at Abiriw. On the contrast Awukugua and Adukurom have their heritage language to be the language of economic importance to them.

Table 3.12: Cross tabulation of language use at workplace (Abiriw)

Data in table 3.12 shows how respondents' make use of languages available to them at the workplace for unofficial and official functions. Respondents were also asked to state languages they use at the work place to help establish the linguistic behaviours of respondents at the workplace.

3.5.5 Language use at the workplace

Language use at workplace at Abiriw for official and unofficial functions.		
	Friends	Office
Okere	2	-
Twi	10	-
Okere & Twi	-	-
English	1	19
Twi & English	5	-
Brosa	-	-
Fante	-	-
Others	1	-
N/A	11	11

3.5.5.1 Language Use at the Workplace (Abiriw)

This question was intended for workers of white collar jobs among the 90 respondents. At Abiriw language choice with friends for unofficial functions at the workplace is predominately Twi. Twi recorded 10 respondents as language used with friends for unofficial functions at the workplace, those who reported that they use Twi and English for unofficial functions at the workplace are 5 representing (18%) of respondents while 1 respondent indicated that he uses English. At the office all 19 respondents use English for official duties

Table 3.13: Cross tabulation of language use at the workplace (Awukugua)

Table 3.13 presents the restrictions in choice of languages at the workplace.

Language use at the workplace at Awukugua for official and unofficial functions.		
	Friends	Office
Okere	1	-
Twi	3	-
Okere & Twi	-	-
English	4	10
Twi & English	2	-
Brosa	-	-
Fante	-	-
Others	-	-
N/A	20	20

3.5.5.2 Language use at workplace (Awukugua)

At the workplace 10 respondents at Awukugua who are workers said they use three languages Okere, Twi English and a combination of Twi and English for

unofficial duties at the workplace. On the contrary, these same respondents switched to English for official duties at the office.

Table 3.14: Cross tabulation of language use at the workplace (Adukurom)

Table 3.14 presents data on language use at the workplace at Adukurom.

Language use at the workplace at Adukurom for official and unofficial functions.		
	Friends	Office
Okere	1	-
Twi	1	-
Okere & Twi	1	-
English	3	17
Twi & English	10	-
Brosa	-	-
Fante	-	-
Others	1	-
N/A	13	13

3.5.5.3 Language use at the Workplace (Adukurom)

Adukurom recorded the highest number of 17 respondents who are workers, and 10 out of this number stated that they use two languages Twi and English for unofficial purposes at the workplace. On the other hand, 7 respondents also declared that they use solely Okere, English and Twi, and a combination of the three languages for unofficial duties. For official purposes, all 17 respondents reported that they use English.

A comparison of tables 3.12, 3.13 and 3.14 presents a similar picture to the variations that exist in language use at workplace. These tables display a situation whereby all the 38 respondents from the three communities who answered this question used different languages for official and unofficial functions.

Table 3.15: Cross tabulation of language use at the hospital

Data for language use at the hospital is displayed in table 3.15 below.

Language use at the hospital						
	Okere	Twi	Okere & Twi	English	Twi & English	N/A
Abiriw	1	20	1	1	7	-
Awukugua	-	23	-	-	7	-
Adukurom	-	16	3	-	10	1

3.5.6 Language Use at the Hospital

Language use at the hospital as shown in table 3.15 provides a pattern that demonstrates how multilinguals are able to vary their language to suit a context and how the languages complement each other. Respondents at Awukugua relegate Okere to the background by reporting that they use Twi at the hospital. Awukugua recorded the highest of 23 respondents while Abiriw recorded 20 respondents and Adukurom 16 respondents. Some respondents reported to be bilingual at the hospital they claimed that they use Twi and English at the hospital, Adukurom recorded the highest of 10 respondents who made this declaration, while Abiriw and Awukugua recorded 7 respondents

each. Generally Akan seem to be the preferred choice of language at the hospital.

Table 3.16: Cross tabulation of language use with strangers

Data in table 3.16 dwells on respondents' choice of language with strangers

	Language use with strangers					
	Okere	Twi	Okere & Twi	English	Twi & English	N/A
Abiriw	1	22	-	1	6	-
Awukugua	-	25	-	1	4	-
Adukurom	-	16	1	-	12	1

3.5.7 Language Use with Strangers

The table 3.16 shows that majority of the members of the Okere speech community will not speak their language to strangers but will prefer to use Twi which is a lingua franca in the Southern part of Ghana. Twi recorded the highest number of 25 respondents at Awukugua followed by 22 respondents at Abiriw and 16 respondents at Adukurom. The use of Twi and English was also recorded with Adukurom recording the highest of 12 respondents while that of Abiriw was 6 respondents and 4 respondents at Awukugua. Two other respondents from Abiriw and Awukugua stated that they use solely English with strangers.

3.5.8 Comparison of tables 3.7 – 3.16 domains of language use.

A comparison of tables 3.7 – 3.16 on domains reveal a lot of similar patterns of language use across all the three communities. Okere dominates as language

used at home in varying degrees across all the three communities. This is evidenced by the numbers recorded by the three communities for language use at home with parents, siblings and friends. In a similar fashion all three communities recorded ɔkere as the language they use with their kinsmen. In the same order, all the three communities recorded minority languages such as Pidgin, Brosa and Ewe. It should be reiterated that the use of Pidgin at home was by students.

Apart from that respondents behaved differently towards the three groups of kinsmen in their homes. Majority of the respondents stated that they use ɔkere with their parents at home but that of siblings and friends although in the majority, witnessed a reduction in ɔkere in favour of Akan. The outcome buttresses the point that the aged are conservative while the youth especially those between the ages of 11 – 20 and 21- 30 find Akan to be prestigious and innovative. On another note, the language policy which favours the use of English and Akan at school may have influenced the language choices of the youth. As the study of Akan at school makes it a language for the elite in the society. Moreover, with education they might have friends who are not native speakers of ɔkere so the choice of Akan gives them access to a wider audience than ɔkere.

