

UNIVERSITY OF CAPE COAST

ACCEPTABILITY OF LEXICO-GRAMMATICAL FEATURES OF  
GHANAIAN ENGLISH

BY

NANCY BOAHEMAA NKANSAH

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and Legal Studies, University of Cape Coast, in partial fulfilment of the  
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Language

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## DECLARATION

### Candidate's Declaration

I hereby declare that this thesis is the result of my own original research and that no part of it has been presented for another degree in this university or elsewhere.

Candidate's Signature..... Date:.....

Name: Nancy Boahemaa Nkansah

### Supervisors' Declaration

We hereby declare that the preparation and presentation of the thesis were supervised in accordance with the guidelines on supervision of thesis laid down by the University of Cape Coast.

Principal Supervisor's Signature..... Date.....

Name: Professor Lawrence K. Owusu-Ansah

Co-supervisor's Signature.....Date.....

Name: Dr. Joseph Arko

## ABSTRACT

This study examines the levels of acceptability of some lexical forms and grammatical features identified in the literature as Ghanaian English. It also discusses the recognised or acceptable indexical markers of the variety. The study explains the phenomenon of acceptability through Schneider's (2007) Dynamic Model of Postcolonial Englishes. Employing both qualitative and quantitative methods, the researcher sampled 400 respondents for a survey and 20 participants for interviews. Respondents indicated their levels of acceptability on a scale of 1-5 where 1=*Unacceptable*, 2=*Unacceptable sometimes*, 3=*Neutral*, 4=*Acceptable sometimes* and 5=*Acceptable*. The study revealed that not all the lexical forms identified to be Ghanaian English received the same level of acceptability. The acceptability of lexical items was influenced by its wide and continuous use, the origin of the concept, an individual's knowledge of Standard English and global recognition or acceptability. It was also found that the grammatical features which are acceptable to Ghanaians are the use of uncountable nouns and idiomatic expressions since these features recorded higher levels of acceptability. The acceptability of these features was attributed to reasons such as their conformity to Standard English rules of grammar, intelligibility and their wide usage. Some of the acceptable and unacceptable lexical and grammatical features were also recognised as being indexical to the variety. Based on Schneider's model, the study showed that Ghanaians are endonormative in terms of lexical items and exonormative in terms of grammar. The study has implications for theory, codification and further research.

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DEDICATION

To my parents,

Mr. Nkansah Boahene and Mrs. Grace Nkansah Boahene



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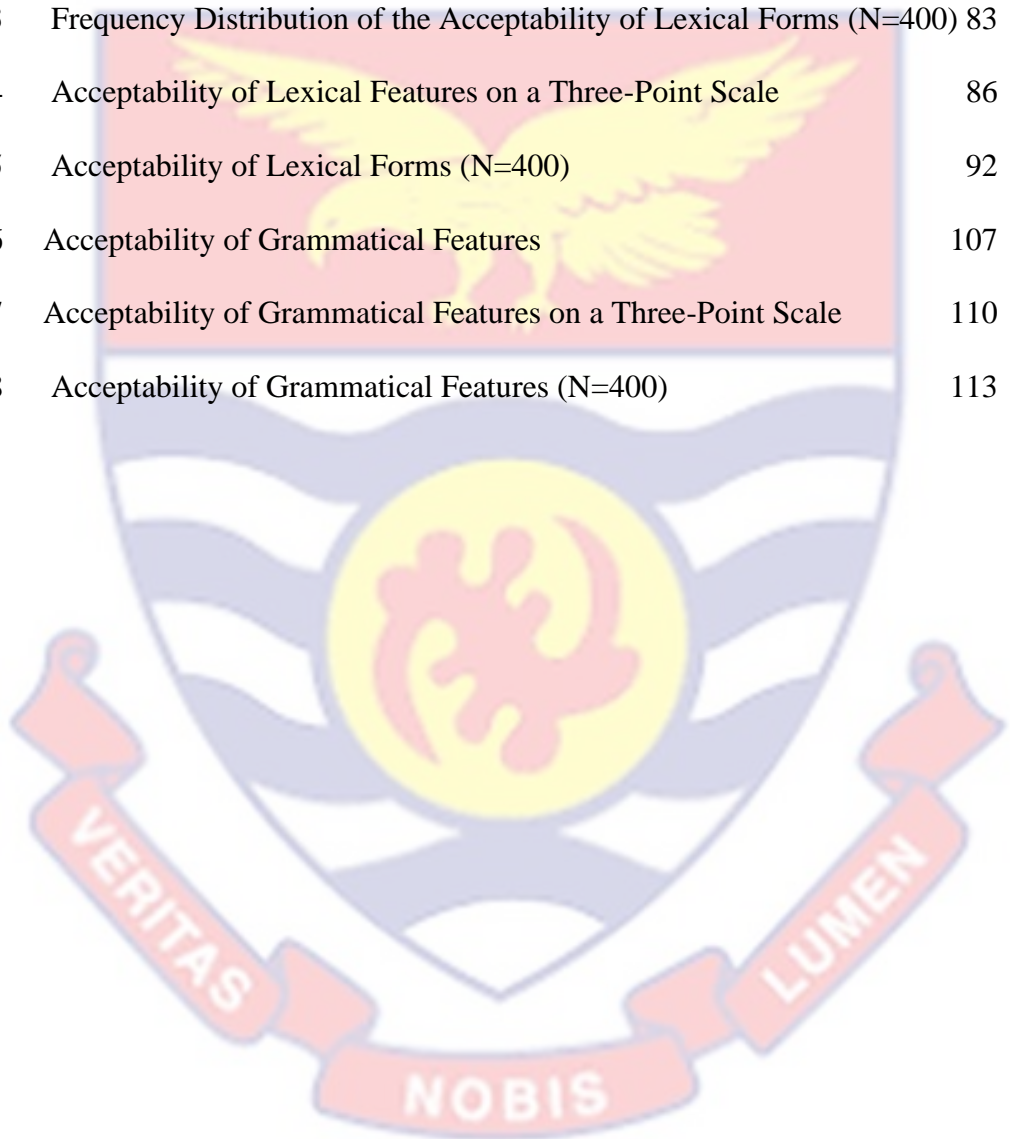


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## CHAPTER ONE

### INTRODUCTION

#### **Introduction**

This study examines the acceptability of certain lexico-grammatical features of Ghanaian English. This chapter, therefore, presents the background, statement of the problem, the purpose of the study. The chapter also contains the research questions, some assumptions underlying the study, significance, delimitation, the organization of the thesis and a conclusion.

#### **Background to the Study**

The English language is undoubtedly one of the languages used in almost every part of the world for different purposes and reasons. Although initially transplanted in Britain, the English language from the British Isles was transported by traders, soldiers and settlers to United States, Canada, Australia and New Zealand (Greenbaum, 1996). The language initially spread when some British natives moved to United States, Canada and New Zealand for colonization. However, in Australia, the language was transported when the British sent prisoners there. Through trading, colonialism and Christianity, the language spread to other parts of the world.

The spread has been described, using different models. Notable among them is Kachru's (1985) three concentric circles. These are the Inner, Outer and Expanding circles respectively. The Inner circle refers to native speakers; that is, those who speak English as a first language or mother tongue. The second circle refers to speakers in countries where English is used as a second language. These countries are former colonies of Britain. The third circle is

known as the Expanding circle where English performs no official function in these countries; that is, English is a foreign language. The Inner circle is norm providing, the Outer circle is norm-developing and the Expanding circle is norm-dependent. There has been a series of criticisms of Kachru's (1985) model which has led to the modification of the model by scholars like McArthur (1987), Gollach (1988) and Modiano (1999) which aims to shift away slightly from the geographical classification. However, the principle underlying all these models is to describe the nature of the spread of the English language.

The spread of English has led to its resultant effects of the different varieties of English and consequently to its current position as a global means of communication (Brutt-Griffler, 2002). These varieties of English have received mixed and different reactions from different scholars in terms of terminology and the domain of reference. Among these is the term *World Englishes*. World Englishes has been looked at from diverse ways by researchers such as Quirk (1985), Kachru (1992), Owusu-Ansah (1997), McArthur (1998), Mesthrie (2003), Schneider (2003) and Bolton and Davis (2006). Quirk (as cited in Kachru, 1991) is one such scholar who does not recognize other varieties of English and views non-native varieties as inappropriate and unacceptable. The argument in recent studies by Kirkpatrick (2010) and Mahboob and Szenes (2010) is no exception to Quirk's position. Kirkpatrick (2010) is of the view that the different varieties of English should be limited not only to former colonies but to the range of varieties within the native settings as well.

Similarly, Mahboob and Szenes (2010) add that the naming of World Englishes under geographical labels is inappropriate due to some three outlined reasons. To them, English as used by non-native speakers does not reflect the complex nature of the complex language situation. Secondly, the labels do not adequately describe the rich diversity of Englishes in these countries since they may be made up of influences of their colonial masters and thirdly, the creation of new nation states does not necessarily reflect linguistic boundaries and therefore cannot be used to name language varieties. These points as raised by Mahboob and Szenes (2010) are not strong enough to debunk the labelling under geographic locations neither is there a clear cut distinction between the three points raised. However, scholars such as Kachru (1992), Owusu-Ansah (1997), Schneider (2003) and Mesthrie and Bhatt (2008) hold a different view. Mesthrie and Bhatt acknowledge the fact that the use of *Englishes* is because of its shared authority, prestige and normativity but they also assert that *New English* is not a satisfactory term to describe this phenomenon and World Englishes is too broad a term and so prefer McArthur's choice of the term *English language complex* which covers all the varieties of English. These studies have either suggested that English spoken outside the inner circle should be perceived as a different variety or a deviation. Studies in favour of the recognition of non-native varieties of English have provided a description of these non-native varieties. One such non- native variety is Ghanaian English.

Ghana is one of the countries where the language was used after its introduction in Africa on the arrival of Europeans as colonizers and slave masters. English was first introduced in Ghana, the then Gold Coast in the 16<sup>th</sup>

century (Adika, 2012). Since then, English has been used as the language of education, administration, law and governance. English is the official language of Ghana (Sey, 1973). Studies on English in Ghana or Ghanaian English clearly show that the language is not used the same way as it was transported to Ghana but used in a way which is peculiar to the Ghanaian context. Ghanaian English is the variety of English language spoken in Ghana, a former British colony. Adika (2012) notes that Ghanaian English “has been travelling the delicate expansionist path of innovation, adaptation, and maintenance of standards over the years” (p.156). This suggests that Ghanaian English is characterized by innovations, that is, the language has changed to suit its new environment which makes it distinct from the transported language while at the same time the language maintains some standards of native speakers.

The description of Ghanaian English shows contrasting views on the existence of the variety. Scholars such as Sey (1973) and Nimako (2008) deny the existence of GhE as a distinct non-native variety while scholars such as Owusu-Ansah (2012), Ngula (2011, 2012) and Wiredu (2012) support the argument that Ghanaian English is a distinct non-native variety of English. All these studies point to the fact that the English spoken in Ghana is a nativised variety, that is, there is the influence of Ghanaian languages and culture. It is based on these arguments surrounding GhE that Ahulu (1994) classifies the attitude of Ghanaians into three groups. These are those who are not in favour of a nativised variety, those in favour of the nativised variety and those who think it should be codified and others who are not in favour of the use of English after independence but rather seek the adoption of an indigenous



national Ghanaian Language. Despite all these views, Adika (2012) emphasizes that there is a Ghanaian variety of English and Owusu-Ansah (2012) proves it with three pieces of evidence of the existence of Ghanaian English. According to him, Ghanaians are not ignorant of the fact that the language they speak is different from other varieties of English. Also, Ghanaians have an emotional attachment towards the English they speak and that the English as used has some traces of the Ghanaian context. As a step towards codification, it is relevant that a non-native variety is accepted by its speakers.

Norrish (1997) posits that the issue of acceptability arises as nativised varieties evolve. According to Kachru (1992, p. 67), “the acceptance of a model depends on its users: the users must demonstrate solidarity, identity, and loyalty toward a language variety”. Wolf (2010) considers attitude as a contributory factor to the emergence of natural differences and regional homogeneity in West African and East African Englishes. This attitude, he adds, includes that of speakers to their own variety and others. To a very high extent, acceptability has got to do with attitude. Bamgbose (1997) notes that the criteria for judging an innovation or otherwise of a variety should be based on the number of people, its domain of usage, who uses it, where the usage is sanctioned and the attitude of users and non-users to it. Nativised forms may become a standard variety as a result of its users. One of the methods of standardisation is proper attitudinal reactions of the users of the language (Wiredu, 2012). This presupposes that the attitude towards a variety is very important in determining acceptable forms. van Dijk (1977) notes that speakers and hearers can accept or reject certain utterances implicitly or

explicitly as a sentence of their language. He adds that the acceptance of an utterance is not only based on syntactic and semantic rules but also on pragmatic rules, conditions and structures.

It is against this background that this study seeks to investigate the acceptability of certain lexico-grammatical features associated with Ghanaian English (henceforth, GhE).

### **Statement of the Problem**

Non-native varieties of English have attracted much attention from both non-native speaker researchers and native speaker researchers. A number of studies have looked at the acceptability of non-native varieties. Some of these varieties include Hong Kong English (Sewell, 2012; Ting, 2011), Chinese English (Wang, 2009), Nigerian English (Alo & Igwebuike, 2012; Foluke, 2012), Singaporean (Chang, 2008) and Puerto Rican English (Dayton & Blau, 1999). These studies have emphasized the role of speakers in determining the acceptability or otherwise of a variety. They have also established that there are certain factors which account for the acceptability of certain features in non-native varieties.

Similarly, some studies have also described the existence and nature of Ghanaian English from the phonological perspective (Adjaye, 2005; Appartaim, 2012; Sey, 1973), lexical perspective (Dako, 2003; Ngula, 2014; Sey, 1973), grammatical perspective (Huber, 2012; Ngula, 2012; Nimako, 2008; Sey, 1973; Wiredu, 2012) and from the semantic perspective (Sey, 1973). In addition to these, Owusu-Ansah (2012) has also proven the existence of Ghanaian English. All these studies, except for studies by Sey (1973), Ahulu (1994) and Nimako (2008), have indicated that there is a

Ghanaian variety of English. The variety has, however, been accepted or rejected based on certain reasons. The basis for the rejection of GhE has been that Standard British English is the benchmark and the more appropriate variety to use. Therefore, the educated Ghanaian would not accept any usage other than the Standard British variety. The educated Ghanaian would, among other things, guard against GhE, strive to avoid it and find it disgusting. All these issues have been largely based on opinions and impressions of linguists.

It is, therefore, important that the acceptability of GhE is considered in the evolution of the variety. Since acceptability depends on the users of the language, it is imperative that the speakers' perspective is considered as far as the study of GhE is concerned. Despite the important role of speakers in determining what is acceptable, their views on GhE have not been considered, except for a recent study by Anderson (2009) which tests for acceptability of GhE. Although the present study does not intend to provide a description of linguistic forms in GhE, it intends to look at Ghanaian English from a different perspective, specifically, the acceptability of certain aspects of the variety among its users. It is in the light of these issues that the present study seeks to investigate the acceptability of certain lexico-grammatical features of GhE from the perspective of speakers.

### **Purpose of the Study**

The aim of this study is to investigate the acceptability of certain lexico-grammatical features of Ghanaian English by the educated Ghanaian. It also seeks to find the lexico-grammatical forms which are likely to be recognised as indexical markers of GhE.

Selected lexico-grammatical features of Ghanaian English are, therefore, tested in this study to ascertain their acceptability by Ghanaian users of English. These features are presented to speakers of Ghanaian English in a questionnaire. Specifically, some lexical items in sentential contexts and grammatical sentences are used to represent the selected features.

The Likert Scale is then used to determine linguistic acceptability by using the highest scores. Secondly, based on the degree of acceptability or otherwise of these features, the likely indexical markers of GhE are also identified.

### **Research Questions**

The study was guided by the following research questions:

1. What is the level of acceptability of lexical forms identified as Ghanaianisms in the literature?
2. What is the level of acceptability of grammatical forms identified as Ghanaianisms in the literature?
3. Which forms are likely to be accepted/ recognised as indexical markers of the variety?

### **Assumptions underlying the Study**

The study is based on certain assumptions. It is assumed that there is a Ghanaian variety of English. This variety is a nativised form of British English and so shows traces of Ghanaian languages and Ghanaian culture.

In addition to the above, it is assumed that variations of non-native varieties occur at all levels of language use, from lexical, grammatical,

semantics to discoursal levels. Ghanaian English also manifests these variations.

Finally, it is assumed that certain lexico-grammatical forms of Ghanaian English will be more acceptable to educated Ghanaians than others. Although there are many lexico-grammatical forms which have been described from the point of view of linguists, it is assumed that Ghanaians will not deem all the described features of the variety acceptable. It will, therefore, bring to the fore what is in use but is not acceptable to the educated Ghanaian.

### **Significance of the Study**

This study is relevant to theory, codification and standardisation of GhE and research. First, the study also has theoretical significance. Schneider's (2007) Dynamic Model which has been established for Postcolonial Englishes is the theory on which the present study is based. Although the model has been applied to other non-native varieties, the study proves the extent to which Ghanaian English as a postcolonial variety fits into the model in relation to the concept of acceptability.

Furthermore, the study has implications for the codification and standardisation of GhE. The accepted forms will serve as a reference point in the codification of Ghanaian English. Codification is very important in the standardisation process as there is the need for the language to be put in books to serve as reference materials. This study will, therefore, contribute in that regard. The study will, therefore, be a useful source of information on what speakers consider to be GhE. Bamgbose (1998) lists acceptability as one of the concepts which should be considered in the codification process. To an extent,

these codified forms will serve as an important starting point towards the establishment of standard forms which will then be used across all domains of life in the Ghanaian context.

The study contributes to studies on non-native varieties of English. The focus of this study is Ghanaian English, a non-native variety. In the area of research, the study contributes to studies on World Englishes, specifically, those on Ghanaian English since it contributes to our knowledge of the variety. The findings indicate the attitude of non-native speakers towards nativised forms. Although there are numerous studies on Ghanaian English which provide a description of the variety, this study will contribute to these studies by focusing on the acceptability of Ghanaian English. It will also serve as one of the few studies to investigate the attitude of Ghanaians from an empirical perspective other than a scholarly or linguistic perspective.

Finally, the study adds to the existing knowledge on acceptability of a variety of English. That is, their acceptance or rejection of certain forms adds to this knowledge. The study also finds out what is in use but not acceptable to users. This suggests that some forms may be in use by non-native speakers but these might not be accepted by them.

### **Delimitation**

The study focuses on a non-native variety, specifically, on Ghanaian English. The features of Ghanaian English which have been described from scholars' perspective will be the focus of this study. This study, therefore, focuses on acceptability by users of the variety.

Also, the study employs the Dynamic Model for Postcolonial Englishes since Ghanaian English is an evolving postcolonial variety.

Although Ghanaian English has been described at the phonological, lexical, syntactic and semantic levels, selected lexico-grammatical features of GhE will be tested for acceptability. This is because nativisation begins with vocabulary and grammatical forms before all the other linguistic levels. Hence, the need to test for some of these nativized forms.

This study focuses on the educated Ghanaian. The educated Ghanaian is considered as a Ghanaian with, at least, a secondary school education. In view of this, only students and workers with, at least, a secondary school education who work or study within the five colleges of the University of Cape Coast are the respondents in this study. These students and workers serve as a fair representation of educated Ghanaians.

### **Organisation of the Study**

The study is organized into five chapters. The first chapter, as a way of introduction, gives the background, statement of the problem, research questions and the significance of the study. It also discusses the assumptions underlying the study and the delimitation of the study.

Chapter Two presents the review of related literature. It specifically presents the concept of acceptability, indexical markers and the theoretical framework, that is, Schneider's (2007) Dynamic Model of Postcolonial Englishes. The chapter also reviews the related literature on the arguments surrounding the existence of Ghanaian English, lexico-grammatical features of Ghanaian English and studies on the acceptability of both native and non-native varieties. Studies which have also applied Schneider's Dynamic Model

are discussed. These reviews point out the contribution of previous studies to the concepts of acceptability and Ghanaian English as well as help situate the current study in the literature.

The methodological approaches which are employed in the study are in Chapter Three. The chapter describes the research design, research site, the population, the sample size, sampling procedure and the source of data. The instrument used, the pilot study and the methods of data analysis are also described.

The analysis and discussion are presented in Chapter Four. This has been done in accordance with the two research questions of the study. Specifically, this chapter presents the results of the descriptive statistics and views of participants relating to the research questions together with the interpretation and discussion of the findings.

Chapter Five provides a conclusion to the entire study, by presenting the summary of the study, main findings, implications and recommendations.

### **Chapter Summary**

This chapter served as an introduction to the study. It provided the background to the study on the spread of English and the controversies surrounding the use of World Englishes and the domain of reference. The statement of the problem was also presented and the need for the acceptability of Ghanaian English was established. The research questions, purpose of the study, assumptions underlying the study and significance of the study were also provided to guide the focus of this study. It also presented the delimitation and the outline of the thesis.



## CHAPTER TWO

### REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

#### Introduction

In this chapter, I discuss the conceptual and theoretical frameworks and review the related literature as well. The review covers studies that argue for or against the existence of Ghanaian English and those which look at certain lexical and grammatical features as innovations associated with Ghanaian English. I discuss the concept of acceptability and studies that focus on the acceptability of non-native varieties of English. As the theory underpinning this study, Schneider's Dynamic Model of Postcolonial Englishes is also presented. As a way of testing the usefulness of this model, studies which have employed the model and some critiques on it are discussed.

#### Ghanaian English

English was introduced in Ghana initially during the second half of the 15<sup>th</sup> century through to the 17<sup>th</sup> century by the British who came for trade purposes (Adjaye 2005; Sey, 1973). Schools were later started in the castles and forts in the 18<sup>th</sup> century to train Ghanaians as interpreters, clerks and administrators (Adjaye, 2005). Currently, the English Language is used in Ghana as a second language, which co-exists with other Ghanaian languages. The English language is used for all official purposes in the country, which include law, education, governance, judicial proceedings, media, internal and international affairs (Anderson, 2009). It is used in both writing and speech. The variety of English peculiar to Ghanaians largely exhibits influences of the

Ghanaian languages and Ghanaian culture. This has, therefore, attracted divergent views from researchers, either directly or indirectly, which can be classified as studies in doubt and studies which accept the existence of Ghanaian English.

### **Studies which Doubt the Existence of Ghanaian English**

This section presents the arguments of scholars who doubt the existence of GhE. Sey (1973), in describing the tendencies of the usage of English in Ghana, remarks that GhE is characterised by the use of learned and archaic forms, flamboyance of prose style and frequent cases of hyper-correctness. Throughout his book, Sey measures GhE against the British Standard English and considers differences as errors at the levels of lexis, grammar, semantics and pronunciation. He also gives reasons why a Ghanaian variety of English should not be discovered. According to him, the quest to be proficient in Standard English has always been the aim of the educated Ghanaian and that Ghanaians guard against possible mother tongue interferences depending on their level of education. He further claims that what has been described as GhE is insignificant as far as the structure of English is concerned, since it involves only the addition of lexical items of local origin to British Standard English. He adds that Ghanaians are not likely to accept such forms as Ghanaian. Furthermore, there are only limited numbers of situations in which the language is used and British English is always preferred.

Ahulu (1994) is another scholar who is sceptical about the concept of a distinctive GhE. He, however, examines GhE, for its viability either as errors or modifications, from two approaches of local acceptability and

distinctiveness of the Ghanaian variety. On local acceptability, he examines the works of scholars such as Sey (1973), Gyasi (1991), Amonoo (1961) and Duodu (1986) as representatives of educated Ghanaians. According to him, Sey's (1973) and Gyasi's (1991) views are a reflection of one viewpoint on attitudes toward GhE. Ahulu says that Amonoo (1961) views the mistakes as indigenized forms which could be codified and accepted. Ahulu, also, uses Duodu's (1986) work to represent educated Ghanaians calling for a national language. He, therefore, says that GhE has produced three clear-cut camps in Ghana. There are those who do not subscribe to a local variety of English, those who believe there is an indigenized variety which should be codified, and those who are in favour of the adoption of a national language. The adoption of a national language, according to Ahulu, is likely to lead to ethnic sentiments. On the issue of distinctive lexis, the use of one of the Ghanaian languages in the midst of many others as a feature of Ghanaianisms is likely to pose ethnic problems and also, the use of loan words does not make one a speaker of GhE. In terms of grammar, Ahulu (1994) points out that the examples which are noted as typical of Ghanaians are also found in the English of other second language countries such as Nigeria and India. It is based on these that he concludes that the grammatical features should be viewed as non-native tendencies rather than as varieties. Owusu-Ansah (2012), however, comments on Ahulu's work by saying that the commonalities that Ghanaian English have with other varieties should not be a hindrance for its consideration as a variety. This is because, according to Owusu-Ansah (2012), speakers consider the language to be different from other varieties and it also maintains a connection with a native variety.

Nimako (2008), in an attempt to describe what he terms as “good English” (p. xiii), stresses that in the usage of English as an official language, Ghanaians show deviation from British English. Although Nimako points to the fact that mother tongue interferences cannot be ignored, he thinks that these features are Ghanaian because they are common in educated GhE and are rare or absent in Target (or Standard) English. Although Nimako terms the English used by Ghanaians as Ghanaian, that is, recognising the difference between Standard British English and GhE, he expresses a view similar to those expressed by Sey (1973) and Ahulu (1994) that he does not subscribe to GhE as a variety but a deviation from the Target English.

