

ETHNORÊMA

Lingue, popoli e culture

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ANNO IV - N. 4 (2008)

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Ethnorêma, dal greco *ethnos* ‘popolo, etnia’ e *rhêma* ‘ciò che è detto, parola, espressione’, ma anche ‘cosa, oggetto, evento’. Nella linguistica pragmatica *rema* sta ad indicare la parte di una frase che aggiunge ulteriore informazione a quello che è stato già comunicato (il *tema*).

Ethnorêma, from the Greek words *ethnos* ‘people, ethnicity’ and *rhêma* ‘what is said, word, expression’, but also ‘thing, object, event’. In linguistics, *rheme* indicates the part of a sentence that adds further information about an entity or a situation that has already been mentioned (the *theme*).

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Multilingualism and language attitudes in Ghana: a preliminary survey

Federica Guerini
(Università degli Studi di Bergamo)

SOMMARIO

Il presente contributo illustra i risultati di un'indagine preliminare volta ad indagare gli atteggiamenti linguistici degli studenti che frequentano la *University of Ghana* di Accra, in relazione alle lingue utilizzate (o potenzialmente utilizzabili) all'interno del locale sistema scolastico. Una particolare attenzione sarà riservata alla rilevazione degli atteggiamenti nei confronti dell'akan, la lingua più importante (per numero di parlanti e grado di elaborazione raggiunto) tra quelle parlate in territorio ghanese. Attraverso l'osservazione dei dati contenuti in un campione di 90 questionari somministrati agli studenti in forma anonima, si cercherà di descrivere gli atteggiamenti degli studenti stessi nei riguardi dell'introduzione dell'akan come lingua di insegnamento nei diversi gradi del locale sistema scolastico, nonché gli atteggiamenti in relazione alla possibilità di discutere, servendosi dell'akan, una serie di argomenti tecnici e specialistici. L'analisi dei dati raccolti rivelerà che l'eventuale impiego dell'akan come lingua di insegnamento nell'ambito del locale sistema scolastico sarebbe avversato non soltanto dagli studenti in possesso di un certo grado di competenza dell'akan come lingua seconda o come lingua veicolare, ma anche dagli stessi studenti che riconoscono nell'akan la propria lingua materna. La capacità di discutere in lingua inglese un ampio ventaglio di discipline tecniche e specialistiche può dunque essere considerata la competenza in generale più ambita ed apprezzata tra quelle offerte dal locale sistema educativo.

1. Introduction¹

The present paper focuses on the investigation of language attitudes in West Africa, with special reference to Ghana, a former British colony and one of the most important countries in the region. The results of a preliminary survey focusing on attitudes towards language use in education among students attending the University of Ghana in Accra (the capital of Ghana) will be reported and briefly discussed in the light of previous language attitude research.

The domain of education was selected since it is generally deemed to play a crucial role in shaping language attitudes and in influencing the outcomes of language maintenance and language shift processes (cf. Baker, 1992: 36–38). Admission to secondary and university education is impossible without a good competence in the language officially adopted as the teaching medium within the educational system. As a consequence, the language employed in education – which in Ghana, as in most African countries, is a European language inherited from the former colonial administration – is inevitably assigned a higher prestige and is perceived as the only language worth being literate in or even the sole language worth investing (both in financial and in cognitive terms) since the early childhood, to the detriment of local languages and vernaculars. In fact, language attitudes tend to be affected by the functions that a language may fulfil within a given speech community as well as by its potential use in a range of linguistic domains, i.e. perceived practical and social worth of the language. This explains why the adoption of an indigenous language as the teaching medium in higher education could dispel the common prejudice depicting African languages as unfit for use in formal, institutional and official domains, and could play a significant role in reversing language shift (Fishman 1991).

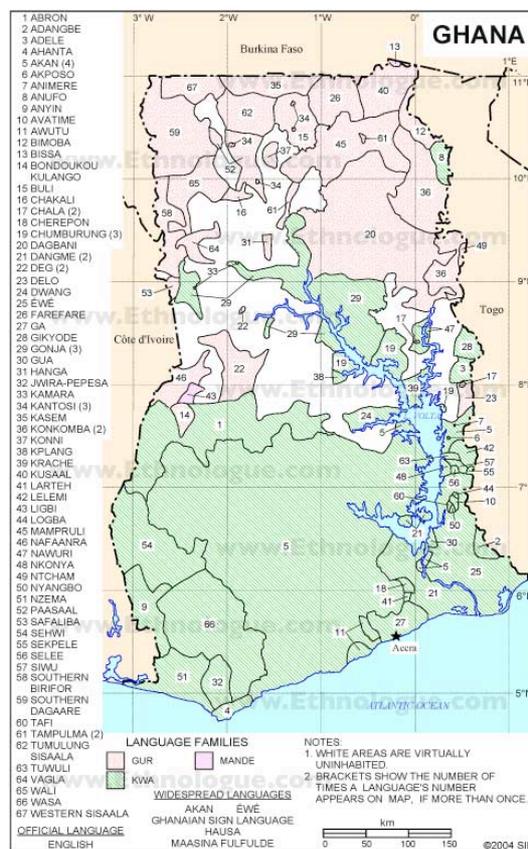
In section 2 of this paper, I will briefly draw a sociolinguistic profile of Ghana, focusing on some of the demographic, ethnolinguistic and socio-political factors affecting language attitudes and language choices in that region. Section 3 will be devoted to the discussion of a few methodological issues, such as the advantages and the drawbacks entailed in the use of self-evaluation questionnaires in order to gather sociolinguistic data, and the rationale behind the questionnaire overall configuration. The following section (section 4) describes the major sociolinguistic features of the sample population, while a presentation of the findings of the research will be

¹ A shorter version of the present paper was presented at the International Symposium on Bilingualism (ISB6) which was held at the University of Hamburg (Germany) from the 29th of May to 2nd of July 2007.

undertaken in section 5. A final section (section 6), resuming the results of the analysis and proposing a few comprehensive observations, will follow.

2. Ghana's sociolinguistic profile²

In Ghana more than sixty languages are currently spoken by a population of about 18 million people.³ All the languages spoken within Ghanaian borders belong to the Niger-Congo family; the year 2000 national census reveals that the native language of about 43% of the Ghanaian population is Akan,⁴ which is also spoken as a second language or as a lingua franca⁵ by at least 40% of the remaining Ghanaian population.



² The sociolinguistic situation in Ghana has been described in detail by Dakubu (1988), (1997a), (1997b), (2000), Huber (1999: § 5) and Turchetta (1996: 43 ff). In this section a concise overview will be provided so as to put the reader in a position to appreciate the rationale behind the research and its results.

³ Cf. Asher R. E. / Mosley Christopher (1994: map 108).

⁴ Figures extracted from the national census report in Osam (2004: 1).

⁵ By *lingua franca* I mean a (simplified) variety of language which is used in communication between speakers who have no native language in common. The term is employed here as a synonym of *vehicular language*.

The name Akan was adopted in the 1950s as a broad term to indicate a cluster of several dialects, the main ones being Akuapem, Asante, Fante, Akyem and Abron (Brong), spoken in Ivory Coast. A vehicular variety of the Akan language, based on the three major non-Fante dialects (i.e. Akuapem, Asante and Akyem), takes the name of Twi [tɔ̃ɔ] and can be considered to be the major lingua franca of the country. Akan enjoys considerable prestige and is currently employed in a variety of domains: in religious ceremonies, in politics, in television and radio programs, within the judicial system and even in formal education where, until May 2002, was used as the teaching medium during the first three years of primary school. At present, the official language policy states that English should be adopted as the medium of instruction from primary one, whereas an indigenous language is studied as a compulsory subject in Senior Secondary School (High School) (Owu-Ewie, 2006: 77).

Attitudes towards languages in Ghana are influenced by a series of intertwined socio-historical and cultural factors, the most prominent of which is probably over a century of British colonial rule (1821–1957), leading to the establishment of English as the most prestigious and the only official language of the country, a privileged position that the colonial language has retained after independence as well, till the present day.

English is consistently employed in television and radio broadcasts, in daily newspapers and magazines, in almost all the administrative and legal documents published within the country, as well as in all official transactions (Huber, 1999: 137). The peculiar prestige enjoyed by the English language is clearly evinced in the words of this Ghanaian journalist, who claims that:

English [...] enjoys great prestige in the country as it is seen as a language of power and security. Competence in English gives one the power to exercise authority; it is a key to one's advancement in society. It enhances one's chances of getting a good job. A person who wants to feel secure learns English as it is one of the requirements for employment in many areas.

(Saah, 1986: 370)⁶

Like in most African countries, in Ghana the ability to speak English remains the prerogative of a minority of the population, although a certain degree of competence is an indispensable requisite for holding any public office (unlike the ability to speak a nationwide vehicular language, such as Akan) and for participating in many aspects of

⁶ Cf. also Dako, who claims that 'English is without doubt the most prestigious language in Ghana today' (2002: 53).

national life. Pressures of public opinion forced the government to sponsor, through the institution of apposite financial plans, the publication of cultural and didactic materials in ten indigenous Ghanaian languages.⁷ Furthermore, the government has supported the institution of a Bureau of Ghana Languages and a School of Ghana Languages, that are expected to organize teaching courses of the indigenous languages both for children and adult learners.⁸ Diploma and degree programmes in Akan are currently run in the major Ghanaian Universities and Schools of Languages, but attitudes towards the use of the indigenous languages within the educational system remain highly controversial.

In most Ghanaian universities, lecturers and professors teaching indigenous languages are looked down on by their own faculty members, who may even hint at them as “second-rate” colleagues, an attitude that inevitably affects students as well:

Teachers of such languages [i.e. indigenous languages] are not much sought after and, quite often, students do not consider them as proficient academically as teachers of other subjects. In fact, teachers of African languages often try to “redeem” their image by making sure that they are able to teach some other subject as well.

(Bamgbose, 1991: 94)

[Pupils] have very high respect and admiration for teachers and other people who are able to express themselves fluently in English. Even teachers have great respect for their colleagues in the English departments and indeed all those who are very proficient in the use of English. [...] Some parents are disappointed when they learn that their children or wards are learning their own languages at school. It is common to hear such comments/questions as: ‘why should we pay high school fees only for you to learn languages we already speak?’.