This notwithstanding, Abiriw and Adukurom exhibited a similar pattern of recording a variety of languages such as English, Fante, Ga and a combination of Twi and Ga while Awukugua was skewed towards Twi and ɔkere.

In church the pattern of language use was skewed towards two main languages with the congregation, languages recorded were Twi and a combination of Twi and English with insignificant differences. That of church meetings changed as Awukugua recorded the highest for the first time with all 30 respondents stating that they use Twi. At church meetings majority of the respondents prefer using Twi while 3 respondents said they use a combination of English and Twi. Adukurom somewhat recorded the highest number of respondents who stated that they use both English and Twi at church meetings. This indicates that the membership of groups in churches of the three communities differ from community to community. In relation to this, language choices for group meetings at church in the various communities differ from community to community.

The findings also revealed that although the school physically belongs to the community it has a different culture which restricts patterns of language use. In the classroom all 18(100%) students stated that they use English with their teachers but with friends they displayed their multilingualism by using a variety of languages. Respondents' choice of language with friends at school brought out some variations whereby all 3 respondents who reported that they use Okere with friends were all from Awukugua while Abiriw and Adukurom recorded the use of Pidgin with friends. Another fact worth commenting on is the language policy at school that restricts the use of Okere in school.

Besides the outcome of responses from workplace witnessed the same fashion as that of school as there were a variety of languages recorded for

unofficial functions and English the official language of the country for official functions at the office in all the three communities.

Furthermore, the market provided a very sharp difference between Abiriw and the other two communities. At Abiriw as many as 18 respondents indicated that they use Twi at the market while 10 indicated that they use Ɔkere while 1 respondent did not answer. Comparing Awukugua and Adukurom Ɔkere dominated as language used at the market. The results from Abiriw depicts a picture of people from Akropong going to buy or sell at the Abiriw market which demands the use of a common language for bargaining at the market. Since group identity plays a major role at the market.

Similarly, at the hospital Twi dominated but there were some degrees of variations. 27 respondents from Awukugua revealed they use only Twi at the hospital, while Twi recorded 20 respondents at Abiriw and 16 respondents at Adukurom, all three communities recorded the use of English and Twi but Adukurom recorded the highest of 10 respondents. This development can be linked to the location of Adukurom along the Somanya, Koforidua road with the influx of non -native speakers of Ɔkere, so calls for the use of a common language. Both Abiriw and Awukugua recorded 7 respondents each who claim to use English and Twi at the hospital. Language choice for strangers indicates that in communication understanding is ultimate so members of all the three communities will prefer using Twi, before changing to any other language. However, the use of a combination of English and Twi recorded the highest of 9 respondents at Adukurom as against 6 and 4 respondents at Abiriw and Awukugua. Just like the other analysis the locations of the communities has an influence on their language choices.

3.6 Attitude of Speakers

Attitude of speakers towards their language is paramount to the future of a language. Based on this, respondents were asked questions about their attitude towards ɔkere. The responses show an overwhelming majority of all respondents from the three communities exhibiting positive attitudes towards their heritage language. The first question was about whether respondents felt comfortable speaking ɔkere everywhere and the responses from the three communities were as follows; *Yes* recorded 28(35.9%) at Awukugua followed by both Abiriw and Adukurom with 25 (32.1%) respondents each. Majority of the respondents from all the three communities especially wished their heritage language was used at the only F.M station at Dawu instead of Twi. One of my consultants' did not hide his resentment towards the use of Akwapim Twi for most public functions since the youth at Abiriw preferred speaking Twi to ɔkere, their heritage language. Some parents added that they had barred their children from speaking Twi at home. Surprisingly respondents at Awukugua and Adukurom did not show so much resentment to the use of Twi by the youth as respondents at Abiriw did. May be the resentment from respondents at Abiriw towards the use of Twi is the rate at which Twi is used all over the town. With regard to this assertion table 3.1 provides a scenario whereby as many as 11respondents from Abiriw said Twi was their first language as opposed to 7 and 6 respondents at Awukugua and Adukurom respectively.

The second question was about whether ɔkere should be studied at school.

The responses recorded some variations as some respondents felt that it will not be prudent spending a lot of money to produce materials for the study of

Ɔkere at school. The responses show as many as 27 respondents from Abiriw indicating that Ɔkere should be studied at school as that will make the language attractive to their children who learn Twi at school.

At Awukugua 25 respondents felt the learning of Ɔkere at school will enhance the future of Ɔkere so should be learnt at school. Interestingly responses from Adukurom made a difference. Although I met groups of people speaking Ɔkere on the streets of Adukurom only 14 respondents felt it was necessary to learn Ɔkere at school. Majority felt it will be a waste of money as the demographic size of Ɔkere speakers was too small. When I probed further they said since they were all bilingual in Twi and Ɔkere there was no need to learn Ɔkere at school. Some even said there were no teachers to teach Ɔkere so the concentration should be on Twi while others felt being literate in Ɔkere had no socio-economic value but rather a waste of money. On the contrary, Nana Aduasa one of my consultants at Adukurom told me that a native had translated the Akwapim Twi Bible into Ɔkere, so on Sundays, one reading from the Bible is done in three languages English, Twi and Ɔkere instead of two at the Bethel Presbyterian church to the admiration of the congregation.

3.7 Testing of Findings against Framework

This section focuses on testing the findings of this study to Batibo's triglossic structure model one of the theoretical frameworks for this study. Firstly, Batibo focuses on the triglossic structure model to describe patterns of language use in multilingual speech communities. As stated earlier in chapter 2 Batibo (2005) explains that triglossic refers to the use of three languages by a speech community. These three languages are assigned roles based on their prestige, status and functions in the society. These three languages play roles that make

each of them crucial in a way to members of the community who have to master when to use each of them at the appropriate domain. Failure to use these languages at the appropriate places is perceived as not being communicative competent.