Thus, the studies by Sey (1973), Ahulu (1994) and Nimako (2008) suggest one perspective on the existence of GhE. They regard GhE to be a deviation, characterised by (learner) errors rather than legitimate innovations. However, the present study views features of GhE from a sociolinguistic approach to examine the acceptability of GhE and so does not support the views of the above scholars on GhE.

### **Studies which Accept the Existence of Ghanaian English**

This section discusses the views by scholars who support the existence of GhE. Dako (2003) posits that the English in Ghana is an instance of language contact situation. English is undergoing a process of indigenization in order to meet the demands of its new socio-cultural environment. She proposes two extreme concepts; that is, either GhE is allowed to be liberal enough to operate in Ghana, free from external influences or it is allowed to maintain some connection with native varieties. She, however, adds that there

is evidence of the first option while the second has led to the concerns of falling standards of English.

Sarfo-Adu (2007) observes that English is undergoing indigenization. English words have also acquired extended or restricted field owing to the acculturation of English. He says that considering the length of time English has been used in Ghana, depth of usage, emotional attachment of Ghanaians to the language, its functional importance and sociolinguistic status, there is the need for codification and standardisation of the variety. He affirms the status of GhE in the following line that GhE "...has assumed a more functional posture by being used in a wide range of domains" (p. 177).

Similarly, Adika (2012), in his work on GhE, clearly states that there is a distinctive Ghanaian variety of English. After a thorough review of works on Ghanaian English, he stresses that one of the ways to separate deviant forms from nativised forms will be through the application of Owusu-Ansah's (1997) Tolerability Scale. English in Ghana, according to him, is influenced by the linguistic and cultural identity of Ghanaians at all levels of language use which includes pronunciation, vocabulary and idiomatic usages. In contemporary Ghana, people are using the language in a socio-culturally relevant way to aid communication.

Owusu-Ansah (2012), in adding his voice to the ongoing debate on the existence of GhE, presents three pieces of evidence to support the argument that GhE exists and is a legitimate variety of English. By so doing, he debunks the views of Sey (1973), Gyasi (1991), Ahulu (1994) and Nimako (2004). His study reveals that Ghanaians are not ignorant of the fact that the English they speak is different from other varieties. This recognition is confirmed by

speakers of other varieties as well. Also, Ghanaians use English in distinguishing different contexts of medium and formality. Hence, there is an expansion of the register range of the English used by Ghanaians. Moreover, his study revealed that Ghanaians have developed some emotional attachment through the development of endonorms to the language. Owusu-Ansah's attitude towards GhE sharply contrasts the position held by Sey in his seminal work on GhE because while the former proves the existence of GhE, the latter sees GhE as a deviation from Standard British English which is marked with errors.

Bamiro (1994; 1997) argues that in describing GhE, a more neutral term such as 'variation' and 'innovation' should replace 'deviation' (p. 106), as suggested by Sey (1973). Bamiro comments that Sey's use of 'deviation' suggests infelicity, inappropriateness and unacceptability against some perceived norms. This argument indirectly shows Bamiro's stance as far as GhE is concerned.

Studies by Ngula (2011, 2012, 2014) on spelling pronunciation, lexical hybridizations and the semantics of modal verbs demonstrate that Ghanaians are making English their own to reflect their experience and context. He considers GhE as a nativised variety which has a unique local identity but also maintains international intelligibility. Ngula (2012) considers these differences as innovations of GhE at the phonological, lexical and grammatical levels. To him, these deviations, in addition to reflecting the socio-cultural conditions of Ghanaians, are also suggestive of the creative and innovative tendencies exhibited by Ghanaians. He concludes that both native

and non-native speakers can claim ownership of the English language (Ngula, 2012). In other words, Ghanaians own GhE.

Wiredu (2012) considers the GhE as an indigenized variety because of its contact with the local languages. This variety spoken by Ghanaians identifies them as Ghanaian speakers of English because it has “developed a distinctive Ghanaian colour” (p. 20).

It can be deduced from the above arguments that indeed some scholars believe that GhE exists. The reasons which support this argument include the fact that GhE is an indigenized variety which is socio-culturally relevant as it reflects the linguistic and cultural identity of Ghanaians. Also, it has acquired more functional domains as it is used in a variety of contexts. Features of GhE are innovations or variations. Ghanaians also rely on their own norms concerning the language. The studies which are in favour of a Ghanaian variety of English (Adika, 2012; Bamiro, 1994; 1997; Dako, 2003; Ngula 2011, 2012, 2014; Owusu-Ansah, 2012; Wiredu, 2012), therefore, provide one of the assumptions underlying this study: That there is a Ghanaian variety of English which is a nativized variety.

From the above discussions, there appear to be two schools of thought regarding the existence of GhE. While some scholars such as Sey (1973), Ahulu (1994) and Nimako (2008) deny the existence of a Ghanaian variety of English as a distinct non-native variety, other scholars such as Dako (2003), Bamiro (1994, 1997) Adika (2012), Owusu-Ansah (2012), Ngula (2011, 2012, 2014) and Wiredu (2012) support the argument that Ghanaian English is a distinct non-native variety of English. The studies conducted by Sey, Ahulu, Bamiro, Dako, Ngula and Owusu-Ansah provide evidence against which the

present researcher investigates the acceptability or otherwise of features of GhE.

### **Features of Ghanaian English**

Ghanaian English as a non-native variety has been described at all levels of language usage including the lexical and grammatical levels. This section, therefore, presents certain lexical and grammatical features of GhE identified in the literature because of the focus of the present study.

#### **Lexical Features**

The use of vocabulary by non-native speakers is one of the ways in which non-native speakers show awareness of their geographical locations and socio-cultural contexts (Kachru & Smith, 2008). According to Bamiro (1994, 1997), GhE lexical items have been stabilised and institutionalised since they can be found in other West African varieties such as Nigerian English. This is likely because of the similar colonial experience they shared. Sey (1973) provides some origins of GhE vocabulary; these origins are semantic extension of trade names and ellipsis. He further states the reasons for Ghanaianisms to be the inadequate stock of vocabulary items and varying degrees of failure to recall words and modes of derivation. Dako (2003) adds that the GhE words have distinct pragmatic and semantic fields not found in Target English.

Lexical features of GhE have received some attention from scholars in the field such as Sey (1973), Bamiro (1994, 1997), Dako (2003), Sarfo-Adu (2007) and Ngula (2014). These studies, just like studies on GhE in general, have approached these lexical features as either deviations (Sey, 1973) or from



a sociolinguistic perspective as innovations (Bamiro 1994, 1997; Dako, 2003; Sarfo-Adu, 2007; Ngula, 2014). Despite the different approaches to the lexical features and different data sources used by these scholars, Ghanaianisms have been noted to consist of coinages, words with semantic extension, semantic restriction, combination of semantic extension and restriction, semantic shift, translation equivalents, lexical borrowing and hybridizations. These processes are present in other Outer circle varieties as well. Indeed, borrowing, loan translation, semantic extension, semantic restriction and coinages are also characteristic of Nigerian, Singaporean, Chinese, Malaysian, Zambian, Indian, Philippines Englishes among others (Bamiro 1994, 1997; Mesthrie & Bhatt, 2008).

### **Coinages**

This is the most productive innovative process in GhE (Bamiro, 1994; 1997). These are non-simple words or compound words which are absent in Target English in terms of meaning but may have some similarities with target English free collocations or productive patterns (Sey, 1973). Bamiro adds that these inventions are contextually helpful since they help construct the experience of Ghanaians in the use of English in its new context. This feature of the Ghanaian lexicon was also identified by Sarfo-Adu (2007) in his study as invented words or phrases. In Sarfo-Adu's study, coinages had the least number of occurrences of 7%. This contradicts to Bamiro's (1994, 1997) assertion that coinages are the most productive innovative process in Ghanaian English. This disparity in terms of frequency of occurrence of coinages is probably as a result of *compounds* being treated as a separate feature in Sarfo-Adu's study.

### **Semantic Extension**

There is also the presence of semantic extension where the meanings of words in Target English are retained in addition to extended meanings which are not present in Target English (e.g. *cloth* has gained the additional meaning of any Ghanaian dress and *concert* now refers to any stage performance) (Sey, 1973). Sey (1973) adds that it is possible to establish the relationship between the extended meaning and the Target English meanings. According to Sarfo-Adu (2007), semantic extension implies that there is an increment in the number of contexts in which words are used because of the socio-cultural context. Semantic extension forms 8% of GhE lexical items in his study.

### **Semantic Restriction**

Sey's (1973) use of semantic restriction refers to cases where meanings of words in Target English are limited within its semantic field (e.g., *missus* is now used as a reference term for a wife married in the European way). That is, the word's referent is limited to a narrower field. There is a reduction in the number of contexts in which these words are used (Sarfo-Adu, 2007). Restriction has the second highest number of occurrence (7.5 %) in Sarfo-Adu's research.

### **Combination of Semantic Restriction and Extension**

This type of Ghanaianism is made up of words with both a restricted meaning in GhE and an extended meaning in this variety as well (Sey 1973). According to Sey, the word *herbalist* whose meaning has been restricted to one who cures by herbs has acquired the additional meaning of one who has

supernatural powers used to diagnose diseases and human afflictions together with the prescription of appropriate remedies.

### **Semantic Shift**

Sey (1973) defines this concept as the process where the central meaning of a word in target English becomes marginalised and vice versa (e.g. the central meaning of *park* being *amusement grounds* has been replaced with a *football field* as the central meaning in GhE). The shift in meaning is as a result of the socio-cultural environment of the Ghanaian which might lead to cross-cultural misunderstanding by people who are not members of the Ghanaian socio-cultural context (Sarfo-Adu, 2007; Kachru & Smith, 2008). Sarfo-Adu identified lexical words under semantic transfer to be 19%.

### **Translation Equivalents**

Ghanaian users of English translate their mother tongues into English in certain contexts (e.g. *tight friend* or *bush man*). Translation equivalent was identified by Sarfo-Adu (2007) as loan translation. According to him, it deals with the translation of a source language into a target language. He notes that this is done primarily to show one's knowledge in the mother tongue. In GhE, it manifests especially in proverbs and idioms. Loan translation occurred 18 times, representing 9% of the total number throughout the data. The use of translation equivalents in GhE is not because of the absence of the target English equivalents but it is necessitated by particular contexts (Sey, 1973).

### **Lexical Borrowing**

As a result of the language contact situation, GhE has borrowed words from Ghanaian languages (e.g. *Kwashiorkor* which is a disease caused by malnutrition in children and *Kente* which is a type of locally made cloth). Kachru and Smith (2008) write that borrowing is one device that is used for the nativisation of a language in a new situation. Sarfo-Adu (2007) states two reasons which accounts for borrowing. These are socio-cultural and socio-psychological factors. The former refers to the fact that the borrowing is possible in order to communicate the new experiences, practices and concepts which are not in Target English but are present in the new environment while the latter deals with the prestige of a loaner to a language. The second highest occurrence for his study was borrowing which had 17% of the total number in his data. According to Sarfo-Adu, the food domain has supplied more local words to the lexicon of GhE than any other domain. In Dako's (2003) study, loan words made up 30% of the total number of occurrences. However, what Dako (2003) presents as loan or borrowed words appears to be a list of Ghanaian languages. This leads to Sarfo-Adu's comments that her glossary is misleading.

### **Lexical Hybridization**

Dako (2003) and Ngula (2014) identify lexical hybridization as one of the innovative processes of GhE. From Ngula's perspective, hybridised forms are made up of words of two languages where one is a local language. Hybridizations in GhE can be grouped under social, cultural, financial (monetary), health and politics. The social domain has to do with the hybridised forms used in fashion, work, entertainment, recreation and sports.

The cultural domain is made of hybridizations that relate to tradition, alcoholic beverages, food and clothing. Those in the cultural domain originate from specific ethnic groups since every ethnic group has its own unique culture but they are used nationally. The money domain refers to the hybrid forms which relate to money, bank transactions and dubious financial transactions carried out by people in authority. The health or medicinal domain is usually names of locally produced herbal medicines. With the political domain, reference is made to the use of hybridised forms such as those on campaigns, politics and governance. One characteristic of this domain is that it is marked with derivational affixation. Ngula sees hybridization formation in GhE as a “...deliberate linguistic act which emanates from an awareness of the lexical systems of English on one hand, and that of the local languages on the other hand” (p.16). Ngula concludes that lexical hybridization as a process of innovation gives the language its unique local identity while ensuring mutual intelligibility.

### **The Role of Ghanaian Languages in GhE Vocabulary**

Ghanaian languages play a significant role as far as GhE lexis is concerned. In translation equivalents, Ghanaian languages are translated. They also form one of the elements in hybridizations, borrowing and most of the other innovative processes. This is a clear indication that GhE is an instance of language contact situation. GhE has borrowed more from Akan than any other Ghanaian language (Dako, 2003; Sarfo- Adu, 2007; Ngula 2014). Nimako (2008) says that mother tongue interferences cannot be ignored because of the introduction of local idioms in the variety. This is a clear indication of the

important role the Ghanaian languages play in shaping the lexical features of GhE.

Although these lexical features have been looked at from the two angles of both deviation and variation, one issue is paramount. That is, lexical features as used in the Ghanaian context are distinct from Target English usage. Variation at the lexical level can be found across all domains of language usage in the Ghanaian context. The purpose of the present study is not to provide a description like the ones by Sey (1973), Bamiro (1994, 1997), Dako (2003), Sarfo-Adu (2007) and Ngula (2014), but to test for acceptability of these described features. In other words, examples from these serve as the questionnaire items for the present study.

### **Grammatical Features**

The grammar of GhE has been the subject of interest to researchers in the field. While some scholars (Sey, 1973; Huber 2012) have described some general grammatical features, others (Owusu-Ansah, 1991; Ngula, 2012; Wiredu 2012) have also described specific grammatical features of the variety. Huber indicates that there exist some semblances between GhE, African Englishes in general and British Standard Varieties in terms of its morpho-syntactic structure because of the language contact situation. Despite these similarities, GhE demonstrates some features peculiar to the Ghanaian speaker of English. The features are largely influenced by the L1 of Ghanaians. He emphasizes as a way of conclusion that GhE is a standard variety and, hence, none of its features is pervasive as far as the features characteristic of World Atlas of Varieties of English (WAVE) is concerned. WAVE is a database on

the morphosyntactic variation of 235 features from 50 varieties of English which was compiled from descriptive materials, naturalistic corpus data and native speaker knowledge.

Studies on GhE indicate that grammatical features of GhE have, generally, been described in terms of plural morphemes with uncountable nouns, article usage, adjectival uses of the past participle, relativisation, stative verbs, modal usage, question tags, pronouns and adverbial subordination. Also, left dislocation, coordination, gerunds and the *to* infinitive, derivation of adverbs and adjectives, negation, response to *Yes/No* questions, idiomatic expressions, tense and aspect, subject verb agreement and idiom usage have been described. For the purposes of this study, ten of these grammatical features were tested and, hence, they are described below.

### **Plural Morpheme with Uncountable Nouns**

In GhE, there is the use of uncountable nouns with the plural morpheme, or with the indefinite article a(n) to make them countable (Sey, 1973; Huber, 2012). Sey attributes this usage to the confusing and fragmentary nature of the presentation of uncountable nouns in textbooks since there is no consistent relationship between count and non-count nouns. He adds that there are usually instances where certain nouns have both countable and uncountable functions and, secondly, the noun is related to other nouns which are countable in nature. According to Huber, the plural marking is omitted for human and non-human nouns sometimes. The following examples support the above description in GhE:

1. The teachers will be given the *respects* they deserve. (Sey, 1973)
2. C.G. Lehmann carried out many studies and with *informations* from other investigators, he concluded that... (Huber, 2012)

### Article Usage

Ghanaian users of English usually omit definite articles where they perform idiomatic functions and the articles are often inserted where they are supposed to be absent in Target English because it either sounds abnormal or illogical (Sey, 1973). The use of articles in GhE is illustrated in the sentences below:

3. I am going to bank. (Sey, 1973)
4. He is in *the* possession of the book. (Sey, 1973)

### Stative Verbs

Sey (1973) stresses that there is the use of imperfective verbs as perfective verbs in GhE. The presence of this feature implies that there is an extension of the use of the progressive marker to stative verbs (Huber, 2012). Sey adds that the use of *having* is the most persistent use of a perfective form of an imperfective verb. Nimako (2008) and Sey attribute this usage to the generalization of English verb rules rather than L1 interferences. The use of these forms is so pervasive because stative verbs are allowed to take *be* and *-ing* (Mesthrie & Bhatt, 2008). Examples are given below:

5. I am *having* a rich grandfather. (Sey, 1973)
6. I am *thinking* that the work cannot be completed in two weeks.  
(Nimako, 2008)



## Modals

In terms of modal usage, there is the use of the present tense where the past tense form is required (Sey, 1973). This view has also been shared by Huber (2012) and Ngula (2012). Mesthrie and Bhatt (2008) point out that in most varieties in World Englishes, *will* is used in the sense of *would*, an issue of which GhE is no exception (Huber, 2012; Ngula, 2012). Huber reports that the use of the *will* and *would* feature is neither pervasive nor extremely rare in GhE. In most new English varieties, *would* is described as a declarative softener (Huber, 2012). Nimako (2008) points out that in several African varieties of English, *can* co-occurs with *able*. Also, there is a combination of the modal verb and the main verb in the simple present tense to express a request that is not binding on the addressee where the British uses the main verb without the modal (Ngula, 2012). The form *may* appears to be generalised as a polite permissive modal which may be the result of hypercorrection. This issue of hypercorrection has been identified by Sey as one of the reasons for forms used by the educated Ghanaian. Examples of modal usage in GhE are:

7. I *will* implore you to buy the tickets. (Ngula, 2012)
8. Those who default in payment after a grace period *would* lose their boarding status and right to enjoy meals in the dining hall. (Ngula, 2012)

In terms of the semantics of modal verbs, Ngula (2012) adds that in both the British and Ghanaian Englishes, the use of modal verbs expresses the same types of meanings. Also, the root modals have a wide semantic range as compared to the epistemic meanings. The modal *could* which expresses

hypothetical possibility is used more often in GhE. In the case of modal verb *shall*, the epistemic and root functions are common with the epistemic function of prediction being the most frequent use of *shall*. Also, in GhE usage, *shall* expresses root functions of obligation. The use of *may* expresses the epistemic meaning of concession is very rare in GhE.

### Question Tags

New Englishes are united in using invariant tags which are dependent on the pronoun or auxiliary rule (Mesthrie & Bhatt, 2008). According to Sey (1973), question tags in GhE are formed with positive or negative statements and the tags *not so* or *isn't it*. Nimako (2008) posits that the use of these forms is common in GhE and much more is the inattention given to whether the statement before the tag is a negative or affirmative statement which has a likely influence on the choice of tags. Huber (2012) describes this feature as neither pervasive nor extremely rare in its usage by the Ghanaian. Examples include:

9. God loves us all, *not so?* (Nimako, 2008)
10. The children are late again today, *isn't it?* (Nimako, 2008)

The description of this feature by Sey (1973), Nimako (2008) and Huber (2012) shows how common this feature is in GhE. A look at these studies of different time intervals makes one wonder if this feature is really a deviation as suggested by Sey and Nimako. However, Huber investigates this feature to be a feature of the Ghanaian variety of English and not a deviation.

## Pronouns

According to Platt, Weber and Ho (as cited in Mesthrie & Bhatt, 2008), with new English varieties spoken where the first languages do not make distinctions between pronouns, pronouns are used indiscriminately. Nimako (2008) insists that the pronouns cause some problems for some speakers, especially, the use of the second person pronoun and the objective form of the first person pronoun. That is, GhE is characterised by expressions which do not take into consideration the issue of case, especially in coordinate sentences. Huber (2012) gives some features of the pronouns, pronoun exchange and nominal gender. He says *the thing* is usually used as an alternative for *it*. The masculine form of third person pronouns in both the subject and object positions is generalized to the masculine form and it even extends to possessive pronouns. He emphasizes that GhE employs emphatic reflexives with *own* while conversational GhE has emphatic + non-emphatic pronoun sequence. Examples are given below to illustrate this point.

11. The blessings of the lord will be upon you and I. (Nimako, 2008)

12. You and *me* are the children of God. (Nimako, 2008)

## Adverbial Subordination

Mesthrie and Bhatt (2008) state the use of conjunctions in non-native varieties. According to them, there can be the use of conjunctions in both clauses, double conjunctions in the same clause and the use of conjunctions in clause final positions. As far as GhE is concerned, according to Huber (2012), clauses are usually linked with more than one conjunction to even three. There is also the doubling of correlative conjunctions under this category. Huber marks the use of correlative conjunctions as neither pervasive nor extremely

rare and the use of conjunction doubling as a feature which exists but is extremely rare. Examples of the adverbial subordination are given in the following sentences:

13. We've come to the modern age and other things *but still* look at what they are doing to each other. (Huber, 2012)

14. *Although* I don't enjoy listening to them *but* I think people are really getting involved. (Huber, 2012)

### **Left Dislocation**

Mesthrie and Bhatt (2008) opine that in new Englishes, left dislocation constructions prepose a topic and supply a comment by way of a full sentence. This has also been reported by Owusu-Ansah (2012) and Huber (2012). The following examples highlight this feature:

15. *That man, he* is good. (Huber, 2012)

16. *Actually the mid semester* we had this morning, *it* was to the inconvenience of us. (Owusu-Ansah, 2012)

### **Coordination**

Owusu-Ansah (1991) recognises two types of coordination in GhE. The first which he refers to as normal coordination conforms to the rules of grammar. That is, coordination between similar grammatical elements or elements of equal grammatical rank. The second type does not follow the rules of grammar described or breaks the rules of normal coordination; hence, it is referred to as 'odd couples'. He observed that informants have no difficulty in constructing normal coordinations at different grammatical levels. The

formation of odd couples is as a result of the level of formality of the situation in which they are used. The types of coordination in GhE are illustrated below:

17. Normal coordination: What do you think it will be? Would it be precious stone, would it be clay or rock? (Owusu-Ansah,1991)

18. Odd coordination: Was it just random sampling or you planned it? (Owusu-Ansah, 1991)

### Idiomatic Expressions

Sey (1973) examines idiomatic expressions in the use of prepositional phrases and phrasal verbs. Prepositional phrases in GhE are considered from three parameters. These have to do with wrong prepositional usage, the use of preposition where it is not required and the omission of a preposition where one is required in native variety. This is further confirmed by Mesthrie and Bhatt (2008) that preposition use in non-native varieties involves the absence of prepositions and the use of double prepositions. According to them, in some varieties, prepositions follow the NP making them postpositions. Examples of idiomatic expressions are illustrated below:

19. The furniture *comprises of* one wooden desk and table. (Sey, 1973)

20. The village committee should be *congratulated for* their good work. (Sey, 1973)

As far as phrasal verbs are concerned, Sey (1973) explains that educated Ghanaian speakers tend to avoid them in preference for their single word equivalents. Its usage involves the use of a particle where one is not required with the common ones being *up* and *out*.

The above studies by Sey (1973), Owusu-Ansah (1991), Nimako (2008) Ngula (2012) and Wiredu (2012) have described grammatical features

of GhE. However, this study does not intend to describe the grammatical features of GhE like the previous studies but to test for some of these features to ascertain the levels of acceptability.

### **The Concept of Acceptability**

Acceptability has been defined by Crystal (1992, 2008) as “the extent to which linguistic data would be judged by native-speakers to be possible in their language” (Crystal, 2008, p.4). An acceptable utterance is one whose use is considered permissible or normal (Crystal, 2008). Crystal (1992) mentions that there is usually disagreement on what an acceptable utterance is since acceptability is influenced by variational factors such as regional and social background, age, sex, personal preferences among others.

According to Nilsenová (2009), acceptability is the extent to which a sentence allowed by the rules to be grammatical is considered permissible by speakers and hearers. An acceptable sentence must “appear natural and appropriate in a given context, be easily understood and possibly be to a certain extent conventionalised” (Nilsenová, 2009, p. 1).

van Dijk (1977) views it as an act which involves the ability of a (native) speaker-hearer to identify with an utterance from another speaker as a sentence of his own. He categorises acceptability into two: implicit and explicit. Explicit acceptance deals with situations where evaluation of utterances is required which is based on motivated decisions but the decisions itself must be known and the implicit is the normal or natural one which occurs in the course of conversation. In as much as acceptability is based on syntactic and semantic rules, it also includes pragmatic rules, conditions and structures.

Acceptability in non-native contexts is affected by factors from three perspectives of linguistic, social and psychological. In terms of linguistic factors, acceptability is affected by intelligibility; that is, when the language features are understood in communication. Socially, acceptability is influenced by prestige and social stigma. Language features which are socially stigmatised are not accepted while socially prestigious language features which are associated with high status speakers are accepted. Psychologically, acceptability is influenced by past experience and somatic markers. People's attitudes towards non-native language features are as a result of past experiences with those features. Features which receive negative reactions in their earlier productions will receive lower acceptability at a later stage (Ting, 2011).

