

**Cultural Reference in Modern Ghanaian English-language Fiction: Ways of
encoding, authorial strategies and reader interpretation**

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To my children

Abstract

Modern Ghanaian English-language fiction came into existence in the mid-1960s. The hybrid nature of this literature, resulting from the fact that it is written by authors of a particular cultural and linguistic background in the language of a different culture, often poses problems of comprehension, and hence interpretation, for readers who do not share the author's cultural and linguistic background. Communication between the Europhone African writer and his multiple audience becomes complex not only as a result of the writer's indigenising the European language so that it can carry his African experience, but also because of the (partial) lack of common ground between reader and writer. The current work studies a particular aspect of this peculiar interpretive situation through examining how cultural reference is encoded in modern Ghanaian English-language fiction, what textual strategies writers employ to facilitate understanding of such reference and the effect these strategies have on reader interpretation.

The findings suggest that the indigenisation of English is necessitated by a 'naming' process – the wish to find names in English for things, phenomena and practices that are culturally alien to it. Indigenisation also serves to inscribe the Ghanaian writer's difference and distance from the culture whose language he has chosen for literary expression, thereby creating a metonymic gap. Readers are divided along this gap, and their position in relation to it is indicative of their ability to interpret untranslated/unexplained African-language words/expressions in the text. The authorial strategies intended to make the texts more accessible to the readers all have some promise, but eventually all may prove ineffective because they try to cater for the needs of a rather mixed and ill-defined readership. The research provides evidence that the Ghanaian writer's indigenisation of English and provision of authorial assistance is driven by the perceived need and tolerance of the audience, and by a compulsion on the writer to conform to a way of writing that is critically recognised as African.

Observations on the limitations of the research and outlines of possible future developments are also offered.

Declaration

In accordance with Postgraduate Study Regulation 3.8.7, I hereby declare that this thesis has been composed by myself, that the work it contains is my own, and that it has not been submitted for any other degree.

Katalin Egri Ku-Mesu
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Joseph Arko, Department of English, University of Cape Coast, Ghana and (research student at the time at the) Department of Theoretical and Applied Linguistics, University of Edinburgh

Jemima Anderson, Department of English, University of Ghana, Legon

Ewe and Nzema: Joseph Arko

Lingala, Swahili and Tshiluba: Fred Betu Ku-Mesu, originally of Kinshasa, D.R. Congo

On cultural aspects of my work I consulted the following people:

Ghana and its ethnic groups:

Aloysius Denkabe, Department of English, University of Ghana, Legon

Joseph Arko, Department of English, University of Cape Coast, Ghana and (research student at the) Department of Theoretical and Applied Linguistics, University of Edinburgh

Jemima Anderson, Department of English, University of Ghana, Legon

DR Congo and its ethnic groups:

Fred Betu Ku-Mesu, originally of Kinshasa, D.R. Congo

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Coded corpus

A Wind from the North
Beyond the Horizon
Changes
Crossroads at Ankobea
Fragments
Grief Child
No Sweetness Here
Of Men and Ghosts
Our Sister Killjoy
The Beautiful Ones Are Not Yet Born
The Catechist
The Clothes of Nakedness
The Dancing Tortoise
The Gab Boys
The Girl Who Can
The Healers
The Narrow Path
The Sound of Pestles
The Strange Man
This Earth, My Brother ...

WordSmith tables for authorial assistance

Full corpus

Cushioning
Contextualisation
Ethnographic explanation
Glossary
No assistance

First generation writers

Cushioning
Contextualisation
Ethnographic explanation
Glossary

No assistance

Later generation writers

Cushioning

Contextualisation

Ethnographic explanation

Glossary

No assistance

Internationally published works

Cushioning

Contextualisation

Ethnographic explanation

Glossary

No assistance

Locally published works

Cushioning

Contextualisation

Ethnographic explanation

Glossary

No assistance

WordSmith tables for indigenised – non-indigenised polarity

Full corpus

Non-indigenised cultural reference

Indigenised signifier

Indigenised signified

Indigenised signifier and signified

First generation writers

Non-indigenised cultural reference

Indigenised signifier

Indigenised signified

Indigenised signifier and signified

Later generation writers

Non-indigenised cultural reference

Indigenised signifier

Indigenised signified

Indigenised signifier and signified	
<i>Internationally published works</i>	
Non-indigenised cultural reference	
Indigenised signifier	
Indigenised signified	
Indigenised signifier and signified	
<i>Locally published works</i>	
Non-indigenised cultural reference	
Indigenised signifier	
Indigenised signified	
Indigenised signifier and signified	

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1 INTRODUCTION

This work has grown out of my long-standing interest in the African continent and in Europhone African literature in general, and in modern Europhone Ghanaian literature in particular. In shorter projects I have investigated, among other things, the issue of reading for pleasure in Africa and whether African literature can survive without large international publishers. More specifically, I studied the potential of literary texts as sources of sociolinguistic exploration of society through analysing the power relationships in Ghanaian society as presented in Ama Ata Aidoo's short story *No Sweetness Here*, examined how African proverbs are interpreted by a multiple audience, what effects authorial strategies aimed at facilitating reader understanding have on a multiple readership, and explored the applicability of Relevance Theory in the rather peculiar interpretive and communicative situation of hybrid literary texts. Relevant parts of my article 'Whose Relevance? Interpretation of Hybrid Texts by a Multiple Audience' (*Edinburgh Working Papers in Applied Linguistics*, no.8, 1997, 44-53) have been incorporated here.

Ghana's written literary history, one of the longest in Africa, goes back to the 18th century and boasts a theological study in Latin by Antonius Guilielmus Amo (c.1703-c.1750), an antislavery tract by Ottobah Cugoano (c.1745-c.1790), historical and anthropological works in the 19th and 20th century by such authors as Carl Reindorf (1834-1917), Raphael Armattoo (1913-1953) and Adelaide Casely-Hayford (1868-1959), a sarcastic criticism of these in *The Blinkards* (1915), a play by Kobina Sekyi (1892-1956), and *Wayward Lines from Africa* (1946) – a collection of poems which is probably the first publication that can be regarded as creative literature proper – by Michael Francis Dei-Anang (1909-1978)¹.

Modern English-language Ghanaian fiction, however, did not come into being until the mid-1960s, when several talented Ghanaian writers started publishing. This literary upsurge in Ghana coincided with similar outbursts of literary creativity in European languages all over Africa – at the intersection of languages and cultures a new literature was born: Europhone African literature. Chapter 2 puts the development of this literature in historical perspective focusing on the key issues of definition, language, audience and critical standards. The account is that of the growth of Europhone African literature with the understanding that Ghanaian literature forms part of it and shares most features of its development, with a

specifically Ghanaian emphasis². Although creative Ghanaian prose writing includes elite as well as popular literature, the scope of the current work covers only the former.

There exists a plethora of studies of the various aspects of African literature. The most relevant ones for the current study are those which deal with the indigenisation of English in general, and the language of African literature in particular. Among the many, this work has drawn particularly on the works of Bokamba, Hancock and Angogo, B. Kachru, Owusu-Ansah, Smith and Todd in the area of non-native, or indigenised, varieties of English, of Ahulu, Criper, Huber, Kropp Dakubu, and Sey in the area of English in Ghana, and of Achebe, Ashcroft, Ashcroft *et al*, Baker and Eggington, Bamiro, Isola, B. Kachru, Ngugi wa Thiong'o, Saro-Wiwa, Sridhar and Zabus in the area of the language of non-native, and specifically (West) African, English literatures. Studies of the language of Africa literature have, so far, focused on the writer, the creation of the texts and their characteristic features. However, 'meaning is never written as if ready-made inside the text, but is formed within the reading of the text' (Lehtonen, 2000:78). My work aims to contribute to the filling of a gap by concentrating on the reader and on how he copes with indigenised language use in Ghanaian English-language fiction.

The hybrid nature of this literature, resulting from the fact that it is written by authors of a particular cultural and linguistic background in the language of a different culture, often poses problems of comprehension, and hence interpretation, for readers who do not share the author's cultural and linguistic background. Communication between the Europhone African writer and his multiple audience becomes complex not only as a result of the writer's moulding the European language so that it can carry his African experience, but also because of the (partial) lack of common ground - or 'absence' or 'distance' (Ashcroft, 2001b:61-2) - between reader and writer. 'If the linguistic and cultural "extension" of the code is missed, one also misses the interpretation at the linguistic, literary, sociolinguistic and cultural levels' (B. Kachru, 1986:165).

In the current work I study a particular aspect of this peculiar interpretive situation through examining how cultural reference is encoded in modern English-language Ghanaian fiction, what textual strategies writers employ to facilitate understanding of such reference and the effect these strategies have on reader interpretation. My reasons for choosing to study fiction - primarily the novel (82.02% of the corpus) and secondarily the short story (17.97% of the corpus) - rather than poetry or drama coincide with Zabus's:

The Europhone novel provides an adequate testing terrain for the practice of indigenisation because the novel is a flexible, polysemic form that can incorporate other genres, as Mikhail Bakhtine amply demonstrated, and other registers as well. As such, the analysis of its language poses interesting problems valid for other genres and other post-colonial literatures. (1991:4)

In addition, both the novel and the short story can be described as hybrid products which look 'inward' into African lore and 'outward' to imported literary traditions, and it is primarily the language that has diverted them from their inward course.

Instead of studying 'pure' texts and 'qualified' readers, I am interested in the actual production and the actual reading of literary texts, 'which cannot be separated from those cultural practices and relations where producers and readers act' (Lehtonen, 2000:78). Therefore, it is important to understand the idea of culture, the perception members of one particular culture may have of another culture, and to familiarise ourselves with the actual culture that gave rise to the literary works studied here. Thus, Chapter 3 investigates the concept of culture and also examines the special relationship culture has with language. It then introduces us to the cultural and linguistic reality which forms the Ghanaian writer's source of inspiration.

Understanding the relationship of culture with language is an important aspect of my work, in which I have drawn most on Sapir and Whorf's hypothesis of linguistic relativity and work by Jiang, Kaplan, Kramsch, Langacker, La Pergola Arezzo, Tannen, Tengan, Thomas and Wierzbicka.

The distance between the Europhone Ghanaian writer and his primarily Western audience accentuates the demands written language makes on both its producers and receivers. Chapter 4 examines this specific communicative situation through the prism of culture and highlights the problems Ghanaian writers face in terms of their audience, both local and international, as a consequence of their choice of English as the language of literary expression. The English they use, however, is not metropolitan English but one that is moulded to carry their Ghanaian experience. The chapter examines this process of moulding the foreign or exogenous language that has become known as indigenisation. Throughout this work, indigenisation is not going to be examined as indigenisation *per se* pertaining to the unconscious collective process of a speech community but as a literary device, 'the writer's attempt at textualizing linguistic differentiation and at conveying African concepts, thought-patterns, and linguistic features through the ex-colonizer's language' (Zabus,

1991:3). For historical reasons, the yardstick against which the Ghanaian writer's literary language is going to be 'measured' is Standard British English. Since the Ghanaian writer needs to cross cultural boundaries to reach the majority of his audience, Chapter 4 also examines the nature of cross-cultural communication and gives an account of Relevance Theory, a theory of communication and cognition that has been found particularly fitting for the analysis of how the Ghanaian writer's provision or withdrawal of various methods facilitating the understanding of cultural reference affects the reader's interpretation of that reference in Anglophone Ghanaian fiction. After a general description, the applicability of Relevance Theory to the data is explored.

With the study having been placed in the complex context of cross-cultural literary communication via an indigenised exogenous language, Chapter 5 sets out the parameters within which the research is to be conducted. It defines the research objectives, describes the data and the procedures followed. Particularly important is the delineation of the novel approach to the description of indigenised language, i.e. the examination of each cultural reference as a linguistic sign, as well as the definitions of what is regarded in the current study as cultural reference and as indigenised language use.

A detailed linguistic description of the indigenised language examples yielded by the data extracted from the corpus follows in Chapter 6. Such a description is necessary because it highlights the complexities of linguistic variation in cultural reference, examines the areas of divergence from Standard British English and explains their origin, thereby pointing to the source of reader difficulty. As such, it provides a basis for the examination, in Chapter 7, of authorial strategies, and of reader interpretation.

Using data gathered from readers by way of a questionnaire, Chapter 7 explores the concept of the metonymic gap created by the insertion of African-language words or expressions into the English-language text without the provision of any authorial device to facilitate understanding and examines the effect it has on various groups of readers, these being the Ghanaian, non-Ghanaian African and Western readers. It then proceeds to analyse the effects on, and usefulness for, the various groups of readers of the authorial strategies of cushioning, contextualisation, ethnographic explanation and the editorial rather than authorial provision of a glossary.

Chapter 8 analyses the differences between the first and later generations of Ghanaian writers regarding their use of indigenised language and provision of authorial assistance to the reader.

By way of conclusion, Chapter 9 revisits the research objectives and summarises the results and their implications. It also offers observations on the limitations of the research and outlines possible future developments.

Notes on terminology

The terminology used in this work draws on accepted usage in the fields of African (and by the same token, post-colonial) literary theory and criticism, cultural anthropology, and linguistics and its various sub-disciplines such as anthropological linguistics, applied linguistics and sociolinguistics. However, I feel it is necessary to clarify the following.

Standard British English or Standard English and native English are used alternatively to refer to the same variety of English – the language of Great Britain. While the former is used when grammatical acceptability and correctness is of special importance, the latter is preferred when the emphasis is on its culture-specificity.

Because of the complexity of the linguistic situation in West Africa in general, and in Ghana in particular, where “the ‘mother tongue,’ especially in mixed families, is very often the father’s tongue” (Zabus, 1991:2, fn4), it needs to be stated that throughout this study ‘mother tongue’ is used to refer to the writer’s or the reader’s first language or what linguists and language educators call L1.

The ‘author’, ‘writer’ and ‘reader’ as generic entities are referred to as ‘he’. ‘She’ is used only when reference is made to a specific female writer. In the data analysis, while remaining anonymous, individual readers are referred to as ‘he’ or ‘she’ according to their natural gender.

‘Western’ is used throughout this work to refer to all entities that form part of Europe and North America and the culture and civilisation of these regions.

Notes

- ¹ Source: Klein, Leonard S. (ed.). 1988 [1986]. *African Literatures in the 20th Century: A Guide*. Harpenden, Herts.: Oldcastle Books Ltd.
- ² It is a sad fact that although African writers are identified by their nationality (rather than by their ethnic group), Europhone national literatures in Sub-Saharan Africa, perhaps with the exception of the very prolific Nigerian literature, are still relatively rarely referred to as such. It has become more accepted in the literature to talk about Europhone African literature in general as an all-embracing entity, or to refer to regional literatures such as West African, East African, or Southern African literature, or to identify bodies of literature according to their language of creation such as Anglophone, Francophone or Lusophone African literature.

2 AFRICAN LITERATURE AND ITS PROBLEMATIC ASPECTS

2.1 Introduction

Modern African literature in European languages had existed, been studied and its development had kept informing scholarship for over thirty years before it led to the creation, roughly a decade and a half ago, of the new discipline of postcolonialism.

Postcolonial theory or postcolonial studies 'is considered part of the interdisciplinary field of cultural studies, which draws on anthropology, sociology, gender studies, ethnic studies, literary criticism, history, psychoanalysis, political science and philosophy to examine various cultural texts and practices' (Robinson, 1997:12-13). It grows out of the break-up of the European empires in the second half of the 20th century and the subsequent rise of counterhegemonic cultural studies¹, with a scope that remains controversial and has been defined in various ways:

- (1) The study of Europe's former colonies since independence; how they have responded to, accommodated, resisted or overcome the cultural legacy of colonialism during independence. 'Postcolonial' here refers to cultures after the *end* of colonialism. The historical period covered is roughly the second half of the twentieth century. ['Post-independence' studies]
- (2) The study of Europe's former colonies since they were colonized; how they have responded to, accommodated, resisted or overcome the cultural legacy of colonialism since its inception. 'Postcolonial' here refers to cultures after the *beginning* of colonialism. The historical period covered is roughly the modern era, beginning in the sixteenth century. ['Post-European colonisation' studies]
- (3) The study of all cultures/societies/countries/nations in terms of their power relations with other cultures/etc.; how conqueror cultures have bent conquered cultures to their will; how conquered cultures have responded to, accommodated, resisted or overcome that coercion. 'Postcolonial' here refers to our late-twentieth-century perspective on political and cultural power relations. The historical period covered is all human history. ['Power-relations' studies] (Robinson, 1997: 13-14 [15]; original emphasis)

As can be expected, each of these definitions will appeal to, and be useful for, a particular group of scholars and is only one way of looking at postcolonialism, but not the only way. Because modern Europhone African literature – also referred to, at least in its early stages, as resistance literature² - came into being as a response to the cultural legacy of colonialism

shortly before and during independence, the current study falls into the scope of Definition 1 above.

In literature, postcolonial criticism rejects the universalist claims of liberal humanist critics and the Eurocentric norms and practices these promote. In addition to showing that canonical Western literature and literary criticism is often evasive or silent on matters of colonisation and imperialism, postcolonial critics foreground questions of cultural difference and promote hybridity and cultural polyvalency by developing a perspective in which “marginality, plurality and ‘Otherness’ are seen as sources of energy and potential change” (Barry, 1995:198).

As will be seen in the discussion below, literary theorists and critics had been expressing such ideas long before the advent of postcolonialism. Many – e.g. Achebe, Boyce Davies, Chinweizu, Jemie, Madubuike, Ngugi wa Thiong’o, Larson³, Fanon, Lefevere – have been adopted by the new discipline. Others – e.g. Bishop, Egejuru, Iyasere, Owomoyela – have not been referred to as postcolonial theorists/critics despite their clearly expressed anti-Eurocentricism and anti-colonialism. Particularly because of the non-inclusion in the ‘canon’ of postcolonial theorists/critics of some of the finest writers on African literature, whose works I consider indispensable in the study of African literature and its problematic aspects, the following discussion – although informed by postcolonial theory – will treat the subject from a historical rather than from a postcolonial theoretical standpoint.

The current chapter is devoted to the examination of Europhone African literature. After an account of its inception (2.2), special attention will be given to four areas: definition (2.3), language (2.4), audience (2.5) and critical standards (2.6). Although such a detailed description may seem implausible if not irrelevant, we have to remember that the raw material of the current thesis is a selection of African literary texts – Ghanaian English-language novels and short stories. To understand the difficulties involved both in expressing and interpreting cultural difference in these texts, it is vital to understand the development of African literature, and it is important to examine particularly its five aspects highlighted above as they all draw our attention to problems intrinsic in the hybrid nature of these texts and point towards difficulties faced both by their creators and readers.

2.2 The beginnings

From its very inception, African literature has been ridden with problems - the elite, or highbrow, Europhone African literature, that is. For the rich oral traditions, the Onitsha Market type popular literature⁴ and modern African writing in African languages⁵ seem to have been thriving undisturbed and untouched by the turmoil surrounding African writing in European languages.

Two major literary events mark the emergence of modern Europhone African literature. In the autumn of 1947 the first issue of *Présence africaine* appeared in Dakar and Paris. Its editor, Alioune Diop said that its purpose was to 'define the African's creativity and to hasten his integration in the modern world' (Diop quoted in Bishop, 1988:16).

The second important event was the publication, in 1948, of Léopold Sédar Senghor's *Anthologie de la nouvelle poésie nègre et malgache de langue française*. Apart from Senghor's own *Chants d'ombre* published two years earlier and Léon Damas's anthology *Poètes d'expression française (Afrique Noire, Madagascar, Réunion, Guadeloupe, Martinique, Indochine, Guyane)*, this was the first major anthology to indicate that serious poetry was beginning to be written by enough Africans and poets of African descent, and that the world could no longer treat them with continued ignorance and denial. Jean-Paul Sartre's introductory essay *Orphée noire* was equally influential not only in its impact on the African writers (mainly the French-speaking poets), but also in bringing these works to the attention of the non-African world.

Négritude, the emerging literary movement, grew out of the intellectual self-questioning imposed by the French policy of assimilation and was 'a philosophy that asserts an aggressive totality of Africanness albeit in the language and perhaps even in the philosophical spirit of the rejected imperial power' (Angoff and Povey, 1969:18). It was 'a thesis asserted by those intellectuals of Africa whom French colonial policy had most effectively moulded as Black Frenchmen who were worthy of assimilation into the French cultural community' (Angoff and Povey, 1969:20). In their attempt to obtain individuality, these intellectuals felt a burning need to search for an alternative to their Frenchness.

The British, on the other hand, relied on a different colonial practice and made a less concerted effort to acculturate the Africans to their ways. Since they never really faced assimilation, Africans under British rule refused to accept the simplistic philosophy of Négritude to reject

Europe, their refusal being hallmarked by Wole Soyinka's often quoted statement, 'A tiger does not have to proclaim his tigritude.' They, however, had their own intellectual problems born out of the realisation that they were caught up between two traditions originating from two different cultures. The concept of 'culture conflict' actually derives from this recognition. A corollary to the concept of 'culture conflict' was the concept of 'African Personality' (Angoff and Povey, 1969:19) which shows suspicious similarities with Négritude and produced poetry that echoes the mood.

Whether the term is Négritude, 'culture conflict' or 'African Personality', the essential element of the concept expressed is that there are two worlds that meet in the educated African: he not only inherits his own tradition, but shares, of necessity, in the impact of Western culture, as well. It is out of this double heritage that African writers began to create a new literature.

2.3 Problems of definition

When asked to define jazz, Louis Armstrong once said, "Man, if you gotta ask, you'll never know." "Ditto for African literature," one might say. Yet the question, "What is African literature?" keeps cropping up at conferences of writers and critics, in prefaces and introductions to books, in general discussions ... (Barkan, 1985:27)

2.3.1 The conferences

One of the first African critics to address the issue of what African literature is is the Nigerian writer Cyprian Ekwensi. In 1956 he wrote:

What then is African writing? To my own mind African writing is that piece of self-expression in which the psychology behind African thought is manifest; in which the philosophy and the pattern of culture from which it springs can be discerned. (Ekwensi quoted in Bishop, 1988:18)

The matter, however, was not seriously and systematically tackled until 1962, when the Nigerian poet Christopher Okigbo raised it at the Conference of African Writers of English

Expression, which came to be regarded as the seminal conference for African literature, held in June that year at Makerere University, Kampala, Uganda. When asked, at the end of the conference, whether there was such a thing that might be termed as African literature, Christopher Okigbo said, 'If and when the literature emerges, it will have to divine its own laws for its unity; its own form. Until this happens it appears rather premature to talk of African Literature in terms other than geographical' (Okigbo quoted in Bishop, 1988:19).

Bernard Fonlon of Cameroon had these thoughts to offer, placing emphasis, significantly, on expression as the defining element:

The experiences and emotions of the African are essentially universal: colonial humiliation, frustration, sorrow, bitterness, hate, revolt, revenge, exaltation, joy, love - these are human experiences. To my mind what conferred upon these an African character was their expression, their manner. (Fonlon quoted in Bishop, 1988:19)

The sensitive question of whether such white African writers as Alan Paton and Nadine Gordimer can be included in the definition of African literature was addressed by another leading African critic, Ezekiel Mphahlele, who, interestingly, based his distinction on the writer's identification with his characters.

There is a degree of identification in which a white writer in Africa like Mr. Paton or Miss Gordimer stands in relation to the characters and setting of his or her stories which indicates whether either of them is African. In both cases, one can distinctly tell they are on the white side of the colour line. For their identification is stronger with the white characters than with the black. This identification is a much closer and intimate relationship than the mere espousal of a cause which one's characters uphold in the context of a story; in other words, it is not just sympathy. It is a matter of belongingness in relation to the group represented by one section of characters one is portraying and the habitat of that group. What holds good for the white writer is true in the case of the Black one in his segregated world.

This is the distinction between a non-African white writer and a white African writer on the one hand, and between a white and a black African writer on the other. (Mphahlele quoted in Bishop, 1988:20)

Remembering this conference much later, Ngugi wa Thiong'o observes that what he believes to be the real question, i.e. whether what these writers of 'English expression' wrote qualified as African literature, was never seriously asked. The issue of literature and audience and of language as a determinant of national and class audience was not really addressed. Instead, the

debate was about subject matter and the racial and geographical origin of the writer (Ngugi, 1986:6).

The conference on 'African Literature and the University Curriculum' held at Fourah Bay College, the University of Sierra Leone in Freetown in April 1963 also showed considerable concern with the definition of African literature. In his short speech opening a discussion T.R.M. Creighton quoted his own definition of African literature accepted by a Congress of Africanists in Accra a year earlier: 'any work in which an African setting is authentically handled, or to which experiences which originate in Africa are integral' (Creighton, 1965:84). Creighton, however, pointed out that such a definition would raise the problem of what to include in and exclude from the scope of African literature, mentioning such problematic works from this point of view as Conrad's *Heart of Darkness*, Soyinka's poems about being an African in London and Greene's *The Heart of the Matter*. The discussion that followed raised no doubts that writing in any of the indigenous languages of Africa is unequivocally considered to be African literature. At the same time, it voiced opinions that writing by an African in any of the former colonial languages, i.e. in English, French, Portuguese, Spanish or Italian, should primarily be considered as African literature, and only secondarily as English, French, Portuguese, etc., literature. It was suggested that provenance plays an important role in deciding what is, and what is not, African literature. A native African writer, no matter whether black or white, will continue to write African literature whether he writes about an African situation or about his experiences abroad. On the other hand, the works of a non-African writer, such as Joyce Cary, even if they are set in Africa, will continue to be considered as English literature in an African setting.

Four years later, the African-Scandinavian Writers' Conference, held near Stockholm in February 1967, did not address the issue of defining African literature directly, but the question kept lurking in the papers and discussions. In his *Opening Remarks* Per Wästberg quotes, somewhat critically, the definition put forward at the conference at Fourah Bay College, but his conclusion is that 'you cannot define African literature as one single unit with certain characteristics. One is forced to use the term "African literature" in a deliberately loose way, remembering that what constitutes African literature is a number of national and ethnic literatures throughout Africa' (Wästberg, 1968:11). The question he raises here about 'African literature' as a meaningful entity and about it being a cliché into which are squeezed writers representing a multi-levelled reality is a troubling one which does not seem to have had sufficient attention ever since.

There have, however, been critics who believe this issue to be relevant and important enough for consideration. Edgar Wright, when giving his working definition of African literature, confines the term to writers from sub-Saharan or Black Africa and excludes those who are of European descent. He argues that we are dealing with a number of national literatures which have certain common elements though exceptions and variations inevitably occur. Wright maintains that it is the degree of commonness that is important, whose elements he lists as follows:

- (i) There is at most only a brief history of written literature, but a strong tradition of oral literature that is still alive.
- (ii) The vernaculars (there may be many within the country) are still actively used at all levels of normal social and family life.
- (iii) English is the second language common throughout the country, used as a medium of education (at higher if not at lower levels) and as the medium of communication with other countries in Africa and beyond.
- (iv) The past history is that of a colonial territory subject to cultural, political and missionary as well as linguistic influence from Britain.
- (v) The present history is one of achieved independence, with a growing awareness of both national identity and modern problems.
- (vi) There is an acute racial awareness based on colour.
- (vii) Traditional culture (possibly a number of individual cultures) is a major influence on the development of the contemporary national culture and its accompanying attitudes and beliefs. (Wright, 1973:6-7)

Wästberg's and Wright's view finds a supporter twenty years later in Oyekan Owomoyela, who writes that concepts like 'African literature', 'European literature', 'Asian literature' are all geopolitical constructs made up of a number of distinct elements, especially languages and nationalities. Africa comprises a number of different nations, just as Europe and Asia do. Consequently, just as we use 'European literature' as an umbrella term for English, French, German, Russian, etc., literatures and 'Asian literature' as an umbrella term for Chinese,

Japanese, Indian, Korean, etc., literatures, "'African literature' must be seen as a convenient shorthand for the many distinctive literatures of the African continent" (Owomoyela, 1993:364).

In the discussions that followed Wole Soyinka's talk on *The Writer in a Modern African State* at the 1967 Stockholm conference, Alex La Guma seemed conscious about the oversimplified nature of his own definition: 'African literature or Scandinavian literature or American or English literature is simply that which concerns itself with the realities of its prospective or appropriate societies. African literature concerns itself with the realities of Africa' (La Guma in Wästberg, 1968:22).

At the same conference, in his paper *Individualism and Social Commitment*, Lewis Nkosi challenges the notion of socially committed literature maintaining that, although being a public figure or a revolutionary is not incompatible with being a poet, it has got very little direct relationship with literature. In his opinion the claim that the poets and writers of Africa should, or are going to, provide a vision of the future of Africa is false and misleading. It is rather the originality writers exhibit in their exploration of the human condition that strikes us as prophetic. 'A writer's special commitment is to language and its renewal and to the making of a better instrument for the delineation of human character' (Nkosi, 1968:48).

Virgilio de Lemos joins Nkosi in addressing the more subtle question of the quality of writing saying that it is not the theme chosen by the writer that determines the quality of a literary work. What is important for the writer is to use the language in a mature and skilful way to influence people through it.

It may be noted here that according to Rand Bishop, who did extensive research on the relevant documents in English and French that appeared between 1947 and 1966, French-speaking African writers made fewer attempts to define African literature than their English-speaking counterparts. Bishop believes that francophone writers were less interested in the search for a definition of African writing because of their preoccupation with Négritude. It also seems likely that they considered Négritude to be the definition of African literature.

2.3.2 *An all-inclusive perspective: Martin Tucker and Oladele Taiwo*

In his book *Africa in Modern Literature* published in 1967 Martin Tucker devotes a full chapter to the problem of defining African literature. The questions he seeks to answer are whether it is a prerequisite for a writer to be African or of African descent to be able to write African literature; whether literature created by writers throughout the world 'about the milieu, essence, and the thematic and psychic particularities of the African continent' (Tucker, 1967:2) is African literature; whether African literature should be restricted to works written in any of the African languages or works by such writers as Hemingway or Cary can be considered as part of African literature. In his attempt to answer these questions he makes a reference to the conclusions of the conference of African writers held at Makerere University College in 1962 discussed above, and quotes that 'the essential elements of African literature were the African viewpoint ... the moral values, the philosophy, and customs of African society' (Bloke Modisane in Tucker, 1967:3). Tucker's own view is that writers not born in Africa may form part of African literature if their works carry the feel and the spirit of the African continent, though he adds that a sense of proportion should be observed with regard to all categories and classifications; it is not only spiritual and psychic qualities that have to be taken into account when determining what distinguishes African literature but geographic content and biography, as well. He establishes four broad divisions by which African writers can, in his opinion, be best characterized:

- 1) the non-African writer who treats the subject matter of Africa in a language other than African;
- 2) the African writer, black or white, who deals with the subject matter of Africa in an African language;
- 3) the African writer whose subject matter is other than Africa but who writes in an African language;
- 4) the African writer who treats the subject matter of Africa but does so in a non-African language which has become part of the means of communication in Africa.

According to this convenient outline all creative writing that has got something to do with the African continent either through subject matter or by the provenance and language of the writer goes under the umbrella of African literature.

Oladele Taiwo rejects the concept that African literature is that which is written by Africans, and that the works of non-African writers cannot be considered as part of it. He maintains that any work with an authentically African background should be considered African literature. He seems to agree with Tucker in that 'any work which is African in content and sympathy should be admitted into the body of African literature' (Taiwo, 1967:180). Somewhat contradictorily however, he supports the idea that African literature should be written in the indigenous languages of Africa and the growth of a literature indigenous to Africa should be encouraged.

2.3.3 *An attack on Eurocentricism: Janheinz Jahn*

A remarkable perspective is taken by Janheinz Jahn who launches an attack on a Eurocentric view of world literature. He points out that even today literature is classified by languages, a method of classification which was justifiable until the beginning of the 20th century. Literature was national literature, and from a literary point of view the nation was identical with the territory where the language was used. To be regarded as 'world literature', a work had to acquire importance outside its language areas and had not only to be translated into other languages, but it had to leave its mark in the literatures of other countries. Since European nations were in close contact with each other, many works crossed the linguistic frontiers and became promoted to the rank of 'world literature. But 'to achieve the same distinction, an important work written in a non-European language depended on three factors: first, a European to discover it; second, a European who knew the language well enough to translate it; and third, the luck to find favour with the prevailing taste in Europe' (Jahn, 1966:16). This meant that masterpieces of Indian, Arabic, Chinese and even the less exotic Hungarian literature were, and still are, excluded from 'world literature'. Though the basic concept of world literature asks for all national literatures, including those still unknown, to be considered equally, 'Europe felt she was the conductor, entitled to decide on key and beat, and also to exclude from the choir those who sang in exotic tones outside her comprehension' (Jahn, 1966:17).

Despite the fact that Janheinz Jahn throws light as early as the mid-1960s on the incomprehension, and one may add patronising, attitude of the Western reading public and critical circles towards non-European literatures, until quite recently this attitude has continued to dominate the way African literature is perceived.

When it comes to defining African literature, Jahn, unlike many others before him, is of the opinion that literature can no longer be classified by language, geographical areas, colour or birth-places of the authors for the simple reason that European languages and Arabic have spread beyond their traditional areas, geography provides no literary categories, and colour and provenance also fall outside the domain of literature. Though he gives no specific criteria, he believes that literature, be it European, American, Asian or African, can only be classified by style and the attitudes it reveals. Only by studying and analysing individual works can we fit them into a tradition of similar attitudes and styles and can we decide which literature they belong to.

Contemporary African literature has, in his opinion, two sources: traditional African literature and Western literature. The boundary between them is the boundary between oral and written literature, with traditional African literature showing no European influences and not being written down, and Western literature exhibiting no African stylistic features or patterns of expression. A work that reveals no African stylistic features or patterns of expression belongs to Western literature even if it is written by an African. Although Jahn acknowledges that simple as it is theoretically, this distinction is hard to make in practice, I believe it casts doubt on his contention that geographical factors and place of origin play no part in classifying which literature a work belongs to. Probably because it is rather difficult to pin down what exactly those African stylistic features and patterns of expression are, and because the question arises whether they can or have to be made uniform throughout Africa, the criteria that the definition of African literature hinges on remain debated even today.

Jahn, however, goes on to say that it is important to find out those “ingredients of ‘Africanism’” (Jahn, 1966: 23) which prompt us to speak about African literature in English, French and Portuguese rather than English, French and Portuguese literature in Africa. He is convinced that a literary work written by, quoting his example, a Yoruba author in English has to be examined not only for the modern ideas and influences from English literature, but also for the stylistic features that come from the Yoruba oral traditions. He seems to recognise the difficulty underlying such investigations but believes that the literary analysis of oral literature can be the first step towards understanding the literary forms of the oral traditions. Following this line of argument, and contrary to his earlier statement about where writers should be placed, Jahn seems to come to a more cautious conclusion when he says that it would be superficial, and probably a mistake, to assign an African writer who writes in a European language to Western

literature on the basis that his work does not exhibit 'Africanisms' which are recognisable at first sight.

Despite the uncertainties present in his argumentation, Jahn manages to put forth a very important point. Namely, that when discussing the question of what constitutes African literature, it is not the concept of authentically handled African setting, nor experiences originating from Africa, nor a concern with the realities of Africa, not even 'the milieu, essence and the thematic and psychic peculiarities of the African continent' (Tucker, 1967:2), or the moral values, the philosophy and customs of African society that are of primary importance. They may or may not yield literary categories. What needs to be looked at first and foremost is style and patterns of literary expression and their relationship with African stylistic features stemming from traditional African oral literature.

2.3.4 *Africa-centred consciousness: Nadine Gordimer*

'What is African writing? Must one be black or brown in order to write it, or may one be any old colour? Must the work deal with situations that couldn't come about in quite the same way anywhere else in the world? Or can it deal with matters that preoccupy people everywhere? May it be written in one of the world languages which came to Africa in Colonial times, or must it be written in African languages?' - asks Nadine Gordimer in her collection of essays on African literature entitled *The Black Interpreters* (1973:5). The very fact that she opens her book with these questions shows that about a quarter of a century after the emergence of modern African literature the debate on what it actually is and how it should be defined is still very much alive.

Gordimer's own answer is so terse and compact that any summary would only do harm to it. To her, African writing is

any writing done in any language by Africans themselves and by others of whatever skin colour who share with Africans the experience of having been shaped, mentally and spiritually, by Africa rather than anywhere else in the world. One must look at the world *from Africa*, to be an African writer, not look *upon Africa* from the world. Given this Africa-centred consciousness, the African writer can write about what he pleases, and even about other countries, and still his work will belong to African literature (Gordimer, 1973:5).

Gordimer is also aware that when considering African writing, the criteria to be used for definition must be carefully selected. The question here is whether we are approaching it as testimony of social change, or as literature. If we consider it as testimony of social change, then anything written is of interest and justifies publication and study. If, however, we consider it as literature, it is exclusively the quality of the writing and the creative gift of the writer that matters. She believes that from a literary point of view the ideal achievement occurs when a man's experience and his talent are equal to each other. Though this concurrence is far from being common in any literature, this is the only canon which she deems worthwhile in measuring the achievements of literature.

Gordimer maintains that modern African literature is essentially a committed literature because it is motivated by a deep need to protest and demand. It has taken inspiration from the expression and assertion of the African personality, and it is this assertion that underlies political action and seeks recognition through political autonomy. The novel whose theme is the political struggle itself simply represents the most obvious aspects of this commitment.

As far as the future of African writing is concerned, Gordimer builds her judgement on ideas expressed by Claude Wauthier in his book entitled *The Literature and Thought of Modern Africa*. Wauthier suggests that when independence is gained, the purpose of the impetus of the cultural renaissance is fulfilled, and in addition to historical novels about national heroes and about the fight for independence, in the construction of African socialism 'an aggressive literature might be developed, criticising the go-getting of some, the opportunism of others, abusive profits, and customs shackling economic development' (Wauthier, 1966:280). Gordimer believes that if Wauthier is right, African literature will remain essentially a committed literature.

2.3.5 *Self-definition in action and commitment to education: Chinua Achebe*

Chinua Achebe has spoken out and written on many various aspects of African literature though he does not seem to be keen on defining it. At a conference on African literature at Dalhousie University, Canada he said that 'African literature would define itself in action; so why not leave it alone?' (Achebe, 1973:49). He echoes Wästberg when saying that African literature cannot be crammed into a small, neat definition. It is not one unit, but a group of associated

units, 'the sum total of all the *national* and *ethnic* literatures of Africa' (Achebe, 1964:56; cf. Wästberg, 1968:11 quoted in 2.3.1).

Deferring a definition does not mean, however, that Achebe has no clear-cut ideas about African literature. In his paper entitled *Thoughts on the African Novel*, which he delivered at the above-mentioned conference, he expresses his conviction that the African novel has to be about Africa. However, he rejects the suggestion that Conrad's *Heart of Darkness* is African literature on the grounds that Africa is not only a geographical entity but also a 'metaphysical landscape', 'a view of the world ... from a particular position' (Achebe, 1973:50; cf. Gordimer, 1973:5 quoted above), which position is not even a matter of colour since the literary scene in Africa is shared by blacks and whites alike.

Achebe believes in committed literature. His commitment, though, is not to any political cause but to educating his people about their past, thus helping them to raise their self-esteem and regain their true identity.

Here then is an adequate revolution for me to espouse - to help my society regain belief in itself and put away the complexes of the years of denigration and self-abasement. And it is essentially a question of education, in the best sense of that word. ... You have all heard of the African personality; of African democracy, of the African way to socialism, of negritude, and so on. They are all props we have fashioned at different times to help us get on our feet again. Once we are up we shan't need them any more. ...

The writer cannot expect to be excused from the task of re-education and regeneration that must be done. ...

I for one would not wish to be excused. I would be quite satisfied if my novels (especially the ones set in the past) did no more than teach my readers that their past - with all its imperfections - was not one long night of savagery from which the first Europeans acting on God's behalf delivered them. Perhaps what I write is applied art as distinct from pure. But who cares? Art is important but so is education of the kind I have in mind. And I don't see that the two need be mutually exclusive. (Achebe, 1965b:44-45)

On this point, like on many others, Achebe is not without supporters. Such distinguished writers as Camara Laye of Guinea⁶ and Kofi Awoonor of Ghana⁷, just to mention two, agree with him that the African writer has a mission to help people to grasp the significance of the past and civilisation of Africa.

2.3.6 Decolonising African Literature: Chinweizu, Jemie and Madubuike

Attacks on the Eurocentric view of African literature become more and more fierce by the beginning of the 1980s, when a new generation of Africans enters the scene of literary criticism. One of the most powerful and influential books of this period is *Toward the Decolonization of African Literature* by Chinweizu, Onwuchekwa Jemie and Ihechukwu Madubuike. In their attempt to define African literature they employ set theory borrowed from mathematics, which might seem quite outlandish at first sight, though the approach of borrowing a theory from science and applying it to literature is not without examples: the Hungarian Zoltán Abádi Nagy, in his *Válság és komikum* (Budapest: Magvető, 1982), a study of contemporary American literature, applies the theory of entropy successfully to point out tendencies of development in the American novel. Chinweizu, Jemie and Madubuike's concern is with concepts and the sets they denote, evolving and non-evolving sets, and the intensional and extensional definitions. Their conclusion is that

the concept of African literature, like the concept of other national or regional literatures, is one whose denotation is an *evolving set*. It cannot be defined with simple, clear-cut, dictionary-like definition, through an enumeration of necessary and sufficient conditions. ... A fruitful procedure ... would be to approach the matter as one requiring an *extensional definition* in which *family resemblances* are pragmatically employed to decide which of any doubtful or borderline cases should be included with the indisputable canon of African literature. (Chinweizu, Jemie and Madubuike, 1980: 307-308)

The central issue for them is the criteria by which African literature should be judged. In their attempt to define these criteria they seek an answer to what African literature is, i.e. what works and for what reasons can be regarded as part of the body of African literature; and what the relationship between these works and other national and regional literatures is.

The criteria for classification Chinweizu, Jemie and Madubuike apply in defining African literature are *regional literatures* – for example European literature – which include many *national literatures* in different languages, and *language literatures*, some of which include several national literatures. The example they give for *language literatures* is English language literature, which includes British national literature; the national literatures of those countries where English is the native language, e.g. the United States, Canada, Australia and New Zealand; and the national literatures of those countries where English is not the mother tongue of the population but has been established as an official language, which is the case in many of the former British colonies. They observe that attempts to include African literature in the body

of European literatures have been made in the case of African works which are written in a European language, the argument for their inclusion being the very fact that the language used is non-African. However, they strongly oppose such claims and state that it is not language but ethos that is a crucial factor in determining which national or regional literature a particular work belongs to. Although language embodies cultural values and is a vehicle for expressing them, it is not the main generator of these values and as such, is not the only factor to be relied on for literary criteria. In addition, they maintain that *national criteria* are more important in determining critical standards than *language criteria*. To illustrate this they mention that although Chinua Achebe's works are written in English, and therefore may be considered as part of *English-language literature*, they can by no means be criticised with British national values. It is especially the difference between Igbo and British experience and values that makes Achebe mould the English language so that it can carry his Igbo experience and values.

When it comes to the actual definition of African literature, they claim that

works done for African audiences, by Africans, and in African languages, whether these works are oral or written, constitute the historically indisputable core of African literature. Works done by Africans but in non-African languages, and works done by non-Africans in African languages, would be among those for which some legitimate doubt might be raised about their inclusion or exclusion from the canon of works of African literature, and it is for them that some decision procedure would have to be established. (Chinweizu, Jemie and Madubuike, 1980:11-12)

For this decision procedure they suggest four main considerations, which they rank in the following order of importance:

- (1) the primary audience for whom the work is done;
- (2) the cultural and national consciousness expressed in the work, whether through the author's voice or through the characters and their consciousness, habits, compoment and diction;
- (3) the nationality of the writer, whether by birth or naturalization ...;
- (4) the language in which the work is done. (Chinweizu, Jemie and Madubuike, 1980:13-14)

It is based on these criteria that they classify the works of such writers as Amos Tutuola, Ayi Kwei Armah, Efua Sutherland, Ama Ata Aidoo, Flora Nwapa, Davidson Abioseh Nicol, Okot p'Bitek, Denis Brutus, Peter Abrahams, Ngugi wa Thiong'o, Chinua Achebe or Ezekiel

Mphahlele as African literature, and exclude Joyce Cary's *Mister Johnson* and Joseph Conrad's *Heart of Darkness* from the canon of African literature. They acknowledge, however, that classification becomes more difficult in the case of expatriate African writers and works set in places outside Africa. Bringing the examples of Gertrude Stein, James Baldwin, Ezra Pound, Samuel Beckett, T.S. Eliot, W.H. Auden and Vladimir Nabokov, they suggest that it is perhaps not impossible for a writer to belong to two or more regional or national literatures, and it is 'a judicious exercise of commonsense' that has to be called for in borderline situations.

Chinweizu, Jemie and Madubuike have clear-cut ideas about the direction in which they would like African literature to develop. They express great dissatisfaction at the absence of traditional forms of oral literature such as narrative poems, parables, paradoxes, myths, legends, proverbs, songs, dirges, epics and boasts from poetry, and tales, legends, allegories, parables and fables from prose. Their opinion is that privatist and protest poetry has overshadowed traditional forms, themes and treatment in the corpus of modern African poetry, which no longer seems to reflect the diversity of African interests and activities. Although they do not denounce private themes in poetry, they ask that these should be made lucid and accessible. Protest poetry, on the other hand, should not be directed exclusively to Europe and America, but it should also be addressed to an African audience as criticism of the illegal and dishonest acts of Africans. As far as narrative prose is concerned, they would like to see traditional forms not only incorporated into novels and short stories, but also continued in their own right. At the same time, they would like the authors to utilise the traditional style of oral rendition, which would make it possible for the audience to transform from readers to participant-listeners. In this way, some of the dramatic performance dimensions of traditional African narrative could be incorporated into modern African prose writing.

The incorporation and development of traditional techniques of orature should go a long way towards infusing eloquence into our poetry, improving the narrative style of our prose, and imparting a genuinely African flavor to both. Thus, some central concern of experimentation for the decolonization of our prose and poetic techniques would be the continuation of traditional forms with a pouring of new wine into old bottles, as it were; the incorporation of these forms as elements in novels, poems and short stories; the employment of traditional devices in saturating quantities that will impart an African tone to the product; and the development out of all these of new forms and techniques suitable for rendering new aspects of the contemporary African reality. (Chinweizu, Jemie and Madubuike, 1980:261)

Further on they consider three aspects of narrative rhetoric: (1) narrative language; (2) the handling of expository material unfamiliar to some of the African audience; and (3) the utilisation of descriptive and characterisation techniques that derive from African orature.

Of narrative language they say that there is a need for experimentation for two reasons: a) because Africans use the English language differently from the way the English use it; and b) because each African language has its own rhetorical devices which are peculiar to the community and are the legacy of its cultural inheritance. To be able to capture the flavour of African life, the English language has to be flexed and its boundaries expanded so that it could represent these idiomatic and rhetoric usages. If the modern African novel in English is to capture the stylistic features of the African oral narrative, a full range of linguistic resources of African prose traditions, such as proverbs, legends, fables, puns, similes, metaphors, allusions, hyperboles, rhetorical devices of conversation, just to mention a few, need to be rendered in English so that their original flavour is preserved. In addition, there is the task of showing no embarrassment at deviating from standard English and appropriately rendering in the novels the various types of English, i.e. register, that are spoken by Africans.

As far as the introduction of expository material is concerned, Chinweizu, Jemie and Madubuike remind us that the primary audience for the African novel is the African audience, so features that are common to or understandable by most African cultures, e.g. extended family, polygamy, libation pouring, sacrifice to ancestors, do not have to be introduced. 'Expositions required solely by the deficiencies of non-African audiences ought not to be encouraged' (Chinweizu, Jemie and Madubuike, 1980:264). If, however, some information, be it anthropological, sociological or other, which is important for the narrative has to be introduced, it has to be done so that it gets integrated in the narrative flow without interrupting it and without detracting the reader's attention from it.

As for the utilisation of descriptive devices and characterisation techniques, they suggest that African writers should make more use of resources derived from the oral tradition, for example ideophones, descriptive names, praise names, metaphorical descriptions, germane and recognisable allusions, and onomatopoeic imagery.

2.4 Problems of Language

Culture embodies those moral, ethical and aesthetic values, the set of spiritual eyeglasses, through which they [human beings] come to view themselves and their place in the universe. Values are the basis of a people's identity, their sense of particularity as members of the human race. All this is carried by language. Language as culture is the collective memory bank of a people's experience in history. Culture is almost indistinguishable from the language that makes possible its genesis, growth, banking, articulation and indeed its transmission from one generation to the next. (Ngugi, 1986:14:15)

There are perhaps only two African writers who justified their choice of a European language by asserting its intrinsic superiority over African languages. Davidson Abioseh Nicol questioned the technical ability of African languages to adapt themselves to the writers' inspiration. Léopold Sédar Senghor, in turn, openly defended the literary use of French over African languages for aesthetic reasons. In a lyrical outpouring of his admiration he describes the French language in the following words:

... le français est une langue 'de gentillesse et d'honnêteté'. ... je sais ses ressources pour l'avoir goûté, mâché, enseigné, et qu'il est la langue des dieux. ...Et puis le français nous a fait don de mots abstraits - si rare dans nos langues maternelles -, où les larmes se font pierres précieuses. Chez nous, les mots sont naturellement nimbés d'un halo de sève et de sang; les mots du français rayonnent de mille feux, comme des diamants. Des fusées qui éclairent notre nuit. (Senghor quoted in Ngugi, 1986:32)

(... French is a language of 'kindness and honesty'. ...I know its potential because I have tasted it, explored its depth, taught it, and I know that it is the language of gods. ...And then French gave us abstract words - so rare in our mother tongues - which turn the tears into precious stones. In our languages the words are, by nature, surrounded with a halo of sap and blood; French words sparkle with thousands of rays like diamonds. Thousands of brilliant sparks and starts that light up our night. - My translation.)

The Nigerian critic Obiajunwa Wali in his article *The Dead End of African Literature?* published in *Transition* (10, September 1963) refused to accept what Achebe calls the 'fatalistic logic' of the position of European languages in African writing. He argues that African literature must be written in African languages, one of his main arguments being that the African writer writing in a European language would produce only an inferior version of what he or she is capable of creating in an African language:

An African writer who thinks and feels in his own language *must* write in that language. The question of transliteration, whatever that means, is unwise as it is unacceptable, for the “original” which is spoken of here, is the real stuff of literature and the imagination, and must not be discarded in favour of a copy. (Wali Quoted in Bishop, 1988:29)

Wali's view received both support and rejection from fellow critics and writers. Niyi Osundare, for example, suggests that instead of struggling with ‘lexical equivocations’ and ‘masochistic linguistic acrobatics’ the writers would be better off writing in their own languages (in Owomoyela, 1993:359-60). Mphahlele, on the other hand, states that the colonial languages serve as a unifying force within African nations.

English and French have become the common language with which to present a national front against white oppressors. Where the white man has already retreated, as in the independent states, these two languages are still a unifying force. By stages, each of the various states will need to find an African official language for itself. ... In the meantime are we going to fold our arms and wait for that kingdom to come? The creative instinct always runs ahead of social, political, and economic developments; and the creative impulse cannot wait for such developments before it expresses itself. (Mphahlele quoted in Bishop, 1988: 28-29)

Some critics, like the Ghanaian poet Michael Dei-Anang, suggest that the African writer's choice of a second-language as a literary vehicle raises questions of a psychological rather than a technical nature. In his statement in 1960 Dei-Anang wrote:

In the long run ... Africans, whether they be French or Portuguese or English by historical or political affiliation, can best express their innermost feeling in their mother tongue with the complex and expanding matrix of traditional life as a fitting background. (Dei-Anang quoted in Bishop, 1988:30-31)

Others, like Achebe, emphasise the practical nature of the choice: ‘There are scores of languages I would want to learn if it were possible. Where am I to find the time to learn the half-a-dozen or so Nigerian languages each of which can sustain literature?’ (Achebe quoted in Bishop, 1988:31). He is of the opinion that ‘a language spoken by Africans on African soil, a language in which Africans write, justifies itself’ (Achebe, 1973:50). In an earlier paper entitled *The African Writer and the English Language* he explains that given the language situation of Africa with approximately one thousand languages, the former colonial languages, i.e. English, French and Portuguese, function as national languages, and serve as the means of mutual

communication across ethnic and language boundaries. A literature written in one of these languages is a national literature because a whole nation is its actual or potential audience. At the same time, ethnic literatures are written in the indigenous African languages. He defends authors who choose to write in a European language saying that they are not 'unpatriotic smart alecs with an eye on the main chance - outside their own countries. They are the by-products of the same process that made the new nation states of Africa' (Achebe, 1964:57). At the same time, he maintains that a world language like English must be prepared to pay the price of being submitted to different kinds of use. The African writer should aim at moulding English so that it is able to express his peculiar experience while retaining its value as a means of international communication.

Achebe's view is contradicted by Owomoyela, who maintains that put properly in historical perspective, the use of European languages ceases to be a necessity despite the attempt of some 'Europhone writers' and 'Europhile critics' to assert its indispensability (Owomoyela, 1993:365).

Ngugi wa Thiong'o takes a revolutionary stance on the language question claiming that 'the language of African literature cannot be discussed meaningfully outside the context of those social forces which have made it both an issue demanding our attention and a problem calling for resolution' (Ngugi, 1986:4). In his opinion there are two contending social forces exerting influence on the language issue: imperialism in its colonial and neo-colonial phases, which, he says, continues to control the economy, politics and culture of Africa on the one hand, and the struggle of African people to liberate themselves, on the other hand. 'The choice of language and the use to which language is put is central to a people's definition of themselves in relation to their natural and social environment, indeed in relation to the entire universe' (Ngugi, 1986:4). Ngugi claims that this choice for African people has been determined by the European powers which divided Africa into English-speaking, French-speaking and Portuguese-speaking countries; countries which in turn came to define themselves in terms of these European languages. According to him, the writers who opt for European languages accept what Achebe called the 'fatalistic logic of the unassailable position of English in our literature' (Achebe, 1974:xiv) and are preoccupied with how best these borrowed languages can carry the weight of their African experience.

Achebe, Tutuola and Okara are regarded as three alternative models of how the English language can be moulded to this end. Achebe uses proverbs abundantly, which is best

exemplified in his *Things Fall Apart* and *Arrow of God*. He also adopted another device, i.e. the use of relatively simple words of Anglo-Saxon origin in preference to words with Greek or Latin roots, to suggest the 'lyricism and dignified profundity characteristic of traditional discourse' (Owomoyela, 1993:359), but the best examples of this are found in Ayi Kwei Armah's *The Healers* and *Two Thousand Seasons*. Tutuola is famed for calquing (or loan-translation), which is abundant, for example, in his *The Palm-wine Drinkard* and *My Life in the Bush of Ghosts*, though in his case it is attributed to the poor acquisition of the European language. Okara's *The Voice* is reputed for its use of morpho-syntactic relexification (i.e. fashioning English according to the rules of the original African language syntax). A detailed discussion of these various devices collectively known as indigenisation will follow in Chapter 4.

Ngugi is opposed to this 'mission of enriching foreign languages by injecting Senghorian "black blood" into their rusty joints' (Ngugi, 1986:7) for the simple reason that 'it is the final triumph of a system of domination when the dominated start singing its virtues' (Ngugi, 1986:20). Rather, he asks how African writers can enrich their own languages and why African writers do not create literary movements in their own languages. The answer, to him, lies in the impact of colonisation and neo-colonisation:

Berlin of 1884 was effected through the sword and the bullet. But the night of the sword and the bullet was followed by the morning of the chalk and the blackboard. The physical violence of the battlefield was followed by the psychological violence of the classroom. But where the former was visibly brutal, the latter was visibly gentle ... In my view language was the most important vehicle through which that power fascinated and held the soul prisoner. The bullet was the means of the physical subjugation. Language was the means of the spiritual subjugation. (Ngugi, 1986:9)

The consequence of the suppression of African languages and the literature they carried and the elevation of English and other European languages and the literature they carried was alienation; alienation of the African from his own self to other selves and from his own world to other worlds (Ngugi, 1986:12).

Given the linguistic medium of its message, Ngugi identifies creative writing by Africans in European languages as the literature of the petty-bourgeoisie educated in colonial schools and universities. His opinion is echoed by Owomoyela, who writes somewhat later:

Modern African literature is a product of the assimilated elite. When they tried their hands at creative writing they had no other choice of language than that of their education. Also, given the stigma of inferiority that attached to the use of African languages in the colonial era, the educated African felt hardly any misgiving about preferring European substitutes. (Owomoyela, 1993:352)

Ngugi's view is that the accession of this class to political and economic power is reflected in the rise and development of this literature. Since, however, this literature was the literature, to use Ngugi's terminology, of the nationalistic or patriotic bourgeoisie, internationally it helped this class to explain and show to the rest of the world that 'Africa had a past and a culture of dignity and human complexity' (Ngugi, 1986:20); internally, on the other hand, it lent confidence to the petty-bourgeoisie by giving it a 'cohesive tradition and a common literary frame of reference, which it otherwise lacked with its uneasy roots in the culture of the peasantry and in the culture of the metropolitan bourgeoisie' (Ngugi, 1986:21); confidence with which to confront the colonial powers. Initially, then, this literature was part of the anti-colonial and anti-imperialist struggle. But when, after independence, the hopes of the people were betrayed by the bourgeoisie that agreed to a neo-colonial arrangement, it became more critical, disillusioned and bitter in tone. Since the criticism was directed towards the 'traditional' audience of this literature, i.e. towards the imperialist bourgeoisie, the petty-bourgeoisie in power and the military, the literature of the educated elite had to search for new audience in other social strata, mainly amongst the working class and the peasantry. The movement towards the people was, however, impeded by the limits of the European languages. It could not go any further than that section of the petty-bourgeoisie which was still in closest touch with the people: the teachers, students, secretaries, for example. It stopped there, 'caged within the linguistic fence of its colonial inheritance' (Ngugi, 1986:22). Albert Gérard describes this situation as follows:

Paradoxically, they still use the European languages in spite of the obvious fact that the experiences, thoughts, emotions and concerns of any particular community cannot find suitable expression through the inevitably distorting medium of an alien language. The predominance of foreign-language writing merely perpetuates the unfair distribution of power between an elite of esoteric cognoscenti and the muted, blinded majority of those who have not mastered the magic idiom of leadership. (Gérard, 1984:22)

Ngugi observes that the literature in European languages was given the identity of African literature as if there had never existed literature in African languages before. Of the petty-bourgeoisie he ironically remarks that 'if it had been left entirely to this class, African languages would have ceased to exist - with independence!' (Ngugi, 1986:22).

Ngugi shares the opinion of those who maintain that, despite its claims, this literature is not African literature but a hybrid tradition which can best be termed as Afro-European literature, and he defines it as literature written by Africans in European languages in the era of imperialism. Although it undeniably produced many talented writers and many works of genuine critical merit, there is a growing number of African writers who give African languages a written literature. In 1977 Ngugi himself said farewell to the English language as the medium of his creative writing out of his conviction that

African literature can only be written in African languages, that is, the languages of the African peasantry and working class, the major alliance of classes in each of our nationalities and the agency for the coming inevitable revolutionary break with neo-colonialism. (Ngugi, 1986:27)

His book *Decolonizing the Mind* is meant to be his farewell to English as the medium of all his writing. Now he writes in Gikuyu and Swahili, but through translation he hopes to be available to all. His determination, however, is not received without scepticism. It is pointed out that he may not be so sure of his decision if he had not achieved literary acclaim in English, with his non-English works becoming instant subjects of translation to English as a consequence (Saro-Wiwa, 1992:156).

2.5 Problems of audience

Who is the audience of the contemporary African writer? The bored Euro-American liberal literati searching for literary exotica in the African quarters of their empire? The African elite trained away from themselves in institutions of European design? (Kgositsile in Lefevere, 1992:124)

The problems of language choice for creative use inevitably bring with them problems relating to who the audience of modern Europhone African literature is.

With few exceptions, African writers claim to be writing for Africans first and foremost⁸. For a number of reasons, however, we find a rather limited reading public in Africa.

Firstly, high levels of literacy, either in European or African languages, benefiting large sections of the population, have never been widespread on the African continent. During the past couple of decades even existing literacy levels have been seriously undermined by the IMF-imposed Structural Adjustment Programmes which require that governments spend less and less on education because such spending is allegedly a waste of the revenue⁹.

Secondly, as I observe in an earlier article, many of those who are literate in an African or European language, or both, use their literacy functionally to get about the business of everyday life, i.e. they read newspapers, letters, the Bible, specialised professional literature, exam material, etc. (Egri Ku-Mesu 1998b). The habit of reading for intellectual enjoyment seems to be almost non-existent in Africa. Egejuru writes:

My concern is that because of the way we are brought up, we are not given the taste to read novels after we leave school. After elementary school and secondary school, you can hardly find a civil servant buying and reading novels. I don't see what chance you have of getting your books read except at the university level. (1980:99-100)

This brings up an interesting point. Namely, that literature, i.e. elite literature, seems to be associated with reading extensively, with reading long works like novels, which appear in the form of books. On the one hand, this may seem to suggest that whatever is not published in a book form, or does not require extensive reading, for example poetry, short fiction, drama and the like, is not seriously considered to form part of the body of literature. On the other hand, it raises a practical issue: Reading is not only a relatively new phenomenon, but it is closely connected with economic development. Books are expensive, therefore a luxury beyond the reach of most ordinary Africans. The key element for the peoples of Africa is still the struggle with nature, and, for a long time to come, winning that struggle remains their primary goal over such matters of comparatively little import as reading for intellectual enjoyment¹⁰.

The reasons for the lack of interest in reading for pleasure and entertainment cannot, however, be blamed solely on education. Such essentially solitary activities as reading, which go down well in individualistic Western societies, appear to be displaced in interdependent African culture, where shared experience tends to be more valued and appreciated. Chakava writes:

... most Kenyans do not read beyond completion of their formal education unless it is for professional achievement. This habit is largely blamed on the colonial education system, which emphasized education for achievement rather than

education for life. The fact that this attitude still lingers on, thirty years after independence, means there may be more to this problem than meets the eye. Cultural factors also have negative effect on reading. African people, in general, derive more pleasure and are able to communicate more easily through oral and performing arts – through talking, singing, dancing, music, and drama. Communication through the book is a private undertaking, the pursuit of which alienates readers from their own community, whose ideal form of entertainment comes through participation in communal activities. Communication with a book is a one-way process that many Kenyans find idle and boring. This attitude may be due, in part, to the kind of books that Kenyans have been exposed to so far. Many of them do not appeal to the particular and daily concerns of Kenyans and are mostly written in English, a foreign language accessible to less than 20 percent of the country's population. Furthermore, most of the mother tongue languages do not have developed orthographies, so that even when books are written in them, the characters on the page do not always conform to the sounds intended, making reading difficult and helping further to alienate one from a language one knows so well. (1995:392)

Thirdly, Egejuru observes that 'the subject matter of African writers and its presentation seems to respond more to the literary taste of the Western bourgeoisie' (1980:15). The wider African readership appears to favour popular literature over 'high' literature because while popular literature avoids reality through sublimation, elite literature transcends it through symbolic inversion. The common people, however, do not seek complexity in their literature. When they turn to literature, they try to find solutions to the complexities of life; solutions which are readily offered by the often unambiguous world of popular fiction where good is rewarded and evil is punished (Priebe, 1997:87-88).

Ezekiel Mphahlele is of the opinion that if a writer is not fortunate enough to have his book chosen as required reading material in school, 'You don't get read at all!' (in Egejuru, 1980:29). The reality, also expressed by Femi Osofisan¹¹, is that in Africa elite Europhone literature is read by those who are literate in the European language and can afford to spend on it. This is the educated middle class in general, and students of literature and university lecturers in particular. Such a limited audience is hardly capable of supporting the livelihood of its writers.

In practice, whatever their claim may be, African writers write for a predominantly non-African audience. Isola observes that

African writers who publish their works in foreign languages are confusing their market with their audience. A genuine audience inhabits the same literary ecosystem as a writer and can immediately understand the writer's allusions to culturally significant events, objects, people, and situations. In contrast, a market consists of people who do not inhabit the same literary ecosystem as the writer. These people can only try to understand the writer's exotic story and appreciate his literary qualities from a distance.

When Africans write in African languages, their audience is their market. It is necessarily restricted. When Africans write in foreign languages, they might still capture a few readers in their own countries (where literacy rates are as low as ten percent). But their potential market is enormous. (1992:25)

Multiple as it is because it is composed of native and non-native speakers of the European language used by the African writer, the non-African readership is not part of the African writer's ecosystem. It is removed from the writer's world in space and culture and has a different linguistic background. The only common ground between writer and this audience is the knowledge of the language of literary communication. As we have seen, and will see in the next section, such a situation may lead to the misinterpretation, and sometimes even incomprehension, of works by African writers.

2.6 Problems of critical standards

Critical standards derive from aesthetics. Aesthetics are culture dependent. Therefore critical standards must derive from culture. (Okpaku quoted in Bishop, 1988:179)

Fairly soon after its inception, the new literature emerging from Africa began to be supported by critical writing. Articles and critical studies on literary works created by Africans appeared, writers spoke out about their works, motivation and ideology. As we have seen, attempts to define, or rather to outline, what is African literature were made. Debates were launched about whether African literature should be a committed literature, about what language it should be written in, and about critical standards.

2.6.1 Criticism and rejection of Western critical standards

Chinua Achebe is among those African writers who first spoke out against applying Western critical standards to African literature. In his article entitled *Where Angels Fear to Tread* (1962), he denounces Eurocentric criticism. He distinguishes three broad types of critics: 1) 'the peevishly hostile, what-do-they-think-they-are breed', who cannot cope with the demise of the colonial era and turn their anger against the literature of the new independent nations; 2) the

ones who are amazed that Africans are capable of creative writing, and they do it in European languages; and 3) the group of critics who are not patronising and condescending towards the African writers but apply to them the same strict critical standards with which they judge other writers. Achebe dismisses the first two groups as unworthy of consideration but opens a dialogue with the third group. They, however, are doomed to suffering a heavy treatment at his hand. Achebe accuses them of increasing dogmatism, he feels annoyed by their 'cock-sureness' and their pronouncements which he feels they are not qualified to make because they do not have the special knowledge of Africa they think they possess. Though he is ready to give some credit to the conscientious Western critic, he maintains that the theories produced by him are no substitutes for insight. 'No man can understand another whose language he does not speak (and "language" here does not mean simply words, but a man's entire world view). How many Europeans and Americans have our language? I do not know of any, certainly not among our writers and critics' (Achebe, 1962:48).

Bernth Lindfors's classification of critics of African literature makes an insightful comparison:

Critics of African literature tend to be either racists, nationalists or individualists. The racists devoutly believe in the africanité of African literature and usually seek to demonstrate that black African writers think alike and therefore write alike. ... Nationalist critics, on the other hand, are preoccupied with mapping the geography of African literature. ... A formal declaration of literary independence is normally based on the assumption that writers in a given country have more in common with one another than they do with writers in other countries. ... The individualist critic, to complete the trichotomy, concerns himself primarily with differences, for he is interested in defining the unique genius of the individual writer. (Lindfors, 1973:153-54)

Lindfors suggests that African literature could do with some other types of critic as well, for example with the tribalist who would bring an ethnic point of view to the study of African literature.