In relation to this work, findings point to the fact that majority of respondents in the three communities reported using Ɔkere at home and in the community. The findings reveal that majority of respondents in two of the communities Adukurom and Awukugua stated that they use Ɔkere for buying and selling at the market. In contrast the language choice for the church is predominately either in Twi or bilingual in Twi and English for congregation and Twi for group meetings. The school followed with the same pattern of language use with a sharp division between language choice for friends outside the classroom and that for teachers in the classroom.

The same pattern of language choice was exhibited at the workplace whereby a variety of local languages were used but at the office all respondents became monolingual in English with their colleagues. Based on this analysis I can confidently say that the Ɔkere speech community uses three languages Ɔkere, Twi (a dialect of Akan) and English. By this analogy the speech community of Ɔkere is a triglossic community. English the official language of Ghana is assigned official and formal duties, so it is used at school with teachers in the classroom and at the office with colleagues. With regard to these functions English occupies the top of the model and coded 'H' (High) compared to Twi and Ɔkere. In another vein, in the middle of the structure is Twi which is used in the community for wider communication such as the hospital, with strangers and for group meetings in church. Compared to English

it is coded 'L' (Low) but compared to ɔkere which is the minority language it is coded H'(High) while ɔkere the minority language is coded 'L'(Low). By the findings I can say that the patterns of language use at ɔkere is a type of doubly overlapping diglossia whereby English takes on the roles of Twi at official and formal functions, while Twi takes up the roles of ɔkere at informal public places such as funerals, hospitals, and with strangers. On the other hand, ɔkere is confined to the home and intra group activities. This relationship makes ɔkere a minority language confined to primary domains compared to Twi as represented in figure 4.

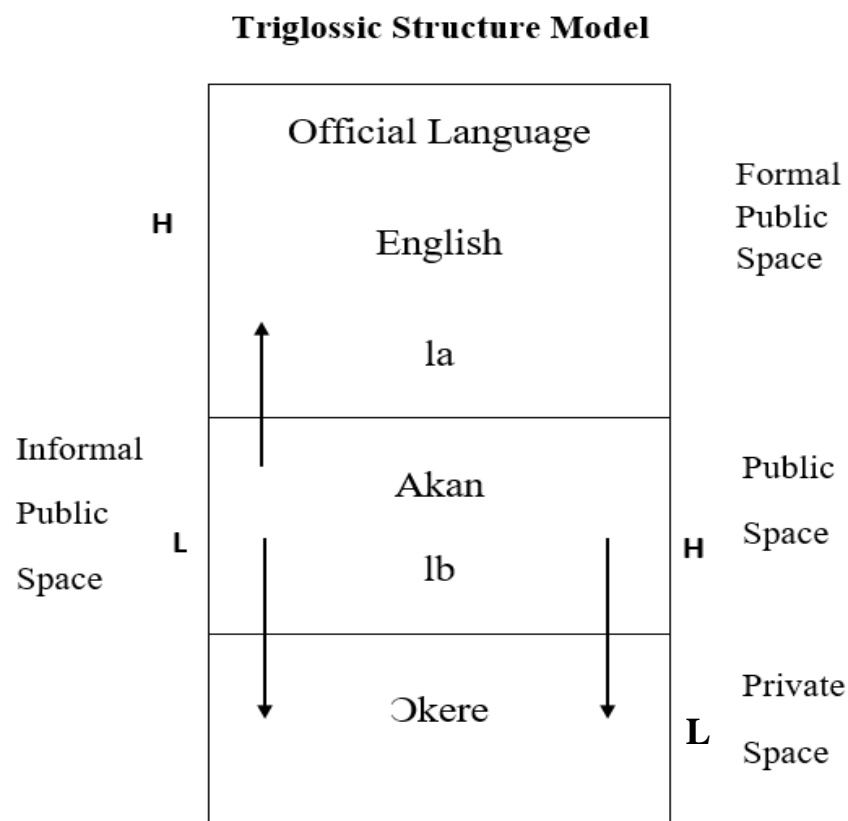


Figure 4: Triglossic structure model in the ɔkere context

3.8 A Summary of Chapter

This chapter analysed data based on respondents' bio data, linguistic repertoire, language proficiency, domains of language use and attitude towards ɔkere in

all three communities. It is obvious that majority of respondents in all the three communities reported to be proficient in three languages or more. Abiriw recorded 3 respondents who were competent in 6 languages, the highest in the study, while 10 respondents reported of being proficient in two languages which was the least from all three communities. The data clearly shows that within the Okere speech community English is an added on language in the linguistic repertoire of educated Africans.

CHAPTER FOUR

CASE STUDIES

4.0 Introduction

This chapter presents detailed sociolinguistic histories of nine respondents who were selected from the three communities. The selection was done based on the outcome of analysis done in chapter 3 aiming at providing an up-close and personal insight into people's sociolinguistic life in Okere. It will give a broad prospective that goes beyond the general picture presented in chapter 3. The selection targeted respondents who are proficient in Okere notwithstanding their parental history. Some selected respondents had both parents being native speakers of Okere but lived outside Okere speaking area, and then another group with only one parent being a native speaker of Okere but proficient in both languages. Other issues considered were respondents' settlement patterns, linguistic abilities and the distribution of these languages. The analysis of respondents' sociolinguistic histories is to determine the linguistic status of these individuals. In addition, it is a way of establishing the linguistic variations that exist in the three communities and the implications of these linguistic situations to Okere. These sociolinguistic histories of the nine individuals are presented in the next section in the form of case studies they are arranged from community to community.

4.1 Case Studies

4.1.1 Nana Akua (*pseudo name*)

Nana Akua (*pseudo name*) is a fifty -five-year-old traditional ruler who hails from Abiriw. Nana Akua's parents migrated from Abiriw and settled at

Asamankese a Twi speaking town where she was born and raised. After her secondary education at Asamankese she served as a pupil teacher for three years at Kpong. Kpong is a predominantly Dangme speaking town in the Eastern Region of Ghana. It is however noted for its high rate of native Ewe speakers because of its geographical location along the Volta Lake.

Nana later moved to join her husband (a native of Abiriw) at Somanya; another Dangme speaking town. At Somanya she supplied foodstuffs to schools, a trade that took her to big market centres such as Frankadua, Adawso, Mankessim and Asesewa.