(Andoh-Kumi, 1997: 49)

Students inserting the study of a Ghanaian language in their university curriculum tend to be dismissed as under achievers who turn to easier options after failing to obtain good results in more serious subjects. Indeed, if they happen to be caught going to lesson with the grammar of an indigenous language among their textbooks, they may

⁷ The languages which are gaining benefit from the plan are Ga, Dangme, Nzema, Dagaare, Gonja, Gurenne, Kasem and Dagbani, together with the country’s major vehicular languages, i.e. Akan and Ewe. For more details, cf. Guerini (2006: 37–42).

⁸ The Bureau of Ghana Languages was actually established in 1951, six years before independence from the British colonial administration (Andoh-Kumi, 1997: 23).

be teased about by their own peers, and addressed with remarks like “Weeds will grow into your mouth if you go on like that!”⁹

On the other hand, there is a portion of the Ghanaian population who disapproves the importance of English in Ghana (cf. Saah, 1986: 373). In their view, the choice of English as the only official language of the country is a clear sign of its (economic as well as cultural) dependence on the British administration, or even “a potential source of economic and intellectual control” (Mazrui, 2004: 54), that should be dealt with by educational and political authorities. Many Ghanaians consider the indigenous languages to be more suitable to express local values and traditional culture, rather than academic subjects; on the contrary, English is tied to the ideas of well-being and of economic development commonly associated to life in a Western country, and proficiency in English is perceived as a key requisite for occupying the most important and remunerative national positions, despite its undeniable association with the restrictions imposed by the former colonial rule.¹⁰

Another crucial problem is posed by minority language speakers, who feel threatened by the preferential treatment (in terms of institutional support) enjoyed not only by an exolanguage like English, but also by a nationwide vehicular language like Akan. Exasperated language loyalty tends to arise from the resentment against a dominant ethnic group like the Asantes’, whose native language has been accorded widespread prominence and prestige ever since the colonial period (cf. Turchetta, 1996: 44).

Dakubu (2005), for instance, quotes the words of a law lecturer at the University of Ghana and a Consultant to the Ga Traditional Council,¹¹ Dr. Josiah-Aryeh, who declared to a local newspaper that “there is a perception among the Gas that they are losing their land, culture and language [...]. The Ga people feel there is a plan afoot to extinguish their existence entirely”; Dakubu observes that statements like the above:

⁹ Prof. Kofi Agyekum (University of Ghana), p.c., October 2006. I wish to thank Prof. Kofi Agyekum for his precious assistance in formulating the Akan version of the language attitude questionnaire adopted in this study.

¹⁰ See, for example, Adegbiya (2000: 89) who, discussing the prestige enjoyed by English within the Ghanaian educational system, recalls the harsh (sometimes even corporal) punishments that used to be inflicted on those schoolchildren who were found using one of the indigenous languages.

¹¹ The Ga people are the ethnic group historically inhabiting Accra, the capital of Ghana. Their language, Ga [gã], is one of the minority languages of the country, but since it is the indigenous idiom of the capital – which is of course an influential political and economic centre – many Ghanaians actually speak it as a second language or at least show a considerable degree of passive competence.

[...] reflect a widespread feeling among the Ga that their communal interests are ignored by the powers that be, and specifically, *that their language is dying*. This attitude is a fairly new development, and on most counts it is difficult to substantiate.

(Dakubu, 2005: 47, my emphasis)

One of the consequences of this “widespread feeling” – that my personal observations suggest to be quite pervasive among speakers of other Ghanaian minority languages as well – is that the use of an exolanguage like English as the teaching medium within the educational system tends to be preferred to the use of an indigenous language like Akan (a linguistic system that many Ghanaian children would already be familiar with because of the general Akan-speaking environment), an attitude which is far from unusual, as Dakubu (2005: 52) again attests:

In the middle of the 20th century the German missionary Rapp noted that Ga teachers were not particularly interested in teaching Ga, but refused to teach Twi [i.e. Akan] (which they all spoke) as a matter of ethnic pride, and consequently taught only in English. Most people would concur in this judgement today.

This is an example of what Colin Baker defines as a “language conflict attitude”: “the underlying assumption is of competition, one language threatening the other. Positive consequences for one language imply negative consequences for the other language. This gives the impression of languages existing in a kind of balance. As one prospers, the other declines” (1992: 77).

Such conflicting attitudes tend to generate a circular situation in which language policy reforms are repeatedly postponed in the attempt to avoid ethnic tensions, and English consolidates its position as the only language suitable for use in the local educational system.

3. Research methodology

Data were collected through an anonymous written questionnaire administered by local fieldworkers to a random sample of 90 students attending the Faculty of Arts at the University of Ghana (Accra), in September/October 2004.¹² The questionnaire needs to

¹² I am indebted to Prof. Kari Dako and prof. Kofi Agyekum of the University of Ghana who kindly accepted to administer the questionnaire to their students: their invaluable assistance played a key role in the accomplishment of this work.

be regarded as an initial tool to be refined and improved in accordance with the results emerging from this preliminary survey.

Questionnaires are probably the most widespread means of eliciting sociolinguistic information concerning language attitudes and language use. The decision to adopt a self-evaluation questionnaire entails a few undeniable disadvantages: respondents may overstate or misrepresent their language competence, they may over-report the choice of a language variety in certain domains or underrate the use of their native languages and vernaculars in the attempt to assert their distance from traditional culture and demonstrate their adherence to a modern, educated elite. Besides, respondents may describe their language behaviour in a way that makes them appear more decent and socially respectable than they actually are, or indeed in a way that makes them appear as they think the researcher would like them to be – a well-known phenomenon described by Baker (1992: 19) as the “halo effect”.

Yet, I believe that the use of questionnaires may be justified by at least a couple of reasons. First of all, questionnaires allow the researcher to gather a considerable quantity of information, concerning a wide range of individuals, which can be effectively compared with the results of research carried out under similar conditions. Besides, albeit some of the answers may turn out to be imprecise or even partially unreliable (especially as far as individual language competence and language use are concerned), a careful analysis of the data can provide many useful insights into the respondents’ attitudes as well as into the relationship among the various languages spoken within a given speech community.

Respondents were invited to choose between an English version and an Akan version of the questionnaire, an option aimed at disclosing their intrinsic language preferences: significantly, only 3 respondents out of 90 opted for the Akan version (although 39 respondents out of 90 declared Akan to be their native language).

The questionnaire contains a total of 43 questions, and consists of two sections: the first one (questions 1 to 16) is composed of a series of open-ended questions designed to gather information about the respondent’s (socio)linguistic profile: a group of 12 questions, aimed at collecting information about the respondent’s age, gender, first language, place and country of birth and residence, family background and level of education, is followed by questions 13 and 14, enquiring whether the respondent is able to read and write the variety that she/he has indicated as her/his first language (an ability which cannot be taken for granted, given the low degree of development characteristic of many local languages), whereas questions 15 and 16 are designed to

establish the respondent's individual repertoire (i.e. the language varieties that each respondent is able to understand, speak, read or write) as well as her/his overall language competency.

The second section of the questionnaire (questions 17 to 43) contains 27 attitude statements that respondents were asked to rate on a four-item scale:

i- Strongly agree; *ii-* Agree; *iii-* Disagree; *iv-* Strongly disagree

The decision to exclude from the scale a neutral “Neither agree nor disagree” option – which is often inserted in questionnaires containing language attitude statements similar to those proposed here (cf. Baker, 1992 and Adegbija, 1994) – was motivated by the desire to prevent respondents from resorting to that option in order to elude embarrassing, puzzling or difficult questions. The fact that in only two questionnaires out of 90 a few questions were deliberately left unanswered suggests that the respondents found little difficulty in filling them, and that attitude statements were generally perceived as appropriate, well-defined and easy to interpret.

In this second section, attitudes to language use within the educational system have been broken down into components: attitudes towards the use of Akan (as opposed to English) as the teaching medium in the local school system, from primary school to college and university (questions 17 to 21); attitudes towards the place of Akan as Ghana's national language and its role in the expression of Ghanaian cultural and linguistic identity (questions 22 and 23); attitudes towards the use of Akan (as opposed to English) in informal conversations within the local university campus (questions 30 and 31); attitudes towards the possibility of employing the Akan language (as opposed to English) in discussing specialised and technical subjects (questions 32 to 38), and instrumental attitudes related to the pragmatic value directly or indirectly attached to a good command of the English language (questions 39 to 43).

Besides, this section includes two attitude statements (“There are things that you can say in English, but not in Akan” and “There are things that you can say in Akan, but not in English”), inviting the respondents to provide examples in case they agree, and two questions (24 and 25) exploring attitudes towards the declining ability of speaking Akan as a consequence of the long-term contact with an high-prestige language of wider communication like English – a topic previously investigated in Guerini (2003), which will not be explicitly discussed in this paper.

4. *The sample*

Although the sample is admittedly limited and cannot be expected to be representative of the student population in Accra, it nevertheless shows an interesting degree of internal differentiation. A total of 13 Ghanaian languages and vernaculars are mentioned in the section investigating the respondents' first language (cf. table 4.1), including three different Akan dialects (Fante, Asante, and Akwapem),¹³ and Hausa, a Nigerian language belonging to the Afro-asiatic family, and one of the major West African *lingue franche*.¹⁴ No respondent indicated more than a single first language, a result that probably misrepresents their actual language competences, given the complex linguistic background of most African speech communities, and which evinces the need for a more explicit formulation of the same question in a future version of the questionnaire.

Four respondents indicated English as their first language but, as in the preceding case, the answer is probably unreliable since, in Ghana, English is spoken mainly as a second language (i.e. as a linguistic system learned from the general English-speaking environment as well as through formal education) by individuals speaking one of the indigenous languages as their mother tongue (cf. Dako, 2001: 25).

Respondents were also asked to indicate how many languages they were able to speak, in addition to their first language: their answers are displayed in table 4.2. Notice that most respondents declared to be able to speak up to 3 or 4 language varieties, and that, on average, the individual linguistic repertoire of non-Akan native speakers tends to be more complex than the repertoire of their Akan native speakers counterparts. The result is hardly surprising: minority language speakers are motivated to develop a good command of national languages in addition to their native languages and vernaculars, because the latter are generally perceived as lacking socio-economic value, whereas a certain degree of proficiency in a national language like Akan gives access to education, job opportunities and a better standard of living. It goes without saying that this entails a considerable degree of linguistic convergence in favour of the languages

¹³ Remember that Twi is the name of a vehicular variety of Akan. The glottonym Akan, however, is hardly ever mentioned by its (uneducated) speakers; the language is normally referred to as Twi, either by native speakers or by individuals who speak it as a second language.