In a later article on the same issue entitled *Colonialist Criticism*, Achebe continues criticising the Western critic's limited experience and knowledge of Africa. He also argues that colonialist critics, as he calls them, show no willingness to accept 'the value of sensibilities' other than theirs and dismiss the African novel on the grounds that the novel is a peculiarly Western genre. However, he defends the African novel, drawing a witty parallel with music and saying that when the black people of America, deprived of their own musical instruments, started playing the white man's trumpet and trombone, they did indeed blow them in a way these instruments

had not been designed to be blown. The result, he says, was not waltz and foxtrot but jazz, and it was definitely not a loss to the world.

Solomon Ogbede Iyasere is yet another advocate of the conviction that critical assessment of African literature must be done by African critics. His starting point is Eldred Jones's argument at the Seminar on African Literature and the Universities held at Fourah Bay College in April 1963:

When the main critical voices are non-African there is a danger that the writers may come to emphasize the values which they think their foreign readership demands. This could lead to an expatriate literature produced by Africans, and to false artistic values. (Jones, 1965:89-90)

Iyasere says that the view represented by Jones derives from the fact that especially in the early African literary works Western critics emphasised the non-literary elements, such as the social and anthropological details and those aspects of African writing which they found exotic. As a consequence, a number of works of mediocre or no literary quality received critical acclaim from the 'Western liberal chic', as Iyasere puts it. He goes on to say that this situation caused many African writers and critics to agree with Jones, but their reasons for taking such a stand may be different from Jones's. The so-called 'engaged' critics see Western domination in literary criticism as another form of neo-colonialism. They not only object to such domination, but they reject Western critical standards, as well. Iyasere quotes Okpaku's energetic statement about criticism of African art and African critical standards:

The primary criticism of African arts must come from Africans using African standards. We cannot accept either of the existing two approaches to criticism of African literature. It is as undesirable to plead for leniency in criticizing African works as it is absurd for Lewis Nkosi to ask that Western critical standards be used. Western critical standards are developed in the Western tradition and are applied by Western critics to interpret and criticize Western literature to the Western audience. ... So, when the Western critic looks at an African work he immediately tries to find out which Western works it best resembles so he can use this to establish communication with the Western reader. His comparisons are made against the background of Western Literature and, therefore, Western Culture. By the same token, an African critic trying to relate African Literature or any literature to Africa must do so against the background of African Culture. He must draw upon the patterns of the African aesthetic. In other words, he must use African critical standards. (Okpaku quoted in Wright, 1973:4)

Iyasere summarises this view as one according to which 'African literature belongs to Africans alone and not to the public, and only Africans using undefined African standards can validly and judiciously evaluate African creative works' (Iyasere, 1975:21).

At variance with Okpaku and the group of critics who share his views, Iyasere maintains that African critics, despite all their 'inside knowledge,' have failed to provide a more insightful criticism. Most often, Iyasere says, critical responses are 'apologetic defences of mediocre works with a vehement display of misplaced hostility towards anyone ... who dares see fault in the contemporary novelist' (Iyasere, 1975:21). In his opinion the African critic, who himself is in the process of formation and development, seems to be uncertain as to which issues are of primary importance, and he often gets caught up in the kind of criticism which he calls 'a corruption of the critical which illuminates more about the critic's idiosyncrasies than the work examined' (Iyasere, 1975:21).

Iyasere is of the opinion that African critics must be sympathetic and encouraging to African writers but they must not, by any means, let themselves be blinded to their faults. Patriotic zeal, he says, should not be a factor in literary criticism. Relating his comments to the African novel he states: 'We cannot shrink from an honest evaluation of our writers *nor eliminate as "un-African" any formal aspects of the novel at which a writer may not be successful*' (Iyasere, 1975:23; adds emphasis). He criticises Abiola Irele's proposal not to include 'coherence' within the criteria for the evaluation of African literary works and says that to do such a thing would mean the underrating of the achievement and potential of African writers. '*We must not castrate in the name of "Africanism" the literature we cherish*' (Iyasere, 1975:24; added emphasis).

He condemns Western 'gratuitous paternalistic criticism' but insists that it is purely on literary, that is textual, grounds and not on patriotic and racial ones that critics should be put right. Differences of judgement can be settled only by turning directly to the text and by examining closely the work itself. 'If the work cannot stand by itself, for itself, then no amount of cultural apprenticeship nor narcissistic indulgence can defend it' (Iyasere, 1975:24).

Iyasere opposes the practice of passing off socio-anthropological commentary as literary criticism because such commentary, while being valid as extra-textual explanation, will always remain purely informative and descriptive, and not evaluative. He accuses African critics of trading on their cultural background and using it 'as a jumping-off place for an exhibition of our

knowledge of African customs and traditions - our "Africanism". "How African we are!" we seem to say, peddling our cultural heritage in much the same way that Benin bronzes are peddled in New York or Paris' (Iyasere, 1975:25). He insists that the mere fact of being African should not lead any critic to believe that his explanations are inevitably better than those of a non-African scholar-critic. To be a critic requires more than the knowledge of social realities behind the work. The study of literature requires 'a keen aesthetic sensibility, and a thorough knowledge of the techniques of language' (Iyasere, 1975:26).

Oyekan Owomoyela criticises Western critics of African literature for their self-assurance in a field which they have very limited knowledge of, and points out shortcomings, such as critical parentalism and patronising, and arrogant ethnocentrism, that have been pilloried by several African critics before him. However, he touches upon a very important issue, the issue of generalisation, which appears not to have received sufficient attention before. He quotes Nancy J. Schmidt, who notes that

a characteristic of critical works about African literature from the earliest to the most recent is generalizing about entire genres of African literature or the literature of large geographic areas, while providing little or no documentation in support of the generalizations. (Schmidt quoted in Owomoyela, 1991:4)

Owomoyela questions the concept of the whole of sub-Saharan Africa as a homogenous cultural unit and challenges the assumption that the literatures emerging from this area show stylistic and thematic uniformity (cf. Wästberg, 1968:11 quoted in 2.3.1 and Achebe, 1964:56 quoted in 2.3.5). Though he acknowledges the limited validity of such claims on the grounds that 'the writing is in response to the trauma of centuries of subjugation and cultural deprivation' (Owomoyela, 1991:4), he maintains that the conditions of subjugation, and therefore the literary responses it generated, differed; and that traditional modes of expression vary in different parts of Africa. Consequently, separate literary developments can be observed in contemporary African literature.

One can confidently conclude that the perceived need to extend their competence over the whole of the vast continent of Africa, with its numerous languages and ethnic groups, forces some critics into all sorts of errors. Why the literary scholar cannot respectably be an expert on the Ankole or the Bambara to the exclusion of all other groups (or nations) is a mystery. Anthropologists and other social scientists do not seem to be plagued by the same need to pretend to all-inclusive knowledge. As long as literary critics insist on being jacks-of-all-trades, they will keep making silly statements. (Owomoyela, 1991:6)

Owomoyela does not spare the superciliousness of African writers, either. Because they are 'cultivated and treated as atypical flowers in a field of weeds,' he says, they become blind to honest criticism from their fellow African critics if that criticism is not in their favour. The claim that Percy Bysshe Shelley makes at the end of his *A Defence of Poetry* that 'poets are the unacknowledged legislators of mankind' represents an irresistible attraction to African writers, and many are prone to its preposterousness. They often come to possess the arrogance of claiming to be the voices, the mouthpieces of vision, creating the impression that those outside their 'holy' circles are deprived of vision and sensitivity. Such an attitude, in Owomoyela's opinion, must be strongly discouraged. In his view, the African writer's 'obsessive feeling of self-importance and divine election' results partly from the critical acclaim received from Western critics. He believes that if more critics realised the need of writers for more humane understanding and treatment, and for more indulgent criticism, there would be more responsible writing from Africans and 'less playing to the European gallery' (Owomoyela, 1991:16).

In their attempt to decolonise African literature Chinweizu, Jemie and Madubuike declare that African literature must be given a 'separate and autonomous status' from all other literatures and 'genuinely autonomous criteria' should be used in judging it. They insist that 'judging African literature by European criteria, or by criteria allegedly universal which on closer scrutiny turn out to be European, is indeed to define African literature as an appendage of European literature, and to deny its separateness and autonomy' (Chinweizu, Jemie and Madubuike, 1980:10).

In the making of African literature they even assign a definite role to *African* critics. They see these critics as helpers of both writers and audience, but grant them authority only as long as they represent the society for which the writers produce. To be able to carry out their job effectively, African critics must develop an African aesthetic, which must be rooted in an African sensibility. The 'uncontaminated reservoir' of this African sensibility is the African oral tradition, and it is from this oral tradition that the foundation elements of an African aesthetic must be drawn. The African critics, therefore, must begin to collect and analyse the immense body of oral and written traditional material in African languages in order to 'extract guidance towards the formulation of a contemporary African poetics, narrative rhetoric, and dramaturgy' (Chinweizu, Jemie and Madubuike, 1980:291).

2.6.2 *Towards a cross-cultural evaluation of African literature*

In his study of the critical evaluation of African literature Edgar Wright sets out to examine the problems, such as language use and cultural distinctiveness, that African literature poses to the critic and examines the extent to which responsible criticism should modify itself to be able to take care of them.

Wright makes an important point by distinguishing between three types of English: a) English as a mother tongue, e.g. American, Australian or South African English; b) English as a second language, e.g. English in African countries where the first language is vernacular and English is the official means of communication; and c) English that has been undergoing the process of creolisation, e.g. English in the West Indies. He goes on to say that English language literature in Africa is, without exception, second-language literature, so the critic who wants to analyse and discuss the style of a writer immediately finds himself faced with the problems that such a situation raises.

The question of critical authority, however, remains, and responses from African authors reflect disagreement on this sensitive issue. Wright quotes Okpaku at length, who claims that 'judging African literature by Western standards is not only invalid, it is also potentially dangerous to a development of African Arts. It presupposes that there is one absolute artistic standard and that, of course, is the Western standard. Consequently, good African literature is taken to be that which most approximates to Western literature' (Okpaku quoted in Wright, 1973:4).

Wright remarks that Okpaku arrives at the conclusion that Western culture is completely irrelevant in matters of criticism concerning African art (Okpaku in Wright, 1973:4 quoted in 2.6.1). He observes that although Okpaku may be justified for attacking the insularity of certain Western critics, his reference to Nkosi and his quoting of Soyinka's statement that 'African writers do not want to be African writers but writers' show that the African writers themselves are quite divided in their approach to the issue of criticism.

The problem remains, says Wright, because 'African literature in English has roots and contexts that lie outside the traditional cultural and linguistic soil which has nourished the literature of the west' (Wright, 1973:5). Writers using English continue to produce works which become part of the 'world literature' in English, but there are no agreed standards for evaluation, and there is no

wide understanding of the problems involved in establishing such standards. What Wright undertakes to do is not suggesting the standards but showing the problems involved and clarifying how far the critical criteria and standards developed to handle English literature can be applied to judge African literature.

The Western critic, he says, is faced with two basic questions: 1) How universal are critical theories? Can a general critical theory, e.g. a Freudian approach, work when it is applied to a culture whose origins are totally distinct from the one which supplied the source material for its creation? 2) Who are the audience, for whom the works are primarily intended, and who can best appreciate the purpose and the methods of the writer? Behind these two inevitably looms a third question: How far can a white man experience and understand the world of an African, and how far can an African experience and understand the world of the white man? According to Wright the response lies with individual writers and critics, with some, e.g. Tutuola and Okara, emphasizing the gulf, and some, e.g. Soyinka and Armah, stressing the bridges. Though no one can fully understand and share the experience of another, members of the same community have a good deal of common experience which, in turn, serves as common ground for sharing experience with other communities. Literature is a medium that acts on the mind and imagination of the readers and makes them understand customs, behaviour and emotions that were formerly strange or unknown to them.

When Wright returns to the problem of language, he says that writing in second-language English can undoubtedly be popular beyond the linguistic boundaries. Critical comment will, however, probably vary from one linguistic area to another. A local critic can immediately recognise false language or clumsy style, whereas a non-local critic may have trouble differentiating between clumsy style and real creativity.

Wright concludes his discussion on the note that African literature 'has emerged to a state where it deserves and demands the careful consideration that is given to any other writing in English, and is best served by having applied to it standards and procedures as carefully considered as those we apply to literatures whose norms and traditions have already been thoroughly understood' (Wright, 1973:21).

In his book on the forming of critical standards for the evaluation of African literature Rand Bishop observes that Western critics, in their attempt to understand and evaluate African literature, have relied on the literary texts themselves and, with only a few exceptions, failed to

recognise the need to understand the cultural context from which this literature has emerged. He quotes Nancy Schmidt as saying that

it is hoped that students of comparative literature and literary critics will realize that meaningful cross-cultural literary criticism cannot be conducted on the basis of Western literary standards even if the literature is written in a Western language. By trying to apply Western standards to literature which is not wholly within the Western tradition, judgements become inconsistent and criticisms become naive or wholly incorrect. ... Until more is learned about aesthetic standards and the histories of both oral and written literatures in non-Western societies, there can be no basis for a valid cross-cultural literary criticism, which must consider literature primarily in the context of the culture in which it is created and secondarily in terms of the critic's own culture. (Schmidt quoted in Bishop, 1988:8)

He also quotes Okpaku, whom he considers the near-embodiment of the critical standards by which Africans judge African literature:

What then are these African critical standards? The logical place to go to in search of them is the African aesthetic. In particular, we should examine our traditional artistic forms as well as genuine (not "studied") contemporary African tastes and attitudes towards the various art forms. ... The next place to search for these standards would be an examination of those common aspects of life most frequently dramatized in the arts. This would include love, life, hate, honor, duty, death, destruction, pride, prejudice, friendship, fear, violence, birth and reality amongst others. Different cultures not only have different conceptions of these but have different attitudes to them. Not only that, they give them different emphases. All these different conceptions, attitudes, emphases, tastes and preferences constitute the basis on which to build criticism. This is where the search for African critical standards must begin. (Okpaku quoted in Bishop, 1988:9-10)

Bishop does not quite understand what Okpaku means by 'aesthetic,' and he disagrees with him that this is where one should turn in search of critical standards. According to Bishop, it is more feasible to attempt to isolate and identify critical standards and induce an African aesthetic from them, though he does not exclude the derivability of critical standards from aesthetics, either. He does, however, agree that the study of traditional art forms is relevant, but rejects the claim that the examination of various aspects of life will lead to the establishment of critical standards. In his opinion Okpaku's terms 'studied' and 'genuine' create the impression that the African critic is inherently the custodian of African critical standards, which are either to be discovered or are recognised by all 'genuine' African critics.

Bishop believes that 'critical standards may best be inferred from the explicit critical statements made by the critics themselves - that is, that the Africanness or Négritude of a critic is existential rather than essential, that it creates the African critical tradition at least as fast as it can be discovered' (Bishop, 1988:11). He also agrees that the examination of African taste may reveal critical standards. However, he is of the opinion that although the study of the elements of African life can reveal a lot about African culture, it is the attitude to the literary handling of these elements that will actually tell us about the critical standards by which they are judged.

In her book *Beyond Boundaries: African Literature and Literary Theory* Mineke Schipper argues for a cross-cultural approach to African literature. She shares Bishop's view that critical texts reveal the critic's cultural norms and adds that 'different cultures lead to different appreciation of "the other's reality"' (Schipper, 1989:161). She also reminds us that the role the power factor plays in cross-cultural relations should not be forgotten about. When looking at critical comments, one must always take into account whether the author of the text belongs to a globally dominant country and/or culture or to a dominated country and/or culture. 'The critic may not be aware of his own lack of modesty, the superiority complex expressed in his critical comment' (Schipper, 1989:159), which can often lead to counter-criticism from the other culture, revealing striking differences in, sometimes even incompatibility of, norms, views and background. 'Looking carefully at the critical texts from an intercultural comparative point of view, we must constantly take into account the possible cultural differences with all their ideological connotations, expressing group interests and values' (Schipper, 1989:159).

2.6.3 *African feminist criticism*

African feminist criticism stands at the "intersection of ontologies": 'woman', 'African', 'post-colonial', 'feminist' (Ashcroft quoted in Bryce, 1994:621). It is a fairly recent development in African criticism, and as Bryce points out, the terms 'woman' and 'African' become more problematic as the body of creative writing by African women grows (ibid.).

One of the first works to address this issue is *Ngambika: Studies of Women in African Literature* (Eds. Boyce Davies and Adams Graves, 1986). In her introduction Boyce Davies identifies African feminist criticism as engaged criticism 'in much the same way as progressive African literary criticism grapples with decolonization and feminist criticism with the politics of male

literary dominance' (op.cit., 12). It is also derivative criticism in that it borrows its tools from African literary theorists as well as from mainstream feminist theorists. Its task is to 'identify critical approaches and standards and criteria which have been applied so far to the study of African literature from a feminist perspective and which can be utilized and built upon for further examination of women in/and African literature' (ibid.). African feminist critics, when relying on the above mentioned two critical traditions, must strive for a balance, keeping in mind that these traditions have grown out from, and in some cases are the adversaries of, Western literary criticism. What the African feminist critic has to aim at is not reduction but 'refinement geared specifically to deal with the concrete and literary realities of African women's lives' (op.cit., 13).

Although Boyce Davies makes a good job of identifying the precursors and tasks of African feminist criticism, the prescriptive and homogenising tendency of her attempt to define an 'African' feminism signals the existence of two major problem areas: the undifferentiated, uncritical application of Western feminist ideas to African, and other Third World, realities, and the tendency to homogenise the diversity found in Africa, and in the Third World in general.

These problems are highlighted by Chandra Talpade Mohanty, who argues that in an attempt to set up an object that can culturally, materially and discursively be presumed as the Other of the Western female, some feminist writers 'discursively colonize the material and historical heterogeneities of the lives of women in the third world, thereby producing/representing a composite, singular "third-world woman"' (1994:197). In addition, 'a cross-culturally singular, monolithic notion of patriarchy or male dominance leads to the construction of a similarly reductive and homogeneous notion of ... the "third-world difference" – that ahistorical something that apparently oppresses most if not all women in these countries' (op.cit., 198).

Although 'India' and 'Africa' are far from being homogeneous categories, Quayson suggests that a certain measure of generalisation is inevitable for a discussion of women's issues. This, however, should serve the formation of a multifaceted perspective:

Theory is of no value if it cannot be generalized; however, the purpose of generalization is to bring a particular perspective into view which can then be criticized, qualified or even abandoned once it is seen to have served the purpose for which it was set up. (Quayson, 2000:107)

Despite the work on the issues of feminism and postcoloniality done in the past decade or so by such scholars as Spivak, Mohanty, Suleri, Loomba, Katrak and Kanneh¹², Western feminist

discourse remains dominant, which Katrak attributes to the fact that the theoretical production of postcolonial writers is not given due attention or is dismissed as not theoretical enough by Western standards; that those who produce theory and consume it within the realm of Western academia increasingly use postcolonial texts as raw material; and that theoretical production has become an end in itself, drawing interest only from other theorists who speak the same esoteric language in which 'obscurity is regularly mistaken for profundity' (Katrak, 1995:256)¹³.

A further problematic issue is the notion of double colonisation; that women in formerly colonised societies are subjected to oppression both by imperialist and patriarchal ideologies. As both colonial and colonised patriarchies were apprehensive about the spectre of women's independence, they often collaborated to keep them 'in their place'. Women became, and still remain, 'a vocabulary in which colonial and colonised men work out their relations with each other' (Loomba, 1998:222). In Africa 'women are spoken *for, about, and against*' (Nnaemeka, 1997:167, original emphasis). A very important difference between Western feminists and their African counterparts results directly from the status quo of women in their respective societies: whereas the former are concerned with the relative importance of feminist versus class emancipation, for the latter the discussion focuses on feminist emancipation versus the struggle against neo-colonialism, especially in its cultural aspect (Holst Petersen, 1995:251-52). There is ample evidence both in the creative and critical writing of African women that for them the fight against neo-colonialism and Western cultural imperialism comes before the fight for female equality.

That feminism is a historically, culturally and geographically specific concept should gain wider currency against hegemonic tendencies of certain feminist schools that aspire to universality. The Western model of feminism holds little appeal for African women, as is obvious from Dangarembga's comments:

... women in Zimbabwe are wary of being called feminists. It is really a dirty word. ... Western feminists have a very bad name ... People think about lesbianism, about breaking up families and ... I actually don't understand it, quite frankly. I have tried to say to people that feminists want to make the world a better place, but I think men feel threatened, and then women don't want to lose the social security which they gain from having a relationship with a man. The feminist, who in Zimbabwe is usually a single woman, is a threat to the other women, and this means that actually there can not be any solidarity between the women either. (Holst Petersen, 1994: 347-48)

Miriam Tlali talks about the insecurity men feel:

There is a definite fear of feminism in the African men, especially in South Africa ... Anytime you ask him to do something, to go and fetch the child today, or something like that he says, "Look, you are already a feminist." You are a white woman and a feminist. It is thrown into your face in the same way in which Communist is thrown into the face of the blacks in South Africa. (In Katrak, 1996:240)

Lauretta Ngcobo, also from South Africa, points out that the limitations to a certain class and exclusions of working-class women and, in certain cases, men of the Western feminist movement would simply not work in African societies. In Africa women and men have endured racism, colonisation and continuing imperialism together, so an African feminist theory needs to include working-class women and supportive men, as well (in Katrak, 1996:240-1).

Indeed, the notion of feminism as a monolithic concept fails when applied to Africa. Feminist theorising in the African context needs to redefine and transform Western feminist concepts to be relevant to the particular concerns of African women and to their own history and culture. The model suggested by Wilson-Tagoe - the 'women's culture' model - has the potential to break the monolithic concept of feminism by 'presenting a wider framework within which a woman's writing can be defined in terms of cultural contexts and priorities' (1997:12) and by acknowledging 'the variables of nationality, race, ethnicity, history and class as literary determinants which are as significant as gender in a woman's writing' (ibid.).

2.7 Conclusion

As has been shown by the discussion above, modern Europhone African literature is heir to two distinct traditions: African traditional culture and Western culture. The problems involved in its development, interpretation and critical appreciation are, indeed, rooted in its hybrid nature.

The question of what language or languages African literature should be written in seems to be cardinal. Though quite a number of African writers seem to agree that, ideally, African writers should employ African languages as their literary medium, for historical reasons and various practical considerations, many continue to write in European languages. There appears, however, to be a consensus on the acceptability and even desirability of 'doing violence' to the standard forms of European languages in order to let them carry the writer's African experience and capture the rhythms, idioms and flavour of African languages.

The choice of a European language for artistic creation immediately raises questions about the audience of African literature. While economic, cultural and educational factors keep the primarily intended African audience fairly limited, Western readers may be disadvantaged by their spatial, cultural and linguistic distance. Certainly, this distance – also incorporating the critic's cultural norms and the critical standards rooted in them - has a considerable influence on what critical standards African literature is or should be judged by.

During its five decades of existence Europhone African literature has come to be a Western academia oriented phenomenon. The initial public interest surrounding its birth which was raised by the turbulent political events resulting from the struggle of African peoples for their independence has dwindled away. African Writers Series launched by publishers such as Heinemann and Longman have been significantly downgraded after the rich output of the first three decades of their existence, and the last ten years have seen the odd new title published in these series. The university departments and research centres established for the study of Anglo-Franco- and Lusophone African literature, on the other hand, remain in place and determine much of what is or is not accepted as highbrow modern Europhone African literature. Udentia's observation that Afro-American journals still have a significant influence in determining the decisive trends in African literature and in deciding what constitutes the canon of African literature is still valid (1993). Although the past decade and a half has produced quite a number of postcolonial literary theorists of 'periphery' origin, many of them seem to publish and practice criticism of Eurocentrism in the West, which suggests that postcolonial literary theory may still have more to do with the concern of the West with modifying and adjusting its approach to the 'Other'. The fact is that the West is still in control, and the question is not 'whether theories produced by, and in, the central social formations should be applied in the periphery; they *are* in fact applied and *will* be applied, no permission sought' (Jeyifo, 1993:26; italics as in original).

An answer has, by now, also emerged to the question of what constitutes African literature. The status of works by Africans in African languages has never been questioned. With regard to European language works, African literature has come to comprise works written by Africans of any skin colour, either at home or in the diaspora, whose formative years have been spent in Africa and their life shaped by an African experience, and who 'look at the world *from* Africa, ... not look *upon* Africa from the world' (see Gordimer in 2.3.4). Because of the economic, cultural and educational issues discussed in 2.5, the choice of a European language for literary creation predestines African writers to walking the tightrope of aspiring to find their niche at

home while having to seek the favours of an alien audience. The difficulty of this acrobatics 'might still be that Africa is not always thinking of, or speaking to the West' (Kanneh, 1997:83).

Notes

- ¹ The ancestry of postcolonial theory can be traced back to Fanon's *The Wretched of the Earth* published in 1961 and Said's highly influential *Orientalism* (1978). Later works include the now classic Ashcroft, Griffiths and Tiffin 1989, Bhabha 1990, Tiffin and Lawson 1994, and Williams and Chrisman 1994, followed by Mongia 1996, Ashcroft, Griffiths and Tiffin 1995, Moore-Gilbert 1997, Moore-Gilbert, Stanton and Maley 1997, Gandhi 1998, Loomba 1998, Ashcroft 2001a & b, Castle 2001, and Goldberg and Quayson 2002.
- ² The concept of resistance literature is discussed at length for example in Harlow 1987, Sharpe 1989 and Slemon 1990.
- ³ See, for example, Larson, Charles. 1973. Heroic Ethnocentrism: The Idea of Universality in Literature. *The American Scholar*, 42(3) (Summer).
- ⁴ Obiechina's 1973 book is an authoritative study of the Nigerian Onitsha Market literature, while Ikiddeh (1971) and Priebe (1978) examine Ghanaian popular literature.
- ⁵ African writing in African languages seems to have fallen outside Western critical interest, probably because of the linguistic barriers and diversity involved. One of the few studies, if not the only book-length publication, available in this area is Gérard's 1981 work *African Language Literatures: An introduction to the literary history of Sub-Saharan Africa*.
- ⁶ Camara's view on the importance of acquainting the world with African civilisation is succinctly expressed in an interview given to Egejuru (1980:21, 118-19).
- ⁷ Awoonor has spoken on this subject, among others, in an interview at The University of Texas at Austin (Lindfors et al. (eds.), 1972:48-50) and published a study of the history, culture and literature of Black Africa (1975).
- ⁸ Evidence for this can be found, among others, in Egejuru 1980, and indirectly through the discussion of the writer's choice of language in Ngugi 1986, Achebe 1988, *Research in African Literatures* 23/1 1992, and Walder 1998.
- ⁹ Personal communication by Femi Osofisan.
- ¹⁰ Personal communication by Aloysius Denkabe.
- ¹¹ Personal communication by Femi Osofisan.
- ¹² For example, Spivak 1985, 1986, 1991 and 1994; Mohanty 1994; Suleri 1994; Loomba 1994 and 1998; Katrak 1996; Kanneh 1997 and 1998.
- ¹³ It is worth giving a thought to what Stanislaw Andreski says in this respect: 'Obscurity ... is the refuge of mediocre minds. A banal lack of originality may be mistaken for profundity if it is tricked out in pompous language, and presented in terms of the fashionable but irrelevant paraphernalia of more exact sciences: simulation models, algebraic symbols and the like.'

But more sinister than this is the alliance which has grown up between the “academic call-boys” who, knowingly or unknowingly, serve the interests of the wielders of power and the “Foundation moguls” by putting a pseudo-scientific gloss on the crude realities of power and giving their blessing to the *status quo*. In recent times the bulk of the literature has been a sort of mumbo-jumbo sorcery, the effect of which has been to bemuse rather than to enlighten, to maintain rather than to challenge the establishment’ (1972: inside flap of jacket).

3.1 Introduction

As the present work is devoted to the examination of cultural difference expressed through variously encoded cultural reference in the English-language prose of Ghanaian writers, it is a must to include a discussion of the notion of culture. Rather than systematically reviewing different theories of culture, some of those relevant for the current work are examined in 3.2 to clarify what is meant by 'culture' and to provide a conceptual framework for the investigation of cultural reference carried out later.

In 2.4 we have seen that one of the major problems of African, hence Ghanaian, literature is the writer's choice of a European language for literary creation. We have also seen that African, and by the same token other postcolonial, writers prefer to twist and mould – indigenise – the European language so that it can carry their specific cultural experience. As cultural reference is an obvious site for indigenisation by virtue of it being a fusion of culture and language, in 3.3 we shall examine the relationship between culture and language. Although the relationship between language and culture is taken for granted throughout this work, this section is a useful reminder that language is part as well as a reflection of culture.

The Ghanaian writer's world unfolds in 3.4, which begins with the examination of the features of traditional society. To understand Ghanaian society, knowledge of the traditional institutions is required because 'in any situation of change in contemporary Ghana (and Africa for that matter) it is the traditional social practices which give direction to the changes taking place' (Nukunya, 1992:3). Ghanaian traditional society is described in a West African context. Such an approach provides a wider framework in accordance with the view that whatever the differences between the construction and dynamics of different traditional societies may be, they

all share the acceptance of tradition, of the givenness of some actual or symbolic past event, order, or figure as the major focus of their collective identity, as the delineator of the scope and nature of their social and cultural order and as ultimate legitimator of change and of the limits of innovation. In these societies tradition serves not only as a symbol of continuity, but as the delineator of the legitimate limits of creativity and innovation and as the major criterion of their legitimacy (Eisenstadt, 1973:151-2).

It also emphasises the similarities and overlaps that occur throughout the West African sub-region, with the exception of highly Islamised areas such as, for example, Northern Nigeria or Mali.

Traditional society is juxtaposed with modern West African urban culture, and the changes in the individual's social and cultural outlook brought about by a changing economic and social milieu are described. It is pointed out that tradition and modernity coexist in a mutually informative and mutually influential manner.

The section ends with an account of the multilingual linguistic set-up which plays a determining role in the Ghanaian writer's creativity.

The conclusion brings the various threads together into the understanding of culture that this work adopts; an understanding which assigns a central position to the inter-relatedness of culture and language and, as such, facilitates the elucidation of the Ghanaian writer's context of creation.

3.2 Theories of culture

“‘Culture’ is said to be one of the two or three most complex words in the English language,” says Terry Eagleton at the beginning of his book *The Idea of Culture*. Perhaps it is not just in the English language, and perhaps it is not the word itself but the complexity of the concept of culture that has inspired a plethora of definitions¹ by most prominent social and cultural anthropologists of various linguistic background. Yet it is ‘as good a label as any for the overall phenomenon or system of meanings within which sub-systems of social structure, technology, art and so on exist and interconnect’ (Byram, 1989:80):

culture represents a consensus on a wide variety of meanings among members of an interacting community approximating that of the consensus on language among members of a speech-community. Speech is an individual action and each individual speaks somewhat differently from another; yet speakers of a given language can understand one another on their first meeting, though they cannot understand speech in other languages to which they have not been exposed. ... The same holds for culture in general (of which language is one part); namely, that there is a consensus in a community (in this case about the meanings of symbols, verbal and nonverbal), that the consensus is substantively related to the importance of communication in

social life ... It must be emphasized that members of a community can vary greatly in thoughts, feelings, and behavior, yet hold in common understandings of the symbols and representations through which they communicate (LeVine, 1984:68).

The concept of culture as consisting of the shared knowledge of individual minds has produced highly influential views of culture. Goodenough, one of the best known proponents of the view of culture as cognition, sees cultures as systems of knowledge:

A society's culture consists of whatever it is one has to know or believe in order to operate in a manner acceptable to its members. Culture is not a material phenomenon; it does not consist of things, people, behavior, or emotions. It is rather an organization of these things. It is the form of things that people have in mind, their models for perceiving, relating, and otherwise interpreting them. ...

Culture ... consists of standards for deciding what is, ... for deciding what can be, ... for deciding what one feels about it, ... for deciding what to do about it, and ... for deciding how to go about doing it (quoted in Keesing, 1974:46).

In Goodenough's conceptualisation the location of culture is in the minds of individual human beings. Because of differences in biological heritage, personal history and societal roles, however, they do not share exactly the same model of their culture, i.e. they have varying cognitive models of society's culture. Language is a subsystem of culture, and individuals do not share exactly the same model of their language but differ in dialect and idiolect.

Lévi-Strauss, the most influential representative of the structuralist approach, 'views cultures as shared symbolic systems that are cumulative *creations of mind*; he seeks to discover in the structuring of cultural domains – myth, art, kinship, language – the principles of mind that generate these cultural elaborations' (Keesing, 1974:47-48; original emphasis). He assumes that 'the human mind is everywhere the same and cultures are different implementations of basic abstract logical properties of thinking which are shared by all humans and adapted to specific living conditions' (Duranti, 1997:33). People in "traditional" societies and people in western, technologically advanced societies think differently because they have access to different resources in building their theories.

In Geertz's interpretive approach, cultures are treated as systems of shared symbols and meanings:

The culture concept to which I adhere denotes a historically transmitted pattern of meanings embodied in symbols, a system of inherited conceptions expressed in



symbolic forms by means of which people communicate, perpetuate and develop their knowledge about and attitudes toward life (quoted in Wierzbicka, 1997:20-21).

Geertz is interested in the never-ending interpretive process that characterises human experience. In *The Interpretation of Cultures* he writes:

Culture is the fabric of meaning in terms of which human beings interpret their experience and guide their action; social structure is the form that action takes, the actually existing network of social relations (1973:145).

He argues that like language, culture is a semiotic system, its symbols, like linguistic symbols, encoding a connection between a signifying form and a signalled meaning. Symbols are public and communicate meaning from one mind to another. Therefore, cultures do not exist in the minds of individuals but rather between them. He, then, unlike Goodenough, locates culture outside the individual. Although each individual has his or her own perception of culture, culture remains an autonomous system of symbols independent of individual human minds which the individual can use as he or she sees appropriate.

These theories of culture have aspects that are relevant to the current study. Goodenough's view that culture is 'the form of things that people have in mind, their models for perceiving, relating, and otherwise interpreting them' seems to underpin the claim that cultural reference in the work of Ghanaian writers, no matter how it is encoded, may present difficulty of understanding for the reader who does not share the writers' cultural experience. Lévi-Strauss's view of 'cultures as shared symbolic systems' and Geertz's view of culture as a 'historically transmitted pattern of meanings embodied in symbols, a system of inherited conceptions expressed in symbolic forms' draws our attention to the similarity of language and culture as semiotic systems: both linguistic signs and cultural symbols denote something that stands for, or refers to, something else in a meaningful way. By definition, signs consist of a form and a referent; linguistic signs, more specifically, conjoin, as Saussure argues, a form and a concept, signifier and signified. Just as the relationship between signifier and signified is arbitrary, so is the relationship between a cultural symbol and its referent. Neither linguistic signs nor cultural symbols have significance unless they are recognised as such by their users, and just as the meaning of linguistic signs has to be learnt by the speech community, so the meaning of cultural symbols has to be learnt by the members of a particular cultural group.

Influential and relevant though these views of culture are, D'Andrade points out three major problems relating to them:

first, many things one would want to call cultural are not completely or even generally shared; second, culture consists of more than just knowledge; and third, it is not clear whether cultural systems are to be found "inside" or "outside" the minds of individuals (1984:90).

To illustrate that 'culture consists of more than just knowledge', D'Andrade quotes Geertz's example of a Beethoven quartet:

...that a Beethoven quartet is a temporally developed tonal structure, a coherent sequence of modeled sound – in a word, music – and not anybody's knowledge or belief about anything, including how to play it, is a position to which most people are, upon reflection, likely to assent. (In D'Andrade, 1984:90)

He, then, gives the example of marriage, saying that marriage is not the same thing as knowing how to marry people or knowing how to get married or understanding what it is to be married. Marriage is part of culture, any culture, in that there is a constitutive set of rules that individuals know, which are intersubjectively shared and adhered to.

Marriage is a culturally created entity – *an entity created by the social agreement that something counts as that entity*. To agree that something will count as something else is more than simply knowing about it, although knowing about it is a necessary precondition. The *agreement* that something counts as something else involves the *adherence* of a group of people to a *constitutive rule* and to the entailments incurred by the application of the rule. (D'Andrade, 1984:91; original emphasis)

'Getting married' then is the enactment of certain behaviours in certain contexts, and 'being married' entails certain obligations and commitments.

In addition to culturally created things like, for example, family, prestige, deviance, which are all created by social agreement to what counts as what, there exist 'brute facts' (Searle quoted in D'Andrade, 1984:92) such as stone, tree, hand, a person's age, the number of calories consumed during a meal, all of which exist prior to, and independent of, their definition. Although such entities are not culturally created, they are nevertheless affected by culturally based associations and invoke shared connotations, though these cultural connotations do not manufacture the objects themselves.

The example of a Beethoven quartet quoted above directs our attention to yet another cultural phenomenon which does bear importance for the current work. In addition to 'brute facts' and culturally created entities, there exists a cultural category through which much of the shared knowledge and behaviours is expressed symbolically. Artefacts as the tangible products and symbols of culture, whether they come from traditional art forms or from such less orthodox artistic domains as sartorial or culinary styles, are infused with the meanings of the culture that has created them. 'Artefacts of literature, music and the like are the expressions both of the idiosyncratic meanings of individuals and also of the systems of meaning which individuals share' (Byram, 1989:84).

D'Andrade's own definition of culture, lengthy though it is, is worth quoting in full:

The position taken ... treats culture as consisting of learned systems of meaning, communicated by means of natural language and other symbol systems, having representational, directive, and affective functions, and capable of creating cultural entities and particular senses of reality. Through these systems of meaning, groups of people adapt to their environment and structure interpersonal activities. Cultural meaning systems affect and are affected by the various systems of material flow, such as the flow of goods and services, and an interpersonal network of commands and requests. Cultural meaning systems are linked to personality systems through the sharing of specific items that function in both systems for particular individuals. Various aspects of cultural meaning systems are differentially distributed across persons and statuses, creating institutions such as family, market, nation, and so on, which constitute social structure. Analytically, cultural meaning systems can be treated as a very large diversified pool of knowledge, or partially shared clusters of norms, or as intersubjectively shared, symbolically created realities. On the individual level, however, the actual meanings and messages that people learn, encounter, and produce are typically not divided into separate classes of items that can be labeled knowledge, norm, or reality, but rather form multifunctional complexes of constructs, organized in interlocking hierarchical structures, which are simultaneously constructive [create cultural entities], representative [represent the world], evocative [evoke certain feelings], and directive [direct one to do certain things] (1984:116 [96]).

The variability of culture across human populations with regard to economic, organisational and communicative patterns by which humans live, as well as with regard to cultural standards of intellectual, moral and aesthetic judgement is an essential point for the current study. In this respect, D'Andrade's definition of culture is particularly pertinent because from the more abstract level of how cultural meaning systems and personality systems are linked he goes on to relate his observations to the level of the very individuals who constitute the systems and talks about actual meanings these individuals learn, encounter and produce. This approach to cultural meaning through the individual is highly relevant as the current

study proposes to investigate cultural meaning learnt and (re)produced by writers as individual members of their cultural environment, as well as encountered and interpreted by readers as individuals not necessarily sharing the writers' cultural background.

3.3 Language and culture

It is commonly accepted that language is an indispensable and inseparable part of culture – it 'must be understood as cultural practice' (Duranti, 1997:23). In Jiang's view, language is flesh and culture is blood, the two forming a living organism together. 'Without culture, language would be dead; without language, culture would have no shape' (Jiang, 2000:328). This inter-relatedness is reflected in definitions of culture by practitioners of language and literature. According to McCarthy and Carter's general definition culture is 'the set of values and beliefs which are prevalent within a given society or section of society (1994:150). In the context of language teaching, however, they discern more specific definitions with language being an integral part:

First, *culture with a capital C* This refers to the most prestigious artistic achievements of a society: its art, music, theatre and, especially, its literature.

Second, *culture with a small c* This refers to the habits, customs, social behaviour and assumptions about the world of a group of people.

Third, *culture as social discourse* This refers to the social knowledge and interactive skills which are required in addition to knowledge of the language system. (1994:151; original emphasis)

Kramsch contrasts culture with nature and argues that 'nature refers to what is born and grows organically (from the Latin *nascere*: to be born); **culture** refers to what has been grown and groomed (from the Latin *colere*: to cultivate)' (1998:4; original emphasis). In her definition of culture the inter-relatedness of language and culture seems to be central:

1 Membership in a discourse community that shares a common social space and history, and a common system of standards for perceiving, believing, evaluating, and acting. **2** The discourse community itself. **3** The system of standards themselves (1998:127).

Tengan defines culture as 'an observable pattern of human behaviours which are consciously constructed and communicated by the mind through language' (1994:127).

In fact, the study of the relationship between language and culture has had a long history. In the 17th century John Locke's (1632-1704) *An Essay Concerning Human Understanding* published in 1690 already offers the insight that the meanings of words from different languages do not match and that they reflect characteristic ways of living and thinking in a given society, so they provide clues to the understanding of culture. About a hundred years later this is what the German critic and poet Johann Gottfried Herder (1744-1803) writes about cultural elaboration:

Each [language] in its own way is both lavish and lacking, but, to be sure, each in its own way. ...Profusion is the style of the language. In Siam there are eight different ways of saying "I" and "we," depending on whether the master speaks to the servant or the servant to the master. ... Each one of these synonymies is linked to custom, character, and origin of the people; and everywhere the inventive human spirit reveals itself (quoted in Wierzbicka, 1997:10).

The first systematic statement on language as worldview which can be regarded as the precursor of linguistic relativity was presented by the German linguist Wilhelm von Humboldt (1767-1835):

Each tongue draws a circle about the people to whom it belongs, and it is possible to leave this circle only by simultaneously entering that of another people. Learning a foreign language ought hence to be the conquest of a new standpoint in the previously prevailing cosmic attitude of the individual. In fact, it is so to a certain extent, inasmuch as every language contains the entire fabric of concepts and the conceptual approach of a portion of humanity. But this achievement is not complete, because one always carries over into a foreign tongue to a greater or lesser degree one's own cosmic viewpoint – indeed one's personal linguistic pattern. ([1836] 1971:39-40)

The notion of linguistic relativity, associated with Edward Sapir and Benjamin Lee Whorf, is an idea according to which 'lexicalized concepts impose restrictions on possible ways of thinking' (Saeed, 1997:41). The idea that different linguistic frames of reference lead their users to different observations of the world and to different interpretations of these observations is the force of Sapir's famous statement:

Human beings do not live in the objective world alone, nor alone in the world of social activity as ordinarily understood, but are very much at the mercy of the particular language which has become the medium of expression for their society. It is quite an illusion to imagine that one adjusts to reality essentially without the use of language and that language is merely an incidental means of solving specific problems of communication or reflection. The fact of the matter is that the 'real

world' is to a large extent unconsciously built up on the language habits of the group. No two languages are ever sufficiently similar to be considered as representing the same social reality. The worlds in which different societies live are distinct worlds, not merely the same world with different labels attached. (1964:69)

Whorf may have gone too far in emphasising 'the difference between languages and cultures and the conceptual universes associated with them' (Wierzbicka, 1997:7), but his main thesis offers a profound insight which will be recognised by anyone whose experience extends beyond his or her native language:

The background linguistic system (in other words, the grammar) of each language is not merely a reproducing instrument for voicing ideas but rather is itself the shaper of ideas, the program and guide for the individual's mental activity, for his analysis of impressions, for his synthesis of his mental stock in trade. Formulation of ideas is not an independent process, strictly rational in the old sense, but is part of a particular grammar and differs, from slightly to greatly, as between different grammars. We dissect nature along lines laid down by our native languages. The categories and types that we isolate from the world of phenomena we do not find there because they stare every observer in the face; on the contrary, the world is presented in a kaleidoscopic flux of impressions which has to be organized by our minds – and this means largely by the linguistic systems in our minds. We cut nature up, organize it into concepts, and ascribe significances as we do, largely because we are parties to an agreement to organize it in this way – an agreement that holds through our speech community and is codified in the patterns of our language. The agreement is, of course, an implicit and unstated one, but its terms are absolutely obligatory; we cannot talk at all except by subscribing to the organization and classification of data which the agreement decrees. (1956:212-14)

Although it is difficult to prove whether differences in world-views between cultures are to be attributed to differences in linguistic systems, the plausibility of language influencing forms of thought and our perception of the world is hard to doubt. Among others Langacker observes that 'language is culturally transmitted and a primary vehicle for cultural interaction and transmission' (1994:52), and Wierzbicka maintains that human beings do not think even about universal human concepts², such as body parts, the sun, the moon, the stars, rain, wind, fire and water, in the same way. She claims that language does not reflect the world directly, but 'it reflects human conceptualisation, human interpretation of the world' (Wierzbicka, 1992:7). Therefore, words referring to universal human concepts can be as language-specific as those referring to customs, traditions, rituals and beliefs. Quinn and Holland's observation that 'the intuition of native speakers about their language are heavily dependent on the intuitions of these natives as culture-bearers' (1987:16) underpins Wierzbicka's argument.

As has been seen in 2.4, the issues raised by linguistic relativity are highly pertinent to the Ghanaian, and by the same token African and other postcolonial, writer who chooses an essentially foreign, or if you like transplanted, language for literary creation. In the attempt to reconcile Ghanaian cultural experience with the desire to express it in an alien tongue, English is bound to be twisted and moulded so that it can convey concepts that are foreign to it. However, it is not only the culture and language contact situation that lends relevance to the fact that language and patterns of thought are interlinked, but also multilingualism in a multiethnic, hence multicultural, milieu. In *Changes – A Love Story* (1991) Ama Ata Aidoo beautifully captures the essence of this link from the point of view of popular opinion:

When Ali was in an English-speaking environment, people found his language ‘quaint’ with its French accent and philosophical turn to everyday phrases. When he was in a Francophone environment, people thought his language enchantingly ‘simple, comme les Anglais!’ (30)

Although monolingual popular opinion, as well as some cognitive scientists³ deny the existence of links between ways of speaking and ways of thinking on the one hand, and the existence of differences in ways of thinking associated with different languages and cultures on the other hand, the existence of such links and differences between language, culture and thought is self-evident to people with an intimate knowledge of two or more languages and cultures.

3.4 The Ghanaian writer’s cultural and linguistic reality

3.4.1 Seeing through culture

‘I am also financing a cement-block house for my mother in the village. They say that it has raised her esteem so much that it has even won her back my father. ... I have issued instructions to them to find a small cement house in town which I can buy for my two kids’ (Darko, 1995:140).

Amma Darko and her heroine, Mara, in *Beyond the Horizon* certainly have a clear idea of the house Mara is building for her mother and of the one she intends to buy for her children. It needs no explanation. Everyone knows what a cement-block house is. Or do we? Some of us, readers, may wonder: What size and shape are those cement blocks? What shape is the house? What kind of internal division does it have? How many rooms? What amenities?

What kind of windows? Sash? Continental European? Louvres? What are louvres, anyway? How about the roof? Tiles? Slates? Corrugated iron? Why has it changed the status of Mara's mother? What place does it have in the paradigm of Ghanaian dwellings? We could keep on asking. As much of our reality is culturally constructed, our concept of a house is influenced by the culture we are part of. The cultural knowledge underlying our cultural understanding of the world is what we see with.

The Ghanaian writer sees the world through the prism of his own culture and wants to tell a Ghanaian story, even if he does that in English, a 'transplanted language in a speech community that does not share the native cultural contexts of the transplanted language' (Y. Kachru, 1987:87). His reality will be an unmistakably West African reality in general, and a Ghanaian reality in particular. Perhaps one of the most salient features of this reality is the coexistence of the traditional and the modern. About one third of the population lives in urban areas⁴, while the rest live in villages and traditional towns. Although there is a growing urban population at the expense of rural areas, this does not significantly alter the overall West African outlook. The claim that 'in spite of the rapidity of social change (necessarily fastest in the urban centres and slower in the villages) the traditional still outweighs non-traditional cultural elements' (Obiechina, 1975:36) has lost none of its pertinence.

3.4.2 *Traditional society*

Traditional society, which West African, therefore Ghanaian society is regarded to be, is collective by nature. The life of a community is bonded together by a common historical and ancestral background and is bound within a limited area; it is based on permanent face-to-face social relationships and co-operation. The present life of the people, indeed every aspect of their human experience - their actions, behaviour, norms, ideas, beliefs, ideals, attitudes and values - is handed down to them orally from generation to generation with as little modification as possible. The identification of the individual with the social and cultural outlook of the group of which he or she forms part means that 'the traditional individual's apprehension of reality is ... the collectively shared vision of reality certified by custom' (Obiechina, 1975:40). Social conformity is at the heart of the existence of a traditional community. Although the individual is less autonomous than in the Western sense, the subordination of the individual's self-interest to the overall interest of the community does not lead to the repression of individual freedom because traditional society is never remote

from the very people who compose it, and because its corporate nature leaves little room for manipulation by ambitious individuals.

The traditional spirit does not dictate uniformity of personal character and temperament. Individuals, even in a traditional community, may differ in character and temperament, and may, sometimes, deviate from the behavioural norms of their community. However, as Obiechina observes,

The traditional did [and does even today] work towards the maintenance of internal social harmony and good external relations. Politics provided [and keep providing] the framework for defining and delimiting social relations, individual rights and obligations, and the specific roles and statuses attaching to different offices, and law was [and still is] directed towards reconciling the parties in every conflict and restoring the state of normality (1975:205; comments in square brackets are my own).

In West Africa the custodians of the traditional are the ancestors. They are the souls of those departed elders who have lead a life of high moral and ethical standards and contributed meaningfully to the welfare of the community. The ancestors live in the world of spirits, yet they are not separated from the living but are considered part of their human families. As Quarcoopome explains, 'in the African context the family is made up of the dead, the living and the generation yet unborn' (1987:128). The ancestors are the guardians of traditions, ethics, family affairs and property and, as such, are believed not only to be continually watching over the living but to have power to influence their affairs, as well. They are constantly kept in mind and held in veneration by the individual and community alike. They are invoked to ensure their help and protection, and it is believed that success and prosperity depends on the favour of the ancestors. Prayers such as the following express the sense of dependence on the ancestors:

You are leaving us today; we have performed your funeral. Do not let any of us fall ill. Let us get money to pay the expenses of your funeral. Let the women bear children. Life to all of us. Life to the chief (quoted in Busia, 1954:201).

Ancestors are the link people have with the spiritual world. They are the intermediaries between men, the divinities and God. Their power and authority is relegated to them from God. This power and authority commands fear, awe and respect from people as the ancestors can not only dispense, on behalf of God, their blessing, help and reward for the observance of the laws and customs but can also punish individuals, families or even whole communities

for displeasing them by breaking the customs or failing to fulfil their obligations to their kinsfolk⁵.

In the traditional world-view, then, spiritual and non-spiritual, the celestial and the mundane exist in a fusion. The constant interplay of these two worlds gives sense to existence in a traditional West African village. At the centre of this traditional universe is man. He is acted upon by forces above the human force – the supreme creator God; the lesser gods connected with cosmic and natural phenomena; the minor spirits, who inhabit the air, the forests and streams; and the ancestors, whose spiritual bond with the living vouches for the continuity of society. Though man is not capable of acting upon these forces, he can regulate his relationship with them by expiating and placating them through sacrifices and religious rites. On the other hand, man has the power to act on the lower forces, such as materials and minerals, without being acted upon by them, and manipulates them to his advantage.

‘Traditional habits of thinking are compounded of empiricism and metaphysics’ (Obiechina, 1975:38). Actions forming part of daily life, such as farming, fetching water, cooking, eating and drinking, making clothes and tools, just to mention a few, comprise a reality which is perceived by the individual through the senses, and as such, require empirico-rational behaviour. At the same time, because both the physical world and the unseen universe are embraced by the traditional world view, the traditional mind also perceives reality at a super-sensory level of consciousness. As Obiechina sums it up,

...religion provides an operative basis for regulating the relationship between man, the gods and the ancestors, while magic provides the answer to the threats of the harmful mystical forces that beset man in this world. Within the traditional setting, therefore, reality is apprehended empirically and rationally as a sensory phenomenon and metaphysically as an invisible force which operates in the universe. Thus, apart from areas of action which can be regarded as truly empirical, there are others which can only be subsumed under religious or magical manifestation. The world of traditional West African village life depends on the constant interplay of these two aspects – the physical, seen world and the unseen world of the gods, ancestors, spirits, witches and magicians (1975:38-9).

Social structure in the traditional system is based on the extended family and the mutual helpfulness and co-operation of its members. The most crucial relationship is that between father and son: ‘it is the foundation of the ancestral authority upon which the continuity of the institutions, common values, attitudes and sentiments of the traditional culture depend’ (Obiechina, 1975:218-19). A father is responsible for bringing up his son in the best traditions of the clan and for providing for his basic necessities. In turn, a son must be

reverent and obedient to his father and when the father dies, he must perform the proper funeral rites to smooth the father's passage to the spiritual world of the ancestors. Sacrificial offerings by the son provide sustenance for the spirit of the dead father, who will continue to exercise tutelary influence over his son and his family.

Most traditional societies are rural communities where farming is the main occupation, although keeping livestock, hunting and fishing is also practised, depending on climate and geographical location. The land is assumed to belong to the ancestors, whose living descendants are entitled to its full use while here on earth. Every male member of a family has land available to him to farm on, which ensures that no man is without employment. Since land is the main source of economic production, wealth, power and status are closely linked with success in farming. Life is regulated by seasonal rhythms which determine the patterns of work. There exists a sexual division of labour, which assigns certain types of agricultural activity and skills to men and others to women. Even the pattern of parent-child relationship is determined, and the desirability of male children explained, by the traditional economy. The father, who is the head of the domestic economic unit, has considerable power over his children. He commands obedience from them and exercises authority over them. As long as he is alive, he receives labour tribute from his grown-up sons as an expression of their filial loyalty. Not only does this help to maintain inner cohesion and solidarity within the family, but it also underlines the great practical importance of having male children as labour force to increase the prospects of agricultural, and consequently economic, success. The father, on the other hand, is obliged to take care of his sons' needs until they set up a family of their own. He has to give them a portion of the family land on which they can lay their economic foundation, build a house for them in the family compound, and pay the bride price for their wives. These obligations on the part of the father ensure that despite the clearly defined economic basis of the relationship between father and son, this relationship is devoid of exploitation.

In Ghana in particular, existing side by side with the patrilineal descent, inheritance and succession⁶, common in the northern and eastern regions of the country, among the Ga people of the Accra region, and partly among the Akwapims and Fantes, matriliney is prevalent among the Akan peoples inhabiting southern Ghana south and west of the Volta River system. In the Akan conception of the nature of man, man is both a biological and a spiritual being. As Busia explains, two sets of bonds, the mother-child bond and the father-child bond, determine two sets of groupings and relationships:

Man as a biological being inherits his blood from his mother; this gives him his status and membership within the lineage, the clan, and the tribe, and his rights and obligations as a citizen; moreover, ... the concept of a life hereafter and of a spirit world, and the consequent worship of the ancestors, provides a religious link and unbroken continuity with all one's matrikin.

As a spiritual being, a man receives a twofold gift of the spirit: that which determines his character and his individuality he receives through his father; but his soul, the underlying part of him, he receives direct from the Supreme being.

... The blood that is transmitted through the mother, the personality that comes indirectly from the Supreme Being through intermediaries, and that 'small bit of the Creator which is in every person's body' and which he receives directly from the Supreme Being, combine to make a man what he is. (1954:199-200)

Matrilineal descent is responsible for the laws of inheritance of property, succession to stools, and marriage. A woman's personal property cannot be acquired by her husband or male members of her family as long as other female members are alive.

The custodian of all knowledge and treasures of the community is the woman:

Ye ko bisa aberewa, "We are going to consult the old woman," places the woman as the final arbiter in all decisions in the Ashanti community. When a tribunal sits to settle a case, its members finally retire to take a decision and this final act culminating in giving justice is referred to as "consulting the old woman." ... However inferior an Ashanti woman may appear to an outside observer she is the final decisive factor in all the activities of the men and the arbiter of what is good or bad for the whole community. (Tufuo and Donkor, 1989:58)

As maintainers of the clan and the bearers of kings, mothers enjoy a high social status. This is emphasised by the respect that is due to them: to be disrespectful to a mother leads to the same consequences as sacrilege.

While the most important bond is between mother and child, Warren (1986:37) informs us that the Akan father is theoretically without legal authority over his children. His natural rights, however, usually allow him to educate, discipline and maintain custody of his offspring.

Powerful and prominent as women may seem, the matrilineal system does not guarantee equality between male and female members of a lineage. The authority in the family lies with the maternal uncle. He has the power to choose spouses for his nephews and nieces and sanction their divorce. His power is great, but the authority he has is a kind of corporate authority as all the blood relations in the family can have a say in his decisions. The head of

the family – the family elder – is male. He represents the family on the local council of elders, acts as the family intermediary with the spirits, is the custodian of family traditions, manages all family property and settles family disputes. He is, however, not an autocrat as any decision he makes has to be upheld by other elders in the family⁷.

Gyamfuaa-Fofie points out that ‘the matrilineal system merely guarantees that nephews will inherit from their uncles through the female line: wealth continues to be confined to males’ (1997:40). She further explains that women in Ghanaian communities have been socialised to accept male supremacy, and have sometimes acted as primary agents in enforcing and re-enforcing restrictive gender rules. Girls are taught that the essence of a woman’s life is marriage and are trained to seek material gain from suitors; they are encouraged to marry wealthy men irrespective of the age difference. They are ‘socialized into the knowledge that success in life is achieved by marrying successful men: the idea that a woman can become successful through self-confidence and hard work is rarely credited’ (ibid., 41). The psychological oppression of women is maintained even through proverbs such as ‘If a woman buys a gun, she must keep it in the room of a man,’ or ‘When a woman rears a sheep, the man must sell it’ (ibid., 41). Although Ghanaian traditional religions do not discriminate against women priests, who can perform the same rites as their male counterparts in the same capacity, Christianity is not free from discriminatory attitudes towards women, and the Bible is often quoted to promote male authority and female submission and humility. Attitudes towards female education have not been favourable, either. Boys have traditionally been privileged over girls in matters of education because it is believed that the resources spent on a girl’s education would be wasted when she married. Girls are, therefore, encouraged to take up trading or farming, or to learn a vocation at best, and marry rather than seek academic success. No matter how high an educational standard a woman has, if she is single, she will not be accorded as much respect as an illiterate married woman. Despite the fact that the Ghanaian educationalist Dr Kwaggir Aggrey clearly spoke out for the education of women when he said ‘If you educate a woman you educate a nation but if you educate a man you educate an individual’ (quoted in Gyamfuaa-Fofie, 1997:43), women’s advancement has been a slow process. On the one hand, not only do women lack self-confidence, but they also allow themselves to be drawn into rumour-mongering, petty jealousies, back-biting and sexual envy, which weaken their morals and hinder their progress. On the other hand, though many men sympathise with the struggle of women for recognition and fulfilment, many perceive a threat to their leadership and authority and try to hinder women’s progress.

Nature forms an integral part of the traditional West African's world order. It is not 'other' as in the industrialised and urbanised West where it is admired and appreciated in forms such as waterfalls, landscapes and beautiful flowers in gardens and parks. Human life is intimately interwoven with physical nature, which is not dead but filled with spirits and vitality.

Behind nature there is supernature, the spirit which animates it and infuses it with occult potency. Everything in nature is either a manifestation of matter, tangible, physical and responsible to sensual perception, or supernature, that which is nature's hidden power and life. The perfect combination of the two aspects ensures the harmony and ordered progress of the traditional world ... Since nature is so intimately woven into the traditional consciousness, it is an ever-present reality constantly within view. Understandably, *it is more an object of veneration than of aesthetic appreciation* (Obiechina, 1975: 43; added emphasis).

This intimacy between man and nature is also reflected in the symbols and images drawn from nature that fill traditional folklore and mythology.

Artistic creation in the traditional environment is collective and utilitarian. Pure and applied art are not strictly differentiated. While religious and ritual activities find expression in masks, statuettes and figurines, art is also put to such common use among traditional people as door-carving, wall- and floor-decoration, pottery, decoration of utensils and tools, and body-decoration such as body-painting, intricate hairdos, body-piercing and cicatrisation. The traditional artist's work is inspired by a 'collectively shared aesthetic vision from which he derives his motifs, symbolism and functional framework' (Obiechina, 1975:53), and is commissioned by the community.

Music has various functions in traditional society: it is entertainment, accompaniment to dance and serves religious and ritual purposes. A musical session, and most dance situations, always establish a rapport between the performers and the audience, inviting the latter to participate. Song and dance express a predominantly collective emotion, be it happiness, exaltation, suspense, sorrow, fear, anger or reverence. Whatever the musical situation, the ultimate effect seems to be the same:

To bring the community together, to forge a social, aesthetic or mystical link among its members and to unite emotional responses around defined rhythmic waves and melodies. Music, dance and song become for the community an instrument for creating social, emotional and aesthetic solidarity (Obiechina, 1975:58).

3.4.3 *Modern urban society*

'For most Africans, life begins in the village, and wherever they go after that, they carry the village within them' (Obiechina, 1975:201). When they enter the modern industrialised urban environment (as distinct from traditional urban settlements which are relatively homogeneous culturally), where elements of the oral kinship-oriented culture coexist with elements of literate individualistic culture, their behaviour and attitudes are infused with certain ambivalence. Although through societies and associations based on ethnic origin and/or place of provenance they may try to recreate a traditional framework reproducing some of the security of the rural community, the individual is compelled to play roles which do not exist in the traditional setting. To fit in the economic system he has to acquire literacy, and through it some specialised skill or profession. As a consequence, he enters a situation where he grows detached from the tradition-oriented community where social hierarchy and status determines the individual's place, and becomes free to assert his individuality. He no longer counts in terms of the group he belongs to, but plays a range of roles which depend on his level of education and professional training. This requires considerable social and mental adjustment.

Modern towns are conglomerations of people drawn together from different traditional areas, so the historical identification, social homogeneity and collective outlook of the traditional community are no longer found there. Though most urban settlers tend to have a background of traditional experience, the lack of a collective world-view and collectively defined reality affects the consciousness of each individual. Obiechina observes that

the metaphysical outlook of the traditional individual becomes the superstitious outlook of the city-dweller, the difference being that the metaphysical apprehension of reality in the former is an essential aspect of the "logically" conceived world-order, but is in the latter a mere fragmentary phenomenon unrelated to the general "realistic" outlook, which is scientific. Belief in magic within the traditional environment is an aspect of the collective cultural equipment and plays an important part in social relations, whereas within the modern setting, it is a private reality. The individual may only have recourse to it in pursuit of private gain or private vengeance (1975:40).

The prototype of the urban individual is characterised by the absence of a unified cultural ethos on the one hand, and by quite a high degree of individual initiative and independent thinking on the other. He tends to be physically and mentally mobile; not so much intelligent as streetwise, shrewd and cunning. The wider scope of experiences in the city makes him

more adaptable to different roles. His lack of a unified cultural and moral vision allows him to adhere to a code of behaviour based on egotism: he is likely to feel free to indulge in 'worldly pleasures' without much restraint and to pursue personal gains and advantages, even through dishonest means, without giving anything back in return.

People in the village look increasingly to their urban relatives for help and fulfilment of their aspirations. More significantly, parents are less willing, or less capable, to meet their traditional obligations to their children who live and work in the towns. This indicates their diminishing traditional authority over their offspring. In turn, urban dwellers show a tendency to 'virtually disregard their traditional reciprocal obligations, duties and responsibilities to relatives outside their nuclear families except the closest and the most immediate' (Nukunya, 1992:155-6). Marital ties and ties to one's children are strengthening at the expense of kinship ties.

The transition from indigenous moral restraint to the complexities of modern discipline has resulted in a conflict of values leading to the psychological and moral bewilderment of the individual. The phenomenon of corrupt practices in Africa has its roots in the ideological flux of this 'in-betweenness'. Mazrui observes that 'politics in Africa ... are sometimes hard to keep clean merely because people are moving from one set of values to another' (1986:240). The priority of ethnic solidarity and kinship obligations over allegiance to the newly created political entity of a nation pressurises African politicians and officials into giving privileges to their kinsmen, thus giving in to nepotism.

Part of the problem of corruption goes back to the colonial administration. Being a case of foreign control, artificial by definition, the colonial regime lacked legitimacy and was alienated from the population. Government property, therefore, lacked respect.

It became almost a patriotic duty to misappropriate the resources of the colonial government when this was possible without risk of punishment or exposure. After all, to steal from a foreign thief could be an act of heroic restoration. Post-colonial Africa still suffers from the cynical attitudes to government property generated by the colonial experience.

... [The nation] is an artificial entity invented by the colonial order, with boundaries which bear no relation to ethnic limits or traditional kingdoms. The Europeans carved up Africa to suit European convenience. ... Why should I regard those colonial frontiers as being more important than the needs of my children? Why should I regard integrity in the service of an artificial national entity as more important than staple food for my children? While I abuse the resources of my

artificial nation in favour of my authentic family, let the innocent cast the first stone.
(Mazrui, 1986:242-3)

Like nepotism, bribery, too, has its roots in traditional culture. Traditional gift-giving in Africa is based on the principle of prior appreciation and reciprocity. It is also a matter of dignity that the beneficiary of a favour should give something in return. Anticipating a favour by extending a favour to one's future benefactor is, however, not necessarily the same as a bribe of money. The changing standards and codes of behaviour brought about by a modern money economy have nevertheless shaded the former into the latter and the continuity with an older custom has lent legitimacy to this practice. As Mazrui observes, 'the central question still persists: is there such a thing as corruption, or is it all a matter of culture? It does seem as if one culture's bribery is another's mutual goodwill' (1986:241).

Yet another factor working against the equilibrium of traditional indigenous cultures is the introduction of literacy associated with the emergence of new cultural elements, new skills, new attitudes and new aspirations. What can, however, be regarded as instrumental in the disruption of the old social order and in accelerating social change is the arrival and growth of the mass media. Their accessibility both to the literate and the non-literate and their availability both in English and the indigenous languages have not only rapidly expanded their audiences, but increased their capacity for spreading new cultural influences, as well. By familiarising the individual with other ways of life and presenting him with changes in the society he lives in and in the world outside it, they not only increase the individual's perceptive power, but exert a considerable influence on the way of life of traditional people.

Christianity has also been instrumental in undermining the ideological matrix – collective solidarity and tradition – that hold traditional society together. The alienation of the converts from their traditional loyalty to the ancestors and the splitting of the collective conscience mean that the community can no longer keep its integrity. Their religious basis undermined, traditional customary laws are no longer effective, and the traditional social framework can no longer cope with the tensions and conflicts arising from the culture-contact.

Although Christianity 'contradicts the narrow appeal of the traditional system to the brotherhood of those bound by common ancestry and marriage' (Obiechina, 1975:258) by offering 'an authority rival to the authority of the ancestors and an appeal to the universal brotherhood of man' (ibid.) and thereby affects the most fundamental, therefore most cohesive, factors of the traditional system, and, as a consequence, facilitates the

fragmentation of traditional society, it has to be acknowledged that it has never put traditional religion in the danger of obliteration. Many of those who become Christian in their youth tend to find their way back later in their life to take a traditional title or to marry an additional wife. Sometimes even those who profess Christian values throughout their life seek the intervention of traditional agents such as priests, medicine men and diviners in times of crisis when the Christian faith fails to provide them with respite and remedy.