Notwithstanding her exposure to languages such as English, Dangme, Ewe, Akan, among others, Nana is still very proficient in Okere. This is because during her youthful days her house at Asamankese was full of relatives who spoke Okere at home. Apart from that her family house is located at the heart of Abiriw where Okere is used as an index for individuals within that location. Nana can be described as a typical multilingual as she speaks Twi, English, Ewe, Dangme, Ga and Okere at varying levels of proficiency.

These languages are distributed in Nana's social networks as follows: in Nana's neighbourhood there is a strong bond between neighbours, to the extent that each member's identity is known by all the members of the community. Over the years, it has been argued that language is one of the aspects of culture that establishes one's identity to a particular community. This implies that, the use of a common language has the potential of strengthening communal bonds. Due to this, Okere is the language used in interactions involving members of the neighbourhood. Nana uses Okere at home and in her neighbourhood, at big

social gatherings such as funerals she adds Twi by switching between Twi and Ɔkere. Nana's profile suggests a close-knitted relationship between members in this community. Undoubtedly, Ɔkere is maintained as an index for social networking among members of this community while the use of Twi signals the presence of strangers in the community.

Apart from this strong social network, her trading activities as a supplier of foodstuffs to Senior High Schools makes her a member of another network of elite business men and women who use English for all their meetings. Nana's language for business is English since she has had up to secondary level of education. It is however imperative to note that the bond between members of this network is not as strong as her local networks at home, in the neighbourhood. Apart from using English as her language of business, Nana uses English as her language of instruction when she has to help her grandchildren with their homework.

Another social network Nana Akua belongs to is the Women's ministry society of her church. This group is made up of women between the ages of 40 and 70. The group basically sees to the welfare of women of the congregation and can be described as vibrant.

As a group working for the best interest of women, they engage in activities such as Bible studies, income generation activities trainings, choir practice, among others. The primary choice of code used in executing all these activities is Twi, with occasional English code switching because not all members are native speakers of Ɔkere. Nana also speaks Twi at meetings involving traditional rulers of the Akuapem traditional council, whose

membership comprises ɔkere, Late and Twi speaking traditional rulers. At such meetings the choice of code is strictly Twi.

Nana's business expeditions usually bring her into contact with farmers and traders who neither speak Twi nor English. At such occasions she engages one of the languages in her multilingual repertoire by conducting business with her clients in Ewe, Ga, or Dangme depending on the language background of the individual since farmers in the locality are mostly natives of these Kwa languages.

4.1.2 Doku (pseudo name)

The second case study takes us to the outskirts of Abiriw where Doku (pseudo name) lives with his parents. He resides adjacent to the boundary that separates Abiriw from Akropong. He is an eighteen-year-old student whose father hails from Ho in the Volta region while his mother is a native of Abiriw. Doku has three other siblings who live in Ho with their paternal grandfather. Therefore, Doku spends most of his long vacations with his grandfather and siblings at Ho. As a result of his periodic stay in Ho, Doku is proficient in Ewe.

Over all, Doku is competent in four languages- Ewe, ɔkere, Twi and English. In every point in time, he chooses the language which best suits the linguistic behaviour of each of his interlocutors. At home, he uses Ewe and ɔkere as both parents are eager to transmit their respective native languages to him. In a situation where Doku is engaged in conversations with only his mother, the language choice is restricted to ɔkere. However, any discussion involving both parents is usually done in ɔkere and Ewe so as to accommodate

all the parties involved. I must state here that, Doku's father proficiency in ɔkere is as low as his mother's proficiency in Ewe.

When in Ho, Doku and his siblings' code switch between ɔkere, Ewe and English during their interactions. Nonetheless, in the case of Doku, Ewe dominates because of the environment in which he finds himself. Whenever there are visitors around, Doku and his siblings in Ho communicate in ɔkere just to allow them to discuss private issues in the presence of the visitors. This also creates a bond between the siblings. To exhibit their level of proficiency in English (i.e. the official language of Ghana), Doku and his siblings who are all students, occasionally restrict their language choice to only English. In another vein Doku uses Twi in his neighbourhood at Abiriw since Twi dominates all interactions within this locality due to the proximity to Akropong and the citing of some social amenities in that area of Abiriw. For instance, since a recreational centre is located in Doku's neighbourhood at Abiriw, there seem to be contact of cultures which is influencing language use in the environment.

Just like any Ghanaian student, Doku is restricted by the language policy to use English as the sole means of communication between him and his teachers as well as his peers. It is only allowed to speak Twi with the mates during break time. He however speaks Akwapim Twi during the study of Ghanaian language which is the only period that they are allowed to speak Twi in class.

4.1.3 Kwabena (pseudo name)

Still at Abiriw our third case study features Kwabena (pseudo name) a thirty-five-year-old professional teacher who is married with a child. Kwabena

displays varying degrees of competency in six languages Okere, Twi, English, Konkomba, Dagbani and Ewe. Kwabena was born at Tarkwa but his parents who are both natives of Okere relocated to Abiriw when he was just five years old. He spent part of his life schooling in Tamale where he acquired two languages Dagbani and Konkomba while Ewe was acquired from a next door neighbour at Abiriw. Currently he stays at Abiriw where he teaches at a Senior High school.

Kwabena currently uses only four of the six languages with members of his network at Abiriw, these are Okere, Twi, English and Ewe. Okere, his mother tongue, is used with his nuclear and extended family members at home for all interactions, as family members are keen in speaking Okere with their kinsmen as a way of identifying themselves with their ethnic group. This can be described as a language maintenance strategy.

In inter- ethnic communication, Kwabena's choice of language is Twi which he speaks with his friends in the neighbourhood who do not understand Okere. At school, all conversations involving official duties are done in English. Besides he helps his daughter with her studies in English but after that he switches back to Okere which to him comes unconsciously.