¹⁴ Cf. Dakubu (2005: 48), who explains that, in Ghana, "Hausa is a lingua franca of urban acculturation throughout the southern part of the country, spoken mainly (but not solely) by migrants from savannah areas beyond the south, associated with particular areas of the city [Accra] largely inhabited by such people and to some extent with Islam".

with regional or national diffusion, and may eventually lead to language attrition and language shift processes (cf. Batibo, 2005: 51–60).

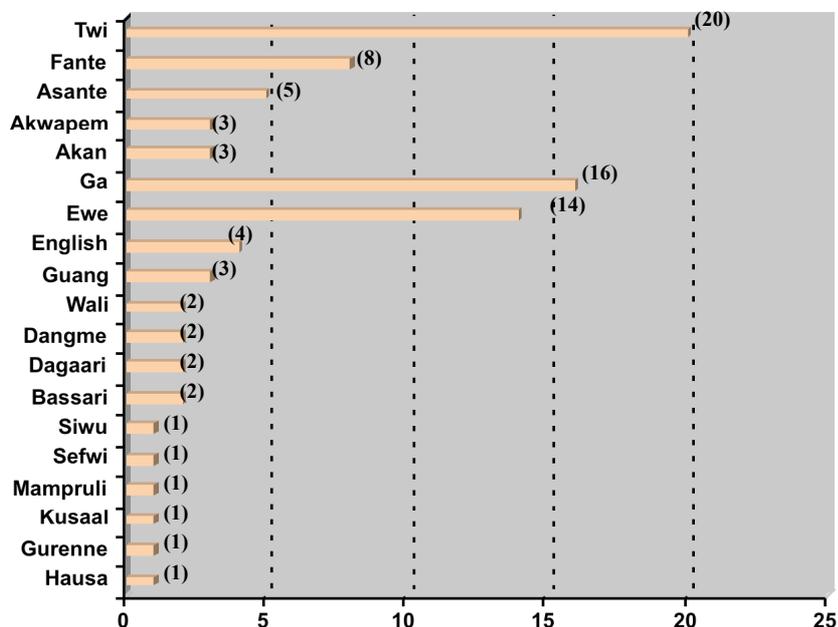


Table 4.1: Respondents' first language.

Notice that most respondents declared to be able to speak up to 3 or 4 language varieties, and that, on average, the individual linguistic repertoire of non-Akan native speakers tends to be more complex than the repertoire of their Akan native speakers counterparts. The result is hardly surprising: minority language speakers are motivated to develop a good command of national languages in addition to their native languages and vernaculars, because the latter are generally perceived as lacking socio-economic value, whereas a certain degree of proficiency in a national language like Akan gives access to education, job opportunities and a better standard of living. It goes without saying that this entails a considerable degree of linguistic convergence in favour of the languages with regional or national diffusion, and may eventually lead to language attrition and language shift processes (cf. Batibo, 2005: 51–60).

The data collected show that the majority of the sample speak at least three languages (cf. table 4.3 below): *i*) English (the official medium of instruction within the local educational system); *ii*) a variety of Akan, depending on the geographical origin of the single respondents and of their parents; *iii*) Ga, the indigenous language of the capital, where the university campus is located.

Apart from English, which is obviously mentioned by all the respondents (including those who selected the Akan version of the questionnaire), a considerable proportion of non-Akan native speakers (42 corresponding to 82.4% of the sub-group) indicated a variety of Akan as their second language, whereas the most popular second language among Akan native speakers is Ga (mentioned by 27 respondents out of 39, corresponding to 69.3% of the subgroup). Ewe, the indigenous language of the neighbouring Volta Region, which is also spoken across the Ghana-Togo border (cf. Dakubu, 1988: 91), is indicated by 9 respondents (corresponding to 11.9% of the non-Ewe native speaker sub-group).

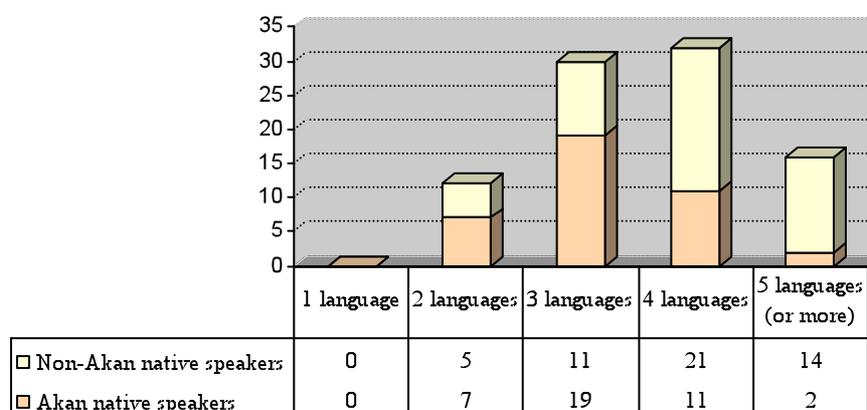


Table 4.2: Number of languages spoken by the respondents (first language included).

Most languages have been learned in a spontaneous way, i.e. outside the educational system, in the multilingual environment which is typical of most West African urban areas. The above findings are indicative of the importance of a multilingual competence within the speech community under investigation, where linguistic diversity is an everyday experience, and suggest that the introduction of multilingual (or at least, bilingual) instruction may not be perceived as a totally alienating and unrealistic long-term educational objective, provided that the speech community's attitudes do not decidedly advise against it.

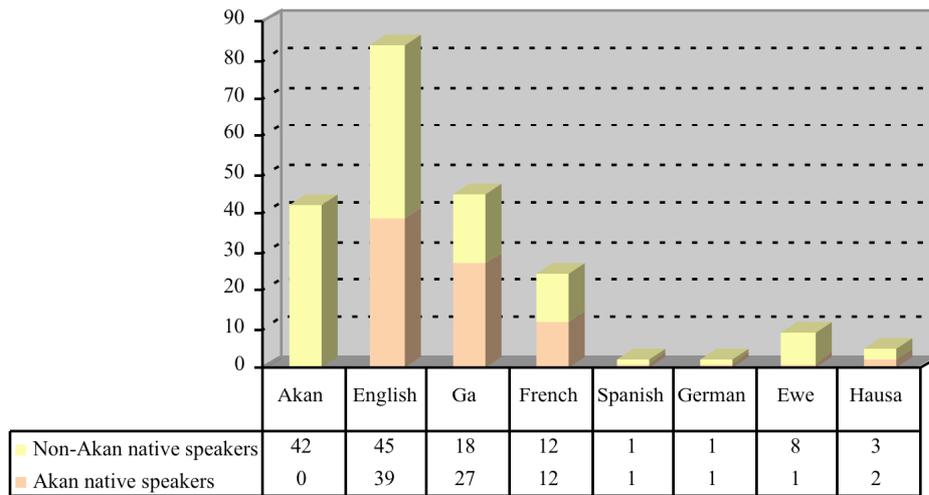


Table 4.3: Breakdown of major second languages.

Among the exolanguages mentioned by the respondents, the most prominent position is occupied by French, which is the official language of Ghana neighbouring countries (Ivory Coast, Burkina Faso and Togo), as well as a worldwide high-prestige lingua franca; a competence of Spanish and German is also reported by a negligible percentage of respondents.

More than half of the respondents (47 out of 90, corresponding to 52,2%) declared to be born in Accra, although all of them claimed to have spent part of their life outside the capital. With the exception of two respondents – a student born in Toronto (Canada) and a student born in De Plateau (Ivory Coast) – all the participants mentioned Ghana as their home country.

If the respondents' gender is taken into account, we notice a satisfactory differentiation, with 64.4% female and 35.6% male; the prevalence of female respondents is probably due to the fact that the Faculty of Arts, which the respondents attend, tends to have a slightly predominant female attendance.

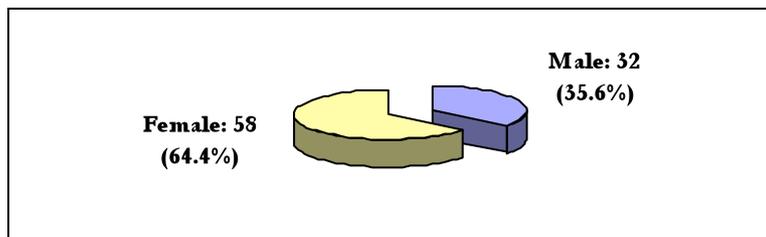


Figure 4.1: Gender of respondents.

The respondents' age is included between 18 and 39 years, although, rather predictably, the majority of them are from 20 to 29 years old, as illustrated in table 4.4 below; table 4.5, on the other hand, displays the age of the sample population by gender so as to make possible a comparison of the ratio of male to female respondents.

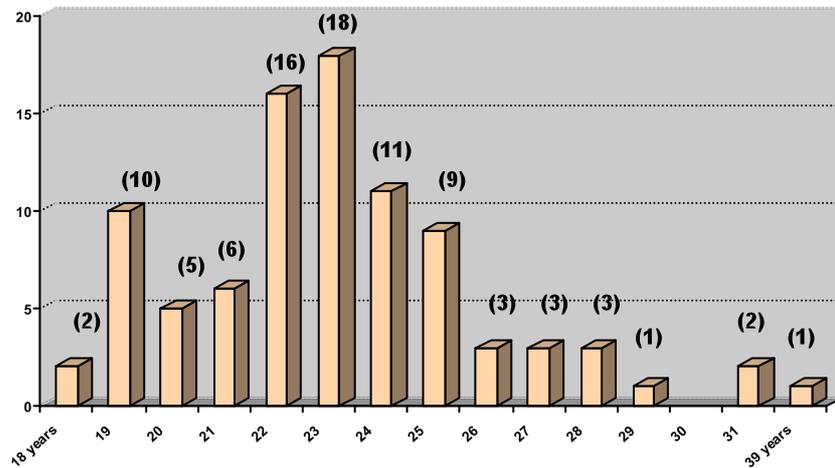


Table 4.4: Respondents' age span.