Urban West Africans are living through the separation of man from nature, though this process has not gone as far as it has in the industrialised West. With the expansion of urban centres into the forest and the construction of road and railway networks wild nature is forced to recede. Many of the traditional attitudes, especially religious and mystical, cease to exist with this recession.

It is fair to say that the taste for horticulture of all sorts, landscape gardening, ornamental gardening, the development of garden parks, zoos and so on widely noticeable in the environmental and architectural history of the past few centuries in Europe, especially since the eighteenth century, represents modern man's attempt to re-establish some kind of contact with a domesticated nature to replace the relationship which he has all but lost through industrialization and urbanization. Natural woods and forests are replaced with cultivated gardens and parks, natural animals by those in the zoos, natural streams and brooks by ponds, moats and canals. Natural darkness is negated by electricity. The moon is obliterated by the street lights in built-up urban centres (Obiechina, 1975:49).

Nature is being similarly recreated in the West African urban settlements. Most importantly, Western aesthetic attitudes towards and concepts of nature are being developed by individuals, especially the educated middle class, who live in the urban environment or have had a western type education. Nature, however, is never too far. Some people, even after they have been absorbed in the urban settlements, keep visiting sacred woods and enchanted hills and keep worshipping old rivers and streams. Since many urban West Africans live only part of their life in the town and the other part in their ancestral village, they are never completely out of touch with nature, nor have they lost the concepts of nature of their rural relatives.

The significance and social value of art has also been decisively affected by urban social change, the heterogeneous nature of urban populations and the influence of Western artistic philosophy. The vacuum created by the lack of the unified social and cultural outlook essential to aesthetic collectiveness has been filled by 'atelier art of a secular nature, nurtured in Western-type schools and expressing an essentially individual vision' (Obiechina,

1975:71-2). This has brought with it the separation of art from common culture and the growth of coterie audiences. Although the artist working in the modern idiom attempts, from time to time, to draw his inspiration and motifs from traditional folklore and traditional artistic forms, he is no longer a creator integrative of society.

Where the traditional artist works in intimate association with society, taking from it his themes, functional relevance and his symbols, and rewarding the society by sharing with it his vision in the interpretation of public realities, the modern artist is an individual who draws his artistic impulse from his own imagination and makes his creation available to society for its own edification. He is not commissioned by the community to produce his work, as his traditional counterpart would have been, and the community is under no obligation to patronize his product. He may take some of his motifs from the culture but these are used in a way which only his personal imagination will define. The result is often a breakdown in artistic collaboration between artist and society, a collaboration which was implicit in the traditional aesthetic. Artistic individualism is an aspect, and indeed a symptom, of cultural fragmentation (Obiechina, 1975:73-4).

The gap between traditional art and the art of the elite is bridged by a flourishing popular art, which has come into being in the towns. Its 'in-betweenness' comes from the fact that like modern elite art, it is individual, but, at the same time, it is functional, very much like traditional art. It is produced by people who have no or little artistic training but a fair amount of natural talent and disrespect for the canons of modern art schools. Their outstanding qualities are spontaneity, simplicity, gaudiness, and immediacy of impact. The pop artist takes the shortest route between his artistic means and communicative aims. Understanding the import of his work demands little intellectual or imaginative effort from the audience.

Popular art covers a vast area of urban activities. It ranges from sign-writing, poster-painting, murals in public houses and hotels through the carving of masks, walking sticks and various human, animal and plant figures to popular writing and popular music. Popular literature is best represented by pamphlets, novelettes, popular magazines and comic strips. Its attractiveness to the literate but not highly educated is well explained by Priebe:

The common people have little time for complexity in their literature; in fact, when they look to literature they try to find resolution for the complexities of life. Thus the world of the popular novelette is often an unambiguous world where good is rewarded and evil punished. ... The elite literature transcends the reality through symbolic inversion; the popular literature avoids reality through sublimation. The former offers a positive vision; the latter simply reflects real concerns (1978:87-8).

Popular music known as “high life” has become the music of urban populations throughout the English-speaking parts of West Africa. Functionally it harks back to traditional music in that it is entertainment, accompaniment to dance, and it does create social and emotional solidarity. The rhythm is largely traditional, but the instrumentation is mostly Western, with the exception of traditional drums. The popular appeal of “High life” is reinforced by the lack of a rigid formal dance tempo. The “High life” song is similarly simple. It contains satirical or commonplace sentiments, and often observations on modern urban life.

Musical appreciation in the towns is no longer necessarily a community affair. The wide range of varieties of music available to the population, from classical music through popular Euro-American music to the popular music of French-speaking West Africa and the Congo and traditional African music, has made musical taste cosmopolitan. As music is provided by the radio, TV and hi-fi, it increasingly has the tendency to become a more private and individual experience.

Despite all these changes, a large body of traditional thinking survives even among those who have been most intensely subjected to Western acculturation: the middle-class professionals and the university and Western educated West Africans. Though they spend most of their life in the urban centres, through their visits to their relatives in the villages they continue to be exposed to the influence of traditional oral culture. They are proficient speakers of their native languages (Kropp Dakubu, 1997a: chapters 3 & 4), have a comprehensive knowledge of traditional proverbs and speech forms, and are familiar with their folklore (Obiechina, 1975:27). To a great extent, they also share the values and attitudes of their traditional culture:

All those have been embedded in the consciousness of the West African peoples as cultural groups; even the introduction of elements of the Western literary culture has merely modified traditional oral culture but has not destroyed the consciousness deriving from its tradition. So long as the relation between the town and the village remains complementary, and so long as a large number of people live in the villages, and those who live in the towns also live in the villages part of the time, so long will oral tradition continue to inform the consciousness and determine the sensibility of most West Africans (Obiechina, 1975:27-8).

Kropp Dakubu also asserts that ‘the distinction between urban and rural society is not always sharp or absolute’ (1997a:22). The fact that the same people are likely to shift between an urban and a rural existence at different times of their lives has got implications for linguistic patterns. One of the most distinctive characteristic features of urbanism in West Africa is

‘culturally pervasive multilingualism’⁸ (ibid.), which the Ghanaian writer is very much part of.

3.4.4 *Language*

In the West African linguistic set-up Brann (1980) identifies a trilingual model⁹ comprising the mother tongue (L1)¹⁰, other tongue (L2) and further tongue (L3). The mother tongue, which may not necessarily be a standardised variety but merely a dialect of a large standardised language or a member of a language cluster or language group, is ‘the language of tradition, intimacy, initial socialisation and frequently of the first years of primary schooling’ (ibid., 13). It is mainly an oral medium and serves as an in-group language whenever an individual meets a ‘brother’ away from the home setting; this way it can be maintained by urban migrants even when it becomes redundant for the rising generation.

The other tongue may be a lingua franca, like Hausa or Akan, but need not necessarily be that; it can be the standard variety of a language for speakers of local dialects, or a ‘closely related language of a group, of which a member (not necessarily the major one) has become the standard’ (ibid., 8). Just as it is the case elsewhere throughout West Africa, there is hardly any Ghanaian, except for those whose L1 is a standard form, who does not speak at least another Ghanaian language for the purpose of wider communication. The other tongue, then, serves to facilitate inter-ethnic communication in multi-ethnic and multi-lingual areas. It is essentially an L2 habitually used by a person and changes for each individual in accordance with their environment.

While the mother tongue and the other tongue are indigenous languages by virtue of being home and community languages, the further tongue is exogenous by virtue of being imported from abroad. In Ghana it is the former colonial language, English, which most educated and urbanised Ghanaians speak in addition to their L1 and L2. Although there is no agreement on appropriate terminology to be used (e.g. European language, hence Europhone text/literature; non-native English, world English), there seems to be consensus on the fact that it is a transplanted language which by now has become ‘accepted’, ‘received’ or ‘assimilated’ (Brann, 1980:10) depending on the variety one is looking at¹¹. As the language of education and officialdom, it is the further tongue of all educated Ghanaians. In its demotic form of

broken or Pidgin English it has become an ‘other tongue’ for the less or formally not educated, and it may well have become the mother tongue of some few Ghanaians.

Figure 3:1 below shows Kropp Dakubu’s representation of the Ghanaian trilingual situation. She points out that although the trilingual model of multilingualism applies to the Ghanaian situation, “triglossia” is far from stable.

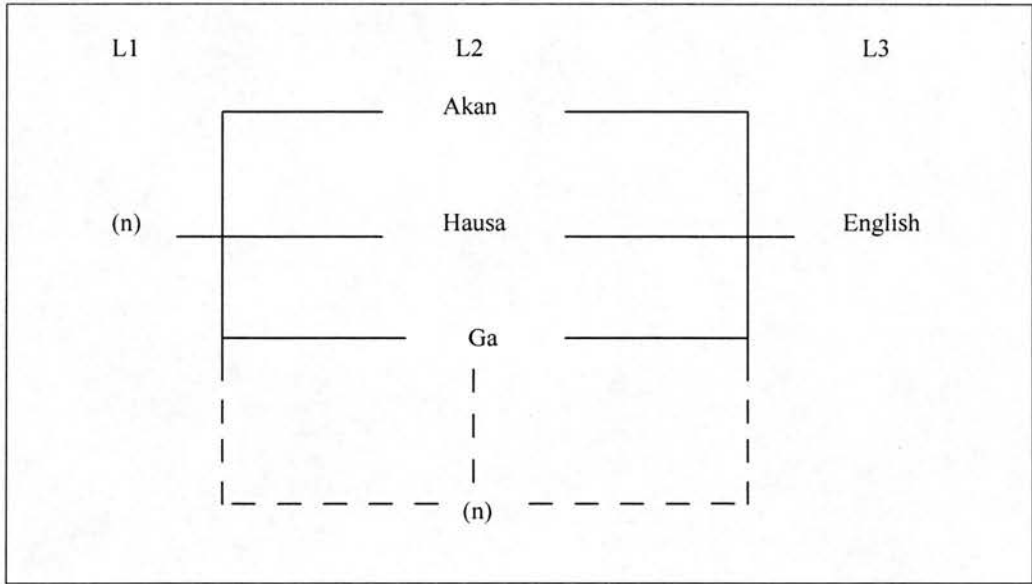


Figure 3.1: The Trilingual Configuration in Ghana; *n* indicates that the number of possible languages in a category is indefinite (adopted from Kropp Dakubu, 1997a:33).

As can be seen, one obvious difficulty is the existence of several languages in common use as a second language (L2), often by the same people. (Only the most widely spoken are listed.) Even when the local community language (L1) can be classed as an indigenous lingua franca, the number of major languages is not necessarily reduced. In Kumasi, for example, the local community language is Akan, which is also the largest single language in Ghana and is apparently spreading as a second language; but Hausa, too, has long been a major presence there. In Accra and in many other towns, Hausa, Akan, and Ga are in competition as lingua francas among migrants, who speak none of them as their community languages, which they continue to use in the urban environment. Even in Larteh and other small towns of Akuapem, a third of the adult population speaks Ga, in addition to Akan and English. ...In Figure [1], the exotic language (L3) is the only term represented by just one language, English. This fact may help to account for the apparently secure

position of this language, despite the notorious inequality of access to it. (1997a:33-4)

Kropp Dakubu further explains that the language situation in Ghana is neither strictly trilingual nor inherently stable, and other factors such as the distinction between the social domain in which a language is used, the immediate social function of a language event, the broader communicative goal or why a particular language is being used, and the relationship between the two also have to be taken into consideration. Variation in space and time also have their sociolinguistic significance. 'For a Larteh-speaking father to choose to speak Akan to his children in Larteh, for example, would signify differently from making the same choice in Akan-speaking Aburi or in Accra ... [and] choosing to speak Hausa in Lagos means something rather different from choosing to speak it in Accra' (Kropp Dakubu, 1997a:40).

It is from this cultural and linguistic multiplicity that each Ghanaian writer forges his or her own medium of expression.

3.5 Conclusion

As discussed in 3.2, culture is viewed as historically created and socially transmitted systems of meaning, communicated through natural language and other symbol systems. Human beings sustain and develop their knowledge about and attitudes towards life in terms of these systems of meaning which, in turn, give form, order, point and direction to their lives. Although individuals can differ to varying degrees in thoughts, feelings and behaviour, the fabric of meaning through which people interpret their experience and guide their action represents a consensus among the members of a community. Common meanings, which exist independently of particular individuals, "are the objects produced by the group. They are not accessible in pure form but are inherent in the expectations of the group as to 'rational' behaviour, and in the artefacts which symbolise and are expressions of the meanings of that behaviour" (Byram, 1989:85).

Although one can talk about culture in general merely in terms of its inter-subjective, ideational aspects, it is difficult to examine a particular culture without making mention of the artefacts it has produced, or even of the way its members use language to talk about

natural objects and phenomena. Artefacts in the physical world are both products and symbols of culture infused with the meanings of the culture that produced them. Works of art as artefacts of culture are 'the expressions both of the idiosyncratic meanings of individuals and also of the systems of meaning which individuals share' (Byram, 1989:84).

Cultural meanings are negotiated, agreed upon and expressed in the language of the community. Language owes its key position in culture to its meta-function: it refers beyond itself to other symbols and phenomena. As such, it is the carrier of the individuals' experience of cultural meaning.

Ruqaiya Hasan writes:

Languages need communities to live in; they develop and change through their use in the living of life, and this characteristically takes place in social contexts of culture. The relationship between language and culture is symbiotic: the one lives through the other. Because language is instrumental in the creation, maintenance, and change in societies, and society of language, language cannot help carrying the social meanings of its speech community. Whenever we use language, we invoke far more of our social reality than people give the utterance credit for in describing its meanings. These facts have consequences both for the maker and the receiver of the message. Literature is no exception to this. (1989:101)

The Ghanaian writer, as any other writer, is surrounded by the realities of his community; his text is inspired and informed by and speak of his culture. His bi- or multilingual background extends the meaning resources of English, his chosen medium of literary creation.

The context of creation has consequences for the readers, who are 'the medium for the text's achievement' (Hasan, 1989:103). The readers' cultural, linguistic, spatial and temporal distance from the writer's reality acts upon the understanding of the text and may present difficulties for those readers who do not share the writer's cultural and linguistic background. One particular area where the reader may experience difficulty is the area of cultural reference. The complexities relating to the writer's encoding and the reader's understanding of cultural reference in the English-language texts of Ghanaian writers will be examined in subsequent chapters.

Notes

- 1 An extensive selection given in Monaghan and Just (2000), Ch.2 includes definitions by Edward Tylor, Franz Boas, Bronislaw Malinowski, Claude Lévi-Strauss, Renato Rosaldo, Ward H. Googenough, Margaret Mead and Adam Kuper.
- 2 A discussion of universal human concepts can be found in Wierzbicka, 1991:9-10, 1992:22, 26-27, 119, 125-30, 174-76, 202-3 and 1997:22, 33.
- 3 A striking example of such denial is presented by Steven Pinker:

As we shall see in this chapter, there is no scientific evidence that languages dramatically shape their speakers' ways of thinking. The idea that language shapes thinking seemed plausible when scientists were in the dark about how thinking works or even how to study it. Now that cognitive scientists know how to think about thinking, there is less of a temptation to equate it with language just because words are more palpable than thoughts (1994:58).

Pinker refuses to consider the possibility that while some categories may be innate, others may, indeed, be imposed by culture and dismisses both the 'strong' and the 'weak' version of linguistic relativity: 'the more you examine Whorf's arguments, the less sense they make' (1994:60). However, his assertion that thought is independent of language lacks credibility because he never looks at any other language than English. There is ample evidence from the fields of linguistics, sociology and anthropology that discredit and disprove Pinker's line of argument, for example Kramsch 1998, Gumperz and Levinson 1996, Hanks 1996, Wierzbicka 1997, 1991 and 1992, Geertz 1973, Malinowski 1935, just to mention a few.
- 4 Data from 1990. Source: <http://www.ghanaweb.com/GhanaHomePage/general/>
- 5 Ancestors and ancestor worship are discussed in more detail in Busia 1954, Sundermeier 1998, and Warren 1986.
- 6 Patriliney in relation to the northern peoples of Ghana is discussed in detail in Fortes 1987.
- 7 Authoritative work on Akan culture was done by Rattray 1923, 1927, 1929 and 1930. Other important works include Manoukian 1950, Danquah 1951, Meyerowitz 1958, Amoah 1975, Gyekye 1987 and Ackah 1988.
- 8 Kropp Dakubu points out that multilingualism has two referents: 'the linguistic repertoire of a social group and the repertoires of individual members of the group' (1997a:22). In her book she uses 'multilingual' to describe a social-geographic unit in which several languages are used, and 'polyglot' to refer to an individual who speaks several languages.
- 9 A trilingual model of multilingualism has been found particularly applicable to Africa. Alexandre (1971:660) classifies languages used in Africa into the local, the national or vehicular, and the European. Abdulaziz-Mkilifi (1972) proposes a "triglossic" model for modern East Africa: the local language, the "indigenous" lingua franca: Swahili, and the European language of international currency.
- 10 Brann identifies a person's first language both as *mother tongue* and as *vernacular*. He links *mother tongue* to the principle of heredity, by which the individual receives the language through the mother. *Mother tongue* is connected with the *jus sanguinis* or heredity by blood and is thus a *genetic* term. *Vernacular*, on the other hand, is connected etymologically and by use to the place of birth, or to the possession or law of the land, the *jus soli* and thus connotes *locality* (1980:3-4).

¹¹ Ghanaian English has been described in detail by Sey 1973, Ahulu 1992 and Kropp Dakubu (ed.) 1997b.

4 WRITTEN LANGUAGE, INDIGENISATION AND PRAGMATIC THEORY

4.1 Introduction

The current chapter examines the relationship between written language and culture (4.2), and offers a discussion of the special form of influence that culture has on language when a particular culture adopts a language that originates outside its boundaries.

Such exogenous languages get moulded by their new users so as to carry the new users' particular experience. The phenomenon widely known as indigenisation is discussed, offering two views on the subject that informed and influenced the current study most: B. Kachru's nativisation (4.2.1) and Zabus's innovative theory called relexification (4.2.2.3).

The relationship between culture and pragmatic theory is examined with special reference to cross-cultural communication (4.3.1). As a particular point of interest for the analysis of the data, Relevance Theory is discussed in detail (4.3.2), and its applicability to the data is explored (4.3.3).

Throughout, particular reference is made to literary use with all examples – except in the overview of Relevance Theory and for the Tshiluba proverb - taken from the works of Ghanaian writers.

4.2 Written language and culture¹

The demands written language makes on both its producers and receivers are different from those of spoken language². In conversation, the speaker and the hearer can negotiate meaning through synchronous joint actions (Clark, 1996:59-91). The writer, however, has to convey his meaning without the benefit of synchrony. Nonetheless, writing and reading are joint actions, perhaps not quite the same way as conversation, but they do require the participants to co-ordinate both on content and process. While, however, in conversation speakers and hearers synchronise the phases of their actions, in the asynchronous setting of writing and reading the writers try to make processing optimal for their readers. They, therefore, have to

anticipate possible reactions and 'must provide for the possible lack of convergence of shared knowledge: of the world, of social conventions, of the language itself' (Widdowson, 1980:239). The actual production and the actual reading of texts

cannot be separated from those cultural practices and relations where producers and readers act. Meaning is never written as if ready-made inside the text, but is formed within the reading of the text, which is affected by the position of the reader in contexts and cultural practices in addition to the text itself (Lehtonen, 2000:78).

The written text is a social situation, 'for it exists in the participations of social beings whom we call writers and readers' (Ashcroft, 2001b:59). It is the 'partial record' of the discourse to be derived by the reader. As Widdowson points out, 'the extent to which this derivation will reconstitute the writer's discourse will depend on how far [the reader] corresponds in actuality to the interlocutor the writer has presupposed' (1980:239). This correspondence depends on factors such as background knowledge, beliefs and expectations, i.e. what the participants of the interaction have in mind. As pointed out by Ashcroft, 'meaning is achieved constitutively as a product of the dialogic situation of reading' (2001b:60). Although people may live in different worlds and may have different experience, understanding and different traditions, the 'social accomplishment of textual meaning occurs despite the cultural distance between writer and reader' (ibid.).

Language users have in mind an assumption of coherence, i.e. an expectation that 'what is said or written will make sense in terms of their normal experience of things' (Yule, 1996:84). What counts as normal experience will be 'locally interpreted by each individual and hence will be tied to the familiar and the expected' (ibid.). Yule explains that the difference between the following two structurally identical notices is that the interpretation of (b) does require some familiarity with suburban life:

- (a) Plant Sale (= someone is selling plants)
- (b) Garage Sale (≠ someone is selling their garage; = someone is selling household items from their garage)

Familiarity triggers off immediate interpretations of known material, dissuading us from considering possible alternatives. They make us create a coherent interpretation for a text that potentially does not have it, let us fill in details automatically and make us construct familiar scenarios for what might appear to be odd events. Whatever interpretation we arrive at, it is based not only on what is in the text, but inevitably on what we have in mind.

Our ability to interpret the unwritten – and the unsaid – automatically is based on pre-existing knowledge structures called schemata. The availability and activation of relevant prior knowledge allows us to make sense of new experiences – and texts in particular - by ‘relating the current input to existing mental representations of entities and situations that we have experienced in the past’ (Semino, 1995:82). What the notion of schema tries to capture is ‘a portion of background knowledge containing generic information about a particular type of object, person, setting or event’ (ibid.). Stereotypical knowledge about settings and situations (e.g. knowledge about different types of houses), which lends a fixed, static pattern to the schema, is a ‘frame’. Knowledge about sequences of related actions used in the comprehension of complex events (e.g. knowledge about going to the doctor’s), on the other hand, is a ‘script’. Assumed elements of a frame or script are not stated explicitly in the discourse; the pre-existing shared background knowledge structure enables the reader to create an interpretation of what is not stated in the text. As Semino (1995) explains,

meanings are not ‘contained’ within the text, but are constructed in the interaction between the text and the interpreter’s background knowledge. If a comprehender lacks or fails to activate adequate schemata for a particular input, he or she may be unable to make meaningful sense of a text, and comprehension may be impaired. Moreover, differences in the availability or selection of schemata may lead to differences in the interpretation of the same text by different people. (1995:83)

It is inevitable that our schemata – our background knowledge for making sense of the world – which we develop in the context of our experiences, will be culturally determined. Readers who share the writer’s cultural background come to a text equipped with the appropriate schemata. However, the absence of these schemata may lead to the breakdown in the reading process not only at the level of inference but also in the comprehension of explicitly stated facts.

Let us now consider how these issues bear on the situation of the Ghanaian writer. The Ghanaian writer’s choice of English as the medium of creation has inherent problems which the writer may disregard altogether, or may acknowledge by employing various techniques to help his readers cope with his text. First, there is the problem of a culturally competent readership. It is perhaps self-evident that the Western readers’ culturally determined background knowledge for making sense of the world does not match that of the Ghanaian writer’s. At the same time, for reasons discussed in 2.5, the Ghanaian writer’s home audience is fairly limited. A further difficulty is due to the fact that Ghana is a multi-ethnic

country, so this limited readership is not homogenous. Although all Ghanaian readers can easily understand reference to any social, cultural, geographical, etc. aspect of life in Ghana as a supra-ethnic national entity, only a relatively small number of them will belong to the same linguistic and ethnic background as a particular writer. Only this small number of readers will be equipped to fully co-ordinate with the writer on content in the joint action of writing and reading.

This situation is further complicated by issues of genre. It can be expected that the Western reader will be familiar with the traditions of both the short story and the novel and will handle them without problems. However, the Ghanaian writer's story-telling schema, rooted in his rich oral traditions, may very well be structured differently from that of the Western tradition³. This difference may affect the way he constructs his story and may cause processing problems for the Western reader. On the other hand, a Fante-speaking Ghanaian reader, for example, may find the English-language novel of his/her fellow Fante writer hard to understand. While all other written literary genres have 'predecessors' in the oral traditions of the peoples of Ghana, and of Africa as a whole, the novel is a rootless, completely foreign and relatively recent import into the African literary scene. It seems that although the Ghanaian reader's cultural and linguistic experience may match the cultural and linguistic experience of the writer, he/she may still find it difficult to respond to the novel as a genre alien to his/her literary traditions⁴.

The problems brought about by the choice of the African, hence the Ghanaian, writer to employ a historically foreign language for literary creation have been discussed in 2.4. For the written literary code, the consequence of this choice is the attempt of the African writer to convey African concepts, thought patterns and linguistics features by indigenising the foreign language, 'thereby redefining and subverting its foreignness' (Zabus, 1991:3-4). The conflict arises from the fact that African writers – and writers all over the world in a similar sociolinguistic situation - operate 'outside the boundaries of either [their] own society or that of [their] adopted language' (Nkosi quoted in La Pergola Arezzo, 1988:40). For many, the solution is the adaptation of the 'foreign' language, be it English, French, Portuguese, or any other language, so that it can carry their specific experience. The Indian Raja Rao says:

We cannot write like the English. We should not. We cannot write only as Indians. We have grown to look at the large world around us as part of us. Our method of expression therefore has to be a dialect which will some day prove to be as distinctive and colorful as the Irish and the American. Time alone will justify it (quoted in Sridhar, 1982:294).

In his essay *English and the African Writer* Chinua Achebe expresses a similar conviction:

The price a world language must be prepared to pay is submission to many different kinds of use. The African writer should aim to use English in a way that brings out his message best without altering the language to the extent that its value as a medium of international exchange will be lost. He should aim at fashioning out an English which is at once universal and able to carry his peculiar experience. ... It will have to be a new English, still in full communion with its ancestral home, but altered to suit its new African surroundings (1965a:222-3).

This process of moulding English to express an Indian, African, Caribbean, etc. vision has been identified as the nativisation of English⁵ by Kachru (1982a), and as indigenisation of the European language by the indigenous African languages by Zabus (1991), a special instance of which she calls relexification.

Indigenisation, or nativisation, is 'a process of linguistic and sociolinguistic change through which an external language becomes part of the culture of a community that uses it as an additional language, while it still retains many features of the language as it is used by native speakers' (Owusu-Ansah, 1997:24). It takes place at all levels of language and affects the phonology, lexis and grammar of the language being indigenised. In Ghana, in the spoken language there is a continuum with the unmixed Ghanaian languages at one end, the unmixed English at the other, and the mixed varieties in between. The two unmixed varieties are used in highly formal situations such as, for instance, the Asantehene's address to the state (unmixed Akan) or board meetings (unmixed English). As the level of formality falls, mixed varieties of various degree are used, for example between work-mates and friends⁶. With regard to educated written English in Ghana, Ahulu argues that those characteristic features which are supposed to yield a Ghanaian variety are 'not consistently or reliably realised and that their Standard English equivalents are used on more than 95% of occasions of use' (1992: Abstarct). His evidence suggests that indigenisation in the written medium is a distinctive feature of the language of literature.

Kachru and Zabus come to the study of the phenomenon they call nativisation and indigenisation, respectively, from different starting points. Kachru examines the 'bilingual's creativity' (Kachru, 1987:125) apropos the question of the pluricentricity of English, addressing the issue of the validity of monolingualism as the norm for description and analysis of the linguistic interaction of multilingual societies. He criticises the limitation of

'using almost identical approaches for the description of the bilingual's and monolingual's creativity' (ibid., 126) and gives an account of the distinctive features of the bilingual writer's textual strategies. His work is ground-breaking and significant in that he identifies all the principal areas regarding the linguistic realisation of distinctiveness.

While Kachru's interest seems to be in sociolinguistic variation, Zabus sets out to systematically examine the indigenisation of language in the West African Europhone novel, both English and French. In a way Kachru provides a 'rough framework', and Zabus does the 'fine tuning' by rigorously analysing the African palimpsest and deciphering the improperly erased remnants of African languages. Her interest is in the stylistic variation deliberately introduced by the West African writer to create a certain cultural effect. It is inevitable that some of her categories for the writer's textual strategies overlap with Kachru's, although she may name them differently. At the same time, her list is more extensive than Kachru's, including such categories as Pidgin and code-switching, and the techniques of cushioning and contextualisation whereby the writer shows awareness of the existence of a varied readership. Identifying the one and the same text as the locus of the change happening between two languages allows Zabus to formulate her theory of relexification, which can well be applied to the study of literature created in similar sociolinguistic situations in other parts of the world.

Although the importance and relevance of Kachru's contribution is unquestionable, it is Zabus's work that provides a theoretical framework that the current study can rely on not only in the description of lexico-semantic and syntactic variation of cultural reference, but also in examining the various strategies writers employ to help readers to cope with cultural reference in their texts.

4.2.1 *Nativisation*

Nativisation has been used to refer to the unconscious collective process of a speech community as well as to the conscious choice of an individual writer.

Kachru considers the body of non-native writing in English to be contact literatures, regarding the concept as an extension of 'contact language'. He argues that such literatures

are 'a product of multicultural and multilingual speech communities' (B. Kachru, 1982a:330) and have formal and thematic characteristics which justify the use of the term 'contact'.

Using a *non-native* language in native contexts to portray new themes, characters, and situations is like redefining the semantic and semiotic potential of a language, making language mean something which is not part of its traditional "meaning." It is an attempt to give a new African or Asian identity, and thus an extra dimension of meaning. A part of that dimension perhaps remains obscure or mysterious to the Western reader. In purely linguistic terms, it entails developing a meaning system appropriate to the new situations and contexts. One has to make various choices to make the linguistic resources of L2 function in situations where formal equivalence is not always possible (B. Kachru, 1982a:341-42).

Contact literatures 'reveal a blend of two or more linguistic textures and literary traditions' (B. Kachru, 1986:161). They lend extended contexts of situation to the English language which are distinct from the ones normally associated with the native varieties of English. These extended contexts of situation, the range of discourse devices and the cultural assumptions in such literatures demand an extended cultural awareness from a reader who is not part of the speech community which identifies with the variety.

Such texts have more than one interpretive context: (1) the surface meaning of English (usually associated with native varieties); and (2) the underlying meaning of the first or dominant language of the author (B. Kachru, 1986:166). This often poses problems of comprehension (i.e. 'comprehension of a text of one variety of English within the context of situation of another variety'; B. Kachru, 1995:275), and hence interpretation (i.e. 'contextualization of the text within the variables which are appropriate for it within the context of its source language'; *ibid.*) for readers who do not share the author's linguistic and cultural background. 'If the linguistic and cultural "extension" of the code is missed, one also misses the interpretation at the linguistic, literary, sociolinguistic and cultural levels' (B. Kachru, 1986:165).

4.2.1.1 Nativisation of context

Nativisation of context, which he also calls contextual nativisation of texts happens when a text is overloaded by cultural and historical presuppositions which are different from what would be the traditionally expected cultural and historical milieu for English literature. Such

texts demand a serious cultural, at times even anthropological, interpretation. The difficulty here is not grammatical but of a lexical and contextual nature. Consider the following example from Agovi's short story, *Naked Triumph*:

So the people waited. That long wait that destroys a people's confidence in themselves. At last, one spoke. A deity spoke. Unheralded, he thundered through the village. He looked fierce, angry and weird. He tossed his head sideways, muttering incoherent things to the air. He threw his powerful *bodua* into the sky and caught it several times. Brown amulets and dark bracelets were fixed tightly around his powerful arms. White, stringed shells hung across his chest, already dripping with sweat; a loose, brownish raffia skirt was attired to his waist. And his feet rang with the sound of little bells around his ankles.

Behind him, two young girls carried white clay in a brass bowl. They scattered it at every throw of his *bodua*. Azule Tano had descended on Ehwaka. His voice rang out: "I am the river that divides the Nzimas from the Agnis. I am Tano the Invincible." A sudden lull descended on the village. Tano, the dark deity, had descended (1989a:6).

One might hazard a guess that without an intimate knowledge of the traditions, customs and beliefs of the Nzema people in the Western Region of Ghana a lot of the detail concerning Tano, his attire, the manner of his descent on the village and his overall nature are lost on the reader.

4.2.1.2 Nativisation of cohesion and cohesiveness

Nativisation of cohesion and cohesiveness involves the redefinition of the native English users' concept of cohesion and cohesiveness in a given variety 'within the appropriate universe of discourse' (B. Kachru, 1986:166). Particularly affected are types of lexicalisation, collocational extension and the use/frequency of grammatical forms. The lexicalisation involves direct lexical transfer, hybridisation and loan translation. The interpretation of such lexicalisation is bound to be affected by the meaning of the underlying language(s) of the author. The following passage offers an example of loan translation:

"Araba, perhaps you are still too weak to think of this, but have you considered that this impatient child chose a very bad time to arrive?"

"His coming has made me so happy I wouldn't have it any other way now," said Araba.

Baako saw the look on his mother's face take on a sudden severity.

"That's not what I'm talking about." She paused, then said with irritation, "I mean the *outdooring*." (Armah, 1969:87; added emphasis)

As Sey explains, 'outdooing' is a loan translation from Ga: *kpodziemo* or 'going out' ceremony means a baby's first appearance in public to be named (1973:86).

4.2.1.3 Nativisation of rhetorical strategies

The nativisation of rhetorical strategies include the transfer to English of consciously or unconsciously devised strategies which correspond to patterns of interaction in the native culture of the author. These patterns make his style 'deviant' from a native English speaker's point of view. Authenticity of speech acts and discourse types is achieved, according to B. Kachru (1986:167) by

- 1 The use of native similes and metaphors ... which linguistically result in collocational deviation:

e.g. 'You good-for-nothing, empty corn husk of a daughter' ... 'You moth-bitten grain' (Aidoo, 1970b:109)

- 2 The transfer of rhetorical devices for "personalizing" speech interaction:

e.g. 'Massa, God knows I know my job.'
'Of course! As a man of the land and your wife's husband you are a man and therefore you do not cook. As a black man facing a white man, his servant, you are a black, not a man, therefore you can cook.'
'Massa, Massa. You call me woman? I swear, by God, Massa, this na tough. I no be woman. God forbid!'
(Aidoo, 1970a: 17)

- 3 The translation ('transcreation') of proverbs, and idioms:

e.g. '...it was the over-confidence of the hare that made the tortoise beat him in the race'
(Darko, 1995: 39)

- 4 The use of culturally-dependent speech styles:

e.g. 'Maami Amfoa, where are you going?'
My daughter, I am going to Cape Coast.
'And what is our old mother going to do with such swift steps? Is it serious?'

My daughter, it is very serious.
 'Mother, may God go with you.'
 Yoo, my daughter.
 'Eno, and what calls at this hour of the day?'
 They want me in Cape Coast.
 'Does my friend want to go and see how much the city has changed since we went there to meet the new Wesleyan Chairman, twenty years ago?'
 My sister, do you think I have knees to go parading on the streets of Cape Coast?
 'Is it heavy?'
 Yes, very heavy indeed. They have opened up my grandchild at the hospital, *hi, hi, hi*. ...
 (Aidoo, 1970c: 40)

5 The use of syntactic devices (categories adopted from Bamiro 1995):

e.g. *Thematisation of complements and adjuncts:*

'This is the white men's second wish,' Isanusi continued. ... The elephants they say they want destroyed, but only for their tusks. ... Leopards they want dead for their hides. ... Land they want from us, but not the way guests ask the use of land. ... On this their cut-off land they would like to have crops grow. But the white men are not accustomed to doing their own planting and it is not in their minds to get accustomed here. They would have the king give them men to work the land ...
 (Armah, 1979b: 82; added emphasis)

Unusual word order in nominal group structure:

The morning following, Densu was weak but his mind was peaceful.
 (Armah, 1979a: 142; added emphasis)

The day following, the travellers spent resting. (Armah, 1979a:152; added emphasis)

4.2.1.4 Linguistic realisation of thought patterns

Last but not least, Kachru discusses the linguistic realisation of thought patterns. He suggests that while English has a linear paragraph structure, other languages may well accommodate different structures, such as the spiral-like structure of Hindi discourse or the circular structure of Marathi. In addition, the system of logic generally employed in the West is based

on the Aristotelian straight line of progressive stages, whereas other, non-European peoples may have preference for non-sequential logic. From this follows that Indian, African, etc. thought-processes ‘manifest themselves in distinct English types’ (B. Kachru, 1986:169).

The phenomenon described by Kachru can be confirmed by many language educators. It seems, however, that his observation relates to expository prose and academic writing rather than creative prose where rules of logic do not necessarily apply. Let us take, for example, the interior monologue and the stream of consciousness technique. The interior monologue is marked by a style which represents an attempt to suggest inchoate thought processes, the rapid succession of thoughts, topic shifts, as well as non-verbal images. Similarly, stream of consciousness is used to represent the free association or flow of thoughts and impressions in a person’s mind rendered in a partly verbalised, and if verbalised, often partly formulated style. These two examples alone demonstrate that literary texts may not be the locus for comparing thought patterns based on systems of logic.

4.2.2 *Indigenisation*

Zabus defines indigenisation as ‘the writer’s attempt at textualizing linguistic differentiation and at conveying African concepts, thought-patterns, and linguistic features through the ex-colonizer’s language. ... When indigenized, it is no longer metropolitan French or English that appears on the page but another register reminiscent of the dominant European language, whether it is a Nigerian Pidgin vaguely suggestive of a variety of English or a French that has “something African to it”’ (1991:3). She regards such texts as palimpsests in that behind the surface of the European language imperfectly erased remnants of the African language can be discerned, and decyphering the palimpsest recovers ‘the trace in filigree of ... African (source) languages’ (Zabus, 1991:3).

Like Kachru, Zabus postulates that indigenisation works in the text and in the context. The strategies she identifies, however, are somewhat different from Kachru’s. These are:

- the use of Pidgin;
- code-switching;

- relexification;
 - (a) calquing;
 - (b) “textual violence”: morpho-syntactic relexification and lexico-semantic relexification⁷;
 - (c) ethno-text;
- cushioning;
- contextualisation by inference.

4.2.2.1 The use of Pidgin

The use of pidgin involves the novelist’s departure from the current oral usage and the creation of an artistic medium in which an ‘artefactual dialect’ (Zabus, 1991:175), rather than reality in West Africa, is manifested. Pidginisation is meant to establish a character rooted in his or her supra-national or urban identity, as well as to represent attitudes towards pidgin speakers, solidarity and power relationships. The following exchange between Zirigu, the middle-aged general keeper and cook of a Government Rest House and his only guest, a young medical doctor, spells out an intricate power and solidarity semantic:

‘Massa, you tink you go like fried fillet of calf? Or braised lamb liver? Yes, here a good one. An escalope of veal with onions and fried potatoes.’
 ‘Zirigu, whom did you say you were going to cook for?’
 ‘Yourself, Massa.’
 ‘But That is not the food I eat.’
 ‘But 'e be white man chop.’
 ‘Zirigu, I no be white man. And that is the second time this morning I've told you that. And if you do it again, I'll pack up and leave.’
 (Aidoo, 1970a:16)

Zirigu’s pidgin signals both his lower education and his lower social status. For him the young doctor is not only the guest to whose service he is assigned, but the doctor’s education reflected in his impeccable English and the status given to him by his highly valued profession make him a ‘big man’ comparable to the former white colonisers. The doctor’s attempt to neutralise the inequality between the cook and himself by changing to Zirigu’s code fails perhaps because his standard English is a constant reminder of their different social standing and of the complexities of historical, political and cultural causes that lead to

such a situation. Nevertheless, his changing to pidgin is significant because the 'speaker can use codes for an identity shift: to obscure one identity and bring into the foreground another' (B. Kachru, 1984:187). '*Zirigu, I no be white man*' not only separates the young doctor from the white race - with which he is identified by virtue of his education and status, but with which he disclaims all association because of the immediate connotations it has with colonisation and its consequences -, but also renounces identification with the black masters who followed suit in exploiting their fellow blacks after independence. Using pidgin for this particular statement marks the young doctor's identification and solidarity with common people like Zirigu and emphasises his Africanness and his attachment to his cultural roots and heritage.

4.2.2.2 Code-switching

Code-switching, in Zabus's view, signals the fact that most West Africans are bi- or multilingual. Switching from the standard variety of English to pidgin indicates a need to do away with the unnaturalness or formality of the standard variety in the given situation. A reverse switch stresses the need to assert the seriousness of the words of the speaker, and always confirms the dominant role and high status of the standard variety in the situation of diglossia. Zabus observes that code-switching from the European to the mother tongue has a cathartic function. It may also emphasise the speaker's difference and independence from the dominant language group or his/her attempt to alienate the non-African locutor.

4.2.2.3 Relexification

Relexification is defined by Zabus using Loreto Todd's formulation: "'the relexification of one's mother tongue, using English vocabulary but indigenous structures and rhythms' – best describes the process at work when the African language is simulated in the Europhone text... [It is] the making of a new register of communication out of an alien lexicon" (Zabus, 1991:101-2). Though it is related to notions of 'transposition', 'paraphrase', 'translation', 'transliteration', 'transference' and 'transmutation', it differs both from translation and auto-translation in that these take place between two texts – the original and the translated version

– whereas relexification is characterised by the absence of an original. Relexification takes place between two languages within the same text. It is also defined in terms of power relationships:

Although these two languages [the European language and the African language] are unrelated, they interact as dominant vs. dominated languages or elaborated vs. restricted codes, as they did and still do to some extent in West Africa where the European language is the official language and the medium of prestige and power. As it hosts such warring tendencies, relexification is a strategy *in potentia* which transcends the merely methodological. On the methodological level, it stems from a need to solve an immediate artistic problem: that of rendering African concepts, thought-patterns and linguistic features in the European language. On the strategic level, relexification seeks to subvert the linguistically codified, to decolonize the language of early, colonial literature and to affirm a revised, non-atavistic orality via the imposed medium. (Zabus, 1991:107)

The method of relexification relates a character to a specific ethnicity.

4.2.2.3.1 Calquing

Zabus considers calquing to be the ancestor of relexification. It is direct or semi-direct loan-translation from the African language resulting in lexico-semantic transplants, shifts, extensions, analogical constructions, transfer of grammatical relations, morpho-syntactic innovations and phrasal transplants. Some of these produce very awkward syntax or ‘fortunate coinage’. Some lexical and phrasal transplants are perceived as graceful, pertinent and poetic. The following extract presents an example of loan translation:

The man threw the sponge he had been chewing into his soap dish, turned up his head and rinsed his mouth with the falling water. (Armah, 1988:102; added emphasis)

Sey explains that twigs from certain plants, beaten into a fibrous mass and dried are used for cleaning the teeth after being moistened and softened by chewing. *Chewing sponge* is a loan translation from the Akan *se wee* (‘sponge chewing’) with the Akan word order adjusted to fit the English pattern (1973:77).

Textual violence is understood as the disregard for, the failure to comply with and the acting against the dictates or requirements of the European prose narrative. It operates (a) on the morpho-syntactic level involving alteration of English syntax to reflect syntactical patterns of the African language; and (b) on the lexico-semantic level resulting in collocational innovation and the inclusion of such forms of the oral narrative as repetition, hyperbolic statements, synecdoche, reification, praise-names, epithets and eulogies characteristic of heroic poetry. Examples of morpho-syntactic variation (categories adopted from Bamiro 1995) include, among others,

(i) *subjectless sentences*

e.g. 'Is a joke,' he says ... (Armah, 1988:25)
 "Is funny, no?" (Armah, 1983:24)

(ii) *omission of function words*

e.g. 'You say truth.' (Armah, 1979b:119)
 "Ghana life sweet oh!" (Armah, 1983:75)

(iii) *reduplication*

e.g. Heavy, heavy is our remembrance, long our dispersal from our way,
 the way. (Armah, 1979b:27)

(iv) *tag questions*

e.g. "You are writing a paper about our organization, not so?" (Armah, 1974:225)
 "It is that, no?" (Armah, 1974:243)

(v) *the use of the progressive aspect with mental processes*

e.g. 'Are you thinking I want to use what you've told me against you?'
 Densu asked. (Armah, 1979a:37)

(vi) *focus constructions such as emphatic premodification*

e.g. 'You are a funny man, you this man,' he said. (Armah, 1988:30)

(vii) *thematisation of complements and adjuncts*

e.g. 'Strange is the community,' he said ... 'Sibiri, daughter of Kimia ,
on her own initiative took a goat and set a trap for the creature. ...
 Now this other permission the white men have been pressing for, let

us look at it. ...But here they have come claiming they have crossed the sea ...' (Armah, 1979b:97-98; added emphasis)

At the lexico-semantic level the following are examples of (a) collocational innovation and (b) repetition (categories adopted from Bamiro 1994):

- (a) Yes, eleven years. But it has been difficult. Oh, it is true I do not think that I am one of these women with a sweet tooth for fish and meats. But if you say that you are going to eat soup, then it is soup you are going to eat. Perhaps no meat or fish may actually hit your teeth but how can you say any broth has soul when it does not contain anything at all? It is true that like everyone else, I liked kontomire. But like everyone else too, I ate it only when my throat ached for it or when I was on the farm. (Aidoo, 1970a:82; added emphasis)
- (b) 'Hear now the end. The white men wish us to destroy our mountains, leaving ourselves wastes of barren sand. The white men wish us to wipe out our animals, leaving ourselves carcasses rotting into white skeletons. The white men want us to take human beings, our sisters and our sons, and turn them into labouring things. The white men want us to take human beings, our daughters and our brothers, and turn them into slaves. The white men want us to obliterate our remembrance of our way, the way, and in its place to follow their road, road of destruction, road of a stupid, childish god.' (Armah, 1979b:83-84; added emphasis)

4.2.2.3.3 The ethno-text

The ethno-text is constituted of proverbs, rules of address, riddles, praise-names, dirges, prayers, greeting formulae, culturally-bound insults and other culturally-bound formulae, which are grafted onto the European-language narrative to capture traditional speech and atmosphere. Consider, for example, Foli's libation speech in Armah's *Fragments* (pp.3-6):

- [1] Where you are going,
[2] go softly.
[3] Nananom,
[4] you who have gone before,
[5] see that his body does not lead him
[6] into snares made for the death of spirits.
[7] You who are going now,
[8] do not let your mind become persuaded
[9] that you walk alone.
[10] There are no humans born alone.
[11] You are a piece of us,
[12] of those gone before

[13] and who will come again.
[14] A piece of us, go
[15] and come a piece of us.
[16] You will not be coming,
[17] when you come,
[18] the way you went away.
[19] You will come stronger,
[20] to make us stronger,
[21] wiser,
[22] to guide us with your wisdom.
[23] Gain much from this going.
[24] Gain the wisdom
[25] to turn your back on the wisdom
[26] of Ananse.
[27] Do not be persuaded you will fill your stomach faster
[28] if you do not have others' to fill.
[29] There are no humans who walk this earth alone.

[30] A human being alone
[31] is a thing more sad than any lost animal
[32] and nothing destroys the soul
[33] like its aloneness.

[34] Always
[35] there has been a danger in such departures.
[36] Much of our blood has run to waste
[37] yet we will not speak of ways
[38] to stop the coming and the going
[39] for we are not mad with the sorrow of moments that pass.
[40] Always
[41] the danger of death,
[42] the death of the body,
[43] death of the soul
[44] alone on seas that know no ending,
[45] hanging in the endless sky
[46] alone beyond all horizons
[47] where our highest hills are themselves too small,
[48] alone in opposite lands,
[49] lands of the ghosts,
[50] alone in white men's lands.

[51] There are dangers in this life
[52] but fathers,
[53] do not fill your grandson here with fears.
[54] The danger of death we have with us
[55] around us everywhere at home.
[56] It is the promise of those gone before.
[57] Let him hear that.
[58] Let him not forget its truth
[59] and give him courage to understand it.
[60] Watch over him, fathers.
[61] Watch over him
[62] and let him prosper

- [63] there where he is going.
 [64] And when he returns
 [65] let his return, like rain,
 [66] bring us your blessings and fruits,
 [67] your blessings
 [68] your help
 [69] in this life you have left us to fight alone.
 [70] With your wisdom
 [71] let him go,
 [72] let him come.
 [73] And you, traveler about to go,
 [74] Go and return,
 [75] Go, come.

In traditional Akan religion prayer as a means of communication between man and god is accompanied by libation, which is the pouring of water or alcoholic drink or the sprinkling of food. This signifies the reunion of the living with the spirits of the ancestors. The prayer itself is an appeal to the spirits of the ancestors and features invocations, praises and requests. 'The requests are often what one wishes best for oneself, one's friends, and those who, by the standards of his particular society, are virtuous enough to continue in this life and prosperity' (Antubam, 1963:41). The enemy and the sinful, who are doomed to condemnation in the traditional mind, are either left out of prayers or are associated with negative wishes. In traditional libation prayers, as Antubam explains, reference has to be made to what is known in Akan societies as the seven basic virtues (*Siare-Nson*, i.e. seven elements of grace): 1) life and good health; 2) God's grace; 3) peace of the world; 4) fertility of sex, potency or procreativity; 5) good eye sight; 6) good hearing power; and 7) rainfall and general prosperity of the land and state (1963:42).

The above prayer is that of an uncle on the special occasion of his nephew, Baako, leaving to study in the U.S. As such, it is tuned to the occasion and does not contain all the 'seven elements of grace'. Specifically it mentions only rainfall and prosperity (ll. 62-68). However, through adhering to other elements of the *Mpaayie* (libation prayers), namely through the invocation of the ancestral spirits (ll. 3-4) and emphasising the bond between the ancestors and the living (ll. 10-13, 56-59) and between the individual and his family and clan (ll. 7-9, 14-15, 19-22, 27-33), through evoking the dangers of the foreign land (ll. 34-51) and asking the ancestors not only to enrich Baako in knowledge (ll. 23-26) and in worldly possession (ll. 62, 65-69) but also to protect him (ll. 5-6, 52-53, 60-61, 70-72), this prayer becomes a powerful appeal to the spirits of the ancestors for the smooth passage to a foreign land and safe return of a son, of 'a piece of us'.

The various culture-specific formulae constituting the ethno-text are bound to reoccur in various forms in all the novels that share the same socio-historic, cultural, ethnic and linguistic background. The discursive elements of the ethno-text are not translated but relexified through a conscious process which stretches relexification to go beyond loan-translation and highlights the essentially world-creating aspect of the former.

4.2.2.4 Cushioning

African-language words or phrases describing culturally bound concepts, objects and occurrences may, as we have seen, be translated or relexified. At the same time, the writer may resort to the method of cushioning or contextualisation to make the text linguistically accessible to the reader. Cushioning involves the juxtaposition of an African-language word or expression with its English equivalent to provide immediate explanation or clarification for the reader who is outside the author's speech community:

I see my uncle among people who are dancing ... Their movements are virile as they jump up and down, each man only covered by a small cloth as he would borrow from his wife or sister, tied around his waist over his shorts, leaving the torso bare. The drums and the *adawuro* (gong-gongs) are more intense in their rhythmic beating than I have ever heard them before ... (Duodu, 1969:51)

I bought her a bottle as well as some of the shampoo soap which makes the hair longer. When she used the soap, her hair turned violet and everybody laughed at her and said her hair looked like *mmefe* - palm nut husks. (Duodu, 1969:99)

4.2.2.5 Contextualisation by inference

Contextualisation, or 'contextualisation by inference' as Zabuz prefers to call it, involves the reader in a guessing game. It is usually achieved through having the reader infer the meaning of an African-language word or expression from the immediate context provided or through the embedding of an African-language word or expression in a dialogue with the aim of letting the characters explain its meaning. Consider the following extract:

How long would it take, and how hard the work, before there would be enough food for five, and something left over for chasing the gleam? Only one way. There would always be only one way for the young to reach the gleam. Cutting corners, eating the fruits of fraud. The timber merchant and his piled up teeth, offering the bribe, the way. Once when the man was traveling to Cape Coast three different policemen had stopped the little bus and asked the driver for his quarter license. The driver had not bought it yet, and each policeman had said to him, in front of everybody, 'Even *kola* gives pleasure in the chewing.' In each case the driver had smiled and given the law twenty-five pesewas, and the law was satisfied. There was only one way. (Armah, 1988:95)

There is an abundance of clues provided by the context. So, although it helps, one does not necessarily need special knowledge of the various customs and practices associated with the consumption of kola nut. The meaning of 'kola', as used in the above passage to mean 'bribe', may be worked out relying solely on the context in which it is embedded.

4.3 Culture and pragmatic theory

4.3.1 Cross-cultural communication

The definition of pragmatic meaning as a three-part relationship of *S* meaning *Y* by *X*, i.e. speaker meaning as distinct from word or sentence meaning (Thomas, 1996:7), may prove to be insufficient even in communication between the members of the same culture. Of course, the probability that people with the same cultural and linguistic background understand each other without difficulty is great. It may, however, happen that the listener fails to recover the meaning intended by the speaker, or arrives at a different interpretation (i.e. misunderstands the speaker). Pragmatic meaning cannot, by its very nature, be identified with speaker meaning only; it does entail listener understanding. It is even more so in cross-cultural communication. The reasons for this are rooted in the fact that

in natural language, meaning consists in human interpretation of the world. It is subjective, it is anthropocentric, it reflects predominant cultural concerns and culture-specific modes of social interaction as much as any objective features of the world 'as such'. 'Pragmatic (attitudinal) meanings' are inextricably intertwined in natural language with meanings based on 'denotational conditions'. (Wierzbicka, 1991: 16-17)

The 'various forms of asymmetry' resulting, for instance, from different and/or unequal access to knowledge 'in situations where participants from different linguistic and cultural

backgrounds come into contact' (Pirainen-Marsh, 1998:334) present themselves even more conspicuously in the communication between the Ghanaian writer and his reader. As we have seen in previous chapters, the uniqueness of the situation is created by a variety of factors: the commonly known problems involved in written (literary) communication, the bi- or multi-linguality of the writer, his choice of English for literary creation, his appropriation and modification of this medium for the expression of his African experience, the existence of a multiple heterogeneous audience, and the existence or absence of the writer's willingness to employ textual strategies to help the reader cope with his text. In addition, indigenisation as a textual strategy is inherently prone to problems of interpretation. Thomas writes: 'Cross-cultural pragmalinguistic failure occurs when the pragmatic force mapped by the non-native speaker onto a given linguistic structure is systematically different from that normally assigned to it by a native speaker of the target language' (1996:10). The Ghanaian writer, in his indigenised text, systematically maps the pragmatic force of his African language(s) onto the linguistic structures of English. The result may not necessarily be cross-cultural pragmalinguistic failure, but the interpretive situation will, nonetheless, be a rather complex one.

Although some aspects of this complex situation may be partially explained in terms of Grice's Cooperative Principle, the maxims may eventually not work in cross-cultural communication⁸. Quoting the example of the Javanese principle of *étok-étok*, which 'allows one both not to say what one knows is true and also to say what one knows is not true' (Wierzbicka, 1991:104), Wierzbicka illustrates that cultural norms which are different from Anglo-Saxon and Anglo-American cultural norms and expectations, which form the basis of mainstream modern pragmatics, render the Gricean maxims – in this particular case the maxim of quality – irrelevant. The anthropological and linguistic literature abounds in examples. Tannen (1991), for instance, gives an overview of more than twenty culturally-bound conversational styles. From Ghana we may bring the example of 'control [among the Akan] on women's speech, particularly within the public domain' (Yankah, 1998: 17). Women, who are regarded as the repositories of knowledge and wisdom, are socially constrained from drawing attention to their personality by publicly demonstrating this knowledge in speech. The power of this norm is such that it is stipulated even by the Akan proverb "The hen knows that day has broken, yet it looks to the cock to announce it" (ibid.). Yankah also mentions the verbal potency of silence in situations when speaking out would lead to the disruption of social harmony. Silence can function both as an act of internalising stress, and, by being an exercise in restraint, as a mark of maturity.

Although Grice allows for the non-observance of the maxims, flouting, violating, infringing, opting out of, and even suspending a maxim makes sense only if applied within the same culture, whose members are expected to entertain the same expectations and observe the same norms of communication. We may agree that in Javanese culture the maxim of quality is suspended; but we are still left with at least two problems. If it is suspended, what takes its place? Furthermore, I, a Hungarian, completely ignorant of Javanese cultural norms, will still find my Javanese interlocutor at best untruthful, but most likely an outright liar.

While acknowledging the (at least partial) applicability of modern pragmatic theories to my data, my interest here does not lie in examining their shortcomings in tackling cross-cultural communication. I chose Relevance Theory for the analysis of how the Ghanaian writer's provision or withdrawal of various methods facilitating the understanding of cultural reference affects the reader's interpretation of cultural reference in Anglophone Ghanaian fiction for several reasons. Relevance Theory has already been used in studies which suggest applicability to the current project. Blass (1990) investigated relevance relations in Sissala⁹ discourse and has shown that Relevance Theory can be successfully applied to analyse an African language in an African culture, both of which are different from the language and culture that gave rise to the theory. Gutt (1991), on the other hand, examines a range of translation phenomena and demonstrates that they can be explained in a relevance-theoretic framework, thus demonstrating the applicability of the theory cross-culturally. While the Gricean Cooperative Principle and the maxims are a set of rules which speakers are expected to conform to regardless of their culture, the Principle of Relevance, as we shall see below, adapts to culture because its requirement is that the speaker should strive to achieve maximum relevance, but there are no restrictions on how it should be achieved – so cultural constraints on communication may come into play.

In the following two sections I will give an outline of Relevance Theory and will explore its applicability to my data.

4.3.2 *Relevance Theory*

Relevance Theory is a theory of ostensive-inferential communication. Sperber and Wilson write:

Inferential communication and ostension are one and the same process, but seen from two different points of view: that of the communicator who is involved in ostension and that of the audience who is involved in inference. (1995:54)

Indeed, the texts studied in this work are the products of acts of ostension, in which the writers 'make manifest an intention to make something manifest' (Sperber and Wilson, 1995:49). As will be seen in Chapter 5, cultural reference is made manifest to the reader in various ways, triggering off different sets of assumptions. It is left to the inferential abilities of the reader to sort out these assumptions and arrive at an interpretation. Relevance Theory carefully examines and accounts for this process and, as such, it shows promise of successful application in the analysis that follows in subsequent chapters of where and why readers may find difficulty in the way authors have chosen to make cultural reference manifest.

The following is a summary of Relevance Theory as presented in Sperber and Wilson (1995) and further explained, among others, by Blass (1990), Gutt (1991), Blakemore (1992) and Wilson (1994).

The basic assumption of Relevance Theory is that human communication and cognition is governed by the search for relevance¹⁰. Although all humans live in the same physical world and share a narrower physical environment, the context for comprehension is drawn not only from this but from what Sperber and Wilson call an individual's cognitive environment (1995:38), and define as follows:

A fact is *manifest* to an individual at a given time if and only if he is capable at that time of representing it mentally and accepting its representation as true or probably true.

A *cognitive environment* of an individual is a set of facts that are manifest to him.

To be manifest, then, is to be perceptible or inferable. An individual's total cognitive environment is the set of all the facts that he can perceive or infer: all the facts that are manifest to him. An individual's total cognitive environment is a function of his physical environment and his cognitive abilities. It consists of not only all the facts that he is aware of, but also all the facts that he is capable of becoming aware of, in his physical environment. ... Memorised information is a component of cognitive abilities. (1995:39; italics as in original)

By assumptions Sperber and Wilson mean 'thoughts treated by the individual as representations of the actual world (as opposed to fictions, desires, or representations of representations)' (1995:2). Relevance as a relation between a given assumption and a given context is defined in terms of contextual effect and processing effort:

Relevance

Extent condition 1: an assumption is relevant in a context to the extent that its contextual effects in this context are large.

Extent condition 2: an assumption is relevant in a context to the extent that the effort required to process it in this context is small. (Sperber and Wilson, 1995:125; italics as in original)

Contextual effects are achieved when new information interacts with a context of already existing assumptions in one of three ways:

(1) by strengthening an existing assumption:

E.g.: I assume that

- 1a. If somebody I know is wearing a wedding ring, and s/he has never worn a wedding ring before, s/he probably got married since I last met him/her.

A few days later I meet Ruby and discover:

- 1b. Ruby is wearing a wedding ring on her left ring finger.

Then, in the above context, from the existing assumption 1a and the new information 1b I can deduce the conclusion in 1c:

- 1c. Ruby is married.

The new information in 1b is relevant in the current context precisely because it provides further evidence for an assumption.

(2) by contradicting and eliminating an existing assumption:

E.g.: In the above context I have formed hypothesis 1a, had new information 1b and formed conclusion 1c. Then I learn that Ruby has just returned from Korea, where she worked as a university lecturer. I also learn that in Korea, women of Ruby's age are married almost without exception. If at her age a woman is still not married, she may face embarrassing questions or situations. To fend off prying into her personal life, Ruby decided to wear a wedding ring, which she has continued to have on even after her return. Now I know:

- 2a. Ruby is not married.

According to Sperber and Wilson, 'when the individual discovers that he is entertaining both a proposition P and its negation -P, the weaker of the two assumptions is abandoned. ... [The new information 2a is] relevant precisely because it contradicts and eliminates an existing assumption; and the more assumptions it eliminates, and the stronger they were, the more relevant it is' (Blass, 1990:46).

- (3) by combining with an already existing assumption to yield a contextual implication (i.e. a logical implication which can be derived neither from the new information, nor from the context alone, but only from these two combined).

E.g.: I have given my e-mail address to several people but not yet to Chris. Suppose I am about to check if I have had any new e-mail messages. I form the following hypothesis:

- 3a. If there is a message from Chris, someone has to have given him my e-mail address.

When I check my mail, I find that

- 3b. Chris has sent me a message.

Then from the existing assumption 3a and the new information 3b I deduce the conclusion in 3c:

- 3c. Someone must have given Chris my e-mail address.

According to Sperber and Wilson, 3c is a contextual implication of 3b in the context of 3a, i.e. it is deducible from 3a and 3b together, but neither from 3a or 3b alone. It is relevant 'precisely because it combines with the context to yield a contextual implication. More generally, new information is relevant in a context if it has contextual implications in that context, and the more contextual implications it has, the more relevant it is' (Blass, 1990:45)

Contextual effects cost mental effort to derive, which results in a trading relationship between mental effort and relevance: the greater the effort required to derive contextual effect, the lower the relevance will be. At the same time, the greater the contextual effects are, the greater the relevance will be.

The processing (or mental) effort needed to understand an utterance depends on (a) the effort of memory and imagination required to construct a suitable context; and (b) the psychological complexity of the utterance itself. Greater complexity implies greater processing effort. If the extra linguistic complexity of an utterance is not balanced by extra contextual effects, it will diminish the overall relevance of the utterance. The source of psychological complexity can be found not only in the linguistic structure of an utterance,

but also in the degree of its familiarity to the receiver and in the frequency of its occurrence. Linguistically simpler utterances may nonetheless be psychologically more complex if they are rarely encountered or are not familiar to the receiver.

According to Sperber and Wilson, an individual automatically aims at maximum relevance, and to achieve this, selects the best possible context in which to process an assumption. The notion of *optimal* relevance states that there should be a balance between processing effort and effect achieved. When such a balance is achieved, the assumption has been '*optimally processed*'. Since an individual is not likely to be interested in contextual effects *per se*, but rather in their contribution to his cognitive goals, Sperber and Wilson redefine contextual effects in an individual as cognitive effects, and '*a positive cognitive effect* as a cognitive effect that contributes positively to the fulfilment of cognitive functions or goals' (1995:265; italics as in the original). By the relevance of an assumption to the individual Sperber and Wilson mean the relevance achieved when that assumption is optimally processed. They define:

Relevance to an individual (comparative)

Extent condition 1: An assumption is relevant to an individual to the extent that the positive cognitive effects achieved when it is optimally processed are large.

Extent condition 2: An assumption is relevant to an individual to the extent that the effort required to achieve these positive cognitive effects is small. (1995:265-66; italics as in original)

A point to note with regard to the definition of relevance given earlier and the one above: Sperber and Wilson claim that in the process of comprehension 'people hope that the assumption being processed is relevant (or else they would not bother to process it at all), and they try to select a context which will justify that hope: a context which will maximise relevance. In verbal comprehension in particular, it is relevance which is treated as given, and context which is treated as variable' (1995:142). Since the context is no longer treated as given, the earlier formal definition of relevance in a context is replaced by a psychologically more appropriate characterisation of relevance to the individual (based, however, on the earlier definition).

According to Sperber and Wilson, relevance is not just a property of assumptions in the mind, but is also a property of phenomena in the environment which lead to the construction of assumptions. So they extend this definition to include not only propositions or

assumptions, but phenomena (and stimuli, a stimulus being a phenomenon designed to achieve cognitive effects) in general, and utterances in particular:

Relevance of a phenomenon (comparative)

Extent condition 1: a phenomenon is relevant to an individual to the extent that the positive cognitive effects achieved when it is optimally processed are large.

Extent condition 2: a phenomenon is relevant to an individual to the extent that the effort required to achieve these positive cognitive effects is small. (1995:153; modified according to instruction on p.266; italics as in original)

Let us consider the example given by Blass (1990:57-58). Suppose one hears Big Ben strike once. Using one's encyclopaedic entry for striking clocks in general, and for Big Ben in particular, one may access the following assumptions:

- a. Big Ben has struck once¹¹.
- b. If Big Ben strikes once, it is one o'clock.

From *a* and *b* one can draw the contextual implication:

- c. It is one o'clock.

However, it would also be possible to access assumptions *d* and *e*:

- d. Big Ben has struck.
- e. If Big Ben strikes, it is not broken.

In normal circumstances, however, the route taken in *d* and *e* seems less likely. According to Sperber and Wilson, the assumption constructed on presentation of a given phenomenon will be determined by the principle of relevance: 'the first interpretation tested and found consistent with the principle of relevance is the only interpretation consistent with the principle of relevance: all other interpretations are disallowed' (Wilson: 1994:51).

The presumption of optimal relevance communicated by every act of ostensive communication is spelt out by Sperber and Wilson as follows:

Presumption of optimal relevance

(a) The set of assumptions **I** which the communicator intends to make manifest to the addressee is relevant enough to make it worth the addressee's while to process the ostensive stimulus.

(b) The ostensive stimulus is the most relevant one the communicator could have used to communicate **I**. (1995:158)

Then they formulate the principle of relevance:

First (or Cognitive) Principle of Relevance

Human cognition tends to be geared to the maximisation of relevance.

Second (or Communicative) Principle of Relevance

Every act of ostensive communication communicates a presumption of its own optimal relevance. (1995:260)

The unique aspect of overt communication is that an addressee is entitled to have steady expectations of relevance. We are, however, cautioned:

Precisely because utterance interpretation is not a simple matter of decoding, but a fallible process of hypothesis formation and evaluation, there is no *guarantee* that the interpretation that satisfies the hearer's expectation of relevance will be the correct, i.e. the intended, one. Because of mismatches in memory and perceptual systems, the hearer may overlook a hypothesis that the speaker thought would be highly salient, or notice a hypothesis that the speaker had overlooked. Misunderstandings occur. The aim of a theory of communication is to identify the principles underlying the hearer's (fallible) choices. Relevance theory claims that the interpretation that satisfies the expectation of relevance is the only one that the hearer has any rational basis for choosing. To claim that a choice is rationally justified, however, is not the same as claiming that it is invariably correct. (Wilson, 1994:47)

Two more aspects of Relevance Theory need to be discussed here as directly pertinent to the current study: implicatures and the connection between relevance and culture. Other relevance theoretic notions will be introduced and discussed in later chapters as, and if, the need arises.