Chang (2008) also asserts that despite the fact that acceptability judgements are made at the subconscious level, acceptability is influenced by one's linguistic background, cultural background, linguistic history, upbringing, tolerance and personality.

The speakers of a variety are, therefore, instrumental in deciding what is considered normal in a language as they have the ability to judge what is normal to them.

### **Studies on Acceptability**

This section is an empirical review of works on acceptability. Studies on acceptability of features in World Englishes have focused on native speakers' acceptance of non-native varieties, non-native speakers' acceptance of non-native varieties and comparison of native and non-native speakers' acceptance of non-native varieties.

### Acceptability of Phonological Features

Chang (2008) investigated the intelligibility and acceptability of Singapore English accent to both Singaporeans and speakers of English from other countries such as Malaysia, India, Philippines and the United States (US). Issues such as intelligibility, acceptability, familiarity and one's use of the variety were tested against a perception that Singaporean English was difficult to be understood by non-Singaporeans. In terms of acceptability, the study showed that respondent groups found speakers from their own country acceptable, except Malaysia. Generally, it was only the United States speaker who was found acceptable by respondent groups in all countries, followed by Singapore, Philippines and India with Malaysia recording the least acceptance. This was attributed to the unfamiliarity and unintelligibility of Malaysian English. The author concluded that Singaporean English was not as easy to understand and acceptable as American English.

This finding is not surprising as the United States speaker was recorded to be highly intelligible as compared to speakers of other varieties. It can be deduced from the study that whenever speakers have to compare a variety against a standard variety, then the standard variety is likely to be the preferred choice.

Sewell (2012), in his quest to find out the local acceptance of a local model of pronunciation, the effects of phonological features on acceptability and the implication for language teaching, presented twelve accent samples to 52 first year undergraduates students. The survey made it clear that the samples were acceptable when they represented parts of the continuum of Hong Kong English and the pronunciation was devoid of certain phonological



features. The local accents were acceptable when they did not contain salient local features. The respondents, therefore, did not consider the following acceptable: alterations to syllable structure, final consonant cluster reduction in prevocalic or prepausal position, substitution of /v/ for /w/, vowel substitutions and devoicing of consonants and consonants substitutions. On the other hand, the accents which had some higher salience profile and the tendency to reduce intelligibility were considered as errors and thereby, recorded low acceptability. These features included: substitution of /ð/ with /d/, substitution of /θ/ with /f/, /r/ substituted by /w/, final consonant cluster reduction in preconsonantal position, use of a full vowel in unstressed syllables, linking phenomena in connected speech and the vocalisation or deletion of postvocalic /l/. He expressed his opinion that at the accent level, there should be no doubt that Hong Kong English exists.

Although Sewell (2012) makes a significant contribution to the acceptability of non-native varieties in Hong Kong English, there are some concerns with this study. One of these is the fact that the twelve accent samples of scripted and unscripted speech might be concerned with Received Pronunciation (RP). This might not be a true reflection of actual usage despite his claim that his choice of data was based on authenticity. Also, the gender disparity in the selection of the samples (2 females and 10 males) and the choice of respondents (42 females and 10 males) is likely to have affected the overall results. The English major students who were the respondents might not be a true representative of Hong Kong users of English.

Foluke (2012) investigated the intelligibility and acceptability of Nigerian English accents based on users' perception, other users' perception

and users' metaperception which deals with a user's perception of how other users perceive his or her accent. In order to arrive at a valid conclusion, oral reading test and questionnaires were used for both accent identification and intelligibility and acceptability rating. Data was collected from Nigerians with varying educational backgrounds and first languages. Three different accents were presented to respondents for their views, other users' perception and the perception of a user about how others perceive his/her accent. Accent 1 refers to the Educated Nigerian English accent, Accent 2 is the Regional Nigerian English accent and Accent 3 is the Mother Tongue-based Nigerian English accent. It was found out that Accent 1 was the most acceptable, followed by Accent 2, with Accent 3 being the least acceptable according to users' perception. Other users also perceived Accent 1 as the most acceptable and Accent 2 as the least acceptable. On users' metaperception, Accent 1 was the most acceptable while Accent 3 was the least acceptable. All three perceptual forms indicated that Accent 1 was the most acceptable. She, therefore, concluded that educated Nigerian English accent is the most intelligible and acceptable, followed by Mother Tongue-based Nigerian English accent and the least intelligible and acceptable accent is the Regional Nigerian English accent. This study is not comprehensive to an extent because the writer failed to give a detailed description of the different types of accents.

The above studies point to the fact that there is a link between acceptability and intelligibility of phonological features. The features which are considered acceptable are also highly intelligible. This characteristic is not restricted to the use of English in the Asian region alone but to West Africa, as in the case of Nigerian English accents.

### Acceptability of Lexico-grammatical Features

In a cross-cultural study of Puerto Rican English, Dayton and Blau (1999) examined the acceptability of Puerto Rican English as a non-native variety within and outside of Puerto Rico. The study focused on lexical items from natural speech which were embedded in sentential contexts. The instruments that were used were a sentence editing task and a multiple choice test administered to 233 respondents together with an interview of three subjects. The respondents were made up of student learners of English, non-native English teachers in Puerto Rico and the other group were native speakers of English who did not speak Spanish. The study indicated that as proficiency increased, students did not choose and accept items that diverged from American English. The teachers also showed a high degree of acceptance while the native speakers showed a high degree of non-acceptance. Dayton and Blau attributed the disparity in results to the difference in the target of the two groups. Whereas the teachers target was a non-native variety, the native speakers target was a native variety, American English. The study, therefore, showed that Puerto Rican English was an acceptable non-native variety within Puerto Rico but an unacceptable variety outside Puerto Rico. Dayton and Blau argued that Puerto Rican English as a non-native variety should be given the same status as native varieties of English.

The use of three instruments for the above study is impressive as it gives some credibility to the data collected. Their finding is also an indication that native speakers and non-native speakers may have different attitudes towards the same variety.

Wang (2009) in his study on Chinglish or English used in China looked at the extent of tolerability of Chinglish in China and whether Chinglish could be regarded as a new variety of English. To achieve this, he used the questionnaire as the instrument which he administered to 10 native British speakers of English. In all, nineteen (19) sentences from the corpus of the highly educated in China were tested. The results showed that Chinglish was unacceptable or acceptable, depending on the features being tested. Issues relating to tense, transitivity and intransitivity of verbs, auxiliary verbs, set patterns and subordinate conjunctions which did not conform to British English norms were unacceptable. However, some sentences were also accepted by the native speakers which related to number concord, part of speech, possessive and question tags. Chinglish usages which were derived from Chinese languages were the least acceptable. He added that it was likely for Chinglish to be accepted by the Chinese and not acceptable to some British. On answering the question whether Chinglish should be considered as a new variety, Wang said that English is contextually relevant in China as it is used to express their ideologies, emotions, assumptions and their cultural basis and not that of native English speakers. He added that British English and Chinglish were not entirely different but shared some similarities. He proposed that Chinglish could be considered as a “derivative of British English” and “manifesting a tacit acceptance of English as a language of Chinese people” (Wang, 2009, p.32). He said that Chinglish could be considered as a new English because it had developed through the education system, developed in a country where English was not spoken by most of the population, used for a wide range of functions and has become localised with

the adoption of some language features of its own. He concluded by arguing that it is a developing or emerging variety.

Although Wang (2009) makes a significant contribution to the study of Chinese English, the findings are problematic. First, the fact that he uses the British speakers because of their ability to make sound judgements is not appropriate since the British do not share the culture and linguistic background of Chinese. He himself mentions that such usages may be uncomfortable and strange. Also, the writer does not make it clear the number of sentences which were used to represent each feature.

In exploring Hong Kong students' acceptability of some grammatical features identified in the literature, Ting (2011) examined the extent of local acceptance of local features, factors affecting acceptability, the extent of the acceptance of features of the variety or as errors and the stage of Hong Kong English as a variety in Schneider's model. Ting's study points out that the respondents did not show high levels of acceptance for all the 11 features tested. These features included the use of a redundant preposition, variable occurrence of a necessary preposition, the use of a redundant –s for nouns, the lack of a necessary plural suffix-s for nouns, the lack of a necessary 3<sup>rd</sup> person singular –s for nouns, the lack of a copula *be*, the lack of past tense verbs for past events, variable occurrence of articles, foregrounding of the subject, the lack of grammatical subject and the use of an invariant question tag "isn't it". The rejection of these features, according to Ting, was due to an exonormative attitude, where Standard English was considered as the norm and all others considered as errors. Others also failed to recognise the targeted features. Participants were of the view that the features would be acceptable in contexts

such as computer-mediated communication and face-to-face conversations. On factors affecting acceptability, the following were identified: intelligibility, interviewees' past experience in relation to the instructions received in school concerning standard grammar usage. Interviewees' exposure to English, the context and the perceived competence and social status of the users of the features were also some of the factors identified. Although most of the participants acknowledged the existence of the variety, they did not agree that it should be an autonomous variety because the features were not produced intentionally but as a result of the lack of conformity of rules of the language at the time of speaking. Many of the respondents were also of the view that Hong Kong did not own English and also, education would be affected in terms of the learning of English. He concluded that Hong Kong English is at the third stage of Schneider's model but has traces of the second stage.

This study is commendable for Ting's use of the mixed method approach as he mentioned that earlier studies of this nature had used only the quantitative approach. The use of interviews offered him the opportunity to know the reasons behind their answers. However, the use of fifty-two (52) respondents is not representative enough for a quantitative study.

In a related study, Alo and Igwebuikwe (2012) examined the grammaticality and acceptability of certain expressions in Nigerian English which had been noted to be pervasive in Nigerian English. Data was collected from 192 educated Nigerians in two Nigerian universities by the use of questionnaires together with an interview from 67 undergraduates and 125 graduates. The study revealed that there were similar acceptability rates among subjects (undergraduates and postgraduates) on the omission of

determiners, use of stative verbs in progressive form, use of phrasal verbs, forms of polite usage, use of adverbs/adjectives, the use of tag questions, greeting forms, idiomatic expressions, forms of polite usage, the choice of nominal items, the choice of lexical items and the use of American English. On the other hand, the results indicated that there were divergences in responses between the undergraduates and postgraduates in their acceptability of the choice of prepositions, use of pronouns, use of noun inflections, use of verb inflections and the use of misplaced modifiers. The majority of the respondents did not accept the popular Nigerian English features tested because they violated certain Standard British English norms. A shortcoming of the study is that the reason for the selection of students from the two institutions in Nigeria was not justified in the work which is likely to result in an inaccurate generalisation of the findings.

The above studies by Dayton and Blau (1999), Wang (2009), Ting (2011) and Alo and Igwebuikwe (2012) provide some insights about the acceptability of lexico-grammatical features. In terms of methodology, non-native features described in the literature and the International Corpus of English can be a source of data for acceptability tests. In addition to the use of questionnaires and interviews, multiple choice and editing task can be also used for data collection. In relation to acceptability, it was observed that different speakers have different attitudes towards non-native varieties. Lexico-grammatical forms which do not conform to standard norms are likely to be rejected by native speakers of English. In the same way, some non-native speakers also reject features in non-native varieties based on intelligibility, levels of exposure to the rules of the language and context.

### Acceptability of Pragmatic Features

Fujiwara (2007) focused on the British acceptability of Japanese English refusals and employed both a web-based written and oral questionnaire with a seven-point Likert Scale for the data collection. Thirty British students were made to rate four cases of refusal strategies which included request for pay raises (RPR), offer of broken vase (OBV), invitation to a party (IP) and invitation to dinner (ID). According to him, Japanese English refusals were highly acceptable by British English speakers except for ID. IP could also be regarded as unacceptable because it was within the acceptability and unacceptability domain making it possible for two interpretations. The refusal strategies which are even problematic to Japanese speakers are perceived to be acceptable by British people. The author attributed the likely reasons of unacceptability to requests being unspecific and the Japanese providing irrelevant information. Comparing the results to an earlier study by American respondents, Fujiwara (2007) indicated that apart from ID, British acceptability rates are higher than Americans. On answering the question of whether prosodic features had significant effect on acceptability, the study revealed that prosodic features with Japanese-like (non-native like proficiency voices) prosodic features had higher acceptability than native speaker-like prosodic features.

Fujiwara (2007) provides a new dimension to the study of acceptability by looking at speech acts and employing web-based questionnaires and not the traditional written questionnaires. However, he fails to specify the number of questions for each refusal.



### Acceptability of Ghanaian English

Anderson (2009), in looking at some of the factors which affect the description and codification of a Ghanaian variety of English, mentioned that negative attitudes about a Ghanaian variety of English have resulted in an error analytic approach to studies on the variety. These negative attitudes had led to a low social acceptability of GhE from both scholars and speakers. She added that in a recent study to investigate the attitudes of Ghanaians, 65% of the respondents admitted they spoke GhE, 29% believed they spoke British English and 4% believed they spoke American English. However, the 66.5% of the respondents said GhE should not be taught in schools because it was a stigmatised variety and non-standard variety which had the tendency to affect students' performance. The 33.5% of the respondents who believed GhE should be taught in schools said that not all lexical items in Ghanaian Language had their translation equivalents in English and Ghanaians could also express their world view better through GhE. Also, Ghanaians needed to be taught GhE and it is through the use of GhE that the variety could gain international recognition. Most of the students said they preferred to learn British English in school as compared to Ghanaian and American varieties. Based on these results, Anderson argued that there is the need for a distinction to be drawn between an error and innovation in GhE and the features of the innovation should be grammatical, locally acceptable, internationally intelligible and one that is spoken by the educated Ghanaian.

Anderson (2009) provides a good starting point as far as the attitude of Ghanaians towards GhE is concerned; however, there are few concerns. One of these is the fact that she did not employ naturally occurring data. Also, one

wonders if the respondents know that which mark a variety to be Ghanaian, American or British. Both Anderson's study and the current researcher focus on GhE and the educated Ghanaian to test for acceptability of GhE. The present study, however, tests specific features in terms of lexis and grammar of the Ghanaian variety of English.

The above studies on acceptability in different contexts and levels of language use point to the fact that in native speakers' judgement of non-native varieties, certain features may be considered acceptable while others would be considered unacceptable. In the same way, in an acceptability judgement by non-native speakers on non-native varieties, some features are regarded as acceptable while others are viewed as unacceptable.

### **Indexical Markers**

According to Abercrombie (as cited in Foulkes, 2010), indexical features are the correlation between aspects of linguistic structure and non-linguistic factors. These factors include differences in gender, age, socioeconomic status, ethnicity, group affiliations, regional background and individual identity and even emotion and attitudes of individual speakers. Abercrombie (as cited in Laver, 1968) views indexical markers as features in speech which convey information about the characteristics of a speaker. To Crystal (2008), indexical is "a term used by some linguists to refer to features of speech or writing which reveal the personal (biological, psychological or social) characteristics of a language user, as in voice quality or handwriting"(p. 241). It can also be used to refer to the identifying characteristics of a group such as regional, social or occupational indices.

Indexicality refers to those aspects of speech signal that provide information such as the age, identity, social status, dialect, health condition or the emotional mood of speakers (Miller 2010; Geers, Davidson, Uchanski, Nicholas, 2013; Jacewicz & Fox, 2014).

In narrowing indexical markers to non-native varieties, Ofulue (2010) adds that the indexical markers of varieties of Global languages like English is the presence of indigenized English expressions which distinguish each variety. These expressions are usually understood only by speakers who belong to the same speech community. Non-native speech includes a type of indexical information that cues listeners about the talker's native language background and location of origin (Atagi & Bent, 2014).

It can be said that indexicality is that which identifies a speaker or which is peculiar to a particular speech community. In other words, indexical markers are features which identify speakers. For the purposes of this study, I look at features which are likely to be recognised as indexical markers to be features which identify the speakers of the Ghanaian variety of English.

### **Theoretical Framework**

The literature indicates that various models can be used to describe non-native varieties. Notable among them are Kachru's (1982, 1992) and Schneider's (2007). Kachru's (1992) mentions that institutionalised non-native varieties pass through three development stages which are not mutually exclusive. The first stage is the non-recognition stage. At this stage, there is a local variety of English which is considered as inferior. Hence, speakers have a preference for the native variety and consequently, they have a negative attitude towards the speakers of the local variety of English. The second stage

is referred to as the coexistence of local and imported varieties. The stage is characterised by bilingualism in English and the non-native variety. Although both varieties are used to perform different functions, the local variety is still not preferred to the native variety hence, the labelling of the variety as “X English” is perceived as an “ego cracking insult” (p. 57). There exists a phenomenon known as “linguistic schizophrenia” (p. 33), where people are exonormative in ideal but endonormative in practice (Groves, 2011). The final stage is the recognition stage. At this stage, the non-native variety is socially accepted and this recognition manifests in two ways. Firstly, the relationship between the linguistic norm and behaviour is reduced and therefore, there is a preference for the local variety. Secondly, the non-native variety may be promoted in teaching materials to reflect the non-native context. The non-native variety is recognised as having an equal status as the native variety of English.

The present study is, however, guided by Schneider’s (2007) Dynamic Model of Postcolonial Englishes. This model has been employed in this study because of its recency and comprehensive nature. The Dynamic Model has been created on the premise that there is an underlying process which accounts for the various similarities between countries where there is a transplanted variety. According to Schneider’s Dynamic Model, Postcolonial Englishes emerge through a progression of five characteristic stages or phases. These are the foundation, exonormative stabilization, nativisation, endonormative stabilization and differentiation stages. Each phase is marked with four descriptions of socio-political background, identity constructions, sociolinguistic conditions and linguistic effects. These five stages are viewed

in relation to two different speech communities referred to as Settler strand (STL strand) and Indigenous strand (IDG strand). The STL strand refers to the colonizers or settlers group while the IDG strand refers to the colonized.

The first phase of the model, the foundation stage, refers to the moment when English is transplanted in a country which was hitherto, not an English speaking country. This stage is characterized by a complex contact situation and the onset of marginal bilingualism. Contact operates at first between the British who immigrated from different regions and the second, deals with the contact between the STL strand and the IDG strand. Linguistically, there is *koinezation*, incipient pidginization and toponymic borrowing. *Koinezation* refers to the situation where speakers mutually adjust their pronunciation and lexical usage to informal, oral contexts. The incipient pidginization refers to the emergence of a reduced code between people to serve as a lingua franca whereas the toponymic borrowing deals with the borrowing of place names.

The next phase of the model is the exonormative stabilization phase. This stage refers to the period when English is used for all official purposes. It is marked by bilingualism which is acquired through education or increased contact with speakers of the colonial languages. The issue of linguistic norms is not of interest to the settler community and so the language is marked with learners' interlanguage. The English of the educated British speakers becomes a point of reference. Linguistically, the English-speaking settlers begin to adopt indigenous vocabulary because of the need to refer to local things while for the indigenous strand, there is the emergence of structures which are distinctive to the newly evolving variety. There is a change in the language

system of the English in the two communities, beginning with the lexical, then to syntactic and morphological structures later. There is also a shift in the use of the English language towards a local language variety especially in the spoken form because of the need to refer to local things. In view of this, there are grammatical innovations, code switching, code alternation, passive familiarity, second-language acquisition strategies and negotiations.

The nativization stage, the third phase, is considered the central phase of both cultural and linguistic transformation. Both parties (indigenes and settlers) see themselves as permanent residents of the same territory. There is acculturation and linguistic assimilation of the English language. Linguistic usage by the settlers' community is likely to be divided between innovative and conservative speakers. This phase is also characterised by the *complaint tradition*. The complaint tradition deals mainly with issues and opinions of deteriorating standards in the indigenous strand. However, the readiness to accept localized forms in formal context increases gradually. Changes occur at the levels of vocabulary, phonology, morphology and syntax and pragmatic levels and there is also the emergence of mixed codes. In the area of lexis, this phase is marked with heavy lexical borrowing and loan words; phonologically, there is the use of a local accent as a result of the transfer from indigenous languages. The morphology and syntax undergo structural nativization, where forms which are peculiar to the country are developed. Some other features of this phase include new word formation products such as compounds, localised collocations, lexical bundles, varying prepositional usage, innovative assignment of verb complementation patterns to individual verbs and an

alternative morphosyntactic behaviour of certain semantically defined word groups.

The fourth phase, the endonormative stabilization stage, usually follows and presupposes political independence and cultural reliance on an “Event X” (p. 49), that is, any event which makes the two groups realize that there is a mis-relationship between them. This stage is marked by the gradual adoption and acceptance of the English language as a way of expressing the new identity as indigenes. There is the recognition of a new language form which has lost its stigmatised status and is positively evaluated. There is an understanding of the local usage of forms which are distinct from the norms of the colonisers and which have certain traits of the indigenous strand usage. This local usage will also be accepted in formal usage. Therefore, the *complaint tradition* is found to be in the minority. The language is labelled as an “X English” as against “English in X” to signify the status of the language (p.50). Literary works which are written in the language of the new variety emerges. The linguistic change and nativization associated with this stage is different from the initial language that was transplanted. The variety which emerges is considered as homogenous. There is the struggle for its acceptance and codification.

The final stage is the differentiation phase. This stage is usually associated with a new nation which does not define itself as a single social entity but as different subgroups with their own identities. People, therefore, define themselves in relation to certain variables such as gender, age or ethnicity. A new national variety emerges with dialects birth which represents

the subgroups of the nation. The subgroups are, therefore, identified with specific language forms; hence, there are new varieties of the new variety.

Using Schneider's model, Ghanaian English can be said to have evolved from the foundation, endonormative stabilization phases and the third phase of nativisation. This study looks at acceptability and how it fits into the model and whether in terms of lexical and grammatical features, the variety has evolved to the next stage.

### **Critique of Schneider's Dynamic Model**

This section looks at some reviews on the strengths and weakness of the Dynamic Model of Postcolonial Englishes.

As far as the strength of the model is concerned, Angus (2008) is of the view that Schneider makes an immense contribution by recognizing both settlers and indigenous language users in the development of the Postcolonial variety. He, also, commends Schneider for his recognition of the English speaking settlers in any region who did not constitute a homogenous speech community of a single variety. Angus critiques the model on the basis of the issue that the *complaint tradition* is given prominence but Schneider does not clearly differentiate between that concept and the well-known prescriptive traditions. Angus also expresses concern about the use of the term "covert prestige", that term has been used too broadly. The discussions about the political, social and economic relationships and developments captured in the model appear to result more from inexorable human movements than an accident of socio-political history.

Wong (2008) commends Schneider's approach to be holistic but adds that he overrates its descriptive power. Wong, therefore, points out that he is



sceptical of its claim to universality in relation to Schneider's assertion that the model is applicable wherever a language is transplanted. Wong, also, mentions that some aspects of language such as lexis, pronunciation and grammar have been overemphasized more than the cultural aspects and suggests that more emphasis could be given to the cultural aspects of the model.

In his review of the Schneider's model, Ting (2011) commends the model for its detailed description, comprehensiveness and as a current framework for the development of non-native varieties into autonomous varieties. As far as the weakness of the model is concerned, Schneider (2007) himself makes it clear that the model represents an ideal situation and may not be able to capture complex realities due to issues such as variation in place and time, history and different contact situations and differences in terms of the linear progression of the model.

Further, Pung (2009) has also identified some weaknesses with the model. Among these weaknesses include the fact that the model does not present a graphical model for Englishes in the world. Also, the idea of evolution is suggestive that some varieties are more evolved than others; hence, the evolved varieties are superior to other varieties. The idea of colonialism could be expanded to encapsulate ideas of neologism, where dominance of ideas and of the economic domain replaces political and military dominance. Even with the introduction of neo-colonialism in the model, there are likely to be problems for countries which had neither been the subject of colonialism or neo-colonialism but which have a significant number of English speakers like Russia and other Scandinavian European countries. Another issue raised by Pung concerns the unidimensional nature of the

model, where a variety may evolve, devolve or become stagnant but where lateral branching out is not possible. The unidimensional nature makes it impossible to express variation within varieties and proficiency in the particular varieties.

Bonnici (2010) also raises concerns about the fact that the model does not make a distinction between former British protectorates and British colonies. She debunks an assumption made by Schneider that postcolonial varieties have a similar course of emergence. She adds that Schneider's categorisation of varieties of English based on their parallel history of emergence is not empirically supported. Besides, the label *Postcolonial Englishes* presupposes that a variety of English spoken in a postcolonial context must be understood from its colonial past and so the global position of English as an important worldwide language and a valuable linguistic commodity is not captured in this model.

### **Studies Based on the Dynamic Model of Postcolonial Englishes**

Schneider himself has applied the model to 17 Postcolonial countries including Fiji, Australia, New Zealand, Hong Kong, the Philippines, Malaysia, Singapore, India, South Africa, Kenya, Tanzania, Nigeria, Cameroon, Barbados, Jamaica, Canada and America. Other scholars have also applied it to other Postcolonial Englishes. Huber (2014) examined variation in one phonological and one morphosyntactic variable specifically, T-affrication across two genders and two speech styles in spoken GhE, and the choice of relativizer in written texts. The study pointed out that although GhE had reached Phase 3 of Schneider's model, it showed well established and highly systematic stylistic and gender-related variation. He showed that social

variation, a Phase 5 feature, is deeply rooted in the pre-differentiation of a postcolonial variety. He, therefore, employed some features of both phases to analyse the variety. T- affrication was more commonly used by female speakers and was prevalent in formal style. It constituted the development of a local linguistic norm. As far as the choice relativizers in restrictive relative clauses are concerned, the study looked at the differences and similarities between ICE-GB and ICE-GH in data with varying degrees of formality. In both varieties, *who* was strongly preferred to *that* in subject relative clauses with human antecedents and also, there was no significant variation across the formality categories. The more informal the situation, the more zero relatives were used. There was no significant difference between the formality categories in ICE-GH but there were significant differences within the ICE-GB. He concluded that nativisation was not necessarily characterised by radical departures from the transplanted language.