To sum up the sociolinguistic profile of the sample as it emerges from the respondents' answers, we may say that most respondents are university students in their twenties, who were born in Accra (52.2%), as well as in other neighbouring Ghanaian regions, and who have spent part of their life outside the capital or even abroad. The slight predominance of female students (64.4%) probably reflects the average attendance of the Faculty of Arts, although the possibility that the result might have been affected by the limited size of the sample cannot be excluded. All the respondents are at least bilingual – mastering (a variety of) Akan and English – but most of them claim to be able to speak up to four or five languages, which is indicative of the importance attached to the development of a multilingual competence from a very early age. Given the complex multilingual environment where most respondents have grown up and still live, it will be extremely interesting to examine which are their attitudes towards language use in education, and in particular, towards the introduction of an indigenous language, along with English, as the teaching medium within the local educational system.

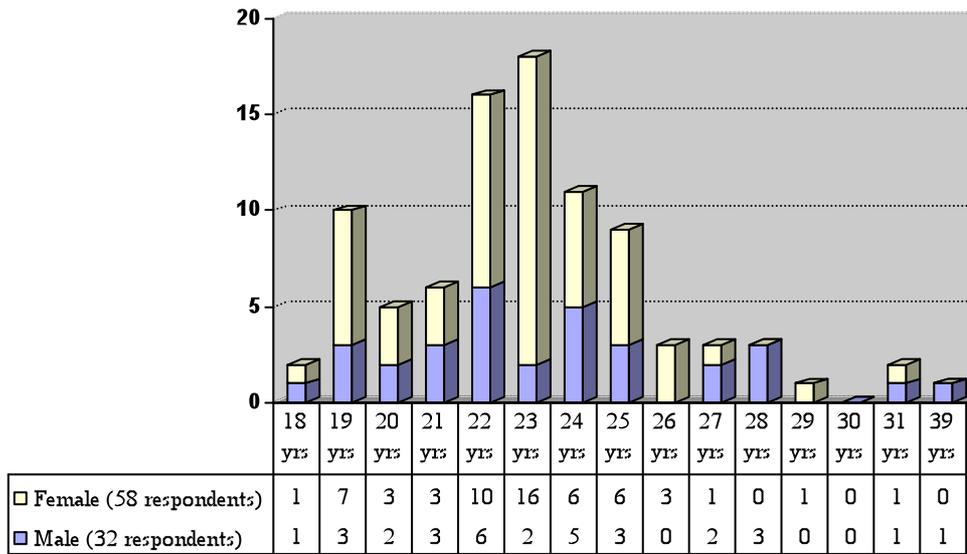


Table 4.5: Age of respondents by gender.

5. Results

As I have anticipated, in the second part of the questionnaire attitudes to language use within the educational system have been broken down into components, resulting in five broad subsections, which will be now examined attempting a comparison between the responses elicited from Akan and non-Akan native speakers. Following the structure of the questionnaire itself, I will begin with questions 17 to 21, the aim of which is to investigate the respondents' attitudes towards the use of Akan (as opposed to English) as the teaching medium in the local school system.

Contrary to all expectations, the introduction of the Akan language appears to be opposed not only by those students who declared to speak it as a second (or third) language, but by the majority of Akan native speakers as well. Indeed, 79.5% of the latter pronounced themselves against the use of the language in primary school lessons, whereas almost the entire group (94.9%) rejected the introduction of Akan as the medium of instruction at college and university (cfr. table 5.1 and table 5.1.1 below).

The use of Akan in the classroom is deemed to have positive effects on the learning process by only 12% of the total sample, with a predictable discrepancy between Akan (25.6%) and non-Akan native speakers (1.9%), although more than one quarter of the sample population acknowledged that lessons would be more interesting (25.6%) and easier to understand (26.7%) if the vehicle for content was Akan rather than English.

	Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
(17) I would like Akan to replace English as a medium of instruction in <u>our primary schools</u> :	2 (2,2%)	11 (12,3%)	42 (46,7%)	35 (38,8%)
(18) I would like Akan to replace English as a medium of instruction in <u>our colleges and universities</u> :	–	2 (2,2%)	34 (37,8%)	54 (60%)
(19) I think that students would <u>learn more effectively</u> if lessons were in Akan rather than in English	3 (3,3%)	8 (8,9%)	36 (40%)	43 (47,8%)
(20) I think that lessons would be <u>more interesting</u> if the language used was Akan rather than English:	2 (2,2%)	21 (23,4%)	29 (32,2%)	38 (42,2%)
(21) I think it would be <u>easier to understand</u> the lessons if the language used was Akan rather than English:	5 (5,6%)	19 (21,1%)	31 (34,5%)	35 (38,8%)

Table 5.1: Frequencies of responses to attitudes statements 17 to 21 (total sample).

	Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
(17) I would like Akan to replace English as a medium of instruction in <u>our primary schools</u> :	2 (5,1%)	6 (15,4%)	20 (51,3%)	11 (28,2%)
(18) I would like Akan to replace English as a medium of instruction in <u>our colleges and universities</u> :	–	2 (5,1%)	18 (46,2%)	19 (48,7%)
(19) I think that students would <u>learn more effectively</u> if lessons were in Akan rather than in English	3 (7,7%)	7 (17,9%)	17 (43,6%)	12 (30,8%)
(20) I think that lessons would be <u>more interesting</u> if the language used was Akan rather than English:	2 (5,1%)	13 (33,4%)	13 (33,4%)	11 (28,1%)
(21) I think it would be <u>easier to understand</u> the lessons if the language used was Akan rather than English:	5 (12,8%)	9 (23,1%)	15 (38,5%)	10 (25,6%)

Table 5.1.1: Frequencies of responses to attitudes statements 17 to 21 (Akan native speakers = 39).

	Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
(17) I would like Akan to replace English as a medium of instruction in <u>our primary schools</u> :	–	5 (9,8%)	22 (43,1%)	24 (47,1%)
(18) I would like Akan to replace English as a medium of instruction in <u>our colleges and universities</u> :	–	–	16 (31,4%)	35 (68,6%)
(19) I think that students would <u>learn more effectively</u> if lessons were in Akan rather than in English	–	1 (1,9%)	19 (37,3%)	31 (60,8%)
(20) I think that lessons would be <u>more interesting</u> if the language used was Akan rather than English:	–	8 (15,7%)	16 (31,4%)	27 (52,9%)
(21) I think it would be <u>easier to understand</u> the lessons if the language used was Akan rather than English:	–	10 (19,6%)	16 (31,4%)	25 (49%)

Table 5.1.2: Frequencies of responses to attitudes statements 17 to 21 (NON-Akan native speakers = 51).

In other words, it is apparent upon examining the response patterns to this first subgroup of attitude statements that the introduction of the Akan language would be opposed by non-Akan native speakers on language loyalty grounds, but would lack the support of most Akan native speakers as well, given the huge prestige attributed to the English language, the perceived practical and economic worth of a good competence

in English, which make it the default choice as far as education is concerned. The possibility to adopt Akan as teaching medium in primary school is actually dismissed as “tribalistic” by one respondent (who declared Akan to be his mother tongue), a remark that probably reflects the common belief that the language of a single ethnic group – however developed and widely spoken across the country – should not be imposed on the others in order to avoid ethnic tensions, and that the language introduced by the former colonial administration is “neutral” in this respect (cf. Bamgbose, 2000).

At the same time, the analysis of this group of responses evinces the need for a different formulation of attitudes statements (17) and (18) in a future version of the questionnaire: the choice of the verb “replace” is probably infelicitous since it may suggest that the Akan language would literally take the place of English as the teaching medium in most (if not all) subjects, thus depriving both students and schoolchildren of the opportunity to reach a reasonable level of competency in that language. A more explicit formulation, highlighting the idea of *bilingual* education (i.e. the use of Akan *along with* English), should thus be preferred to the current version of both statements.

A second group of questions (questions 22 and 23) was intended as a means of investigating the respondents’ attitudes towards the place of Akan (as opposed to English) as Ghana’s national language and its role in the expression of Ghanaian cultural and linguistic identity. Given the high prestige enjoyed by the English language across the country (Dolphyne, 1995: 28), the latter was assumed to represent an important component of Ghanaian cultural and linguistic identity for most non-Akan native speakers, whereas Akan was expected to be the choice of those respondents who mentioned it as their first language. Interestingly, both of these assumptions turned out to be in contrast with the responses collected from our sample: indeed, 94.5% of all respondents rejected the claim that competency in Akan is an essential trait of Ghanaian national identity and an analogous portion of the sample population (96.7%) rejected the same claim with relation to the English language (cf. table 5.2 below).

	Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
(22) One cannot be considered a Ghanaian if one doesn't speak Akan:	3 (3,3%)	2 (2,2%)	26 (28,9%)	59 (65,6%)
(23) One cannot be considered a Ghanaian if one doesn't speak English:	1 (1,1%)	2 (2,2%)	30 (33,3%)	57 (63,4%)

Table 5.2: Frequencies of responses to attitudes statements 22 and 23 (total sample).

	Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
(22) One cannot be considered a Ghanaian if one doesn't speak Akan:	1 (2,6%)	1 (2,6%)	14 (35,9%)	23 (58,9%)
(23) One cannot be considered a Ghanaian if one doesn't speak English:	–	1 (2,6%)	11 (28,1%)	27 (69,3%)

Table 5.2.1: Frequencies of responses to attitudes statements 22 and 23 (*Akan native speakers* = 39).

	Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
(22) One cannot be considered a Ghanaian if one doesn't speak Akan:	2 (3,9%)	1 (1,9%)	12 (23,5%)	36 (70,7%)
(23) One cannot be considered a Ghanaian if one doesn't speak English:	1 (1,9%)	1 (1,9%)	19 (37,3%)	30 (58,9%)

Table 5.2.2: Frequencies of responses to attitudes statements 22 and 23 (*NON-Akan native speakers* = 51).

A comparison of the responses collected from the two subgroups of respondents reveals a considerable convergence of opinions, suggesting that the mother tongue variable does not play a role in this case, and that Ghanaian identity is perceived to be, in most respects, independent of individual language competency. In fact, even in present-day Ghana, the ability to speak (Ghanaian Standard) English remains the prerogative of a minority of the population, the privileged minority who has the benefit of attending the educational system (either in Ghana or abroad) long enough to develop a reasonable familiarity with the language (cf. Dakubu, 1997b: 34). As a consequence, a considerable proportion of covert prestige is attributed to competency in English, which is commonly interpreted as a signal of high education and good financial conditions.