Implicatures, according to Sperber and Wilson, are contextual assumptions and contextual effects that are part of the intended interpretation of an utterance. As such, they should be recoverable in consistency with the principle of relevance. Blass, however, mentions a point noteworthy for cross-cultural investigations:

There has to be a distinction made between the information which the speaker intended the hearer to recover and the process by which hearers recover unintended effects, and which are undertaken on the hearer's own initiative rather than through his desire to identify the intended interpretation. (1990:67)

Let us now consider the example given by Blass (1990:68-69);

- a. Jane: Did you watch the figure-skating last night?
- b. Michael: I don't watch TV.

Utterance *b* is not a direct answer to Jane's question. It, however, gives Jane access to encyclopaedic information¹² about TV programmes, and to the information:

- c. Figure-skating is shown on TV.

Since it is only on TV that Michael could have watched figure-skating, by processing *b* in a context containing *c*, Jane can derive the contextual implication in *d*:

- d. Michael did not watch the figure-skating.

It has to be noted that Blass's setting up the context is rather lame. Jane's initial question *a* shows that Jane opens the conversation with full knowledge about TV programmes, with the assumption in *c* included, in mind. Facts and assumptions about TV programmes form part of her cognitive environment (the set of facts that are manifest to her), otherwise she would not have asked Michael this question. Blass's suggestion that Michael's answer gives Jane access to encyclopaedic information about TV programmes and to the information that figure-skating is shown on TV is, therefore, not correct. Although she is right in deducing that by processing Michael's answer in a context containing the information in *c* Jane can derive the contextual implication in *d*, the context containing this piece of information is not triggered by Michael's answer. It is provided by Jane's total cognitive environment, i.e. all the facts that are manifest to her (cf. definition of cognitive environment above). From Michael's answer it is evident that although he may not share Jane's total cognitive environment, he definitely shares her cognitive environment regarding the facts and assumptions about TV programmes, otherwise he would not have replied as he did: indirectly.

For Sperber and Wilson *c* (if we agree to Blass's line of argument) and *d* are implicatures, i.e. assumptions and conclusions that a rational speaker aiming at optimal relevance expects his audience to supply.

Michael's indirect answer in *b* to Jane's question in *a* suggests that Michael had intended to communicate more than the information that he did not watch the figure-skating; otherwise his utterance in *b* would be inconsistent with the principle of relevance, as simply saying

'No' would have communicated his message and could have achieved the desired effects more economically.

If Jane is to find an interpretation consistent with the principle of relevance, she must access further assumptions and derive further conclusions, which will also be implicatures. She can, for example, access the assumptions in *e* and *f*, and derive the conclusions in *g* and *h*:

- e. The news is a TV programme.
- f. *Dallas* is a TV programme.
- g. Michael does not watch the news.
- h. Michael does not watch *Dallas*.

As Blass suggests, these, however, are probably not the only contextual implications she could draw. She may construct assumptions similar to those in *i* and derive conclusions along the lines of *j*:

- i. People who do not watch TV think they would be wasting their time if they did.
- j. Michael thinks he would be wasting his time if he watched TV.

Thus the indirect answer in *b* can be optimally relevant only if some additional conclusions are derived. These additional conclusions, or implicatures, are needed to offset the extra processing effort incurred by the indirectness of the answer. This means that any element of indirectness in an utterance requires extra processing effort and provides stimulus for a search for additional effects which a more direct formulation would not have achieved.

According to Sperber and Wilson, implicatures may vary in their strength:

The strongest possible implicatures are those fully determinate premises and conclusions ... which must actually be supplied if the interpretation is to be consistent with the principle of relevance, and for which the speaker takes full responsibility. Strong implicatures are those premises and conclusions ... which the hearer is strongly encouraged but not actually forced to supply. The weaker the encouragement, and the wider the range of possibilities among which the hearer can choose, the weaker the implicatures. Eventually, ... a point is reached at which the hearer receives no encouragement at all to supply any particular premise and conclusion, and he takes the entire responsibility for supplying them himself. ... Clearly, the weaker the implicatures, the less confidence the hearer can have that the particular premises or conclusions he supplies will reflect the speaker's thoughts. (1995:199-200)

In formulating and explaining their theory, Sperber and Wilson mention differences that exist among human beings with regard to their physical environment, cognitive abilities and the languages they speak (1995:38). Later on they state that ‘on various social occasions, the expected level of relevance is culturally defined’ (1995:161), but they do not go any further in explaining how culture may affect relevance. It is Blass, who points out that ‘variation in potential assumptions is especially great between different cultures’ (1990:85). She gives the following examples:

- a. He went to McDonald’s. The quarter pounder sounded good and he ordered it.

A Westerner’s encyclopaedic entry for McDonald’s immediately provides access to information about fast food restaurants and the types of hamburger sold in this type of restaurant. Spelling this information out explicitly would, therefore, detract from relevance. In Western culture *b* would be far less relevant than *a* because much of it is known and the effort spent in processing it would not yield enough contextual implications.

- b. He went to a place where food is cooked and sold. It is called ‘McDonald’s’. There he saw ground meat which was formed into patties, fried and put into something baked with flour ...

For a non-Westerner, however, *a* may be completely incomprehensible, while processing *b* may yield greater rewards.

Similarly, information from other cultures, which is not made explicit, may pose a problem for Westerners. While a Sissala would immediately be able to recover the background assumptions needed to understand *c*, a Westerner would have to have them made explicit:

- c. The river had been dry for a long time.
Everybody attended the funeral.

As Blass explains, this utterance is relevant in a context containing the following assumptions:

- d. If a river has been dry for a long time then a river spirit has died.
- e. If somebody has died there is a funeral.

Understanding depends on the hearer's ability to supply the appropriate contextual assumptions. The seemingly unconnected utterances become a coherent text when the appropriate background is supplied.

Blass has another worthwhile point to make. She maintains that 'it is quite conceivable and explainable in relevance-theoretic terms that people of some cultures – of close-knit communities – share so many assumptions about the world that they indeed leave more implicit than people from less homogeneous cultures would, and that their discourses typically include less text than the same discourses would in less homogeneous cultures' (1990:86).

4.3.3 *Applying Relevance Theory to the data*

As has been explained in 4.2.1, the interpretation of hybrid texts, i.e. texts written by authors of a particular cultural and linguistic background in a language of a different culture, is bound to be influenced by the underlying meaning of the writer's first language, which Zabus refers to as 'the source language in filigree' (1991:155).

Although it is widely accepted that each individual and group should and will respond to a text differently, and that all responses are valid, communication between the Europhone African writer and his audience seems somewhat more complex than may be anticipated. This complexity is caused not only by the very nature of hybrid texts, but also by the general problem of (partial) lack of common ground between reader and writer. As has been discussed above, the African writer may claim to write for an African readership (which in itself is far from being uniform) but, especially because he writes in a European language, he is likely to be conscious of a much wider multiple audience. The spacial, cultural, and possible temporal, distance between this multiple audience and the writer, combined with the already described linguistic complexity, may lead to difficulties of interpretation that are usually not encountered outside this particular interpretive situation.

With examples taken from Ghanaian English-language literature (excepting the proverb), I shall examine how Relevance Theory can be used to explain some aspects of this complex problem. The analysis I present here relates to how real readers interpret hybrid texts. Accordingly, the

examples of lexico-semantic variation, syntactic variation and the proverb examined have been part of questionnaires I have used to research this problem area. At this point, however, no direct reference is made to specific findings of these questionnaires. A detailed study of questionnaire data collected specifically for the current work will follow in subsequent chapters.

4.3.2.1 Lexico-semantic variation

In his discussion of the lexico-semantic variation found in Nigerian English Bamiro summarises Bokamba's (1982:91-92) observations relating to the sources of lexical innovations in African English as follows:

Bokamba quite correctly points out that the sources of lexical innovations in African English are mother tongue interference, analogical derivation based on English and the milieu and conditions under which English is learned and used in Anglophone Africa. (1994:48)

While the reader who shares a particular author's sociolinguistic background will have no problem in processing and understanding such innovations, the reader who does not share the author's sociolinguistic background is likely to miss out on the meaning of the majority of them. Consider the following few examples:

(i) *coinage*

... we were defeated before we went, for we had heard that some people employed secondary school students to sit the exams for them, while others bought exam papers from the right quarters, and yet others knew the people who marked the papers! True enough, many of us bombed (Duodu, *The Gab Boys*, p.120; added emphasis)

to bomb (an examination): schoolboy slang for 'to fail' (Sey, 1973:75)

Young push-babies with frowning faces broke through hedges behind different kind of carriages ... Another black push-baby passed, pushing a white and pink carriage. (Armah, *The Beautiful Ones*, pp.125-126; added emphasis)

push-baby: a maid servant employed to mind babies in the house and take them out for rides in prams (Sey, 1973:88)

(ii) *lexical items with semantic restriction*

But I'd never thought I was an 'adolescent'. I usually thought of myself as a 'guy' (Duodu, *The Gab Boys*, p.73)

guy: a tough man; one who gives the impression of being fearless; one admired for defying popular authority (Sey, 1973:94)

(iii) *lexical items with semantic extension*

It's only bush women who wear their hair natural. (Armah, *The Beautiful Ones*, p.129)

bush (adjectival): unpolished, uncouth, rustic (person) (Sey, 1973:98)

Though lexical innovations can be assigned a varying number of categories, depending on the criteria applied to the analysis of their origin - Sey (1973) works with six basic categories, Bamiro (1994) with ten - the reason behind the failure of the non-indigenous-language-speaking non-local reader to understand these lexical items seems fairly uniform. Such a reader's assumptions will be less than adequate about the author's physical, social and linguistic background, i.e. his cognitive environment will contain no, or only a very limited number of, assumptions regarding the author's physical, social and linguistic reality, which will impose a serious restraint on the achievable positive cognitive effects. In addition, the so far unencountered lexical item, or an already known word used in an unusual context, represents psychological complexity which increases the processing effort, thus reducing relevance and eventually hindering understanding.

It has to be noted that contextualisation, which may fail to be effective in the case of African-language words, is likely to prove successful in the case of lexico-semantic variation because the context does, in many cases, help to determine the actual meaning of words resulting from lexical innovation.

4.3.2.2 Syntactic variation

'The relexification of one's mother tongue, using English vocabulary but indigenous structures and rhythms' (Todd, 1982:303) resulted not only in lexico-semantic variation in West African, hence Ghanaian, English, but also produced syntactic patterns that reflect the structure of indigenous languages. From among the examples described and analysed by Bamiro (1995) I would like to examine a) the thematisation of complements and adjuncts, and b) the word order in nominal group structure.

a) Thematisation of complements and adjuncts

Bamiro observes that in the Ghanaian Ayi Kwei Armah's novels there is a 'preponderant use of marked structures which reflect the underlying logic of the authors' mother tongues' (1995:198). The following example is taken from Armah's *Two Thousand Seasons*:

'This is the white men's second wish,' Isanusi continued. ... The elephants they say they want destroyed, but only for their tusks. ... Leopards they want dead for their hides. ... Land they want from us, but not the way guests ask the use of land. ... On this their cut-off land they would like to have crops grow. But the white men are not accustomed to doing their own planting and it is not in their minds to get accustomed here. They would have the king give them men to work the land ... (p.82; emphasis added)

According to Bamiro, many West African languages are topic-prominent, therefore a preference for the thematisation of complements and adjuncts can be observed in these languages, which, in turn, is reflected in West African English (1995:198). In the above example the complements 'the elephants,' 'leopards,' 'land' and the adjunct 'on this their cut-off land' are thematised. The reader's difficulty here is seen not in terms of positive cognitive effects but rather in terms of the effort necessary to process the marked theme. The reader who shares Armah's Akan background is likely to process the above utterances with absolute ease and may miss the point that is expected to be recovered from the extra contextual effects yielded by the greater processing effort required to process the marked Theme. Indeed, if the complements and the adjunct are fronted as a result of mother tongue interference and not as a result of a conscious choice on Armah's part, then there are no extra contextual effects to recover. On the other hand, if Armah consciously foregrounded these elements, then he surely intended to make his point salient about what the white man wanted to grab and destroy in his greediness. The non-Akan speaking English reader, faced with the extra linguistic complexity of the marked Theme, has to employ greater processing effort, but his effort is likely to be counterbalanced by the extra contextual effects mentioned above. If, however, Armah consciously fronted the complements and adjunct not because he wanted to convey an implicated meaning but simply because he wanted to retain the flavour of African speech, the Akan-speaking reader may merely overlook this subtlety, and the non-Akan speaking reader may read more into the text than it is supposed to convey.

The reader certainly has a difficult task in trying to recover the intended meaning. In Armah's case one finds an indication in another of his novels, *The Healers*. In *Two Thousand Seasons* the following marked structure is recurrent:

Two girls tried to help the pathfinders: Noliwe and Ningome were their names. (p.54; added emphasis)

There was a woman. Idawa was her name. (p.69; added emphasis)

This woman - Akole was her name - said ... (p.78; added emphasis)

At the same time, in *The Healers* a character who is a native speaker of English prefers to use the unmarked form:

This queen - her name is Victoria - has ears that hear everything that goes on everywhere in the world ... (p.201; added emphasis)

This seems to suggest that the marked structure is Armah's conscious choice, but his reasons for this choice cannot be unambiguously recovered from the text.

b) Word order in nominal group structure

Just like in the case of thematisation of complements and adjuncts, psychological complexity resulting from structural unorthodoxy stands in the way of smooth and effortless information processing in the following examples:

The morning following, Densu was weak but his mind was peaceful. (*The Healers*, p.142; added emphasis)

The day following, the travellers spent resting. (*The Healers*, p.152; added emphasis)

Bamiro suggests that this order within the nominal group, in which the head precedes the modifier in certain syntactic environments, reflects the syntactic structure of Kwa and Gur languages, to which many West African languages, among them Akan, belong (1995:201). He informs us that 'The day following' actually translates in Akan as

<i>Eda</i>	<i>a etoso</i>
The day	following.

However, in Armah's case, although an influence of his mother tongue and possibly of other indigenous languages is the first logical explanation, his familiarity with and proficiency in French make interference from French possible.

Whatever the source, the reader is faced with a non-standard form which, again, may, or may not, cause processing difficulty. Similarly to what happens in the case of thematising complements and adjuncts, the Akan-speaking reader is likely not to discern the anomaly and may process the utterance at minimal effort. At the same time, the non-Akan-speaking reader's expectations will be influenced by the fact that in the grammar of English postmodification of the noun phrase is possible with the *-ing* participle, but the 'antecedent head corresponds to the implicit subject of the nonfinite clause' (Quirk *et al.*, 1985:1263). This suggests that 'the morning following' and 'the day following' may appear to be incomplete to the non-Akan-speaking reader, and he would probably spend time and effort to look for structures like 'the morning following his sleepless night filled with nightmares' or 'the morning following their arrival' before sorting out the meaning of the noun phrase. Though finally not incomprehensible, this structure distracts from relevance because the reader's time and effort spent on processing it will not be rewarded by extra contextual effects.

4.3.2.3 Proverbs

In hybrid literary texts, together with riddles, dirges, praise names and different forms of address, one relatively often encounters proverbs. As part of the linguistic realisation of distinctiveness, they are convenient for the study of how the reader makes sense of 1) the surface meaning of English and 2) the underlying meaning of the indigenous language.

Understanding proverbs has a number of complications. First, most proverbs can be understood both literally and metaphorically. Second, proverbs are so-called echoic utterances echoing the thought, or if you like wisdom, of a people, so a proverb can achieve relevance simply by demonstrating that someone finds it wise to quote in the circumstances. Third, by representing popular wisdom 'in a manifestly sceptical, amused, surprised, triumphant, approving or reproving way, the speaker can express her attitude to the thought echoed, and the relevance of her utterance might depend largely on this expression of attitude' (Sperber and Wilson, 1995:239).

However, what needs to be considered first is the relationship between the thought that is to be communicated and the propositional form of the utterance which is used to represent this thought. For the proverb **Hail has shown the strong man where his home is**¹³ this relationship can be represented as follows:

Level 1: The thought

Misfortune will drive one to seek support from the very people, usually one's family, whom one has ignored.

Level 2: Representation of the thought in L1

MVULA WA MABUE WA KALEJA KALUME KUABO.

rain of ice has shown strong man home

Level 3: Relexification of Level 2 in English

Hail has shown the strong man where his home is.

According to Relevance Theory, an utterance is strictly literal if its propositional form (Level 2) is identical with the propositional form of the thought it is used to represent (Level 1). However, what a communicator often aims to achieve is not literal truth but optimal relevance, as is the case when quoting a proverb. In order to achieve optimal relevance, the utterance 'should give the hearer information about that thought which is relevant enough to be worth processing, and should require as little processing effort as possible' (Sperber and Wilson, 1995:233). As illustrated above, this can be achieved if the propositional form of the utterance shares some, but not necessarily all, the logical properties of the propositional form of the thought whose interpretative expression it is (see Sperber and Wilson, 1995:233).

As shown by our previous examples, another important factor is the set of assumptions the hearer/reader can provide to arrive at the intended interpretation. The greater the number of assumptions provided by the hearer/reader is, the closer to the intended meaning he gets.

In hybrid texts, which are characterised by the absence of the original, the reader has to make do with the English version of Level 3 into which the indigenous language is relexified. However, the surface meaning of the European language does not always yield the underlying meaning of

the first language. It seems that some semantic considerations may provide helpful insight into why this is so.

First of all, 'it seems to be an incontrovertible principle of semantics that the human mind abhors a vacuum of sense, so a speaker of English faced with absurd sentences will strain his interpretive faculty to the utmost to read them meaningfully' (Leech, 1974:8). From this follows that an audience whose sociolinguistic context is different from the communicator's will, by rule, attempt to make sense of the communicator's utterance, and that in this attempt the members of this audience will inevitably draw on *their* cognitive environment, i.e. the facts that are manifest to *them*. Their assumptions, as we have seen, may, or may not, coincide with the assumptions necessary to arrive at the intended meaning of the communicator. Even if the assumptions of the communicator are different from those of his audience, the audience embarks on constructing a context in which the utterance becomes meaningful *to them*.

Second, it is assumed by semanticists that 'the same basic conceptual framework is common to all languages, and is a universal property of the human mind' (Leech, 1974:15). Connotative meaning, however, is open-ended, embracing objectively and subjectively identified characteristics of the referent, and as such, it is considered culture related. While the intended meaning of the proverb **Hail has shown the strong man where his home is** may be guessed by the non-Muluba English-speaking reader, it is more likely that his interpretation will differ, due to differences in connotative meaning, from that understood by the Baluba as used in their native linguistic and cultural context. The Tshiluba word *kalume* connotes the rather negative image of a braggart boasting about his strength, success, achievements and victories over people. At the same time, the English collocation *strong man* tends to be associated with the positive values of determination and perseverance. Similarly, *home* can be associated with goal, success and achievement, a meaning that the Tshiluba *kuabo* (whose literal meaning is better represented by the French *chez eux*) does not have. Further modification of meaning may also result from English being a second/foreign language for the audience. It is not unlikely that the connotative meaning of an English word should get influenced by the connotations attached to the reader's mother-tongue equivalent of that word.

4.4 Conclusion

The examination of the relationship between written language and culture, the account of indigenisation and the exploration of the applicability of Relevance Theory to the data links up directly with two subsequent chapters.

Kachru's and Zabus's remarkable insight into and, especially Zabus's, detailed analysis of what goes on in the Europhone literary text will be exploited in Chapter 6 in the analysis of categories of indigenisation yielded by the data extracted from the corpus.

As we have seen, the absence of synchrony between the writer and reader in the joint action of writing and reading, or what Ashcroft calls, with regard to the postcolonial text, the absence of writers and readers from each other (2001b:62), makes the negotiation of meaning impossible, which leaves the writer with the task of having to anticipate and provide for possible reactions of the reader who, in turn, will have to reconstitute the writer's discourse. The success of this communicative endeavour will depend on the existence or lack of culturally determined shared background knowledge between the writer and the reader.

In Chapter 7, I will investigate, in a relevance theoretic framework, what the writer makes manifest as he is engaged in an attempt to convey his meaning, and what assumptions the reader makes in applying his inferential abilities to sort out the writer's assumptions to arrive at an interpretation.

Notes

- ¹ A historical perspective on the relationship between culture and written language is given in Kaplan 1986.
- ² Detailed descriptions of the difference between spoken and written language can be found, for example, in Brown and Yule 1983 (Chapter 1), Biber 1988, Halliday 1989, Clark 1996 (Chapter 1 and p. 90), and Hughes 1996.
- ³ In an interview Ama Ata Aidoo remarked that 'One doesn't have to really assume that all literature has to be written. I mean one doesn't have to be so patronizing about oral literature. There is a present validity to oral literary communication... I totally disagree with people who feel that oral literature is one stage in the development of man's artistic genius. To me it's an end in itself. One can recite to people; ... you can just sit down and relate a

story. They don't have to be folktales only, there are lots of stories going round. In fact I believe that when a writer writes a short story, it should be possible for the writer to sit before an audience and tell them the story of a boy and a girl in Accra, or London, or Paris. I believe this so strongly; if I have any strong conception of what else could be done in literature, it is this. We don't always have to write for readers, we can write for listeners. ... We cannot tell our stories maybe with the same expertise as our forefathers. But to me, all the art of the speaking voice could be brought back so easily. We are not that far away from our traditions' (Duerden and Pieterse, 1972:23-4).

4 In a personal communication Chantal Zabus told me that in informal conversations with her several Ghanaians expressed their concern about their inability to understand the novels of Ayi Kwei Armah. The existence of problems of understanding related to novels of Ghanaian writers, and of Armah in particular, was confirmed by Kari Dako, Lecturer at the Department of English, University of Ghana.

5 Nativisation as a process is described by Bokamba (1982), Hancock & Angogo (1982) and Zuengler (1982).

6 Social aspects of code-switching in an African environment are examined in Myers-Scotton 1993.

7 A detailed linguistic description and categorisation of morpho-syntactic and lexico-semantic variation can be found in Bamiro 1994 and 1995.

8 A critique of Gricean pragmatics and the description of a different, semantic approach to cross-cultural communication, illustrated with examples from over ten languages can be found in Wierzbicka 1991.

9 The Sissala people live in the south of Burkina Faso and in Northern Ghana.

10 Note that 'the assessment of relevance is not the goal of the comprehension process, but only a means to an end, the end being to maximise the relevance of any information being processed (Sperber and Wilson, 1995:142).

11 In the given context – one hears Big Ben strike once – 'Big Ben has struck once' is a fact in the ordinary sense of the word. It has to be noted, however, that in Relevance Theory assumptions are 'thoughts treated by the individual as representations of the actual world (as opposed to fictions, desires, or representations of representations)' (Sperber and Wilson, 1995:2).

12 According to Sperber and Wilson, information stored in memory falls into three types: logical, encyclopaedic and lexical. 'The *logical entry* for a concept consists of a set of deductive rules which apply to logical forms of which that concept is a constituent. The *encyclopaedic entry* contains information about the extension and/or denotation of the concept: that is, about the objects, events and/or properties which instantiate it. The *lexical entry* contains information about the natural-language counterpart of the concept: the word or phrase of natural language which expresses it' (1995:86). The encyclopaedic entry for the concept *computer*, for example, would contain a set of assumptions about computers, and for the concept *write* about writing. As we do not all have the same assumptions, for instance, about computers or writing, encyclopaedic entries vary across speakers and times. Also, they are open-ended as new information keeps being added to them all the time; as a consequence, they can never be regarded as complete (1995:87-88).

13 Tshiluba, D.R. Congo; oral source: Fred Betu Ku-Mesu

5 RESEARCH OBJECTIVES AND METHODS

5.1 Introduction

The cultural and linguistic issues discussed in Chapters 2, 3 and 4 point the current research towards taking a cross-cultural perspective and examining cultural reference in the English-language prose works of Ghanaian writers with a focus on the linguistic description of the various ways of encoding cultural reference, on the methods writers use to facilitate reader understanding of cultural reference, and on how these various factors may affect reader understanding. Remaining in the domain of cultural reference, the present work will also examine whether a later generation of the empire still 'writes back' using the same strategies as the glorious first generation. The objectives of the research are laid out in 5.2, whereas 5.3 discusses the methods of investigation, including the data (5.3.1), the coding of cultural reference (5.3.2) and the methods of analysis (5.3.3).

5.2 Objectives

The fact that 'Africa is not always thinking of, or speaking to the West' (Kanneh, 1997:83) raises the issue whether the Western audience, for whom modern African literature is not primarily intended but who, for reasons discussed in 2.3, are the main consumers of this literature today, experiences any difficulty in understanding African writing in European languages.

Given the various African national and pan-African readership as the primarily intended audience of this literature¹, the concept of African culture considered as a unified whole by such influential authors as Jahn (1961), Abraham (1962) and Soyinka (1976) has to be addressed and the issue of plurality within African cultures considered.

Indeed, a recognition of 'the cultural and philosophical *difference* of what is African within these texts' (Kanneh, 1997:69, original emphasis) will form the basis of the current research, and the recognition of cultural difference in general define its direction.

The present work, which falls within the broad framework of investigating (cross-) cultural understanding of literary texts², will focus on a specific area, namely the area of cultural reference as present in the works of Ghanaian writers and has three objectives:

- 1 to describe lexical, semantic and syntactic variation in the indigenised forms of cultural reference in the English-language prose works of Ghanaian writers;
- 2 to analyse how the textual strategies Ghanaian writers employ to facilitate reader understanding of cultural reference encoded in various ways affect interpretation by various groups of readers, these groups being the Ghanaian reader, the non-Ghanaian African reader, and the Western reader;
- 3 to investigate, within the perspective of post-colonialism set out in Chapter 2, whether the ways of encoding cultural reference in the English-language prose works of Ghanaian writers have remained the same over time or have changed, creating a difference in approach between the first and a later generation of Ghanaian writers to expressing the African experience.

It is hoped that the findings will (a) highlight the linguistic complexity involved in expressing culture in hybrid literary texts; (b) add to our understanding of the nature of pragmatic meaning in cross-cultural literary communication; and (c) have implications for the issue of post-coloniality in literature.

5.3 Methods

5.3.1 The data

There are two different kinds of data examined in this study:

- (a) The raw material for the current research, i.e. cultural reference encoded in a variety of ways, has been extracted from a corpus of Ghanaian fiction.
- (b) Data regarding the effect of authorial strategies on reader interpretation was collected by way of a questionnaire.

5.3.1.1 The corpus

English-language prose works of Ghanaian writers constitute the primary data of the current research. The selection of works was inevitably influenced by availability, although every effort was made to ensure that early as well as recent writing is represented, and nationally published writers are included alongside internationally known and acclaimed authors. The following is the full list of works included in the research (the abbreviations in brackets will be used in the rest of this work when mention of the full title is not practicable):

Abruquah, Joseph W. (b. 1921)	<i>The Catechist</i> (1965)	(Catechist)
Agovi, Kofi (b. 1944)	<i>A Wind from the North and Other Stories</i> (1989)	(Wind)
Aidoo, Ama Ata (b. 1942)	<i>No Sweetness Here</i> (1970)	(No Sweetness)
	<i>Our Sister Killjoy</i> (1977)	(Our Sister)
	<i>Changes – a love story</i> (1991)	(Changes)
	<i>The Girl Who Can and Other Stories</i> (1997)	(Girl Who Can)

Aidoo, Kofi Osei (b. 1950)	<i>Of Men and Ghosts</i> (1991)	(Of Men)
Armah, Ayi Kwei (b. 1939)	<i>The Beautiful Ones Are Not Yet Born</i> (1968) <i>Fragments</i> (1969) <i>The Healers</i> (1978)	(The Beautiful Ones) (Fragments) (Healers)
Awoonor, Kofi (b. 1935)	<i>This Earth, My Brother ...</i> (1971)	(This Earth)
Codjoe-Swayne, Naa Otua (b. 1959)	<i>The Dancing Tortoise</i> (1994)	(Dancing Tortoise)
Darko, Amma (b. 1956)	<i>Beyond the Horizon</i> (1995)	(Beyond)
Darmani, Lawrence (b. ca 1950)	<i>Grief Child</i> (1991)	(Grief Child)
Djoleto, Amu (b. 1929)	<i>The Strange Man</i> (1967)	(Strange Man)
Duodu, Cameron (b. 1932)	<i>The Gab Boys</i> (1967)	(Gab Boys)
Kwakye, Benjamin Kwame (b. 1967)	<i>The Clothes of Nakedness</i> (1998)	(CoN)
Selormey, Francis (b. 1927)	<i>The Narrow Path</i> (1966)	(Narrow Path)
Yankah, Kojo (b. ca 1950)	<i>Crossroads at Ankobea</i> (1982)	(Crossroads)
Yeboah-Afari, Ajoa (b. ca 1950)	<i>The Sound of Pestles and Other Stories</i> (1986)	(SoP)

For the purpose of the analysis of cultural reference, a corpus was established containing the first, middle and last chapter/short story of each volume. In the case of the novels such a selection was decided on to ensure that the sample contained different parts of the narrative. Such a consideration, of course, was unnecessary in the case of the short stories. Occasionally, when a chapter/short story was found too short in comparison with others, a neighbouring chapter/story was added to the corpus to ensure a proportionately equal representation of each

work. The corpus, in its final form, comes from the above 20 volumes with a size of 210,187 words.

For the purpose of comparison, the writers have been sorted into two groups: those comprising the first generation of modern Europhone Ghanaian writers, and those comprising the later generation. Abruquah, Armah, Awoonor, Djoletto, Duodu and Selormey – the writers of the first generation – all grew up in pre-independence Ghana. Their experience of colonial existence determines their artistic outlook and their need to assert their African identity in the Achebean sense discussed in 2.1.5. The writers of the later generation – Agovi, A. A. Aidoo, K. O. Aidoo, Codjoe-Swayne, Darko, Darmani, Kwakye, Yankah and Yeboah-Afari – were either very young or not even born at independence in 1957. The experience determining their artistic outlook is that of life in post-independence Ghana. Confident in their already established African identity, they are likely to be free from the grip of the post-colonial angst so characteristic of the first generation.

5.3.1.2 The questionnaire

A questionnaire was designed to gather data on the effect of authorial strategies on the comprehension and interpretation of cultural reference in Ghanaian creative prose texts by different audiences, these being, as has been mentioned in 5.2 above, the Ghanaian reader (a far from homogeneous entity falling into two broad categories: the Ghanaian reader who shares the writer's broader cultural and narrower ethnic and linguistic background, and the Ghanaian reader who shares the writer's broader cultural but not the narrower ethnic and linguistic background), the non-Ghanaian African reader and the Western reader.

The first section of the questionnaire elicits data on the ethnic/linguistic background and reading habits of the subjects to enable the researcher to draw up reader profiles. The main body focuses on the writer's strategies regarding indigenised cultural reference: I on cushioning, II on ethnographic explanation, III on the use of a glossary, IV on the absence of authorial assistance, and V on contextualisation.

The texts chosen for the questionnaire come from 10 out of the above 20 works. The indigenised cultural reference they contain is expressed, in most cases, by a single lexical item, and has been chosen for the following reasons:

- Questionnaire items I (i & ii):

Adawuro (gong-gongs) and ‘doing *aworshia* – that is, working all night’ offer two different techniques for cushioning.

- Questionnaire items II (i & ii):

An ethnographic explanation is offered by the writer for *bampa* and *aboefosem*, which presents an opportunity to assess the effect of such an explanation on the reader.

- Questionnaire items III (i & ii):

The two passages contain Akan words and expressions for which a glossary is provided, which makes it possible to gather information on the readers’ use of and attitude to glossaries.

- Questionnaire items IV (i & ii):

Bodua, *tro-tro* and *aplankeys* come from Nzema, Pidgin and Ga, respectively, and as such, offer an opportunity to reveal differences within a multilingual and multi-ethnic Ghanaian readership.

- Questionnaire item IV (iii):

‘Fathers’ may present difficulty because of its culture-related unusual plural form.

Agbada is a loan word from Yoruba, and as such is expected to present difficulty to all reader groups.

- Questionnaire item IV (iv):

The sub-clause ‘as a rival would look at her husband’s favourite’ offers an opportunity to examine if the cultural reference hidden in it, for which no authorial

assistance is given, is understood by the different reader groups. It also gives an opportunity to see if the readers understood it immediately or used greater processing effort to work the meaning out.

- Questionnaire item V (i):
Being one of the 245 personal names found in the corpus, *Kweku Nyamekye* gives an opportunity to examine what significance names have in different cultures and how they are understood by different readers.

- Questionnaire item V (ii):
Kola may present difficulty because of its spelling and its culture-embedded reference to corruption, which may not be understood by non-Ghanaian readers.

- Questionnaire item V (iii):
Despite a very suggestive context provided by the author, 'Passion Week' may present difficulty because of its Christian meaning (the fifth week of Lent, beginning on Passion Sunday and ending on Palm Sunday).

The questionnaire was administered to 45 subjects including 19 Ghanaian, 7 non-Ghanaian African and 19 Western readers. Although it is possible to divide these groups into subgroups – the Ghanaian readers into subgroups relative to each writer's ethnic and linguistic background, the non-Ghanaian African readers into subgroups relative to their ethnicity, and the Western readers into subgroups according to them being native or non-native speakers of English –, the current research does not intend to compare subgroups within the three main groups unless the difference they show is significant. To ensure comparability of the three main groups, it was required that all subjects be literate in English, possess a fairly advanced, near-native or native proficiency in English and be educated at least to post-secondary level, the minimum level of education required being second year at university regardless of specialisation. Europeans with African experience were purposefully excluded from the sample population as data supplied by them might have affected the generalisability of the results. Although there was a possibility that

the data provided by the subjects might vary according to their age and sex, these factors did not seem significant enough to influence subject selection or subsequent data analysis.

The questionnaire can be found in Appendix 2, and the data gathered in Appendices 3 and 4.

5.3.2 *Coding cultural reference*

5.3.2.1 A working definition of cultural reference

The discussion of culture in 3.2 and 3.3 identifies some important features of culture, which are:

- culture as historically created and transmitted systems of meaning embodied in symbols;
- consensus in a community about the meanings of symbols, verbal and non-verbal;
- meaning communicated by means of natural language and other symbol systems;
- consensus in a community about what counts as ‘rational’ behaviour;
- social organisations;
- customs;
- artefacts as products and symbols of culture.

Summarily, culture can be regarded as ‘any of the customs, worldview, language, kinship system, social organization, and other taken-for-granted day-to-day practices of a people which set that group apart as a distinctive group’ (Scollon and Scollon, 1995:126). In other words, ‘culture includes *all* cultural practices and products, and the assessment of the processes of their production, consumption, the process of their representation and exchange, and the interrelationship of all these elements’ (Ashcroft, 2001a:20, original emphasis).

Since Ghana appears in the works studied not only through its various peoples but also as a supra-ethnic national entity, for the purposes of the current research cultural reference needs to be defined at two different levels. At the level of ethnic groups, any reference, in any form of encoding, to any of the ideational or material aspects of the culture of each individual writer’s ethnic group which give that group ‘a distinctive identity and which is used to organize their internal sense of cohesion and membership’ (Scollon and Scollon, 1995:127) will be treated as

cultural reference. At the national level, any reference, in any form of encoding, to any of the ideational or material aspects of Ghanaian culture which give the Ghanaian people as a composite group a distinctive identity will also be treated as cultural reference.

5.3.2.2 Types of cultural reference

A preliminary examination of the works listed above in 5.3.1.1 shows that the following types of cultural reference are recurrent:

Physical world

- 1 *physical environment/cultural artefacts* – this category includes nature and the man-made world, cultural artefacts ranging from household utensils to sculptures, music and (oral) literature

e.g.: He threw his powerful *bodua* into the sky and caught it several times. (Wind, p.6; italics as in original)

bodua: cow-tail whip

- 2 *food and drink*

e.g.: Even though they had eaten they were pressing their mother to give them some of the *apranpransa* she had bought. (Of Men, p.2; italics as in original)

apranpransa: maize meal prepared with palm soup

- 3 *clothing*

e.g.: He got up and got dressed, wearing a *batakari* over a shirt. (Fragments, p.144; italics as in original)

batakari: a smock-like loose long shirt made of thick hand-woven material

Human Relationships

- 1 *socio-economic roles of the sexes* – this includes the role assigned to men and women in society as well as non-formalised sexual relationships between non-married people
e.g.: ‘Zirigu, now you better shut up your mouth before you annoy me. Since when did you start teaching me how to do my marketing? This is my job. A woman’s job. (No Sweetness, p.19)

- 2 *marriage/separation/divorce* – this category embraces all aspects of pre-marriage relationships and arrangements, married life including extra-marital affairs, and separation and divorce including divorce settlement
e.g.: But marital rape? No. The society could not possibly have an indigenous word or phrase for it. Sex is something a husband claims from his wife as a right. Any time. And at his convenience. Besides, any ‘sane’ person, especially sane woman, would consider any other woman lucky or talented or both, who can make her husband lose his head like that. (Changes, p.12)

- 3 *parent-child/grown-up-child relationship* – this category focuses on the place assigned to children in society, including the nature of the mother-child/father-child, and more generally, grown-up-child relationship, the behaviour expected from children in these relationships and the way they are treated by the grown-up world both within and outside their families
e.g.: ‘The good child who willingly goes on errands eats the food of peace.’ This was a favourite saying in the house. Maami, Aunt Efua, Aunt Araba ... oh, they all said it. (No Sweetness, p.103)

...Maami came in from the conversation with the other mothers. When she saw the figure of Yaaba, her heart did a somersault. Pooh, went her fist on the figure in the corner. Pooh, ‘You lazy lazy thing.’ Pooh, pooh! ‘You good-for-nothing, empty corn husk of a daughter...’ She pulled her ears, and Yaaba screamed. (No Sweetness, pp.108-9)

...I want to know whether Maami called me her child. Does it mean I am her child like Adwoa is? But one does not ask our elders such questions. (No Sweetness, p.113)

- 4 *family, kinship* – this category focuses on the concept of family and nature of kinship ties

e.g.: ‘The bungalow gets too lonely for her. Here, there would be other children for her to play with. Nearly all her cousins ...’
 ‘Please, don’t call them her cousins,’ her mother-in-law had reprimanded.
 ‘But ... but Maa,’ Esi had virtually stammered, ‘aren’t they her cousins?’
 ‘You know that in our custom, there is nothing like that. Oko’s sisters’ children are Ogyaanowa’s sisters and brothers. ...’ (Changes, p.68)

Spiritual world

1 *traditions (both religious and secular)/customs/beliefs/superstitions*

e.g.: The medicine man (naturally, after I had met his demand of a bottle of London Dry Gin and a pure white fat hen) covered me from head to toe with white powder, mixed a pounded mixture of herbs and the dried marrow of some unnamed wild animals with water and made me drink a whole calabashful of it. It tasted like hell. Then he smeared my body with sticky egg yolks and made me lie down on the floor for twelve whole hours, if not more, while he left to go and eat and, as I heard later, even had a hot afternoon quickie with his youngest wife. Then he returned, tapped me several times with his goat-tail wand, ordered me to get up and told me with all the certainty of his magical powers that nothing bad, no grain of harm, would ever come to me in Europe. All was going to be golden for me there and, though I was going there poor, I would return with wealth and bring honour to Naka. And I, like my mother and all the other villagers, believed him. (Beyond, p.55)

2 *ancestors/deities* – this category concentrates on the place of ancestors and deities in the cosmogony of the peoples of Ghana, the reverence due to them, their impact on everyday life and the customs and traditions connected with them

e.g.: Quietly I went past him into the doorway where he had stood offering libation to those gone before, and in the same place where he had let fall those miserly drops I poured down everything in the glass, and it was only after that that I opened my mouth again:
 “Nananom, drink to your thirst, and go with the young one. Protect him well, and bring him back, to us, to you.”
 As I came back into the room Foli met me with words,
 “But I poured ...”
 “It was not enough,” I answered him. ...The spirits would have been angry, and they would have turned their anger against him. He would have been destroyed.” (Fragments, p.8)

- 3 *birth/death/funeral/afterlife* – this category includes the beliefs, customs and practices associated with birth, death, funeral and afterlife

e.g.: ‘... You know the child is only a traveler between the world of spirits and this one of heavy flesh. His birth can be a good beginning, and he may find his body and this world around it a home where he wants to stay. But for this he must be protected. Or he will run screaming back, fleeing the horrors prepared for him up here. ...’ (Fragments, p.97)

And the child that came so briefly has gone back where he came from ... The little one is gone; soon he will be the elder of his great-grandmother there. (Fragments, p.198-9)

- 4 *Christianity/Islam*

e.g.: Edzi demonstrated the seriousness of her intentions by being baptized into the Roman Catholic Church, and after that the families gave in. The marriage was celebrated with all the traditional customs and blessed in the Catholic Church. (Narrow Path, p.5)

When Mma Abu accepted that she could not deal with the matter of Fusena and marriage any longer, she went to consult the family *mallam*. The *mallam* read from the Holy Book, threw his cowries, drew his lines, and told her not to worry. Her time would come. (Changes, p.59; italics as in original)

Proverbs and sayings

e.g.: As Mark Brown, ‘The African Cow Boy’, would say, ‘A beggar has no choose’. (The proverb in Twi is ‘*Su kom na nnsu nam*’: ‘Clamour for food and not for meat.’)(Gab Boys, pp.28-9, italics as in original)

Strangers should not be served palm soup – ‘*Ohoho nndzi abenkwan*’ (Catechist, p.111; italics as in original)

Proper names

- 1 *personal names* – names of people, deities, personified creatures

e.g.: Akobi Ajaman (male; Beyond), Esi Sekyi (female, Changes), Azule Tano (deity; Wind)

- 2 *place and geographical names, real or imaginary* – including street names, names of residential areas, resorts, etc.

e.g.: Ankobea (Crossroads), Labadi Pleasure Beach (CoN), Esikafo Aba Estates (The Beautiful Ones)

Modernity

- 1 *formal education* – all aspects of education including the actual physical reality of a school/university, the joys and tribulations of going to school, pupil vs. teacher behaviour, the school/university as institution, the social value of education, the high esteem in which educated people are held and the privileges they enjoy
e.g.: Not like one of these *yetse-yetse* things who think putting a toe in a classroom turns them into goddesses. (No Sweetness, p.121; italics as in original)
- 2 *work/profession/office* – types of work, professions, posts and offices both modern and traditional, religious and secular
e.g.: A man who once shocked the entire village and beyond when he threatened to give the dying chief's linguist a 'banana funeral' because the old man owed him eight shillings and sixpence ... (Beyond, p.4; added emphasis)

... he realised that the furthest he could go with his level of education was a messenger clerk at the Ministries, at best. (Beyond, p.5; added emphasis)
- 3 *corruption* – all forms, manifestations and practices of corruption in Ghanaian society
e.g.: When he opens the office door there is loud, pleased laughter inside, and a voice with a vague familiarity says, 'No. This is only your *kola*. Take it as *kola*.' Another laugh. 'I was sure you would understand, if only I could find you properly. My friend, if you get the logs moving for me, I will see you again. Don't worry. I will take you to my own house.' (The Beautiful Ones, p.107; italics as in original)
- 4 *Europe/Europeans (the Western world) in the view/belief of Ghanaians*
e.g.: 'But ... but Maa,' Esi had virtually stammered, 'aren't they her cousins?'
'You know that in our custom, there is nothing like that. Oko's sisters' children are Ogyaanowa's sisters and brothers. Are we Europeans that we would want to show divisions among kin?' (Changes, p.68)

As these are cultural categories, whose boundaries are often not clear-cut, overlaps between the categories above may occur. For instance, the referents of place and geographical names

apparently form part of the physical environment, proper names may denote deities, and proverbs and sayings may relate, for example, to married life or to the parent-child relationship. Sorting them into separate categories was not always easy. However, the principle followed was to put the references into cultural categories that were most strongly suggested by their immediate context.

The data extracted from the corpus and analysed in this work relates only to the above 18 cultural categories. Other types of cultural reference are not taken into consideration.

5.3.2.3 Linguistic categories

Linguistically, these various types of cultural reference are realised in the studied texts either in a standard, non-indigenised form, or, as has been discussed in 4.2.1 and 4.2.2 , in an indigenised form.

Although, when examining the linguistic characteristics of indigenisation, it is customary to talk about lexico-semantic and morpho-syntactic variation (e.g. Bamiro 1994 and 1995, Zabus 1991), I would like to depart from this tradition and approach indigenisation from a different angle, examining each cultural reference as a linguistic sign, ‘the union of a form which signifies, which Saussure calls the *signifiant* or signifier, and an idea signified, the *signifié* or signified’ (Culler, 1976:19; original emphasis). The two elements of the linguistic sign are ‘united in the brain by an associative bond ... and each recalls the other’ (Saussure, 1959:66). Instances of cultural reference as discrete linguistic entities may show unusual features regarding either form or meaning, or both.

Before further investigating the variation possible in the signifiers/signifieds, we need to establish clearly the distinction between what is regarded as non-indigenised and indigenised language use. I quoted B. Kachru on this earlier in 4.2.1:

Using a *non-native* language in native contexts to portray new themes, characters, and situations is like **redefining the semantic and semiotic potential of a language**, making language **mean something which is not part of its traditional “meaning”**. It is

an attempt to give a new African or Asian identity, and thus an extra dimension of meaning. (1982a:341; italics as in original, bold added)

If we follow this line of argument, practically all cultural reference can be considered indigenised in that it refers to cultural signifieds that mean ‘something that is not part of [the] traditional meaning’ of English. Let us take ‘I shouldn’t shake hands with anyone at the airport’ (*Beyond*, p.55) as an example. The cultural signified of this expression is a superstition, according to which by shaking hands with you people who envy you because you have the opportunity to travel to the much admired Western world may take your luck away or may put ‘bad medicine’ in your palm which will make everything go wrong for you on your journey. Obviously, such a meaning is not carried by the above expression as part of its native British English meaning.

Meaning ‘something which is not part of [the] traditional meaning’ of English cannot, however, be the only criterion to decide whether a linguistic item is indigenised or not. Zabus, also quoted earlier in 4.2.2, talks about ‘textualizing linguistic differentiation’ and about discerning ‘behind the surface of the European language imperfectly erased remnants of the African language’ (1991:3). This implies that to be considered indigenised, a linguistic item must exhibit some kind of modification at the lexical, and/or semantic, and/or syntactic level. Let us examine, for instance, ‘kill me quick’ (*CoN*, p.1). It is a grammatically standard second person imperative form. It is, however, an example of indigenised language use as it is an apparent innovation, a coinage meaning locally brewed hard liquor of a very high alcohol content – a signified which, again, is not readily recovered in the context of native British English.

Because the signified of a cultural reference is always problematic by virtue of it carrying in itself the distinctive identity of a group of people, it is difficult to draw the line between what is non-indigenised cultural reference whose meaning falls beyond the cultural experience of the reader and indigenised cultural reference whose signified is problematic. Let us return to our earlier examples. ‘I shouldn’t shake hands with anyone at the airport’ is clearly grammatically well-formed and semantically perfectly normal in Standard English. As such, it can be considered non-indigenised, especially because it does not, by itself, have a culture specific meaning. At the time of the SARS epidemic it would have been perfectly normal for someone travelling to the Far-East to say ‘I shouldn’t shake hands with anyone at the airport’, perhaps

with the thought 'lest I get infected' in mind. Why the non-Ghanaian reader may find it difficult or even impossible to understand the meaning of this utterance in its entirety is because the culturally bound superstition it refers to falls beyond his cultural experience. At the same time, although grammatically well-formed and semantically normal in Standard English, 'kill me quick' is an example of indigenised cultural reference whose signifier is problematic as the phrase undergoes nominalisation, and whose signified is problematic because its culture-bound meaning is not recoverable in the context of native English. Another example of indigenised language use is 'a cement-block house in the village' (*Beyond*, p.140). Its first element 'cement block' is an unusual form – a collocation which, although perfectly intelligible, does not exist in Standard British English. It is a coinage in Ghanaian English and refers to a rectangular block of concrete used for building/construction. Although, technically speaking, it should be a 'concrete block', the word 'concrete' in Ghanaian English appears to be reserved to refer to a mixture of cement and gravel or sand that is used in the foundation of buildings or is not moulded into blocks. 'Cement', used adjectivally, refers to any mixture with cement as one of its ingredients, and in 'cement block' it is to distinguish this particular kind of block from bricks that are made of clay or mud (Sey, 1973:77, 118). It also refers to a cultural signified whose meaning is not recoverable in a native British English context: namely, a particular type of dwelling in the cline of Ghanaian dwellings which is contrasted with the clay or mud houses usually found in villages and, being regarded better than those, carries a positive value judgement, which is reflected in the respect given to anybody who owns such a house.

So for the purposes of the current study cultural reference as defined in 5.3.2.1 will be considered indigenised if either its linguistic form, i.e. the signifier, or the concept it signifies, i.e. the signified, or both, have been modified so that the resulting linguistic entity is either non-existent in Standard British English, or shows irregularity of form, or meaning, or both.

It has to be re-emphasised that, although it is possible to examine them separately, the signifier and the signified are intimately united. While variation in the signifier primarily affects the linguistic form in which the cultural reference is expressed, it may, particularly in the case of loan translation³, result in the modification of meaning, although the latter still remains easily recoverable and, in most cases, unproblematic. At the same time, variation in the signified refers to a change in meaning while the form remains completely unchanged. Variation in the signifier and signified results in the change of both form and meaning.

Table 5.1 below shows the non-indigenised – indigenised dichotomy together with the possible variation within the indigenised category. The examples have either been examined above or will be looked at in detail in later chapters, particularly in 6 and 7.

NON-INDIGENISED	INDIGENISED		
	<i>variation in the signifier</i>	<i>variation in the signified</i>	<i>variation in the signifier & signified</i>
'I shouldn't shake hands with anyone at the airport' (Beyond, p.55)	Dzenawo's son was to be <i>outdoored</i> . (This Earth, p.11) You broke <i>not so?</i> (Beautiful Ones, p.106) 'e be white man chop (No Sweetness, p.16)	Passion Week (Beautiful Ones, p.1) hot drink (Fragments, p.5)	kola (Beautiful Ones, p.95) akpeteshie (Beautiful Ones, p.103) kill me quick (CoN, p.1)

Table 5.1: The non-indigenised – indigenised distinction

Instances of African language expressions and Pidgin English may fit in the 'variation in the signifier' category because of their non-standard form, and also the 'variation in the signifier and signified' category because their signified may refer to an entity which falls outside the cultural context of native-speaker English. I have decided to categorise instances of Pidgin English as indigenised linguistic entities showing variation in the signifier because in understanding written text, recognition of form may play a role in the comprehension of meaning. Such a view seems to be supported by the findings of interactive, reader-driven reading models⁴ according to which comprehension also depends on the printed text, and by Rumelhart, who found that reading was not only a cognitive but also a perceptual process (1977:573). A further point, discussed in detail in 6.2.3 is that, in most instances, once the irregularities of form are eliminated in Pidgin, it becomes intelligible and no longer presents a difficulty for comprehension of meaning, as

illustrated by the above example: '*e be white man chop – it is white man's food*. Instances of African language expressions, on the other hand, are categorised as indigenised linguistic entities showing variation in the signifier and signified. As foreign words in the English text, they show variation in the signifier. Also, they are, almost without exception, used to refer to cultural signifieds that form part of the writer's, but not of native British, cultural environment, and as such, are likely to present problems of understanding for readers who do not share this environment.

African language, or seemingly African language, words in the studied texts also present another kind of difficulty. Because a lot of words and expressions have been absorbed by English – particularly in its regional varieties – whose origin can be traced back to other languages and cultures, it is not always easy and straightforward to decide whether a word belongs to the lexis of standard British English or not, i.e. whether it can be considered non-indigenised or indigenised. A quick look at the etymological component of *The New Shorter Oxford English Dictionary* (1993 edition) entries for the following words occurring or recurrent in the corpus sheds light on a puzzling variety:

- (a) nim *n.* var. of NEEM
 neem *n.* [Hindi *nīm* f. Skt *nimba*]

- (b) cassava *n.* [Taino *casávi*, *cazábbi*, inf. by Fr. *cassave*, Sp. *cassava*]

 yam *n.* [Port. *inhame* or Sp. † *iñame* (mod. *ñame*), prob. of W. African origin
 (cf. Fulani *nyami* eat.)]

- (c) kente *n.* [Twi = *cloth*]

 fufu *n.* var. of FOO-FOO
 foo-foo *n.* [Twi *fufuu*]

 gari *n.* var. of GARRI
 garri *n.* [f. a W. Afr. lang.]

With regard to whether to consider the above words – and other words of similar origin – indigenised or not in the context of the current research, I have made decisions taking both cultural and linguistic factors into consideration. It will, however, be obvious that I regard cultural experience of the signified as being of overriding importance in this particular matter.

Although 'nim' is clearly of non-African origin, its signified, a tropical tree (*Azadirachta indica*, family Meliaceae) is part of the Ghanaian natural environment, but not of the natural environment of Britain. This signals very little, or rather no, likelihood of 'nim' being part of native British cultural experience – 'nim' is something foreign to it. This foreignness is reinforced by 'nim' being a borrowing in English. Considering 'nim' in the light of this double – cultural and linguistic – foreignness, I have decided to regard it as indigenised.

'Cassava' and 'yam', on the other hand, are regarded as non-indigenised. 'Cassava' is of non-African origin, whereas 'yam' may be traced back to a West African language. Regardless of their origin, they are both borrowings in English. Their signifieds are tropical plants, very much part of everyday Ghanaian reality. So far, they are very similar to 'nim'. What makes a difference, however, is that they have been known and available in Britain long enough to become part of British culinary experience – they can be bought in big supermarkets as well as at greengrocers', figure in recipes and are prepared and eaten just like other 'common' tropical fruits and vegetables such, for example, as orange, banana, pineapple, coconut, okra and sweet potato.

The words in group (c) above are invariably considered indigenised. Not only are they borrowings in English from Twi, a Ghanaian language, or in the case of 'gari' from an unspecified West African language which could as well be a Ghanaian language, but their signifieds are essential elements of Ghanaian reality and as such fall outside native British cultural experience. It is more than probable that in an otherwise standard British English text these words would be used in an anthropological or ethnographic context and would refer exclusively to culturally defined objects.

Some words are categorised both as non-indigenised and indigenised/problematic signified, depending on whether they are used in their literal sense or in a culturally defined meaning. For example, 'mother' is non-indigenised when it is used to refer to somebody's biological mother, as in 'my poor mother back home in black Africa' (*Beyond*, p.2). It is, however, indigenised when it is used as a form of respectfully addressing an older woman, as in

'Maami Amfoa, where are you going?'
My daughter, I am going to Cape Coast.

‘And what is our old mother going to do with such swift steps? Is it serious?’
My daughter, it is very serious.
‘Mother, may God go with you.’ (*No Sweetness*, p.40)

5.3.2.4 Authorial strategies

The authorial strategies that may either facilitate or hinder reader understanding of cultural reference have been identified as cushioning, contextualisation, ethnographic explanation, providing a glossary, and complete withdrawal of assistance to the reader.

These methods, as well as the findings of the questionnaire regarding them, will be discussed in Chapter 7.

5.3.2.5 Codes

In the actual coding of cultural reference, I have adopted codes which make the identification of an item fairly easy:

Codes for the source of cultural reference:

BH	<i>Beyond the Horizon</i>
BO	<i>The Beautiful Ones Are Not Yet Born</i>
CA	<i>Crossroads at Ankobea</i>
CL	<i>Changes – a love story</i>
CN	<i>The Clothes of Nakedness</i>
DT	<i>The Dancing Tortoise</i>
FR	<i>Fragments</i>
GB	<i>The Gab Boys</i>
GC	<i>Grief Child</i>
GW	<i>The Girl Who Can and Other Stories</i>
MG	<i>Of Men and Ghosts</i>
NP	<i>The Narrow Path</i>
NS	<i>No Sweetness Here</i>
OS	<i>Our Sister Killjoy</i>
SM	<i>The Strange Man</i>

SP	<i>The Sound of Pestles and Other Stories</i>
TC	<i>The Catechist</i>
TE	<i>This Earth, My Brother ...</i>
TH	<i>The Healers</i>
WN	<i>A Wind from the North and Other Stories</i>

Codes for the types of cultural reference:

pw	Physical World
1	physical environment/cultural artefacts
2	food and drink
3	clothing
r	Human Relationships
1	relations between the sexes
2	marriage/separation/divorce
3	parent-child/grown-up-child relationship
4	family, kinship
sw	Spiritual World
1	traditions/customs/beliefs/superstitions
2	ancestors/deities
3	birth/death/funeral/afterlife
4	Christianity/Islam
ps	Proverbs and Sayings
pn	Proper Names
1	personal names
2	place and geographical names
m	Modernity
1	formal education
2	work/profession/office
3	corruption
4	Europe/Europeans (the Western world) in the view/belief of Ghanaians

Codes for the linguistic categories:

NI	non-indigenised linguistic item
Isr	indigenised linguistic item with variation in the signifier
Isd	indigenised linguistic item with variation in the signified

Isrd indigenised linguistic item with variation in the signifier and signified

Codes for writer strategies to facilitate reader understanding of indigenised language:

cont contextualisation
cush cushioning
ethno ethnographic explanation
glos glossary
0 no assistance to reader

The order in which these codes follow each other is the following: source – type – linguistic features – writer strategies.

Examples: I shouldn't, say, shake hands with anyone at the airport <BH> <sw1> <NI> <0>
kill me quick <CN> <pw2> <Isd> <0>

The following is a coded passage from K. O. Aidoo's *Of Men and Ghosts*, p.5:

These days Kani <MG> <pn1> <Isrd> <0> rarely went into the bush <MG> <pw1> <NI> <0>. Even when he did it was to visit some of his labourers <MG> <m2> <NI> <0> staying in cottages <MG> <pw1> <NI> <0> on two of his farms <MG> <pw1> <NI> <0>. He was from a long line of men who had been prosperous. At the root of it had been someone called Kankanfo <MG> <pn1> <Isrd> <cush> - the field marshal - who had lived sometime before the great war in which white men had burnt down the paramount town <MG> <pw1> <Isr> <0> of the State of Return-on-Hearing-it <MG> <pn2> <Isrd> <0>. This man, legend had it, was so powerful that he could sell people to white men at Sweetness-Stop <MG> <pn2> <Isrd> <0>. Now Kani <MG> <pn1> <Isrd> <0> had big farms <MG> <pw1> <NI> <0> and many plots <MG> <pw1> <NI> <0> uncultivated yet. He had a store <MG> <pw1> <NI> <0> too. In it were some merchandise of the white man. It was brought from Sweetness-Stop <MG> <pn2> <Isd> <0> by the porters <MG> <m2> <NI> <0> of Kani <MG> <pn1> <Isrd> <0> who carried his rubber <MG> <pw1> <NI> <0> to sell there.

5.3.3 *Methods of analysis*

In preparation to be able to address the objectives set out in 5.2 above, the corpus of coded texts was processed with the help of WordSmith Tools (Oxford University Press, 1996) for the various cultural, linguistic and authorial strategies categories, and tables were obtained. Likewise, the data collected by the questionnaire was transferred into tables for ease of analysis. This completed, the following procedures have been followed.

For **Objective 1**, the tables obtained by means of WordSmith Tools were meticulously sifted through manually and the data were sorted into categories according to the linguistic characteristics of the examples. Then a detailed linguistic analysis of variation found in the signifier, signified, and signifier and signified, respectively, was carried out, drawing on the work done in this field particularly by Bamiro (1994, 1995), Sey (1973), Ahulu (1992), Zabus (1991) and Huber (1999). It has to be noted, however, that although some of the categories of variation in this study are inevitably found to be the same as categories of indigenisation described by other researchers, both the categorisation and the ensuing analysis are data driven, and only categories required by this specific data are adopted and examined.

For **Objective 2**, the various authorial strategies intended to facilitate reader interpretation of cultural reference are described, and their effect on reader interpretation analysed in the framework of Relevance Theory (described in 4.3.2), using evidence provided by the questionnaire. Although not void of basic quantifying, the analysis is carried out using a mainly qualitative approach necessitated by the nature of the data and the theoretical framework chosen.

For **Objective 3**, based on data obtained by means of WordSmith Tools, the first and the later generation of Ghanaian writers are compared with regard to their use of indigenised language, particularly of indigenised cultural reference, and of authorial strategies intended to facilitate reader understanding. Although primarily qualitative, this analysis makes use of more quantification.

5.4 Conclusion

The present chapter sets out the parameters within which the current research is to be conducted. Particularly important is the delineation of the novel approach – of examining each cultural reference as a linguistic sign – to the description of indigenised language, as well as the definitions of what is regarded in the current study as cultural reference and as indigenised language use.

The findings are reported in chapters 6, 7 and 8.

Notes

- ¹ Evidence for this can be found, among others, in Egejuru (1980), and indirectly through the discussion of the writer's choice of language in Ngugi (1986), Achebe (1988), *Research in African Literatures* 23/1 (1992), Walder (1998).
- ² The 'classics' in this area are B. Kachru (1982b, 1986, 1995) and Smith (1987). Others include Zabus (1991), Y. Kachru (1995), Baker and Eggington (1999) and Lehtonen (2000).
- ³ Various examples of loan translation, including *covercloth*, are analysed in 6.2.1.5.
- ⁴ For example Rumelhart (1977), Stanovich (1980), Kintsch and van Dijk (1978), Just and Carpenter (1980), Anderson and Pearson (1984) and Pearson and Tierney (1984).

6 CULTURAL REFERENCE: CATEGORIES OF INDIGENISATION IN THE DATA

6.1 Introduction

The aim of the current chapter is to give a detailed linguistic description of the indigenised language examples yielded by the data. Such a description is necessary because it highlights the complexities of linguistic variation in cultural reference, examines the areas of divergence from Standard British English and explains their origin, thereby pointing to the source of reader difficulty. As such, it provides a basis for the examination, in Chapter 7, of authorial strategies, and of reader interpretation.

In Chapter 4 I examine categories of indigenisation as suggested by Kachru, Zabus and Bamiro. While they are indicative of areas of interest, they conform to what is required by the specific data they are used for. As I have taken a novel approach to indigenisation described in 5.3.2, I will examine linguistic variation in the signifier (6.2), in the signified (6.3) and in the signifier and signified (6.4), and will adopt categories which are required by my data. The Ghanaian languages involved in the analysis are those of the writers' mother tongues or those used in Ghana as lingua franca: Akan (Fante and Twi), Ga, Ewe and Hausa.

The conclusion (6.5) brings together the linguistic and cultural categories and examines their relationship.

6.2 Variation in the signifier

As discussed in 5.3.2, variation in the signifier affects primarily the linguistic form in which the cultural reference is expressed and occurs both at lexical and syntactic level. The data yields the following categories:

- *Lexical innovation*: (a) clipping, (b) unusual collocations, (c) backformation, (d) loan translation, (e) multiple word-formation processes, (f) irregular spelling
- *Syntactic variation*: (a) irregular tag questions, (b) omission of function words, (c) omission of the dummy subject 'it', (d) omission of direct object in ditransitive verbs, (e) irregular use of count/non-count nouns

As further explained in 5.3.2, Pidgin in this study is regarded as presenting a case of problematic signifier. However, as our interest here is not in its linguistic description, which would fall far beyond the scope of the current work, but rather in its literary representation, it will be discussed below independently from the above categories.

Where possible because of the relatively small number of examples within a category, there will be an attempt to examine each one of them individually. Where the number of examples within a category exceeds the feasibility of their individual examination, some of the most pertinent examples will be analysed, while the rest will be relegated to a full list of all the examples of cultural reference found in the corpus of Ghanaian writing under investigation. The full list can be found in Appendix 1.

6.2.1 *Lexical innovation*

6.2.1.1 Clipping

The data yields only four examples of clipping:

- (1) *B* (Gab Boys, p.178) <pn1>
- (2) *Bibi* (Girl Who Can, p.131) <pn1>

B is a popular pet name for any woman whose English first name starts with B, e.g. Beatrice, Bernadette, Bridget, etc. English names starting with other letters do not readily get clipped this way, nor do Ghanaian language women's names. This process, however, is quite productive in

that if a woman's name is the combination of an English first name and a Ghanaian language family name, e.g. Bernadette Boatemaa, she will most likely be called BB (pronounced 'bee-bee'), alternatively *Bibi*, by her family and friends.

(3) *Sis* (SoP, p.1) <pn1>

Clipped from 'Sister', it is the affectionate way of addressing or referring to a female sibling. Unlike its full form, it is not used in combination with names. Similarly to it, however, it can refer both to a younger or an older sister. It has to be noted, though, that the full form + name version, e.g. 'Sister Abena', is more respectful and is required in certain situations, for instance when speaking about or addressing one's older sister. Calling an elder sister simply by her name would be a sign of disrespect.

(4) *mokes* (Gab Boys, p.13) <pw3>

Mokes, clipped form 'moccasins' is very likely to be outdated in-group slang ('The Gab Boys' was written in 1967) influenced by American English.

6.2.1.2 Unusual collocations

Although 'it may be argued that lexical (in)congruity is dependent on semantic (in)compatibility' (Wales, 1989:77), the collocations found in the data are unusual and unexpected rather than semantically incompatible. They can be divided in the following groups:

(i) *Writers' creations*

- (5) *adjustable chair* (Girl Who Can, p.2) <pw1>
- (6) *paramount town* (Of Men, p.5) <pw1>
- (7) *waste box* (The Beautiful Ones, p.7) <pw1>

These are neither habitual collocations in Ghanaian English, nor traceable to Ghanaian language expressions, but rather individual writer's creations in an attempt to add more linguistic *couleur locale* to their work.

(ii) *Collocations with redundant elements*

(8) *backyard garden* (Wind, p.11) <pw1>

In this collocation not only is 'yard' redundant, but 'backyard' is a loan translation from the Twi *enfikyirifuo* – *enfikyiri* (backyard) + *efuo* (farm). It may be noted that there is no Akan word for 'garden' – both the Fante *haban* and the Twi *efuo* mean 'farm' as traditionally people in Ghana used to have farms, not gardens. As 'garden' is a borrowing in Akan from English, and 'backyard' a loan translation from Akan into English, (8) is a collocation that may be called a 'cross' loan-blend. An example of a loan-blend proper is *tro-tro lorry* (SoP, p.61; Appendix 1: 859), where 'tro-tro' is a borrowing from Pidgin into English and 'lorry' is a borrowing from English into Ghanaian languages, particularly Fante of the Akan group and Ga, and Pidgin. The expression itself is tautologous as 'tro-tro' is Pidgin for 'lorry'.

Other examples are

(9) *cinema house* (Beyond, p.61; Girl Who Can, p.4) <pw1>

(10) *trading shop* (Crossroads, p.8) <pw1>

(11) *transport trucks* (Beyond, p.57) <pw1>

where 'house', 'trading' and 'transport' are redundant, respectively. It seems likely that in Ghanaian English 'trading' is used to emphasize the difference between retail outlets and other kinds of shops, e.g. workshops where things are made or repaired rather than sold, and 'transport', analogously to 'transport-ship' and 'transport-plane', emphasizes the difference between trucks used for transporting goods and those used for the conveyance of people.