Kwabena seems to be losing Konkomba and Dagbani since he uses these two languages only when some of his friends and mates at the University of Professional Studies who are native speakers of these languages call him. According to him most of the vocabulary of these languages do not come to him easily as they did in the past. This pushes him to switch codes to English the few times he has to use Konkomba and Dagbani. This can be attributed to

Kwabena moving away from Tamale where Dagbani and Konkomba are dominant languages to Abiriw where he does not get people to speak with.

A strong bond has existed between Kwabena and an Ewe family in his community since his childhood. This bond started some thirty years ago when Kwabena and this family of six were next door neighbours. His mother who was a trader used to leave him with this family and through that Kwabena speaks Ewe fluently whenever he is in the company of members of this family. He told me his visits to this family always brought some nostalgic feelings, his attachment to this family is so strong that he perceives himself as part of that family.

4.1.4 Nana Kwasi Kuma (pseudo name)

We now move from Abiriw to Awukugua where Nana Kwasi Kuma (pseudo name) stays with his family of four. He is a 45-year-old traditional ruler. His parents who were peasant farmers migrated to Effiduase in the Ashanti Region where they farmed. Nana Kwasi has no educational background as his parents introduced him to farming at a very tender age. According to him, he regrets not to have been given the opportunity to get formal education.

Nana is proficient in two languages Twi and Okere but seems to be more proficient in Okere. During funerals and other traditional ceremonies his competence in Okere is admired by all. In his daily activities he initiates all his conversations in Okere before switching on to Twi depending on the level of competence of the other party in Okere. Even on some occasions he switches between Twi and Okere. His use of figurative expressions to spice his speeches in Okere tells how good an orator he is. A visit to Nana Kwasi's home

welcomes you to a typical Okere traditional home where majority of the people are traditionalists. You rarely meet them speaking any other language apart from Okere. The use of Twi is reserved for visitors who come to the house.

4.1.5 Kwaku Temeng (pseudo name)

I present the fifth case study also from Awukugua. He is Kwaku Temeng (pseudo name) a twenty-year-old student of the Presbyterian College of Education at Akropong. He lives with his parents and siblings at Awukugua. Kwaku's father hails from Abor in the Volta Region while the mother comes from Awukugua. He is proficient in four languages Okere, Twi, Ewe and English. At home Kwaku uses Okere with his immediate family members when the father is not part of the conversation. Apart from that, if the father is involved the father contributes to such conversions in Ewe while they answer back in Okere.

Kwaku's relationship with his neighbours is very cordial because there is an association of residents in the neighbourhood. Through their meetings residents have gotten to know each other in the neighbourhood. At such meetings they socialize and share ideas and most importantly encourage the use of Okere among themselves. These meetings create a strong bond between members of the neighbourhood. In this particular neighbourhood, there is a directive that demands members of the community to be loyal to the heritage language –Okere. Elders of the community thus frown upon the use of any other language among members.

Outside his neighbourhood Kwaku finds himself in another environment where the use of English dominates. At times some teachers speak

French to Kwaku but since his French is bad, he responds in English. At times the communication changes to Twi if it is not official which does not disturb him because of his competence in Twi. However, this relationship with teachers and colleagues at college is not as strong as that which exists between him and his neighbourhood.

Compared to the other three languages, Kwaku's competence in Ewe can be said to be the lowest since he uses it with only his father. Kwaku seldom initiates conversations in Ewe because his proficiency level is low. Apart from that his mates who are Ewes at school are very proficient in Twi so prefer speaking Twi with him because Twi allows them to integrate socially than Ewe in this environment.

4.1.6 Papa Kwasi (pseudo name)

Papa Kwasi (pseudo name) is our sixth case study; he is 60 years and a father of four. His father hails from Abomosu and the mother is from Awukugua. Papa Kwasi was born and raised at New Tafo, a Twi speaking town. He also spent part of his life in Accra during his secondary school days so has some competence in Ga. His highest level of proficiency is in Twi which he uses in most of his activities. After his retirement he took to farming as a hobby at Awukugua. Papa is proficient in four languages Twi, Ga, English and Okere.

He uses Okere and Twi at home since he is married to a woman whose mother tongue is Twi who is not proficient in Okere. He indicates that his youthful days at New Tafo, makes him to speak Akyem (a dialect of Akan) confidently than all the other languages in his linguistic repertoire. He is putting in a lot of efforts to improve upon his proficiency in Okere as he

noticed that his variety of ɔkere is not pure. To save his children from facing the same challenges he has enrolled them at Nifa Senior High school at Adukurom so that the environment can contribute to their acquisition of ɔkere. Papa uses both Twi and English at the Men's fellowship (a religious society) at Awukugua, where he is the president. The meetings are usually held in Twi but there are few instances of code switches to English when it becomes difficult to find the names of some equipment and gadgets in Twi. Letters to the group are read in English and later translated to Twi. At times such translations are not done as most of the members are literate in English. However, the use of Twi dominates most of their activities which makes them more proficient in Twi. With regard to Ga, Papa speaks it outside home, especially to Ga native speakers who reside in the community or visit Awukugua.

4.1.7 Yaw (pseudo name)

The seventh case study focuses on Yaw (pseudo name) who is a 29-year-old man from Adukurom. He grew up at Akyem Bansa, a Twi speaking town, where his parents who are both ɔkere settled. He dropped out of school at Basic six due to truancy. Kwabena speaks two dialects of Akan- Akyem and Akuapem Twi, and a basic level English which he refers to as Pidgin and 'below average variety' of ɔkere although both parents are native ɔkere speakers.

In Kwabena's home he uses Twi and ɔkere which he alternates between the parents and his siblings. His stay at Bansa has given him a near-native competency of Twi, especially the Akyem dialect. Kwabena and his siblings tend to use Akyem Twi in most of their day to day interactions since they feel more comfortable speaking Twi than ɔkere. This they do to the

disapproval of their parents. However, when their parents are involved they reluctantly use Ɔkere so as to impress them.