In applying the model to Philippine English, Martin (2014) examined Philippine English to ascertain whether it had come to a halt in the nativisation phase, as claimed by Schneider or had progressed to the next stage. According to Martin (2014), the Event X which marks phase 4 did not result in a general desire among Filipinos to reject the language of a colonial master but the language maintained its elevated status in Philippine society. Also, there was still an ambivalent attitude towards the variety since the acceptability of Philippine English only applied to a certain class of the society such as the educated and middle to upper income members of Philippine society. Also, the indigenized form could not be considered as an identity carrier in the same way as Singaporean English did, as most Filipinos are not proud to be

associated with the variety. Another justification he gave was that the existence of the codification of Philippine English was seen as an indicator of homogenization which is an indication of a progression to stage 4. There was, also, the emergence of literary creativity which signifies that Philippine English was in stage 4 but he did not fail to add that literary texts of Anglo-American origin were preferred.

Van Rooy (2014), in applying the model to United States of America and South African Englishes, proposed a refined view of language contact within the Dynamic Model. He argued that the two features associated with Phase 4 of endonormative stabilisation: endonormativity and homogeneity need to be separated. In the U.S.A, endonormativity was achieved shortly after independence and was based on the belief that the local forms of English were good enough to be its own standard. However, in South Africa, endonormativity had not been fully reached as a result of the segregation of the various ethnic groups for the largest part of the 20<sup>th</sup> century and the clash between Afrikaner nationalism and a population that had retained a connection to Britain much longer. He argued that there was a lack of homogeneity in both countries because of their multiple contact situations. He mentioned a number of factors to buttress his argument. One of the factors was that both U.S.A. and South Africa had various communities migrating at different times and with long distances between settlements and so the uniformity which could be achieved in geographically more confined settlements was less likely. Also, both countries shared a history of ethnic tension and segregation policies which gave rise to different ethnolects. The connection between

endonormativity and homogeneity is not a necessary one and will not necessarily converge and so should be analysed separately.

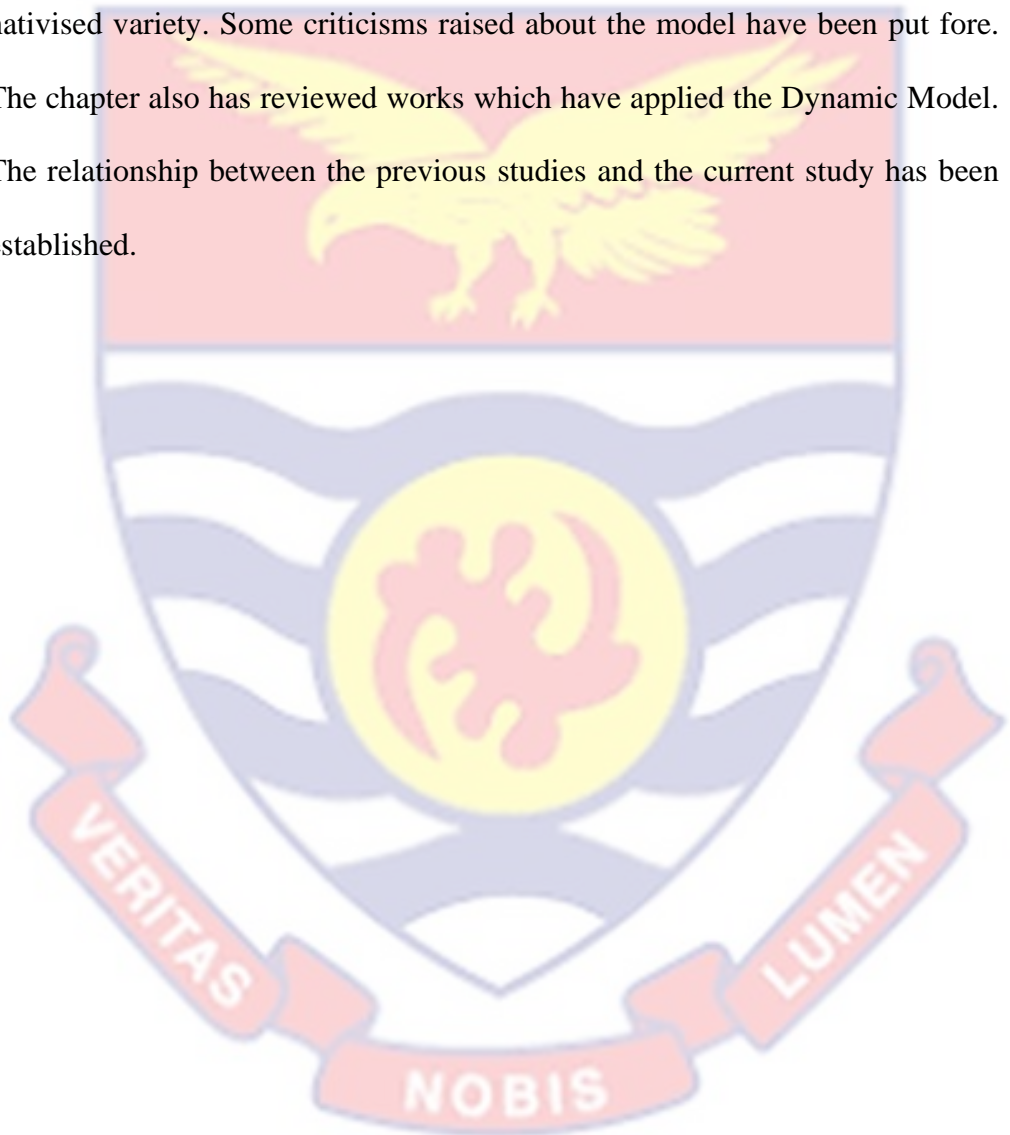
Moreover, Wee (2014) in his work on *The evolution of Singlish in late modernity: Beyond Phase 5* argued that the basic assumptions of the Dynamic Model will need to be reconsidered if it was to keep pace with the sociolinguistic implications of globalization. His argument was based on certain factors. These factors included the fact that the nature of interaction between immigrant professionals and their host societies was different from that of the relationship that existed between settler and indigenous communities since the relationship between the latter was a symmetric one. He added that there was commodification of the variety where Singlish was marketed as an exportable cultural product through the media and workshops on the language, which made it no longer an in-group identity marker of solidarity that was being conveyed globally to both Singaporeans and non-Singaporeans. He noted the global spread to be an issue of language spread without any colonizers. Singlish was likely to be separated from Singaporeans and even the Singaporean identity because non-Singaporeans might have knowledge of the language. He recommended that the model be revised to consider the above factor of linguistic sophistication, migration and commodification and a more drastic factor of the recognition of a shift from modernity to late modernity.

### **Chapter Summary**

The chapter has looked at the background of Ghanaian English and has also examined the literature on the existence of Ghanaian English and the different views on the variety. The features that were tested in the present

study were also discussed. The concepts of acceptability and indexicality have also been examined. Studies which have investigated the acceptability of phonological, lexico-grammatical and pragmatic features were also evaluated.

The chapter has examined the theoretical framework which was proposed by Schneider (2007). It has clearly stated that Ghanaian English is a nativised variety. Some criticisms raised about the model have been put fore. The chapter also has reviewed works which have applied the Dynamic Model. The relationship between the previous studies and the current study has been established.



## CHAPTER THREE

### METHODOLOGY

#### Introduction

The previous chapter presented a review of related literature and their relationship with the current work. The present chapter presents the methodology which guides the study. It describes the research design, research site, population, sample and sampling technique, source of data, instruments of data collection and the data collection procedure. The chapter also discusses issues regarding the pilot study, the challenges encountered during the instrument administration and the data analysis procedure.

#### Research Design

The study employed a mixed method approach, a combination of both the quantitative and qualitative methods which include viewpoints, data collection, analysis and inference techniques used in research (Johnson, Onwuegbuzie & Turner, 2007). The quantitative research design involves the collection of numerical data which is analysed statistically and the author draws conclusions for generalization (Creswell, 1994; Jackson, 2010). Quantitatively, this study employed the probability sampling technique of data collection, stratified and systematic sampling. The study also made use of questionnaire which is a quantitative instrument of data collection. The data from the survey was tested to measure the levels of acceptance of some lexico-grammatical features in GhE. In terms of analytical procedures, frequencies, percentages and some measurement of central tendency such as the mean was used to describe results. Taylor-Powell (1996) terms these statistical methods as descriptive statistics since their main purpose is to describe the data. The

findings are also presented using tables and charts for the purpose of describing and explaining the phenomena that the data reflects.

Also, the qualitative research design deals with procedures which result in open-ended, non-numerical analysis which is analyzed by non-statistical methods (Dornyei, 2011). This study employed the non-probability sampling technique of purposive sampling. Also, a qualitative instrument of an interview guide was used for the data collection. The interviews were then transcribed and grouped under emerging themes in accordance with the purpose of the study. In terms of analysis, the researcher gives an in-depth description and interpretation of the results by accounting for the features which are likely to be recognised as features of GhE and the participants' views on the acceptability of the test items. Interpretation of the data by the researcher is very key in qualitative research and it also includes analyzing data for themes or categories and drawing conclusions (Creswell, 2003). The reason for the choice of qualitative methods in addition to the quantitative methods is to make meaning of the survey results and to elicit the opinions of participants concerning the acceptability of GhE.

### **Population**

The population for this study was the educated Ghanaian. According to Anderson (2009), education should be a prerequisite for determining the acceptability of GhE. In view of this, the students and workers of the University of Cape Coast (UCC) make up the sample for this study. These groups are considered for this study because they qualify to be classified as educated Ghanaians. The educated Ghanaian is defined in this study in relation to the International Corpus of English (ICE) classification of an educated



person. According to Nelson, Wallis and Aarts (2002), educated speakers of English are adults, aged 18 years and above, who have had English Language as the medium of instruction to at least the end of their secondary education. Therefore, the educated Ghanaian is an individual with, at least, a secondary level education in Ghana. The educated Ghanaians employed in this study have up to a tertiary level of education, specifically, individuals with three to four years of tertiary education. Since educated Ghanaians are not located in a particular setting in the country, the University of Cape Coast was selected for this study.

The University of Cape Coast was selected for this study because it admits and employs both students and workers of different ethnic groups and first languages from across the country. That is, it gives a fair representation of the educated Ghanaian population. Also, the proximity of the institution to the researcher was considered because of time and financial constraints. The site was also chosen because of the familiarity of the researcher with the university community. Moreover, since the study used questionnaires, the choice of UCC helped in the follow up activities of the researcher.

Regular students who were in their final year (level four hundred students) and postgraduates were, therefore, deemed suitable for this study and so they formed the target population as far as the students' category is concerned. It means that sandwich and distance education students were not considered in this study. This is because they were not easily accessible during the time of the data collection, since they are on campus during specific periods of time within the academic year.

With regard to workers, the administrative staff and teaching staff were considered for this study. In terms of the administrative staff, members considered as senior staff were used. Just like the students, these categories of staff have had three to four years of tertiary education. As far as the academic staff is concerned, there was no distinction between ranks since these workers have as their lowest qualification a university degree.

### **Sample**

The sample size for this study was 400. According to Kirk (1995), when the population is beyond 5,000, the sample size of 400 is acceptable. The sample size of 400 was used because the population was over 19,000.

In addition, twenty of the respondents were selected for the interview. Employing the concept of saturation as a guiding principle in determining the sample size in qualitative research (Mason, 2011), I considered twenty interviews appropriate since there was no emergence of new themes after this point. Specifically, the concept of data saturation refers to the point when there is no addition of new themes (Marshall, 1996; Kumar, 2010).

### **Sampling Procedure**

In order to get a representative sample of the population, a multi-stage sampling technique was employed for the quantitative part of the study. The multi-stage sampling deals with the selection of sample which is done sequentially across two or more hierarchical levels (Battaglia, 2008). This means that sampling is done in more than a stage to arrive at the ultimate sample. First, the stratified sampling technique was used. According to Teddlie and Yu (2007), stratified sampling is a probability sampling in which

the target population is divided into subgroups known as strata based on a criterion and then sampling is done within each stratum. The strata are mutually exclusive and homogenous segments.

The stratified sampling made the researcher classify the regular students and workers of the university into strata based on their colleges of affiliation. It should be pointed out that these strata were based on the existing structure of the university. This sampling technique is appropriate for this study because it made it possible for every member of each college in UCC to have the chance to equally participate in this study. Proportionate allocation was used to assign figures to each of these colleges per their respective population. The schools and faculties within the colleges were, also, assigned numbers in proportion to their population in the respective colleges. That is, the proportional allocation was done at two levels; the college and the school or faculty levels.

In addition to the stratified sampling technique, the systematic sampling technique was finally deployed in selecting the respondents for the survey. The systematic sampling technique, according to Bellhouse (2005), is the selection of sample whereby there is a random choice at the beginning of the population list and a selection of every unit at equal intervals afterwards. That is, choosing samples by selecting every  $k^{th}$  sampling frame member where  $k$  represents the population divided by the desired sample size (Onwuegbuize & Collins, 2007). The systematic sampling was used because it ensures that the sample is more spread across the population (Johnnie, 2012).

Also, the purposive sampling was employed in the selection of participants for the interviews. Purposive sampling is the selection of most

suitable respondents, based on the objective of the study (Morse, 1991). It also allows the researcher to actively select the most productive sample to answer the research questions (Marshall, 1996). The judgement of the researcher is of much importance since only those who can best provide the information to meet the objectives of the study are considered (Kumar, 2010). In this study, participants were selected primarily on the basis that one had been part of the initial survey. Secondly, the individual's willingness to participate in the study and their availability at the time of data collection were considered by the researcher.

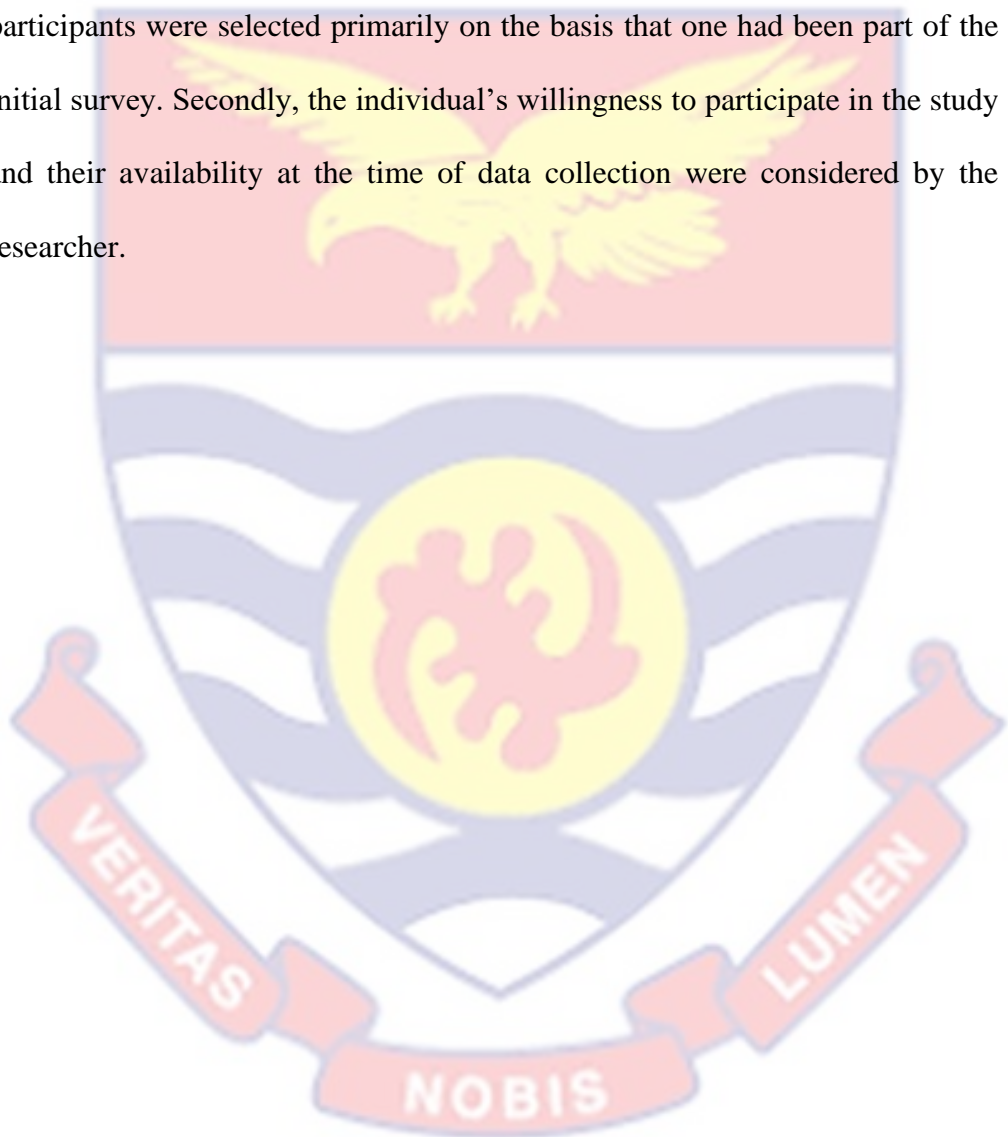


Table 1 - *Proportional Distribution of Questionnaires according to Colleges, Schools/Faculties*

Schools/Faculties	Undergraduates	Teaching staff	Non-teaching staff	Postgraduates
College of Agriculture and Natural Sciences				
School of Agriculture	11	1	1	2
School of Biological Sciences	28	1	2	
School of Physical Sciences	50	2	2	1
College of Education Studies				
Faculty of Education	111	2	2	8

Table 1, Continued

College of Health and Allied sciences				
School of Nursing /Midwifery	14	1	1	1
School of Medical Sciences	7	1	1	
College of Humanities and Legal Studies				
Faculty of Arts	28	1	1	2
School of Business	50	1	1	1
Faculty of Law	3	1		
Faculty of Social Sciences	54	1	1	5

Source: Author's construct

### Sources of Data

The questionnaire's test items were taken from previous researches which have described GhE. Specifically, the study tests Ghanaian lexical items and grammatical expressions from Sey (1973), Bamiro (1994, 1997), Nimako (2008), Owusu-Ansah (1991, 2012), Huber (2012) and Ngula (2012). The following features of Ghanaian English were, therefore, tested in this study. As far as lexis is concerned, this study tested mainly some GhE coined words. With grammatical features, the study tested for article usage, stative verbs, idiomatic expressions, modal verbs usage, question tags, pronoun usage, adverbial subordination, uncountable nouns, odd couples and left dislocated constructions. The choice of the lexical items and grammatical features was based on the regularity of occurrence of the features in the GhE literature. These features were tested for their acceptability which then served as a primary data for the current study. The primary data was sourced from students and staff (both teaching and administrative) of UCC with the aid of questionnaires.

Also, a semi-structured interview was employed to gain more insight into the phenomenon of acceptability by Ghanaians. Interviews were used to explore the views, experience, beliefs and/ or motivations of individuals on specific matters (Gill, Stewart, Treasure & Chadwick, 2008). The face-to-face interview style was found suitable for this study. This is because the face-to-face interview offers a high degree of flexibility where the interviewer is available to explain the purpose, encourage participants to cooperate, clarify questions, correct misunderstandings, offer prompts and follow up on new ideas (Diaslingh, 2008; Matthers, Fox & Hunn, 1998; Phellas, Bloch & Seale,

2011). The specific type of face-to-face interview that was used is the semi-structured type which involves a series of open-ended questions based on the topic areas of the research (Matthers et al., 1998). The semi-structured interview was useful because its nature makes it possible for both the interviewer and interviewees to discuss some topics in more detail (Matthers et al., 1998). Known for its flexibility, the semi-structured interview helps the researcher to probe for views and opinions of the interviewee without the interviewee being influenced by limited responses (Kajornboon, 2005; Pathak & Intratat, 2012). The data from the semi-structured interviews were then used to supplement the responses from the questionnaires.

### **Instruments**

Questionnaires and interview guide were the main instruments for the data collection. Questionnaires provide an efficient means by which statistically quantifiable information can be collected (Creswell, 2002). The questionnaire was used because it allows for a lot of information to be collected within the shortest possible time (McLeod, 2014). Also, questionnaires allow for anonymity of respondents which allows for honest answers.

The questionnaire was made up of three parts which were guided by the research objectives. Section A deals with the personal data of respondents while section B looks at the acceptability of lexical features in sentential contexts. Section C addresses the acceptability of grammatical features of Ghanaian English. In all, 50 sentences were tested, 20 for lexical and 30 for grammatical features. Sections B and C were made up of Likert items on a



five-point Likert Scale of unacceptable to acceptable where *Unacceptable* = 1, *Unacceptable sometimes* = 2, *Neutral* = 3, *Acceptable sometimes* = 4 and *Acceptable* = 5. Respondents were therefore asked to tick appropriately. The Likert Scale is described by Schutze and Sprouse (2013) as a scale for linguistic acceptability is made of a numerical value with two endpoints of acceptable or unacceptable and sentences are to be rated along the scale. The Likert Scale was employed in this study because it measures attitudes, values and opinions (Johns, 2010). Also, it is known for its universal application (Johns, 2010) and relatively easy to read and understand by participants (Bertram 2007).

Besides the questionnaire, the semi-structured interview guide was also used for the data collection. The semi-structured interview was used to elicit information about acceptability, reasons for their response, how the unacceptable lexico-grammatical features are similarly referred to or constructed and how context influences acceptability.

### **Data Collection Procedure**

A list of students was obtained from the Student Records and Management Information Section (SRMIS). The list was assigned numbers and after an initial random sample of the 5<sup>th</sup> person, every 49<sup>th</sup> member on the list was contacted for the study. Questionnaires were administered to the lecturers and the administrative staff at their offices within the selected colleges. With regard to ethical issues, a verbal informed consent was sought from them and those who were willing to participate in this research were given the questionnaires. Informed consent usually includes the following: voluntary participation, explanation of the nature of research, the procedures

of the study, the right to ask questions and the protection of the participants' privacy (Creswell, 2002). The first page of the questionnaire also stipulated the assurance of anonymity and confidentiality. These questionnaires were then picked later at the convenience of the respondents.

However, with the students' population, an initial negotiation was made with the students who are in level four hundred and above within the various colleges under consideration. The students, therefore, indicated their meeting times and venues and, therefore, determined when the researcher could be present to administer the questionnaires. Before the questionnaires were administered, verbal informed consent about their willingness to participate was sought from the respondents and they were also assured of the confidentiality of their responses. The questionnaires were then given to students to complete after which they were collected. The month of February, 2015 was used for the data collection. These questionnaires would help answer the research questions.

Similarly, interviews were scheduled for participants at their convenience. Therefore, issues such as date, time and place of the interview were arranged with the interviewees. In relation to the place of interviews, Turner (2010) points out that interviews need to be conducted in an environment where the participants do not feel restricted or uncomfortable to share information. Once again, an informed verbal consent was sought from them, especially with regard to confidentiality and anonymity. According to Eckert (2013), informed consent should encompass both what you are going to do and what you are not going to do; it should be voluntary and should show no signs of coercion. The interviews were recorded with an audio recorder.

Each interview session lasted for about thirty minutes. The interviews were conducted in August, 2015. The interviews were held in English, since it is the official language of the country.

### **Recruitment of Field Assistants and Pilot Study**

Two field assistants were recruited to help in the data collection for the study. These are National Service Personnel of the Department of English who understand the concept of World Englishes. An additional training was given to them in order to explain the concept and the purpose of the research. In order to test the reliability of the instruments, the instruments were pre-tested. A pilot study was conducted from August, 2014 at U.C.C for some selected administrative staff. The responses from the pre-test helped to examine the applicability of the instrument. Hence, possible sources of ambiguity were reworded and it helped to ensure that the objectives of the study were being met. The pilot study helped to realize the feasibility in administering the questionnaires and the interview guide in the actual work and the challenges that are likely to be encountered.

### **Challenges Encountered**

The first challenge that was encountered was the unwillingness of respondents to respond to the questionnaires. Most of these respondents attributed it to their busy time schedules while others attributed it to some personal reasons. Therefore, only, the respondents who were willing to participate in this research were included.

Also, most of the questionnaires had to be replaced for the workers because they had misplaced them at the time of collection. Some of the students also took some questionnaires but failed to return them.

Moreover, the data collection was time-consuming since the concept of Ghanaian English was not known to many of those outside the linguistic field. Together with my field assistants, I had to explain the concept to them before the respondents agreed to participate in the study. Some, however, expressed concerns about the issue of standards.

### **Method of Data Analysis**

After the data was collected, it was edited, coded and fed into SPSS version 16 and Excel. The data was analyzed with statistical tools such as frequencies, percentages and mean. The data was then interpreted and presented on charts. The quantitative analysis was done in two phases, where there was an initial five-point scale response and was later collapsed to three categories for the purpose of discussion. The interview data was transcribed, coded, grouped into themes and interpreted to support the quantitative results.