From this point of view, response patterns to attitude statements 22 and 23 display an unexpected degree of sociolinguistic awareness: despite belonging to the educated elite who has attained a command of the English language, respondents reject the latter as a national identity mark; in a similar way, competency in Akan is also rejected, in spite of Akan historical presence in the region and its distribution across the local population, a result that entails the recognition of Ghana's complex multilingual and multiethnic environment, and implies a good level of consciousness about the feelings of linguistic minority groups.

On considering the respondents' attitudes towards the possibility to employ Akan and/or English in a variety of domains of language use, a more composite picture emerges. The local university campus (Legon) was examined in the first place, as a context indicative of respondents' everyday interactive experience with both teachers

and peers. The data reveal that 60% of the total sample enjoy hearing Akan spoken within the university campus and over 90% of the sample population (91.1%) claim to enjoy the use of English in the same context (cf. table 5.3 below).

	Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
(30) When I am in Legon, I enjoy hearing Akan spoken:*	6 (6,7%)	48 (53,3%)	29 (32,2%)	6 (6,7%)
(31) When I am in Legon, I enjoy hearing English spoken:*	26 (28,9%)	56 (62,2%)	7 (7,8%)	–

Table 5.3: Frequencies of responses to attitudes statements 30 and 31 (total sample).

* one respondent remarked that she was “indifferent” to the language(s) spoken.

	Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
(30) When I am in Legon, I enjoy hearing Akan spoken:*	4 (10,3%)	24 (61,5%)	10 (25,6%)	–
(31) When I am in Legon, I enjoy hearing English spoken:*	5 (12,8%)	28 (71,8%)	5 (12,8%)	–

Table 5.3.1: Frequencies of responses to attitudes statements 30 and 31 (Akan native speakers = 39).

* one respondent remarked that she was “indifferent” to the language(s) spoken.

	Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
(30) When I am in Legon, I enjoy hearing Akan spoken:	2 (3,9%)	24 (47,1%)	19 (37,3%)	6 (11,7%)
(31) When I am in Legon, I enjoy hearing English spoken:	21 (41,2%)	28 (54,9%)	2 (3,9%)	–

Table 5.3.2: Frequencies of responses to attitudes statements 30 and 31 (NON-Akan native speakers = 51).

In this case, however, response patterns show an interesting tendency: whereas, as we would expect, both subgroups display positive attitudes towards the use of English within the campus, the choice of Akan in the same context is appreciated by around 50% of non-Akan native speaker respondents and by over 70% of their Akan native speaker counterparts. In other words, English is deemed to be the most appropriate choice within the university campus, but most Akan native speakers – who rejected the “institutional” use of their mother tongue as the teaching medium within the educational system – regard Akan as fit to be used in more informal face-to-face interactions, an opinion shared by 50% of non-Akan native speakers as well. This suggests that, in the respondents’ perception, the functional relationship between the two languages is hierarchical in nature, with English occupying the high extreme along the prestige/status continuum, and Akan restricted to situations characterised by lower

levels of formality, e.g. to everyday interethnic and/or peer group communication, in accordance with its role as the major lingua franca of the country. This interpretation is consistent with the results emerging from the analysis of the next group of statements (questions 32 to 38), the aim of which was to elicit attitudes towards the possibility of employing the Akan language (as opposed to English) in discussing technical and scientific subjects.

Before turning to the data, however, it is necessary to point out that the apparent asymmetry of statements (36) to (38) is not coincidental. In a first draft of the questionnaire the formulation of statements (37) and (38) was in line with those preceding them, i.e. “*I think English is more elegant than Akan*” and “*I think English is more precise and accurate than Akan*”. When the questionnaire was submitted to the local fieldworkers (some of them university lecturers) who would administer it to the students, it was objected that the above formulation might sound offensive and face-threatening, especially to Akan native speakers. As a consequence, it was replaced with the current version, for it is evident that the content of each statement should be as “neutral” as possible in order to gather reliable and significant responses.¹⁵ Statement (36) – the original formulation of which was “*I think English is more sophisticated than Akan*” – was also accordingly modified.

Response patterns to this subgroup of statements confirm the correlation between the degree of development (i.e. *Ausbau*, in the sense of Kloss, 1988) of a certain language and speakers’ attitudes towards it. As expected, three quarters of the sample population (74.4%) give their assent to statement (32) declaring that technical matters can be discussed more effectively in English than in Akan, and an even higher proportion of respondents (88.9%) approve the subsequent statement concerning scientific theories. Statement (34) turns out to be more controversial, with responses symmetrically distributed across the four item scale. Slightly more than 60% of the total sample (64.4%), on the other hand, rate Akan as more effective than English for the expression of feelings and emotions.¹⁶ Incidentally, Akan is probably one of the most developed West African indigenous languages, but it would appear that this is not sufficient to dispel the common prejudice depicting African languages as unfit for use in formal, technical and specialised domains.

¹⁵ The need to carry out a critical examination of the content of attitudes statements is one of the central concerns of language attitude research, described as “content validity” by Baker (1992: 24).

¹⁶ A few respondents pointed out that Akan insults and swear words are more effectual than in English, which is hardly surprising, given that the language the speaker is most proficient in tends to be perceived as the most adequate means of expression of one’s feelings.

	Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
(32) <u>Technical matters</u> can be expressed more effectively in English than in Akan:	24 (26,6%)	43 (47,8%)	21 (23,4%)	2 (2,2%)
(33) <u>Scientific theories</u> can be explained more effectively in English than in Akan:	34 (37,8%)	46 (51,1%)	8 (8,9%)	2 (2,2%)
(34) <u>Political problems</u> can be discussed more effectively in English than in Akan:	15 (16,6%)	29 (32,2%)	32 (35,6%)	14 (15,6%)
(35) <u>Feelings and emotions</u> can be expressed more effectively in English than in Akan:	8 (8,9%)	24 (26,7%)	43 (47,8%)	15 (16,6%)
(36) I think Akan is more <u>sophisticated</u> than English:	15 (16,6%)	32 (35,6%)	29 (32,2%)	14 (15,6%)
(37) I think Akan is more <u>elegant</u> than English:	3 (3,3%)	22 (24,4%)	49 (54,5%)	16 (17,8%)
(38) I think Akan is more <u>precise and accurate</u> than English:	7 (7,8%)	18 (20%)	52 (57,8%)	13 (14,4%)

Table 5.4: Frequencies of responses to attitudes statements 32 to 38 (total sample).

On considering response patterns to statements (36) to (38), one may note that almost three quarters of the total sample disagree with statements (37) and (38) – a figure suggesting again that attitudes towards English tend to be more positive than attitudes towards Akan –, whereas statement (36) “*I think Akan is more sophisticated than English*” elicits a less clear-cut response, with 52.2% of the sample agreeing with it, compared to 47.8% disagreeing (cf. table 5.4), a result which may be indicative of the necessity of replacing the adjective “sophisticated” with a more relevant and/or suitable alternative in a future version of the questionnaire.

On comparing frequency counts related to Akan native speakers with those referring to non-Akan native speaker respondents, we do not notice significant discrepancies: as we would expect, Akan tends to be held in higher esteem by those respondents who mentioned it as their native language and whose proficiency is presumably higher. The correlation between proficiency and (positive) language attitudes has already been pointed out, among others, by Baker (1992: 45); what needs to be underlined here is probably the relatively high proportion of Akan native speaker respondents who appear to have negative feelings about the possibility to discuss specialised subjects in their native language. The most striking aspect, however, is that over one quarter of the respondents belonging to this subgroup (28.2%) rate English, rather than Akan, as the most adequate means of expression of one’s feelings, compared with around 60% (58.8%) of non-Akan native speakers who disagree with the same claim (and so, presumably, rate Akan as effective as English in this respect).

	Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
(32) <u>Technical matters</u> can be expressed more effectively in English than in Akan:	7 (17,9%)	17 (43,6%)	14 (35,9%)	1 (2,6%)
(33) <u>Scientific theories</u> can be explained more effectively in English than in Akan:	9 (23,1%)	24 (61,5%)	5 (12,8%)	1 (2,6%)
(34) <u>Political problems</u> can be discussed more effectively in English than in Akan:	2 (5,1%)	14 (35,9%)	18 (46,2%)	5 (12,8%)
(35) <u>Feelings and emotions</u> can be expressed more effectively in English than in Akan:	1 (2,6%)	10 (25,6%)	22 (56,4%)	6 (15,4%)
(36) I think Akan is more <u>sophisticated</u> than English:	7 (17,9%)	11 (28,2%)	17 (43,6%)	4 (10,3%)
(37) I think Akan is more <u>elegant</u> than English:	2 (5,1%)	15 (38,5%)	18 (46,1%)	4 (10,3%)
(38) I think Akan is more <u>precise and accurate</u> than English:	4 (10,3%)	12 (30,7%)	19 (48,7%)	4 (10,3%)

Table 5.4.1: Frequencies of responses to attitudes statements 32 to 38 (Akan native speakers = 39).

	Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
(32) <u>Technical matters</u> can be expressed more effectively in English than in Akan:	17 (33,4%)	26 (51%)	7 (13,7%)	1 (1,9%)
(33) <u>Scientific theories</u> can be explained more effectively in English than in Akan:	25 (49,1%)	22 (43,1%)	3 (5,9%)	1 (1,9%)
(34) <u>Political problems</u> can be discussed more effectively in English than in Akan:	13 (25,5%)	15 (29,4%)	14 (27,5%)	9 (17,6%)
(35) <u>Feelings and emotions</u> can be expressed more effectively in English than in Akan:	7 (13,7%)	14 (27,5%)	21 (41,2%)	9 (17,6%)
(36) I think Akan is more <u>sophisticated</u> than English:	8 (15,7%)	21 (41,2%)	12 (23,5%)	10 (19,6%)
(37) I think Akan is more <u>elegant</u> than English:	1 (1,9%)	7 (13,7%)	31 (60,8%)	12 (23,5%)
(38) I think Akan is more <u>precise and accurate</u> than English:	3 (5,9%)	6 (11,7%)	33 (64,8%)	9 (17,6%)

Table 5.4.2: Frequencies of responses to attitudes statements 32 to 38 (NON-Akan native speakers = 51).