(iii) *Collocations with a synecdochic element*

- (12) *grammar education* (No Sweetness, p.72) <ml>

This collocation is unusual because the ellipsis of ‘school’ creates a synecdoche non-existent in British English, in which ‘grammar’ stands for the notion of grammar school.

‘Cement’ is the ‘bonding’ element in (13)-(18) below:

- (13) *cement block* (Catechist, p.109) <pw1>
(14) *cement block walls* (Strange Man, p.) <pw1>
(15) *cement-block house* (Beyond, p.) <pw1>
(16) *cement verandah* (Gab Boys, p.89) <pw1>
(17) a small *cement house* in town (Beyond, p.) <pw1>
(18) *cement paper* (This Earth, p.171) <pw1>

In (13)-(17) ‘cement’ stands for concrete, of which it is only an ingredient. Sey explains that in Ghanaian English ‘cement is used adjectivally to qualify any structure with cement as one of its ingredients, to distinguish it from structures made of clay or mud’ (1973:77). Neither ‘cement block’, nor ‘concrete block’ are habitual collocations in British English, ‘breeze block’ being the commonly used expression. Whereas in British English ‘cement’ does not readily collocate either with ‘verandah’ or ‘house’, *cement floor* (This Earth, p.182) and *cement path* (This Earth, p.170; SoP, p.75) are accepted - therefore non-indigenised – collocations.

(18) is different from the rest of the group in that here ‘cement’ is not an ingredient, but the content of the sack whose material becomes recycled as wrapping paper.

(iv) *Collocations (or their elements) retaining older forms*

- (19) *trafficator bulb* (Wind, p.26) <pw1>

The use of ‘trafficator’ instead of ‘indicator’ shows a tendency to retain older forms that are no longer current in present-day British English.

(v) *Analogical construction*

(20) *the mouth of the road* (No Sweetness, p.130) <pw1>

The above expression is based on physical similarity as well as linguistic analogy: a road junction is likened to the mouth of a river. In Standard British English ‘mouth’ does not readily enter into association with ‘road’, which makes (20) unusual – perhaps poetic in certain contexts. Ama Ata Aidoo uses it as a stylistic device to continue to signal that the character is grounded in his native speech community and is thinking and interacting in his native language.

6.2.1.3 Backformation

(21) *Sissie* (Girl Who Can, No Sweetness, Our Sister) <pn1>

Sissie is a hypocorism created by clipping ‘sister’ to ‘sis’ and adding *-ie*. It retains a close connection with one of the core meanings of ‘sister’: a female fellow citizen, a female of the same race, colour, class, profession, etc. (*The New Shorter Oxford English Dictionary*). A favourite with Ama Ata Aidoo (all instances come from her works), it is used as a personal name. The characters called *Sissie* are invariably modern emancipated Ghanaian women on a study trip in Western Europe or North America, and by choosing such a name Aidoo emphasizes their strong roots in and unsevered ties with Africa.

6.2.1.4 Loan translation

The data yields an interesting variety of loan translations. Some are ‘loan translation proper’, i.e. translations from African languages into English:

- (22) *bush meat* (Gab Boys, p.184) <pw1>
- (23) *covercloth* <pw3> (Fragments, p.142) <pw3>
- (24) *cover cloths* <pw3> (Fragments, p.137) <pw3>
- (25) *market-money* (SoP, p.36) <pw1>
- (26) *outdoored*: ‘Dzenawo’s son was to be *outdoored*.’ (This Earth, p.11) <sw1>
‘Once John has not been *outdoored* he is not a chief.’
(Crossroads, p.48) <sw1>
- (27) *outdooring* (Crossroads, p.48, 49 / Fragments, p.87) <sw1>
- (28) *sponge* (Beautiful Ones, p.101, 102) <pw1>
- (29) *sponge strands* (Beautiful Ones, p.102) <pw1>

(22) denotes ‘game’ as opposed to meat from home-bred animals. Sey (1973:76) explains that in Ghanaian English it is a loan translation from the Akan *ha nam* and it can mean either meat – *nam* – from the forrest/bush – *ha mu* – or meat from a hunting expedition – *ha* – as *ha* is homonymous. The fact that Ahulu identifies *bush meat* as a non-standard form (1992:14), ‘game’ being the standard at the acrolectal level in Ghana, also testifies to it being indigenised.

(23) and (24) are differently spelt variants of the same word. They refer to a piece of cloth worn by women as a stole. Sey (1973:89) identifies the Fante word *ahatado* – ‘that which covers’ – as its source.

I have been able to identify (25) as a translation from the Hausa *kudi cin kasuwa* – ‘money + of + market’. However, it is very likely that other Ghanaian languages have the same or a similar expression. This highlights the fact that in a multilingual environment, such as Ghana, it may not be possible to trace a loan translation in English back to an ultimate source language – there may be more than one. Our choices are influenced not only by our limited knowledge, if any, of

Ghanaian languages, but also by our limited knowledge of a writer's linguistic repertoire and by our limited access to informants whose knowledge of languages may vary but is not infinite.

(27) is a loan translation from the Ga *kpodziemo* – 'going out' (Sey, 1973:86). As a noun, it refers to the ceremony that marks the child's first appearance in public and is held on the eighth day after a child's birth. It is also used in a verb form, as in (26). Although the Akan people call a similar ceremony *ntetea* – eighth day ceremony (Rattray, 1927:61, 409) –, it is the loan translation from Ga that is used universally in English. As evidenced both by (26) and (27), the same expressions are also used analogously in English to refer both to the act of presenting a newly elected chief in public and to the presentation ceremony.

Sey identifies (28) as a loan translation from the Akan *sa wee* – 'sponge chewing' – and gives the meaning as 'twigs from certain plants, beaten into a fibrous mass and dried; used for cleaning the teeth after being moistened and softened by chewing' (1973:77). In English the word order fits the adjective + noun pattern: 'chewing sponge'. If the context makes the meaning clear, the adjectival element can be omitted and 'sponge' used alone, as in (28), or in collocation with other words, as in (29).

(30) is a case of what can be regarded as a 'loan translation cum blend':

(30) *chop money* (No Sweetness, p.131; Wind, p.49) <pw1>

The source is the Fante *edzidzi sika* or Twi *edidi sika* – 'eating + money'. The first half of 'eating money', which would be a loan translation proper, gets replaced by 'chop' – a borrowing from Pidgin, creating the blend. Different from 'housekeeping money' in Standard British English, which includes all the expenses of the maintenance of a household, *chop money* is money given to somebody to buy food for the household or the family (Sey, 1973:79).

The remaining examples of loan translation in the data are a special kind of 'two-tiered' calque:

(31) *clothing store* (CoN, p.211) <pw1>

(32) *my little aunt* (No Sweetness, p.131) <r4>

(33) *lorry road* (Gab Boys, p.88) <pw1>

(34) *motor road* (Narrow Path, p.3) <pw1>

In (31) ‘store’, as many other words for things and ideas originally associated with British and/or European culture, is borrowed into Akan from English, and is habitually used in conjunction with *ntama* – ‘clothing’. The expression *ntama store* is then translated back to English resulting in *clothing store*. In (32) ‘aunt’ is borrowed into Fante, then *ante ketsewa* – ‘aunt younger/junior’, a term used to refer to an aunt who is younger than you – is translated back into English. Similarly, in (33) and (34) ‘lorry’ and ‘motor’, get borrowed into Akan, then the Akan expressions, *lorry okwan* and *motor okwan*, get translated back into English. The result is the co-occurrence of words which is unexpected and not commonly used in British English.

6.2.1.5 Multiple word-formation processes

The data has only four examples of this variation:

- (35) *enstool*: ‘you are going to be *enstooled* officially’ (Crossroads, p.50) <sw1>
‘whether he will be *enstooled* at all’ (Crossroads, p.54) <sw1>
- (36) *enstoolment* (Crossroads, p.11) <sw1>
- (37) *destool*: ‘The people of Kramo village rebelled and *destooled* their chief.’ (Crossroads, p.54) <sw1>
‘the Ankobea chief was going to be *destooled*’ (Crossroads, p.105) <sw1>
‘Nana Kwesi Mensa IV would be declared *destooled*’ (Crossroads, p.108) <sw1>
- (38) *destoolment* (Crossroads, p.107) <sw1>

The word-formation process involves the conversion of the noun ‘stool’ into a transitive verb with the meaning ‘put or set a person on a stool’. By way of derivation we then get ‘enstool’ –

install, set a chief on a stool (the symbol of the ruler's office), formally invest with the authority of a chief –, which is based on the analogy with 'enthroned'. 'Destool' – depose, remove from a stool, remove a chief from office and authority – is formed in the same way and is analogous with 'dethrone'. Further derivation (and analogy with 'enthronement' and 'dethronement') results in the nouns 'enstoolment' and 'destoolment' denoting the action of enstooling/destooling or the fact of being enstooled/destooled.

6.2.1.6 Irregular spelling

(39) The *Beautiful Ones Are Not Yet Born* (title; also p.183) <pw1>

'Beautiful' occurs in the part of Armah's novel included in the corpus five times with the correct spelling. The unique phrase with the irregular spelling appears only twice: as the title and at the end of the novel as decoration on the back of a small bus. It is believed that Armah himself saw the phrase on a 'mammy wagon', a truck converted to carry people, and found it appropriate for his symbolic fable. This suggests that such an irregularity is not so much a common feature of Ghanaian English as it is an individual product indicative of the original producer's – identifiable as the driver/owner of the 'mammy wagon' – educational, hence English language, standard.

6.2.2 Syntactic variation

6.2.2.1 Irregular tag questions

The irregular tags observed in the data are *no?* and *not so?*:

(40) You would all have laughed at me, *no?* (*Girl Who Can*, p.48) <sw1>

(41) You broke *not so?* (*Beautiful Ones*, p.106) <pw1>

In English the structure of tag questions is based on contrasting polarity: a positive main clause is followed by a negative tag if a positive answer is expected, and a negative main clause by a positive tag if a negative answer is expected. In many African languages, however, 'the parallel structure consists of a single clause with a postposed particle' (Bamiro, 1995:194). As Bamiro points out, in Akan 'the contrasting polarity tags are collapsed in the expression *mebua?*' (ibid, p.195) – 'am I lying?' or *entefaa?* – 'is it not so?':

Oba ha, *mebua?* – He came here, am I lying?

Oba ha, *entefaa?* – He came here, is it not so?

Oamma ha, *mebua?* – He did not come here, am I lying?

Oamma ha, *entefaa?* – He did not come here, is it not so?

At the same time, *not so?* may equally be influenced by Pidgin, which also has the tag *no bi so?* (Todd, 1982:301). Bokamba observes that 'there has been a strong and mutual influence between WAVE (i.e. West African Vernacular English) and the pidgin Englishes. Consequently, certain aspects of the syntax of these otherwise distinct varieties have become undistinguishable for certain classes of speakers' (1991:503-504). This is further corroborated by the fact that *You broke not so?* appears in Armah's novel as graffiti in a Pidgin textual environment.

Sey (1973:43) points out that the Akan interrogative particle *nkyi* can precede both a positive and a negative statement to indicate that a confirmation of the statement is required:

Nkyi oba ha? – He came here?

Nkyi oamma ha? – He did not come here?

Although the uniformity of the interrogative particle both for positive and negative statements may have an indirect influence on the indiscriminate use of the tag *no?* in English, it seems more likely that *no?* has come about as the collapsed form of the Pidgin *no bi so?* or the 'clipped' translation of the Akan *entefaa?* – 'is it not so?'.

6.2.2.2 Omission of function words

As observed in Bamiro 1995, the sources of omission of function words in African English are difficult to determine with certainty. Bokamba (1982:80-81) attributes an important role to interference from African languages. At the same time, the influence of Pidgin English is not negligible as it 'does not use overt articles or auxiliary items that correspond to the English ones' (Bamiro, 1995:192). The data yields examples for (i) the omission of articles and (ii) the omission of the main linking verb 'be'.

(i) Omission of articles

- (43) *Who born* □ *fool* (Beautiful Ones, p.106) <pw1>
(... a fool)

(ii) Omission of the main linking verb 'be'

- (42) *You* □ *broke not so?* (Beautiful Ones, p.106) <pw1>
(You are broke ...)

- (44) *Who* □ *born fool* (Beautiful Ones, p.106) <pw1>
(Who was born ...)

- (45) *Contrey* □ *broke* (Beautiful Ones, p.106) <pw1>
(Contrey [countryman] is broke)

- (46) *Money* □ *sweet pass all* (Beautiful Ones, p.106) <pw1>
(Money is sweet ...)

- (47) *Vagina* □ *sweet* (Beautiful Ones, p.106) <pw1>
(Vagina is sweet)

This tendency to omit the linking verb 'be' is normally observable where the context or other grammatical features are adequate.

(42)-(47) all appear in Armah's novel as graffiti in a Pidgin contextual environment, which, in this particular instance, makes a strong case for Pidgin rather than a Ghanaian language as the most likely influence.

6.2.2.3 Omission of the dummy subject 'it'

- (48) *Money sweet* □ *pass* ■ *all* (Beautiful Ones, p.106) <pw1>
(... it pass[es] all)

Bamiro (1995:191) attributes the omission of the dummy subject 'it' both to the influence of West African languages, and to the 'strong mutual influence between WAE [West African English] and pidgin English', which has contributed to the simplification of West African English, at least among those speakers who belong to the lower educated social strata, and whose linguistic behaviour is characterised by the use of Pidgin. This view is corroborated not only by the fact that the linking verb 'be' is omitted, but by yet another tendency towards simplification in (48): the omission of the Present Simple 3rd person singular suffix -s, and by the fact that, as has been indicated above, (48) features in the novel in a Pidgin context.

6.2.2.4 Omission of direct object in ditransitive 'give'

The discussion of ditransitive 'give' will be confined to the construction 'give somebody something to drink' as the data yield the following example:

- (49) *We give our ghosts* □ *to drink*. (Fragments, p.7) <sw1>
(We give our ghosts something/wine/gin to drink.)

It seems very unlikely that the omission of the direct object in (49) is an influence from Akan, Armah's mother tongue. In Fante the verb 'drink' is *nom*. The noun 'drink' is *anondze*, which consists of the nominalising morpheme *a-*, the root morpheme *-nom-* with its assimilated end consonant *n*, and the derivational morpheme *-dze* which means 'thing'. The noun *anondze* literally means 'drink thing', and is used as the direct object in the sentence

<i>Ye</i>	<i>ma</i>	<i>hon</i>	<i>anondze.</i>
S	V	O _{ind}	O _{dir}
(We	give	them	drink [thing].)

In the context of pouring libation, which is the context for (49), normally the noun *nsa* – 'alcoholic beverage' – is used as O_{dir}:

<i>Ye</i>	<i>ma</i>	<i>hon</i>	<i>nsa.</i>
S	V	O _{ind}	O _{dir}
(We	give	them	wine/gin/etc.)

This shows that in Akan the direct object of 'give' in this construction is invariably expressed by a noun (or possibly a pronoun) and in the given context cannot be omitted as wine, gin, etc. is an essential element of libation pouring.

(49) is spoken by an old woman, and thus gives the impression that the actual words uttered are spoken in Akan, which makes Akan appear to be the source of the irregularity in English. The above examples, however, show that this is not the case. In 4.3.2.3 mention has been made of Armah's proficiency in French as a possible source of interference. In French the expression 'to give somebody something to drink/to give somebody a drink' is *donner à boire à quelq'un* (Collins-Robert French Concise Dictionary), where, unlike in English, *donner* (give) has no obligatory direct object possibly because *boire* (drink) semantically determines the range of what it can be. While the following sentences are grammatically correct in French, in their English counterparts it is not possible to omit the direct object:

Donne-moi à boire.
(Give me [something] to drink.)

Il m'a donné à boire.

(He gave me [something] to drink.)

Nous leur donnons à boire.

(We give them [something] to drink.)

(49) is embedded in the context of the Akan tradition of pouring libation, and has a non-English speaker locutor, which points to Fante as the source language behind the grammatical irregularity of this sentence. I have demonstrated, however, that the interference is more likely to be from French, of which Armah is a highly competent user. Because the 'transference' (Zabus, 1991:104) happens not between Fante and English, but between French and English, I consider this a case of 'false indigenisation', the end product of which is made to look as if it originated in an indigenous language but in fact it does not.

6.2.2.5 Irregular use of count/non-count nouns

The only examples found in the data are

(50) a couple of *quids* (Gab Boys, p.183) <pw1>

(51) a *white calico* (Wind, p.15) <pw3>

'Quid' belongs to the same group of nouns as, for example, 'sheep', 'salmon' and 'trout', which do not mark for plural. The singular-plural contrast in their case is morphologically absent, but it can be recovered from the syntax. Sey points out that in Akan there are nouns which are morphologically similar (1973:29). It is, therefore, unlikely that the irregularity in (50) can be traced back to interference from Akan. Ahulu observes that 'difficulties that are related to the determination of the NP's number generally involve questions that relate to the head noun. For example, in structures like *a lot of boys*, *a number of questions*, *plenty of friends*, etc., which is the head: *lot* or *boys*, *number* or *questions*, *plenty* or *friends*? The fact that the answer could be either item in each pair (e.g., it could be *lot* or *boys*) makes it necessary to allow that the syntactic number of an NP may not be determined by its head noun' (1992:34), which

undoubtedly adds to the difficulty of a non-native user of English. It seems probable, however, that 'quid' being the informal expression for a pound in money, the irregular plural in (50) results from a generalisation based on their close semantic association, as well as from the underdifferentiation of their morphology.

(51) is not an impossibility in Standard British English, where it refers to a particular sort of calico cloth which is plain white as opposed to printed. In Ghanaian English *calico* undergoes semantic extension to mean 'head-cloth/head-dress made of calico'. As this meaning gets lexicalised in *calico*, it, in turn, acquires the count property of 'head-cloth/head-dress, which allows it to combine with the indefinite article.

6.2.3 *Pidgin*

As has been mentioned earlier, my current interest in Ghanaian Pidgin¹ is not in its detailed linguistic description as a spoken variety but in its sociolinguistic aspects and literary representation.

In Ghana Pidgin is predominantly an urban phenomenon, and it is not as widespread as in other English speaking West African countries, for example in Nigeria (Criper, 1971:14, Huber, 1999:156). It is usually associated with illiteracy and with the uneducated section of society, and as such, is stigmatised (Huber, 1999:140, 148, 154-63; Zabus, 1991:51). In his study Huber establishes the existence of two distinct varieties of Ghanaian Pidgin that form a continuum 'with basilectal varieties that are associated with the less educated sections of society, to more mesolectal and acrolectal forms that are usually spoken by speakers who have at least progressed to the upper forms of secondary school' (1999:139-40). Huber identifies these varieties as the 'educated' and 'uneducated' varieties of Ghanaian Pidgin, but notes that this Pidgin continuum is not the same as Criper's (1971) or Sey's (1973:14-8) clines², which describe various approximations to Standard Ghanaian English. He further observes that

Pidgin 'basilect' is only *associated* with uneducated contexts, because it is in these settings that it is most often heard. The educational attainment of a speaker is not,

however, a sufficient indicator whether or not he or she speaks basilectal or acrolectal Pidgin. Although a number of differences exists between 'basilectal' and more 'acrolectal' GhaPE [Ghanaian Pidgin English], the structural differences are not so vast as to warrant speaking of a continuum in the sense that this term is usually used by Creolists with reference to e.g. the situation in the Caribbean. (op.cit., p.140)

Huber points out that the difference between the two varieties of Ghanaian Pidgin is not so much in their structure or phonology as it is in their lexis and the functions they serve. Uneducated or basilectal Ghanaian Pidgin is used as a lingua franca in highly multilingual settings; at the same time, more educated or acrolectal varieties do not fulfil basic communication needs – they function as in-group languages to express group identity and solidarity (op.cit., p.140). Another important point is that although a rough correlation can be established between basilectal Ghanaian Pidgin and uneducated speakers with no or little command of Standard Ghanaian English, and between more acrolectal Ghanaian Pidgin and (more) educated speakers with a better command of Standard Ghanaian English, this does not necessarily imply that the latter is more Standard Ghanaian English-like than the former. Furthermore, uneducated Ghanaian Pidgin, by virtue of it being used in linguistically heterogeneous contexts 'characterized by low educational attainment of the speakers – in other words, settings which diminish (but not necessarily exclude) the usefulness of an areal Ghanaian lingua franca such as Twi (or Hausa) and at the same preclude StGhaE [Standard Ghanaian English] as a language of interethnic communication' (Huber, 1999:142), can be called a non-institutionalised variety. Educated Ghanaian Pidgin, on the other hand, can be called an institutionalised variety as it is acquired and used in well-defined institutions such as secondary schools and universities. As Pidgin has wide currency in the Ghanaian police and armed forces, the Pidgin spoken by policemen and soldiers can be considered another institutionalised variety.

Apart from the varieties described above there is yet another pidginised English in Ghana which is called 'Minimal Pidgin' by Criper (1971:14), 'Broken English' by Sey (1973:2) and 'Houseboy Pidgin' by Huber (1995:fn2). This variety is different from other Ghanaian Pidgin varieties in that it is not transmitted from one generation of speakers to the next as the other varieties are but is a synchronic simplification process. It is an English-lexicon variety used by illiterate speakers to communicate with their English speaking superiors and is 'characterized by high inter- and intra-individual variability and a strong influence from the speakers' first

language. This jargon is very much dependent on the speaker's mother tongue and is an *ad hoc* means of communication' (Huber, 1999:153).

Because of its inferior status, Pidgin in Ghana is rarely used in the printed or electronic media or in films. When it occurs, it is spoken by uneducated characters, or its association with a certain jocularity is exploited for popular humour. Some of the more political magazines use mock Pidgin in satire. In Ghanaian novels Pidgin is statistically more infrequently and more episodically represented than, for example, in novels in Nigeria³ (Zabus, 1991:51). Prevalent sociolinguistic prejudice is complemented by technical difficulty. Being primarily a spoken medium, Pidgin has no written or orthographic tradition, so scripting it for use in literature may well prove demanding for the writer. Agheyisi demonstrates the various levels through which its written representation progresses to become what Zabus calls an 'artefactual dialect' (1991:175):

Level 1: Andrew kari yu trɔbu komot fɔ dE. yu nɔsi se na wok i dè du. hEn! wetin yu dè tɔk? ... if yu hiE di moni we dEn tek bayam yu gÒ rɔn.

Level 2: Andrew, kari you trobu komot fo de. Yu no si se na wok i de du. Hen! Wetin yu de tok? ... If yu hear di moni we den tek buyam yu go ron.

Level 3: Andrew, carry you trobu comot fo dere. You no see say na work i dey do? Hen! Wetin you dey talk? ... If you hear de money wey dem tek buy'em, you go run.

Level 4: Andrew, carry you trouble come out for dere. You no see say na work he dey do? Hen! What ting you dey talk? ... If you hear de money which dem take buy'em, you go run.

Level 5: Andrew, carry your mischief come out from there. You no see that is work he doing? Hen! What thing you talking? ... If you hear the money that they paid, you go run.

Level 6: Andrew, cut out your mischief from there; can't you see that she is busy? Ha, what are you saying? ... If you heard how much they paid for it, you would run. (1984:217)

Even at the risk of stripping Pidgin of its essentially African elements and making it look like just a corrupted version of Standard English, for the sake of intelligibility the writer may opt for Level 3, which offers maximum accuracy of transcription with a moderate approximation to English. However, the transcription of Level 3 'may tax the patience even of a well-meaning local or international reader' (Zabus, 1991:176), so most writers settle for the 'interlanguage' of

Level 4 whose intermediate approximation to English does not jeopardise ease of comprehension by a reader who is literate in Standard English.

The writer's competence in Pidgin may also influence the way in which it is represented in a literary text. The following dialogue is from Awoonor's *This Earth, My Brother* (1971:38):

- Seidu!
- Sah!
- Where dey cook?
- Ah no know, sah. Look lak igo for im jolley house.
- That's what they are. They can't let their whoring women alone. What chop he make?
- Lamb chop, sah.
- Make table, Seidu.

Zabus (1991:74) points out that the un-Pidgin use of 'where' instead of *husplès* and 'know' instead of *sabi* may indicate either that Ghanaian Pidgin has evolved differently from other Pidgins, or that Awoonor's knowledge of Pidgin is limited. Although Zabus's doubts regarding Awoonor's competence may be justified, it may very well be the case that Awoonor is merely opting for maximum intelligibility. If we consider that the exchange is between the Englishman Mr. Smith and his Ghanaian steward boy, Seidu, we may identify the variety used as 'Houseboy Pidgin' with its inter- and intra-individual variability, which makes it even more difficult to decide what influenced Awoonor's choices most. We can, however, accept Zabus's observation that writers in general lack the proper training in the stylistic rendering of West African Pidgin (1991:74).

It is hardly surprising then that the data has a fairly small number of examples:

(52) *aspiti* (This Earth, p.176) <pw1>
(hospital)

(53) *broder* (This Earth, p.176) <r4>
(brother)

- (54) *motri* (This Earth, p.176) <pw1>
(mortuary)
- (55) *masa* (This Earth, p.173, 176) <m2>
(master)
- (56) *Golcos* (Gab Boys, p.9) <pn2>
(Gold Coast)
- (57) the real “*cash-dey*” sections of this city (Girl Who Can, p.3) <pw1>
(“money is there” – affluent)
- (58) “*Make God help you pass well and go for overseas,*” he told me. “*Then you go fit look for your father.*” (Wind, p.53) <m4>
(“May God help you to do well in your exams and go overseas” ...
“Then you will be able to look after your father.”)
- (59) *Pray for detention*
□ *Jailman chop ■ free* (Beautiful Ones, p.106) <pw1>
(Pray for detention, a prisoner eats free)
- (60) *Socialism chop ■ make I chop* (Beautiful Ones, p.106) <pw1>
(Socialism is corrupt, let me have my share)

While examining (42)-(48) above for irregularities they exhibit, it has been noted that they appear in a Pidgin context and show a likely influence from Pidgin, so it seems logical to include them here:

- (42) *You broke not so?* (Beautiful Ones, p.106) <pw1>
(You are broke, aren't you?)
- (43/44) *Who born fool* (Beautiful Ones, p.106) <pw1>
(Nobody is a fool)

(45) *Contrey broke* (Beautiful Ones, p.106) <pw1>
(Contrey [countryman] is broke)

(46/48) *Money sweet pass all* (Beautiful Ones, p.106) <pw1>
(Money is better than anything else)

(47) *Vagina sweet* (Beautiful Ones, p.106) <pw1>
(Sex is good)

The above examples all exhibit characteristics of Pidgin: (42)-(48) show syntactic irregularities described in 6.2.2 (a), (b) and (c), while (52)-(56) are phonetically corrupted forms. (57) has the Pidgin multifunctional *dey*, which, in this case, functions as the present tense of 'be' or 'exist' (Sey, 1973:3). (58) has a variety of features characteristic of Pidgin: *make* used as a modal verb to express the imperative in 3rd person singular; the semantically extended use of *pass* to mean 'pass an examination'; the irregular use of *for* in the expression 'go overseas'; the use of *go* as a modal verb to indicate future; the use of *fit* to express ability/capability; and the irregular use of the phrasal verb *look for* to mean 'look after'. In addition to the omission of the indefinite article and the Present Simple 3rd person singular suffix -s, (59) has the Pidgin *chop* for 'eat', whereas in (60) the semantic field of *chop* is extended to encompass a more abstract meaning associated with corruption. In (60) the Present Simple 3rd person singular suffix -s is also omitted, and *make*, with the nominative and not the accusative form of 'I', is used again as a modal verb to express the imperative in 1st person singular.

These examples provide further evidence from a corpus of Ghanaian English language prose that Zabus's term 'artefactual dialect' is a befitting description of the literary representation of Pidgin. The examples above are 'double' approximations: approximations to Pidgin in an attempt to represent an essentially spoken variety, and approximations to Standard English to ensure intelligibility for the reader, both converging at Agheyisi's Level 4 into an 'interlanguage' which does not exist outside the world of fiction⁴.

6.3 Variation in the signified

In the current data variation in the signified is meant to refer to a change in meaning while the form remains unaffected. The examples in the data can be sorted into the following categories:

- *Lexical innovation*: a) conversion; b) acronyms and symbols
- *Semantic changes*: a) semantic extension; b) semantic restriction; c) semantic restriction and extension; d) semantic shift; e) semantic transfer
- *Proverbs and sayings*

Because of the relatively large number of examples found in the data that show variation in the signified, it is not feasible to examine each one of them and thus produce an explanatory list below. Instead, the most pertinent examples in each category will serve as illustration of the observations made.

6.3.1 *Lexical innovation*

As has been seen in 6.2, lexical innovation involves the creation of new lexical items by way of coinage, clipping, creating unusual collocations, compounding, backformation, blending, borrowing, loan-translation, derivation and multiple word-formation processes. These all bring about changes that affect the form one way or another: either an already existing form gets altered or a completely new one comes to be created. Conversion and the creation of acronyms and symbols, however, leave the form unchanged while altering the meaning.

6.3.1.1 Conversion

Only three examples of a special kind of functional shift have been found in the data. These are:

- (61) *Doctor* (SoP, p.74) <pn1>
- (62) *Lawyer* (This Earth, p.173) <pn1>
- (63) *Master* (SoP, p.66) <pn1>

The change is from common noun to proper name, which can be used instead of a person's name in all situations. The category change involves a shift in meaning: while the common noun is neutral, the proper noun has a positive connotation reflecting respect, admiration and high social status. This type of conversion seems to be fairly productive in Ghanaian English, and is dependent on what is perceived as a prestigious profession and on whom respect is due or offered to in a given situation. Other examples I have come across in Ghana include 'Engineer', 'Teacher', 'Driver', 'Surveyor', and also military ranks, e.g. 'Sergeant' and 'Commander'.

6.3.1.2 Acronyms and symbols

The view taken in this study is that acronyms and symbols present a case of variation in the signified. Although they are created by a truncation of words to their initial letters, thus bringing about a change in the form of the words they are created from, the actual representation of the symbols and acronyms is constant – it remains a letter, or a succession of letters and is recognized as such. It is rather the meaning behind a letter, or a particular combination of letters that may be difficult or impossible to decipher if the symbol or acronym is not familiar.

The data has eight examples. (64)-(67) and (69)-(70) are alphabetisms while (68) is pronounced as a single word, following French pronunciation rules. (64) is further complicated by 'Kansawora' being a fictional name in Armah's novel, and also because the acronym appears already in Chapter One, whereas 'Kansawora' does not get mentioned until we reach Chapter Two, which creates an information gap for the reader.

- (64) *K.C.C.* (Beautiful Ones, p.7) <pw1>
[Kansawora City Council]
- (66) *U.T.C. / UTC building* (Beautiful Ones, p.9 / 107) <pw1>
[United Trading Company]
- (66) *G.N.T.C.* (Beautiful Ones, p.9) <pw1>
[Ghana National Trading Company]
- (67) *U.A.C.* (Beautiful Ones, p.9; This Earth, p.178) <pw1>
[United Africa Company]
- (68) *C.F.A.O. / the French C.F.A.O.* (Beautiful Ones, p.10 / 9) <pw1>
[Compagnie Française Africaine Occidentale]
- (69) *CPP* (Beautiful Ones, p.110) <pw1>
[Convention People's Party]
- (70) *OBK* (Gab Boys, p.12, 13, 14) <m2>
[‘Office Book Keeper’]
- (71) *¢500* (SoP, p.74) <pw1>
[500 cedis]

(70) is somewhat different in that after deciphering the acronym we are presented with a case of semantic transfer (see 6.3.2.5 below). ‘Office Book Keeper’ has little to do with keeping the accounts; it refers to the person in charge of a local authority police station.

The vertical line crossing the capital C vertically in (71) signals that it refers to a unit of money – just as other money symbols crossed either vertically or horizontally, such as £ and \$, do. One cannot, however, decipher it unless one knows the monetary system in Ghana (which used to be 1 cedi = 100 pesewas; now only the cedi is used).

6.3.2 *Semantic change*

6.3.2.1 Semantic extension

These are cases where the English forms retain their meaning while acquiring additional meanings unknown in Standard British English. In most cases, the connection between these extended meanings and the standard meanings is recoverable.

The words and expressions with extended meaning most frequently occurring in the data are:

- (75) *cloth(s)* (Catechist, p.107; Changes, p.6; Crossroads, p.1, 11, 51, 53, 109; Dancing Tortoise, p.135; Gab Boys, p.90, 94, 100, 101, 192; Healers, p.110, 116; Narrow Path, p.12; No Sweetness, p.67, 74, 131; Of Men, p.5, 50, 55, 108, 113; SoP, p.40, 41, 43; This Earth, p.4, 9, 11, 101; Wind, p.17, 47) <pw3>

and its combinations with pre-modifiers

- (76) *mourning cloth* (This Earth, p.105) <pw3>
(77) *bedcloth / sleeping cloth* (Changes, p.9 / 10) <pw1>
(78) *undercloth* (Of Men, p.48) <pw3>,

as well as

- (83) *linguist / the chief's linguist* (Of Men, p.5, 113, 116 / Beyond, p.4; Narrow Path, p.1) <m2>
(86) *Passion Week* (Beautiful Ones, p.1, 3, 111) <sw4>.

While retaining its standard meaning, *cloth* in Ghanaian English is also used to refer to any Ghanaian traditional wear as distinct from European clothing. This can be the colourful woven Kente cloth (Rattray, 1927: 221-63; Antubam, 1963:152), the Akunintam – ‘the cloth of the great’ – with appliqué or embroidery (Warren, 1986:70), or the stamped Adinkra cloth (Rattray, 1927:264-68; Antubam, 1963:151), or imported cotton material called ‘wax’ or ‘super wax’.

Today, a cloth is worn in a toga-like fashion by men; for women it is either a dress or a set of a blouse and two ‘cloths’, one of which is wrapped around the waist as a skirt, and the other worn either folded along the long end and wrapped around as a shorter top skirt or as a head-dress. The pre-modifiers in (76)-(78) indicate the occasion or purpose for which the cloth is worn or used.

In its extended meaning, *linguist* refers to the King of Ashanti’s or a chief’s spokesman – a repository of the history of the clan he represents and a ‘walking storehouse’ of proverbs. He is not only an eloquent and diplomatic speaker – a ‘linguist’ –, but an influential high state office bearer: in addition to his judicial powers, he is the number one advisor to the King or to the chief (Rattray, 1927:276-78; Danquah, 1928:41). *Spokesman* also occurs in the data (Appendix 1, 84) with the same extended meaning.

In (86) the Christian meaning of *Passion Week* is extended somewhat jocularly and irreverently to include reference to the last week of the month when financial hardship is rife and pay day is eagerly awaited.

Kinship terms such as *mother* and *father* are extended to refer, in addition to one’s biological mother and father, to other older female and male members of the extended family, as well as to be used as a respectful address to older people one is not necessarily related to, or to people held in high esteem:

- (93) *mother* (Gab Boys, p.186; Of Men, p.105; No Sweetness, p.59;
Wind, p.4) <r4>

In the following passage Chicha, a teacher, visits the house of one of her pupils. The boy’s mother establishes rapport appropriate to the social context by addressing the teacher as ‘my child’, who, in turn, pays her respects by addressing the boy’s mother as ‘Mother’:

She looked up and smiled. Her smile was a wonderful flashing whiteness.
‘Oh Chicha, I have just arrived.’
‘So I see. *Ayekoo*.’
‘*Yaa*, my own. And how are you, my child?’
‘Very well, Mother. And you?’

‘Tanchiw. Do sit down, there’s a stool in that corner. (No Sweetness, p.59)

Other examples include

- (95) *two of my mothers* (Gab Boys, p.191) <r4>
- (96) *one of her mothers on her mother’s side* (Girl Who Can, p.47) <r4>
- (97) *any other mothers and grandmothers we considered close enough* (Girl Who Can, p.47) <r4>

A special case is calling one’s own daughter ‘Mother’ – a term of endearment based on the idea of likeness and the child being named after one of her grandmothers, combining respect and fondness for one’s own mother and respect with fondness for the daughter through a projection of her future role as a mother:

She was his eldest daughter and his favourite child He called her ‘Mother’, particularly when he was in a good mood. (Wind, pp.3-4)

The same idea underlies the use of *my brother, my father, my husband* (Appendix 1, 110, 111 and 112, respectively) in a mother’s addressing her son:

‘Mama, here I am,’ a piping voice announced.
‘My husband, my brother, my father, my all-in-all, where are you?’ And there he was. All at once, for the care-worn village woman, the sun might well have been rising from the east instead of setting behind the coconut palms. Her eyes shone. Kwesi saluted me and then his mother. (No Sweetness, p.63)

In addition to what has been said above, *fathers* as a plural entity (Appendix 1, 101, 102 and 103) refers not only to one’s older male relatives in the extended family, but also to the ancestors who inhabit the other world:

The big crowd which had ushered Okomfo into the *ahenfie* also followed him out. The chief fetish priest of Ankobea had come back indeed [from the dead]. He had talked and they had heard him. Ankobea waited to see what new thing he would bring from the fathers. (Crossroads, p.12)

Among all the kinship terms found in the data, *auntie* seems to have the widest range of extended meanings:

(105) *auntie* (Catechist, p.17) <r4>

An old man's reference to his third wife, (105) seems to be an isolated case dependent on individual preference rather than generally accepted usage.

(106) *Auntie* (Grief Child, p.178; SoP, p.41) <r4>

(107) *Auntie Abena* (SoP, p.40, 41) <r4>

(108) *Auntie Esi* (CoN, p.5, 96) <r4>

(109) *Auntie Boatemaa* (SoP, p.63, 69, 70) <r4>

While (106) and (107) are respectful ways of addressing a woman older than the speaker, (108) is used by a male character to express his fondness and respect for the addressee, and (109) by a girl to address her stepmother.

6.3.2.2 Semantic restriction

Semantic restriction is defined here as the restriction of meaning in Ghanaian English of a word or expression to a limited area within its Standard British English semantic field. As the data yield only four examples, we shall examine them all.

(114) *compound* (Changes, p.6; CoN, p.1, 211; Dancing Tortoise, p.285; Grief Child, p.84, 88, 90, 91, 92, 178, 181; Narrow Path, p.2, 85, 180; Of Men, p.47, 102; Strange Man, p.1; This Earth, p.5, 8, 9, 175; Wind, p.17, 44, 54) <pw1>

(115) *missus* (Girl Who Can, p.132) <r2> – Sey 67, 71, 95

(116) *police constable* (Gab Boys, p.10) <m2>

(117) *general police* (Gab Boys, p.12) <pw1>

Compound in Ghanaian English is restricted to an enclosure on which a school, church, factory, etc. stands, or to an ensemble of huts/houses of various sizes surrounded by a fence or wall that is occupied by the members of an extended family. In large towns it can also refer to living quarters within an enclosure shared by the same ethnic group:

When she was younger and growing up in the big compound with her cousins and other members of the extended family, she had had to be extremely careful about starting a quarrel with anyone. (Changes, p.6)

In the end, everyone reached home. Home to cheerless iron huts known as Compounds. In our area, we had Dagarti Compound, Frafra Compound, Green Compound and other Compounds designed to harbour different shades of humanity. (Wind, p.44)

Missus is restricted to addressing or referring to a wife, who is literate and is married in church or at a registry office according to Western European custom. It is not used for women married according to Ghanaian traditional custom (Sey 1973:67, 71, 95):

As for asking her mother-in-law to move in to look after the house, the children and Kobla, that too was another problem. "Hei, it never works out." Again, "except for one or two blessed people. Much of the time, the old lady bustles around, cooking her son all his favourite dishes, while dropping a few hints here and there about how much better *off* she always knew he would have been with one of the simple unspoilt girls from the village ..."

"My dear sister, there have been cases where the missus came back with her degrees and diplomas to find a brand new wife installed by the husband's family." (Changes, pp.131-2)

Police constable (or constable) and *general police* (or general policeman) in Ghanaian English tend to be restricted to refer only to an educated policeman or educated policemen, who are distinguished from the *escort police* (Appendix 1, 82) by their black suit and cap. *Escort police* are illiterate policemen who wear a khaki jacket and shorts and a red fez cap (Sey, 1973:92, 102). While (116) and (117) are cases of semantic restriction, *escort police* represents a case of semantic extension. In *The Gab Boys*, however, Duodu clearly uses *police constable* and the 'amalgamation' *escort police constable* (Appendix 1, 81) to refer to an illiterate policeman. Sey quotes the 1937 *Gold Coast Handbook* with regard to *general policemen* and *escort police*, which is an indication that their meanings had been well established in Ghanaian English by the time Duodu wrote his novel. It can be argued that Duodu's idiosyncratic use of these terms is not

a reflection of his own confusion about the meaning of these expressions but is intended to be an indirect comment on the self-proclaimed worldly-wisdom of the character who uses them.

6.3.2.3 Semantic restriction and extension

There are cases in Ghanaian English when a lexical item that has undergone semantic restriction acquires an additional meaning which is unknown in Standard British English. The examples from the data I would like to examine are

- (119) *carriers* (No Sweetness, p.69) <m2>
- (121) *mate / mates* (Gab Boys, p.97, 99, 100, 101, 104; SoP, p.61 / This Earth, p.172, 176) <m2>
- (122) *the driver's mate* (Gab Boys, p.96; SoP, p.61) <m2>
- (123) *lorry mate* (Gab Boys, p.99) <m2>
- (125) *reckon*: 'He *reckoned* the dowry.' (No Sweetness, p.67) <r2>
'I hope you had something to *reckon* against him?' (No Sweetness, p.67) <r2>
'You forgot to *reckon* the Knife Fee.' (No Sweetness, p.67)
<r2>
'He also *reckoned* the price of the trunk.' (No Sweetness, p.68)
<r2>
'There was only the Cooking Cost for me to *reckon* against his.'
(No Sweetness, p.68) <r2>
- (126) *soup* (Catechist, p.110, 113; Gab Boys, p.94; Dancing Tortoise, p.289, 292; No Sweetness, p.82; Of Men, p.8; SoP, p.68, 69) <pw2>
- (130) *stew* (Catechist, p.110) <pw2>
- (135) *stool* (Crossroads, p.47, 51, 52, 53, 107, 108) <pw1>

In (119) *carrier* is restricted to 'porter' and acquires the additional meaning of one who bears load or luggage from one place to another by carrying it on the head. Sey explains that in Ghanaian English 'carry' is restricted to mean 'carry on the head'. This is due to interference

from Fante, which has a variety of verbs to distinguish between carrying on the head and carrying on other parts of the body (1973:119).

Maami Ama turned round to look at her. ‘What are you putting yourself to so much trouble for? When Nana Kum said the boy ought to go and stay with his father, did I make any objection? He is at the school. Go and fetch him. Tomorrow, you can send your carriers to come and fetch his belongings from my hut.’ (No Sweetness, p.69)

The rural setting in Ama Ata Aidoo’s short story where access to any means of transport is limited, and the fact that carrying load on the head rather than in the hands or on the back is a common practice in Ghana, underscores the Ghanaian English meaning of *carrier*.

(121) and its combinations in (122) and (123), and also in (858) (Appendix 1) are frequently used expressions in Ghanaian English. *Mate* is restricted to ‘a helper or assistant to a more skilled worker’ (*The New Shorter Oxford English Dictionary*, 1993 edition) and extended, at the same time, to mean a helper to the driver of a vehicle, particularly of a tro-tro, used for transporting people, who hails passengers at a *lorry station* (Appendix 1, 853), collects fares and gives change, allocates places to passengers and room to luggage, ensures that the vehicle is fully (or rather over)packed, tells the driver where people want to get off, runs errands for the driver, etc. Sey categorises *mate* as a case of semantic shift (1973:121), but he does not provide enough evidence for the ‘re-arrangement of the characteristic patterns within the semantic field’ (ibid., p.72) of the word. I, however, argue that the added-on element of the ‘conductor’ whose very role is defined differently from that in Standard British English, makes *mate* to be a case of semantic restriction and extension rather than that of semantic shift.

As illustrated in (125), *reckon* is restricted to ‘give an account of items received’ (*The New Shorter Oxford English Dictionary*, 1993 edition) and is extended to the listing, in a traditional divorce proceeding, of expenses the parties to be divorced incurred during their marriage and seek repayment of. This additional meaning is completely unknown in Standard British English.

Unlike in British English, where *soup* can also mean ‘fog, thick cloud’, and *stew* ‘an agitated, anxious, or angry state’ as well as ‘a pond or tank in which edible fish are kept until they are needed for the table’ (*The New Shorter Oxford English Dictionary*, 1993 edition), in Ghanaian

English both (126) and (130) are restricted to food or dish and extended to give a specifically Ghanaian meaning to these words. They are best described in comparison to each other, although one cannot be defined in terms of the other. *Soup* is a liquid or semi-liquid food made of the basic ingredients of water, meat, fish (including crustaceans), vegetables and pepper. It is prepared by boiling the ingredients without the addition of oil. If one starts making a dish by boiling the meat with onion, one is making soup. If, however, one starts by frying onions in oil and then adds the ingredients, which are largely the same as for soup, one is definitely making stew. *Stew* is a dish of deep-fried meat, fish, snails, mushroom and a lot of vegetables and pepper. It is thicker than soup. Because the ingredients, with the exception of oil, are the same, one can have, for example, both groundnut soup and groundnut stew. The difference is in the way of preparation, consistency and in what it is eaten with. Neither soup nor stew is served as a separate course. Although rice, *kenkey* [a coastal Ghanaian staple of cooked corn meal] and *banku* [similar to *kenkey* but milder in taste] can be eaten both with soup and stew, *fufu* [pounded yam or a mixture of pounded yam and plantain] is eaten only with soup and *tuo* [T.Z. or *tuonzafi* – an originally Hausa staple made from rice, millet, corn or sorghum] is eaten only with stew.

Restricted to a seat without arms or back on a single central pedestal, *stool* has the additional meaning of the throne and symbol of authority of a chief, and in case of the Ashanti state, the Golden Stool is the shrine and symbol of the national soul.

6.3.2.4 Semantic shift

Semantic shift is defined here as ‘a meaning shift which results in a special case of what the expression denotes in its lexical meaning’ (Löbner, 2002:52). The data yields one example:

(136) *hot drink* (Fragments, p.5) <pw2>

Hot here means ‘producing an effect as of heat or burning, especially on the nerves of taste’ (*The New Shorter Oxford English Dictionary*). However, unlike in Standard British English, in collocation with ‘drink’ it does not refer to the temperature at which the drink is consumed.

Rather, it refers to the strongly alcoholic, intoxicating quality of the drink, which, because of its high alcohol content, produces a burning feeling in the mouth and throat:

Only after those words did Foli think to begin pouring out the schnapps he had been holding in those hands of his which hate so much to let hot drink escape. (Fragments, p.5)

6.3.2.5 Semantic transfer

Semantic transfer is understood here as the use of words or expressions almost completely outside their Standard British English semantic field. The data has examples, which seem to be cases of idiosyncratic usage, as in (137), or of outdated slang, as in (145), or are becoming obsolete, as in (138):

(137) *action film* (Beyond, p.61, 62) <pw1>
[Used to refer to pornographic films.]

(145) *piece/pieces* (Gab Boys, p.98, 99) <pw1>
[Used to refer to discarded stubs of cigarette collected to be reused later.]

(138) *airtight trunks* (Gab Boys, p.103) <pw1>
[Refers to a large metal box – the local version, especially in rural settings, of a wardrobe – for keeping clothes, especially women’s clothing, in. According to Sey, an ‘airtight’ with some items of clothing was a pre-marriage gift a man was expected to present his fiancée with (1973:115).]

Others, such as (142) and (143) are frequently used expressions in Ghanaian English:

(142) *lorry / lorries* (Crossroads, / p.8; Narrow Path, p.9, 10, 14, 184 / 3; No Sweetness, p.128; SoP, p.61; This Earth, p.178, 179 / 7, 177) <pw1>

Unlike in Standard British English, where *lorry* means ‘a long flat low wagon without sides’ or ‘a large strong motor vehicle for transporting goods, troops, etc., especially an open one with a flat platform’ (*The New Shorter Oxford English Dictionary*, 1993 edition), in Ghanaian English *lorry* refers to a small roofed truck, usually converted, for carrying passengers, which, until recently, has been the chief means of local and short to medium distance transport in Ghana. *Lorry park*, consequently, is the place where passenger vehicles – particularly *lorries* – wait to collect passengers, and not ‘an open space or lot reserved for the parking of lorries’ (*The New Shorter Oxford English Dictionary*, 1993 edition). It is synonymous with *lorry station* (Appendix 1, 853), but Sey observes that in big towns such as Accra, Kumasi and Secondi-Takoradi *lorry park* is more likely to be used (1973:76-7).

6.3.3 *Proverbs and sayings*

Proverbs and sayings found in the data are categorized as presenting variation in the signified. Except for the occasional African word thrown in, the form shows no variation – all the 38 examples are perfectly well formed sentences and their literal meaning is not at variance with Standard British English semantic fields. However, as mentioned in 4.3.2.4, proverbs echo the wisdom of a people, and they do so at a metaphorical, rather than literal, level through culturally dependent metaphors and associations. In our case, these metaphors and associations relate to the physical, social and cultural reality of the different peoples of Ghana, so the meanings these metaphors and associations convey are not consistent with their Standard British English interpretation.

In 4.3.2.4 I also illustrate how a thought underlying a proverb gets represented in an L1, and then explain why differences occur between the L1 representation and its relexification in English. (179) below shows no significant difference between the Fante source language and the relexified English version. However, the English, French, Lingala and Hungarian equivalents of the same proverb illustrate that different cultures conceptualise the same idea differently.

- (179) *The bamboo fence does not creak if nothing strikes it.* (Wind, p.8)
[Fante: *Se biribi anka mpapa a mpapa nye krada* – ‘if nothing touches the raffia fence, the fence will not creak’]

There’s no smoke without fire.

Il n’y a pas de fumée sans feu.

[French: word by word equivalent of the English version]

Mayi eninganaka pamba te.

[Lingala: Water doesn’t move without a reason.]

Nem zörög a haraszt ha a szél nem fújja.

[Hungarian: Brushwood doesn’t rustle if the wind’s not blowing it.]

(167) illustrates that connotations do vary from culture to culture. While in English ‘snake’ connotes treacherousness, deceit, secrecy and lurking danger, in Akan it is associated with might and strength:

- (167) *Some animal has swallowed the snake.* (Of Men, p.47)
[Akan: *Aboa bi amen owo*. Meaning: Somebody is mightier/tougher than their opponent. A snake, which usually swallows other animals, can only be eaten by a mightier/fiercer animal.]

In the majority of cases, however, one needs considerable ethnographical knowledge to understand the proverbs of a different culture. (150) and the ensuing elaboration illustrate this.

- (150) *Nobody points out his village to another with his left finger.* (Gab Boys, p.189)
[Akan: *Obi nfa nensa benkum nkyere n’egya kurom* – ‘Nobody points to his father’s village with the left hand.’]

The Akan, as many other peoples in Africa, distinguish between the functions of the right hand and left hand. The right hand is used for eating, pointing, offering and accepting – the latter two can also be done by both hands together. The left hand is used for cleaning oneself after the toilet. Children are taught to use their left hand to wipe their bottom – never the right one! The association of the left hand with excrement is so strong that the Fantes, for example, call it *atebin* – ‘wiper of excrement’ – instead of using the Akan *benkum* – ‘left hand’. Children are told by their parents not to put something down using their left hand lest the object should get lost. So if a child loses something, he/she may say: ‘I put it down with my left hand’. From this follows that pointing to one’s father’s village with one’s left hand would not only be improper, but also rather disrespectful and disgraceful. At the metaphorical level (150) is a reminder or warning that one should not talk badly about or debase where one comes from and the people one respects.

6.4 Variation in the signifier and signified

Variation in the signifier and signified, as applied to the data, affects both the linguistic form in which the cultural reference is expressed and the meaning. The examples found in the data can be categorised as follows:

- *African language expressions*
- *Lexical innovation:* (a) borrowing, (b) coinage, (c) collocations containing African words, (d) unusual collocations and compounds, (e) conversion

6.4.1 African language expressions

6.4.1.1 Words/expressions referring to the natural environment and various aspects of culture

By virtue of being foreign in an English text, African language words and expressions can be regarded in the context of the current study as presenting a case of variation in the signifier and signified. For many, a translation is sufficient:

- (203) *onyina* (Gab Boys, p.90)
silk cotton tree

Others, like items of food and clothing, or family terms, need a description or a note on usage:

- (225) *waakye* (SoP, p.65)
A meal of rice and beans boiled together.

- (247) *Nana* [female] (No Sweetness)

- (248) *Nana* [male] (Crossroads, Gab Boys, No Sweetness, Of Men)

Nana is the Akan word both for grandmother and grandfather. Either on its own, or in combination with male names, it is also used to address or refer to older respectable male members of the family, clan, or community. Similarly, it serves as a term of respect in referring to dead ancestors, and is used for the relationship we call 'grandchild'. Rattray observes that when calling a grandchild *Nana*, "an Ashati is addressing the infant not as 'grandchild' but as 'grandparent' or ancestor" (1927:321n).

Yet others, such, for example, as words for traditions, customs, traditional titles, ancestors and deities, benefit from a detailed, often ethnographical, explanation:

- (259) *Akwanbo* (Of Men, p.viii)
(290) *Okyeame* (Crossroads, Of Men)

It is likely that identifying *Akwambo* (alternatively *Akwanbo* as in 259) to the non-Akan reader as ‘path-clearing festival’ will give little idea of its meaning. It is more elucidating to give an explanation, however short: *Akwambo* is the most important festival among the Agona people of Ghana, during which the path from one village to another is cleared – the path which is supposed to have been used by the ancestors during the time of migration. It is held at harvest time in the month of September or October, and as such, it is also the festival of the new yam. Through the symbolism of the ancestors’ path, the harvest and the ceremony in the village shrine – during which a bottle of rum is half-emptied and filled up again from a bottle newly brought to the shrine – *Akwambo* marks and celebrates the continuity between old and new.

Similarly, it may not suffice just to translate *okyeame* as the ‘chief’s linguist’. For a real understanding of what it actually means it is necessary to have the explanation given in 6.3.2.1 above.

6.4.1.2 Names

6.4.1.2.1 Personal names

Personal names⁵ may seem rather complicated to the outsider as the naming systems of the peoples of Ghana include information, among other things, about the day the bearer was born on, the order in which he/she was born into the family, the patrilines of the father, physical characteristics at birth, special events at the time of birth, etc. It is beyond the scope of this study to provide a detailed description of these systems here, but the examples chosen from the data below illustrate the idea:

- (341) *Baako* (Fragments)
- (366) *Foli* (Fragments)
- (346) *Boi / Kwadwo Boi* (Gab Boys)
- (451) *Tete / Mr Tete* (Strange Man)

Baako is an Akan serial name given to the first born child, male or female. The first born male child can also be called *Ako*. The Ewe name the first born male child *Foli*, the Ga name it *Tete*. *Kwadwo Boi* is a male born on Monday (Kwadwo) and is the fifth born in the family (Boi). The writer Ama Ata Aidoo is one of twins and was born on Saturday – a fact recoverable from the first two elements of her name. Ama is the day name given to girls born on Saturday, while Ata is given to twins regardless of their sex.

Muslim and Hausa names such as Bukari, Ibrahim, Idrissu, Issah, Issaka, Mahama, Yaro, Fati, Fusena, and Mariama (Appendix 1, 351, 368, 369, 370, 371, 412, 459, 509, 510 and 527, respectively) signal close connection with Northern Ghana, where Islam has had a long established presence and a strong influence.

(456) *Wangara* (Wind)

Kropp Dakubu explains that “‘Wangara’ in Ghana is a term (ultimately from Arabic) that refers to people of Mande origin and their Mande language. However, it seems that at least some of the people so called are of diverse origins’ (1997a:175, n21). She also observes that there is a strong tradition among the Northern peoples of Ghana to use ethnic or place names or some other appellation not used at home while working in the south (ibid., p.179, n24).

Some Akan surnames appear to be Anglicised versions of indigenous Akan names. According to Warren and Andrews they occur particularly on baptismal certificates especially if the Ghanaian was baptized into a Christian church by a foreign missionary (1990:35-7). The data has the following examples:

(308) *Dr Aggrey* (No Sweetness)

[Akan: *agyir / egyin* – ‘cat’]

(336) *Ataa Quarshi* (Strange Man)

[Akan: *Kwakyee* – ‘male, Thursday-born, the gift’]

(350) *Budu Baiden-Danielson* (Strange Man)

[Akan: *Badu* – ‘tenth-born child’]

- (373) *John Kofi Blankson* (Crossroads)
[Akan: *kuntu* – ‘blanket’]

There are names, which are the combination of various foreign and/or indigenous elements, such as

foreign title + indigenous surname

- (312) *Dr Agyekumhene* (Dancing Tortoise)
(532) *Mrs Ofori* (Grief Child)

(foreign title +) foreign first name + indigenous surname

- (374) *Jonathan Dumenyo / Paul Dumenyo* (This Earth)
(513) *Grace Mensah* (No Sweetness)
(486) *Miss Beckie Annan* (Grief Child)

traditional title + indigenous day name + family name

- (407) *Opanyin Kwesi Addai* (Crossroads)

indigenous kinship term + indigenous day name + family name

- (309) *Agya Kwaku Amankwaa* (Gab Boys)
(505) *Maame Esi Abokuma* (Crossroads)
(515) *Mena Araba Jesiwa* (Healers)

While in the data these combinations are the most frequently occurring ones, others are also possible.

6.4.1.2.2 Geographical names

Geographical names may also present an interest with regard to their meaning and history, if they are recoverable:

- (600) *Ga* (Girl Who Can, Healers)
- (610) *Keta* (Dancing Tortoise, Girl Who Can, Narrow Path, This Earth)
- (622) *Kumase* (Girl Who Can) / *Kumasi* (Crossroads, Fragments, Gab Boys, Wind)
- (647) *Oguaa* (Girl Who Can)
- (685) *Winneba* (Crossroads)

Central Accra is often referred to, especially by the Gas, as *Ga*. *Keta* means ‘head of the sand’ – the people who migrated from the North built their settlement at the ‘head of the sand’ on the beach. *Kumasi* is ‘under the kum tree’ – when the Ashanti kingdom was founded, there was a choice between two towns to be the capital. The spiritual leader, Okomfo Anokye, planted two kum trees in two different towns. One survived and one died. Where the tree survived, there is *Kumasi*; where the tree died, there is Kumawu – ‘kum is dead’ (a town about 50 miles west of *Kumasi*). *Oguaa* means ‘market’ and it is the original Fante name of Cape Coast. *Winneba* is the phonologically corrupted version of Windy Bay – the original Akan name of this town is Simpa.

Two of the place names in the data are used metonymically:

- (552) *Achimota* (Beautiful Ones, p.110; Dancing Tortoise, p.131) <m1>
- (570) *Anloga* (Dancing Tortoise, p.131) <m1>

Similarly to (848) examined in 6.4.2.3 below, *Achimota* and *Anloga* stand for educational institutions. In this case the referents are secondary schools situated in these locations.

6.4.2 Lexical innovation

6.4.2.1 Borrowing

The data has seven loan-words, one from Yoruba, four from Pidgin, one from Swahili and one of unknown origin, which present variation both in form and meaning:

- (692) *agbada* (Changes, p.89) <pw3>
 (693) *booklong* [people] (Changes, p.12; Wind, p.26) <m1>
 (694) *comot*: 'the marriage was 'comot, kaput, finished, kabisa'(Changes, p.159) <r2>
 (695) *jot* (Beautiful Ones, p.5) <pw1>
 (696) *kabisa*: 'the marriage was 'comot, kaput, finished, kabisa'(Changes, p.159) <r2>
 (697) *too known* [people] (Wind, p.27) <m1>
 (698) *tro-tro* (SoP, p.62) <pw1>

(692) is a borrowing from Yoruba and refers to men's traditional wear, a rather long and voluminous shirt worn all over West Africa. (693), (694), (697) and (698) are borrowed from Pidgin. *Booklong* and *too known* can be used synonymously and refer to somebody with academic qualifications. They can also be used critically of people who try to be over-clever. *Comot* literally means 'come out/get away/get out', depending on the context, however, it can acquire various meanings. Here it apparently means 'finished, broken down'. *Tro-tro* is Pidgin for 'lorry' (see 6.2.1.2 and 6.3.2.5).

(695) seems to be of uncertain origin. There is some likelihood that it is borrowed from Pidgin; or it is possible that it is now outdated Ghanaian English slang for 'cigarette'.

(696) is Swahili for 'absolutely, exactly, quite, totally, completely, definitely, extremely, very'.

6.4.2.2 Coinage

Examples of coinage found in the data fit the broad description of coinage as the invention of new terms. At the same time, coinage here is meant in the sense used by Sey: 'compounds and derived words (i.e. non-simple words) which are not T.E. [Target English, i.e. British English] in meaning though they may be identical in form to T.E. free collocations. ... There are cases ...

where the collocations sound unlikely in T.E. ... In both cases, however, the expressions are constructed in accordance with T.E. productive patterns' (1973:70).

The examples are names created in English for things and phenomena that exist in Ghana and are characteristic of the cultural experience of the peoples of Ghana, and as such, are non-existent in Standard British English. They include creative personal names and nicknames, creative geographical names, vocational names, names of institutions of various sorts, brand names and names of things, phenomena and cultural practices. Some of the most interesting examples are personal and geographical names, and names of things.

Creative personal names and nicknames give the sum total of a character by describing his or her personality, most outstanding characteristic feature, quality or appearance or something they have done or have connection with. They may also reflect the name giver's affection, criticism, dislike, etc. towards the character.

(700) *Mystique Mysterious* (CoN, p.1) <pn1>

(705) *His High Dedication* (Gab Boys, p.198) <pn1>

Mystique Mysterious is a shady character, a drug dealer, his eyes 'always hidden behind a pair of dark sunglasses, his barrier against the curiosity of those who were drawn by his unnatural quality of energy and power'. By referring to him by such a name, people 'combined their respect for him, their fear of him, the fascination they felt for the unreachable person behind the shades' (CoN, p.1). *His High Dedication*, on the other hand, is a sarcastic reference to Kwame Nkrumah, the first president of the Republic of Ghana.

The creative geographical names in the data all come from Kofi Osei Aidoo's novel. They are created by a play on some of the morphological and phonological features of the original Akan place names they are 'transcreated' from. With the help of an informant I have managed to trace some of them back to their real place name original. Below are a couple of examples for illustration:

(718) *Pool-of-Water* (Of Men, p.53)

(726) *Thousand-Farmers* (Of Men, p.vii, 109)

The real place referred to by (717) is the town of Nsuta in the Ashanti Region. The Akan word *nsutae* means ‘pool of water, lake’. (725) is identifiable as Akwapim from the Akan words *apim* meaning ‘thousand’ and *kwua* meaning ‘farming’.

(743) *grass-cutter* (Gab Boys, p.94, 184) <pw1>

(753) *Kill Me Quick* (CoN, p.1) <pw2>

(755) *white-white* ((Beautiful Ones, p.109; Fragments, p.131) <pw3>

(743) refers to a wild forest animal, a rodent, whose meat is considered to be a delicacy. (753) is the rather suggestive English name used for *akpeteshie* (Appendix 1, 211), the locally made strong alcoholic drink. (755) is used to refer to a white jacket or shirt and white trousers worn together.

6.4.2.3 Collocations with African words

These collocations are characterized by having a non-English first element, an approximation of whose meaning is, however vaguely, suggested by the second English element by way of associations and analogy.

(761) *akpeteshie bars* (Wind, p.52) <pw1>

(762) *Attukpai taxi station* (Gab Boys, p.104, 105) <pw1>

(830) *Volta Region* (Dancing Tortoise, p.129, 135) <pn2>

Thus, for example, if ‘wine bar’ is a place where people drink wine, *akpeteshie bar* may well be a place where people drink *akpeteshie*, whatever drink it may be.

Attukpai taxi station, while suggesting that *Attukpai* is the location at which taxis wait for their fare, has an anomaly in that ‘taxi station’ itself is an irregular collocation. ‘Station’ in Ghanaian English has undergone semantic extension and, in addition to ‘train’, ‘bus’ and ‘coach’ it includes ‘taxi’, ‘lorry’ and ‘car’ in its collocational range. (While ‘taxi station’ is fairly easy to

understand, ‘lorry station’ and ‘car station’ benefit from clarification. As has been explained in 6.3.2.5 above, they are synonymous expressions and refer to the place where passenger vehicles, particularly lorries – roofed trucks used for carrying people – wait to collect passengers.)

Volta Region is deceptive in that, based on the analogy, say, with Brong-Ahafo Region, one may identify ‘Volta’ as an African word. However, it is not. It is the Volta River that gives its name to this region, and it was the Portuguese who called this river *Rio da Volta* – “River of Return”. Wilks suggests that because they found no more gold trade, the Portuguese turned back at the Volta – and named it “River of Return” (1993:15). Kropp Dakubu, however, is of the opinion that it is “Change River”, *volta* meaning ‘alteration’ (as well as ‘return’), and the river was given this name by the Portuguese because of its periodic fluctuation in the direction of the current at its mouth (1997a:142).

In a few cases, the African words come in the middle or at the end of the collocation, as in

- (788) *a fifty-pesewa coin / a single fifty-pesewa coin* (Beautiful Ones, p.2)
<pw1>
(800) *clan of Batawo* (This Earth, p.11) <r4>

(849) is an interesting example because of the metonymy involved:

- (849) *Legon man*: ‘You ino be *Legon man*?’ (Wind, p.26) <m2>

The University of Ghana is situated in Legon, so the place name has come to stand for the institution. The expression *Legon man*, therefore, refers not just to any man who comes from Legon, but specifically to those associated with the University, and particularly to university lecturers.

6.4.2.4 Unusual collocations and compounds

The collocations and compounds listed here are different from those in 6.2.1.2 in that not only is the combination of words occurring together unusual, but they also show variation regarding their meaning. The examples I would like to examine are

(850) *body-check cabins* (Beyond, p.57) <pw1>

(857) *steward boys* (SoP, p.62) <m2>

(850) seems odd in Standard British English because *body-check* is used in various sports and means ‘the placing of one’s body in the way of an opponent in order to impede him’ (*The New Shorter Oxford English Dictionary*). In Ghanaian English it undergoes semantic transfer to mean ‘security check’. In addition, *cabin* retains the meaning ‘a booth, a small room’, which has become obsolete in Standard British English. The collocation thus created refers to the small booths at airports where security checks are carried out.

In (857) *steward* first gets restricted to ‘a passengers’ attendant’, then is extended to refer to an attendant working in somebody’s house rather than on a ship, train or airplane. Then it is combined with *boy*, and produces an unusual collocation in Standard British English. The expression is synonymous with ‘houseboy’ and refers to a boy or a man who works in a house as a servant.