In relation to the third research question of the likely recognised indexical markers of GhE, the results of the acceptability rates were used to determine it. Hence, results of the survey were used to interpret the indexical markers of GhE.

### **Chapter Summary**

This chapter described the research design, the mixed research design. It has also indicated that the study employs both the qualitative and quantitative techniques through sampling, data collection and the presentation of statistical

methods and descriptive analysis which were used for the data analysis. The instruments used were the questionnaire and a semi-structured interview guide which were administered to the students, administrative and teaching staff of the University of Cape Coast.



## CHAPTER FOUR

### RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

#### Introduction

This chapter presents the analyses of the data together with the discussion. There is the statistical analysis of the degree of acceptability of lexico-grammatical features of Ghanaian English. There is a discussion of the demographic characteristics of respondents, acceptability of lexical and grammatical features and the recognised indexical markers of GhE. What educated Ghanaians consider acceptable and the reasons for their choice are also presented. Specifically, there is a frequency distribution of the acceptability and the mean scores. Based on the levels of acceptability, the indexical markers of Ghanaian English are also discussed.

#### Demographic Characteristics of Respondents

The characteristics of respondents considered in this study include sex, age and level of education.

The sex distribution of the respondents was 39.5% for females and 60.5% for males. This is an indication that more males participated in the study than females. It is worth mentioning that sex is not measured as a variable as far as acceptability is concerned, that is, the sex of participants was not considered before one was allowed to participate in the study. Also, the participation of more males than females in this study may be as a result of the sampling technique used, that is, the systematic sampling.

Table 2 - *Socio-demographic Characteristics of Respondents (N=400)*

Variable	Frequency	Percentage (%)
<b>Sex</b>		
Female	158	39.5
Male	242	60.5
<b>Age</b>		
16-20	21	5.2
21-25	270	67.5
26-30	60	15.0
≥ 31	49	12.2
<b>Level of education</b>		
Undergraduates	356	89.0
Postgraduate	12	3.0
Graduate	32	8.0

Source: Field survey, Nkansah (2015)

The results show that more than half of the respondents were between the ages of 21 and 25 representing 67.5% while the least age recorded was 16 to 20 forming 5.2% of the total number of respondents. Those aged between 26 and 30 and above 30 recorded 15% and 12.2% respectively. The age differences may be due to the fact that a lot of undergraduates were respondents in this study.

According to Anderson (2009), education is a key factor that should be considered in determining what is accepted as Ghanaian English. With regard to the educational background of respondents, although university students and workers are considered, the results indicate that the majority of

the respondents 356 (89%) were undergraduate students with 8 percent being graduates while postgraduate students formed the minority of 3.0 %. The vast disparity in the figures of respondents and their educational levels could be attributed to the proportionate allocation within each stratum of the population which made it possible for more undergraduates to participate in this study.

### Years of Education in the English Language

In terms of the number of years of education in the English Language, Figure 1 indicates that more than half of the respondents (83.3%) have had 13 or more years of education in the English language. This finding was expected since the Ghanaian educational system has been structured in such a way that one acquires nine years of education at the basic level, an average of three years at the senior high school level and three to four years at the tertiary level, through which the medium of instruction is the English language.

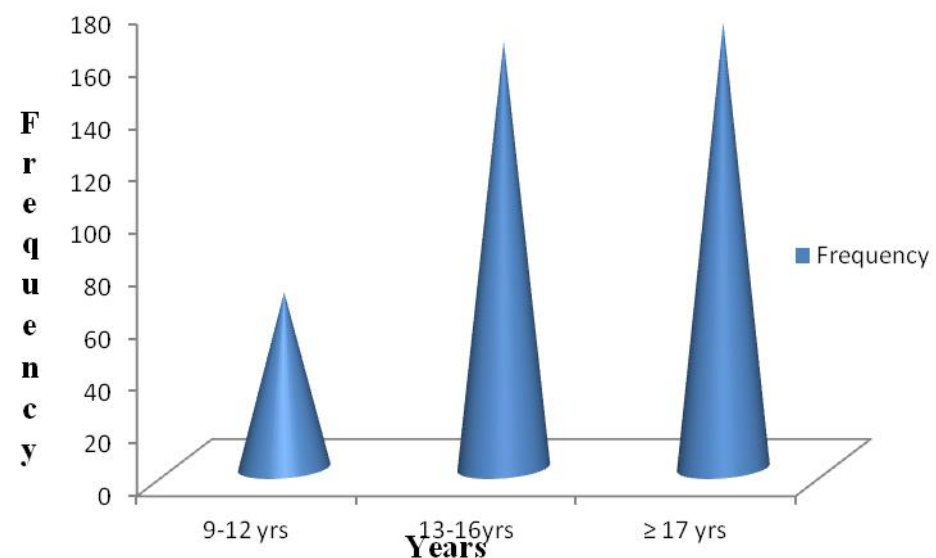


Figure 1: Education in the English Language

Source: Field survey, (2015)



### Ghanaians' Views on GhE

Ghanaians are aware that the type of English they speak is quite different from the Standard British English. This came to light when the respondents were asked for their views on Ghanaian English. Ghanaians' opinions on GhE confirm Owusu-Ansah's (2012) view that Ghanaians are aware that the variety of English they speak is different from other varieties of English. Their views on GhE presented two viewpoints. There were some of the participants who were of the view that the English which Ghanaians speak is made up of errors while others were also of the view that the English which is spoken in Ghana is a modification of British English to suit the Ghanaian context. The educated Ghanaians who believed that the variety is full of errors had these to say:

Interviewee 10

For its intent and purposes, they are ok. Though there are some or quite a lot of us who wouldn't say speak Standard English (if you want) for whatever reasons whether be it their level of education or the exposure to the language itself or be it the influences of the pidgin English that we pick up from secondary schools. So, standard of English I'll say is average. Somebody might argue that the purpose of language is for communication therefore if a person gets his point across that is all but I also feel that as long as there are rules of usage then there are a lot of mistakes that are made, some people's subject verb agreement is off, the use of words in the right context, adding letters where they should not be used and so on and so

forth. These are some of the things that sometimes I just wonder and it cuts all across from the educated to the so called illiterates. They all do it be it the MP or minister, somebody who claims to be of stature.

Interviewee 13

It is actually not the best. We don't speak the best English. I mean the good one that we have been taught in school. That is, the British English that we have been taught should have been the best.

Interviewee 16

For now, there are a lot of introductions into the English language, the way we have come to know and express it and that may be below standard because what the queen language actually is when it comes to grammar, when it comes to constructions, I think now we are speaking our own thing and that might not be really what it is supposed to be.

These views by educated Ghanaians partly confirm the assertion by Sey (1973, p. 7) that “the educated Ghanaian would not ‘accept’ anything other than educated British Standard English”. It also confirms the views of Ahulu (1994) and Nimako (2008) since they also view any English other than the standard to be deviations and errors.

On the other hand, some educated Ghanaians who believe that the variety of English as spoken by Ghanaians is a modification of English to suit the Ghanaian context also said the following:

Interviewee 8

The Ghanaians, although they will speak the standard British English, they have to modify it to suit their own contexts. So there are some words and expressions which might not be in the standard one but we have used it in our contexts and it is understood by quite a number of people, particularly some educated.

Interviewee 5

I think most of the time we do direct translation of the local language.

Interviewee 19

Well, English is a foreign language, isn't it? I believe that anybody who is into another language and decides to learn another language will automatically not speak it like the owner of that language. I don't think there is any other way to speak English than how we are speaking it now. What I believe is that no matter what we do, part of the way we speak in our local language would be embedded in the English language that we have learnt as a second language. To me, it's not bad, it's cool. I believe so; sometimes the constructions, the expressions, there are our own language translations into the English, they might not even exist in English.

The above views mean that Ghanaians view modification to suit context to be based on some direct translations from the local languages to

English and some created and borrowed words from the Ghanaian languages. These views are in line with studies by Dako (2003), Bamiro (1994, 1997), Adika (2012), Ngula (2011, 2012, 2014), Owusu-Ansah (2012), and Wiredu (2012) who also view Ghanaian English to be an indigenized variety.

### **Ghanaians and Acceptability of English**

As far as the acceptability of English generally is concerned, Ghanaians were asked what they considered acceptable or otherwise in English. They raised two major issues with regard to what they considered acceptable. One of the issues which were raised is the conformity to Standard English. Some Ghanaians are of the view that the only basis for which they would accept a word or structure to be English is on the basis that the word or grammatical structure conforms to British English rules. Therefore, any form of word, sentence or meaning that is expressed contrary to what is noted to be standard is unacceptable.

Interviewee 4

I think that once we talk of a particular expression being acceptable, then we are looking at what the native speakers of that language agree on, what they speak. By native speakers, the British

Interviewee 16

What I want to say is that the language is based on some rules let's say what should be expressed in a past tense, what should be expressed in a past participle. There are some rules

governing construction of sentences or phrases, once that one is obeyed, I will term that as acceptable English.

Interviewee 18

Since we are following or we are using the British type of English, there are some sentences that they consider to be right.

So we following them and we forming sentences based on their rules, the sentence could be considered as right.

Moreover, some educated Ghanaians consider intelligibility as the main basis for the acceptability of English. These Ghanaians are of the view that language is for communication; hence, they consider English to be acceptable if it is intelligible. In other words, provided the English they speak or hear people speak makes meaning or is meaningful, then it is acceptable.

Interviewee 2

I think once the person you'll be speaking with understands whatever you say, I consider that to be acceptable. If I don't understand, I don't see it to be acceptable. And so that which is understandable is accepted.

Interviewee 6

Well, if I'm able to understand it the way you are saying it, yeah it is accepted. So the understanding, if you're able to communicate, it's acceptable.

Interviewee 7

It's about clarity. When somebody says something or constructs a sentence there should be clarity. You should be able to understand the analogy the person wants to draw. It's about clarity and the correct usage of words, tenses, concord and all that. By clarity, I mean that it should be devoid of ambiguity, it should be clear; the person listening should be able to understand what the person is saying.

Intelligibility was identified by Nilsenova (2009) and Ting (2011) as one of the factors which affect acceptability in their works.

#### **Acceptability of Lexical Items**

Some lexical items in GhE were tested for their acceptability or otherwise. These twenty lexical items were put in sentential contexts. The respondents ranked these characteristics on a five-point Likert Scale of 1 = *Unacceptable*, 2 = *Unacceptable sometimes*, 3 = *Not sure*, 4= *Acceptable sometimes* and 5 = *Acceptable*. Table 3 presents the frequency distribution of the acceptability of lexical forms in GhE.

Table 3 - Frequency Distribution of the Acceptability of Lexical Forms (N=400)

Ghanaianisms	Unacceptable		Unacceptable sometimes		Not sure		Acceptable sometimes		Acceptable	
	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage
Bush meat	79	19.8	38	9.5	51	12.8	113	28.3	119	29.8
Coal pot	135	33.8	51	12.8	61	15.2	81	20.2	72	18.0
Bachelor's night	101	25.2	51	12.8	80	20.0	89	22.2	79	19.8
Bombed (in an exams)	240	60.0	51	12.8	28	7.0	57	14.2	24	6.0
Booker	173	43.2	54	13.5	50	12.5	69	17.2	54	13.5
Boys' quarters	54	13.5	52	13.0	69	17.2	108	27.0	117	29.2
Chop money	181	45.2	54	13.5	32	8.0	92	23.0	41	10.2
Gate fee	81	20.2	40	10.0	37	9.2	129	32.2	113	28.2
Outdooring	118	29.5	43	10.8	52	13.0	90	22.5	97	24.2

Table 3, Continued

Small chops	125	31.2	52	13.0	51	12.8	89	22.2	83	20.8
Tight friend	153	38.2	50	12.5	40	10.0	105	26.2	52	13.0
Brown envelope	74	18.5	56	14.0	68	17.0	114	28.5	88	22.0
Senior brother	76	19.0	38	9.5	42	10.5	96	24.0	148	37.0
Fitter	139	34.8	45	11.2	54	13.5	98	24.5	64	16.0
Enstooled	42	10.5	48	12.0	86	21.5	96	24.0	128	32.0
Chop box	57	14.2	42	10.5	54	13.5	137	34.2	110	27.5
Chop bar	106	26.5	70	17.5	85	21.5	89	22.2	50	12.5
Gate man	74	18.5	63	15.8	52	13.0	124	31.0	87	21.8
Rice water	125	31.2	51	12.8	48	12.0	99	24.8	77	19.2
Hot drinks	149	37.2	40	10.0	60	15.0	76	19.0	75	18.8

Source: Field survey, Nkansah (2015)



From the frequency and percentage table distribution of Table 3, it is evident that out of the twenty lexical items selected and tested in this study for acceptability, 12 are unacceptable, 4 are acceptable sometimes and 4 are acceptable. The lexical items which are considered unacceptable by educated Ghanaians include *coal pot, bachelor's night, bombed (in an examination), booker, chop money, outdooring, small chops, tight friend, fitter, chop bar, rice water* and *hot drinks*. The following are also considered to be acceptable sometimes: *gate fee, brown envelope, chop box and gate man*. The acceptable lexical items in Ghanaian English are *bush meat, boys' quarters, senior brother and enstooled*.

#### **Acceptability of Lexical Features on a Three-Point Scale**

Although the five-point Likert Scale represents the actual instances of language use, it was found to be more delicate and sensitive to minute differences. Therefore, the five-point scale was developed into a three-point scale at both the lexical and grammatical levels for the purpose of the discussion. Table 4 presents the frequency distribution of the acceptability of lexical items on a three-point scale.

Table 4 - *Acceptability of Lexical Features on a Three-Point Scale*

Ghanaianism	Unacceptable		Not sure		Acceptable	
	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage
Bush meat	117	29.2	51	12.8	232	58.0
Coal pot	186	46.5	61	15.2	153	38.2
Bachelor's night	152	38.0	80	20.0	168	42.0
Bombed (in an exams)	291	72.8	28	7.0	81	20.2
Booker	227	56.8	50	12.5	123	30.8
Boys' quarters	106	26.5	69	17.2	225	56.2
Chop money	235	58.8	32	8.0	133	33.2

Table 4, Continued

Gate fee	121	30.2	37	9.2	242	60.5
Outdooring	161	40.2	52	13.0	187	46.8
Small chops	177	44.2	51	12.8	172	43.0
Tight friend	203	50.8	40	10.0	157	39.2
Brown envelope	130	32.5	68	17.0	202	50.5
Senior brother	114	28.5	42	10.5	244	61.0
Fitter	184	46.0	54	13.5	162	40.5
Enstooled	90	22.5	86	21.5	224	56.0
Chop box	99	24.8	54	13.5	247	61.8
Chop bar	176	44.0	85	21.2	139	34.8
Gate man	137	34.2	52	13.0	211	52.8
Rice water	176	44.0	48	12.0	176	44.0
Hot drinks	189	47.2	60	15.0	151	37.8

Source: Field survey, Nkansah (2015)

### **Bush Meat**

More than half of the respondents 232 (58.0%) were of the view that *bush meat* is acceptable while 117 (29.2%) of the respondents said that it is unacceptable in GhE and 51(12.8%) of the respondents were in the neutral category. The average response for *bush meat* is 2.29 (SD=0.89) which is in the neutral category. This is an indication that, on average, most Ghanaians are neutral regarding the acceptance of *bush meat*. The few respondents who did not accept the use of *bush meat* in GhE preferred to use *game* with only one participant indicating that he uses *lean meat* to refer to a meat from the forest/bush.

### **Coal Pot**

The majority of the respondents 186 (46.5%) indicated that the use of *coal pot* is unacceptable and 153 (38.2%) of the respondents said it was acceptable. However, 61 (15.2%) of the respondents indicated that they were not sure of its acceptance. With a mean value of 1.92, *coal pot* as a lexical item in GhE had an overall response of it being unacceptable. With the exception of the few participants who were neutral in the acceptance of *coal pot* in GhE, the interview pointed out that Ghanaians accept the use of this lexical item.

### **Bachelor's Night**

The frequency distribution shows that slightly above forty percent (168) of educated Ghanaians accepted the use of *bachelor's night* whereas thirty-eight percent (152) rejected it. Twenty percent (80) of the respondents were not sure of their response. *Bachelor's night* has a mean response of 2.04 (SD= 0.90) which

means that, on average, educated Ghanaians are neutral in their response. Although a number of the interviewees needed further explanation of this concept, it was considered acceptable with only three indicating that they would use *transition party* and *dinner* instead.

### **Bombed**

The majority 291 (72.5%) of the respondents said that *bombed* (in an examination) is unacceptable which represents more than fifty percent of the total number of respondents. Twenty percent said it was acceptable while 28 (7.0%) were in the neutral category. From Table 5, it is patent that *bombed* (in an examination) has a mean response of 1.48 (SD=0.81) which points out that on average educated Ghanaians do not accept it. Most Ghanaians would prefer *failed* to *bombed* (in examination).

### **Booker**

With regard to the acceptability or otherwise of *booker* in GhE, most 227 (56.8%) of the respondents did not in agree to it, 50 (12.5%) were neutral and 123 (30.8%) of the respondents agreed to it. From Table 5, it was revealed that the average response for *booker* is 1.74 (SD=0.90) which means unacceptable.

It was found during the interview that educated Ghanaians prefer the use of *book men/women* as compared to *bookers* which has been identified in the literature, a reason which might have accounted for the highest number of rejections during the survey. However, a few of the participants were of the view that based on the roles of *bookers*, they would rather use *conductor*, *passengers'* *attendant*, *station masters /mistress*, *loading boys* or *G.P.R.T.U* workers.

### Boys' Quarters

The data reveals that 225 (56.2%) of the respondents agreed to the use of *boys' quarters* whereas 106 (26.5%) did not agree to it. Sixty-nine (17.2%) of the respondents were indecisive of its acceptance. Based on the data, it can be seen that the mean reveals that, on average, the respondents are in the neutral region with the value of 2.30 (SD=0.86). The educated Ghanaians who rejected *boys quarters* as a reference term for an outhouse to a main building were of the opinion that they would use more appropriate terms such as a *detached apartment, extension building, annex and guest room*.

### Chop Money

The majority 235 (58.8%) of the respondents did not accept the use *chop money* in GhE while 133 (33.5%) of the respondents accepted it and 32 (8.0%) of the respondents were not sure of its acceptance. The respondents, on average, are neutral in the use of chop money as a lexical item in GhE, (mean=1.74, SD=0.93). The majority of Ghanaians said that they would use *housekeeping money* or *upkeep money* but one participant had a divergent view that she would use *spending money* as a lexical item in GhE.

### Gate Fee

In terms of frequency, the data shows that 242 (60.5%) of the respondents said *gate fee* is acceptable, 121 (30.2%) said it was unacceptable and 37 (9.2%) of the respondents were not sure. The average response for *gate fee* is 2.30, which means that educated Ghanaians are not sure of the acceptability of gate fee.

Ghanaians who were not in favour of the acceptance of *gate fee* pointed out that they prefer *rate*, *entrance fee*, *admittance fee* or *attendance fee*.

### Outdooring

Table 4 points to the fact that less than fifty percent (187) of the respondents indicated acceptable to *outdooring* while 161 (40.2) of the respondents indicated that it is unacceptable and 13.0% (52) of the respondents were in the neutral category. The mean response recorded on Table 5 shows that educated Ghanaians are neutral in their response. Some Ghanaians had a preference for *christening* but one interviewee had a preference for *naming ceremony*.

### Small Chops

Most (44.2 %) of the respondents rejected the use of *small chops* in GhE while a little above ten percent (172) accepted it. The neutral category recorded 51 (12.8%) of the total response. From Table 5, the mean value of 1.99 (SD= 0.94) points to the fact that, on average, educated Ghanaians are neutral. Apart from one interviewee who had the opinion that she would use *savouries* instead of *small chops*, a number of educated Ghanaians who reject *small chops* prefer either *pastries* or *snacks*.

Table 5 - Acceptability of Lexical Forms (N=400)

Ghanaianism	Mean	Std. Deviation
Bush meat	2.29	0.890
Coal pot	1.92	0.918
Bachelor's night	2.04	0.895
Bombed (in examination)	1.48	0.810
Booker	1.74	0.900
Boys' quarters	2.30	0.861
Chop money	1.74	0.926
Gate fee	2.30	0.904
Outdooing	2.06	0.932
Small chops	1.99	0.935
Tight friend	1.88	0.943
Brown envelope	2.18	0.894
Senior brother	2.32	0.890
Fitter	1.94	0.930
Enstooled	2.34	0.821
Chop box	2.37	0.854
Chop bar	1.91	0.884
Gate man	2.18	0.915
Rice water	2.00	0.939
Hot drinks	1.90	0.918

Source: Field survey, Nkansah (2015)

### Tight Friend

From Table 4, it was revealed that a little above fifty percent (203) of the respondents were not in agreement of *tight friend* in GhE. Less than forty percent (157) were in agreement with it and exactly ten percent of the respondents were neutral. According to the mean value on Table 5, the distribution refers to the fact



that educated Ghanaians are neutral in their acceptance of tight friend. The higher rejection of *tight friend* was evident during the interview as well as most educated Ghanaians like *close* or *best friend*.

### **Brown Envelope**

Out of the total number of 400 respondents, 202 (50.5%) respondents said that *brown envelope* is acceptable representing the majority, while 130 (32.5%) of the respondents said it was unacceptable and 68 (17.0%) were not sure. With the mean value of 2.18 (SD=0.89) on Table 5, it is observed that the respondents do not know if *brown envelope*, a referent term for bribe in GhE, is acceptable. Most Ghanaians acknowledged the fact that *brown envelope* has been used figuratively and so they favour the term *bribery* rather than *brown envelope*.

### **Senior Brother**

The use of *senior brother* in GhE recorded the highest level of acceptance of 244 (61.0%) as against 144 (28.5%) as the second highest for unacceptability. Forty-two (10.5%) of the respondents were neutral in their acceptance. The mean value of 2.32 (SD=0.89) on Table 5 reveals that, on average, the respondents are neutral concerning it. During the interview, it was noted that the few educated Ghanaians who reject *senior brother* like *elder brother*.

### **Fitter**

As far as *fitter* is concerned, 184 (46.0%) of the respondents were not in favour of its acceptance, 164 (40.5%) of the respondents were in favour of it and 54 (13.5%) of the respondents were not sure. The mean (mean=1.94, SD= 0.93)

indicates that it is neutral which has the implication that, on average, educated Ghanaians have a neutral stance as far as acceptance of *fitter* is concerned. Ghanaians were of the opinion that they do not accept *fitter* but use *mechanic*. However, two of the participants said they would use *mechanical engineer* or *repairer/vulcanizer*.

### **Enstooled**

More than half (56.0%) of the respondents indicated that *enstooled* as a lexical item in GhE is acceptable whereas 90 (22.5%) of the respondents indicated that it was unacceptable and 86 (21.5%) of the respondents were not sure. On average, the respondents expressed a neutral response which is supported with the mean of 2.34 and a standard deviation value of 0.82. The educated Ghanaians who did not accept *enstooled* selected *enthroned* or *induction*.

### **Chop Box**

With regard to *chop box*, 99 (24.8%) of the respondents said it was unacceptable while the majority 247 (61.8%) of them said it was acceptable but 54 (13.5%) were not sure. Also, the mean for *chop box*, which is greater than 1 (SD=0.85) is in the neutral category. The few Ghanaians who indicated that *chop box* in GhE is unacceptable said they would accept either *box*, *locker*, *provision box*, *wooden box* or *package box*.

### **Chop Bar**

From the frequency and percentage distribution of Table 4, it is evident that the majority of the respondents did not accept *chop bar* as a lexical item in GhE, 85 (21.2%) of the respondents were not sure and 139 (34%) accepted it. The

distribution shows that on average educated Ghanaians are neutral in the acceptability or otherwise of *chop bar*. The majority of respondents indicated that they prefer *restaurant*, while others also modified it by attaching the adjective *local* for it to be *local restaurant*. Others had different views since they would prefer *eating place, food vendor, local canteen* and *local food centres*.

### **Gate Man**

As far as *gate man* is concerned, the responses show a high acceptable rate (52.8%) for it while 137 (34.2%) disagreed to it and 52 (13.0%) of the respondents indicated that they were not sure. It has a mean value of 2.18 (SD=0.92) which indicates that, on average, Ghanaians are not sure of the acceptance of *gate man*. Despite the fact that the survey recorded a high acceptance rate for *gate man*, the interview revealed that most educated Ghanaians actually preferred *security* or *security man*. One interviewee, however, mentioned *gatekeeper*.

### **Rice Water**

The acceptability of *rice water* recorded an exciting finding with the same number 176 (44.0%) of respondents indicating acceptable and unacceptable while 48 (12.0%) of the respondents were not sure. The mean response of 2.00 (SD=0.94) for *rice water* signals that, on average, Ghanaians are not sure of its acceptability. Comparatively, Ghanaians have a preference for *rice porridge* as was realized during the interview. One of the participants indicated that she would prefer *rice pudding*.

## Hot Drinks

*Hot drinks* as a lexical item in GhE recorded 189 (47.2%) for unacceptable, 60 (15%) for not sure and 151 (37.8%) for acceptable. The results also reveal that educated Ghanaians, on average, do not belong to the two points of unacceptable or acceptable. Ghanaians accept the use of *alcoholic drinks* or *beverage*, *strong drink* and *spirit* in place of *hot drinks*.