Since Twi comes to Kwabena naturally, he initiates most conversations in Twi. Kwabena's Church at Awukugua depends on Akwapim Twi greatly for its liturgy and order of service. Members of the congregation who are interested in reading the Twi Bible are taken through reading activities to help them read the Bible in Twi. This opportunity has groomed Kwabena such that he now reads the Twi Bible at church.

He has accommodated the culture of his church, presently; the motivation to speak Twi is higher than it is for Ɔkere. On this note, he speaks and reads Akwapim Twi to the attrition of Ɔkere. At church he is a lay preacher and also leads liturgy which he executes with excellent communicative skills in Akwapim Twi. Kwabena's communicative skills in Akwapim Twi endears him to native speakers of the language who occasionally engage his services at public functions.

Apart from his church activities Kwabena owns a grocery shop in town which attracts a lot of clients with different educational backgrounds including the elite in town. Thus for business purposes, with elite clients he sometimes depends on his variety of English which he refers to as Pidgin.

4.1.8 Abena (pseudo name)

Abena (pseudo name) is a fifteen-year-old JHS graduate from a family of five. She was born at Akropong, her mother's hometown. Currently she lives with her parents at Adukurom. Her multilingual skills are displayed by the way she uses languages in her linguistic repertoire to serve her communicative needs.

She has varying degrees of knowledge in Akwapim Twi, her first language acquired, Ga, English and Okere. These languages are distributed to suit the communicative needs of Abena.

Abena who is a Sunday school teacher uses both English and Twi in her interactions with the children. At such times Okere is relegated to the background. The children are taught rhymes and Bible quotations in English and Twi with English dominating. Every activity at the Sunday school is done using Twi or English.

Abena uses Okere with her paternal family members who are very much attached to her nuclear family. She visits the family house regularly to check on her aged grandparents who love to hear her speak Okere. Likewise, during her visits to her maternal relatives she becomes a monolingual Twi speaker who uses Twi in all her interactions.

Ga, which she acquired through her frequent visits to her aunt in Accra, is used as a marked choice to win favours from shops she buys goods from in Accra. However, when she meets people for the first time, she uses Twi.

Typically, Abena switches to Twi in conversations involving her mother although the mother speaks native like Okere. Her father on the other hand is also proficient in Twi but prefers speaking Okere with his immediate family members. Abena's choice of language when she is at Adukurom is Okere. Generally, a very strong bond exists between Abena and her family members at Adukurom who visit her nuclear family regularly.

4.1.9 Akosua (*pseudo name*)

I profile Akosua (*pseudo name*) a 42-year-old single mother. She lived at Enchi in the Western Region for a greater part of her life till she got married recently and currently lives at Mampong. Her mother who is a native speaker of ɔkɛrɛ occasionally brings her home to Adukurom for social functions. Akosua father hails from Enchi so speaks Brosa. It was during one of such visits home that I met her. Akosua is proficient in three languages; Brosa, ɔkɛrɛ and Asante Twi. She uses Brosa at home with her nuclear family since her husband is also Brosa. On the contrary, when she visits her parents and siblings she adds ɔkɛrɛ to Brosa since ɔkɛrɛ is her mother's language. Her father who speaks Brosa does not understand ɔkɛrɛ but her mother speaks Brosa fluently because she has lived at Enchi for a long time.

All Akosua's siblings are equally proficient in these three languages- ɔkɛrɛ, Asante Twi and Brosa. This gives them the opportunity to use any of these languages to serve their communicative needs. Depending on the context Akosua and her siblings find themselves in, one or two of these languages are used. In conversations with their mother, ɔkɛrɛ is used as a form of identifying themselves with their mother's ethnic group. Akosua's occupation as a farmer does not expose her to so many people; she is either on the farm, at home, or at the market to buy or sell her farm produce. Her linguistic behaviour changes at the market as she adds Asante Twi the lingua franca within this area to Brosa. Surprisingly, although Akosua acquired some form of education, she does not consider English as a language in her linguistic repertoire.

4.2 Discussion of Case Studies

The cases presented buttress the highly held notion by linguists such as Batibo (2005) that Africans are highly multilingual due to their exposure to many languages. Evidence of the validity of this claim is seen in the number of languages respondents like Nana Akua and Kwabena are competent in. These two respondents had competence in six languages which is highly multilingual while other cases reported had two or more languages with none being monolingual.

The linguistic repertoires of respondents in cases presented brought to light the rate at which Twi was spreading. Based on the individual linguistic abilities of respondents, it became evident that all the nine respondents had varying degrees of competence in Twi, notwithstanding their language backgrounds, educational backgrounds and settlement patterns. This confirms the dominance of Twi in the Southern part of Ghana.

Furthermore, the discussions made it clear that the acquisition of English was by formal education which was evidenced by all respondents who had some form of formal education except Akosua who reported to have acquired middle school education but did not list English as one of the languages that she was proficient in. On the other hand, respondents without formal education such as Nana Kwasi Kuma from Awukugua had no knowledge in English. Similarly, Abena from Adukurom who is a student is proficient in 4 languages just like Doku who is also a student from Abiriw. Among all the cases presented Nana Akua and Kwabena all from Abiriw recorded the highest number of proficiency in six languages.

Nonetheless no respondent acquired English as a first language it was acquired after the acquisition of indigenous languages.

It is important to note that, all the cases presented re-echoed the argument by Fishman (1991), Clyne and Kipp (1999) that the home is the main domain for the maintenance of language with parents and the elderly as the main transmitters. This fact is substantiated by cases of Nana Akua (case one), Nana Kwasi Kuma (case four), Abena (case seven) and Akosua (case nine) who were born and raised in areas outside Okere but were able to acquire Okere because their parents who were native speakers of Okere used Okere at home and in their immediate environs.

The cases also revealed the role played by the elderly to maintain Okere as stated by Kwabena Temeng that the elderly in his neighbourhood frowned upon the use of Twi in the neighbourhood. In the case of Abena, she mentioned that her grandparents loved to hear her speak Okere. These revelations fell in line with other studies such as Abtahian (2009) which reveals the efforts of the older generation at Hopkins a village in Belize Central America in maintaining Garifuna their heritage language.