6.4.2.5 Conversion

The examples of conversion showing variation for signifier and signified exhibit the same kind of functional shift from vocational or traditional office terms to proper names as described in 6.3.1.1, albeit in Akan, or in a form that looks like Akan:

(863) *Chicha* (No Sweetness, p.56, 57, 58, 59, 60, 61, 62, 63, 64, 68, 71, 72)
<m2>

(864) *Kankanfo* (Of Men, p.5) <m2>

- (865) *Kyikya* (Of Men, p.117) <m2>
- (866) *Nana* (Crossroads, p.10, 11, 49, 50, 52, 53, 54, 103, 104, 105, 108; Gab Boys, p.189, 191; Of Men, p.6) <m2>
- (867) *Nana Kyeame* (Gab Boys, p.187) <m2>
- (868) *Okyeame* (Crossroads, p.54, 55, 104, 105) <m2>

(863) and (865) are peculiar because both are the phonological version of 'teacher' as pronounced by an Akan speaker of English, (863) scripted according to English spelling rules, (865) according to Akan spelling rules.

These vocational or traditional office terms are used the same way as the English vocational terms in 6.3.1.1, the only difficulty being their meaning. *Kankanfo* means 'field marshal', *Nana* is 'grandparent, chief or the respectful term of addressing an elder or office bearer' (see 6.4.1). *Okyeame* is the 'chief's linguist' (see 6.3.2.1 and 6.4.1), and *Nana Kyeame* is the combination of *Nana* and *Okyeame* where the 'o' is omitted because the preceding word ends in a vowel. This conversion process is fairly productive in Akan in that most, if not all, vocational and traditional office terms can be used to refer to or address people in lieu of their proper name.

6.5 Conclusion

Although the main purpose of identifying a set of cultural categories in this study has been to extract from the chosen texts data, i.e. discrete linguistic items, that can be examined in terms of the indigenised/non-indigenised polarity, it may be interesting to take a look at the correlation between linguistic variation and cultural categories.

Elsewhere I have argued that literature, just as everyday language, is symptomatic, though in a different way, of the social system in which it has been created. Although literary texts can be a rich source of data if approached with the intention of asking what they have to say about social, cultural, political and economic relations, it is not possible to make a straight jump from imaginative literary language to objective statements of fact. What literature has is the potential to contribute new information and modify and refine the findings reached by other methods

(Egri Ku-Mesu, 1998a:3). With regard to indigenised language use in African literature in general, and in the Ghanaian English language literary texts that provide the data for the current study in particular, we need to bear in mind that ‘post-colonial writing *represents* neither speech nor local reality but constructs a discourse which may imitate them’ (Ashcroft, 2001b:63; italics as in original). This is a ‘new, indigenized medium conceived *in vitro*’ (Zabus, 1991:4; italics as in original) that Zabus calls ‘third code’ (ibid.), or in the context of relexification a ‘new register of communication ... forged as a result of the particular language-contact situation in West Africa and the artist’s imaginative use of that situation’ (op.cit., 102).

What gets expressed in indigenised language, and to what extent, depends on a variety of factors which include the writer’s inclination for, and perhaps mastery of, using indigenised language, his deliberate choices or unconscious reflexes, stylistic considerations, the subject matter, and the audience. From the fact, for example, that the data has only one indigenised example in the ‘socio-economic roles of the sexes’ (r1) category we cannot assume that such relationships are not spoken about in Ghanaian society, and that if they are, it is done necessarily using linguistic options other than indigenised English. What this simply means is that relationship between the sexes either falls outside the subject matter of the works studied, or that the writers have, for various considerations, chosen to treat this topic using non-indigenised language. When we consider the relationship between linguistic variation and cultural categories in terms of numbers shown in Table 6.1 overleaf, we need to have these limitations in mind.

The table shows that indigenisation is strongest in the category of proper names, and the overwhelming majority of both personal and geographical names are in Ghanaian languages. This is, perhaps, self-evident as one has to use Ghanaian names if one is writing about Ghana. Although in the framework of the current study they are considered indigenised both for signifier and signified as they are foreign words in the English text, they represent a category of their own because they inevitably contribute to the Ghanaianess of the text.

One may argue that when reading a novel, one does not have to know what a name means because even if names are understood as meaningful, they will have no significance in the text of the novel other than signalling a person, a place, etc. In 7.3.1 I will show in detail that this is not necessarily so. Here I will mention only that those who understand the Akan name Oko (Appendix 1, 434), which means ‘sribe’, ‘war’, ‘battle’, ‘struggle’, have a more immediate and

Linguistic categories	pw			r			sw			ps	pn		m				Total
	1	2	3	1	2	3	4	1	2		3	4	1	2	3	4	
Lexical innovation	92	6	8	1	6	3	14	2	1		21	43	13	16		226 (26.03%)	
Syntactic variation	9		1				2									12 (1.38%)	
Pidgin	5					1						1	1	1		9 (1.03%)	
Semantic change	18	11	4	3	1	21	1	1	1				16			76 (8.75%)	
African language expressions	24	16	5			24	8	14	1	3	245 (Male: 167 Female: 76 Family: 2)	147	19	1		507 (58.41%)	
Proverbs and sayings										38						38 (4.37%)	
Sub-total	148	33	18	1	9	1	49	24	17	1	2	266	191	13	52	67 (7.71%)	
Total	199 (22.92%)			60 (6.91%)			44 (5.06%)			41 (4.72%)	457 (52.64%)		67 (7.71%)				868 (100%)

pw: Physical World sw: Spiritual World ps: Proverbs and Sayings pn: Proper Names m: Modernity
 (For sub-categories please refer to 5.3.2.2 and 5.3.2.5.)

Table 6.1: Linguistic variation vs. cultural categories

fuller understanding of the main character Esi's situation and decisions in Ama Ata Aidoo's *Changes*.

The naming systems of the peoples of Ghana reflect distinct ways of thinking about the world, our life in it, and what is regarded as important. For Ghanaians names do not merely signal people. Personal names are an important part of one's identity. As has been seen in 6.4.1.2.1, they may carry information about the circumstances at birth, the patrilineal clans of the father, the day on which one was born, etc., and, very importantly, they identify a person with his or her ethnic group. Although colonisation, Islam, Christianity and various trends and fashions have influenced the indigenous naming systems, the various ethnic groups in Ghana use their traditional names – if not exclusively, then traditional elements in combination with the newer arrivals such as Muslim and Christian names or Europeanised/Anglicised surnames.

The fact that 167 (68.16%) of all African language personal names are male names in the data testifies to male dominance in public and family life in Ghanaian society and underpins what has been said in this respect in 3.4 and 4.3.1.

Geographical names, in addition to resisting translation, further emphasise a sense of belonging. Suffice to say that even today many Ghanaians, after long years spent in urban centres or abroad, are taken back to their village to be buried and rest with their ancestors (cf. close ties between traditional village and modern urban life discussed in 3.4). The names of settlements are historical texts (Kropp Dakubu, 1997: 10-1). In 6.4.1 it is shown that the meaning of place names reflect events in the history of the peoples of Ghana or have other culturally dependent meaning which cannot be truly expressed in a foreign language. Furthermore, we have seen that even if some place or geographical names in modern Ghana carry a colonial legacy, people do refer to them by their original indigenous names (see examples for place names in 6.4.1 above or Appendix 1, 598: *Firaw* – the Akan name for the River Volta).

The cultural category that shows the second largest number for indigenised language use is 'physical world' embracing the subcategories of physical environment/cultural artifacts, food and drink and clothing. This is the category which locates people in the material world that

surrounds them. The familiarity and intimacy with one's surroundings requires a language that can express this close relationship. As Wierzbicka explains,

There is a very close link between the life of a society and the lexicon of the language spoken by it. This applies in equal measure to the outer and inner aspects of life. ... Words with special, culture specific meanings reflect and pass on not only ways of living characteristic of a given society but also ways of thinking. (1997:1 & 5)

It would seem strange for Ghanaians to exist in and talk about their world in foreign terms – so they appropriate English as much as possible to suit this world. The same applies generally to the categories of 'relations' and 'modernity', and specifically to the subcategories of marriage/separation/divorce, family and kinship, formal education and work/profession/office.

Indigenisation in the 'spiritual world' category is rather low in the data. This, again, does not mean that in the real world matters related to the subcategories – traditions/customs/beliefs/superstitions, ancestors/deities, birth/death/funeral/afterlife and Christianity and Islam – do not get discussed in indigenised English. However, the fact that this is a very complex area whose understanding requires a lot of cultural knowledge suggests that in the interest of effective communication writers opt for a relatively less indigenised English to convey their meaning.

The relatively low occurrence of proverbs and sayings in the texts shows interesting tendencies. First of all, the fact that only three proverbs are actually rendered in Akan points to the writers' awareness of an audience beyond their ethnic and national boundaries. Secondly, the 4.72% share of proverbs and sayings in the overall number of examples of indigenised cultural reference found in the corpus suggests that despite oral tradition continuing to inform the consciousness and to determine the sensibility of most West Africans, independence, industrialization, and urbanization have been having a corrosive effect on the traditional mindset and have begun to cause the modification and abandonment of traditional discourse routines, which eventually may lead to the discontinuation of certain traditional figures and elements of speech.

The almost negligible level of syntactic variation and near-absence of Pidgin in the data provide further evidence for the claims made about the status of Pidgin in Ghana in 6.2.3, and for

Ahulu's claim that 'the realization of grammatical categories in the English written by educated Ghanaians which have been claimed to be those which yield Ghanaian features overwhelmingly reflects standard practice. ... in structure the educated Ghanaian departs rarely from the patterns and forms of standard English' (1992:244).

The fact that an overwhelming majority of indigenised linguistic items in the data are found in the lexical domain – as various forms of lexical innovation, semantic change and African language expressions – suggests that the indigenisation, or rather appropriation, of English is necessitated by a 'naming' process – the wish to find names in English for things, phenomena and practices that are culturally alien to it.

Notes

- ¹ Relatively little research has been done about Ghanaian Pidgin. The most comprehensive work up to date is Huber 1999. Other significant works include Criper 1971, Sey 1973, Dadzie 1985, Amoako 1992 and Asante 1995. The literary treatment of Pidgin is extensively discussed in Zabus 1991.
- ² Criper and Sey divide the continuum of English in Ghana into four stages of competence depending on the educational attainment of the speaker and whether English was acquired at school or not. The stages of the two clines do not match exactly. In addition, Criper identifies Type IV as Broken English, whereas Sey excludes it from his classification. The following table of comparison is adopted from Huber (1999:138):

Criper (1971)	Sey (1973:14-8)
Native English	<i>Stage 4: Ambilingualism</i> bilingual who has virtual equal command of both L1 and the second language – rare in Ghana
<i>Type I: Higher (Educated)</i> university graduates, often experience in a native English-speaking community	<i>Stage 3: University Level</i> in several registers command of English almost native
<i>Type II: Middle (Educated)</i> secondary school leavers	<i>Stage 2: Secondary School Stage</i> 5-7 years in addition to stage 1
<i>Type III: Lower (Educated)</i> middle school leavers	<i>Stage 1: Incipient Bilingual Stage</i> 7-10 years of formal education
<i>Type IV: Sub</i> no formal education	Broken English

- 3 Nigerian novelists have demonstrated a lack of prejudice in their treatment of Pidgin. Some of the most well-known novels exploiting this linguistic variety are Ekwensi's *People of the City* and *Jagua Nana* – 'the first full-fledged Pidgin creation in West African Fiction' (Zabus, 1991:66), Achebe's *A Man of the Peple*, and Emecheta's *The Joys of Motherhood*. So far the most conscious and sustained linguistic experiment – comparable in a way to Okara's *The Voice* – with non-standard speech is Saro-Wiwa's *Sozaboy: A Novel in Rotten English*.
- 4 Huber (1999:283-85) gives two written examples of Pidgin: 'Zongo Gossip' from the *Evening News*, 4 January 1966 – the first text of a series of 11 intended to popularise government policy – , and 'Broda Wahala' from the *Uhuru Magazine*, 2 (3) 1990, and mentions the *Legon Observer* as another source of printed Pidgin texts. He identifies the variety in the articles as a broken variety of spoken Pidgin. He points out that in the 1980s and early 90s these magazines/newspapers featured Pidgin in political satire. Because of being associated with the illiterate section of Ghanaian society, who, by implication, were considered politically ignorant, 'Pidgin served the function of making the political statement in this genre more elusive and the author less vulnerable to criticism by the authorities' (Huber, 1999:183). Huber, however, emphasizes that because it is stigmatised, Pidgin is rarely used in the press. The articles he reprints as examples should be considered as exceptional cases.
- 5 Ghanaians have very elaborate systems of naming. While most of these cut across ethnic boundaries, a few are peculiar to one or another ethnic group. An account of the notion of Akan names is given in Antubam 1963. A detailed description covering the Ewe, Ga, Dangme, Akan, Nzema, Gonja, Dagbani, Waale/Dagaare and Kasem linguistic areas is given in Eglewogbe 1987. Warren and Andrews have a useful list of Europeanised Akan surnames with their possible origin and meaning (1990:35-7).

7 CULTURAL REFERENCE: AUTHORIAL ASSISTANCE AND READER INTERPRETATION

7.1 Introduction

‘Many literary texts are unique in the sense that they are deliberately constructed to be *inconsiderate*’ (Zwaan, 1996:241, original emphasis). This ‘inconsiderateness’ can manifest itself at all three levels of text representation identified by van Dijk and Kintsch (1983): the *verbatim representation*, which is derived from the surface structure of the text; the *textbase representation*, containing a *microstructure* and a *macrostructure*, the former reflecting semantic meaning of the text, the latter the main ideas that connect larger sections of the text; and the *situation model*, which is the combination of text information and the reader’s prior knowledge, including his/her goals and attitudes. These three levels tie in neatly with the terms proposed by Enkvist for the discussion of interpretability: intelligibility, comprehensibility and interpretability proper (1991:7). According to Enkvist,

a piece of text is intelligible to those who can recognize in it phonological, lexical and syntactic structures. Intelligibility thus presupposes pattern recognition, the correct perception of structures. A text is comprehensible to those who can assign to it a definite meaning, a semantic structure. And a text is interpretable to those who can build around that text a scenario, a text world, a set of states of affairs, in which that text makes sense. ... Intelligibility is thus the syntactic component of interpretability (which includes phonology, lexis, and syntax); comprehensibility is its semantic component including syntax plus semantics; and interpretability its pragmatic totality involving pragmatics as well as semantics and syntax. (ibid., 7-8)

Indigenised texts may, by definition, be regarded as particularly ‘inconsiderate’ because, as explained in 4.2.1, they have two interpretive levels: (1) the surface meaning of the language in which the text is created – in our case English; and (2) the underlying meaning of the first or dominant language of the author. In Chapter 6 I examined and explained lexical, syntactic and semantic variation of cultural reference found in the studied texts, thereby addressing the issue of intelligibility and comprehensibility.

In the current chapter I will focus on interpretability and will investigate how the ‘inconsiderateness’ of the indigenisation of cultural reference in the text of Ghanaian writers is offset by authorial intervention.

In 5.3.2.4 the following authorial strategies to facilitate reader understanding of indigenised language were identified: cushioning, contextualisation, ethnographic explanation and the provision of a glossary. These, as well as the lack of authorial intervention will be discussed below in the framework of Relevance Theory, outlined in 4.3.2, drawing on data collected by way of a questionnaire (cf. 5.3.1.2).

In the discussion of the questionnaire results I will compare the readers' interpretations of indigenised cultural reference to what I call, for want of a better expression, 'correct meaning'. By 'correct meaning' I understand the meaning of an English or Ghanaian language word or expression as accepted and used in its appropriate cultural context, ethnic or national, by the respective speech communities¹ of Ghana. The examples of indigenised language examined here are all instances of cultural reference used by the authors as such in order to express their Ghanaian cultural experience. Therefore, the meaning of these words and expressions is not a matter of authorial intention. Or rather, the meaning intended by the author corresponds to the meaning as accepted and used by Ghanaians in the appropriate cultural context.

The words 'assumption' and 'relevance' will be used throughout the chapter in the relevance theoretic sense (cf. 4.3.2), not as they are used in common parlance.

7.2 No authorial intervention

In 4.3.2 I identified the texts studied here, by virtue of them having been produced with an audience in mind, as products of ostension, in which the writers 'make manifest an intention to make something manifest' (Sperber and Wilson, 1995:49). Being visible traces of the mother tongue or the most dominant language of the writer, African words in the English language text make it manifest that, indeed, such texts are, to use Zabus's metaphor, palimpsests and that 'behind the scriptural authority of the European language, the earlier, imperfectly erased remnants of the African language can still be perceived' (Zabus, 1991:3). They signal at least bi-, but in most cases multilingualism, and 'a linguistic stratification, i.e. a multi-tiered system that differentially distributes the European language, the African language(s) and the languages in contact' (Zabus, 1991:3).

Language variance has been found to have an important role in inscribing difference, and to be metonymic of the cultural difference it inscribes (Ashcroft et al., 1989:52-3). The presence of untranslated and unexplained African words in the English text creates a metonymic gap, which is

that cultural gap formed when appropriations of a colonial language insert un glossed words, phrases or passages from a first language, or concepts, allusions or references which may be unknown to the reader. Such words become synecdochic of the writer's culture – the part that stands for the whole – rather than representations of the world, as the colonial language might. Thus the inserted language 'stands for' the colonized culture in a metonymic way, and its very resistance to interpretation constructs a 'gap' between the writer's culture and the colonial culture. The local writer is thus able to represent his or her world to the colonizer (and others) in the metropolitan language, and at the same time, to signal and emphasize a difference from it (Ashcroft, 2001b:75).

While the concept of the metonymic gap is plausible, the suggestion that the inserted unexplained African language words resist interpretation seems to have less validity. On the one hand, such a point of view takes account only of a readership which excludes those who share the author's cultural and/or linguistic background, thereby tacitly agreeing that modern English-language African literature is, indeed, written for and read by a non-African audience. On the other hand, although the Western reader may find such words unintelligible and incomprehensible as defined by Enkvist, the very fact that he recognises them as synecdochic of the writer's culture and as signals of an intricate linguistic reality proves that he is able to build a text world around them in which they make some kind of sense, albeit not necessarily literal sense.

The insertion of an African language word or expression in the English text without any authorial assistance provided is significant because it becomes an ostensive stimulus that the writer has found most relevant to communicate the set of assumptions he intends to make manifest to the reader in a manner that is relevant enough to make it worthwhile for the reader to process this ostensive stimulus (cf. Presumption of optimal relevance, Sperber and Wilson, 1995:158, quoted in 4.3.2). As we have seen above, the function of such an authorial device is the distancing of the mother tongue culture of the writer and the other tongue culture represented by the language chosen for creation. It is along the gap thus created that we can expect readers to be divided.

7.2.1 Ghanaian readers

It seems sensible to expect the Ghanaian reader to be situated on the same side of the metonymic gap as the writer. However, we have to recall that in 5.3.2.1 Ghana is identified both as a multitude of ethnic groups and also as a supra-ethnic national entity, and, consequently, a working definition of cultural reference is given both at the level of ethnic groups and at the national level. While at the national level it is reasonable to expect the reader and the writer to be on the same side of the metonymic gap, at the level of ethnic groups we can expect the Ghanaian readership to be fragmented along cultural and linguistic lines.

From the reader profiles (Appendix 3) we learn that the Ghanaian readers in my survey come from seven ethnic groups. Seven are bilingual in their mother tongue and in English; three are trilingual: two in their mother tongue, another Ghanaian language and English, one in the mother tongue, French and English; nine are polyglots: seven speaking their mother tongue, English and up to three other Ghanaian languages, two speaking their mother tongue, English, up to three other Ghanaian languages and French. Relative to each individual writer's background, there are readers who share the writer's physical, cultural and linguistic environment – they share a cognitive environment², which implies that they are capable of making the same assumptions. Since it is manifest which people share this cognitive environment – the writer and readers from his ethnic group – we can call it a mutual cognitive environment, in which every manifest assumption is manifest to the people who share this environment (Sperber and Wilson, 1995:41-2). Readers who do not belong to the writer's ethnic group will not share a mutual cognitive environment with the writer. However, because of similarities of their physical environment, overlaps in culture, and their linguistic knowledge, the cognitive environments of these readers can still intersect with that of the writer: i.e. they will share sets of facts that are manifest to them all.

The readers' familiarity with the texts does not interfere with the findings. One particular reader (GR1) had read 9 books – she is an exception. For the remaining 18 readers, who had read 0 to 4 of the 13 books listed in the questionnaire, the average number of books read per head was 1.5.

The results of Questionnaire Item IV (i & ii) (Appendix 4Da) reveal that the explanations the Ghanaian readers provide for the Nzema *bodua* (a whisk – the tail of a horse or cow believed

to have magical powers and usually forming part of a fetish priest's regalia – Agovi: *A Wind from the North*, p.6), Pidgin *tro-tro* (a short-distance, primarily intra-city passenger vehicle often converted from a truck or van – Codjoe-Swayne: *The Dancing Tortoise*, p.99) and Ga *aplankey* (the *tro-tro* driver's assistant, commonly known in Ghana as the driver's mate, or simply mate, who hails passengers at lorry stations and collects money from the passengers – Codjoe-Swayne: *The Dancing Tortoise*, p.99)³, which are left untranslated/unexplained in the text, reflect that all the readers who gave an explanation have a perfect understanding of *aplankey*, and show either a perfect understanding of *tro-tro* (GR1, GR2) and *bodua* (GR1, GR10, GR18), or a good grasp of their core concept but lack or misunderstanding of refining detail: e.g. *bodua*, though similar, is not exactly a staff (GR4) or rod (GR15), and while magical powers are its dissociable characteristic feature, it is not simply a juju or charm (GR9); *tro-tro* is not any vehicle (GR9, GR15) for intra-city transport or a large vehicle for a lot of passengers (GR4). The fact that *aplankey* is widely understood by the Ghanaian readers regardless of their ethnic origin and knowledge of languages suggests that it has become a supra-ethnic currency in inter-ethnic communication and may be used in the Ga original not only in an English but also in, let us say, Akan or Ewe context. It has to be noted, however, that this applies only to the originally Ga speaking areas in the south of the country – Accra and the surrounding Ga settlements where Ga has become a vehicle for inter-ethnic communication. Further north where Akan dominates and in the north where Hausa is the lingua franca, it would be unrealistic to expect *aplankey* to be understood. *Tro-tro*, as indicated in 6.4.2.1 is a loan-word in Ghanaian English from Pidgin, and as such, does not necessarily require knowledge of Pidgin from anyone to understand it. At the same time, it is synonymous with *lorry* (see 6.3.2.5), which itself is a loan-word in Ghanaian languages, for instance in Fante and Ga (Sey, 1973:2). Based on this we may assume that *tro-tro* is used in indigenous language contexts as well. This suggests that, similarly to *aplankey*, it has acquired a supra-ethnic character and is widely used across languages. Unlike the Ga word, however, it has a much broader sphere of usage because of the spread of Pidgin all across Ghana. While *tro-tro* and *aplankey* have a wide currency, *bodua* is understood in its entirety only by those whose mother tongue is Nzema (GR 10) or the closely related Akan (GR1, GR18). Since its meaning is specific to the traditions of a particular ethnic group, the Nzema (an Akan people), other Ghanaian readers can provide only approximations because their cognitive environment – i.e. all the facts an individual is aware of and is capable of becoming aware of in his/her physical environment – contains information specific to what the regalia of a fetish priest in their own culture is, which may be similar but not identical – hence the difference in the interpretation of the word.

3 of the 19 Ghanaian readers – GR2, GR8 and GR14 – claim not to understand the above three words and they also indicate their inability to guess their meaning from the context. While GR2 actually provides a fairly good definition for *tro-tro*, he feels that a glossary or explanation would not have helped him understand, we assume, the other two words and hence the passages in which they figure. GR8 and GR14, on the other hand, are unable to provide any definitions and feel that a glossary or explanation would have benefited them. The reader profiles show that GR2's mother tongue is Dagaare, a northern Ghanaian language, and he claims knowledge of Twi (Akan) and Pidgin. His knowledge of Pidgin may be regarded as an explanation of his ability to provide a definition for *tro-tro*, although, as has been pointed out above, because of its frequent occurrence in Ghanaian English and possibly in indigenous Ghanaian languages, one does not necessarily have to know Pidgin to understand it. The fact that GR2's linguistic repertoire does not contain Ga, and that he comes from a spatially distant and culturally different environment, explains his inability to understand *aplankey*. At the same time, his knowledge of Twi (Akan), which, as indicated above, is closely related to Nzema, raises expectations of his ability to understand *bodua*. His inability to do so suggests that his knowledge of Twi is limited, is probably restricted to the domain of inter-ethnic communication, and lacks in-depth understanding of culture-specific information to an extent which makes it impossible for him to interpret the Nzema word. This is further emphasised by his own cultural distance – he is a Dagaaba from northern Ghana. GR8 and GR14's case is more straightforward. GR8 is a Buksa from northern Ghana, speaks Buli as his mother tongue – i.e. he is both culturally and linguistically removed from the mainly Akan and Ga speaking southern Ghanaian communities – and claims no knowledge of any other Ghanaian language. Even though this explains his inability to understand *bodua* and *aplankey*, it would be reasonable to expect him to be able to provide an explanation for *tro-tro*. The fact that he offers none suggests either that he comes from a part of Ghana where the influence of Pidgin, a primarily urban phenomenon, is little felt and the synonymous but more 'standard' *lorry* is used, or simply he did not feel it worth his while to provide evidence of his ability to understand *tro-tro* in the questionnaire. GR14, on the other hand, identifies his ethnic origin as Ashanti/Akwapim and speaks Twi as his mother tongue, although he speaks no Ga – hence his inability to understand *aplankey*. His long absence from Ghana⁴, however, distances him both from his mother tongue – and culture – and from Ghanaian English and/or Pidgin, and renders him incapable of understanding either.

The only Ghanaian reader who shows uncertainty about understanding the untranslated/unexplained words is GR7, an Ewe, who claims to speak no other Ghanaian language than Ewe. He, however, indicates his ability to infer their meaning from the context, and gives a good approximation for *bodua*, an acceptable explanation for *tro-tro* and the exact meaning for *aplankey*. While at this juncture it may be accepted that he worked out the meanings from the context, the supra-ethnic character and frequent occurrence of *aplankey* and *tro-tro* render such a claim doubtful. In fact, whether the meaning of *bodua* can be inferred from the context will also be questioned below. What we can almost certainly assume is that the relevance of these words for GR7 is not particularly great because his signalling the potential benefits he could have had from a glossary/explanation indicate that he used substantial mental/processing effort to work out the meanings.

An interesting problem arises from the comparison of answers to whether the readers understand the untranslated words, whether they can guess their meaning from the context, and whether they would find a glossary/explanation useful. Out of 19 Ghanaian readers 15 claim to understand the words; out of these 15, 10 say they can infer the meaning from the context; and out of the 10, 7 indicate no benefit from a glossary and 2 are not sure about it. 2 (GR1, GR3) out of the 15, however, say they cannot guess the meaning from the context, and 3 (GR6, GR11, GR13) are unsure about being able to work out the meaning from the context. Those unsure all indicate that they would have found a glossary useful – despite claiming to understand the words, two of them (GR6, GR13) provided no explanation at all, and one (GR11) explained only the supra-ethnically used *tro-tro* and *aplankey*, but not the more culture specific *bodua*. The puzzling question is how we can explain that although there are 15 Ghanaian readers who understand the untranslated words, two thirds of them indicate ability to infer the meanings from the context, while one third say they cannot, or are not sure whether they can, work out the meanings from the context. If, indeed, it is not possible to guess the meanings from the context, how is it possible that all 15 readers understand the unexplained words?

First, let us re-examine the passages used in the questionnaire:

So the people waited. That long wait that destroys a people's confidence in themselves. At last, one spoke. A deity spoke. Unheralded, he thundered through the village. He looked fierce, angry and weird. He tossed his head sideways, muttering incoherent things to the air. He threw his powerful *bodua* into the sky and caught it several times. Brown amulets and dark bracelets were fixed tightly around his powerful arms. (Agovi: *A Wind from the North*, p.6)

Mawusi stood beside the *tro-tro* and watched the people going to and fro. The place was very noisy. The *aplankeys* were shouting for passengers; and there were quite a few beggars, singing for alms. (Codjoe-Swayne: *The Dancing Tortoise*, p.99)

In Agovi's text there are enough contextual clues to give the Ghanaian reader access to a schema in his encyclopaedic memory with a number of dominant and highly accessible assumptions about deities, their character, their appearance. Deities, however, are specific to ethnic groups, so one needs to have intimate knowledge of the religious traditions and customs of a specific ethnicity to be able to provide details regarding a particular deity's attire and regalia. Sperber and Wilson assume that "the 'meaning' of a word is provided by the associated concept" (1995:90). It is, however, the encyclopaedic entry that 'contains information about the extension and/or denotation of the concept: that is, about the objects, events and/or properties which instantiate it' (ibid., 86). Encyclopaedic entries vary across speakers and times: we do not all have the same assumptions – 'thoughts treated by the individual as representations of the actual world' (ibid., 2) – about, let us say, Kwame Nkrumah or snakes (for the latter see 6.3.3), and, as Blass points out, variation in assumptions can be particularly great between different cultures (1990:85). While each of our 15 Ghanaian readers claiming to understand *bodua* will have a stereotypical image of what a deity is, only the Nzema (GR10) and the Akan (GR1, GR18) will have the precise cultural information in their encyclopaedic entry to provide the exact meaning for *bodua*. GR4, GR9 and GR15 (those who provided definitions), all Ewe, will have different assumptions in their encyclopaedic entries regarding a deity's attire, regalia and their functions. Their interpretations – 'a kind of staff,' 'a kind of juju or charm,' and a 'rod,' respectively – reflect their knowledge of Akan (GR4, GR15) or the lack of it (GR9), and show variation not only between cultures but also between individuals within the same culture. It is not unreasonable to conclude, then, that while the contextual clues in the text are sufficient to trigger a stereotypical image based on similarities of and overlaps between the cultures of southern Ghanaian ethnic groups, they do not provide enough information to enable the readers to work out the exact meaning of *bodua* from the context.

There are, however, 10 Ghanaian readers who claim to understand the three words and to be able to guess their meaning from the context. 5 (GR4, GR9, GR10, GR15, GR18) provide an explanation for *bodua*, 5 (GR5, GR12, GR16, GR17, GR19) do not. As we have seen above, GR10 and GR18 do not actually need a context to know the meaning of *bodua* – it forms part of their cognitive environment. GR4, GR9 and GR15 manage to conjure up a schematic image, but their interpretations differ from the intended one mainly because of cultural

difference, not linguistic competence. This confirms that linguistic knowledge alone without cultural knowledge may not be sufficient for successful communication to take place.

It is more difficult to assess those readers who have not provided definitions despite claiming to understand the words and to be able to guess their meaning from the context. I may only assume that they felt their positive claims automatically indicated their ability to explain the words, therefore they did not find it worthwhile to actually write down their definitions. With no definitions to check and compare, however, it is impossible to verify whether and to what extent they actually understand the untranslated words. I would like to argue, however, that based on the findings above, it is not unreasonable to assume that GR5, an Akan with Twi (Akan) as his mother tongue, and GR16, who identifies her ethnic origin as Ga/Akan – an indication of her cultural competence – and in addition to her mother tongue Ga speaks Twi (Akan), do have the full and exact meaning of *bodua* in their cognitive environment. The others, GR12, a Kasem with the knowledge of Kasem only, GR17, an Ewe with Ewe as mother tongue and knowledge of Ga, and GR19, a Ga with Ga as mother tongue and knowledge of Twi (Akan), may have an encyclopaedic schema about deities, but their assumptions regarding exact details will differ according to their individual cultures. When they claim to be able to infer the meaning from the context, they access the stereotypical image of a deity, not the meaning of *bodua*. When they claim to understand the word, they add on their individual assumptions, which are likely to result in a meaning which is not, or not fully, consistent with the intended one. I take this to be further evidence that the Ghanaian reader does actually rely on his encyclopaedic knowledge and not on the context for the meaning of untranslated words. Since it is not plausible to suggest that there may be Ghanaian readers with no encyclopaedic entry for ‘deity’, we may assume that those culturally and linguistically distant (GR2, GR8, GR14) may not have an extension of the entry for ‘deity as different from own’ and are unable to provide any assumptions for such an extension. Those, however, who claim understanding invariably have an encyclopaedic entry for ‘deity’, together with its extensions, providing a schema which they fill in with their individual assumptions. The ensuing meaning is more or less consistent with the writer’s intended meaning according to the reader’s cultural and linguistic proximity to him.

Especially because of its brevity, the passage from Codjoe-Swayne’s *The Dancing Tortoise* provides further evidence that the Ghanaian reader relies on his cognitive environment rather than on the context for the interpretation of untranslated words. The text provides few, if any, clues to facilitate the inference of the meaning of *tro-tro*; it could be exchanged, for

example, for 'kiosk' without any detrimental effect on the text stylistically or contentwise. The single clue for *aplankeys* is 'shouting for passengers', but this is insufficient information to guide someone to the correct meaning. After all, taxi and bus drivers could also shout for passengers. The fact that the 9 definitions provided for *aplankey* are all correct, and that the 10 definitions for *tro-tro* are either correct or show a grasp of the concept, proves that Ghanaian readers not only have these encyclopaedic entries but readily access them regardless of the context. Their claim to be able to work out the meaning from the context is, therefore, a misconception. It seems that they believe they can work out the meaning of the untranslated words from the context because they understand them. They do not realise that there is no need for an inferential process, particularly because they already know the meaning. Readers GR2, GR8 (Dagaaba and Buksa from Northern Ghana) and GR14 (an expatriate for a long time) can actually be considered as a mini control group: they do not understand the words and because of insufficient contextual clues they cannot work out the meaning from the context, either. This suggests that those who understand the words must have pre-existing knowledge of them, which makes having to resort to inference highly unlikely. The only two readers who signal understanding of the words but indicate that it is not possible to work out their meaning from the context are GR1 and GR3. As she provides no definitions for any of the untranslated words, GR3 is difficult to comment on. Her responses are, however, consistent. Because she understands the words, she finds a glossary/explanation would not have benefited her. On the other hand, GR1, an accomplished linguist possessing not only fluency but detailed linguistic knowledge of Akan, Ga and Nzema, provides correct definitions for all the three words, and clearly shows awareness that her understanding is not a result of an inferential process. Being an Akan with Twi (Akan) as mother tongue, she has not only the linguistic but also the cultural competence. Her acute awareness of her cognitive environment makes her render the question concerning the usefulness of a glossary/explanation non-applicable rather than give a negative answer.

The fact that 4 readers – GR6, GR11, GR13 and GR18 – who claim to understand the untranslated words also indicate that they would find a glossary/explanation useful confirms the existence of an encyclopaedic schema that is to be completed with ethnicity-specific details. Where they cannot provide these details, these readers would welcome a glossary for a full understanding of the exact meaning. 12 (63.15%) Ghanaian readers, on the other hand, feel that a glossary/explanation is non-applicable, would not help them, or are unsure about

its benefits. This shows that a considerable majority of the sample are confident in their ability to make sense of the untranslated words.

These findings confirm that there exists a multi-tiered distribution of Ghanaian readers. At the supra-ethnic national level they all share cultural and linguistic experience with the writer(s) and each other. This is the level that embraces them all and situates them on one side of the metonymic gap – the writer’s. At the level of ethnic groups subdivisions occur according to cultural and linguistic proximity to the writer. There are readers who are both culturally and linguistically distant – they share experience with the writer at the supra-ethnic national level. Readers who know the writer’s language but are not fully conversant, or not familiar at all, with his culture are able to share in the writer’s experience to the extent their linguistic and encyclopaedic knowledge allows. This highlights the overriding importance of cultural knowledge even in inter-ethnic communication within the same national boundaries. Full appreciation of the writer’s meanings is shown only by those readers who share both the writer’s cultural and linguistic experience. The diagram below illustrates this complex situation.

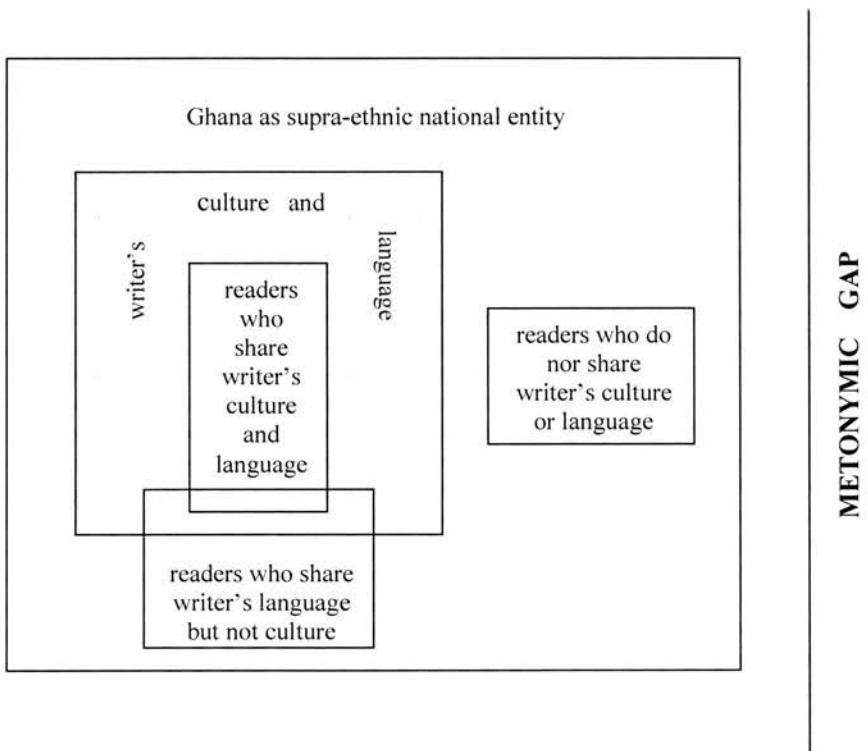


Figure 7.1: Position of Ghanaian readers in relation to the metonymic gap

While acknowledging that there is a Ghanaian readership that shares supra-ethnic cultural and linguistic experience, this complex situation effectively dissolves the notion of the Ghanaian reader as a monolithic entity and highlights the complexity to be encountered in a multi-ethnic multilingual environment.

7.2.2 *Non-Ghanaian African readers*

By virtue of sharing a common African heritage, it is reasonable to expect that the non-Ghanaian African reader would exhibit some affinity if not with the Ghanaian writer's linguistic experience, then at least with his cultural experience.

Like the Ghanaian sample group, the non-Ghanaian African readers are all polyglot, though none of them speaks either Akan, Ga or Pidgin, or any other indigenous Ghanaian language. Small though this reader group is, its members represent East, South, Central and West Africa – they come from 6 ethnic groups which are distant from the writers'. While it is obvious that these readers cannot share a fully mutual cognitive environment with the writer(s), the similarities of their physical environment and overlaps between their cultures will make it possible for them to have some sets of facts that are manifest to them all, with regard to which they are able to make the same assumptions as the writer(s).

The non-Ghanaian African readers' familiarity with the texts is not a factor to be considered. The seven readers had read 0 to 4 of the 13 books listed in the questionnaire, resulting in an average of 1.4 books read per head.

Overall, the responses of this group to Questionnaire Item IV (i & ii) are more uniform than the Ghanaian readers'. Only one reader (NGAR7) claims to understand the untranslated words. He also indicates that he is able to work out the meanings from the context. He has a good grasp of *tro-tro* and gives a correct definition for *aplankey*, and although he cannot explain *bodua*, he is confident that a glossary/explanation would not have helped him. Four readers (NGAR1, NGAR3, NGAR5 and NGAR6) say they do not understand the untranslated words; three of these (NGAR1, NGAR3 and NGAR6) indicate that they are not sure whether they can guess the meaning from the context. NGAR3 and NGAR6 do not attempt explanations; NGAR1 does but all three are incorrect. NGAR5 says he can work out

the meanings from the context but provides no definitions, so it is difficult to verify to what extent he can recover the correct meanings. All four signal, however, that they would have benefited from a glossary/explanation. On the other hand, NGAR2 is not sure whether he understands the words or whether he can guess their meaning from the context; yet he demonstrates good understanding of *bodua*. His cognitive environment, however, conditions him to construct assumptions about chiefs and their symbol of power as first, therefore relevant, interpretation rather than about deities and what their magical powers are vested in, which point to cultural difference between him and the writer. He has an equally good grasp of *tro-tro*, and provides the correct meaning for *aplankey*. He is the only other reader who indicates he would not have benefited from a glossary/explanation, which signals self-assurance regarding the meanings arrived at. NGAR4 is uncertain whether he understands the untranslated words but claims to be able to guess their meaning from the context. His explanations for *bodua* and *tro-tro* are incorrect, but he gives the correct meaning for *aplankey*. He also indicates that he would have found a glossary/explanation useful.

Overall, an overwhelming 85.71% (6 out of 7) of the group indicate that they do not understand the words, or are unsure whether they do. This is the only group where no reader says he/she is not able to guess the meaning from the context – 42.85% (3 out of 7) say they can, 57.14% (4 out of 7) say they are not sure they can. 57.14% (4 out of 7) attempt to explain the untranslated words, and 71.42% (5 out of 7) finds a glossary/explanation would have helped them to understand the words. This clearly shows that for the non-Ghanaian African readers the lack of linguistic knowledge may well be a barrier to activating and accessing cultural knowledge. As they have no pre-existing knowledge of the languages involved, their claim to be able to guess the meaning from the context must be accepted as genuine, and the explanations provided as the results of an inferential process. At the same time, we have seen above that the texts do not contain sufficient contextual clues. Like those Ghanaian readers who share neither the writer's cultural nor his linguistic background, when working out the meaning of the untranslated words, the non-Ghanaian African readers rely not so much on the context as on their existing cultural knowledge. Information in the texts triggers off these readers' schemata in their encyclopaedic memory about deities, vehicles used for transporting people and their crew which get filled in with their assumptions based on their knowledge of their own culture and on their knowledge of other African cultures. The fact that good approximations of the correct meaning are provided for *bodua* and *tro-tro* and that three explanations out of four given for *aplankey* are correct is evidence that their cognitive environment contains assumptions regarding the writer's physical and social

reality, i.e. they share cultural knowledge with the writer and they are capable of making the same assumptions as the writer. That this cultural knowledge is accessed by the members of the sample who represent a wide ethnic and regional variety testifies to such cultural knowledge being supra-ethnic, supranational, pan-African in nature. As Figure 7.2 below shows, this cultural knowledge places the non-Ghanaian African reader on the same side of the metonymic gap as the writer.

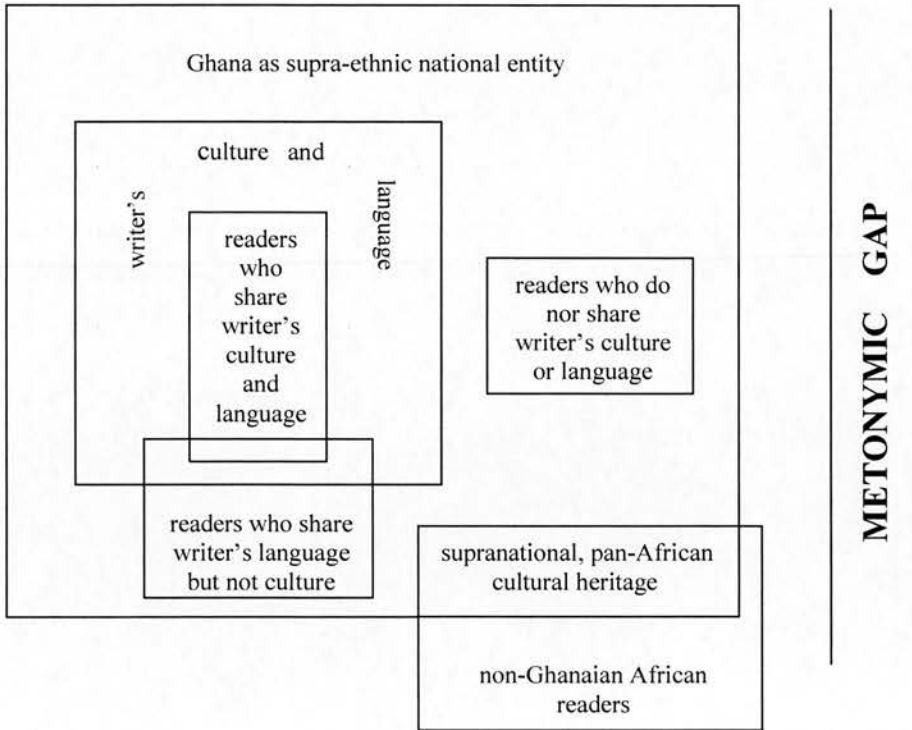


Figure 7.2: Position of non-Ghanaian African readers in relation to the metonymic gap

7.2.3 Western readers

The concept of the metonymic gap entails that, because of their cultural difference, the colonial and other readers in the metropolitan language are not on the same side of the metonymic gap as the writer. We shall see below if the questionnaire results provide evidence for this.

The 19 Western readers constituting the sample are all polyglot, but none of them speaks any indigenous Ghanaian language. They come from 7 different ethnic/national backgrounds in

Europe and North America. 14 are non-native, and 5 are native speakers of English, but, as stated in 5.3.1.2, the group is not examined for differences between native and non-native speakers of English unless these differences are significant. As neither their physical environment, nor their culture show similarities or overlaps with the writers', we may exclude the possibility of them sharing a mutual cognitive environment with the writers. Nor will they be expected to have any sets of facts regarding culture, language (except for the knowledge of English) and physical environment that are manifest to them all.

They can be considered completely unfamiliar with Ghanaian literature as only one reader (WNNER12) has read one book out of the 13 listed in the questionnaire.

The responses of this group to Questionnaire Item IV (i & ii) also show greater uniformity than the Ghanaian readers'. Only one reader (WNER2) claims to understand the untranslated words and to be able to guess their meaning from the context. Unfortunately, her claim cannot be verified as she does not give any explanations/definitions. She, however, indicates that she would have benefited from a glossary. This suggests that despite her claim, she is uncertain about the meanings and her understanding of the words is impressionistic rather than precise. The other 18 readers say either that they do not understand the untranslated words (9) or that they are not sure they do (9). 4 indicate that they cannot guess the meaning from the context, 12 that they are not sure they can. Only another two, WNNER10 and WNER4, say they can guess the meaning from the context. They, however, are uncertain about their explanations/definitions as they indicate that they would have found a glossary helpful. Indeed, none of their definitions – 'necklace' for *bodua*, 'banner' for *tro-tro*, 'inhabitants' for *aplankeys* and 'spear' for *bodua*, 'throughway' for *tro-tro*, 'rickshaw pullers/taxi driver' for *aplankeys*, respectively – is consistent with the intended meaning of the words. Overall, out of the 19 readers 15 – an overwhelming 78.94% – indicate that they would have benefited from a glossary; only 3 say it would not have helped them, and 1 is not sure about its benefits. This indicates that, on the whole, these readers are rather uncertain whether they have arrived at the correct interpretation of the untranslated words.

We have seen above that the passages containing the untranslated words provide insufficient clues for anyone to guess the correct meaning of these words without any linguistic, or, more importantly, cultural knowledge. The fact that 16 (84.21%) of the Western readers cannot – or feel unsure whether they can – work out the meaning of the words from the context confirms the cultural distance between them and the writer: they live in a different world

with different experience, traditions, habit, understanding and expectation. The set of facts the writer has in his cognitive environment is not manifest to them – they do not share the writer’s cognitive environment either mutually or partially. The explanations provided for all three words, none of which is consistent with the correct meaning, confirm that in the inferential process – similarly to the other two groups – the Western readers rely on their cognitive environment. As the set of assumptions manifest to them is different from that of the writer’s, they do not have encyclopaedic schemata about African deities, Ghanaian means of transport and the people associated with them. They may have some marginal, but by no means specific, knowledge of the ‘kind of thing’, which is evidenced by the explanations that come closest to the correct meaning: ‘weapon? magic thing?’ (WNNER10) and ‘stick signifying power’ (WNER3) for *bodua*, ‘means of transport: train?’ (WNNER9) and ‘vehicle’ (WNNER11) for *tro-tro*, and ‘taxi-driver/taxi-men/drivers’ (9 out of the 12 explanations provided) for *aplankeys*. The fact that drawing on assumptions in their cognitive environment cannot lead them to fully correct explanations confirms their cultural difference and distance from the writer. This distance and difference locates them on the other side of the metonymic gap, as shown in Figure 7.3 below.

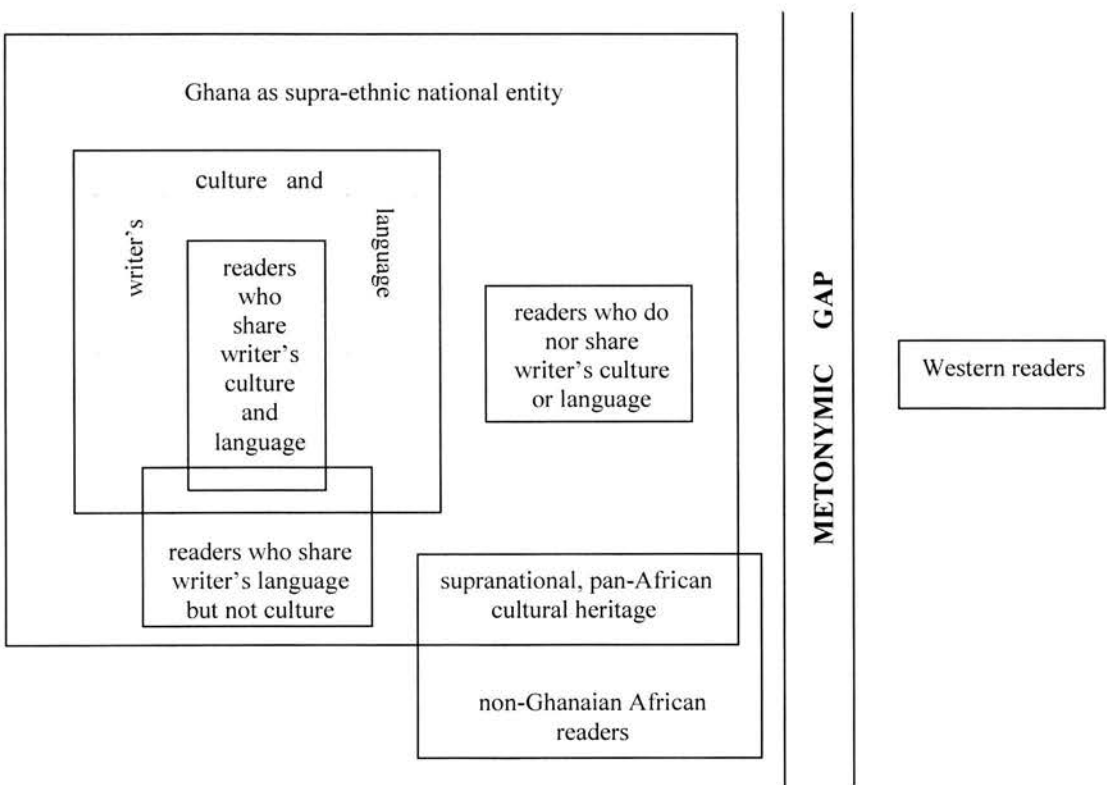


Figure 7.3: Position of Western readers in relation to the metonymic gap

7.2.4 *The metonymic gap and beyond*

The questionnaire results confirm that, indeed, the African language words left untranslated/unexplained in the texts of Ghanaian writers form a cultural gap between the writer's culture and the culture represented by English, the metropolitan language chosen for literary creation. Leaving these words without any authorial assistance to the reader, the writer makes it manifest that he concedes 'the importance of *meanability*, the importance of a situation in which meaning can occur' (Ashcroft, 2001b:76; italics as in original) and opts for the inscription of difference, distance and the absence of writer and metropolitan reader from each other as a result of them being located in different cultures. Whether the reader understands these words or not is not crucial for the understanding of the story – if it were, there would probably be an authorial strategy present in the text to assist the reader. Such words become synecdoches for the writer's culture. Their function is to signal cultural difference and to contribute to the creation of the Africanness of the text. The readers' position in relation to the gap thus created is indicative of their ability to interpret these untranslated/unexplained words. For the majority of Western readers, these words remain symbols of the writer's difference of experience, while the Ghanaian and other African readers can access their culture-bound meaning fully or to varying degrees depending on the similarity of their cultural experience to the writer's.

As the main tenet of the concept of the metonymic gap is cultural difference, the following discussion will focus on Ghanaian writers/readers and Western readers but not on non-Ghanaian African readers as they are on the same side of the metonymic gap as the Ghanaian writer.

The findings of Questionnaire Item IV (iii) (Appendix 4Db) confirm that readers are divided along a cultural – and to a lesser extent linguistic – gap, although I have argued above that it is not possible to rule out entirely that knowledge of a particular language may facilitate access to cultural knowledge. *Agbada* (A. A. Aidoo: *Changes*, p.89) is a borrowing from Yoruba, a Nigerian language only spoken in Ghana by immigrants, yet 89.47% (17 out of 19) of the Ghanaian readers claim to be able to explain *agbada*, and 73.68% (14 out of 19) actually get it right. This is comparable to the non-Ghanaian African readers (none of whom is Yoruba or speaks Yoruba), 85.71% (6 out of 7) of whom claim to understand *agbada*, and 71.42% (5 out of 7) provide the correct explanation. At the same time, although a very high proportion – 94.73% (18 out of 19) – of the Western readers claim to understand this word,

only 36.84% (7 out of 19) of them can come up with the correct explanation. We have to recall that the processing or mental effort needed to understand an utterance depends on (a) the effort of memory and imagination required to construct a suitable context; and (b) the psychological complexity of the utterance itself. Greater complexity implies greater processing effort, hence lower relevance. For the Western reader *agbada* has little relevance – it is the source of great psychological complexity because it is a foreign word, confronted with which the majority of Western readers find it difficult, if not impossible, even on spending considerable processing/mental effort, to construct a suitable context which would enable them to understand it adequately. For the Ghanaian and non-Ghanaian African readers *agbada* is a foreign word, too. They can, however, get round the psychological complexity it represents because in their cognitive environment they have assumptions about men's traditional wear in West Africa that can be described as voluminous. They also know that a person bearing the name Ali is very likely to be Muslim, and they have information on the type of voluminous garment Muslim men wear. So they can construct a suitable context in which to interpret *agbada* with very little effort, so the relevance of this word for them is great.

Although the untranslated/unexplained African language words woven into the English text are the immediately obvious means of creating a metonymic gap, difference can also be, and is, inscribed in English, as is evidenced by the responses regarding *fathers* (A. A. Aidoo: *Changes*, p.89) in the same questionnaire item. 73.68% (14 out of 19) of the Western readers do not understand, or are not sure about, *fathers*. Only 26.31% (5 out of 19) of them say they understand the meaning, but only 21.05% (4 out of 9) of them can provide an explanation consistent with the culture-bound meaning. At the same time, 57.14% (4 out of 7) of non-Ghanaian African readers say they understand *fathers*, and 57.14% (4 out of 7) actually give an explanation consistent with the culture-bound meaning. Not surprisingly, the Ghanaian readers show the highest level of understanding: 94.73% (18 out of 19) claim they understand *fathers*, and the correct explanation is given by 84.21% (16 out of 19). This shows that the Western reader's knowledge of English alone is not sufficient for the interpretation of *fathers* as a culture-bound plural entity (see 6.3.2.1). Albeit an English word, *fathers* has little relevance for the Western reader. It represents psychological complexity because of its plural form, which is rarely, if ever, used in reference to a woman's male parent, grandparent and their male siblings and cousins. Because of the Western reader's unfamiliarity with the extended family system and the relationships within it, it also requires from the Western reader considerable effort of imagination to construct a

suitable context in which it can be adequately understood. This further supports the argument that the metonymic gap is created by the unfamiliarity of cultural concepts, regardless of whether these concepts are encoded in an indigenous African language or English.

As we have seen, inscribing difference by creating a metonymic gap is a means of expressing the writer's cultural identity. However, the fact that Western readers do not have the same experience as the writer does not mean that they have 'incommensurable mental frameworks' (Ashcroft, 2001b:75) and that they cannot understand the writer's meaning. Experience cannot be conflated with meaning just as possession of a language is not necessarily the possession of a measured amount of knowledge about the world. 'The meanings of words are tied to the established ways of using a language, that is, how language interferes with reality to give it meaning. Meanings are not born from innate differences in reality, but from the distinctions with which a language grasps reality' (Lehtonen, 2000:40). Especially because meanings are not born from innate differences in reality, the distance between the Ghanaian writer and Western reader can be traversed. In their responses to Questionnaire Item IV (iv) (Appendix 4Dc) Western and Ghanaian readers exhibit similar levels of understanding of cultural reference encoded in English and left without authorial assistance to the reader. The reference to polygamy in '*as a rival would look at her husband's favourite*' (Yeboah-Afari: *The Sound of Pestles*, p.43) is identified by 12 out of 19 (63.15%) Ghanaian readers. Very similarly, 11 out of 19 (57.89%) Western readers pick up the reference to polygamy, and 9 out of the 11 (81.81%) claim to have understood the meaning immediately. In relevance theoretic terms this means that it took these Western readers little effort of memory to construct the context of a type of marriage which allows the man to have more than one wife in which to interpret the reference. They also used minimal processing/mental effort to achieve positive cognitive effects – 68.42% indicating that they understood the meaning immediately, and none indicating that they needed to work out the meaning – so the relevance of this cultural reference for them is great. The culture-bound meaning has been adequately understood – successful communication across the metonymic gap has taken place.

Every culture has its idiosyncratic as well as universal aspects. While the untranslated/unexplained African language words function as symbols of the idiosyncratic aspects of the Ghanaian writer's culture, the data provide evidence that cultural reference encoded in English falls into two categories:

- (1) cultural reference pertaining to the idiosyncratic aspects of the writer's culture, e.g. *fathers* [collective name for a woman's male parent, grandparent and their male siblings and cousins];
- (2) cultural reference pertaining to the universal aspects of the writer's culture, e.g. '*as a rival would look at her husband's favourite*' [marriage, jealousy, polygamy].

Type 1 references are cultural concepts unknown to the culturally distant metropolitan/Western reader, while Type 2 references are more likely to relate to 'human nature' existent within every particular culture.

Skilled readers have the ability to execute linguistic processes to derive the meaning of a text, i.e. word meanings and propositional structure. They also have the ability to construct an interpretation of the information presented in the text. The process of interpretation 'operates on the propositional structure (i.e., the meaning) and constructs a referential representation. This representation includes information about the real world referents of words, properties attributed to objects, and knowledge about the situation. Interpretation relies on inferential processes that function to integrate explicit information in the text with general world knowledge' (Long et al., 1996:190). When faced with African-language words in the English text, Western readers are unable to derive the word meaning, and consequently most of them are unable to proceed with interpretation. Faced with Type 1 cultural reference, Western readers can undoubtedly derive word meanings and propositional structure. Since, however, their cognitive environment does not contain information about the real world referents of the words, the majority of them are unable to construct referential representations. Their inferential processes are impeded by the lack of world knowledge which could be integrated with explicit information in the text to yield an interpretation. It has been demonstrated above, however, that the metonymic gap can be traversed. Although African-language words and Type 1 cultural reference can be, and are, successfully interpreted by some Western readers, the metonymic gap is most often traversed when they are faced with Type 2 cultural reference. This type of cultural reference pertains to experiences which can be partially shared, even if never identical, across space and time. It is this shared universal experience which makes it possible for Western readers to integrate text meaning with their existing assumptions about the world, which allows them to cross the metonymic gap and recover culture-bound meanings.

7.3 Cushioning⁵

Cushioning, as we have seen in 4.2.2.4, is a method of indigenisation whereby African-language words or phrases describing culturally bound concepts, objects and occurrences in a literary text are juxtaposed with their English equivalent to provide immediate explanation or clarification. It aims at 'naming and identifying the gap between mother tongue and other tongue without necessarily bridging it' (Zabus, 1991:7). As such, I regard it as an authorial strategy whose aim is to make the text accessible to the reader who does not share the author's cultural and linguistic experience.

When resorting to the method of cushioning, the writer makes manifest a number of things: (a) that by the insertion of an African-language word he is signalling cultural difference; (b) that he is aware of a fairly mixed, or a rather ill-defined, readership; (c) that at that point in the text he deems it important for the reader from a different cultural and linguistic background – be it other ethnic Ghanaian, non-Ghanaian African or Western – to have an idea about the meaning of the African-language word; and (d) that he finds tagging an explanatory word or phrase onto the African word the most relevant way of communicating his message so that the reader can achieve the desired effects more economically. While the function of inserting untranslated/unexplained African-language words in the text is the distancing of the mother tongue culture of the writer and the other tongue culture represented by the language chosen for creation, cushioning functions as a shorthand solution aimed at bridging the metonymic gap and assisting the reader to negotiate the 'culture bump' (Leppihalme, 1997) efficiently.

In their discussion of cushioning, which they call 'glossing', Ashcroft *et al* write:

Parenthetic translations of individual words, for example, 'he took him into his *obi* (hut)', are the most obvious and most common authorial intrusion in cross-cultural texts. Although not limited to cross-cultural texts such glosses foreground the continual reality of cultural distance. But the simple ostensive matching of '*obi*' and 'hut' reveals the general inadequacy of such an exercise. Juxtaposing the words in this way suggests the view that the meaning of a word is its referent. But it becomes clear in reading that the Igbo word '*obi*' is one of the buildings which makes up the family's communal compound. If simple ostensive reference does not work even for simple objects, it is even more difficult to find a referent for more abstract terms (1989:61-2).

Ashcroft *et al*'s use of 'referent' in a broad linguistic sense to mean any kind of designation, textual as well as situational, is not helpful in the discussion of cultural meaning. Since we

are concerned with word meaning⁶ here, and, with one exception (Questionnaire item IV (iv), Appendix 4Dc), also throughout the analysis of the questionnaire results, a semantic approach in which reference 'is concerned with the relations between words and extra-linguistic reality: what words stand for or refer to in the outside world or universe of discourse' (Wales, 1989:396), may be more felicitous. If we compare the descriptive meaning⁷ of *obi* and 'hut', the difference is clear:

Expression (type)	Descriptive meaning	Referent type
<i>obi</i> (noun)	one of the buildings of a family's communal compound*	object
hut (noun)	a small, simple, or crude house or shelter, esp. one made of mud, turf, etc., or constructed for temporary use**	object

Table 7.1: The descriptive meaning of obi and 'hut'

(The table has been adopted from Löbner (2002:24). * Meaning as given by Ashcroft *et al* (1989:61). ** Definition adopted from *The New Shorter Oxford English Dictionary* (1993 edition).

The referent of *obi* is a real-world object – so is the referent of 'hut', but the two objects are not the same. The Saussurean framework also supports a relationship between a word and what it refers to in the real-world: 'The linguistic entity exists only through the associating of the signifier with the signified. Whenever only one element is retained, the entity vanishes; instead of a concrete object we are faced with a mere abstraction' (Saussure, 1959:102-3). The signified of *obi*, likewise its referent, can only be a real object, not an English word. The latter can only be its translation, or rather an attempt at its translation. Because different cultures conceptualise the world differently, it is difficult to find exact equivalents, especially in the case of single words referring to culturally defined entities such, for example, as human dwelling or emotions. Reading Ashcroft *et al* in this context, one is to

find their doubting that 'the meaning of a word is its referent' rather absurd. Had they used 'translation' instead of 'referent', it would be easier to see their point, for the translation of a word does not always yield exact equivalence.

Above I chose my words carefully to say that the writer resorts to cushioning because he deems it important for the reader *to have an idea* – but not precise understanding – *of the meaning of the African word*, and that cushioning is a *shorthand* solution. Cushioning gives immediate access to meaning, thereby contributing to the feeling of comfort of the reader not sharing the writers cultural and linguistic background, but the images these English translations suggest to the reader unfamiliar with the writer's culture may prove inadequate, or perhaps even misleading.

Ashcroft *et al's* suggestion that cushioning "(ironically) accords the english [sic] word the status of the 'real'" (ibid., 62) is untenable on two counts. First, we have seen that 'hut' is *not* the referent of *obi*, only its approximation rendered in English, and as such it cannot purport to be the 'real thing'. Second, there is no set word order for cushioning. As Zabus (1991:160-1) also points out, the two words can be swapped as we find, for example, in Achebe's *Things Fall Apart*: 'the elders, or *ndichie*' (p.9), '*jigida*, or waist beads' (p.49). We can, however, agree that particularly because of the difference between the concept carried by the African word and the concept carried by the English word, there is a gap in-between "which is metonymic of the breach that resulted from the clash between two worlds, that of the 'palm-wine shack' and that of 'the steeple', that were forcefully brought 'in contact'" (Zabus, 1991:160).

Ashcroft *et al* also worry that cushioning 'may lead to a considerably stilted movement of plot as the story is forced to drag an explanatory machinery behind it' (1989:62). However, their concern seems to be irrelevant to Ghanaian fiction. In my 210,187 word corpus, in 18 categories of cultural reference there are only 32 instances (0.015% of the corpus) of cushioning.

Questionnaire Item I (Appendix 4A) aims to find out about the readers' perception of the (in)adequacy of cushioning. The two passages used in the questionnaire come from different parts of the same novel, and the cushioned words are '*adawuro*' (gong gongs – Duodu: *The Gab Boys*, p.51) and 'doing *aworshia* – that is, working all night' (Duodu: *The Gab Boys*, p.105), respectively. While the former has a standard form – the 'cushions' are usually linked to the African word by 'or', or appear in-between brackets, dashes or commas either before

or after the African word – the latter is unusual because it uses the connector ‘that is’. As such, it succinctly highlights that the actual role of the English words in cushioning is to provide short, easily accessible explanatory notes, quick glosses in the body of the text to reduce the interruption to the reading process caused by the insertion of an African (i.e. foreign) word⁸. This supports my argument that these English words cannot be mistaken for the referents of the African words and therefore cannot be accorded ‘the status of the real’. The relationship between a word and its translation is not that of referentiality, but that of equivalence which, as we have seen, is a matter of degree depending on the concepts involved.

Although there are two passages containing a cushioned word each, only one question follows relating to both. This may seem to create a methodological difficulty as readers may want to react to each cushioned word separately. My holistic approach, however, is vindicated as out of the total sample of 45 readers only 2 (4.44%) indicated the need to react to the two cushioned items separately. The tables have been created to reflect this need, however slight.

7.3.1 *Western and non-Ghanaian African readers*

While being somewhat uncertain about the answers of the non-Ghanaian African readers, I expected to find that Western readers would find the explanation provided by cushioning insufficient, while Ghanaian readers would overall find it unnecessary. Contrary to my expectation, a convincing majority – Western readers: 68.42% for *adawuro* and 78.94% for *aworshia*; non-Ghanaian African readers: 71.42% for both words; Ghanaian readers: 68.42% for both words – of each reader group says that cushioning provides sufficient explanation of the African-language words. The implications of such findings for the Western and non-Ghanaian reader groups are that cushioning does provide a bridge across the metonymic gap. In case of non-culture-specific concepts like ‘doing *aworshia*’, the metonymic gap is created by linguistic, and not by cultural difference, so the reader’s difficulty is linguistic, not conceptual. Cushioning the Ga word in English gives the reader of English immediate access to the concept, thereby eliminating the gap caused by the foreign word.