From the above discussion, it can be observed that educated Ghanaians accept the use of *bush meat*, *bachelor's night*, *boys' quarters*, *gate fee*, *outdooring*, *brown envelope*, *senior brother*, *enstooled*, *chop box*, *gate man* as lexical items in GhE but *coal pot*, *bombed* (in examination), *booker*, *chop money*, *small chops*, *tight friend*, *fitter*, *chop bar*, *rice water* and *hot drinks* are seen to be unacceptable in GhE.

In view of these results, educated Ghanaians were asked about what influences their acceptability of some of the lexical items. One of the factors which were mentioned was the wide usage of a lexical item. To most educated Ghanaians, any lexical item which has a wide and continuous usage is acceptable. This point was revealed by the following interviewees:

Interviewee 3

These are expressions that Ghanaians use and then, they have come to accept them in the language. So based on the fact that people continually use these expressions they are accepted.

Interviewee 5

I think that as you get to hear a lot of people use it, it becomes like that one becomes the right one. Meanwhile, maybe the fact that a lot of people are using it might be wrong but because you hear a lot of people use it, you might think that is the right one.

Interviewee 10

Over time, you know that language also evolves, continuous usage makes some words and some phrases acceptable and again, carry the meaning that we want.

Another factor which was mentioned to account for the acceptability of the words which were tested in this study is the origin of these words. According to the interviewees, words and concepts which have their origin in the Ghanaian contexts are acceptable.

Interviewee 6

Also, the inventions and where the names or the things we are referring to started from or emanated from. Like coal pot, for instance, coal pot, I don't know about its origin but I think we use it more here in our parts where we have coal. That is why it's a coal pot and we can have fire in it and then cook. So where it began from would also affect acceptability.

Interviewee 7

The same vein also, most of the things that we use, the words that we use did not actually begin with the whites, it is an invention by the blacks. We are limited by what we see. If it is the white man who did the thing, he'll certainly have an English name for it. An example is *fufu*, the white man didn't have it so when he came to Africa and found it, he actually did not have an English name for it. Some of these words emanated from Ghana or in Africa and we gave them the description or we gave them the name per their description and they have found their way in the English language, so to speak. This thing coal pot, the thing is actually like a pot and then why coal? Because we use it to cook food and we couched the name coal pot from it. So because some of them have their origin in Africa or in Ghana, that is how come they attained such names. These names emanated from Africa but that isn't the right English name.

Interviewee 8

For chop bar, I know that there is no particular word to describe the situation as used in Ghana. So what we will say to be chop bar might not reflect let say in England or something. They might refer to it as restaurant but when it comes to our Ghanaian context, we cannot describe it as a restaurant so we prefer the chop bar; I think the name suits it as it is.

Ghanaians acknowledge the fact that their culture and environment is distinct from the culture of the colonial language and so if the origin of the word is based on the Ghanaian culture or origin, then it is acceptable. It is, therefore, not surprising that respondents in Anderson's (2009) study were of the opinion that lexical items in GhE should be taught in schools since the words express the world views of Ghanaians better.

Although Ghanaians would accept some of the lexical items because of the above reasons, they also rejected some of the words based on their knowledge of the lexical item in Target English. It means that the more a speaker knows a lexical item in Target English, the more the GhE version of the word becomes unacceptable. This is illustrated by the following interviewees:

Interviewee 4

I think the ones that I do have a fair knowledge of, I do use but the ones I do not know anything about, I stick to the Ghanaian version.

Interviewee 8

As for 'tight friend' and 'hot drink', I don't accept them. For this one, I prefer the standard ones because they describe them better. So for 'best friend' and 'tight friend', I prefer the 'best friend'. 'Tight friend' might mean a different thing altogether so I prefer the best friend, I think it describes it better than the tight friend.

Interviewee 19

It is not that they are wrong; it is that those words I understand or I know the appropriate terms in the language. Otherwise, I'll also go for he is my senior brother/he is my junior brother that kind of thing.

In addition to Ghanaians' knowledge of a lexical item is the issue of global acceptance. Most Ghanaians are of the view that they would accept a word on the basis of its international recognition. In other words, lexical items which are acceptable to them are the ones which are globally accepted and can be used everywhere for communication.

Interviewee 6

First I gave a reason, that is for communication sake but if there are better words to mean the same thing that is accepted everywhere and you can say it whether the person is a Ghanaian or not, I think I'll go for that one.

Interviewee 16

I'll look for a more appropriate word, what actually is accepted internationally. It's one thing having it accepted within Ghana and then across the borders of Ghana.

Although some educated Ghanaians accept some of the lexical items on the basis of their Ghanaian origin, others also reject them based on the same reason that they sound local or unpolished.



Interviewee 15

For me, when you are speaking English and you use them, I think there are more appropriate words to use like small chops and whatever. For me, when I use them I feel my English does not flow well, it sounds local. But I want to say that, they are words that people use, you cannot go around correcting them but for me personally, I would not use them.

Interviewee 16

There are some that actually don't look polish, rice water, rice water, rice water... so is accepted among certain class of people but when you step higher and addressing a gathering of people who really matter in society, people who have some academic this thing, if you use rice water, it's not too good but when you say rice porridge, I think it's acceptable.

Interviewee 17

I think some are not "English words" enough.

One other issue which came up during the interview is the fact that some Ghanaians reject some of the words because they are hopeful that there is another word to replace it which they consider appropriate or better.

In effect, factors which account for the high acceptability of GhE words are wide and continuous usage and words which describe Ghanaian concepts. On the contrary, factors which account for low acceptability of GhE words were

Knowledge of its Standard English equivalent and issues of global acceptability. Some words, also, recorded low acceptability because they were considered local in nature and Ghanaians were hopeful of more appropriate words.

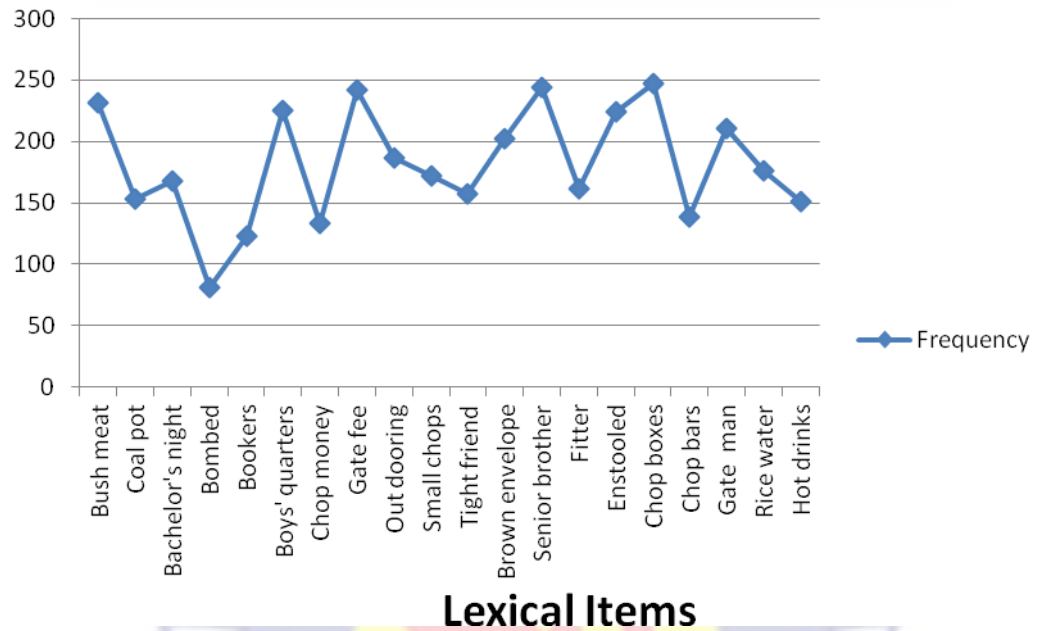


Figure 2: Acceptability of lexical items

Source: Field survey, (2015)

### Acceptability and Confidence Interval

In order to make inferences about the true population, the Confidence Interval (CI) was constructed. CI was constructed at a 95% confidence level and a 5% margin of error where  $\hat{P}$  is the proportion,  $P_L$  is the Lower Confidence Bound and  $P_U$  is the Upper Confidence Bound. When the population of educated Ghanaians are repeatedly sampled, the proportion of educated Ghanaians who will accept the features will lie between the Lower and the Upper Confidence Bound values of each feature respectively.

### Confidence Interval for Lexical Items in GhE

At a 95% level of confidence, it was determined that repeated sampling of 400 respondents will show that the true proportion who indicates that *bush meat* is acceptable will lie between 0.532 and 0.628.

With regard to *coal pot*, it was observed that approximately 33.5% and 43.0% of the population will say that that *coal pot* as a lexical item in GhE is acceptable in a repeated sampling at 95% confidence level.

At a 95% confidence level, the proportions from repeated sampling of 400 respondents on *bachelor's night* will fall within the range of 0.372 and 0.468 to indicate the acceptability of *bachelor's night*.

Giving only 5% margin of error, significant responses from repeated sampling of respondents on *bombed* (in an examination) will be between the interval of 16.3% and 24.2%. This range will form the proportions of educated Ghanaians who accept it.

On the acceptability of *booker*, it was realized that at a 95% confidence level, between 26.2% and 35.3% of the total population are likely to reject *booker* in GhE.

As far as *boys' quarters* is concerned, a repeated sampling of 400 respondents at 95 % confidence level will show a range of 51.4 and 61.1 percent of acceptance respectively.

With a 95% confidence level, if 400 respondents are repeatedly sampled for the acceptability of *chop money* or otherwise, the number of respondents who will indicate that *chop money* is acceptable will be between 114 and 152.

With a proportion of 0.605 of the 400 respondents indicating that the use of *gate fee* is acceptable, it can be seen that a 95% level of confidence of a repeated sampling of 400 respondents will show that the proportion which indicates that *gate fee* is acceptable will be between 0.557 and 0.653.

From Appendix A, it can be noticed that a repeated sampling of 400 respondents at 95% confidence level will reveal that *outdooring* in GhE is unacceptable. This is because those who will indicate that *outdooring* is acceptable will lie between 41.9 % and 51.6% of the total number of educated Ghanaians.

Concerning the acceptability of *small chops*, it is expected that a repeated sampling of 400 educated Ghanaians will show that the percentage of respondents who indicates that *small chops* is acceptable in GhE will be between the interval 38.1% and 47.9%.

At 95% confidence level, the proportion from the repeated sampling of responses on *tight friend* will fall within the range of 0.345 and 0.440 to represent the population who accept the use of *tight friend* as a lexical item in GhE.

Giving a 5% margin of error, it is estimated that significant responses from a repeated sampling of 400 respondents on *brown envelope* which means bribery in GhE will fall within the interval of 0.456 and 0.554.

A repeated sampling of 400 respondents on the acceptability of *senior brother* will lie between 0.562 and 0.658 of the total responses. In other words, the researcher is 95 % confident that the total number of respondents who will accept *senior brother* will be between 56.2% and 65.8 % of the respondents.

As it can be observed from Appendix A, a 95% confidence level for *fitter* has a lower bound of 0.357 and an upper bound of 0.453. This implies that when 400 respondents are repeatedly sampled, between 35.7% and 45.3 % of the respondents will be in agreement with the acceptability of *fitter* in GhE.

*Enstooled* as a lexical item in GhE had 224 of the respondents indicating acceptable which is in proportion to 0.56 of the 400 respondents. At a 95% confidence level, it was determined that a repeated sampling of 400 respondents will show that the true proportion of respondents who indicates that *enstooled* is acceptable will be between 0.511 and 0.609.

With 5% margin of error, the acceptability of *chop box* will fall within the range of 0.570 and 0.665 when 400 educated Ghanaians are repeatedly sampled. This range shows the proportion of educated Ghanaians who will be of the view that *chop box* is acceptable in GhE.

On the acceptability or otherwise of *chop bar*, it is estimated that at a 95 % confidence level, the number of respondents who will indicate that it is acceptable will fall within 0.301 and 0.394 in a repeated sampling.

Concerning *gate man*, if a sample of 400 respondents is repeatedly sampled on the acceptability of *gate man*, I am 95 % confident that the number of respondents who will be of the opinion that *gate man* is acceptable will be between 192 and 230.

With 5% margin of error, the proportions from repeated sampling of responses on *rice water* will lie between 0.391 and 0.489. This proportion

represents the educated Ghanaians who will be in favour the view that *rice water* is an acceptable lexical item in GhE.

Between 0.330 and 0.425 of the respondents will say that *hot drinks* as a lexical item in GhE is acceptable if 400 respondents are repeatedly sampled from the population of educated Ghanaians.

### **Acceptability of Grammatical Features**

As it was done for the lexical items, thirty sentences were used to represent ten different grammatical features. Respondents were asked to rank these features on a five-point Likert Scale.

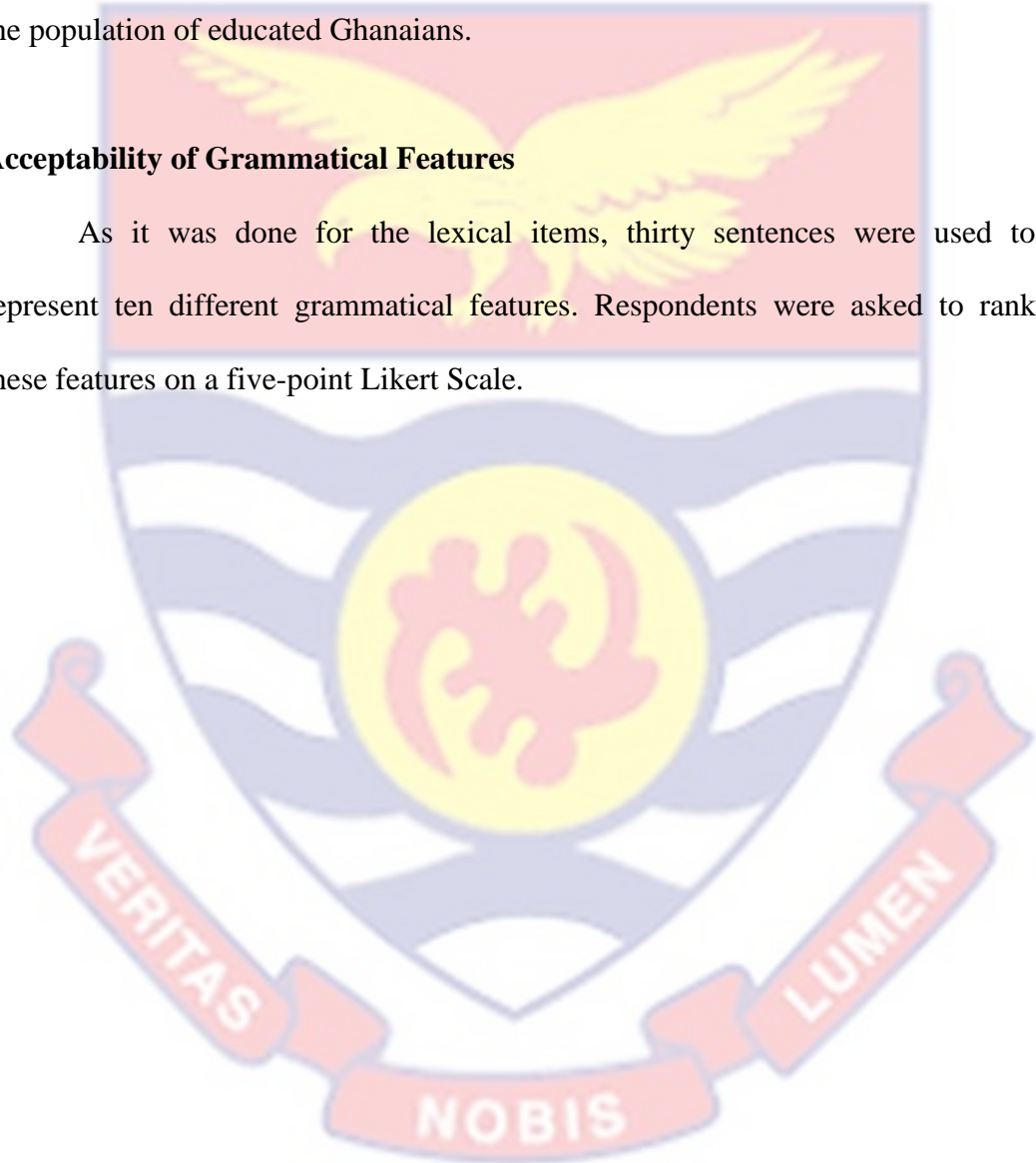


Table 6 - *Acceptability of Grammatical Features*

Ghanaianisms	Unacceptable		Unacceptable sometimes		Not sure		Acceptable sometimes		Acceptable	
	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage
Stative verbs	147	36.8	47	11.7	49	12.2	83	20.8	74	18.5
Article usage	159	39.8	49	12.3	57	14.2	77	19.2	58	14.5
Modal usage	144	36.0	51	12.8	71	17.7	72	18.0	62	15.5
Question Tags	211	52.8	36	9.0	50	12.5	58	14.5	45	11.2
Pronouns	149	37.3	34	8.5	44	11.0	78	19.5	95	23.7

Table 6, Continued

Adverbial subordination	158	39.5	57	14.3	69	17.2	74	18.5	42	10.5
Uncountable nouns	111	27.8	49	12.2	66	16.5	89	22.2	85	21.3
Odd couples	179	44.8	52	13.0	52	13.0	66	16.5	51	12.7
Idiomatic expression	104	26.0	41	10.3	46	11.5	89	22.2	120	30.0
Left dislocation	210	52.5	46	11.5	60	15.0	55	13.8	29	7.2

Source: Field survey, Nkansah (2015)



It can be inferred from Table 6 that of the ten grammatical features identified in the literature as Ghanaian English, nine are unacceptable and only one is acceptable. Ghanaians use of stative verbs, articles, modals, question tags, pronouns, adverbial subordination, uncountable nouns, odd couples and left dislocation are considered as unacceptable by educated Ghanaians. In contrast, idiomatic expression as a feature of Ghanaian English is considered acceptable by educated Ghanaians.

#### **Acceptability of Grammatical Features on a Three-Point Scale**

Table 7 presents the frequency distribution of the acceptability of grammatical features on a three-point scale.

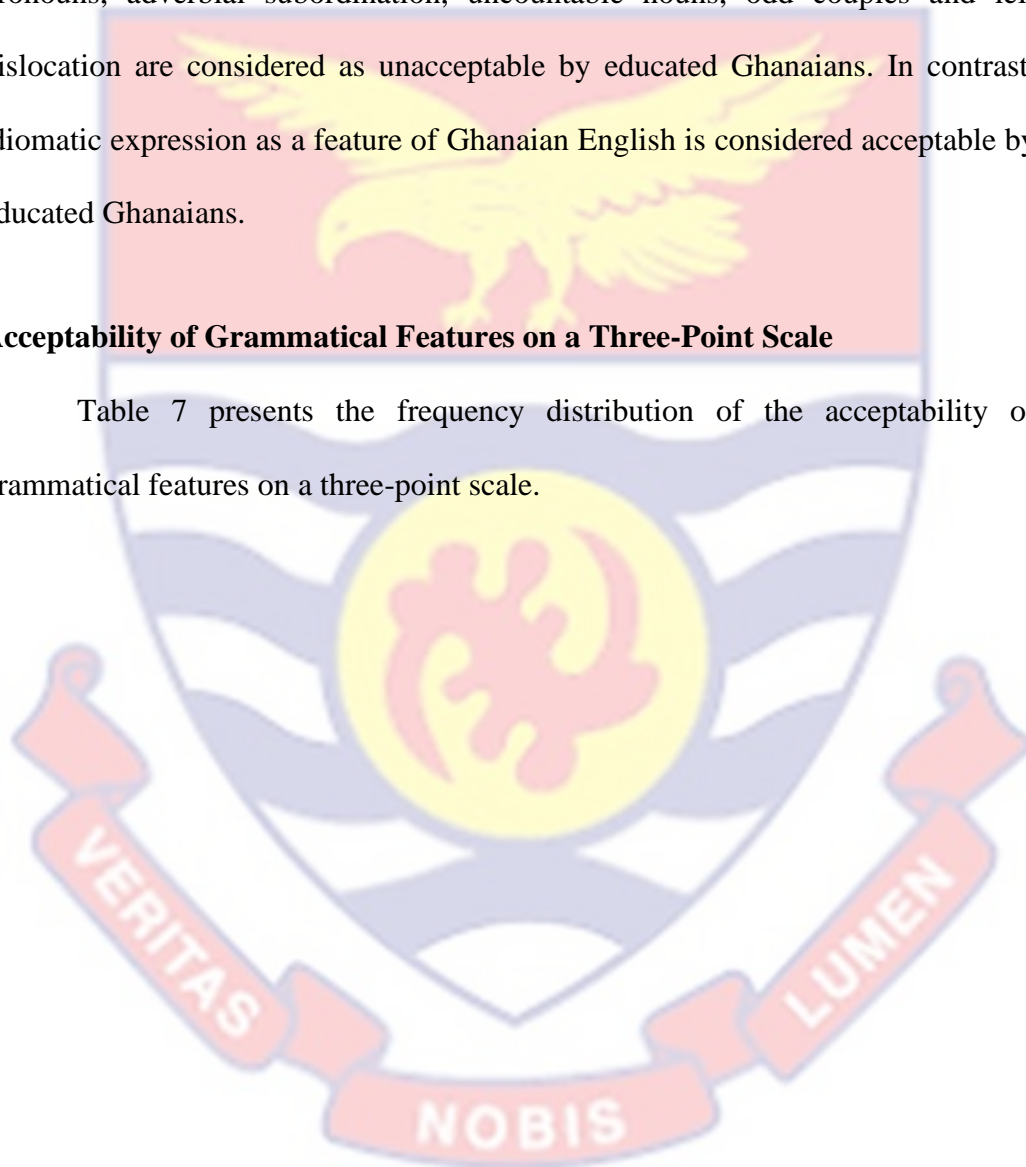


Table 7 - *Acceptability of Grammatical Features on a Three-Point Scale*

Ghanaianisms	Unacceptable		Not Sure		Acceptable	
	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage
Stative verbs	194	48.5	49	12.2	157	39.3
Article usage	208	52.0	57	14.2	135	33.8
Modal usage	195	48.8	71	17.8	134	33.5
Question tags	248	62.0	50	12.5	102	25.5
Pronouns	183	45.8	44	11.0	173	43.2
Adverbial subordination	215	53.8	69	17.2	116	29.0
Uncountable nouns	161	40.2	66	16.5	173	43.3
Odd Couples	231	57.8	52	13.0	117	29.2
Idiomatic expression	145	36.2	46	11.5	209	52.3
Left dislocation	256	64.0	60	15.0	84	21.0

Source: Field survey, Nkansah (2015)

### Stative Verbs

The majority, 194 (48.5%) of educated Ghanaians, indicated that the Ghanaian use of stative verbs is unacceptable while 49 (12.2%) of the respondents were not sure and 157 (39.3%) of the respondents indicated that it was acceptable. Stative verbs as a feature in GhE had a mean response of 1.90 (SD=0.93) which shows a neutral stance. The educated Ghanaians who reject the Ghanaian use of stative verbs usually drop the progressive marker attached to the stative verb. It is,

therefore, constructed as *I have three children* instead of *I'm having three children*. This finding confirms Alo and Igwebuike's (2012) study of stative verbs in Nigerian English, where the majority of the respondents also indicated that it was wrong.

### **Article Usage**

As far as the use of articles in GhE is concerned, more than fifty percent (208) of the respondents did not accept this grammatical feature while 135 representing 33.8% accepted it. However, 57 (14.2%) of the respondents were neutral in their response. With regard to article usage, the data reveals that the average response is 1.80 (SD= 0.91). This shows that most of the educated Ghanaians are neutral about the use of articles in GhE. As was observed during the interview, a construction such as *I am going to bank* was replaced *I am going to the bank* by those who did not accept the former as GhE.

This finding is in contrast to what was identified by Alo and Igwebuike (2012) since most of their respondents were in favour of the omission of determiners in Nigerian English. However, Ting's (2011) study of Hong Kong English had a similar finding to this study because most of the respondents were of the view that it was slightly unacceptable.

### **Modal Usage**

The use of modals in GhE also had a higher rejection rate (48.8%) among Ghanaians in comparison to the number of Ghanaians who accepted it (33.5%). Seventy-one (17.8%) of the respondents were not sure of its acceptability. The

distribution points out that the average result is neutral which is confirmed with a mean value of 1.85 (SD=0.85). The rejected modal usage in the sentence: *If this was Ghana, I'm sure thing will be finished by now* was constructed as *if this was Ghana, I'm sure this thing would be/would have been/might have finished by now*. Other respondents also changed the tense form in the conditional clause to agree with the sentence as *If this were Ghana/if it is in Ghana/if I'm in Ghana, I'm sure this thing will be finished by now*.