Another issue that came up was that migration was one of the factors that brought about language contact, as attested by Nana Akua, Kwabena, Abena and Akosua who acquired languages such as Akan, Dangme, Ga, Dagbani, Ewe and Konkomba through contacts with speakers of these languages at Somanya, Tamale, Frankadua, Asesewa and Asamankese.

In another instance, the assertion by Dolphyne (1988: 52) “that in spite of emotional attachment to their own form of speech, people will learn a

language that brings them economic advantage” was confirmed by respondents’ linguistic abilities which showed that all the nine respondents had varying degrees of competence in Twi. This is due to the fact that Akan serves as a lingua franca for natives of other ethnic groups for inter-ethnic communication. It is the language used for public functions within the ɔkere speech community. As mentioned by Dakubu (1988) and Animah (2015) that Akwapim, Twi is the language of trade within the environs of ɔkere.

The cases also attest to the fact that languages which are not used become moribund as evidenced in two cases by Kwabena that his knowledge in Dagbani and Konkomba was waning. Similar to Kwabena’s situation, Kwaku Temeng (case five) also reported that his Ewe was not as good as it used to be because apart from his father nobody speaks it with him.

One important factor that was highlighted was the allocation of the various languages to domains by respondents which substantiates the fact that the languages were assigned to the domains based on their prestige, status and functions in the society.

Apart from that, there was a variation in the patterns of language use at Abiriw which was different from that of Awukugua and Adukurom as presented by Doku. In Doku’s case he stated that Twi was the dominant language in his neighbourhood which contradicts that of Awukugua and Adukurom where ɔkere was used in the neighbourhood.

Besides, the ability of couples from different ethno-linguistic backgrounds to transmit their languages to their children as in the cases of Doku whose father is a native Ewe speaker so speaks both Ewe and ɔkere,

Akosua's mother is a native speaker of Okere while the father is a native speaker of Brosa. This difference in parental ethno-linguistic backgrounds does not pose challenges but has rather influenced her competency in both Brosa and Okere. Furthermore, Abena has a mother who is a native speaker of Akan and a father who has Okere language background. In the case of Papa Kwasi he has a father with an Akan background while the mother is Okere.

4.3 The Situation of Okere

The cases presented revealed that majority of the respondents used Okere by making language choices to suit the linguistic abilities of individuals they interact with. This saw Okere being utilized in private domains such as home and in the neighbourhood, Twi in public domains such as church and hospital, and English in formal domains such as the classroom and for official meetings. The home therefore became a domain reserved for Okere which helped in transmitting the language to the younger generation as a maintenance strategy. All respondents displayed higher levels of proficiency in Okere than in Twi except Nana Kwasi whose proficiency in Twi was better than Okere.

It has also been revealed that some respondents who migrated from home to other speech communities were still proficient in their heritage languages. As demonstrated by cases of Nana Akua, Akosua and others who were born and raised at predominantly Twi speaking towns but were able to acquire Okere their heritage language. This indicates that some minority speech communities are able to maintain their languages notwithstanding pressure from a dominant language.

Another point worth discussing is that the rate of endogamous marriages among cases reported made it possible for parents to use ɔkɛrɛ at home as was revealed by six of the respondents -their parents were both native speakers of ɔkɛrɛ, so they use ɔkɛrɛ at home.

Generally, it is important to mention that the linguistic phenomenon of language choice has rather helped in maintaining ɔkɛrɛ by assigning it to private domains.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, KEY FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.0 Introduction

This chapter concludes the study by providing a summary of the study by highlighting issues discussed. This includes a summary of key findings and recommendations for future research on language choice and conclusion.

5.1 Summary and Key Findings

The study aimed at investigating language choice in ɔkere speech community, ɔkere is a minority speech community in the Eastern region of Ghana. The study dwelt on Batibo (2005) “triglossic structure model” and the sociolinguistic variationist approach to examine the implications of the presence of dominant languages such as English and Akan to ɔkere. Furthermore, social factors that trigger language choice in the ɔkere speech community and the variations in language choice in the community.

Data for the study was sourced from homes, schools, markets, churches and neighbourhoods of Abiriw, Awukugua and Adukurom. I also went to the Akwapim North District Assembly at Akropong and the ɔkomfo Anɔkye shrine at Awukugua. Moreover, I administered a twenty-four item questionnaire to 90 participants from the three communities and also conducted interviews.

Chapter one gives a general introduction to the study by providing a background to the study in the form of giving a brief explanation of language contact, multilingualism and language choice. In addition, the background to

the study, problem statement, research questions, research object and the significance of the study were all discussed.

The chapter two focused on reviewing relevant literature related to the study, which includes literature on minority and majority language contacts, language shift and language maintenance, and works on language shift and language maintenance in some communities, the theoretical frameworks pinned to the research are Batibo (2005) “triglossic structure model” and the Sociolinguistic Variationist theory, data collection techniques, instruments and procedures employed.

Chapters three and four were mainly on analysis of data, respondents’ bio data, settlement patterns, linguistic repertoire, language proficiency, domains of language use, and attitudes of members of the speech community towards their language. The analysis on their settlement patterns revealed that majority of respondents who migrated from home stayed in Twi speaking areas. Further, migration to other ethno-linguistic areas such as Accra, Tamale, etc...exposed respondents to other languages. This came about because they came into contact with speakers of other languages which demanded the use of a lingua franca. Likewise, respondents stated that the acquisition of Twi came naturally with a lot of respondents displaying varying degrees of competency in Twi. A fact that can be attributed to education, Christianity and the location of Okere speech community in the Eastern region of Ghana, which is dominated by native Akan speakers who form (53%) of the population in that region. More so data on respondents’ linguistic repertoire established that members of the Okere speech community are highly multilingual. Majority of them have

competence in three or more languages in varying degrees, all the 90 respondents were bilingual in Twi and ɔkere.