The final subgroup of attitudes statements (questions 39 to 42) aimed at exploring instrumental attitudes related to the pragmatic value directly or indirectly attached to a good command of the English language, which is traditionally assumed to be the language of upward mobility, i.e. the safest means to obtain a well paid job and to improve one's socio-economic status (cf., for example, Saah, 1986: 373). Statement 43, on the other hand, was intended as a means of ascertaining respondents' "linguistic insecurity", i.e. respondents' (negative) attitudes towards their native Ghanaian accent (it is well known that spoken varieties of English in Ghana present a series of phonetic, morpho-syntactical and lexical features that differentiate them from the varieties spoken in Europe or in the United States, cf. Sey, 1973) as well as their

degree of language awareness in this respect. Table 5.5 displays the figures relating to the whole sample population.

	Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
(39) My knowledge of English and my ability to speak it fluently make me <u>feel superior</u> to those who cannot speak it:	10 (11,1%)	22 (24,4%)	37 (41,1%)	21 (23,4%)
(40) My ability to speak English will assure me <u>a good job</u> as soon as I finish university:	14 (15,6%)	37 (41,1%)	34 (37,7%)	5 (5,6%)
(41) My ability to speak English is <u>a matter of pride</u> for my parents:	13 (14,4%)	50 (55,6%)	23 (25,6%)	4 (4,4%)
(42) My ability to speak English will <u>assure my success</u> in the future:	7 (7,8%)	37 (41,1%)	38 (42,2%)	8 (8,9%)
(43) When I speak English, I am careful about choosing the 'correct' pronunciation, without an evident Ghanaian accent:	16 (17,8%)	40 (44,4%)	25 (27,8%)	9 (10%)

Table 5.5: Frequencies of responses to attitudes statements 39 to 43 (total sample).

	Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
(39) My knowledge of English and my ability to speak it fluently make me <u>feel superior</u> to those who cannot speak it:	3 (7,7%)	10 (25,6%)	17 (43,6%)	9 (23,1%)
(40) My ability to speak English will assure me <u>a good job</u> as soon as I finish university:	3 (7,7%)	16 (41%)	19 (48,7%)	1 (2,6%)
(41) My ability to speak English is <u>a matter of pride</u> for my parents:	1 (2,6%)	21 (53,8%)	15 (38,5%)	2 (5,1%)
(42) My ability to speak English will <u>assure my success</u> in the future:	2 (5,1%)	14 (35,9%)	19 (48,7%)	4 (10,3%)
(43) When I speak English, I am careful about choosing the 'correct' pronunciation, without an evident Ghanaian accent:	2 (5,1%)	17 (43,6%)	13 (33,4%)	7 (17,9%)

Table 5.5.1: Frequencies of responses to attitudes statements 39 to 43 (Akan native speakers = 39).

	Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
(39) My knowledge of English and my ability to speak it fluently make me <u>feel superior</u> to those who cannot speak it:	7 (13,7%)	12 (23,5%)	20 (39,3%)	12 (23,5%)
(40) My ability to speak English will assure me <u>a good job</u> as soon as I finish university:	11 (21,6%)	21 (41,2%)	15 (29,4%)	4 (7,8%)
(41) My ability to speak English is <u>a matter of pride</u> for my parents:	12 (23,5%)	29 (56,9%)	8 (15,7%)	2 (3,9%)
(42) My ability to speak English will <u>assure my success</u> in the future:	5 (9,8%)	23 (45,1%)	19 (37,3%)	4 (7,8%)
(43) When I speak English, I am careful about choosing the 'correct' pronunciation, without an evident Ghanaian accent:	14 (27,5%)	23 (45,1%)	12 (23,5%)	2 (3,9%)

Table 5.5.2: Frequencies of responses to attitudes statements 39 to 43 (NON-Akan native speakers = 51).

Whereas around 60% of respondents (57.6%) are confident that their competency in English will be a guarantee of good employment opportunities and 70% of them consider their command of the English language as a matter of pride for their parents, the same competence in English is perceived as a key to success by less than half of the total group (48.9%) and only 35% of all respondents acknowledged a sense of superiority generated by their language skills. This is probably due to the fact that, in African communities as well as in Western society, feelings of superiority tends to be rather unpopular and disapproved, and not all respondents may be ready to confess them, even in an anonymous survey. In any case, it would appear that the instrumental value attached to English as an essential component in one's professional skills plays a role in influencing the respondents' preference for the latter as the teaching medium in the educational system, a preference not arising out of language loyalty or language identity feelings, but motivated by pragmatic and utilitarian reasons, i.e. by the desire to "gain social recognition and economic advantages" (Gardner / Lambert, 1972: 14). From this point of view, it is evident that even an important and highly developed national language like Akan will never be in a position to compete with the major language of international communication.

If we turn to response patterns elicited by statement (43), a certain degree of "linguistic insecurity" is undoubtedly apparent, for over 60% of the sample (62.2%) claim to accommodate their pronunciation in the attempt to conceal their Ghanaian accent, with about 20% of responses concentrated in the "strongly agree" extreme of the scale, a result indicating that the local accent is indeed the object of negative evaluation. On the other hand, 10% of the total sample opted for the "strongly disagree" extreme, a figure suggesting that a portion of the Ghanaian English speaking population may conversely perceive the local accent as a distinct solidarity marker, i.e. as an ethnically marked feature depicting the speaker as a local community member.

It would be interesting to discover which is the normative model adopted by the respondents who claimed to avoid an evident Ghanaian pronunciation, since English is notoriously a "polycentric" language, i.e. a language presenting a number of prestige standard varieties (American English, British English, Australian English, South African English, and so forth), and picking out the "correct" usage may not be straightforward, although it is certainly indicative of the attitudes consciously or unconsciously attached to the speech community where a given variety is spoken.

6. Conclusive remarks

The present paper has discussed the results of a preliminary survey aimed at investigating attitudes towards language use in education among the students attending the University of Ghana in Accra, who are supposed to represent the best educated, open-minded and innovative elite in the Ghanaian society. Data were collected through an anonymous written questionnaire, which was administered by local fieldworkers to a pilot sample of 90 students attending the Faculty of Arts in order to test the reliability and validity of the questionnaire itself as a research tool which might be subsequently administered to a wider sample, representative of the student population in Accra.

The investigation of language attitudes has always had a place in sociology of language studies, alongside the analysis of overt behaviours and patterns of language use. The interrelation between language attitudes and language behaviour has been demonstrated by countless studies, which proved that knowledge of language attitudes is fundamental to the formulation of any language policy and to success in its implementation. Since Ghana, like most African countries, is still in search of a language policy which might give an appropriate and mutually agreeable role to the various indigenous languages spoken within its borders (cf. Andoh-Kumi, 1997), I decided to focus on Akan, the most important and highly developed language of the country, and to investigate attitudes towards its use as the teaching medium in the local educational system as well as attitudes towards the possibility of employing the Akan language (as opposed to English) in discussing specialised and technical subjects.

The present research is still admittedly at an incipient stage, which does not allow the formulation of overarching conclusions; nevertheless the analysis of empirical data suggests that the introduction of the Akan language as the teaching medium in various levels of the local educational system would be opposed not only by those students who declare to speak it as a second (or third) language, but by the majority of Akan native speakers as well, who tend to perceive the language as unfit for use in formal, technical and specialised domains, and value a command of the English language as one of the most important skills that formal education is expected to provide.

On the other hand, it would appear that most respondents (60%) rate Akan as fit to be used in more informal face-to-face interactions taking place within the local university campus, and regard it as the most adequate means of expression of one's feelings and emotions. In fact, attitudes towards the same language can be

simultaneously positive so far as one domain of language use is concerned and negative in another: this state of affair depends in part on the actual degree of standardization and elaboration achieved by a given variety and by its status within the speech community, but is also influenced by the prestige, the attitudes and the evaluations that community members – either consciously or unconsciously – attribute to each of the languages at their disposal.

Another interesting feature emerging from the empirical data collected so far is that neither English nor Akan appear to be perceived as an essential component of Ghanaian national identity. This tendency entails a considerable degree of sociolinguistic awareness, mutual acceptance and respect for language and cultural diversity, and suggests that the sheer number of speakers or the institutional support enjoyed by a given variety are not the only factors at stake in shaping attitudes towards languages.

A more detailed and systematic investigation of the complex and challenging language scenario in Ghana is certainly needed in order to reach a deeper understanding of the role played by each language in expressing speakers' ethnic and linguistic identity and contribute to language policy and planning in many institutional and official domains.

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Appendix

Questionnaire on Ghanaian Languages

- First Part -

Questions about yourself

(All information will be treated in strict confidence and will be used only for research purposes).

1. Age:
2. Sex:
3. What is the name of your first language?
4. What's the name of the city where you were born?
5. How long have you been here, in Accra?
6. To which ethnic group do you feel you belong?
7. Your father's occupation is:

<input type="checkbox"/> farmer	<input type="checkbox"/> public servant
<input type="checkbox"/> shopkeeper	<input type="checkbox"/> businessman
<input type="checkbox"/> teacher	<input type="checkbox"/> doctor
<input type="checkbox"/> accountant	<input type="checkbox"/> other (please specify).....
<input type="checkbox"/> private company employee	
8. Your mother's occupation is:

<input type="checkbox"/> farmer	<input type="checkbox"/> private company employee
<input type="checkbox"/> shopkeeper	<input type="checkbox"/> housewife
<input type="checkbox"/> teacher	<input type="checkbox"/> other (please specify)
<input type="checkbox"/> nurse	
9. Have you ever lived in other parts of Ghana for more than 5/6 months?

<input type="checkbox"/> No
<input type="checkbox"/> Yes

If YES, where?.....
10. Have you ever lived abroad for more than 5-6 months?

<input type="checkbox"/> No
<input type="checkbox"/> Yes

If YES, where?.....
11. Your religion:

<input type="checkbox"/> Christian
<input type="checkbox"/> Muslim
<input type="checkbox"/> Other (please, specify)
12. What is your present level of educational attainment?
.....
13. Can you read in your first language?

<input type="checkbox"/> yes	<input type="checkbox"/> no
------------------------------	-----------------------------
14. Can you write in your first language?