### Question Tags

On the Ghanaian use of question tags in GhE, most, 248 (62.0%), of the respondents indicated that it was unacceptable, 50 (12.5%) of the respondents were not sure and 102 (25.5%) of the respondents indicated that the use of question tags is acceptable. With an average response of 1.64 (SD=0.86) which is within the neutral range, there is a clear indication that educated Ghanaians are not sure of the acceptability of this feature. The few respondents who did not accept the question tags identified in the literature to be peculiar to Ghanaians mentioned the following as tags to the statement, *The couple have no children, isn't it: do they, have they, haven't they, don't they, is it?*

Alo and Igwebuiké (2012) had a similar finding where more than half of the respondents indicated that the use of question tags is wrong and unacceptable in Nigerian English. Relatedly, Ting (2011) also indicated in his study that most Hong Kong speakers of English said the Hong Kong use of question tags is slightly unacceptable.

### Pronouns

With regard to the use of pronouns in GhE, 183 (45.8%) of the respondents representing the majority said it was unacceptable, 44 (11.0%) of the respondents were neutral and 173 (43.2%) of the respondents said it was acceptable. The mean response of 1.98 (SD= 0.89) is in the neutral position which implying that most educated Ghanaians are not sure of the acceptability of this feature. With the sentence which was tested, *The blessings of the lord will be upon you and I*, the educated Ghanaians who indicated that it was unacceptable constructed it this way: *The blessing of the lord will be upon you and me*. This correction indicates that Ghanaians distinguish the various forms of pronoun usage. The result from this study is not different from what was identified by Alo and Igwebuiké (2012) since the majority of the respondents said the use of such forms was wrong in Nigerian English.

Table 8 - *Acceptability of Grammatical Features (N=400)*

Ghanaianism	Mean	Std. Deviation
Stative verbs	1.90	0.931
Article Usage	1.80	0.907
Modal Usage	1.85	0.854
Question Tags	1.64	0.861
Pronouns	1.98	0.890
Adverbial subordination	1.75	0.874
Uncountable nouns	2.03	0.914
Odd couples	1.71	0.854
Idiomatic expression	2.16	0.918
Left dislocation	1.57	0.815

Source: Field survey, Nkansah (2015)

### Adverbial Subordination

This feature had more than fifty percent (215) of the respondents being in the unacceptable category, while 69 (17.2%) of the respondents were not sure and 116 of the respondents representing 29.0% of the respondents were in the acceptable category. The mean of 1.75 (SD= 0.87) indicates that, on average, educated Ghanaians preferred a neutral stance. The sentence, *Although I don't enjoy listening to them but I think people are really getting cold* was constructed as: *Although I don't enjoy listening to them, I think people are really getting cold*. This means that most Ghanaians reject the use of double subordinators as a feature of GhE.

### Uncountable Nouns

The results indicate that 161 (40.2%) of the respondents were of the view it was unacceptable, 66 (16.5%) of the respondents were neutral and 173 representing the majority's (43.3%) viewpoint was in the acceptable category. It can be realized that, on average, Ghanaians are neutral with respect to this grammatical feature. To buttress this, is the mean value of 2.03 (SD=0.91) from Table 8. During the interview, it was noticed that despite the fact that Ghanaians accept this feature to be characteristic of GhE, those who rejected it dropped the plural morpheme. *I was in charge of all correspondences* was therefore corrected to *I was in charge of all correspondence*.

With this feature, the respondents in Alo and Igwebuike's (2012) study had similar views concerning it in Nigerian English since the majority of Nigerians also accepted this feature in their variety as well. Similarly, the use of

uncountable nouns was slightly acceptable in the study by Ting (2011) in Hong Kong English.

### **Odd Couples**

The data reveals that close to sixty percent (231) of the respondents rejected the use of odd couples as a grammatical feature of GhE with more than ten percent not being sure (52) of its acceptance while close to thirty percent (117) of the respondents accepted this feature. On average, most Ghanaians are neutral (mean=1.71, SD=0.85) with respect to this grammatical feature. Although a number of the participants accepted this feature, the majority who rejected this feature changed the sentence to have equal clauses. For instance, *school is so boring now but a good atmosphere for us to study* was changed to: *School is so boring now but it is/becomes/provides a good atmosphere for us to study* by interviewees.

### **Idiomatic Expressions**

From Table 7, it is evident that 209 (52.3%) of the respondents indicated that the Ghanaian use of idiomatic expression is acceptable, 46 (11.5%) of the respondents were not sure of its acceptability and 145 (36.2%) of the respondents indicated that it was unacceptable. The mean response was 2.16 (SD=0.92) implies that generally Ghanaians are neutral about idiomatic usage in GhE. The higher acceptability of Ghanaian use of idiomatic expression was clear during the interview as most of the participants accepted this feature with the exception of two. The two participants, therefore, changed the expression: *We congratulated all students for their brilliant performance in the examinations* to *We*

*congratulated all students on their brilliant performance in the examinations.*

Although this feature was treated separately by Alo and Igwebuikwe (2012) as the use of phrasal verbs and choice of prepositions in Nigerian English, the majority accepted the use of phrasal verbs while the majority also rejected the use of prepositions. This, therefore, partially confirms what was found in GhE.

### **Left Dislocations**

The acceptability of left dislocated constructions in GhE had the following results. The majority (64.0%) of the respondents pointed out that it was unacceptable, exactly 15% (60) of the respondents were neutral and 84 (21.0%) of the respondents also said it was acceptable. From Table 8, it was revealed that the mean is 1.57 (SD=0.82) which means that on average, Ghanaians do not agree to left dislocated constructions always. The educated Ghanaians, who did not accept this feature, altered the sentence: *That one, I think it's good* to *I think that one is good*. According to Ting (2011), the majority of the respondents in Hong Kong also indicated that this feature is slightly unacceptable.

The data shows that out of the ten grammatical features tested, only two were considered acceptable while the remaining eight were considered as unacceptable. The two grammatical features which were acceptable are uncountable nouns and idiomatic expression in GhE but the eight which were not acceptable are the Ghanaian use of stative verbs, article usage, modal usage, question tags, pronouns, adverbial subordination, odd couples and left dislocation.

In order to find out the reasons for these results, I asked educated Ghanaians about the reasons for their acceptability of certain grammatical features



to others. In response, most educated Ghanaians were of the view that acceptability of grammatical features is influenced by the target English rules. Ghanaians, therefore, consider expressions which conform to the grammar of Target English as acceptable. Therefore, sentences which do not conform to British English rules are seen to be unacceptable. Interviewees 5, 16, and 18 had these to say:

Interviewee 5

As I was saying from the beginning, it should conform to the rules of the language, it might sometimes sound good in your ears but if it does not conform to the rules of the language then it shouldn't be acceptable.

Interviewee 16

We all have some guiding principles or we were taught, growing up in school, we were taught some guiding principles or grammatical rules. That is what we use; though we are not experts but we make sure that at least it falls along the acceptable rules in grammar.

Interviewee 18

There are rules guiding how sentences are formed so we have to go according to rules.

The above reason of conformity to Standard English grammar is also in line with what was found by Ting (2011) in Hong Kong English where the

participants deemed sentences which were perceived to be Hong Kong English unacceptable, especially, when they had always known the standard forms.

One other factor which influenced acceptability is intelligibility. Ghanaians view sentences which are meaningful or sentences which they understand as acceptable. Hence, any sentence which does not give a clear meaning is unacceptable and would not be considered as a feature of GhE.

Interviewee 2

Those which are not acceptable do not really give meaning.

Interviewee 11

It depends on the meaning, the meaning what you want to say in constructing the sentence.

Interviewee 14

I didn't accept them because some of them were tautology. For instance, we have the *although* and *but*, it's kind of meaning the same thing and some of them too were ambiguous. They are not really clear and concise. I can't really make the meaning out of them and others too, they have more than one meaning, so when someone is speaking and brings out such these sentences, it will be difficult to really get what the person is trying to say.

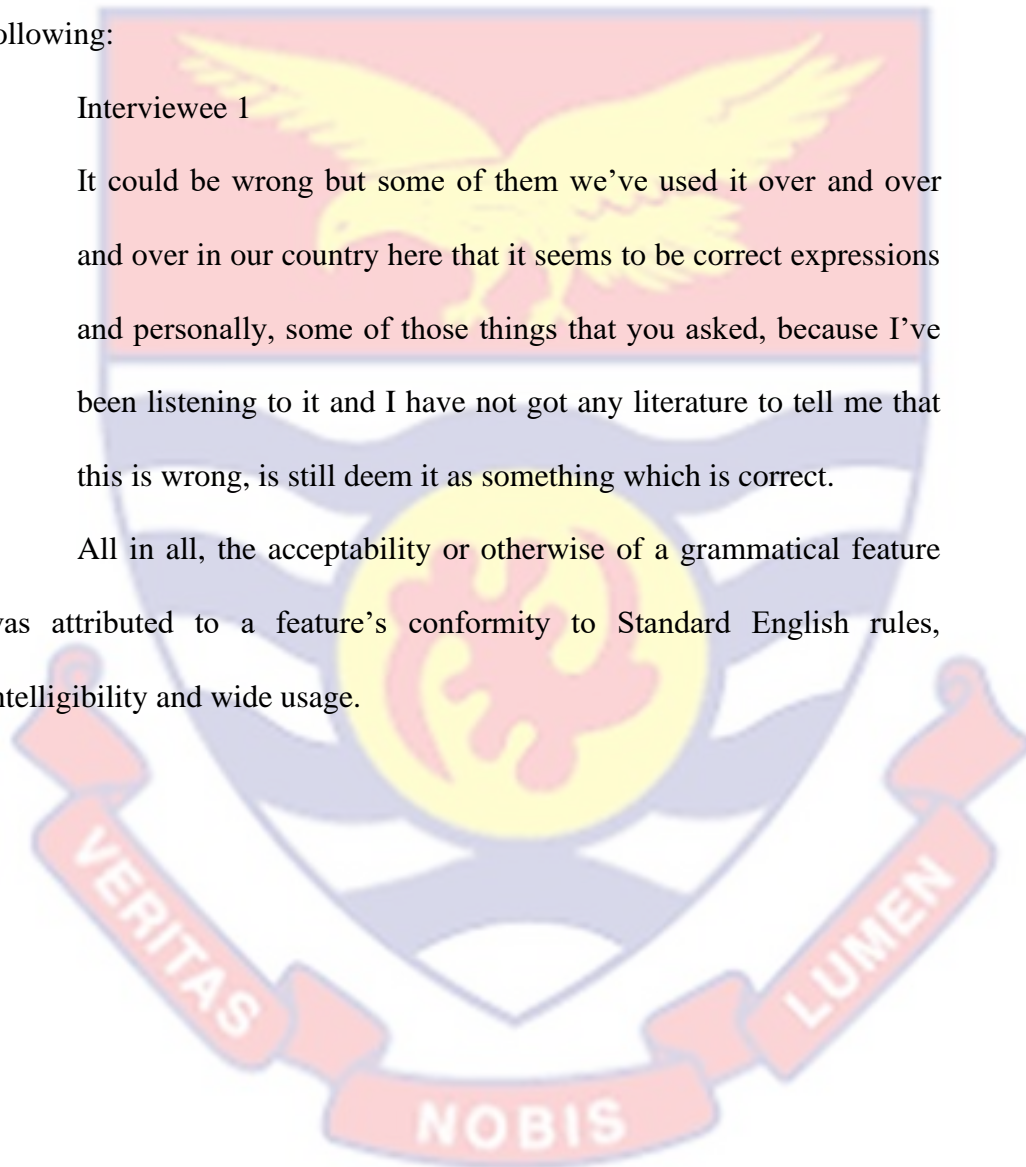
It is not only in Ghanaian English that intelligibility affects the acceptability of grammatical features but in Hong Kong English as was reported in Ting's (2011) study.

Although the issue of conformity to Standard English grammar rules was the highly mentioned factor, with meaning also enjoying a relatively higher recognition, one interviewee had a divergent opinion. To him, the acceptability of grammatical features of GhE is influenced by wide usage. He expressed it in the following:

Interviewee 1

It could be wrong but some of them we've used it over and over and over in our country here that it seems to be correct expressions and personally, some of those things that you asked, because I've been listening to it and I have not got any literature to tell me that this is wrong, is still deem it as something which is correct.

All in all, the acceptability or otherwise of a grammatical feature was attributed to a feature's conformity to Standard English rules, intelligibility and wide usage.



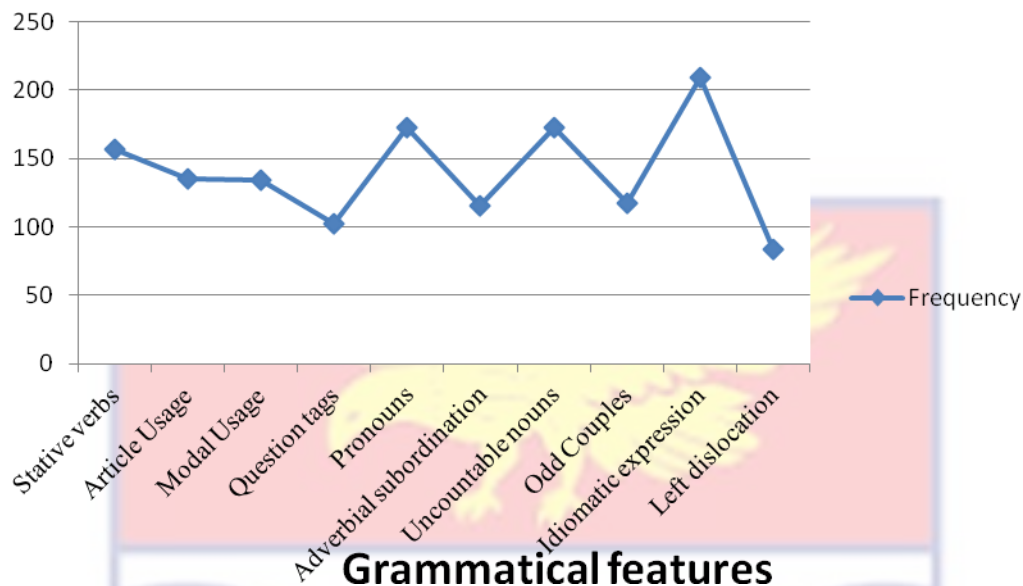


Figure 3: Acceptability of Grammatical Features

Source: Field survey, (2015)

### Confidence Interval for Grammatical Features of GhE

At a 95% level of confidence, it was determined that repeated sampling of 400 respondents will show that the true proportion who indicates that Ghanaians use of stative verbs is acceptable will lie between 0.345 and 0.440.

It was identified that approximately 29.1% to 38.4% of the 400 respondents will have the opinion that article usage is acceptable if the 400 respondents are repeatedly sampled.

Concerning the use of modals in GhE, it was observed that giving only 5% margin of error, significant responses from repeated sampling of 400 respondents on the acceptability of this grammatical feature will fall within the range of 0.289 and 0.381.

At a 95% confidence interval, the proportions from a repeated sampling of responses forming the acceptability of question tags in GhE will fall within an interval of 0.212 and 0.298.

With a 95% confidence level, a repeated sampling of 400 respondents on their views on the acceptability of pronouns will give an interval of 0.384 to 0.481.

On the acceptability of adverbial subordination in GhE, it was determined that at 95% confidence level in a repeated sampling of 400 respondents, 0.246% and 0.334% of the respondents will accept adverbial subordination.

In a repeated sampling of 400 respondents, the acceptability of uncountable nouns in GhE will be between 38.4 % and 48.1%. In other words, the stated range of educated Ghanaians will indicate that uncountable nouns are acceptable in GhE.

Giving only a 5% margin of error, it can be noticed that significant responses from repeated sampling of 400 respondents will point out that the proportion who accept the use of odd couples in GhE will be between 0.248 and 0.337.

The educated Ghanaians who indicated that idiomatic expression in GhE is acceptable are equivalent to a proportion of 0.523. At a 95% confidence level, it is expected that repeated sampling of 400 respondents will show that the true proportion of the respondents who indicate that Ghanaians use of idiomatic expression is acceptable will lie between 0.474 and 571.

At a 95% confidence level, approximately 17.0 % and 25.0% of the total number of respondents would have the opinion that left dislocated constructions are acceptable in GhE.

### **Context and Acceptability**

Educated Ghanaians are of the view that context affects the acceptability of GhE. This was a reaction to the question whether they think context affects the acceptability of the lexical items and grammatical features which were tested and in which context Ghanaians were likely to accept the features. They further explained that they would accept most of the unacceptable lexico-grammatical features in informal, Ghanaian and some audience-specific context. In reference to informal context, this is what some educated Ghanaians had to say:

#### **Interviewee 1**

It could be in a friendly conversation and maybe some interaction that is not actually an official something that you think when you use those words it's going to give a different impression about you. But if it is about official presentation or maybe conversation that you think those words might not be accepted in that kind of context, or if you are writing an official document and you know that word is not official word which is found in the dictionary, then, you need to have the correct one.

Interviewee 3

For the sake of a formal context, you are expected to use the Standard English, the target English. So in that case, some expressions from the GhE will not be accepted but then those ones which have been, should I say, popularised such that people have heard about them would be accepted in both formal and informal context.

Interviewee 18

Why not? Yes, I'll accept them in informal discourse and the Ghanaian context as well. Let say, a chat or conversations with friends but when you are to put them into writing, I wouldn't have used those words.

The effect of contexts on acceptability was present in Ting's (2011) study of Hong Kong English which noted that the grammatical features will be acceptable in computer-mediated communication and daily face-to-face communication since the focus of such communications requires intelligibility and not grammar.

In addition, some of the interviewees were of the opinion that the geographical setting affects acceptability. They made the following remarks:

Interviewee 4

I think we are more comfortable with these words in our Ghanaian context and in informal settings we tend to use these expressions a

lot, especially with the gate fee for instance. For instance, you are a couple of guys going for a party, then you can say that how much is the gate fee rather than going to ask for the rate but let say, if you are going for a conference, it's more of a formal setup and then you want to find out the amount you will pay for the conference, you don't say gate fee. Even though when you get to the entrance, they ask of your receipt and you can enter. So I think these two settings bring out the differences. I think in the Ghanaian context, it has come to stay so I'll accept it.

Interviewee 6

Very much, this is our context. We are Africans, we had our language before English came and we had certain things that we didn't have an English equivalent. So in that context, we would accept a particular way of saying something but when we say the same thing let say in London, the whole Britain itself, it might not be accepted.

Interviewee 10

If I were from outside, and you said outdoor, I'll look at you. What does that mean? I feel that there is always context; if I'm talking to my non-Ghanaian friends, I probably wouldn't say outdoor, right? In my understanding, it depends also on what you are using the language for. I know that in the past, that is when



the child was also christened, so I'll say christening or something like that.

Another context which affects acceptability is the audience in a communicative event. The nature of audience was specifically related to their educational background.

Interviewee 10

Among those who use it all the time. It has to do with the people who are speaking it all the time. Again, we will be dabbling into status and so on and so forth. I don't expect that supposed elites people will use the word brown envelope. So, it has a lot to do with the status of the speakers and if guess the situation too, not necessarily the situation but I think it has to do with who the audience is. It comes to everyday language or everyday communication, some things you can say here, some things you can't say here. That is how I feel about context.

Interviewee 12

Sometimes, depending on whom you are communicating with, you'll choose to use the unacceptable ones for easy understanding. Like somebody who is not so literate, an illiterate.

Interviewee 16

I think chop box is acceptable but I think it is primarily used among youths. When you meet a mature person you might use an alternative vocabulary. I would not use it particularly when I'm addressing audience with a particular status, I mean high status in society, I would not go for chop box but when you step higher in addressing a gathering of people who really matter in society, people who have sound academic this thing, if you use rice water, it's not good but when you say rice porridge, I think it's acceptable. Once again, it's acceptable among those whose academic is not but up there it's not very appropriate. Its acceptability depends on the audience you are handling at any point in time. Depending on the audience, if you are dealing with people that do not have a lot of command in the English language, it is well accepted but in a formal gathering, you can't use that but probably a restaurant or a local restaurant or something might be more appropriate. It is actually situation dependent and audience-dependent, so depending on the gathering or personality that I'm having that dialogue with, it might be acceptable. So depending on the level of education of the individual, the primary goal for communication is to convey a thought or an idea and so if I meet somebody, a JSS leaver, I should use chop box, I should be able to say chop bar so that we could really understand each other but if I

meet somebody with secondary school or tertiary education, I should be able to use alternative words that will convey the same meaning. So it depends on the educational status of the person.

In a similar vein, Hong Kong English is accepted by the speakers even if they considered those features to be errors only in situations that they think that the features were produced by a speaker with a lower status in society (Ting, 2011).

### **GhE and Codification**

Ghanaians generally hold two views with regard to the codification of GhE. First, some of the educated Ghanaians interviewed think that the variety should be codified while others also think that it should not be codified. Those who were of the opinion that GhE should be codified explained that it is because that is what Ghanaians speak. They made these remarks:

Interviewee 15

I'll like it. Like I said, there are some of the words that are not familiar to the white man but you and myself we know it. So that if we look at the dictionary or book that has that word, you'll find the meaning of the word it. So, I'll advocate for that.

Interviewee 18

In order to develop our type of English, we can do that because most Ghanaians usually make use of these words. As a Ghanaian

type of English if we try to put them down it will help so that we will have our own kind of English that we need to speak.

The above excerpts make it clear that Ghanaians would like their variety to be codified for international recognition of the variety since that is what they speak. Anderson's (2009) study also had a similar finding when students who indicated that GhE should be taught in schools gave one of the reasons to be for the language to gain international recognition.

On the contrary, educated Ghanaians who held the view that GhE should not be codified justified their point on the basis that Ghanaians do not own the language. This reason is explained with what the following interviewees said:

Interviewee 5

The English language is not our language unless maybe we want to come out with an aspect of the English language that we are going to say this is GhE language then we can codify some of them but It's somebody's language we are learning and the person has given you the rules governing his or her language, so you have to try as much as possible to follow the rules.

Interviewee 7

Well, our English is more or less trying to conform to a certain standard, the standard has already been established and that we expect all other English languages to conform to that standard that has been set. It is British English that has been set as the standard.

Yes, that is the standard and all these words we are learning towards that particular perfection so I don't think that such expression or such English should be codified or written into books.

Interviewee 14

It would be misleading; I think the right things should be put in books and recorded because books, as we know, is something that lasts for a very long time. We write books, leave it, another generation will come so if the right thing is not put in the books and someone comes to take it, it will continue and those errors will still be in existence so I don't think it's not good to write them down.

These views point to the fact that anything contrary to Standard English which would be put in books to serve as reference materials would be a distortion of the Standard English. This finding is in line with Anderson's (2009) assertion that one of the challenges hindering the codification of GhE is the negative attitudes that Ghanaians have about GhE. According to Ting (2011), Hong Kong speakers also hold a similar view that English does not belong to them and so they cannot recognise the features tested as features of Hong Kong English.

In relating Schneider's (2007) model to the current study, it can be said that GhE has traces of the both the second and fourth stages as far as attitudes are concerned. In the evolution of GhE as a distinct variety, the study shows that Ghanaians are exonormative and endonormative, depending on the features being

tested. Ghanaians are exonormative in the acceptability of grammatical features. This is because local norms are not acceptable and, therefore, they tend to have a preference for Standard British English rules. Their exonormative attitude is also evident in the avoidance of the need for codification. According to Huber (2012), new Englishes are still exonormative in the area of grammar. This implies that in the area of grammar, new Englishes still rely on native varieties for the rules of the language. Wiredu (2012) observes that “many non-native users of English are usually more careful in their grammatical choices” (p. 23)

In terms of vocabulary, Ghanaians are endonormative in the sense that they have a high preference for what is local to the Ghanaian context. They accept these local forms because they appreciate the distinct socio-cultural context in which the language is spoken. Hence, they have a preference for what has its origin in the Ghanaian context. There is, therefore, a positive attitude towards the acceptability of lexical items.

### **Indexical Markers of GhE**

The forms which are likely to be recognised as indexical markers of GhE can be viewed from two angles of both acceptability and unacceptability of certain features. In relation to the lexical items tested, the highly accepted ones are the recognised indexical markers of the variety. This is because these features convey a lot of information about the variety and its speakers. One important fact that the acceptable words reveal is the speakers’ linguistic and socio-cultural backgrounds. Words such as *outdooring*, *enstooled*, *chop box*, *rice water* and

*bush meat* clearly reveal the concepts or situation as they really are in the Ghanaian context. When one considers a word like “bush meat”, it exhibits the linguistic innovation of Ghanaians since it is a transliteration of *nwuramu nam* which literally in Akan means *meat from the bush*.

Paradoxically, the unacceptable lexical forms are also indexical markers of the variety. Lexical items such as *coal pot*, *booker*, *fitter* and *chop bar* also tell us about the use of the variety in relation to its speakers. Although these items are key in identifying the Ghanaian speaker of the variety, they are rejected purely on the basis of their comparison to Standard British English lexical forms. However, most of the alternative terms which were provided for the words which recorded the low acceptability figures do not best describe the concept as used by Ghanaian speakers of English. Generally, the indexical markers of the variety in terms of vocabulary are *bush meat*, *gate fee*, *outdooring*, *senior brother*, *chop box*, *coal pot*, *gate man*, *rice water*, *chop money*, *tight friend*, *fitter*, *chop bar* and *enstooled*.