Notwithstanding the fact that majority of members in the speech community are multilingual, the speech community mainly uses three of these languages for communication. These three languages are English, Twi and ɔkere, which are assigned roles based on prestige, status and functions in the society. In this regard, the data showed that ɔkere the mother tongue was used at home and in the neighbourhood by majority of respondents. Twi on the hand was used at public functions such as group meetings in church, hospital and with strangers, and English at formal functions such as classroom, and offices. With regard to their roles ɔkere is a minority language, confined to primary domains while English is an official language assigned to formal functions. Based on the functions of the languages the nature of contact between ɔkere and Twi is an indigenous dominant language which is widely used for public communication and a minority language confined to primary domains.

The analysis also revealed that there were some variations in language choice within the three communities. Data on language use at the market indicated that majority of respondents at Abiriw preferred using Twi at the market as opposed to ɔkere at Awukugua and Adukurom. This however lends credence to the fact that pressure from Twi on ɔkere is more intense at Abiriw due to the proximity to Akropong than it is at Awukugua and Adukurom.

Chapter four presents detailed sociolinguistic histories of nine selected respondents to provide an up close and personal insight into people's sociolinguistic life beyond the general picture presented in chapter 3. These sociolinguistic histories are presented in the form of case studies.

In reference to the state of Okere data on respondents' attitude towards Okere shows that respondents have a positive attitude towards Okere as majority said they felt comfortable speaking Okere and also felt Okere should be taught at school. The only community that felt there was no need learning Okere were respondents from Adukurom which could be attributed to the location of Adukurom and the heterogeneous nature of the town as stated earlier in chapter 2.

Based on the findings I can say that the presence of English and Twi in the Okere speech community do not pose a threat to Okere. Rather it has influenced the adoption of a peculiar pattern of language use in which three languages: English, Twi and Okere are assigned to domains based on their prestige, status and functions in the speech community. A practice which to me is a strategy to maintain Okere their heritage language.

The chapter five gives a summary of key findings and recommendations for future research.

5.2 Conclusion

The study aimed at investigating language choice in the Okere speech community. The analysis proved that the Okere speech community is highly multilingual due to the need to learn languages of socio economic importance for wider communication. This was revealed based on respondents' settlement patterns and language use patterns.

It is worth noting that the study found out that there is a significant correlation between one's educational background and his competence in languages. This is evidenced by data in table 3.1 which lends credence to the fact that only respondents with formal educational backgrounds had

competence in English. Besides occupation or profession is key to language choice because data on respondents' linguistic repertoire shows that the three respondents who had competence in six languages were all traders. In the same order, all 18 students were proficient in three or more languages including English with 2 respondents claiming to have competence in French.

The findings underscore the fact that all members of the Okere speech community are bilingual in Akan and Okere notwithstanding their educational backgrounds. Along the same line, the findings prove that few respondents between the ages of 11 and 20 years who are students prefer the use of Pidgin with siblings at home and with friends at school to the use of English and Akan. On the other hand, some of them prefer the use of Twi in the community to Okere. Similarly, respondents aged between 50 and 60 were conservative in their language choices as they reported to use Okere more than Twi.

It also came to light that notwithstanding the need for group identity minority language speakers will learn languages as far as it gives them some socio-economic importance.

5.3 Recommendations

This work serves as a reference for future researches on minority languages.

1. It is recommended that further research should use a theoretical framework that will dwell on participant observation to enable the researcher come out with analysis based on his own observations.
2. Research on minority languages in Ghana should be encouraged to allow the linguistic behaviour of minority language speakers be understood better. This will help in identifying any possible threats that could lead to language death.

3. Besides these studies can provide early interventions for such languages to be saved from death.
4. Lastly I recommend that there should an advocacy for the development of literacy in ɔkere to encourage members of the ɔkere speech community to be literate in their heritage language. In addition, the only F.M. station at Dawu which is within the ɔkere speech community should use ɔkere for its programmes.
5. The F.M station should organize competitions and activities in ɔkere to reward natives who are very fluent in ɔkere. These steps if initiated will make ɔkere attractive to the youth to save the language in future.

Appendix I

Questionnaire for data collection

DEPARTMENT OF LINGUISTICS

UNIVERSITY OF GHANA

LEGON, ACCRA.

This questionnaire is aimed at investigating language choice in the Okere speech community. The outcome of this study depends largely on your response to this questionnaire. This questionnaire is purely an academic exercise and any information given will be treated confidential.

SECTION A: BIO-DATA

Please tick the response that is most appropriate () to you.

1. Gender: (a) Male () (b) Female ()

2. Age : (a) 20years and below () (b) 21 to 30 ()

(c) 31 to 40 () (d) 41-50 ()

(e) 50 and above ()

3. What is your father's home town?

.....

4. What is your mother's home town?

.....

5. Where were you born?

6. Where do you live presently?

7. For how long have you been living in this town?

.....

8. For the past five years where have you been living?
.....
 9. (If applicable) where was your last town of residence before moving to live here?
 10. What is your occupation?
 11. What is your level of education?
- | | |
|-------------------|------------------|
| a. None () | d. Tertiary () |
| b. J.H.S. () | e. S.H.S () |
| c. Vocational () | f. Technical () |

SECTION B:

1. What is your mother's mother tongue?
2. What is your father's mother tongue?
3. How many languages do you speak?
4. List the languages you speak by order of acquisition.

First.....

Second.....

Third.....

Forth
- Fifth
- Sixth

5. Please list the languages you speak according to how proficient you are in them.

a.

b.

c.

d.

e.

f.

SECTION C

1. Which languages do you speak with the following people or at the following place?

Language

Home

.....

Mother

.....

Father

.....

Siblings

.....

Friends

Language

Community

.....

Friends

Language

.....

.....

Language

.....

.....

Language

.....

Language

.....

.....

.....

.....

Church

Congregation

Group meetings

School

Friends

Teachers

Market

Market (buying & selling)

Workplace

Friends

Office

Hospital

Strangers

SECTION D

1. Do you feel comfortable speaking ɔkere everywhere?

a) Yes () b) No ()

2. Should ɔkere be studied at school? a) Yes () b) No ()

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