<input type="checkbox"/> yes	<input type="checkbox"/> no
------------------------------	-----------------------------

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15. Which other languages can you speak? Please, write the name of the languages and tick the box according to your level of competence:
- | | | | |
|----------|------------------------------------|-------------------------------|--|
| a) | <input type="checkbox"/> very well | <input type="checkbox"/> well | <input type="checkbox"/> not very well |
| b) | <input type="checkbox"/> very well | <input type="checkbox"/> well | <input type="checkbox"/> not very well |
| c) | <input type="checkbox"/> very well | <input type="checkbox"/> well | <input type="checkbox"/> not very well |
| d) | <input type="checkbox"/> very well | <input type="checkbox"/> well | <input type="checkbox"/> not very well |
| e) | <input type="checkbox"/> very well | <input type="checkbox"/> well | <input type="checkbox"/> not very well |
| f) | <input type="checkbox"/> very well | <input type="checkbox"/> well | <input type="checkbox"/> not very well |
| g) | <input type="checkbox"/> very well | <input type="checkbox"/> well | <input type="checkbox"/> not very well |
16. Which other languages can you write and read? Please, write the name of the languages and tick the box according to your level of competence:
- | | | | |
|----------|------------------------------------|-------------------------------|--|
| a) | <input type="checkbox"/> very well | <input type="checkbox"/> well | <input type="checkbox"/> not very well |
| b) | <input type="checkbox"/> very well | <input type="checkbox"/> well | <input type="checkbox"/> not very well |
| c) | <input type="checkbox"/> very well | <input type="checkbox"/> well | <input type="checkbox"/> not very well |
| d) | <input type="checkbox"/> very well | <input type="checkbox"/> well | <input type="checkbox"/> not very well |

- Second part -

Questions about the languages that you can speak

(Please, indicate your answer with a tick in the appropriate box; you can also add a brief comment, if you want).

17. I would like Akan to replace English as a medium of instruction in our primary schools:
- | | | | |
|---|--------------------------------|-----------------------------------|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Strongly agree | <input type="checkbox"/> Agree | <input type="checkbox"/> Disagree | <input type="checkbox"/> Strongly disagree |
|---|--------------------------------|-----------------------------------|--|
18. I would like Akan to replace English as a medium of instruction in our colleges and universities:
- | | | | |
|---|--------------------------------|-----------------------------------|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Strongly agree | <input type="checkbox"/> Agree | <input type="checkbox"/> Disagree | <input type="checkbox"/> Strongly disagree |
|---|--------------------------------|-----------------------------------|--|
19. I think that students would learn more effectively if lessons were in Akan rather than in English:
- | | | | |
|---|--------------------------------|-----------------------------------|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Strongly agree | <input type="checkbox"/> Agree | <input type="checkbox"/> Disagree | <input type="checkbox"/> Strongly disagree |
|---|--------------------------------|-----------------------------------|--|
20. I think that lessons would be more interesting if the language used was Akan rather than English:
- | | | | |
|---|--------------------------------|-----------------------------------|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Strongly agree | <input type="checkbox"/> Agree | <input type="checkbox"/> Disagree | <input type="checkbox"/> Strongly disagree |
|---|--------------------------------|-----------------------------------|--|
21. I think it would be easier to understand the lessons if the language used was Akan rather than English:
- | | | | |
|---|--------------------------------|-----------------------------------|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Strongly agree | <input type="checkbox"/> Agree | <input type="checkbox"/> Disagree | <input type="checkbox"/> Strongly disagree |
|---|--------------------------------|-----------------------------------|--|
22. One cannot be considered a Ghanaian if one doesn't speak Akan:
- | | | | |
|---|--------------------------------|-----------------------------------|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Strongly agree | <input type="checkbox"/> Agree | <input type="checkbox"/> Disagree | <input type="checkbox"/> Strongly disagree |
|---|--------------------------------|-----------------------------------|--|
23. One cannot be considered a Ghanaian if one doesn't speak English:
- | | | | |
|---|--------------------------------|-----------------------------------|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Strongly agree | <input type="checkbox"/> Agree | <input type="checkbox"/> Disagree | <input type="checkbox"/> Strongly disagree |
|---|--------------------------------|-----------------------------------|--|
24. There are only a few people in Ghana who can speak 'good', 'pure' Akan:
- | | | | |
|---|--------------------------------|-----------------------------------|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Strongly agree | <input type="checkbox"/> Agree | <input type="checkbox"/> Disagree | <input type="checkbox"/> Strongly disagree |
|---|--------------------------------|-----------------------------------|--|
25. The capacity to speak 'pure' Akan is deteriorating because of the widespread use of the English language:
- | | | | |
|---|--------------------------------|-----------------------------------|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Strongly agree | <input type="checkbox"/> Agree | <input type="checkbox"/> Disagree | <input type="checkbox"/> Strongly disagree |
|---|--------------------------------|-----------------------------------|--|
26. There are things that you can say in English, but not in Akan:
- | | | | |
|---|--------------------------------|-----------------------------------|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Strongly agree | <input type="checkbox"/> Agree | <input type="checkbox"/> Disagree | <input type="checkbox"/> Strongly disagree |
|---|--------------------------------|-----------------------------------|--|
27. If you agree, please, give an example:

.....

28. There are things that you can say in Akan, but not in English:
 Strongly agree Agree Disagree Strongly disagree
29. If you agree, please, give an example:
.....
.....
30. When I am in Legon, I enjoy hearing Akan spoken:
 Strongly agree Agree Disagree Strongly disagree
31. When I am in Legon, I enjoy hearing English spoken:
 Strongly agree Agree Disagree Strongly disagree
32. Technical matters can be expressed more effectively in English than in Akan:
 Strongly agree Agree Disagree Strongly disagree
33. Scientific theories can be explained more effectively in English than in Akan:
 Strongly agree Agree Disagree Strongly disagree
34. Political problems can be discussed more effectively in English than in Akan:
 Strongly agree Agree Disagree Strongly disagree
35. Feelings and emotions can be expressed more effectively in English than in Akan:
 Strongly agree Agree Disagree Strongly disagree
36. I think Akan is more sophisticated than English:
 Strongly agree Agree Disagree Strongly disagree
37. I think Akan is more elegant than English:
 Strongly agree Agree Disagree Strongly disagree
38. I think Akan is more precise and accurate than English:
 Strongly agree Agree Disagree Strongly disagree
39. My knowledge of English and my ability to speak it fluently make me feel superior to those who cannot speak it:
 Strongly agree Agree Disagree Strongly disagree
40. My ability to speak English will assure me a good job as soon as I finish university:
 Strongly agree Agree Disagree Strongly disagree
41. My ability to speak English is a matter of pride for my parents:
 Strongly agree Agree Disagree Strongly disagree
42. My ability to speak English will assure my success in the future:
 Strongly agree Agree Disagree Strongly disagree
43. When I speak English, I am careful about choosing the ‘correct’ pronunciation, without an evident Ghanaian accent:
 Strongly agree Agree Disagree Strongly disagree

Thank you for filling this questionnaire!

Medaase pii!

Nsemmissa bi a efa Ghana kasa ahodoɔ ho

- ɔfa a ɛdi kan -

Nsemmissa bi a efa w'ankasa ho

(Asem biara a wobeka no ye adee a eye kokoa mu nsem a yede beye nhwehwemu nko ara).

1. Mfee a woadi:
2. Woye nipasuo ben?
3. Kasa a ɛdi kan a woka no din de sen?
4. Ahenkuro a wɔwoo wo wɔ mu no din de sen?
5. Mmere tenten sen na woadi no wɔ Nkran ha?
6. Abusuakuo ben na wogyɛ di sɛ wobɔ?
7. Wo papa adwuma a ɔyɛ ne:

<input type="checkbox"/> Okuafo	<input type="checkbox"/> ɔyɛ obi adwumayeni
<input type="checkbox"/> ɔte sotoɔ ano	<input type="checkbox"/> ɔyɛ Aban adwumayeni
<input type="checkbox"/> ɔkyerekyerɛfo	<input type="checkbox"/> ɔyɛ n'ankasa adwuma
<input type="checkbox"/> Sikasem ho nkontabufoɔ	<input type="checkbox"/> Yaresafoɔ
<input type="checkbox"/> Adwuma foforo bi (Mepa wo kyew, kyere saa adwuma no)	
8. Adwuma a wo maame ye ne:

<input type="checkbox"/> Okuafo	<input type="checkbox"/> ɔyɛ neese wo ayaresabea
<input type="checkbox"/> ɔte sotoɔ ano	<input type="checkbox"/> ɔyɛ obi adwumayeni
<input type="checkbox"/> ɔkyerekyerɛfo	<input type="checkbox"/> ɔno dee, ɔhwɛ efie nko ara
<input type="checkbox"/> Adwuma foforo bi (Mepa wo kyew, kyere saa adwuma no)	
9. Enti woatena ɔman Ghana ha fa baabi boro beye abosome enum kɔsi abosome nsia soɔ da?

<input type="checkbox"/> Daabi
<input type="checkbox"/> Aane

Se AANE dee a, ɛhenefa na woatena da?.....
10. Enti woatena amannɔne boro beye abosome num kɔsi abosome nsia soɔ da?

<input type="checkbox"/> Daabi
<input type="checkbox"/> Aane

Se AANE dee a, ɛhenefa na woatena da?.....
11. ɔsom a wowɔ mu ne:

<input type="checkbox"/> Kristosom
<input type="checkbox"/> Nkramosom
<input type="checkbox"/> ɔsom foforo bi (Mepa wo kyew, kyere saa ɔsom no)
12. Seesei wo nwomasua mpɛnpɛsoɔ aduru sen?
.....
13. Wobetumi akenkan wɔ wo kasa a ɛdi kan no mu anaa?

<input type="checkbox"/> aane	<input type="checkbox"/> daabi
-------------------------------	--------------------------------
14. Wobetumi atwerɛ wɔ wo kasa a ɛdi kan no mu anaa?