In terms of grammatical features, forms which are likely to be accepted as indexical to GhE are, mostly, the rejected ones identified during the acceptability test. Features such as modal usage, odd couples and stative verbs are particularly Ghanaian. These usages are influenced by the Ghanaian languages of most Ghanaians. It, therefore, presupposes that grammatical features are likely to be stigmatized among its users. Therefore, the grammatical features which are indexical to GhE are stative verb usage, article usage, pronoun usage, modal usage, idiomatic expressions, odd couples and left dislocations.

It appears then that forms which are acceptable may not necessarily be indexical markers of the variety and vice versa. The comparison of norms in relation to Standard British English would always render a localised norm unacceptable. Bambgose (1998, p.2) notes that “some of the features stigmatized are possible variations typical of that variety” and “indexical markers of the non-native varieties” (p. 3). To a high extent, both the accepted and rejected forms in GhE can be indexical markers of the variety since they identify Ghanaian speakers of English in terms of their origin or nationality and first languages.

### Chapter Summary

This chapter presented the analysis and discussion of the data. The chapter focused on the acceptability of lexical and grammatical features of GhE and the indexical markers of the variety in relation to the test items. In terms of lexical acceptability, *bush meat, bachelor's night, boys' quarters, gate fee, outdoor, brown envelope, senior brother, enstooled, chop box, gate man and rice water* recorded higher acceptability scores. On the hand, *coal pot, bombed, booker, chop money, small chops, tight friend, fitter, chop bar and hot drinks* had lower acceptability scores. In relation to the grammar of GhE, the acceptable features are Ghanaian's use of uncountable nouns and idiomatic expressions while stative verbs, article usage, modal usage, question tags, pronouns and adverbial subordination, odd couples and left dislocated are unacceptable. Interview data was also used to support the results from the survey and to account for the factors which affect educated Ghanaians choice of certain lexical items and grammatical features of GhE. The acceptability of lexical items was largely influenced by wide



usage and origin and the grammatical acceptability was largely influenced by the conformity to Standard English rules and meaning. Issues such as context and codification were also considered. The confidence intervals of the significant responses for both the lexical and grammatical features were also discussed.



## CHAPTER FIVE

### CONCLUSION, SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS

#### Introduction

This chapter presents a summary of the entire study and the main findings of the study. It also provides the implications and recommendations for further study.

#### Summary of the Study

The main aim of this study was to investigate the acceptability of certain lexico-grammatical features associated with Ghanaian English (GhE). In view of this, the study sought to address two major issues. First, the study sought to analyze the level of acceptability of those lexical and grammatical forms identified in Ghanaian English. Second, it examined the forms which are likely to be recognised or accepted as indexical markers of the variety.

Therefore, the study employed Schneider's (2007) Dynamic Model of Postcolonial Englishes which helped to situate the attitudes of Ghanaians as far as the evolution of GhE is concerned. The model posits that non-native Englishes evolve through five phases. The study employed both quantitative and qualitative methods. The quantitative data was measured with a Likert Scale. The results were further supported with interviews from the participants. In all, 400 respondents participated in the survey and 20 participants were also interviewed. The numerical data was fed into SPSS version 16 to get the frequencies and percentages as well as the central tendencies such as the mean and standard

deviation. In addition, the Excel Mega Stats was used to construct the confidence interval of significant responses at a 95% confidence level. The interviews were also transcribed and grouped under various themes for discussion. These methods helped to answer the research questions.

The survey tested the acceptability rate of lexical and grammatical forms while the interviews were used to probe further the concept of acceptability by educated Ghanaians. The results from the survey further helped to identify the features which are likely to be recognised as indexical markers of the variety.

### **Key Findings**

In terms of the lexical forms identified in the literature, it was found that eleven of the lexical items are acceptable and nine are unacceptable. The eleven lexical items which recorded higher acceptability scores are *bush meat, bachelor's night, boys' quarters, gate fee, outdooring, brown envelope, senior brother, enstooled, chop box, gate man* and *rice water*. The lexical items which recorded lower acceptability values are *coal pot, bombed, booker, chop money, small chops, tight friend, fitter, chop bar* and *hot drinks*. The choice of these lexical forms by the respondents was as a result of its wide and continuous use and the origin of certain forms in the Ghanaian setting. The unacceptability of some of the forms was because of speakers' knowledge of native speakers' lexical forms, global recognition and the fact that some of the words sound local.

With regard to grammatical features, the findings show that not all the ten grammatical features identified as GhE had the same level of acceptability by

educated Ghanaians. This is because, out of the ten grammatical features identified in the literature, idiomatic expressions and uncountable nouns had higher levels of acceptability whereas stative verbs, articles, modals, question tags, pronouns, adverbial subordinations, odd couples and left dislocations in GhE had lower scores for acceptability. The respondents were of the view that their acceptability or otherwise of a grammatical feature depends on the expression's conformity to Standard English grammar rules, intelligibility and wide usage.

The third main finding is that both the highly endorsed and highly rejected lexical and grammatical items may be indexical to the variety. The lexical items which were recognised as being indexical to the variety are *bush meat, gate fee, outdooring, senior brother, chop box, coal pot, gate man, rice water, chop money, tight friend, fitter, chop bar* and *enstooled*. The grammatical features which are indexical to the variety are stative verb usage, article usage, pronoun usage, modal usage, idiomatic expressions, odd couples and left dislocations.

The study also revealed that Ghanaians are aware that the English they speak is different from Standard British English. They view this difference as either errors or modifications to suit the Ghanaian context. Generally, Ghanaians view acceptability in terms of a word or an expression's conformity to Standard English rules and how well it is understood. It was also found that context affects the acceptability of lexico-grammatical features. Hence, certain forms are likely to be acceptable in the Ghanaian setting, informal context and communication with people with lower levels of education.

In relation to codification, most educated Ghanaians had a positive attitude towards the codification of Ghanaian English. According to them, that is what they speak and so these features should be codified for recognition. On the other hand, those who were not in favour of the codification of these features expressed a concern that Ghanaians do not own English.

Based on the different attitudes of Ghanaians towards the lexico-grammatical features, it can be said that Ghanaians are more endonormative in terms of vocabulary. However, Ghanaians are exonormative in terms of their attitudes towards grammar. Therefore, although the variety is in the fourth stage of endonormative stabilisation, there are traces of the second stage of exonormative stabilisation.

### **Conclusions**

The lexical and grammatical forms identified to be GhE have different levels of acceptability among speakers of GhE. Ghanaians do not accept all the lexico-grammatical features that have been identified to be peculiar to Ghanaians. In other words, forms which are used by most Ghanaians may not necessarily be accepted by all of them.

Generally, it appears that new lexical forms are more acceptable than new grammatical forms. This may be attributed to the reasons for the acceptability of the lexical and grammatical features. It seems more educated Ghanaians view grammatical errors to be that which is contrary to the grammatical rules of the Standard British English. However, in terms of vocabulary, some of the

respondents are more lenient towards the acceptability of what they consider to be Ghanaian.

Also, forms which are likely to be recognised as indexical markers of the variety may not necessarily be accepted. In the same way, forms which are highly rejected may be identified as being indexical to the variety.

### **Implications of the Study**

This study has implications for theory, codification and standardisation of GhE as well as research in non-native varieties as a whole. First, the study has theoretical significance. Schneider's (2007) Dynamic Model which has been established for Postcolonial Englishes is the theory on which the present study is based. Although the Dynamic Model has been applied to other non-native varieties, the study demonstrated the extent to which Ghanaian English as a postcolonial variety fits into the Dynamic Model in relation to the concept of acceptability. The study specifically proved that there is no linear progression of the different phases of the model in all varieties. This is evident in the different attitudes of Ghanaians towards different linguistic levels of vocabulary and grammar. It, therefore, confirms Schneider's (2007) position that the application of the model might not reflect the complex reality.

Another implication of this study is that, with regard to the development of GhE, the evidence suggests that the variety has a vocabulary that is distinct from Standard British English and yet acceptable to the speakers of the variety. These findings imply that the development and standardisation of a variety begin at the lexical level. It is at this level that innovations are more readily accepted in

comparison to the level of syntax. There is the need for the codification of GhE for the variety to gain international recognition. The inability in the codification of the variety may lead to constant rejection by speakers, despite the possibility of the rejected features being indexical to the variety.

The study also has implications for linguists interested in codifying GhE with the long-term objective of standardising the variety. This is because lexical codification should serve as the starting point. As has been pointed out in both the findings and conclusion, users are more inclined towards accepting lexical innovations than they are in the case of syntactic changes. Also, educated Ghanaians should be considered in the study of the acceptability of other linguistic levels. This is because the views of speakers are as equally important as that of linguists. Linguists should not be the sole determiners of what the attitudes towards GhE are to make generalizations. As has been demonstrated, these findings have refuted some postulations made by Sey (1973), Ahulu (1994) and Nimako (2008) about the attitude of Ghanaians towards the variety.

### **Recommendations**

It is recommended that further studies be carried out by paying attention to the acceptability of the other lexical forms which this study did not cover and the acceptability of other grammatical features which were not of interest in the present study but which have been identified as features of GhE.

Also, there can be a study on the acceptability of other linguistic levels in GhE. These may include the acceptability of phonological, semantics and discursal levels of language use in GhE.

A similar study can also be conducted to verify the results of the study. Specifically, a different group of educated Ghanaians who use the language for specific purposes can be considered in such a study.

Moreover, further studies can be carried out by focusing on educated Ghanaians with lower proficiency levels in the English language other than those with three to four years of university education. This will help to ascertain the extent to which proficiency levels influence acceptability.

Finally, a sociolinguistic study of the acceptability of GhE can be considered in future research. Sociolinguistic factors such as gender and age and their relationship with acceptability can be looked at in a similar study.

### **Chapter Summary**

This chapter served as the conclusion to the entire study. It provided the summary of the entire study, the main findings and the conclusion. Implications of the study were also discussed and the recommendations for future research were also given.



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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A: Confidence interval for lexical items in GhE

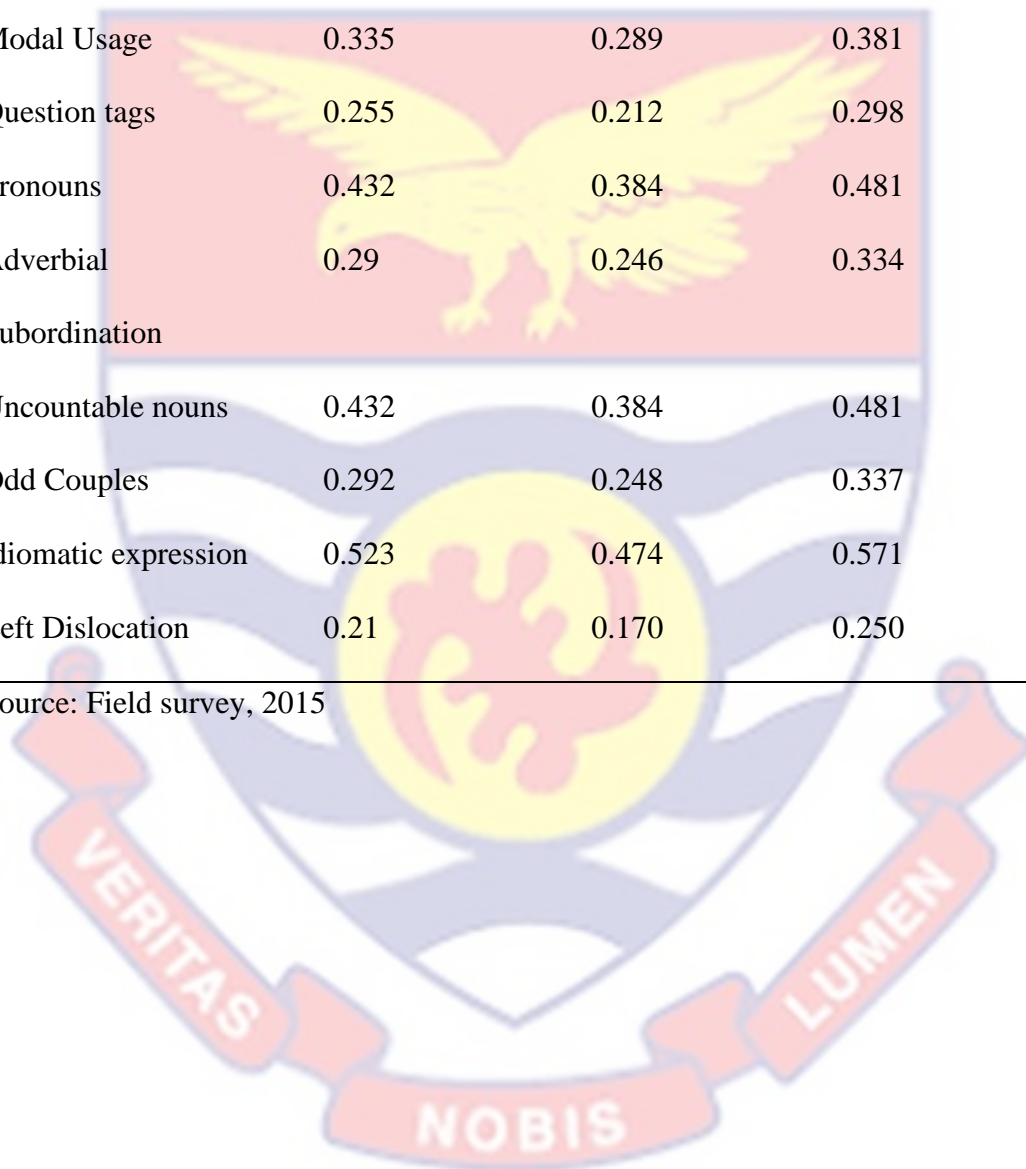
Lexical item	$\hat{P}$	$P_L$	$P_U$
Bush meat	0.58	0.532	0.628
Coal pot	0.382	0.335	0.430
Bachelor's night	0.42	0.372	0.468
Bombed	0.202	0.163	0.242
Booker	0.308	0.262	0.353
Boys' quarters	0.562	0.514	0.611
Chop money	0.332	0.286	0.379
Gate fee	0.605	0.557	0.653
Outdooring	0.468	0.419	0.516
Small chops	0.43	0.381	0.479
Tight friend	0.392	0.345	0.440
Brown envelope	0.505	0.456	0.554
Senior brother	0.61	0.562	0.658
Fitter	0.405	0.357	0.453
Enstooled	0.56	0.511	0.609
Chop box	0.618	0.570	0.665
Chop bar	0.348	0.301	0.394
Gateman	0.528	0.479	0.576
Rice water	0.44	0.391	0.489
Hot drinks	0.378	0.330	0.425

Source: Field survey, 2015

**APPENDIX B: Confidence interval for grammatical features of GhE**

<b>Grammatical Feature</b>	<b><math>\hat{P}</math></b>	<b><math>P_L</math></b>	<b><math>P_U</math></b>
Stative verbs	0.392	0.345	0.440
Article Usage	0.338	0.291	0.384
Modal Usage	0.335	0.289	0.381
Question tags	0.255	0.212	0.298
Pronouns	0.432	0.384	0.481
Adverbial	0.29	0.246	0.334
Subordination			
Uncountable nouns	0.432	0.384	0.481
Odd Couples	0.292	0.248	0.337
Idiomatic expression	0.523	0.474	0.571
Left Dislocation	0.21	0.170	0.250

Source: Field survey, 2015



**APPENDIX C: QUESTIONNAIRE**

**UNIVERSITY OF CAPE COAST**

**DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH**

Dear respondent,

This questionnaire is for an academic exercise. It is part of a research which aims at investigating the acceptability of Ghanaian English. Participants of Ghanaian nationality are required to take part in this research. The expressions used in this questionnaire may be ungrammatical or sub-standard when compared to Target English (British English). Would you say that when an educated Ghanaian uses these forms, they should be accepted? You are kindly requested to respond to the questionnaire objectively. Your views would be treated with utmost confidentiality.

Thank you

Nancy B. Nkansah

**Section A: Personal data**

**Instruction: Please tick where necessary.**

Sex: Female [ ] Male [ ]

Age: 16-20 [ ] 21-25 [ ] 26-30 [ ] 31-above [ ]

Level of education: Secondary [ ] Bachelor's degree [ ] Masters and above [ ]

other [ ] specify.....

Years of education in the English language: 9- 12 years [ ] 13- 16years [ ] 17 years and above [ ]

**Section B: Tick the option that best represents your opinion from the table below. Please indicate the extent of acceptability of these expressions on a scale of 1-5 where 1 = unacceptable, 2 = unacceptable sometimes, 3 = not sure, 4 = acceptable sometimes and 5 = acceptable.**

		1	2	3	4	5
1	We stopped at Awutu to buy some bush meat.					
2	I have left some stew on the coal pot.					
3	His bachelor's night was held at the hotel nearby.					
4	He bombed the whole exam.					
5	The bookers at the station are unfriendly.					
6	Do you think you can accommodate my nephew in your boys' quarters?					
7	He gives very little chop money.					
8	The gate fee for the concert is GH¢ 10.					
9	We were invited to the outdooring of Mr and Mrs Mensah's new born baby this Saturday.					
10	The small chops taste good.					
11	He has been my tight friend since our school days.					
12	Though I qualified for admission, I had to give a brown envelope to the principal for my admission letter.					
13	My senior brother confided in me.					
14	The fitter could not detect the fault on the vehicle.					
15	It would be ridiculous for any properly enstooled African chief					



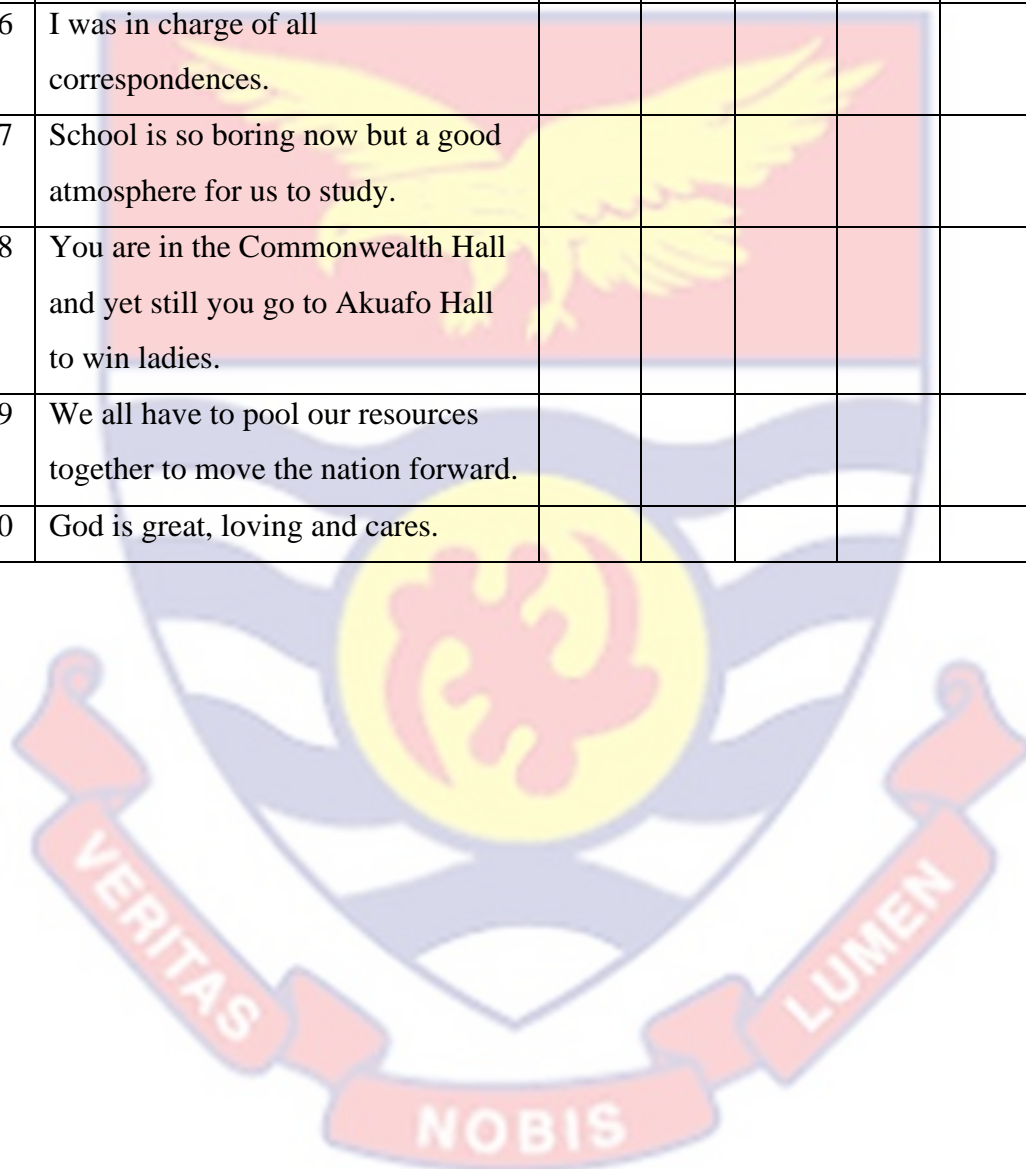
	to make such a claim.					
16	Senior high school students are required to bring chop boxes to school.					
17	The bigger types of machines could be manufactured for use in hotels and chop bars.					
18	The gate man refused to allow any of the protestors to enter the compound.					
19	Her children take rice water as breakfast on Tuesdays.					
20	Some Christians are not allowed to take hot drinks.					

**Section C: Tick the option that best represents your opinion from the table below. Please indicate the extent of acceptability of these expressions on a scale of 1-5 where 1 = unacceptable, 2 = unacceptable sometimes, 3 = not sure, 4 = acceptable sometimes and 5 = acceptable.**

		1	2	3	4	5
21	I am doubting whether he will come.					
22	If you take La Liga, majority of them are from Spain and only a few are foreigners.					
23	I wrote on the conference hall and would as such not comment on this again.					
24	He is good, not so?					
25	The blessings of the lord will be upon you and I.					
26	Although I don't enjoy listening to them but I think people are really getting cold.					
27	He said the suspects will be arraigned before court after police investigations.					

28	God loves you and I.					
29	Provision of proper school buildings with modern equipments.					
30	The teachers will be given the respects they deserve.					
31	I am going to bank.					
32	I'm having three children.					
33	Kwadwo left early for work, isn't it?					
34	Is your question answered or Brother Sam?					
35	The last but not the least, I'd like to thank the catering staff for the sumptuous meals they served tonight.					
36	If this was Ghana, I'm sure this thing will be finished by now.					
37	I am thinking that the work cannot be completed in two weeks.					
38	We congratulated all students for their brilliant performance in the examinations.					
39	You and me are the children of God.					
40	Actually, the mid semester we had this morning, it was to the inconvenience of most of us.					
41	The students voiced out their views.					
42	That one, I think it's good.					
43	The couple have no children, isn't it?					

44	We've come to the modern age and other things but still look at what they are doing to each other.					
45	Me if I were a man, I would even run away. How I fear water!					
46	I was in charge of all correspondences.					
47	School is so boring now but a good atmosphere for us to study.					
48	You are in the Commonwealth Hall and yet still you go to Akuafu Hall to win ladies.					
49	We all have to pool our resources together to move the nation forward.					
50	God is great, loving and cares.					



## APPENDIX D: INTERVIEW GUIDE

- a) What is your view on GhE?
- b) What do you consider acceptable or otherwise in English?
- a) Do you consider the following lexical items to be acceptable in GhE?
  - Bush meat: meat from the forest/ bush or a hunting expedition
  - b) Bachelor's night: A party given by or for a man just before his wedding.
  - c) Boys' quarters: an outhouse where servants and in some cases the younger members of the household live.
  - d) Gate fee: a fee for admission into all kinds of entertainment.
  - e) Outdooring: a baby's first appearance in public to be named.
  - f) Brown envelope: bribe
  - g) Senior brother: elder brother
  - h) Enstooled: to install a chief
  - i) Chop box: a wooden box used for holding food and other articles.
  - j) Gate man: the man at the gate or entrance who sells or collects tickets.
  - k) Rice water: a porridge of boiled rice eaten with milk and sugar.
4. How do you refer to the above concepts in English?
5. Do you consider the following to be unacceptable in GhE?
  - a) Coal pot: a kind of brazier with an upper and lower chamber separated by a grate in which charcoal is lighted for cooking.

- b) Booker: a person who hangs around car stations and collects passengers for lorries and privately owned buses at agreed fees
  - a) Chop money: money given to the housewife or another person for buying food for the household or the family.
  - b) Hot drinks: distilled alcoholic drinks
  - c) Small chops: finger foods
  - d) Tight friend: a close friend
  - e) Fitter: a motor mechanic or anyone who does odd jobs on motor vehicles.
  - f) Chop bar: A working class restaurant where Ghanaian meals are served.
6. Do you consider the following grammatical features as acceptable or unacceptable?
- a) I'm having three children.
  - b) I am going to bank.
  - c) If this was Ghana, I'm sure this thing will be finished by now.
  - d) The couple have no children, isn't it?
  - e) The blessings of the lord will be upon you and I.
  - f) Although I don't enjoy listening to them but I think people are really getting cold.
  - g) I was in charge of all correspondences.
  - h) School is so boring now but a good atmosphere for us to study.
  - i) We congratulated all students for their brilliant performance in the examinations.
  - j) That one, I think it's good.

7. How do you refer to similar grammatical features in English?
8. Why are certain lexico-grammatical features accepted than others?
9. In which context would you accept the above lexico-grammatical features?