In case of a culture-specific concept or object such as *adawuro*, cushioning it in English gives the readers access to their encyclopaedic entry for 'gong-gong'. As their assumptions about percussion instruments vary according to their respective culture and knowledge of the world, their understanding of what *adawuro* is will vary accordingly. Western readers are likely to access their lexical entry for the non-reduplicated form 'gong' as it is a loan word with identical meaning not only in English, but also in many European languages, e.g. French, German, Spanish, Hungarian and Russian. The assumptions in their encyclopaedic entry for 'gong' is of an instrument of Asian origin, which is a round piece of metal that hangs in a frame, makes a resonant sound when hit with a stick, and is used as a musical instrument in an orchestra or to give signals, e.g. summonses to meals. Since the reduplicated 'gong-gong' has a rather vague meaning – any of various simple percussion instruments (*The New Shorter Oxford English Dictionary*, 1993) – it is unlikely to influence these readers' assumptions strongly, apart from increasing their uncertainty about the exact meaning of *adawuro*. Non-Ghanaian African readers, on the other hand, will have different assumptions. In their cognitive environment they will have culture-specific encyclopaedic and language-specific lexical entries for 'gong-gong'. For a Lingala speaking Congolese reader it will be *kingongolo*, referring to a bottomless cone-shaped steel instrument with a handle at its point which is hit with a stick, or to its very urban version – a glass bottle hit with a piece of cutlery. For the Igbo reader it will be *ogene*, referring to a cowbell-shaped metal instrument with a handle which is hit with stick and is used singly or as a pair. The close similarity between *kingongolo* and *ogene* suggests a very probable similarity with *adawuro*, thereby implying a fuller understanding on the part of the non-Ghanaian African reader of the cushioned pair '*adawuro* (gong-gong)'.

All readers, Western or African, aim at achieving optimal relevance, and not necessarily at recovering literal meaning. To achieve this, they make interpretive assumptions about the writer's informative intention, selecting the best possible context in which to process an assumption. There is no guarantee, however, that the interpretation that satisfies the reader's expectations of relevance will be the correct, i.e. the intended, one. Although neither the Western nor the non-Ghanaian readers are likely to recover the correct meaning, their interpretations are relevant enough in the given context to ensure no disruption in the reading process. The implication for cushioning culture-specific concepts is that although cushioning may not provide sufficient information for the reader to recover the full meaning of the African-language word, it provides enough information for him to have a close enough idea to take him across the metonymic gap.

7.3.2 Ghanaian readers

As mentioned above, the Ghanaian readers' results also deviate from my expectations. Even if we acknowledge the diversity of the Ghanaian readership, because of their cultural and linguistic knowledge, it would not be unreasonable to expect that a good number of the Ghanaian readers would find cushioning in the two passages unnecessary. Instead, only 1 (5.26%) Ghanaian reader finds it unnecessary, while 13 (68.42%) find it provides sufficient explanation of the African-language words, and 5 (26.31%) find the information it provides insufficient. From this I gather that the majority of the Ghanaian readers may not have reacted to this question spontaneously as readers, but stepped outside the reading process and engaged in a linguistic exercise, examining the cushioned pairs on their own merit to decide whether the English words provided sufficient explanation of the African-language words.

In this context it is not surprising that 13 readers find 'working all night' and 'gong-gong' adequate. As we have seen, 'doing *aworshia* – that is, working all night' is a simple unproblematic case of translation, which does not involve any culture specific concept, and it is found to be such by the Ghanaian readers. In the case of '*adawuro* (gong-gong)', the most likely reason for the Ghanaian readers to find 'gong-gong' a sufficient explanation is that in their memory they have two lexical entries (some readers may have more, depending on the number of languages they speak) for the encyclopaedic entry for the concept in question – one Akan, and one English. Since the two lexical entries refer to the same concept, they carry the same information, therefore for some of the Ghanaian readers one is an adequate explanation, or translation, of the other.

Those 5 readers who find that cushioning gives insufficient explanation of *aworshia* and *adawuro* must have compared the signifieds, or referents, of the African words with those of the English words. Although we have seen that the 'doing *aworshia* – that is, working all night' pair is unproblematic because of its culture-independent concept, for these readers 'working all night' may still prove insufficient. *Aworshia* is a Ga slang word⁹. In the relevance theoretical framework 'a translation should communicate the same interpretation as that intended in the original, [that is,] it should convey to the receptors *all and only those explicatures and implicatures that the original was intended to convey*' (Gutt, 1991:94; italics as in original). Although 'working all night' conveys the correct meaning, it does not carry the appropriate stylistic value – so this may explain why the more perceptive Ghanaian readers find it inadequate.

In the case of *adawuro* it is not unreasonable to assume that although these readers may have an Akan and an English lexical entry in their memory for the encyclopaedic entry for the concept, they also have a separate encyclopaedic entry for the concept 'gong-gong'. When faced with the pair '*adawuro* (gong-gong)', they compare the concepts. As the two concepts are not identical, because *adawuro* refers to a concrete musical instrument while 'gong-gong' refers to the type (any of various simple percussion instruments) rather than the concrete instrument, these readers find that the natural language expression of the concept 'gong-gong' does not provide sufficient explanation for the concept *adawuro*.

7.4 Contextualisation

As has been seen in 4.2.2.5, contextualisation is a method of indigenisation whereby African-language words or phrases describing culturally bound concepts, objects and occurrences are embedded in an immediate context providing clues as to their meaning, or in a dialogue with the aim of letting the characters explain their meaning. The reader is involved in a guessing game and is expected to infer the meaning from the context. Similarly to cushioning, it aims at 'naming and identifying the gap between mother tongue and other tongue without necessarily bridging it' (Zabus, 1991:7). Because of its function in the text, I regard contextualisation an authorial strategy whose aim, just like that of cushioning, is to make the text accessible to the reader who does not share the author's cultural and linguistic experience.

When the writer decides to create an explanatory context for an African-language word or for a culture-bound concept expressed in English, as in cushioning, he makes several things manifest: (a) that he is inscribing difference; (b) that he is aware of a mixed readership; (c) that leaving the African-language word untranslated or the culture-bound concept expressed in English unexplained will lead to a breakdown of communication with readers with different cultural and linguistic experience; (d) that at that point in the text he finds building a context round the African-language word the most relevant way of communicating his message so that the reader can achieve the desired effects more economically.

The context intended to give clues to the reader to help him infer the meaning of the African-language word is the public interpretation of the writer's thoughts, and the readers construct a mental interpretation of this, i.e. of the original, thoughts. Questionnaire Item V (i, ii & iii) (Appendices 4Ea, 4Eb and 4Ec) intends to find out whether the interpretive expression of the writer's thoughts is relevant enough for the readers to construct the correct interpretive assumptions about the writers informative intention.

7.4.1 Contextualisation of African-language words

In Questionnaire Item V (i) our interest lies in what is communicated to the reader by the name *Kweku Nyamekye* (A.A. Aidoo, *A Gift from Somewhere*, p.81), which, in turn, will depend on the implicit contextual assumptions the reader can recover and on the implicit conclusions he can derive. Some implicit assumptions can be expected to be recovered by all readers, but as we shall see, there is considerable variation in potential assumptions between the Akan-speaking Ghanaian reader, the non-Akan-speaking Ghanaian or non-Ghanaian African reader and the Western reader.

To find out to what extent the name *Kweku Nyamekye* makes sense to the reader, i.e. how relevant it is, we have to consider the processing effort required to understand it and the positive cognitive effects achieved. As we have seen, the processing effort depends on two main factors: a) the effort of memory and imagination needed to construct a suitable context; and b) the psychological complexity of the utterance. The Akan-speaking Ghanaian reader immediately knows that implicit assumptions about the concept and practice of giving personal names must be used to process this utterance. The name *Kweku Nyamekye* gives him access to his encyclopaedic information about day names or soul names derived from the name of the tutelary god of the day of the week on which the child is born (Egblewogbe, 1987:190), *Kweku* being the name given to a male child born on Wednesday, and, more importantly, about names suggesting exceptional circumstances. *Nyamekye* means 'god has given', and this name is given to a much awaited child who is believed to be the gift of God, and as such, is much loved and protected by its mother. Since the Akan-speaking reader has immediate access to this information, the effort needed to construct the suitable context is minimised. The psychological complexity of the utterance is also limited not only because the linguistic structure of the utterance is fairly straightforward, but also because both words, *Kweku* and *Nyamekye*, are

frequently encountered ones, which makes the full name fairly easy to process. Consequently, the relative lack of complexity of the utterance leads to no distraction from relevance.

Let us recall that positive cognitive effects are 'achieved when newly presented information interacts with a context of existing assumptions in one of three ways: by strengthening an existing assumption, by contradicting and eliminating an existing assumption, or by combining with an existing assumption to yield a contextual implication: that is, a logical implication derivable neither from the new information alone, nor from the context alone, but from the new information and the context combined' (Wilson, 1994:45). The name *Kweku Nyamekye* is especially relevant to the Akan-speaking reader because it interacts with his existing assumptions about the world, i.e. it has positive cognitive effects. It not only strengthens his existing assumptions, but combining with the assumption concerning the position of the boy's mother as a no longer favoured first wife, it may yield, or at least forecast, the contextual implication that *Kweku Nyamekye* is a child not very much liked by his father, a fact that we learn only towards the end of the story.

As we have seen, the Akan-speaking reader has immediate access to his encyclopaedic entries for personal names, which then triggers easy and quick processing of the information. Therefore he is distracted from relevance if the name *Kweku Nyamekye* is explained explicitly. It is unnecessary for him to spend time processing the contextualisation in which the assumptions needed to understand the name are made explicit. By contrast, for the non-Akan-speaking Ghanaian or non-Ghanaian African, and the Western reader, for whom the name *Kweku Nyamekye* may prove to be entirely incomprehensible, the rewards for processing the contextualisation following the name may be great. Since all the Ghanaian and non-Ghanaian African readers can be expected to be familiar with African naming systems, understanding this name for them is primarily a language, not a cultural, problem. It may be assumed, however, that the non-Akan-speaking Western reader's cognitive environment, i.e. the set of assumptions that are manifest to him, does not include implicit assumptions about 'talking' names. For him *Kweku* is a first name, a string of sounds used to identify a particular person, whereas *Nyamekye* is taken to be a surname indicating this particular person's kinship with the father. Because of his unfamiliarity with the structure and functions of Ghanaian personal names, the non-Akan-speaking Western reader, and for that matter, the non-Akan-speaking African reader, both Ghanaian and non-Ghanaian, who may be familiar with the concept of 'talking' names but who, due to the lack of his knowledge of the language involved, cannot understand the meaning of this name, is sure to welcome the contextualisation which makes

explicit the assumptions necessary to understand the importance of the name and the reasons behind giving it to the child in the story. The contextualisation, then, becomes informationally useful (i.e. achieves relevance) for all non-Akan-speaking readers not only because the explicitness of the information considerably reduces the processing effort, but also because the newly presented information interacts with the context of their existing assumptions about the structure and meaning of personal names by contradicting and eliminating them, i.e. it has positive cognitive effects (cf. 4.3.2).

In a literary text contextualisation proves to be a highly relevant way of providing information especially because of its unintrusive nature. However, the above example seems to suggest that contextualisation in hybrid texts may not fully achieve its aim of explaining or clarifying meaning. As has been shown, for the Akan-speaking reader the contextualisation is superfluous, may halt the flow of reading, distract from relevance and consequently create the impression of the text being dull. We have to note, however, that, similarly to cushioning, contextualisation becomes burdensome for the readers who shares the writer's language only if it is used too frequently. This does not seem to be the case in Ghanaian English-language fiction. Although contextualisation is by far the most favoured method of providing authorial assistance because of its relative unintrusiveness (54.35% of all assistance in the data is contextualisation), in the corpus of 210,187 words, in 18 cultural categories I have found only 337 instances (0.16% of the corpus) of cultural reference that are contextualised.

On the other hand, the non-Akan speaking reader may benefit from the contextualisation in that it may be his only source of information that can lend some kind of relevance to the name *Kweku Nyamekye*. Since, however, his cognitive environment may not contain assumptions about how the system of Ghanaian personal names works, the new information is not able to combine with an existing assumption to yield a contextual implication. This distracts from relevance and means that the non-Akan-speaking reader loses out on recovering the subtle details that lead to a full(er) understanding of the story.

The questionnaire results show that 78.94% (15 out of 19) of the Ghanaian readers have a full understanding of *Kweku Nyamekye*. This indicates that for the Ghanaian non-Akan speakers – GR7, GR9, GR12, GR13 and GR17 – the new information provided by the context interacted with their already existing assumptions about names by providing further evidence for their assumptions, i.e. by strengthening them, and led to the correct interpretation of the name, i.e. the contextualisation for them proved informationally useful.

The only Ghanaian reader whose interpretation is not consistent with the culture-bound meaning of the name is GR8, a Buli speaker with no knowledge of Akan or any other Ghanaian languages. His lack of knowledge of Akan prevents him from providing the appropriate contextual assumptions for *Kweku*, which is only partially explained by the context. He also fails to construct an interpretation of the information explicitly presented in the text for *Nyamekye*. Ultimately, the interpretation that satisfies his expectation of relevance – ‘*Kweku Nyamekye* is the name of a person’ – is not the intended one because it stops at the recognition of *Kweku Nyamekye* as a person’s name without actually providing the meaning it has.

Interestingly, the 2 readers – GR3 and GR14 – who have no idea/are not sure about the meaning of the name are both mother tongue speakers of Twi (Akan). We may assume that these two readers responded as they did not because they did not have assumptions in their cognitive environment about *Kweku* being the day name given to a Wednesday born male child and about names, like *Nyamekye*, suggesting exceptional circumstances at birth, but because they did not consider it worth their while to process the information and attempt an answer at all.

The results of non-Ghanaian African and Western readers signal the ineffectiveness of contextualisation even in the case of such relatively clear explanations as those provided for *Kweku* (and) *Nyamekye*. In these two groups no reader is able to recover the full culture-bound meaning of the name. However, the interesting aspect of the findings for these two groups of readers is not necessarily in cultural difference. Out of the 26 readers of the two groups combined, 8 manage an interpretation close to the culture-bound meaning. As can be expected, *Kweku* represents an almost insurmountable difficulty for them. Not only would it require them to have assumptions about the writer’s culture and language that they do not have in their cognitive environment, but it is not fully explained by the context, either. The context does contain the information that *Kweku* is a day name, but has no clues which would help recover that the name *Kweku* is given to a male child born on Wednesday. It is only WNNER2 and WNNER13 who manage to figure out that *Kweku* is the day name of the child, but as no further information is available from the text, they cannot provide any further assumptions. However, 6 of these 8 readers are able to construct the correct interpretation of *Nyamekye* – ‘Gift of God’ – based on the information explicitly presented in the text. A majority of the 6, i.e. 4 (66.66%), are native speakers of English, which is 80% of all the English native speakers of the sample (a total of 5). This indicates that while native English

readers are able to process explicit information provided by the context with no or relatively little effort resulting in great relevance, non-native readers of English may find it difficult to cope with the devices of cohesion and coherence in the text, and may not recover even explicitly stated information. This highlights the fact that the Ghanaian writer in particular, and the African writer in general, in addition to the difficulty caused by the difference in cultural and linguistic experience, faces another difficulty when writing for an international audience – that of the competence of the readers in English.

Questionnaire Item V (ii) (Appendix 4Eb), where the context provided by the writer for *kola* is far less explicit than the context for *Kweku Nyamekye*, presents similar results, although with a slightly different distribution. The majority of Ghanaian readers – 11 out of 19 (57.89%) – are able to derive the right contextual implications, i.e. the information in the text combines with their existing assumptions about *kola* to yield the interpretation ‘bribe’. The remaining 8 readers (42.10%) either have some idea (3 – 15.78%), or their interpretation is close to the culture-bound meaning (5 – 26.31%). This indicates either that their encyclopaedic entry for *kola* contains the concept ‘bribe’, or that the context in which it is presented is capable of making them recognise, to various degrees, what the interpretive relation between the propositional form *kola* and the thought it represents is. To put it simply, they either know what *kola* means in its figurative meaning, or the context helps them to infer the (more or less) correct meaning.

The results of non-Ghanaian African and Western readers also show that contextualisation works for some readers – 15 out of 26 readers show various degrees of understanding – and not for others – 3 out of 26 have no idea/are not sure – and leads to misunderstanding yet for some others – 8 out of 26 provide an interpretation which is not consistent with the culture-bound meaning. This confirms that while the contextualisation of African-language words in the English text has advantages for readers in all the three reader groups, it ultimately proves ineffective because, as Zabrus puts it, it relies “on the non-indigenous reader’s ‘act of reading’” (1991:162) and it tries to cater for the needs of a fairly mixed and ill-defined readership.

7.4.2 Contextualisation of culture-bound concepts expressed in English

By extension, culture-bound concepts expressed in English may also get contextualised to help the reader understand their meaning. By virtue of referring to something that exists in the writer's culture but not in the culture where the language of his artistic creation is rooted, these are words and expressions that have undergone indigenisation – either their form (signifier) or their meaning (signified) or both have been modified so that they can carry experience distinct from that carried by British English.

'Passion Week' (Armah, *Beautiful*, pp.1-2) in Questionnaire Item V (iii) (Appendix 4Ec) has undergone semantic extension. In its extended meaning it no longer refers to the Holy Week before Easter, but to the week before pay-day when money is scarce. The analogy based on the tribulations of Christ is obvious and implies comparable suffering caused by destitution and misery. 78.94% (15 out of 19) of the Ghanaian readers recover this meaning, while another 10.52% (2 out of 19) have a close enough idea. No Ghanaian reader misinterprets 'Passion Week', which suggests that either it forms part of their cognitive environment, or that the information provided by the context generates the right interpretive assumptions in the readers, i.e. the contextualisation is effective. The only 2 readers who have no idea are GR14 and GR19. We have seen earlier that GR14 spent a considerable part of his life abroad, which puts him out of touch with life and reality in Ghana at both levels – ethnic and national. We could assume that his encyclopaedic entry for 'Passion Week' contains no assumptions regarding its extended culture-specific meaning. At the same time, it may be the case that he simply did not consider it worth his while to read the passage and answer the question, which is very likely to be the case with GR19.

The contextualisation of 'Passion Week' seems to be less successful for non-Ghanaian African and Western readers, who are not likely to have assumptions about its extended meaning in their cognitive environment. While it does not work only for 11.53% (3 out of 26) of the readers of the two groups combined (whatever the reasons for this may be), 23.07% (6 out of 26) recover the culture-bound meaning, and 3.84% (1 out of 26) have a close enough idea – for them contextualisation undoubtedly has its benefits. However, 61.53% (16 out of 26) fail to achieve a match between the interpretive expression of the writer's thought and their interpretive assumptions about the writer's informative intention¹⁰ – they misinterpret 'Passion Week'. The explanations provided by these 16 readers show that a convincing majority (12 out of 16, i.e. 75%) interpret it in its original Christian meaning. According to Sperber and Wilson, when two

assumptions are found to contradict each other, the weaker assumption will automatically be abandoned. ‘The contextualisation of a new assumption in a context which contradicts it can result in the rejection ... of some or all of the new information itself. In this case, there will be no significant contextual effect’ (1995:115). The existing assumptions of these readers based on their own cultural experience are so strong that the new information provided by the context fails to contradict and eliminate them; in fact, the new information is rejected, and the extended culture-specific meaning of ‘Passion Week’ is not recovered.

The implications of these findings are that the contextualisation of indigenised English-language words/expressions referring to culture-specific concepts is problematic because the one English word/expression signifies two concepts – the original native English concept, and the Ghanaian culture-specific concept (cf. interpretive contexts in 4.2.1). It is successful for Ghanaian readers, in case they need to rely on it, because the new, Ghanaian culture-based information provided by the writer’s context is stronger than their already existing assumptions about a concept rooted in the culture whose language – English – it is expressed in. The stronger new information contradicts and eliminates the existing assumptions and leads to the recovery of the indigenised culture-specific meaning. For the non-Ghanaian readers, African and Western alike, contextualisation may hold some promise, but eventually proves to be ineffective because the inferential process is not able to take these readers beyond their already existing assumptions about the original native English-based concept (12 of 19 Western readers and 1 out of 7 non-Ghanaian African readers provided an interpretation consistent with the Christian meaning). It is not unreasonable to assume that the non-Ghanaian African readers have to wrestle with an additional difficulty resulting from the fact that in *their* indigenised variety of English the same word/expression may refer to yet another concept, which means that they will have three different concepts to choose from.

7.5 Ethnographic explanation

The ethnographic explanation of African-language words referring to culture-specific objects and concepts in the English-language literary text is considered by Zabus (1991:158) to be the ancestor of contextualisation. The reason behind such a rather intrusive authorial device is the need African writers feel to explain African culture to a Western readership and to correct previous misrepresentations of African culture.

Similarly to contextualisation, when the writer decides to provide an ethnographic explanation for an African-language word, he makes it manifest that: (a) with the insertion of the African-language word he is inscribing difference; (b) he is aware of a mixed readership; (c) leaving the African-language word unexplained will lead to a breakdown of communication with readers from different cultural and linguistic background; (d) at that point in the text he finds giving a fairly precise ethnographic kind of explanation of the African-language word – i.e. making explicit the assumptions necessary to understand the meaning of such a word – the most relevant way of communicating his message so that the reader can achieve the desired effects more economically.

Again, it has to be noted that this authorial device is likely to tax the readers if it is overused. In Ghanaian fiction this is not the case. In my corpus of 210,187 words in 18 cultural categories I have found 79 cases (0.037% of the corpus) of ethnographic explanation, which actually include not only explanations of African words such as *Kundum*, *akpeteshie* and *waakye*, but also of culture-specific concepts expressed in English such as ‘the chief’s linguist’, and ‘the poison-bark trial’.

Questionnaire Item II (Appendix 4B) has two passages from Kofi Aidoo’s *Of Men and Ghosts*, each containing an Akan word, *bampa* (p.57) and *aboefosem* (p.83), respectively, which are explained at length. My initial expectations were to find that Ghanaian readers would deem the explanations too long-winded or unnecessary, while Western and non-Ghanaian African readers, who do not understand Akan, would find them handy, providing (occasionally in-) sufficient information.

7.5.1 *Western and non-Ghanaian African readers*

Contrary to my expectations, while 18 out of 26 (69.23%) readers of the Western and non-Ghanaian African reader groups combined found the ethnographic explanation sufficient, over a quarter (26.92%) found it too long-winded. This means that the extra mental effort they needed to process the ethnographic explanation was not offset by positive cognitive effects – i.e. the relevance of the explanation for them was low. This suggests that for a

significant proportion of the non-Ghanaian readership, be it Western or African, ethnographic explanations are tedious.

Many of the African-language words that the Ghanaian writer's text is interspersed with seem to function primarily to inscribe difference and seem not to be essential for the development of the story. They contribute to the creation of Africanness and are perceived by the readers as such. Understanding them (fully) may not be the readers' expectation – after all, they are reading fiction, not an anthropological or ethnographic description – so they may not feel it worth their while to 'wade' through lengthy explanations even if they offer more insight.

7.5.2 *Ghanaian readers*

As with cushioning, because of their cultural and linguistic knowledge, it would not have been unreasonable to expect that a good number of the Ghanaian readers would find the ethnographic explanation in the two passages unnecessary. Instead, only 1 (5.26%) finds it unnecessary, while 14 (73.68%) find it sufficient, and 4 (21.05%) find it too long-winded. Again, it seems that the majority of the Ghanaian readers may not have reacted to this question spontaneously as readers, but stepped outside the reading process and engaged in a linguistic exercise, examining whether the ethnographic type explanation of the Akan words provided by the writer gave a correct and sufficient description of the concept expressed by these words.

The fact that almost three quarters of the Ghanaian readers feel the ethnographic description gives sufficient explanation vindicates the writers. At the same time, the fact that over a fifth of the Ghanaian readers find this kind of explanation tedious signals that the Ghanaian readers may not find such explanation informationally useful, i.e. relevant.

7.6 Glossary

Providing a glossary either as footnotes or at the end of a book is the least frequently used assistance to readers. Very often it is not an authorial but an editorial intervention which the writer may have little control over. That it is not a frequent phenomenon in Ghanaian fiction is shown by the fact that out of the twenty books forming the subject of this study only two, Ama Ata Aidoo's *Changes – A Love Story* and Kojo Yankah's *Crossroads at Ankobea*, have a glossary. It is interesting to note that *Changes* was first published in 1991 for an international audience by The Women's Press Ltd. (London) and contained a glossary. Sub-Saharan Publishers Ltd. (Accra) subsequently published it in 1994 for the domestic audience – with the glossary retained. *Crossroads* was published in 1982 by Asempra Publishers (Accra) for the domestic audience – with a glossary. The 172 instances of glossed words found in the corpus in the 18 categories of cultural reference come from these two novels. *Changes* is represented by one single word, while *Crossroads at Ankobea* by multiple occurrences of 21 words.

While cushioning, contextualisation and the ethnographic explanation are textual strategies leaving no choice for the readers to avoid them, a glossary is an extra-textual device giving the readers the freedom to use it when and only if they want to.

Questionnaire Item III (Appendix 4C) has two short passages from *Crossroads at Ankobea* (p.79 and p.98) with seven words/expressions to look up in the glossary extracted from the glossary at the end of the novel and provided at the end of the questionnaire. The results show that an overwhelming majority – 78.94% of Western readers, 71.42% of non-Ghanaian African readers and 78.94% of Ghanaian readers – of all the three reader groups finds the information provided by the glossary on the meaning of the Akan words/expressions sufficient. At the same time, an equally high proportion of each group – 73.68% of Western readers, 85.71% of non-Ghanaian African readers and 84.21% of Ghanaian readers – indicate that using a glossary slows down their reading. While 42.30% of all non-Ghanaian readers, both Western and African, and 42.10% of Ghanaian readers do not get frustrated at having to use a glossary or are not sure about it, 57.69% of all non-Ghanaian readers and 52.63% of Ghanaian readers indicate frustration. The most frequently quoted reason for frustration is the 'interruption of thoughts/flow of text/story/picturing process' (26.66% of all readers), closely followed by 'interruption/slowing down/disruption of reading process' (24.44% of all readers) and 'interruption/loss of concentration' (11.11% of all readers).

6.66% of all the readers feel that using a dictionary wastes time, while 4.44% feels it distracts from the text/story. Another 4.44% feel it disturbs interpretation/text understanding, and 2.22% say it breaks the holistic impression created by the story.

These results clearly show that although glossaries may provide adequate information for the reader, an overwhelming majority of readers across cultures and languages find them inconvenient as they considerably slow down and frustrate the reading process by interrupting concentration and image building.

7.7 Conclusion

The reader of Ghanaian literature – and, by the same token, the reader of other African and other post-colonial literatures – is involved in a double guessing game: the interpretation of literary works within which there is the interpretation of culture-specific concepts expressed either in an African language or in English. The focus of the current work has been on the latter, in the investigation of which the concept of the metonymic gap has a central role.

As has been discussed, the metonymic gap is a complex concept as it can be created by cultural and/or linguistic difference. If the difference is purely linguistic, represented by an African-language word/expression, it inscribes difference and functions metonymically only when left untranslated/unglossed as it is “its very resistance to interpretation [that] constructs a ‘gap’ between the writer’s culture and the colonial culture” (Ashcroft, 2001b:75). Once an authorial strategy gives the reader access to the meaning of the African-language word, it stops being a synecdochy standing for the writer’s culture and functions simply to add to the *couleur locale* and the creation of Africanness. On the other hand, if the difference is conceptual rather than linguistic, an African-language word may add to the overall complexity of the concept, but the gap remains even if the concept is expressed in English. Whether presented in the text in English or in an African language, such a concept will inscribe cultural difference, and authorial strategies aimed at reducing or neutralising such difference may, though does not necessarily have to, prove ineffective.

The data provide evidence that the metonymic gap, because it is a cultural gap, exists between the Ghanaian writer and the Western reader but does not pertain to the non-

Ghanaian African reader who shares a pan-African cultural heritage and experience with the Ghanaian writer. The data show, however, that it is not impossible for the Western reader to cross the metonymic gap. As Ashcroft observes, 'perhaps the most fascinating and subtle aspect of the transformative function of post-colonial writing is its ability to signify difference, and even incommensurability between cultures, at the very point at which the communication occurs' (2001b:81). The authorial strategies of cushioning, contextualisation, and ethnographic explanation, and the, usually editorial, device of inserting of a glossary all have some benefits for some of the readers in each reader group – the Ghanaian, non-Ghanaian African and Western. However, eventually none of them prove to be efficient because they all try to cater for the needs of a mixed, ill-defined readership. Whether these authorial strategies have been used with the same intensity by the first and the later generation of writers will be examined in the next chapter.

Notes

- ¹ By 'speech community' I understand 'a social group who claim a variety as their own and maintain its distinctiveness from the varieties spoken by their neighbours. ... A speech community is not necessarily coextensive with a language community. A speech community is a group of people who do not necessarily share the same language, but share a set of norms and rules for the use of language. The boundaries between speech communities are essentially social rather than linguistic' (Romaine, 1994:22).
- ² Let us recall that Sperber and Wilson define an individual's total cognitive environment as 'the set of all the facts that he can perceive or infer: all the facts that are manifest to him. An individual's total cognitive environment is a function of his physical environment and his cognitive abilities. It consists of not only all the facts that he is aware of, but also all the facts that he is capable of becoming aware of, in his physical environment. The individual's actual awareness of facts, i.e. the knowledge that he has acquired, of course contributes to his ability to become aware of future facts. Memorised information is a component of cognitive abilities' (1995:39).
- ³ The texts that provide the context for the words analysed in this chapter can be found in the questionnaire in Appendix 2, and also in the corpus on the CD as specified by the titles and page numbers.
- ⁴ Personal communication by Kari Dako, Department of English, University of Ghana.
- ⁵ Zabus (1991:158) informs us that the word was first used by Peter Young, 'Tradition, Language and the Reintegration of Identity in West African Literature in English' in Wright, Edgar (ed.). 1976. *The Critical Evaluation of African Literature*. Washington, D.C.: Inscape, 21-50. He borrowed it from Howard Stone, 'Cushioned Loan Words,' *Word*, 9:1 (April 1953), 12.

- ⁶ 'The **meaning of a word**, more precisely a content word (noun, verb, adjective), is a concept that provides a mental description of a certain kind of entity' (Löbner, 2002:22; emphasis as in original).
- ⁷ 'The descriptive meaning of a content word is a concept for its potential referents' (Löbner, 2002:23).
- ⁸ Zabus suggests that 'in attempting to name the gap between autotelically referential signs, writers take their readers along a tortuous route marked with gaps and blanks' (1991:161). She argues that cushioning "may defer understanding or overstimulate the reader's mind. The synonymous pairs are functionally very much like what Wolfgang Iser called 'the blanks' that suspend *good continuation* ... Those blanks which syncopate the reading and break up the 'connectability' of a text, [Iser] goes on, 'condition the clash of images, and so help to hinder (and, at the same time, to stimulate) the process of image building.' When recurrently used, ... cushioning is more likely to create in the non-Igbo reader mental deferment rather than stimulation, since the impetus for image-building is sapped up by the unfamiliar synonymous pairs'" (ibid.).
- ⁹ Personal communication by Prof. Abena Dolphyne, Department of Linguistics, University of Ghana.
- ¹⁰ Cf. Sperber and Wilson: 'We see verbal communication as involving a speaker producing an utterance as a public interpretation of one of her thoughts, and the hearer constructing a mental interpretation of this utterance, and hence of the original thought. Let us say that an utterance is an *interpretive expression* of a thought of the speaker's, and that the hearer makes an *interpretive assumption* about the speaker's informative intention' (1995:230-1; italics as in original).

8 CULTURAL REFERENCE: ENCODING AND AUTHORIAL STRATEGIES IN THE FIRST VS. LATER GENERATION OF GHANAIAN WRITERS AND IN LOCALLY VS. INTERNATIONALLY PUBLISHED WORKS

8.1 Introduction

In the two previous chapters I gave a linguistic analysis of the various types of cultural reference found in 20 of the prose works of 15 Ghanaian writers in 18 cultural categories described in 5.3.2.2. I have also examined the methods these writers use to assist their readers to understand such reference and the effectiveness of these methods for Ghanaian, non-Ghanaian African and Western readers.

In this chapter I will investigate whether the encoding of cultural reference and the provision of authorial assistance have changed from the first to the later generation of Ghanaian writers and between locally and internationally published works.

As laid out in 5.3.1.1, the first generation of modern Europhone Ghanaian writers is characterised by a formative experience of colonial existence which determines their artistic outlook and their need to assert their African identity and to educate the (Western) world about African culture and history. The writers included in this study who belong to this first generation are Abruquah, Armah, Awoonor, Djoletto, Duodu and Selormey. The writers of the later generation have a formative experience of life in post-independence Ghana, and their artistic outlook is determined by confidence in their already established African identity and – perhaps with the exception of the two oldest writers of this group, Agovi and A. A. Aidoo – by freedom from the grip of the post-colonial angst so characteristic of the first generation. The writers included in the study who belong to this later generation are Agovi, A. A. Aidoo, K. O. Aidoo, Codjoe-Swayne, Darko, Darmani, Kwakye, Yankah and Yeboah-Afari.

The works of the first generation of writers were all published internationally in Heinemann's African Writers Series (with the exception of Duodu's *The Gab Boys*, which was published by Collins). The later generation is divided: six works have been published by various publishers internationally, and six locally. As mentioned in 7.5, Ama Ata Aidoo's *Changes – a Love Story* is the only novel that has been published both internationally and by

		First generation of writers				Published	
	author	dates	work(s)	Date of publication	number of words in study	locally	internationally
1	Abruquah, Joseph W.	1921-	<i>The Catechist</i>	1965	4,058		*
2	Armah, Ayi Kwei	1939-	<i>The Beautiful Ones ... Fragments</i> <i>The Healers</i>	1968 1969 1978	11,805 12,301 7,039		* * *
3	Awoonor, Kofi	1935-	<i>This Earth, My Brother...</i>	1971	14,279		*
4	Djoleto, Amu	1929-	<i>The Strange Man</i>	1967	9,731		*
5	Duodu, Cameron	1932-	<i>The Gab Boys</i>	1967	19,091		*
6	Selormey, Francis	1927-	<i>The Narrow Path</i>	1966	8,287		*
	<i>Sub-total I</i>				86,591	0	8
Later generation of writers							
1	Agovi, Kofi	1944-1996	<i>A Wind from the North</i>	1989	9,534	*	
2	Aidoo, Ama Ata	1942-	<i>Changes – A Love Story</i> <i>The Girl Who Can</i> <i>No Sweetness Here</i> <i>Our Sister Killjoy</i>	1991 1997 1970 1977	10,675 8,352 12,256 9,745	*	* * *
3	Aidoo, Kofi Osci	1950-	<i>Of Men and Ghosts</i>	1991	13,403	*	
4	Codjoe-Swayne, Naa Otua	1959-	<i>The Dancing Tortoise</i>	1994	12,357	*	
5	Darko, Amma	1956-	<i>Beyond the Horizon</i>	1995	10,697		*
6	Darmani, Lawrence	ca 1950-	<i>Grief Child</i>	1991	10,708		*
7	Kwakye, Benjamin Kwame	1967-	<i>The Clothes of Nakedness</i>	1998	8,619		*
8	Yankah, Kojo	ca 1950-	<i>Crossroads at Ankobea</i>	1982	9,613	*	
9	Yeboah, Afari, Ajoa	ca 1950-	<i>The Sound of Pestles</i>	1986	7,637	*	
	<i>Sub-total II</i>				123,596	6	6
	Total				210,187	6	14

Table 8.1: First vs. later generation of Ghanaian writers: works and place of publication

a local publisher. It is, however, listed as published internationally because locally it was not published until three years after its international publication. Table 8.1 on the previous page contains details of names, dates, titles and place of publication.

8.2 Indigenisation of cultural reference

Perhaps because of the high status of Standard British English in Ghana highlighted, among others, by Sey (1973:6-7) and Ahulu (1992:13-4), Ghanaian prose writing has never tended to be prone to over-abundance of indigenisation. Table 8.2 below shows clear evidence of this.

Overall, only about one third, more precisely 32.20%, of cultural reference in the 18 cultural categories examined is indigenised. We have to remember, however, that the examined cultural reference is only 6.61% of the corpus, and we are talking about 32.20% of this, which is a very small proportion indeed. Such a relatively low proportion of indigenisation reflects Ahulu's (1992) findings that educated Ghanaians use Standard English in written English. Ahulu examined those aspects of educated written English in Ghana in a corpus of English – the English of the national newspapers – written by educated Ghanaians which have been claimed to yield the characteristics of Ghanaian English. His analysis shows that 'the divergent ("characteristic") features are not consistently or reliably realised, and that their Standard English equivalents are used on more than 95% of occasions of use. Any given deviant form occurs in less than 10% of instances of use and sometimes alternates with the standard form without any apparent contextual determinant' (1992:241). Ahulu's work relates to grammatical form only, and does not analyse lexical modification. My data show a correspondingly low level of indigenisation – 2.72% of all indigenised cultural reference – in the signifier, i.e. lexical form. It is followed by 7.18% in the signified, i.e. meaning, or, in Ahulu's terminology, lexical modification, and by 90.08% in both the signifier and signified. This tendency of indigenisation being lowest in the signifier, somewhat higher in the signified, and by far the highest in the signifier and signified is maintained in all the sub-corpus – first vs. later generation of writers and locally vs. internationally published works. As I observed in 6.5, this is evidence that indigenisation – at least with regard to cultural reference – is necessitated by a wish to find names in English for things, phenomena and practices that are culturally alien to it. The form tends to get modified only as far as it is

necessitated by the modification of meaning. Ahulu's findings certainly show a tendency, underpinned by my data, that has significant implications for the literary use of English in Ghana: namely, that even if we take into consideration that "a 'new' language is being forged as a result of the particular language-contact situation in West Africa and *the artist's imaginative use of that situation*" (Zabus, 1991:102; added emphasis), Ghanaian fiction conforms to what is regarded to be the 'African way' of writing and using English for literary expression to an extent which may perhaps be considered a 'minimum entry level' for being recognised as African writing. It has to be recognised, though, that quantification in this area is not available, is very likely to be next to impossible and any estimation is bound to be impressionistic.

	All 20 works	Generation		Published	
		first	later	locally	internationally
Number of words in (sub-)corpus	210,187	86,591	123,596	60,896	149,291
Overall number of cultural reference—ONCR (% in relation to (sub-)corpus	13,908 6.61%	5,699 6.58%	8,209 6.64%	4,949 8.12%	8,959 6.00%
Non-indigenised cultural reference (% in relation to ONCR)	9,429 67.79%	4,362 76.53%	5,067 61.72%	3,199 64.63%	6,230 69.53%
Indigenised total (% in relation to ONCR)	4,479 32.20%	1,337 23.46%	3,142 38.27%	1,750 35.36%	2,729 30.46%
signifier (% in relation to indigenised total)	122 2.72%	82 6.13%	40 1.27%	29 1.65%	93 3.40%
signified (% in relation to indigenised total)	322 7.18%	122 9.12%	200 6.36%	116 6.62%	206 7.54%
signifier and signified (%in relation to indigenised total)	4,035 90.08%	1,133 84.74%	2,902 92.36%	1,605 91.71%	2,430 89.04%
Indigenised total (% in relation to (sub-)corpus)	4,479 2.13%	1,337 1.54%	3,142 2.54%	1,750 2.87%	2,729 1.82%

Table 8.2: Indigenisation of cultural reference in the works of first vs. later generation of Ghanaian writers and in locally vs. internationally published works

(N.B. The data presented in this table relate only to the 18 cultural categories described in Chapter 5.)

Both the first and later generation of Ghanaian writers exhibit the use of a similar proportion of cultural reference in the 18 cultural categories in their works – 6.58% and 6.64% of the sub-corpora, respectively. The first generation writers indigenise 23.46% of their cultural reference, while the later generation writers indigenise 38.27% of it. This difference of 14.81% is by far the greatest, both in terms of indigenisation and, also, in terms of authorial assistance, as we shall see later. The explanation for this is twofold. As we have seen earlier, whatever their claims may be, the first generation of Ghanaian writers wrote exclusively for an international readership. To be recognised as African writers, not only did they have to have an African subject matter and an African perspective, but they also needed to modify their language to carry their African experience. After all, the appropriation of English was part and parcel, an essential requirement, of being an African writer, and almost certainly implies conscious choices of indigenised language. At the same time, these writers had to make sure that they moulded English so that it would stand out as distinctively African yet be accessible and palatable to an international audience. This, coupled with an overall preference of the educated Ghanaian for Standard English, explains the low proportion – a mere 1.54% of the sub-corpus – of indigenised cultural reference in the works of the first generation writers.

Among the later generation of writers in the study, six published internationally, six locally. By the time they started publishing, two things had happened. An international readership had been groomed, by the first generation of Ghanaian and other African writers, to read and appreciate African literature; and a small home audience had been established that had ‘inside knowledge’ and acute appreciation for what could be regarded as Ghanaian forms of expression. The existence of such a domestic readership, however small, can be regarded as an important influence on the conscious choices individual writers made in terms of increased indigenised language use. In addition, it is not unreasonable to assume that the indigenisation of English as the unconscious collective process of a speech community both at ethnic and national level had seeped into the personal repertoire of these writers and contributed to the unconscious use of indigenised language in their writing. These factors explain the higher proportion of indigenised cultural reference in the works of the later generation writers. We have to remember, however, that this is still not a very high proportion – only 2.54% of the overall size of the sub-corpus.

When we compare locally published works with internationally published ones, we have to remember that all locally published works have been written exclusively by later generation writers, while the internationally published ones include all the works of the first generation and also works of the later generation.

Locally published works contain a larger proportion of cultural reference – 8.12% of the sub-corpus – than internationally published ones, which contain only 6.00% of the respective sub-corpus. Also, 35.36% of all cultural reference in the locally published works is indigenised as compared to 30.46% in the internationally published ones. This fits the earlier findings regarding the difference between the first and later generation writers. The data provide strong evidence for a distinct division along ‘first generation–internationally published, later generation–locally published’ axes, and the few internationally published later generation works do not seem to make a significant difference. Although they increase the proportion of indigenised language use in internationally published works by 7%, they do not interfere with the general tendency which shows a higher proportion of indigenised language use in locally published works.

Whereas it is not surprising that, in order to cater for the needs of a loosely defined fairly mixed audience, internationally published works contain a smaller proportion of indigenised language than locally published ones, I did not anticipate that later generation writers would use more indigenised language than first generation ones. One could quite legitimately think that being firmly established in their African identity, later generation writers are emancipated from having to use indigenised language to assert their Africanness. The data provide evidence to the contrary. Later generation writers do appropriate English to a greater extent than first generation writers do, but the reason for this may not necessarily be the desire to assert Africanness. On the one hand, following from the development of African literature, it may rather be a need to conform to the popular and critical expectations of what is regarded as African literature. On the other, indigenisation in the Ghanaian speech community, both at national and at ethnic level, with specific regard to lexical modification as part of a writer’s personal linguistic repertoire may account for this.

8.3 Authorial strategies

Ghanaian writers do not seem to over-assist their readers in understanding cultural reference. In the corpus of 20 works in the 18 cultural categories examined they leave 95.54% of the cultural reference unexplained/untranslated, and offer assistance to the readers only in 4.45% of the cases. This accounts for 0.29% of the corpus. The worries of critics, mentioned in 7.2, 7.3 and 7.4, that authorial strategies aimed at making the text accessible to readers who do not share the author's cultural and linguistic experience can be detrimental to the movement of the plot because 'the story is forced to drag an explanatory machinery behind it' (Ashcroft *et al*, 1989:62) are certainly unfounded in the case of Ghanaian prose writing. Table 8.3 below provides evidence for this.

A clearly observable tendency in Ghanaian fiction that may partially be responsible for the low occurrence of 'assisted' cultural reference is the withdrawal of authorial assistance once it has been given. This means that once a cultural reference has been cushioned, contextualised or provided with ethnographic explanation, it will re-occur in the text without these 'props'. For example, in *The Gab Boys* we can witness the gradual withdrawal of authorial assistance. On page 10 'abuse deal' occurs for the first time provided with an ethnographic explanation. Later in the text the Akan-English collocation appears without authorial assistance and finally even the English part of the collocation is omitted. Similarly, on page 12 *OBK* is contextualised, but later in the text assistance is withdrawn. In *Crossroads at Ankobea* on page 10 *ahenfie* appears for the first time cushioned as 'the chief's palace', but then the cushioning is dropped and only *ahenfie* is used, with the expectation that the reader can recall the meaning. *Crossroads*, however, is exceptional in that, in addition to the various authorial strategies deployed in the text, a glossary is available for the reader throughout.

As has been mentioned in 7.5, unlike other authorial strategies, a glossary is an extra-textual device and is very often not an authorial but an editorial intervention. Furthermore, the 172 instances of glossed words found in the corpus in the 18 categories of cultural reference come from two novels: *Changes* is represented by one single word, while *Crossroads at Ankobea* by multiple occurrences of 21 words. This shows that providing a glossary is rather uncharacteristic of Ghanaian fiction. Furthermore, the fact that practically one novel accounts for all the instances of assistance through a glossary creates an imbalance and

seems to distort the findings. Consequently, I have decided to exclude the glossary from the following comparisons.

	All 20 works	Generation		Published	
		first	later	locally	internationally
Number of words in (sub-)corpus	210,187	86,591	123,596	60,896	149,291

Number of cultural references examined for authorial assistance - NCREAA (% in relation to (sub-)corpus)	13,903 6.61%	5,711 6.59%	8,192 6.62%	4,948 8.12%	8,955 5.99%
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No assistance (% in relation to NCREAA)	13,283 95.54%	5,511 96.49%	7,772 94.87%	4,643 93.83%	8,640 96.48%
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Overall number of authorial assistance – ONAA (% in relation to NCREAA) <i>[ONAA minus glossary]</i>	620 4.45%	200 3.50%	420 5.12%	305 6.16%	315 3.51%
	<i>[620-172=448 3.22%]</i>		<i>[420-172=248 3.02%]</i>	<i>[305-171=134 2.7%]</i>	<i>[315-1=314 3.50%]</i>
cushioning (% in relation to ONAA)	32 5.16%	17 8.5%	15 3.57%	12 3.93%	20 6.34%
contextualisation (% in relation to ONAA)	337 54.35%	136 68%	201 47.85%	99 32.45%	238 75.55%
ethnographic explanation (% in relation to ONAA)	79 12.74%	47 23.5%	32 7.61%	23 7.54%	56 17.77%
glossary (% in relation to ONAA)	172 27.74%	0 0%	172 40.95%	171 56.06%	1 0.31%
Overall number of authorial assistance – ONAA (% in relation to (sub-)corpus) <i>[ONAA minus glossary (% in relation to (sub-)corpus)]</i>	620 0.29%	200 0.23%	420 0.33%	305 0.50%	315 0.21%
	<i>[620-172=448 0.21%]</i>		<i>[420-172=248 0.20%]</i>	<i>[305-171=134 0.22%]</i>	<i>[315-1=314 0.21%]</i>

Table 8.3: Authorial assistance

(N.B. The data presented in this table relate only to the 18 cultural categories described in Chapter 5.)

The overall tendency among Ghanaian writers is to use cushioning the least – only 5.16% of all assistance is cushioning. More preference is given to ethnographic explanation – 12.74% of all assistance is ethnographic explanation; and the most preferred – and, of course, least intrusive – strategy is contextualisation with 54.35% of all assistance. This tendency is maintained throughout the sub-corpus: first vs. later generation writers and locally vs. internationally published works. The preference for contextualisation underpins Zabuz's observation that contextualisation 'will always be in use because of the very ubiquity of the concept of context' (1991:164).

As with indigenisation, when comparing groups of writers and works for authorial assistance, we recognise the 'first generation–internationally published, later generation–locally published' axes and can relate the findings accordingly. First generation writers, who have published exclusively internationally, provide assistance for 3.50% of their cultural references, which is identical to the proportion of 'assisted' cultural reference in internationally published works. The fact that internationally published works include works by later generation writers does not make a difference. At the same time, later generation writers show a decrease in assistance: only 3.02% of their cultural references are 'assisted'. Similarly, decreased assistance – given for 2.7% of the cultural references – is found in locally published works. Although a tendency towards decrease is clearly discernible along this axis, there is a 0.32% difference between later generation writers and locally published works, which can realistically be accounted for by the fact that the sub-corpus of later generation writers includes internationally published works which contain a larger number of 'assisted' cultural reference than locally published ones.

If we examine the various categories of assistance, we invariably find that first generation writers cushion, contextualise and ethnographically explain more than later generation writers, and that internationally published works contain more cushioned, contextualised and ethnographically explained cultural reference than locally published ones. To put it in terms of our axes, a higher proportion of 'assisted' cultural reference is found in the 'first generation–internationally published' axis, and a lower proportion in the 'later generation–locally published' axis. Such findings can directly be related to the relative position of reader groups to the metonymic gap. Locally published works cater for an audience that is located on the same side of the metonymic gap as the writer. Authorial assistance is given to the extent that the writer feels necessary for bridging the mostly linguistic, and to a much lesser degree cultural, differences that exist between him and other ethnic groups in Ghana.

Perhaps aspiration and the potential to reach a wider international audience may be contributing factors. At the same time, internationally published works target a rather mixed and ill-defined audience, most of whom, by virtue of being Western, are located on the other side of the metonymic gap. Because in this case there is an obvious cultural difference between the writer and his audience, the writer weaves in more cushioned, contextualised and ethnographically explained cultural reference to make his text accessible to such an international audience than he would do for his local readership.

8.4 Conclusion

From the above it is possible to come to a number of conclusions. Firstly, indigenisation of English in the works of Ghanaian writers is the result of unconscious and conscious processes. It is unconscious in that it flows from the personal linguistic repertoire of the writer which reflects the linguistic processes at work in his speech communities at ethnic and national levels. It is conscious in that writers appropriate and mould English to the extent which is thought to be comfortably accommodated by their audiences and is regarded sufficient enough for them to belong to what is critically deemed to be the body of African literature.

Secondly, authorial assistance is fairly scarcely provided, it is audience driven, and as such involves conscious decision-making on the part of the writer. It is linked to the concept of the metonymic gap – the greater and more discernible the cultural difference, the more assistance is given to the reader.

Thirdly, indigenisation in the works of Ghanaian writers is in reverse ratio to authorial assistance. Whereas there is a higher proportion of indigenisation and lower proportion of authorial assistance in locally published works, there is a lower proportion of indigenisation and higher proportion of authorial assistance in internationally published works. Such a finding provides further evidence for authorial assistance to be audience driven.

Fourthly, there is a small yet discernible difference between the first and later generation of writers both in terms of indigenisation and authorial assistance. However, because both generations need to conform to the critical requirements of what is regarded as African

writing, this difference is not a generational one, and therefore it is not a literary developmental issue. The difference between the two generations is caused by the perceived needs and tolerance of the audience they write for.

9 CONCLUSION

9.1 Research findings

My aim in this thesis has been to examine how cultural reference is encoded in modern English-language Ghanaian fiction, what textual strategies writers employ to facilitate understanding of such reference and the effect these strategies have on reader interpretation. To this end, I set myself three objectives:

- 1 to describe lexical, semantic and syntactic variation in the indigenised forms of cultural reference in the English-language prose works of Ghanaian writers;
- 2 to analyse how the textual strategies Ghanaian writers employ to facilitate reader understanding of cultural reference encoded in various ways affect interpretation by the Ghanaian reader, the non-Ghanaian African reader, and the Western reader;
- 3 to investigate whether the ways of encoding cultural reference in the English-language prose works of Ghanaian writers have remained the same over time or have changed, creating a difference in approach between the first and a later generation of Ghanaian writers to expressing the African experience.

Accordingly, in Chapter 6 I gave a detailed linguistic description of the examples of indigenised cultural reference yielded by the data extracted from the corpus. The approach I took is that of examining each cultural reference as a linguistic sign, and consider it indigenised if either its linguistic form, i.e. the signifier, or the concept it signifies, i.e. the signified, or both, have been modified so that the resulting linguistic entity is either non-existent in Standard British English, or shows irregularity of form, or meaning, or both. In Table 9.1 below I have summarised the linguistic categories of indigenisation of cultural reference yielded by the data. The table highlights the complexity of variation in the expression of cultural reference. It also demonstrates that in the writer's attempt to mould the English language so that it can express his

African experience both form and meaning get modified. The figures presented in Table 6.1 show that variation is greatest in the lexical domain and involve various forms of lexical

Variation in the signifier	<i>Lexical innovation</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • clipping • unusual collocations • compounding • backformation • loan translation • multiple word-formation processes • irregular spelling
	<i>Syntactic variation</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • irregular tag questions • omission of function words • subjectless sentences • omission of O_{dir} in ditransitive verbs • irregular use of prepositions • irregular use of the plural -s
Variation in the signified	<i>Lexical innovation</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • conversion • acronyms and symbols
	<i>Semantic change</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • semantic extension • semantic restriction • semantic restriction and extension • semantic shift • semantic transfer
	<i>Proverbs and sayings</i>	
Variation in the signifier and signified	<i>African language expressions</i>	
	<i>Lexical innovation</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • borrowing • coinage • collocations containing African words • unusual collocations and compounds • conversion

Table 9.1: Categories of indigenisation of cultural reference in the data

innovation, semantic change and African language expressions. This suggests that the indigenisation, or rather appropriation, of English is necessitated by a ‘naming’ process – the wish to find names in English for things, phenomena and practices that are culturally alien to it. ‘Vocabulary is a very sensitive index of the culture of a people’ (Sapir, 1964:36). The choice of the Ghanaian writer to indigenise primarily words and expressions describing the physical environment, cultural artefacts, food and drink, clothing, family and kinship, marriage,

separation, divorce, education, work and profession not only gives insight into the way of living and thinking characteristic of his society, but also serves to inscribe his difference and distance from the culture whose language he has chosen for literary expression.

Not only does language variance have an important role in inscribing difference, but as I explained in Chapter 7, it is metonymic of the cultural difference it inscribes. I have argued that the metonymic gap can be created by cultural and/or linguistic difference. In case the difference is linguistic, represented by an African-language word/expression, it inscribes difference and functions metonymically only when it is left untranslated/unexplained as it is “its very resistance to interpretation [that] constructs a ‘gap’ between the writer’s culture and the colonial culture” (Ashcroft, 2001b:75). Once an authorial strategy gives the reader access to the meaning of the African-language word, it stops being a synecdochy standing for the writer’s culture and functions simply to add to the *couleur locale* and the creation of Africanness in the text. If, however, the difference is conceptual rather than linguistic, an African-language word may add to the overall complexity of the complex, but the gap remains even if the concept is expressed in English. Whether presented in the text in English or in an African language, such a concept will inscribe cultural difference.

Readers are divided along the metonymic gap. The findings confirm that the Ghanaian reader as a monolithic entity does not exist. While the Ghanaian readership shares supra-ethnic national cultural and linguistic experience which situates it on the same side of the metonymic gap as the writer, it is also fragmented along cultural and linguistic factors by virtue of individual readers being members of various ethnic groups. The Ghanaian readers’ appreciation of the writer’s meanings is dependent on their cultural and linguistic proximity to the writer. Those who are culturally and linguistically distant from the writer share experience with him at the supra-ethnic national level. Readers who know the writer’s language but are not fully conversant, or not familiar at all, with his culture are able to share in the writer’s experience to the extent their linguistic and encyclopaedic knowledge allows. Full appreciation of the writer’s meanings is shown only by those readers who share both the writer’s cultural and linguistic experience. This underlines the overriding importance of cultural knowledge and competence even in inter-ethnic communication within the same national boundaries.

The research provides evidence that in relation to the writer and the metonymic gap, non-Ghanaian African readers are in a position similar to those Ghanaian readers’ who share neither the culture of the writer’s ethnic group nor his language. Although the non-Ghanaian African

readers' lack of knowledge of Ghanaian languages may well be a barrier to activating and accessing cultural knowledge, they are part of the same pan-African cultural heritage as the writer, and this supra-ethnic, supranational, pan-African cultural knowledge places the non-Ghanaian African reader on the same side of the metonymic gap as the writer.

Western readers, on the other hand, do not share a mutual cognitive environment with the writer. The research results confirm the cultural difference and distance between them and the writer. This difference and distance locates the Western readers on the other side of the metonymic gap.

The readers' position in relation to the metonymic gap is indicative of their ability to interpret the untranslated/unexplained African-language words/expressions in the text. While the Ghanaian and other African readers can access their culture-bound meanings fully or to varying degrees depending on the similarity of their cultural experience to the writer's, for the majority of Western readers these words/expressions remain symbols of the writer's difference of experience. However, the results show that if the difference is inscribed in English, albeit in indigenised English, Western readers can traverse the metonymic gap, especially if the cultural reference pertains to the non-idiosyncratic, universal aspects of the writer's culture.

The authorial strategies intended to help the reader traverse the metonymic gap all have some promise, as well as shortcomings. Cushioning offers a shorthand solution for all readers who do not speak the writer's language. Although it may not provide enough information for these readers to recover the full meaning of an African-language word, the information it gives is sufficient for them to have a close enough idea of the meaning to avoid a disruption in the reading process and to get across the metonymic gap.

Evidence provided by the research results suggests that contextualisation of African-language words in the English text works for some readers, but not for others, and leads to misunderstanding in some cases. It ultimately proves ineffective because it relies "on the non-indigenous reader's 'act of reading'" (Zabus, 1991:162), involving the reader in a guessing game requiring exceptional insight, and it tries to cater for the needs of a mixed and ill-defined readership. The contextualisation of indigenised English-language words/expressions referring to culture-specific concepts presents further problems by virtue of the one English word/expression signifying two concepts – the original native English concept, and the Ghanaian culture-specific concept. It works for the Ghanaian readers, in case they need to rely

on it, because the new Ghanaian culture-based information provided by the writer's context is stronger than their already existing assumptions about the original native English concept. For Western and non-Ghanaian African readers such contextualisation may eventually prove ineffective because the inferential process may not be able to take these readers beyond their existing assumptions about the original native English-based concept. In addition, the non-Ghanaian African readers may experience further difficulty resulting from the fact that in *their* indigenised variety of English the same word/expression may refer to a different concept.

The ethnographic explanation of African-language words has been shown to be found tedious by a significant proportion of each reader group. Many of the African-language words in the English text function primarily to inscribe difference and to contribute to the creation of Africanness, and are perceived by the readers as such. Understanding them (fully) may not be the readers' expectation – after all they are reading fiction, not an anthropological or ethnographic treatise. Consequently, they may not feel it worth their while to wade through lengthy explanations even if they offer deeper insight.

The results provide clear evidence that despite providing adequate information, glossaries have been found inconvenient by an overwhelming majority of readers in all three groups as they considerably slow down the reading process and frustrate it by interrupting concentration and image building.

Ghanaian writers indigenise and provide authorial assistance to various degrees. In Chapter 8 I compared the first generation of Ghanaian writers with the later generation and internationally published works with locally published ones. The results show that there is a lower proportion of indigenised cultural reference in the works of the first generation of writers, all of whom published exclusively internationally, than in the works of the later generation of writers, who have published both locally and internationally. First generation writers, influenced by popular and critical expectations to conform to what was perceived and regarded as the distinctively African way of writing, almost certainly exercised a conscious choice to use indigenised language. While they moulded English so that it could carry their African experience, they had to make sure that they remained accessible and palatable to an essentially international audience. By the time later generation writers started publishing, an international audience had been groomed to read and appreciate African literature, and a small domestic readership had been established that had an inside knowledge and acute appreciation for what could be regarded as Ghanaian forms of expression. The existence of such a domestic audience has

certainly been an important influence on the conscious choices of later generation writers to indigenise English to a greater extent. At the same time, in addition to the still compelling necessity for writers to write 'differently' in order to be regarded as African writers, indigenisation of English as the unconscious collective process of a speech community both at ethnic and national levels may have found its way to the personal linguistic repertoire of these writers and contributed to the unconscious use of indigenised language in their writing.

The research results also provide evidence that first generation writers cushion, contextualise and ethnographically explain more than later generation writers, and that internationally published works contain more cushioned, contextualised and ethnographically explained cultural reference than locally published ones. Such findings can directly be related to the relative position of readers to the metonymic gap. Internationally published works target a rather mixed and ill-defined audience, most of whom are situated on the other side of the metonymic gap. The apparent cultural difference between the writers and these readers serves as an incentive for the writers to provide more assistance. At the same time, locally published works cater for a readership that is situated on the same side of the metonymic gap as the writer. Although aspiration and the potential to reach a wider international audience may be a contributing factor in the provision of authorial assistance, in locally published works authorial assistance is given only to the extent that the writer feels necessary to bridge the primarily linguistic, and to a much lesser degree cultural, differences that exist between him and other ethnic groups in Ghana.

Both the use of indigenised language and the provision of authorial assistance become highly problematic and stand in the way of the appreciation of Europhone African, and by the same token other postcolonial, writing by a wider international audience if either of them, or both are overdone. The data provide evidence that in Ghanaian fiction this is not the case. In my corpus of 210,187 words there are only 4,479 instances of indigenised cultural reference in the 18 cultural categories examined, which constitutes a mere 2.13% of the corpus. Similarly, there are only 620 instances of authorial assistance provided, which is an even slighter 0.29% of the corpus, and means that authorial assistance is provided only for 13.84% of the indigenised cultural reference. These figures suggest that Ghanaian writers appropriate and mould English only to the extent which is thought to be comfortably accommodated by their audiences but is still sufficient enough for them to be recognised as belonging to what is critically deemed to be the body of African literature. The data suggests that the very small yet discernible difference between first generation and later generation writers both in terms of indigenisation and

authorial assistance is audience-driven, caused by the perceived needs and tolerance of the readership they write for rather than a generational, hence literary developmental issue.

However low the proportion of indigenised language is in the works of Ghanaian writers, the research results have demonstrated that by inscribing cultural difference and thereby creating a metonymic gap, Ghanaian writers trade in meanability, defined by Ashcroft as 'a situation in which meaning can occur' (2001b:76), for the expression of their distinctive cultural experience. The results have confirmed that because of its cultural distance, it is the Western readership that copes with indigenised cultural reference in these texts the least, and that the difficulty it faces is both linguistic and conceptual. The fact that the African readership, Ghanaian and non-Ghanaian alike, has been found to be situated on the same side of the metonymic gap as the writer by virtue of it sharing in a pan-African cultural heritage gives credit to the concept of African culture being a unified whole. At the same time, the results also provide evidence that the African readership is fragmented according to its members' linguistic and cultural proximity to the writer, thus highlighting the existence of plurality within African culture.

Communication between the Ghanaian writer and his multiple audience owes its difficulty to the peculiarity of the interpretive and communicative situation. The cultural difference between the writer and his audience and their absence from each other are accentuated by the existence of more than one interpretive context – the surface meaning of English and the underlying meaning of the writer's mother tongue. The research results provide evidence that only those readers can fully recover the writer's meaning with whom he shares a mutual cognitive environment. The smaller the number of assumptions the reader can provide, the further he gets from the intended meaning. Lack of knowledge of the writer's mother tongue automatically restricts the reader to reliance on the surface meaning of English, thereby limiting him to assumptions derived from the propositional form of the English-language representation of a concept, violating the underlying meaning of the invisible but discernible mother-tongue original. Such a situation inevitably carries the potential for misinterpretation. However, the fact that Ghanaian writers use indigenised language sparingly reduces the risk of reader frustration at the inability to (fully) recover intended meanings and saves the reader from a loss of interest in and appreciation of the Ghanaian writer's cross-cultural text.

9.2 Limitations and possible future developments

The major limitation of the research lies in the size of the corpus and in the size of the sample population. As described in 5.3.1.1, the corpus is made up of the first, middle and last chapter/short story of each of the 20 volumes of Ghanaian fiction selected for the study. The selection contains all the major works of elite Ghanaian prose literature and represents a well-balanced cross section of this writing regarding time and place of publication. Although the inclusion in the study of the first, middle and last chapter/short story ensures that the sample contains different parts of the narrative, in terms of indigenised language use such a selection can only indicate tendencies in the full texts. Whether these tendencies are carried through can be established only by an analysis involving the full texts of the novels and all the short stories in a volume. Similarly, the findings regarding the linguistic variation in indigenised cultural reference do not contain all the linguistic categories that an analysis of the full texts/volumes would yield.

The relatively small size of the sample population (45 subjects including 19 Ghanaian, 7 non-Ghanaian African and 19 Western readers), particularly of the non-Ghanaian African readers' group, means that the evidence from the questionnaires may not always be substantial. As a consequence, on occasion the interpretation of the questionnaire results is inevitably speculative.

A minor limitation is caused by the fact that the analysis of cultural reference is limited to 18 cultural categories (cf.5.3.2.2) and leaves others outside the scope of the research. Although these 18 categories embrace all the major areas, covering all aspects of Ghanaian culture and breaking down the categories to discrete areas – e.g. instead of having the category 'physical environment/cultural artefacts' including nature and the man-made world, cultural artefacts ranging from household utensils to sculptures, music and (oral) literature, introduce separate categories for 'plants', 'animals', 'buildings', 'sculptures', 'music', etc. – would give a fuller and more refined picture.

One possible future development of this research follows from its limitations. A study of the indigenisation of cultural reference in Ghanaian English-language fiction on a much larger scale involving the full texts of the novels and complete volumes of short stories, and perhaps more works, as well as a considerably bigger and more balanced sample population would produce results with a higher degree of reliability.

Relying on evidence provided by the data I have made the claim that Ghanaian English-language fiction does not abound either in indigenised language use or authorial assistance regarding the treatment of cultural reference. The figures quoted above and also in Chapter 8 indicate a low occurrence of indigenised cultural reference and an even lower occurrence of authorial assistance – 2.13% and 0.29% of the corpus, respectively. Statistically this means that every 46th word in the corpus is an indigenised cultural reference and that authorial assistance is provided for every 7th indigenised cultural reference. Practically speaking, the corpus in its current layout comprises 417 pages. All the examined indigenised cultural reference put together makes up 8.8 pages, and authorial assistance is provided for 1.2 pages out of the 8.8. Whether these numbers reflect low proportions indeed, can be verified if we compare them with figures gained, using the same methods, from other African national English-language literatures, for example Nigerian, Kenyan or Zimbabwean. A comparative study involving at least one, but preferably more, of these national literatures could elucidate this question.

In addition to looking at differences between earlier and later generation writers and locally and internationally published works, it would be interesting to investigate whether there is a difference between male and female Ghanaian writers with regard to their use of indigenised cultural reference and provision of authorial assistance. Such a study could also be extended to include other national literatures.

As indigenised language use in the works studied is not limited to cultural reference alone, one possible study could examine and analyse all indigenised language use and the provision or absence of authorial assistance.