<input type="checkbox"/> aane	<input type="checkbox"/> daabi
-------------------------------	--------------------------------

15. Kasa ahodoɔ ben na wotumi aka bio? Mepa wo kyew, twere saa kasa ahodoɔ no nyinaa din na kyere no wo asee ha sedee wotumi ka no fa:

- | | | | |
|----------|---|------------------------------------|--|
| a) | <input type="checkbox"/> Metumi ka no yiye pa ara | <input type="checkbox"/> Metumi ka | <input type="checkbox"/> Mentumi nka no yiye |
| b) | <input type="checkbox"/> Metumi ka no yiye pa ara | <input type="checkbox"/> Metumi ka | <input type="checkbox"/> Mentumi nka no yiye |
| c) | <input type="checkbox"/> Metumi ka no yiye pa ara | <input type="checkbox"/> Metumi ka | <input type="checkbox"/> Mentumi nka no yiye |
| d) | <input type="checkbox"/> Metumi ka no yiye pa ara | <input type="checkbox"/> Metumi ka | <input type="checkbox"/> Mentumi nka no yiye |
| e) | <input type="checkbox"/> Metumi ka no yiye pa ara | <input type="checkbox"/> Metumi ka | <input type="checkbox"/> Mentumi nka no yiye |
| f) | <input type="checkbox"/> Metumi ka no yiye pa ara | <input type="checkbox"/> Metumi ka | <input type="checkbox"/> Mentumi nka no yiye |
| g) | <input type="checkbox"/> Metumi ka no yiye pa ara | <input type="checkbox"/> Metumi ka | <input type="checkbox"/> Mentumi nka no yiye |

16. Kasa ahodoɔ ben bio na wobetumi atwere asan akenkan? Mepa wo kyew, twere saa kasa ahodoɔ no nyinaa din na kyere no wo asee ha sedee wobetumi atwere san akenkan no:

- | | | | |
|----------|---|------------------------------------|--|
| a) | <input type="checkbox"/> Metumi ka no yiye pa ara | <input type="checkbox"/> Metumi ka | <input type="checkbox"/> Mentumi nka no yiye |
| b) | <input type="checkbox"/> Metumi ka no yiye pa ara | <input type="checkbox"/> Metumi ka | <input type="checkbox"/> Mentumi nka no yiye |
| c) | <input type="checkbox"/> Metumi ka no yiye pa ara | <input type="checkbox"/> Metumi ka | <input type="checkbox"/> Mentumi nka no yiye |
| d) | <input type="checkbox"/> Metumi ka no yiye pa ara | <input type="checkbox"/> Metumi ka | <input type="checkbox"/> Mentumi nka no yiye |

- ofa a etɔ so mmieniu -

Nsemmisa a efa kasa ahodoɔ a wobetumi aka

(Mepa wo kyew, kyere wo mmuaee no wo nyiano ahodoɔ a ewɔ asee ho no, wobetumi de w'ankasa adwenkyere kakra aka ho).

17. Mepɛ se yede Akan kasa mmom bekyere adee wo yen Mfitiasee Sukuu ahodoɔ no mu sene se yede Borɔfo kasa bekyere won adee:

- | | | | |
|---|------------------------------------|------------------------------------|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Mepene so pa ara | <input type="checkbox"/> Mepene so | <input type="checkbox"/> Mepene so | <input type="checkbox"/> Mepene so koraa |
|---|------------------------------------|------------------------------------|--|

18. Mepɛ se yede Akan kasa mmom bekyere adee wo yen Ntoasoo Sukuu ne Sukuupɔn ahodoɔ no nyinaa mu sene se yede Borɔfo kasa bekyere won adee:

- | | | | |
|---|------------------------------------|------------------------------------|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Mepene so pa ara | <input type="checkbox"/> Mepene so | <input type="checkbox"/> Mepene so | <input type="checkbox"/> Mepene so koraa |
|---|------------------------------------|------------------------------------|--|

19. Medwene se asuafoɔ no betumi asua adee yiye pa ara se woɔde Akan kasa mmom kyerekyere adesuaɔde no nyinaa mu a sene se woɔde Borɔfo kasa na ebekyere:

- | | | | |
|---|------------------------------------|------------------------------------|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Mepene so pa ara | <input type="checkbox"/> Mepene so | <input type="checkbox"/> Mepene so | <input type="checkbox"/> Mepene so koraa |
|---|------------------------------------|------------------------------------|--|

20. Medwene se adesuaɔde no beye anika pa ara se yede Akan kasa mmom na ebekyere sene se yede Borɔfo kasa bekyere adee:

- | | | | |
|---|------------------------------------|------------------------------------|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Mepene so pa ara | <input type="checkbox"/> Mepene so | <input type="checkbox"/> Mepene so | <input type="checkbox"/> Mepene so koraa |
|---|------------------------------------|------------------------------------|--|

21. Medwene se nteasee a ebeba adesuaɔde no mu no beye mmere pa ara se yede Akan kasa mmom na ebekyere sene se yede Borɔfo kasa no bekyere:

- | | | | |
|---|------------------------------------|------------------------------------|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Mepene so pa ara | <input type="checkbox"/> Mepene so | <input type="checkbox"/> Mepene so | <input type="checkbox"/> Mepene so koraa |
|---|------------------------------------|------------------------------------|--|

22. enye adee a yebegye obi ato mu se ɔye Ghanani se saa nipakorɔ no ntumi nka Akan kasa no a:

- | | | | |
|---|------------------------------------|------------------------------------|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Mepene so pa ara | <input type="checkbox"/> Mepene so | <input type="checkbox"/> Mepene so | <input type="checkbox"/> Mepene so koraa |
|---|------------------------------------|------------------------------------|--|

23. enye adee a yebegye obi ato mu se ɔye Ghanani se saa nipakorɔ no ntumi nka Borɔfo kasa no a:

- | | | | |
|---|------------------------------------|------------------------------------|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Mepene so pa ara | <input type="checkbox"/> Mepene so | <input type="checkbox"/> Mepene so | <input type="checkbox"/> Mepene so koraa |
|---|------------------------------------|------------------------------------|--|

24. Nnipa kakraa bi na woɔwo Ghana ha a wobetumi aka Twi kasa no kronkronn a twitwitwi biara nni mu:

- | | | | |
|---|------------------------------------|------------------------------------|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Mepene so pa ara | <input type="checkbox"/> Mepene so | <input type="checkbox"/> Mepene so | <input type="checkbox"/> Mepene so koraa |
|---|------------------------------------|------------------------------------|--|

25. Sedee na yesi ka Twi kasa no kronkronn a twitwitwi biara nni mu no, ano rebre ase efiri se, seesei no Borɔfo kasa no atre bebree sene Twi kasa no:

- | | | | |
|---|------------------------------------|------------------------------------|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Mepene so pa ara | <input type="checkbox"/> Mepene so | <input type="checkbox"/> Mepene so | <input type="checkbox"/> Mepene so koraa |
|---|------------------------------------|------------------------------------|--|

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26. Nnooma bebreɛ wɔ hɔ a wobetumi aka no Borɔfo kasa mu, nanso wontumi mfa Akan kasa no nka:
 Mepene so pa ara Mepene so Mempene so Mempene so koraa
27. Se wogyɛ to mu a, mepa wo kyew ma nhwesoo:

28. Nnooma bebreɛ wɔ hɔ a wobetumi aka no Akan kasa mu, nanso wontumi mfa Borɔfo kasa no nka:
 Mepene so pa ara Mepene so Mempene so Mempene so koraa
29. Se wogyɛ to mu a, mepa wo kyew ma nhwesoo:

30. Se mewɔ Legon a, m'ani gye sedee wɔka Akan kasa no ho:
 Mepene so pa ara Mepene so Mempene so Mempene so koraa
31. Se mewɔ Legon a, m'ani gye sedee wɔde Borɔfo kasa no ho:
 Mepene so pa ara Mepene so Mempene so Mempene so koraa
32. Nsem bi a efa mfridwuma ho dee yebetumi de Borɔfo kasa akyerkyere mu yiye sene se yede Akan kasa na ebekyerkyere mu:
 Mepene so pa ara Mepene so Mempene so Mempene so koraa
33. Yebetumi de Borɔfo kasa akyerkyere Abodee mu Nyansape ho nimdee ahodoɔ no mu yiye sene se yede Akan na ebekyerkyere mu:
 Mepene so pa ara Mepene so Mempene so Mempene so koraa
34. Yen amammuo mu akwansidee nso no yebetumi de Borɔfo kasa akyerkyere mu yiye sene se yede Akan kasa na ebekyerkyere mu:
 Mepene so pa ara Mepene so Mempene so Mempene so koraa
35. Yebetumi de Borɔfo kasa akyerkyere atenka a venya no mu yiye sene se yede Akan kasa na ebekyerkyere mu:
 Mepene so pa ara Mepene so Mempene so Mempene so koraa
36. Medwene se Akan kasa no mu nsem bebreɛ wɔ abɛfo kwan so sene Borɔfo kasa:
 Mepene so pa ara Mepene so Mempene so Mempene so koraa
37. Medwene se Akan kasa no wɔ animuonyam sene Borɔfo kasa no:
 Mepene so pa ara Mepene so Mempene so Mempene so koraa
38. Medwene se Akan kasa no si pi na emu da hɔ pefee sene Borɔfo kasa no:
 Mepene so pa ara Mepene so Mempene so Mempene so koraa
39. Me nimdee a mewɔ wɔ Borɔfo kasa no mu ne sedee metumi ka kasa no ma mehunu se mewɔ tumi bi sene won a wontumi nka Borɔfo kasa no:
 Mepene so pa ara Mepene so Mempene so Mempene so koraa
40. Senea metumi ka Borɔfo kasa no beboa ama manya adwuma pa aye ntem wɔ bere a mewie Sukuupon no:
 Mepene so pa ara Mepene so Mempene so Mempene so koraa
41. Senea metumi ka Borɔfo kasa no akɔye animuonyamhye ama m'awofo:
 Mepene so pa ara Mepene so Mempene so Mempene so koraa
42. Senea metumi ka Borɔfo kasa no beboa ama m'abrabo akɔ so yiye daakye bi:
 Mepene so pa ara Mepene so Mempene so Mempene so koraa
43. Se meka Borɔfo kasa no a, meye ahweyie wɔ akwan a mesi bobobobo emu nsem no din no se ebeye na mfomsoo biara mma nne a mede kasa no mu na obi anhunu se enne no ye Ghanani:
 Mepene so pa ara Mepene so Mempene so Mempene so koraa

Meda wo ase se woayiyi saa nsemmisa yi ano ama me!