The reader profiles provide evidence (cf. 7.2.1, 7.2.2 and 7.2.3) that elite Ghanaian English-language fiction is not widely read. Taking the issues raised in 2.5 as a starting point, a study could be devoted to the investigation of the domestic and international audience of Ghanaian, and by extension Europhone African, literature, the role large international publishers play in making it available worldwide and what the future may hold for it.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1:

FULL LIST OF THE EXAMPLES OF INDIGENISED CULTURAL REFERENCE FOUND IN THE CORPUS

The list contains all the examples of indigenised cultural reference found in the corpus. Although their frequency is not measured, page numbers provided give an idea – this can, however, be considered no more than an approximation as a particular cultural reference may occur several times on the same page. Page numbers are not given where it proves unfeasible, for example in the case of personal or geographical names, family relations or traditional titles, some of which have such a high frequency as makes it impracticable to indicate all the sites of their occurrence.

The numbering and titles of sections correspond to those in Chapter 6.

6.2 Variation in the signifier

6.2.1 Lexical innovation

6.2.1.1 Clipping

- (1) *B* (Gab Boys, p.178) <pn1>
- (2) *Bibi* (Girl Who Can, p.131) <pn1>
- (3) *Sis* (SoP, p.1) <pn1>
- (4) *mokes* (Gab Boys, p.13) <pw3>

6.2.1.2 Unusual collocations

- (5) *adjustable chair* (Girl Who Can, p.2) <pw1>
- (6) *paramount town* (Of Men, p.5) <pw1>
- (7) *waste box* (The Beautiful Ones, p.7) <pw1>
- (8) *backyard garden* (Wind, p.11) <pw1>
- (9) *cinema house* (Beyond, p.61; Girl Who Can, p.4) <pw1>
- (10) *trading shop* (Crossroads, p.8) <pw1>
- (11) *transport trucks* (Beyond, p.57) <pw1>

- (12) *grammar education* (No Sweetness, p.72) <m1>
- (13) *cement block* (Catechist, p.109) <pw1>
- (14) *cement block walls* (Strange Man, p.) <pw1>
- (15) *cement-block house* (Beyond, p.) <pw1>
- (16) *cement verandah* (Gab Boys, p.89) <pw1>
- (17) a small *cement house* in town (Beyond, p.) <pw1>
- (18) *cement paper* (This Earth, p.171) <pw1>
- (19) *trafficator bulb* (Wind, p.26) <pw1>
- (20) *the mouth of the road* (No Sweetness, p.130) <pw1>

6.2.1.3 Backformation

- (21) *Sissie* (Girl Who Can, No Sweetness, Our Sister) <pn1>

6.2.1.4 Loan translation

- (22) *bush meat* (Gab Boys, p.184) <pw1>
- (23) *covercloth* <pw3> (Fragments, p.142) <pw3>
- (24) *cover cloths* <pw3> (Fragments, p.137) <pw3>
- (25) *market-money* (SoP, p.36) <pw1>
- (26) *outdoored*: ‘Dzenawo’s son was to be *outdoored*.’ (This Earth, p.11) <sw1>
‘Once John has not been *outdoored* he is not a chief.’
(Crossroads, p.48) <sw1>
- (27) *outdooring* (Crossroads, p.48, 49; Fragments, p.87) <sw1>
- (28) *sponge* (Beautiful Ones, p.101, 102) <pw1>
- (29) *sponge strands* (Beautiful Ones, p.102) <pw1>
- (30) *chop money* (No Sweetness, p.131; Wind, p.49) <pw1>
- (31) *clothing store* (CoN, p.211) <pw1>
- (32) *my little aunt* (No Sweetness, p.131) <r4>
- (33) *lorry road* (Gab Boys, p.88) <pw1>
- (34) *motor road* (Narrow Path, p.3) <pw1>

6.2.1.5 Multiple word-formation processes

- (35) *enstool*: ‘you are going to be *enstooled* officially’
(Crossroads, p.50) <sw1>
‘whether he will be *enstooled* at all’ (Crossroads, p.54)
<sw1>
- (36) *enstoolment* (Crossroads, p.11) <sw1>
- (37) *destool*: ‘The people of Kramo village rebelled and *destooled* their chief.’ (Crossroads, p.54) <sw1>
‘the Ankobea chief was going to be *destooled*’
(Crossroads, p.105) <sw1>
‘Nana Kwesi Mensa IV would be declared *destooled*’
(Crossroads, p.108) <sw1>
- (38) *destoolment* (Crossroads, p.107) <sw1>

6.2.1.6 Irregular spelling

- (39) The *Beautiful Ones Are Not Yet Born* (title; also p.183) <pw1>

6.2.2 Syntactic variation

6.2.2.1 Irregular tag questions

- (40) You would all have laughed at me, *no?* (Girl Who Can, p.48) <sw1>
(41) You broke *not so?* (Beautiful Ones, p.106) <pw1>

6.2.2.2 Omission of function words

- (42) *You* □ *broke not so?* (Beautiful Ones, p.106) <pw1>
(43) *Who born* □ *fool* (Beautiful Ones, p.106) <pw1>
(44) *Who* □ *born fool* (Beautiful Ones, p.106) <pw1>
(45) *Contrey* □ *broke* (Beautiful Ones, p.106) <pw1>
(46) *Money* □ *sweet pass all* (Beautiful Ones, p.106) <pw1>
(47) *Vagina* □ *sweet* (Beautiful Ones, p.106) <pw1>

6.2.2.3 Omission of the dummy subject 'it'
(48) *Money sweet* □ *pass all* (Beautiful Ones, p.106) <pw1>

6.2.2.4 Omission of direct object in ditransitive 'give'
(49) *We give our ghosts to drink.* (Fragments, p.7) <sw1>

6.2.2.5 Irregular use of count/non-count nouns
(50) a couple of *quids* (Gab Boys, p.183) <pw1>
(51) *a white calico* (Wind, p.15) <pw3>

6.2.3 Pidgin

- (52) *aspiti* (This Earth, p.176) <pw1>
(53) *broder* (This Earth, p.176) <r4>
(54) *motri* (This Earth, p.176) <pw1>
(55) *masa* (This Earth, p.173, 176) <m2>
(56) *Golcos* (Gab Boys, p.9) <pn2>
(57) the real “*cash-dey*” sections of this city (Girl Who Can, p.3) <pw1>
(58) “*Make God help you pass well and go for overseas,*” he told me.
“*Then you go fit look for your father.*” (Wind, p.53) <m4>
(59) *Pray for detention*
Jailman chop free (Beautiful Ones, p.106) <pw1>
(60) *Socialism chop make I chop* (Beautiful Ones, p.106) <pw1>

6.3 Variation in the signified

6.3.1 Lexical innovation

6.3.1.1 Conversion

- (61) *Doctor* (SoP, p.74) <pn1>
- (62) *Lawyer* (This Earth, p.173) <pn1>
- (63) *Master* (SoP, p.66) <pn1>

6.3.1.2 Acronyms and symbols

- (64) *K.C.C.* (Beautiful Ones, p.7) <pw1>
- (65) *U.T.C. / UTC building* (Beautiful Ones, p.9 / 107) <pw1>
- (66) *G.N.T.C.* (Beautiful Ones, p.9) <pw1>
- (67) *U.A.C.* (Beautiful Ones, p.9; This Earth, p.178) <pw1>
- (68) *C.F.A.O. / the French C.F.A.O.* (Beautiful Ones, p.10 / 9) <pw1>
- (69) *CPP* (Beautiful Ones, p.110) <pw1>
- (70) *OBK* (Gab Boys, p.12, 13, 14) <m2>
- (71) *¢500* (SoP, p.74) <pw1>

6.3.2 Semantic change

6.3.2.1 Semantic extension

- (72) *announcer* (Of Men, p.6) <m2>
- (73) *buses* (Crossroads, p.8) <pw1>
- (74) *bush ancestors* (Beyond, p.58) <sw2>
- (75) *cloth(s)* (Catechist, p.107; Changes, p.6; Crossroads, p.1, 11, 51, 53, 109; Dancing Tortoise, p.135; Gab Boys, p.51, 90, 94, 100, 101, 192; Healers, p.110, 116; Narrow Path, p.12; No Sweetness, p.67, 74, 131; Of Men, p.5, 50, 55, 108, 113; SoP, p.40, 41, 43; This Earth, p.4, 9, 11, 101; Wind, p.17, 47) <pw3>
- (76) *mourning cloth* (This Earth, p.105) <pw3>
- (77) *bedcloth / sleeping cloth* (Changes, p.9 / 10) <pw1>
- (78) *undercloth* (Of Men, p.48) <pw3>
- (79) *dress* (Gab Boys, p.12) <pw3>
- (80) *emigration* (Beyond, p.56, 57) <pw1>
- (81) *escort police constable* (Gab Boys, p.9-10) <m2>
- (82) *escort police* (Gab Boys, p.12) <m2>
- (83) *linguist / the chief's linguist* (Of Men, p.5, 113, 116 / Beyond, p.4;

- Narrow Path, p.1) <m2>
- (84) *spokesman / the chief's spokesman* (Gab Boys, p.188, 189 / 187)
<m2>
- (85) *lobby* (Of Men, p.3) <pw1>
- (86) *Passion Week* (Beautiful Ones, p.1, 3, 111) <sw4>
- (87) *python* (Fragments, p.8) <pw1>
- (88) *rival* (SoP, p.43) <r2>
- (89) *send*: 'When I was young he used to send me.' (Gab Boys, p.191)
<r3>
- (90) *soap* (Gab Boys, p.99) <pw1>
- (91) *toffees* (SoP, p.61) <pw2>
- (92) *umbrella*: red umbrella/royal umbrella (Healers, p.308) <pw1>
- (93) *mother* (Gab Boys, p.186; Of Men, p.105; No Sweetness, p.59;
Wind, p.4) <r4>
- (94) *my mother* (No Sweetness, p.69) <r4>
- (95) *two of my mothers* (Gab Boys, p.191) <r4>
- (96) *one of her mothers on her mother's side* (Girl Who Can, p.47) <r4>
- (97) *any other mothers and grandmothers we considered close enough*
(Girl Who Can, p.47) <r4>
- (98) *one of my grandmothers* (Gab Boys, p.191) <r4>
- (99) *Mammy* (This Earth, p.175) <r4>
- (100) *Mama* (Gab Boys, p.186) <r4>
- (101) *my fathers* (This Earth, p.102, 175) <r4>
- (102) *her fathers / Esi's fathers* (Changes, p.89) <r4>
- (103) *his fathers / the fathers* (Crossroads, p.12) <r4>
- (104) *Papa* (Nimo) (Grief Child, p.15) <r4>
- (105) *auntie* (Catechist, p.17) <r4>
- (106) *Auntie* (Grief Child, p.178; SoP, p.41) <r4>
- (107) *Auntie Abena* (SoP, p.40, 41) <r4>
- (108) *Auntie Esi* (CoN, p.5, 96) <r4>
- (109) *Auntie Boatemaa* (SoP, p.63, 69, 70) <r4>

- (110) *my brother* (No Sweetness, p.63) <r4>
- (111) *my father* (No Sweetness, p.63) <r4>
- (112) *my husband* (No Sweetness, p.63) <r4>
- (113) *my master* (No Sweetness, p.73, 129) <r4>

6.3.2.2 Semantic restriction

- (114) *compound* (Changes, p.6; CoN, p.1, 211; Dancing Tortoise, p.285; Grief Child, p.84, 88, 90, 91, 92, 178, 181; Narrow Path, p.2, 85, 180; Of Men, p.47, 102; Strange Man, p.1; This Earth, p.5, 8, 9, 175; Wind, p.17, 44, 54) <pw1>
- (115) *missus* (Girl Who Can, p.132) <r2>
- (116) *police constable* (Gab Boys, p.10) <m2>
- (117) *general police* (Gab Boys, p.12) <pw1>

6.3.2.3 Semantic restriction and extension

- (118) *agent* (Beyond, p.56, 57, 58, 59, 60, 61, 136) <m2>
- (119) *carriers* (No Sweetness, p.69) <m2>
- (120) *gangway* (Beyond, p.57) <pw1>
- (121) *mate / mates* (Gab Boys, p.97, 99, 100, 101, 104; SoP, p.61 / This Earth, p.172, 176) <m2>
- (122) *the driver's mate* (Gab Boys, p.96; SoP, p.61) <m2>
- (123) *lorry mate* (Gab Boys, p.99) <m2>
- (124) *messenger / court messengers* (Crossroads, p.52 / Crossroads, p.11) <m2>
- (125) *reckon*: 'He *reckoned* the dowry.' (No Sweetness, p.67) <r2>
 'I hope you had something to *reckon* against him?' (No Sweetness, p.67) <r2>
 'You forgot to *reckon* the Knife Fee.' (No Sweetness, p.67) <r2>
 'He also *reckoned* the price of the trunk.' (No Sweetness, p.68) <r2>
 'There was only the Cooking Cost for me to *reckon* against his.' (No Sweetness, p.68) <r2>

- (126) *soup* (Catechist, p.110, 113; Gab Boys, p.94; Dancing Tortoise, p.289, 292; No Sweetness, p.82; Of Men, p.8; SoP, p.68, 69) <pw2>
- (127) *antelope soup* (Of Men, p.5) <pw2>
- (128) *mutton soup* (SoP, p.74) <pw2>
- (129) *palm soup* (Catechist, p.110, 111; Beautiful Ones, p.13) <pw2>
- (130) *stew* (Catechist, p.110) <pw2>
- (131) *ground nut stew* (This Earth, p.101) <pw2>
- (132) *palm nut stew* (Gab Boys, p.) <pw2>
- (133) *rice and stew* (This Earth, p.170) <pw2>
- (134) *steward* (SoP, p.68) <m2>
- (135) *stool* (Crossroads, p.47, 51, 52, 53, 79, 107, 108) <pw1>

6.3.2.4 Semantic shift

- (136) *hot drink* (Fragments, p.5) <pw2>

6.3.2.5 Semantic transfer

- (137) *action film* (Beyond, p.61, 62) <pw1>
- (138) *airtight trunks* (Gab Boys, p.103) <pw1>
- (139) *corn-dough* (Narrow Path, 184) <pw1>
- (140) *gong-gong man* (Catechist, p.107) <m2>
- (141) *knocker* (Gab Boys, p.10) <pw1>
- (142) *lorry / lorries* (Crossroads, / p.8; Narrow Path, p.9, 10, 14, 184 / 3; No Sweetness, p.128; SoP, p.61; This Earth, p.178, 179 / 7, 177) <pw1>
- (143) *lorry park* (No Sweetness, p.128; This Earth, p.180) <pw1>
- (144) *news vendor* (Catechist, p.107) <m2>
- (145) *piece/pieces* (Gab Boys, p.98, 99) <pw1>
- (146) *cabin biscuits* (Beautiful Ones, p.102) <pw2>
- (147) *small boys* (Beautiful Ones, p.109) <m2>

6.3.3 Proverbs and sayings

- (148) *One cannot swallow the head and claim the eyes were not affected.*
(Crossroads, p.51)
- (149) *If a thief promises to give up stealing, everyone should remember that stealing is in his fingertips, and he can always go back to it.*
(Dancing Tortoise, p.285)
- (150) *Nobody points out his village to another with his left finger.* (Gab Boys, p.189)
- (151) *When a child learns how to wash its hands, it eats with its elders from the same bowl.* (Gab Boys, p.196)
- (152) *It's the same thing if a horse doesn't go to the battle front, but its tail does.* (Girl Who Can, p.8)
- (153) *Mother is gold and mother is silk.* (Girl Who Can, p.133)
- (154) *In marriage, a woman must sometimes be a fool.* (No Sweetness, p.61)
- (155) *Our people say a bad marriage kills the soul.* (No Sweetness, p.62)
- (156) *What does one do, when one's only waterpot breaks?* (No Sweetness, p.74)
- (157) *When flour is scattered in the sand, who can sift it?* (No Sweetness, pp.73-4)
- (158) *A clay dish once broken can never be mended again.* (Of Men, p.1)
- (159) *A crab has never given birth to a bird before.* (Of Men, p.4)
- (160) *And then I would say, 'I see her skin has changed.'* (Of Men, p.52)
- (161) *Eating and talking are said to share a deer skin. They may decide to quarrel without warning.* (Of Men, p.8)
- (162) *Every matter that arises has a brother somewhere.* (Of Men, p.46)
- (163) *He who fires a gun in the night must not fear to wail in the day.* (Of Men, p.115)
- (164) *He who was not afraid to fire a gun in the night must not be afraid to wail during the day time.* (Of Men, p.109)
- (165) *I cannot imagine myself eating the rump of a moor hen in public.*
(Of Men, p.52)
- (166) *Only a stranger would be given a one-eyed hen to eat.* (Of Men, p.53)
- (167) *Some animal has swallowed the snake.* (Of Men, p.47)

- (168) *This insolent boy has trodden on my walking stick. (Of Men,p.52)*
- (169) *Whatever is sweet has some bitterness in it. (Our Sister, p.115)*
- (170) *The follower imitates the walk of the leader. (SoP, p.37)*
- (171) *The right hand washes the left and vice-versa. (SoP, p.76)*
- (172) *The sound of pestles in a neighbour's house is no indication of the kind of soup with which the fufuo is to be served. (SoP, p.77)*
- (173) *When you hear the sound of fufuo pestles at work in the neighbourhood, my child, don't be intimidated; pound your poor man's fufuo, for no matter how wealthy your neighbours seem to be, your soup may be of the same quality or even better than theirs! (SoP, p.76)*
- (174) *A goat who visits somebody's house should not weep because its head has been cracked with a club. (This Earth, p.9)*
- (175) *You don't make a juju for a dog which forbids him to touch palm oil. (This Earth, p.95)*
- (176) *As long as we eat, we have to build new hopes. (Wind, p.9)*
- (177) *If a man cannot pay a fine and a relative pays for him, it is not considered a shame. (Wind, p.3)*
- (178) *It is only those who have double eyes that can see into their [the gods'] deeds. (Wind, p.8)*
- (179) *The bamboo fence does not creak if nothing strikes it. (Wind, p.8)*
- (180) *The sheep that tried to break down the solid barn in anger, regretted the loss of its beautiful fur. (Wind, p.9)*
- (181) *Was it not mere folly to insult the crocodile while crossing the river on its back? (Wind, p.14)*
- (182) *When bile spoils the taste of a pot of soup, a new one is cooked. (Wind, p.9)*
- (183) *When this head is still alive, the knee is not allowed to wear a hat. (Wind, p.4)*
- (184) *Who are you to insult the crocodile in midstream? (Wind, p.9)*
- (185) *You don't foolishly dance around a trap if it has caught your favourite prey. (Wind, p.2)*

6.4 Variation in the signifier and signified

6.4.1 African language expressions

6.4.1.1 Words/expressions referring to the natural environment and various aspects of culture

Physical environment / cultural artefacts <pw1>

- (186) *adawuro* (Gab Boys, p.51)
- (187) *ahenfie* (Crossroads, p.10, 11, 12, 107, 108)
- (188) *akonkordieh* (Gab Boys, p.90, 92, 93)
- (189) *atitnpen* (Gab Boys, p.194)
- (190) *atumpan* (Gab Boys, p.190)
- (191) *bampa* (Of Men, p.57)
- (192) *bodua* (Wind, p.6, 7, 8)
- (193) *cedi* (Beautiful Ones, p.2, 3, 4)
- (194) *eto* (Gab Boys, p.92, 93)
- (195) *fetefre* (Gab Boys, p.194)
- (196) *funtumia* (Of Men, p.vii)
- (197) *igya* (Fragments, p.131)
- (198) *mmefe* (Gab Boys, p.99)
- (199) *Obrapa* (Gab Boys, p.11)
- (200) *Okwakuo* (Of Men, p.viii) – bird
- (201) *okyereben* (Gab Boys, p.89)
- (202) *Oman* (Crossroads, p.105, 107)
- (203) *onyina* (Gab Boys, p.90)
- (204) *Otuiedu* (Of Men, p.5)
- (205) *pesewa/pesewas* (Our Sister, p.114/Beautiful Ones, p.1)
- (206) *ropohpoh* (Gab Boys, p.13)
- (207) *sokosare* (Of Men, p.7)
- (208) *tukpei* (Of Men, p.7)
- (209) *yomo-be-Ga* (Gab Boys, p.99)

Food and drink <pw2>

- (210) *akara* (This Earth, p.175)

- (211) *akpeteshie* (Beautiful Ones, p.103; CoN, p.2, 8, 100; This Earth, p.7)
- (212) *ampesi* (Crossroads, p.52)
- (213) *apem* (Gab Boys, p.184)
- (214) *apranpransa* (Of Men, p.2)
- (215) *egusi* (Girl Who Can, p.52)
- (216) *fufu* (Beautiful Ones, p.110; Catechist, p.110; Fragments, p.134; Of Men, p.8)
- (217) *fufuo* (Gab Boys, p.94; SoP, p.68, 69)
- (218) *gari* (Crossroads, p.49)
- (219) *jolof* (Girl Who Can, p.50)
- (220) *kenkey* (Beautiful Ones, p.8, 10, 99; Catechist, p.113; Changes, p.3)
- (221) *koko* (This Earth, p.175)
- (222) *kontomire* (No Sweetness, p.82)
- (223) *mmorosa* (Gab Boys, p.191)
- (224) *oto* (No Sweetness, p.129)
- (225) *waakye* (SoP, p.65)

Clothing <pw3>

- (226) *aboefosem* (Of Men, p.83)
- (227) *agbada* (Changes, p.89)
- (228) *kaba* (This Earth, p.175)
- (229) *kente* (Narrow Path, p.2, 182)

Family relations <r4>

- (230) *Agya* (Gab Boys)
- (231) *agyanom* (Crossroads)
- (232) *anuanom* (Crossroads)
- (233) *Awo* (Our Sister)
- (234) *Ebusua* (Crossroads)
- (235) *Egya* (Crossroads)
- (236) *Eja* (Healers)
- (237) *Emama* (Our Sister)
- (238) *Ena* (Our Sister)
- (239) *Iyie* (Our Sister)

- (240) *Maame* (Crossroads, No Sweetness, SoP)
 (241) *maame/mame* (Wind)
 (242) *Maami* (No Sweetness)
 (243) *Maeto* (Our Sister)
 (244) *Mamaa* (Wind)
 (245) *Mena* (Healers)
 (246) *Naana* (Fragments)
 (247) *Nana* [female] (No Sweetness)
 (248) *Nana* [male] (Crossroads, Gab Boys, No Sweetness, Of Men)
 (249) *nananom* (Crossroads)
 (250) *Nna* (Our Sister)
 (251) *Nne* (Our Sister)
 (252) *Paa* (Wind)
 (253) *Paapa* (SoP)

In combination: *Agya Kwaku Amankwaa* (Gab Boys), *Agya Toroh* (Gab Boys), *Eja Ababio* (Healers), *Maame Abokuma* (Crossroads), *Maame Esi Abokuma* (Crossroads), *Maami Ama* (No Sweetness), *Maame Agyenkwa* (Crossroads), *Mena Araba Jesiwa* (Healers), *Paa Wangara* (Wind)

Traditions / customs / beliefs / superstitions <sw1>

- (254) *abuse* (Gab Boys, p.11)
 (255) *Ananse* (Fragments, p.4)
 (256) *okra* (Crossroads, p.50, 53)

Traditional festivals / sacred days <sw1>

- (257) *Ahobaa* (No Sweetness, p.59, 64)
 (258) *Ahobaada* (No Sweetness, p.64)
 (259) *Akwanbo* (Of Men, p.viii)
 (260) *Akwasidae* (Crossroads, p.54)
 (261) *Kundum* (Catechist, p.107)

Ancestors / deities <sw2>

- (262) *Afedomeshie* (This Earth, p.11)

- (263) *Ashiagbor* (This Earth, p.11)
 (264) *Atitsogbui* (This Earth, p.11)
 (265) *Dalosu* (This Earth, p.5)
 (266) *Kweli* (Girl Who Can, p.141)
 (267) *Letsu* (This Earth, p.11)
 (268) *Mamaa / Azule Mamaa* (Wind, p.2, 5, 6, 7, 16/2, 6)
 (269) *Mamagbo* (This Earth, p.11)
 (270) *Mpoimpoi* (Beyond, p.54)
 (271) *Nananom* (Fragments, p.4, 8, 199)
 (272) *Nyidevu* (This Earth, p.11)
 (273) *Tano / Azule Tano* (Wind, p.7, 9, 13/6, 7, 9)
 (274) *Tigare* (Crossroads, p.98, 103, 104)
 (275) *Wotodzo* (This Earth, p.11)

Christianity / Islam <sw4>

- (276) *"Momma akra nyinaa mmrebre won ho ase nhe: tumi a ewo anuonyam no ase. Na tumi biara nni ho se nea efi Nyankopon; nanso tumi a ewowo ho no, Onyankopon na wahye ato ho. Enti obiara a one tumi no di asi no, one nea Onyankopon ahye ato ho di asi; na won a wodi asi no benya afobu .."* (Crossroads, p.106)

Proverbs <ps>

- (277) *Owo asee: 'You women are no good – owo asee!'* (Catechist, p.16)
 (278) *Tarkwa ewu ntsem muo!* (Girl Who Can, p.6)
 (279) *Ohoho nndzi abenkwan.* (Catechist, p.111)

Work / profession / office <m2>

- (280) *the Apegya* (Of Men)
 (281) *aplankey / aplankeys* (Dancing Tortoise)
 (282) *asafomba* (Crossroads)
 (283) *wansam / Hausa wansams* (Gab Boys)
 (284) *Amankrado* (Of Men)
 (285) *Ankobeahene* (Crossroads)
 (286) *Kankanfo* (Of Men)
 (287) *Mallam* (No Sweetness)

- (288) *Nana* (Crossroads, Gab Boys, Of Men)
- (289) *Okomfo* (Crossroads)
- (290) *Okyeame* (Crossroads, Of Men)
- (291) *Omankrado* (Crossroads)
- (292) *oman mpanyinfo* (Crossroads)
- (293) *Opanin* (Gab Boys)
- (294) *Opanyin* (Crossroads)
- (295) *Osagyefo* (Gab Boys)
- (296) *Osofo* (Crossroads)
- (297) *Sanaahene* (Of Men)
- (298) *Tufuhene* (Crossroads)

In combination: *Amankrado Amponsa* (Of Men), *Nana Ankobea* (Crossroads), *Nana Kani* (Of Men), *Nana Kum* (No Sweetness), *Nana Kyeame* (Gab Boys), *Nana Mensa* (Crossroads), *Opanin Ampoma* (Gab Boys), *Opanyin Kwame Egyaben* (Crossroads), *Okomfo Dua* (Crossroads), *Okyeame Sintim* (Of Men), *Opanyin Kwesi Addai* (Crossroads), *Sanaahene Ogyeabo* (Of Men)

Corruption <m3>

- (299) *kola* : ‘This is only your *kola*. Take it as *kola*.’ (Beautiful ones, p.107)
 ‘Even *kola* nuts can say "thanks".’ (Beautiful Ones, p.182)
 ‘Even *kola* gives pleasure in the chewing.’ (Beautiful Ones, p.95)

6.4.1.2 **Names**

6.4.1.2.1 *Personal names <pn1>*

Male names

- (300) *Aaron Kuku* (This Earth)
- (301) *Ababio / Eja Ababio* (Healers)
- (302) *Addai* (Crossroads)
- (303) *Adonu* (This Earth)

- (304) *Adu* (Grief Child)
- (305) *Adu Ampofo Antwi* (Gab Boys)
- (306) *Afanyie* (Catechist)
- (307) *Agbefia* (Narrow Path)
- (308) *Dr Aggrey* (No Sweetness)
- (309) *Agya Kwaku Amankwaa* (Gab Boys)
- (310) *Agya Toroh* (Gab Boys)
- (311) *Agyei* (Of Men)
- (312) *Dr Agyekumhene* (Dancing Tortoise)
- (313) *Akobi / Cobby / Cobby Ajaman* (Beyond)
- (314) *Akoto* (Strange Man)
- (315) *Mr Akporley* (Gab Boys)
- (316) *Akwasi Asamoah* (Gab Boys)
- (317) *Ali/Ali Kondey / Mr Kondey* (Changes)
- (318) *Amamu* (This Earth)
- (319) *Amaning / Kwadwo Amaning* (Gab Boys)
- (320) *Amankrado Amponsa* (Of Men)
- (321) *Amoa Awusi* (Of Men)
- (322) *Ampoma / Opanin Ampoma* (Gab Boys)
- (323) *Anaafi / Kwesi Anaafi* (Crossroads)
- (324) *Anakpo* (This Earth)
- (325) *Anan* (Healers)
- (326) *Anane* (Grief Child)
- (327) *Ankomah / Mr Ankomah* (Wind)
- (328) *Ansah / Yaw Ansah* (Gab Boys)
- (329) *Mr Apaloo* (Dancing Tortoise)
- (330) *Appau Boateng* (Crossroads)
- (331) *Appia* (Healers)
- (332) *Appiah* (Grief Child)
- (333) *Mr Aryee* (Gab Boys)
- (334) *Asafoakye* (Of Men)
- (335) *Ata* (Healers)
- (336) *Ataa Quarshi* (Strange Man)
- (337) *Attipoe / Mr Attipoe* (This Earth)

- (338) *Awulai Kodwo-Ackah / Awulai Kwadwo-Ackah Ahuma / Chief
Ackah (Wind)*
- (339) *Ayerakwa (Of Men)*
- (340) *Azakyi (Wind)*
- (341) *Baako (Fragments)*
- (342) *Baba (CoN)*
- (343) *Bekoe (No Sweetness)*
- (344) *Benoa (Of Men)*
- (345) *Boahene (Of Men)*
- (346) *Boi / Kwadwo Boi (Gab Boys)*
- (347) *Botoi (Strange Man)*
- (348) *Boye (Grief Child)*
- (349) *Braimah (Gab Boys)*
- (350) *Mr Budu Baiden-Danielson / Mr Baiden-Danielson (Strange Man)*
- (351) *Bukari / Gabriel Bukari (CoN)*
- (352) *Buntui (Healers)*
- (353) *Chief Kushieto (Dancing Tortoise)*
- (354) *Cobbie (Grief Child)*
- (355) *Mr Dadzie (Crossroads)*
- (356) *Damfo (Healers)*
- (357) *Mr Degbe (Dancing Tortoise)*
- (358) *Densu (Healers)*
- (359) *Doku / Dr Doku (SoP)*
- (360) *Egyaben / Kwame Egyaben / Opanyin Kwame Egyaben
(Crossroads)*
- (361) *Ehwenpopro (Of Men)*
- (362) *Entea (Of Men)*
- (363) *Esuman (Healers)*
- (364) *Ewusi (Crossroads)*
- (365) *Fiiifi (No Sweetness, SoP)*
- (366) *Foli (Fragments)*
- (367) *Gariba (Fragments)*
- (368) *Ibrahim (This Earth)*
- (369) *Idrissu (Fragments)*
- (370) *Issah (Gab Boys)*

- (371) *Issaka* (CoN)
- (372) *Jojo's Father* (CoN)
- (373) *John Kofi Blankson* (Crossroads)
- (374) *Jonathan Dumenyo / Paul Dumenyo* (This Earth)
- (375) *Joseph Lartey* (Crossroads)
- (376) *Kani / Kwabena Kani / Nana Kani* (Of Men)
- (377) *Kanto* (Healers)
- (378) *Klu* (Strange Man)
- (379) *Kobla* (Dancing Tortoise, Girl Who Can)
- (380) *Kodjo / Kodjo Fi* (No Sweetness)
- (381) *Kodzo / Kodzo Dzide* (This Earth)
- (382) *Kofi* (CoN, Crossroads, Narrow Path, No Sweetness, Wind)
- (383) *Kofi Abbam* (Catechist)
- (384) *Kofi Ackah Miezah* (Wind)
- (385) *Kofi Billy* (Beautiful Ones)
- (386) *Kofi Ntim* (CoN)
- (387) *Kojo Ankrah* (Crossroads)
- (388) *Kojo / Kojo Ansah* (CoN)
- (389) *Kojo Ewusi* (Crossroads)
- (390) *Kpoley / Papa Kpoley* (Wind)
- (391) *Kubi* (Changes)
- (392) *Kukrubinsin / Kwame Kukrubinsin* (Of Men)
- (393) *Kwabena Nketia* (Gab Boys)
- (394) *Kwadwo Darko* (Gab Boys)
- (395) *Kwadwo Pra* (Of Men)
- (396) *Kwame* (Crossroads, Gab Boys, No Sweetness)
- (397) *Kwame Appianda* (Crossroads)
- (398) *Kwame Kaakyire* (Gab Boys)
- (399) *Kwame Duro* (Gab Boys)
- (400) *Kwamena* (Catechist)
- (401) *Kwaku* (SoP)
- (402) *Kwasi / Kwasi Asamoah / Akwasi Asamoa* (Gab Boys)
- (403) *Kwasi Wusu* (Gab Boys)
- (404) *Kweku / Kweku Sam* (No Sweetness)
- (405) *Kweku Nyamekye* (No Sweetness)

- (406) *Kwesi* (No Sweetness, Catechist)
- (407) *Kwesi Addai / Opanyin Kwesi Addai* (Crossroads)
- (408) *Kwesi Mensah / Kwesi Mensa III* (Crossroads)
- (409) *Mr Kyempim / the Honourable Kyempim* (SoP)
- (410) *Kyikya Fitiye* (Of Men)
- (411) *Mr Lomo* (Strange Man)
- (412) *Mahama* (Grief Child)
- (413) *Mawule Klevor* (Dancing Tortoise)
- (414) *Mawusi* (Dancing Tortoise)
- (415) *Mensa / Old Mensa* (Strange Man) / *Nana Mensa* (Crossroads)
- (416) *Mr Mensah* (Catechist)
- (417) *Moses Gyamfi* (Crossroads)
- (418) *Nai Odum* (Of Men)
- (419) *Nana Kyeame* (Gab Boys)
- (420) *Nani* (Narrow Path)
- (421) *Nda* (Wind)
- (422) *Nimo* (Grief Child)
- (423) *Nkrumah* (Our Sister) / *Kwame Nkrumah* (SoP)
- (424) *Nyankoman Dua* (Healers)
- (425) *Nyidevu* (This Earth)
- (426) *Obeng* (Strange Man)
- (427) *Odaso* (Healers)
- (428) *Odoi* (Strange Man)
- (429) *Odole* (Strange Man)
- (430) *Odotei* (Strange Man)
- (431) *Ofori* (Grief Child, Strange Man)
- (432) *Ogyeaboo* (Of Men)
- (433) *Okai* (Strange Man)
- (434) *Oko* (Changes)
- (435) *Okomfo Dua* (Crossroads)
- (436) *Okyeame Sintim* (Of Men)
- (437) *Old Anang* (Strange Man)
- (438) *Opong* (Of Men)
- (439) *Osey* (Beyond)
- (440) *Otenagya* (Of Men)

- (441) *Oto* (Gab Boys)
 (442) *Owiredu* (Of Men)
 (443) *Paapoe / Paa-poe* (Gab Boys)
 (444) *Saanyo* (Of Men)
 (445) *Sanaahene Ogyeabo* (Of Men)
 (446) *Sebo* (Crossroads)
 (447) *Skido* (Fragments)
 (448) *Takyi* (Of Men)
 (449) *Mr Tamakloe* (Dancing Tortoise)
 (450) *Tawia* (Strange Man)
 (451) *Tete / Mr Tete* (Strange Man)
 (452) *Togbi* (Dancing Tortoise)
 (453) *Tokpo* (This Earth)
 (454) *Topa* (This Earth)
 (455) *Vincent Agawu* (Dancing Tortoise)
 (456) *Wangara / Paa Wangara* (Wind)
 (457) *Wharjah* (Wind)
 (458) *Yaovi* (Gab Boys)
 (459) *Yaro* (Grief Child, This Earth)
 (460) *Yaw* (Gab Boys)
 (461) *Yaw Abu* (Gab Boys)
 (462) *Yaw Dade* (Crossroads)
 (463) *Yaw Gare* (Gab Boys)
 (464) *Yaw Mensah* (Gab Boys)
 (465) *Yaw Nyankuma* (Of Men)
 (466) *Yeboah* (Grief Child)

Female names

- (467) *Abanowa* (Girl Who Can)
 (468) *Abena / Auntie Abena / Abena Tutu* (SoP)
 (469) *Adisa* (This Earth)
 (470) *Adjo* (Grief Child)
 (471) *Adjoa Moji* (Girl Who Can)
 (472) *Adukwei* (CoN)
 (473) *Afi-Yaa* (Girl who Can)

- (474) *Afoa* (Of Men)
- (475) *Awoa / Adwoa Ntimaa / Ntimaa* (Of Men)
- (476) *Adwoba* (Wind)
- (477) *Afriyie / Afriyie Kyempim* (SoP)
- (478) *Ahuma / Ahu* (Wind)
- (479) *Ajoa* (Healers)
- (480) *Ajovi* (Dancing Tortoise)
- (481) *Akos* (Grief Child) – short for Akosua
- (482) *Akua* (Of Men)
- (483) *Akwawua* (Of Men)
- (484) *Ama* (Grief Child, No Sweetness) / *Maami Ama* (No Sweetness)
- (485) *Ama Nkoroma* (Healers)
- (486) *Miss Annan / Miss Beckie Annan* (Grief Child)
- (487) *Anoa / Yaa Anoa* (Fragments)
- (488) *Araba* (Fragments)
- (489) *Asonkye* (Of Men)
- (490) *Ayowa* (Of Men)
- (491) *Birago* (Grief Child)
- (492) *Boaduwaa* (Of Men)
- (493) *Boatema / Auntie Boatema* (SoP)
- (494) *Bozoma* (Wind)
- (495) *Mrs Degbe* (Dancing Tortoise)
- (496) *Dekpor* (Narrow Path)
- (497) *Dokuua* (Of Men)
- (498) *Dzenawo* (This Earth)
- (499) *Eba* (Wind)
- (500) *Edzi* (Narrow Path)
- (501) *Efua* (Catechist, Fragments)
- (502) *Emefa* (Dancing Tortoise)
- (503) *Esi* (CoN)
- (504) *Esi /Esi Sekyi* (Changes)
- (505) *Esi Abokuma / Maame Esi Abokuma / Maami Abokuma*
(Crossroads)
- (506) *Esiama* (Beyond)
- (507) *Esi Amanyiwa* (Healers)

- (508) *Essenam* (Dancing Tortoise)
- (509) *Fati* (CoN)
- (510) *Fusena* (Changes)
- (511) *Goma* (Grief Child)
- (512) *Grace Ason* (No Sweetness)
- (513) *Grace Mensah* (No Sweetness)
- (514) *Gyeyewaa* (Of Men)
- (515) *Jesiwa / Araba Jesiwa / Mena Araba Jesiwa* (Healers)
- (516) *Jiffa* (Dancing Tortoise)
- (517) *Jojo's Mother* (CoN)
- (518) *Mrs Kluvi* (Dancing Tortoise)
- (519) *Kosiwo* (This Earth)
- (520) *Letitia Armah* (Dancing Tortoise)
- (521) *Maume Agyenkwa* (Crossroads)
- (522) *Maanan* (Beautiful Ones)
- (523) *Mama Agawu* (Dancing Tortoise)
- (524) *Mamadze* (Narrow Path)
- (525) *Mansa* (Grief Child)
- (526) *Manzakyi / Manza* (Wind)
- (527) *Mariama* (Girl Who Can)
- (528) *Mary Tutu* (SoP)
- (529) *Masa* (This Earth, p.95)
- (530) *Menawo* (Of Men)
- (531) *Mrs Mensah* (Strange Man)
- (532) *Mrs Ofori* (Grief Child)
- (533) *Ogyaanowa* (Changes)
- (534) *Opokuya* (Changes)
- (535) *Oyo* (Beautiful Ones)
- (536) *Rebecca Dumenyo* (This Earth)
- (537) *Susa* (Grief Child)
- (538) *Mrs Tete* (Strange Man)
- (539) *Tona* (Narrow Path)
- (540) *Vera Mensah* (Dancing Tortoise)
- (541) *Yaa* (Grief Child)
- (542) *Yakuvi* (Narrow Path)

Reference to families

- (543) *the Ofories* (Grief Child)
(544) *the Tamakloes* (Dancing Tortoise)

6.4.1.2.2 Geographical names <pn2>

- (545) *Abenase* (Grief Child)
(546) *Aberasu-so* (Of Men)
(547) *Abetifi* (Crossroads)
(548) *Ablome* (This Earth)
(549) *Aboadee* (Of Men)
(550) *Accra* (Beautiful Ones, Catechist, CoN, Crossroads, Dancing Tortoise, Fragments, Gab Boys, Narrow Path, Strange Man, This Earth)
(551) *Achease* (Healers)
(552) *Achimota* (Beautiful Ones, p.110; Dancing Tortoise, p.131) <m1>
(553) *Ada* (Healers)
(554) *Adabraka* (Gab Boys, Strange Man)
(555) *Adidome* (Dancing Tortoise)
(556) *Afram* (Catechist)
(557) *Afranse* (Healers)
(558) *Agave* (This Earth)
(559) *Agona* (Crossroads)
(560) *Ahafo* (Gab Boys)
(561) *A'koon* (Wind)
(562) *Akosombo* (Gab Boys)
(563) *Akropong* (Healers, This Earth)
(564) *Akwaduro-so* (Of Men)
(565) *Akwatia* (This Earth)
(566) *Alowule* (Wind)
(567) *Amedzofe* (This Earth)
(568) *Anecho* (This Earth)
(569) *Ankobe* (Crossroads)
(570) *Anloga* (Dancing Tortoise, p.131) <m1>

- (571) *Anomabu* (Catechist)
- (572) *Anyinasu-so* (Of Men)
- (573) *Apam* (CoN)
- (574) *Ashante/Ashanti* (Gab Boys)
- (575) *Asuokooso* (Of Men)
- (576) *Atakpame* (This Earth)
- (577) *Atuabu* (Catechist)
- (578) *Awutu* (CoN)
- (579) *Bakano* (Healers)
- (580) *Bamboi* (Fragments)
- (581) *Bamso* (No Sweetness)
- (582) *Bole* (Fragments)
- (583) *Bosuso* (Gab Boys)
- (584) *Brepa* (Crossroads)
- (585) *Buama* (Grief Child)
- (586) *Buanyo* (Grief Child)
- (587) *Dawa* (This Earth)
- (588) *Deme* (This Earth)
- (589) *Denu* (Narrow Path, This Earth)
- (590) *Domeabra* (Healers)
- (591) *Dumasi* (Grief Child)
- (592) *Edwinase* (Healers)
- (593) *Ehwaka* (Wind)
- (594) *Ekupem* (Healers)
- (595) *Enyinase* (Healers)
- (596) *Esuano* (Healers)
- (597) *Eweland* (This Earth)
- (598) *Firaw* (Of Men) – River Volta
- (599) *Fran* (Fragments)
- (600) *Ga* (Girl Who Can, Healers) – Central Accra
- (601) *Ga* (Fragments) – village in Northern Ghana
- (602) *Gambaga* (This Earth)
- (603) *Gindabo* (Fragments)
- (604) *Han* (Fragments)
- (605) *Ho* (Dancing Tortoise)

- (606) *Jang* (Fragments)
- (607) *Jefiso* (Fragments)
- (608) *Kaleo* (Fragments)
- (609) *Kaneshie* (This Earth)
- (610) *Keta* (Dancing Tortoise, Girl Who Can, Narrow Path, This Earth)
- (611) *Kete Krachi* (This Earth)
- (612) *Kibi* (Gab Boys)
- (613) *Koforidua* (Gab Boys)
- (614) *Kojokrom* (Beautiful Ones)
- (615) *Kokompe* (Gab Boys)
- (616) *Koo'dua* (Girl Who Can) – Koforidua
- (617) *Kpando* (Dancing Tortoise)
- (618) *Kpetwei* (Dancing Tortoise)
- (619) *Kramo* (Crossroads)
- (620) *Kuli* (This Earth)
- (621) *Kulmasa* (Fragments)
- (622) *Kumase* (Girl Who Can) / *Kumasi* (Crossroads, Fragments, Gab Boys, Wind)
- (623) *Kwahu* (Gab Boys)
- (624) *Lampurga* (Fragments)
- (625) *Legon* (Beautiful Ones)
- (626) *Lilixia* (Fragments)
- (627) *Mankessim* (Catechist)
- (628) *Mankuma* (Fragments)
- (629) *Monenu* (This Earth)
- (630) *Naka* (Beyond)
- (631) *Nakwaby* (Fragments)
- (632) *Naro* (Fragments)
- (633) *Ndumsuazo* (Wind)
- (634) *Nima* (This Earth)
- (635) *Notsie* (This Earth)
- (636) *Nsawam* (Gab Boys)
- (637) *Nsu Ber* (Healers)
- (638) *Nsu Nyin* (Healers)
- (639) *Nsupa* (Grief Child)

- (640) *Ntanoa* (Of Men)
- (641) *Nyankom* (Fragments)
- (642) *Nzema* (Wind)
- (643) *Nzima* (Catechist)
- (644) *Obuasi* (Beautiful Ones)
- (645) *Odaso* (Halers)
- (646) *Odumase* (Healers)
- (647) *Oguaa* (Girl Who Can) – Cape Coast
- (648) *Osino* (Gab Boys)
- (649) *Osu* (Dancing Tortoise, This Earth)
- (650) *Penyie* (This Earth)
- (651) *Pirisi* (Fragments)
- (652) *Pra* (Healers)
- (653) *Pusupusu* (Gab Boys)
- (654) *Sabuli* (Fragments)
- (655) *Sajumase* (Gab Boys)
- (656) *Sawla* (Fragments)
- (657) *Segakope* (Dancing Tortoise)
- (658) *Sekondi* (Gab Boys, Wind)
- (659) *Seripe* (Fragments)
- (660) *Sibele* (Fragments)
- (661) *Sikyi* (Crossroads)
- (662) *Suhum* (Gab Boys)
- (663) *Sumanyi* (Beyond)
- (664) *Sunyani* (SoP)
- (665) *Supong* (Gab Boys) / *Suppong* (Of Men)
- (666) *Surdo* (No Sweetness)
- (667) *Susa* (Gief Child)
- (668) *Tafo* (Gab Boys)
- (669) *Takoradi* (Gab Boys, Girl Who Can)
- (670) *Tanina* (Fragments)
- (671) *Techiman* (Healers)
- (672) *Tema* (Gab Boys)
- (673) *Teple* (This Earth)
- (674) *Teselima* (Fragments)

- (675) *Tikobo* (Wind)
- (676) *Tinga* (Fragments)
- (677) *Tumu* (Fragments)
- (678) *Tuna* (Fragments)
- (679) *Twafoo* (Of Men)
- (680) *Twafour / Twafuor* (Gab Boys)
- (681) *Twinen* (Wind)
- (682) *Volta* (This Earth)
- (683) *Wa* (Fragments)
- (684) *Walewale* (Grief Child)
- (685) *Winneba* (Crossroads)
- (686) *Yeji* (Fragments)
- (687) *Yenaye* (This Earth)
- (688) *Yidala* (Fragments)
- (689) *Zaberima* (Of Men)
- (690) *Zomayi* (Narrow Path)
- (691) *Zongo* (SoP)

6.4.2 Lexical innovation

6.4.2.1 Borrowing

- (692) *agbada* (Changes, p.89) <pw3>
- (693) *booklong* [people] (Changes, p.12; Wind, p.26) <m1>
- (694) *comot*: ‘the marriage was ‘*comot, kaput*, finished, *kabisa*’ (Changes, p.159) <r2>
- (695) *jot* (Beautiful Ones, p.5) <pw1>
- (696) *kabisa*: ‘the marriage was ‘*comot, kaput*, finished, *kabisa*’ (Changes, p.159) <r2>
- (697) *too known* [people] (Wind, p.27) <m1>
- (698) *tro-tro* (Dancing Tortoise, p.99; SoP, p.62) <pw1>

Creative personal / proper names, nicknames <pn1>

- (699) *Service* (Gab Boys, p.104, 105)
- (700) *Mystique Mysterious* (CoN, p.1)
- (701) *I'll-twist-you* (Strange Man, p.166)
- (702) *Mama Kiosk* (Beyond, p.54, 56,139)
- (703) *Joe Boy* (SoP, p.35, 40)
- (704) *Old Row* (This Earth, p.172)
- (705) *His High Dedication* (Gab Boys, p.198)
- (706) *Motor* (Gab Boys, p.89)

'Personification'

- (707) *The Tailless Animal* (No Sweetness, p.128, 130) <pw1>

Creative geographical names <pn2>

- (708) *Between-Two-Rivers* (Of Men, p.53))
- (709) *Bite-and-Eat* (Of Men, p.vii)
- (710) *Brother-of-Man* (Of Men, p.110)
- (711) *Cottage of Cows* (Of Men, p.vii, 5)
- (712) *Dwarf* (Of Men, p.vii)
- (713) *Fire-has-Cocked-the-Eye* (Of Men, p.53)
- (714) *Kingdom of Soldier-Ants* (Of Men, p.vi)
- (715) *Land-and-Polish* (Of Men, p.103, 116)
- (716) *Land-of-Grass* (Of Men, p.vi)
- (717) *Make-Gifts-at-Times* (Of Men, p.45, 105, 115)
- (718) *Pool-of-Water* (Of Men, p.53)
- (719) *State of Return-on-Hearing-it* (Of Men, p.vi, 5, 112)
- (720) *State of the Great River* (Of Men, p.vii)
- (721) *Sweetness-Stop* (Of Men, p.v, vii, 5, 102, 108, 109, 110, 112)
- (722) *The-Beneath-of-Dancing* (Of Men, p.v, vii, 8)
- (723) *The-Children-of-Ghosts* (Of Men, p.vii)
- (724) *The-Hand-for-Eating* (Of Men, p.vii)
- (725) *The-Hand-That-is-Not-for-Eating* (Of Men, p.vii)
- (726) *Thousand-Farmers* (Of Men, p.vii, 109)
- (727) *Truth-Won't-Desert-the-Head* (Of Men, p.vii)

Work / office <m2>

- (728) *the fish-and-cassava women* (No Sweetness, p.131)
- (729) *Left Flank chief* (Of Men, p.55)
- (730) *lorry-station boiled-eggs-hawker* (Beyond, p.60)
- (731) *Right Flank chief* (Of Men, p.5, 55, 101, 114)
- (732) *Sparkers-of-Fire* (Of Men, p.115)

Names of institutions (of all kinds) <pw1>

- (733) *Ghanavision* (Fragments, p.132)
- (734) *Kill Me Quick / Kill Me Quick kiosk* (CoN, p.96 / 2)
- (735) *Man Pass Man / Man Pass Man Bar* (Crossroads, p.50, 52 / 10, 52)

Brand names <pw1>

- (736) *Mansion* (Beautiful Ones, p.12)
- (737) *Ronuk* (Beautiful Ones, p.12, 104)
- (738) *Thermogene* (Gab Boys, p.100)
- (739) *Tuskers* (Beautiful Ones, p.1)

Names of things, phenomena, cultural practices

- (740) *banana thrash* (Of Men, p.104) <pw1>
- (741) *chewing sticks* (SoP, p.64) <pw1>
- (742) *chop-box* (This Earth, p.178) <pw1>
- (743) *grass-cutter* (Gab Boys, p.94, 184) <pw1>
- (744) *land poll* (Gab Boys, p.9, 13, 14) <pw1>
- (745) *mosquito pole* (This Earth, p.101) <pw1>
- (746) *mammy truck* (This Earth, p.171) <pw1>
- (747) *plaiting thread* (SoP, p.43) <pw1>
- (748) *quarter license* (Beautiful Ones, p.95) <pw1>
- (749) *shampoo soap* (Gab Boys, p.99) <pw1>
- (750) *stool regalia* (Crossroads, p.51) <pw1>
- (751) *talking drums* (Grief Child, p.90) <pw1>
- (752) *kenile-de-juice* (Gab Boys, p.180, 182, 187) <pw2>
- (753) *Kill Me Quick* (CoN, p.1) <pw2>
- (754) *palaver sauce* (Girl Who Can, p.52) <pw2>
- (755) *white-white* ((Beautiful Ones, p.109; Fragments, p.131) <pw3>

- (756) *Cooking Cost* (No Sweetness, p.68) <r2>
- (757) *Ejecting Fee* (No Sweetness, p.67) <r2>
- (758) *Knife Fee* (No Sweetness, p.67) <r2>
- (759) *Knocking Fee* (No Sweetness, p.67) <r2>
- (760) *banana funeral* (Beyond, p.4) <sw3>

6.4.2.3 Collocations with African words

- (761) *akpeteshie bars* (Wind, p.52) <pw1>
- (762) *Attukpai taxi station* (Gab Boys, p.104, 105) <pw1>
- (763) *Buama train station* (Grief Child, p.90) <pw1>
- (764) *Dagarti Compound* (Wind, p.44) <pw1>
- (765) *Frafra Compound* (Wind, p.44) <pw1>
- (766) *Hohoe hospital* (SoP, p.72) <pw1>
- (767) *Korle Bu Hospital / Korle-Bu Hospital* (Strange Man, p.169, 279 /
Dancing Tortoise, p.281) <pw1>
- (768) *Kpetwei station* (Dancing Tortoise, p.99) <pw1>
- (769) *Volta Hall* (SoP, p.70, 74) <pw1>

- (770) *Ago beams* (This Earth, p.10) <pw1>
- (771) *agrey beads* (This Earth, p.6) <pw1>
- (772) *atumpan drums* (Gab Boys, p.192) <pw1>
- (773) *dawuru gong* (Of Men, p.112) <pw1>
- (774) *Kuli waterpot* (This Earth, p.10) <pw1>
- (775) *kyirem drums* (Gab Boys, p.51, 185, 190, 199) <pw1>

- (776) *Ago palm* (This Earth, p.7) <pw1>
- (777) *akonkordieh flowers* (Gab Boys, p.90) <pw1>
- (778) *akonkordieh tree* (Gab Boys, p.88, 93) <pw1>
- (779) *nim tree* (Beautiful Ones, p.) <pw1>
- (780) *odum tree* (Gab Boys, p.196) <pw1>
- (781) *wawa tree* (Grief Child, p.10) <pw1>

- (782) *a cedi note* (Beautiful Ones, p.182) <pw1>
- (783) *a few cedis* (SoP, p.76) <pw1>

- (784) *five cedis* (SoP, p.41) <pw1>
- (785) *thirty cedis* (SoP, p.38, 39, 41) <pw1>
- (786) *one thousand cedis* (SoP, p.66) <pw1>
- (787) *a few thousand cedis* (SoP, p.66) <pw1>
- (788) *a fifty-pesewa coin / a single fifty-pesewa coin* (Beautiful Ones, p.2) <pw1>
- (789) *50 pesewas* (Crossroads, p.49) <pw1>
- (790) *twenty-five pesewas* (Beautiful Ones, p.95) <pw1>
- (791) *two pesewas* (SoP, p.61) <pw1>
- (792) *Aserewa-Sika-Nsuo bird* (Of Men, p.viii) <pw1>
- (793) *kokokyinaka bird* (Gab Boys, p.196) <pw1>
- (794) *gari and beans with palm oil* (Beautiful Ones, p.110) <pw2>
- (795) *nkantomire stew* (Crossroads, p.52) <pw2>
- (796) *adinkra cloth* (Dancing Tortoise, p.290) <pw3>
- (797) *dumas cloth* (Of Men, p.83) <pw3>
- (798) *Joromi top* (SoP, p.43) <pw3>
- (799) *Ayokoo clan* (Of Men, p.7, 112) <r4>
- (800) *clan of Batawo* (This Earth, p.11) <r4>
- (801) *Ahobaa festival* (Catechist, p.107) <sw1>
- (802) *Akwambo festival* (Crossroads, p.104, 105) <sw1>
- (803) *etwam marks* (Gab Boys, p.88) <sw1>
- (804) *the Great Oath of Saturday and Kwanyaako* (Gab Boys, p.199) <sw1>
- (805) *Kundum festival* (Catechist, p.107, 110; Wind, p.2, 3) <sw1>
- (806) *Odenkye dance* (Of Men, p.112) <sw1>
- (807) *Odwira festival* (Of Men, p.114, 115) <sw1>
- (808) *abuse deal* (Gab Boys, p.10, 11) <sw1>
- (809) *Ankobebe gods* (Crossroads, p.9) <sw2>

- (810) *god of Mbemu* (No Sweetness, p.81) <sw2>
- (811) *Accra-Denu road* (This Earth, p.171) <pn2>
- (812) *Achimota/Nima/Barracks intersection* (Changes, p.99) <pn2>
- (813) *Awudome Cemetery* (This Earth, p.176) <pn2>
- (814) *Dabala junction* (This Earth, p.177) <pn2>
- (815) *Kaneshie estates* (Gab Boys, p.184) <pn2>
- (816) *Kramo village* (Crossroads, p.54, 55) <pn2>
- (817) *Labadi Beach / Labadi Pleasure Beach* (CoN, p.99/96) <pn2>
- (818) *Nima police station* (This Earth, p.171) <pn2>
- (819) *Nsawam Road* (This Earth, p.170) <pn2>
- (820) *Osu Cemetery* (This Earth, p.105) <pn2>
- (821) *Winneba road* (Crossroads) <pn2>
- (822) *Yensua Hill* (Beautiful Ones, p.10) <pn2>
- (823) *Agona area* (Crossroads, p.10) <pn2>
- (824) *Agona Ankobea Traditional Area* (Crossroads, p.10) <pn2>
- (825) *Akyem, Kwahu, and Ashante food growing areas* (Gab Boys, p.96) <pn2>
- (826) *Ankobea Traditional Area* (Crossroads, p.56) <pn2>
- (827) *Busanga, Frafra and Dagarti country* (Wind, p.43) <pn2>
- (828) *Mossi and Fulani country* (Wind, p.43) <pn2>
- (829) *Sikiyi Traditional Area* (Crossroads, p.55) <pn2>
- (830) *Volta Region* (Dancing Tortoise, p.129, 135) <pn2>
- (831) *Aka River* (This Earth, p.7) <pn2>
- (832) *River Badua* (Crossroads, p.6, 7, 8, 47) <pn2>
- (833) *Twafuor stream* (Gab Boys, p.102) <pn2>
- (834) *Achimota College* (Strange Man, p.7) <m1>
- (835) *Anloga Secondary School / Anloga Secondary* (Dancing Tortoise, p.133 / 131) <m1>
- (836) *Buama Primary School* (Grief Child, p.91) <m1>
- (837) *Keta Secondary School* (Dancing Tortoise, p.133) <m1>

- (838) *Kpando Secondary Technical School / Kpando Technical / Kpantec*
(Dancing Tortoise, p133 / 131 / 134) <m1>
- (839) *Legon University* (SoP, p.70) <m1>
- (840) *Sunyani Secondary School* (SoP, p.69) <m1>
- (841) *Sunyani Secondary School prospectus* (SoP, p.75) <m1>
- (842) *Tema Secondary* (Dancing Tortoise, p.131) <m1>
- (843) *University of Legon* (Beautiful Ones, p.7) <m1>
- (844) *Accra taxi driver* (SoP, p.75) <m2>
- (845) *Ankobebe chief* (Crossroads, p.105) <m2>
- (846) *Anona masters of eloquence* (Healers, p.2) <m2>
- (847) *asafo company* (Crossroads, p.5, 6, 8) <r1>
- (848) *Kramo chief* (Crossroads, p.55) <m2>
- (849) *Legon man: 'You ino be Legon man?'* (Wind, p.26) <m2>

6.4.2.4 Unusual collocations and compounds

- (850) *body-check cabins* (Beyond, p.57) <pw1>
- (851) *desk clerk* (Beyond, p.56) <m2>
- (852) *highlife singer* (Changes, p.166) <m2>
- (853) *juju-money* (SoP, p.65) <pw1>
- (854) *lorry station* (This Earth, p.102) <pw1>
- (855) *palava sauce* (Crossroads, p.54) <pw2>
- (856) *search clerks* (Beyond, p.57) <m2>
- (857) *steward boys* (SoP, p.62) <m2>
- (858) *talking mokes* (Gab Boys, p.13) <pw3>
- (859) *tro-tro driver's mate* (SoP, p.61) <m2>
- (860) *tro-tro lorry* (SoP, p.61) <pw1>
- (861) *tro-tro station* (Dancing Tortoise, p.99, 138) <pw1>
- (862) *tro-tro queue* (SoP, p.36) <pw1>

6.4.2.5 Conversion

- (863) *Chicha* (No Sweetness, p.56, 57, 58, 59, 60, 61, 62, 63, 64, 68, 71, 72) <pn1>

- (864) *Kankanfo* (Of Men, p.5) <pn1>
- (865) *Kyikya* (Of Men, p.117) <pn1>
- (866) *Nana* (Crossroads, p.10, 11, 49, 50, 52, 53, 54, 103, 104, 105, 108;
Gab Boys, p.189; Of Men, p.6) <pn1>
- (867) *Nana Kyeame* (Gab Boys, p.187) <pn1>
- (868) *Okyeame* (Crossroads, p.54, 55, 104, 105) <pn1>

APPENDIX 2: QUESTIONNAIRE

SURVEY ON INTERPRETATIONS OF HYBRID TEXTS

Purpose of Research

My Ph.D. research focuses on how different audiences interpret hybrid texts, i.e. literary texts written by writers of a particular culture in the language of another culture. The texts chosen for the survey are all written by Ghanaian writers in English, and the basic question is what meaning Ghanaian vs. non-Ghanaian vs. European readerships attribute to them.

Doing the Questionnaire

This questionnaire is not a test of knowledge, consequently there are no good or bad answers to the questions. What I would like to find out is what you think, so when answering the questions, especially when you are asked to explain the meaning a particular extract/expression/word has for you, please make sure you answer spontaneously, without too much thinking, giving the first meaning that comes to you. I would also like you not to discuss your answers with anyone before completing the questionnaire and not to change them afterwards, either. Please do not think about what others may or may not think, or how other people may answer the questions, but focus on what your reaction/response is to the texts.

Your answers will be treated as anonymous. The reason why I ask you to provide your name is purely technical: I would like to be able to contact you in case I need some clarification.

Thank you for your co-operation in advance.

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ABOUT YOURSELF

Name:

.....

Nationality and/or ethnic origin:

.....

Mother tongue:

.....

Knowledge of other languages:

Language

Proficiency

(e.g. (near) native,
intermediate, advanced,
elementary)

.....
.....
.....
.....
.....
.....

Do you read for pleasure/entertainment? (please circle.)

never

rarely

sometimes

often

very often

What do you read for entertainment? (e.g. novels, short stories, poetry, detective stories, sci-fi, etc.)

.....
.....
.....

In which language(s) do you read the above?

.....
.....

Do you read newspapers and/or magazines? (Please circle.)

never rarely sometimes often very often

In which language(s) do you read them?

.....
.....

Do you read specialised literature in you profession/field of study?

never rarely sometimes often very often

In which language(s) do you read it?

.....
.....

Have you read any of the following? (Please tick.)

- Kofi Osei Aidoo: Of Men and Ghosts**
- Cameron Duodu: The Gab Boys**
- Kojo Yankah: Crossroads at Ankobea**
- Kofi Agovi: A Wind from the North**
- Naa Otua Codjoe-Swayne: The Dancing Tortoise**
- Ayi Kwei Armah: Fragments**
- Ayi Kwei Armah: The Beautiful Ones Are Not Yet Born**
- Ayi Kwei Armah: Two Thousand Seasons**
- Ayi Kwei Armah: The Healers**
- Ama Ata Aidoo: No Sweetness Here**
- Ama Ata Aidoo: Changes**
- Joseph W. Abruquah: The Catechist**
- Ajoa Yeboah-Afari: The Sound of Pestles**

I

(i)

I see my uncle among people who are dancing ... They are many, all men. Their movements are virile as they jump up and down, each man only covered by a small cloth such as he would borrow from his wife or sister, tied around his waist over his shorts, leaving the torso bare. The drums and the *adawuro* (gong-gongs) are more intense in their rhythmic beating than I have ever heard them before ...

(ii)

It was about 1.30 a.m. when I reached the Attukpai taxi station, but there were still a lot of cars about, doing *aworshia* - that is, working all night.

Do *you* find 'gong-gongs' and 'working all night' in the above passages

- (a) unnecessary;
- (b) sufficient explanation of the African-language expressions which precede them;
- (c) insufficient as explanation.

Please tick whichever applies.

II

(i)

He, on the other hand, was sitting on his *bampa*. This was what some people slept on. It was part of the floor specially raised for sleeping. A reed quilt covered with plantain thrash and rags served as a mattress.

(ii)

To Kani he gave tobacco. And this was so much that the people of Ayowa's father had a sufficient tuft each. The husband-to-be did not forget to include *aboefosem* - a strip of red cloth which was worn by knotting it to a girdle and passing it between the thighs and fastening it to

the waist band again. Its significance: to cover the man's organ which had brought the wife-to-be into the world.

Do *you* find the explanation following the African-language words in the above passages

- (a) unnecessary;
- (b) sufficient;
- (c) too long-winded;
- (d) insufficient.

Please tick whichever applies.

III

(i)

Nananom, *agyanom*, and *anuanom*, I am very happy that you have shown me the respect of attending to my call despite the short notice. I thank you all.

(ii)

“Ankobebe *adehyefo*, our present chief wants us to drink a bad tonic, and we shall not allow it.” He was more emphatic now, and the heads which nodded were a reassuring response to him. “if he will not sacrifice to the gods as Tigare demands, then I am afraid he should say goodbye to our stool and quit,” Egyaben said.

“By all means!”

“He cannot play with our lives!”

“Ankobebe *momfre yie!*” Egyaben greeted for order.

“*Yie mbra,*” they all responded and then were quiet.

“Let us therefore send a resolution to the *oman mpanyinfo* and the chief, giving the chief a last chance to ...”

The above two passages come from the same novel. For a glossary please turn to the very end of this questionnaire.

Do *you* think the glossary

(a) is unnecessary;

(b) provides sufficient information on the meaning of the African-language words/expressions;

(c) provides insufficient information.

Please tick whichever applies.

Do you feel that having to use a glossary slows down your reading?

YES

NO

NOT SURE

Please circle whichever applies.

Does having to use the glossary relatively frequently make you frustrated?

YES

NO

NOT SURE

Please circle whichever applies.

If YES, please explain why you feel frustrated.

IV

(i)

So the people waited. That long wait that destroys a people's confidence in themselves. At last, one spoke. A deity spoke. Unheralded, he thundered through the village. He looked fierce, angry and weird. He tossed his head sideways, muttering incoherent things to the air. He threw

his powerful *bodua* into the sky and caught it several times. Brown amulets and dark bracelets were fixed tightly around his powerful arms.

(ii)

Mawusi stood beside the *tro-tro* and watched the people going to and fro. The place was very noisy. All the *aplankeys* were shouting for passengers; and there were quite a few beggars, singing for alms.

Do you understand the italicised words in the above passages?

YES NO NOT SURE

Please circle whichever applies.

Can you guess their meaning from the context?

YES NO NOT SURE

bodua:

tro-tro:

aplankey:

Do you think a glossary or some kind of explanation would make it easier for *you* to read and understand the above passages?

YES NO NOT SURE

Please circle whichever applies.

(iii)

But Ali was impatient. Eventually they agreed on a Sunday about a month ahead, depending of course on whether or not Esi's fathers wanted to see Ali at all. When he started rummaging through the pockets of his voluminous *agbada*, Esi wondered what he was looking for. He soon pulled out a small box, flipped it open and revealed a gold ring ...

Can you explain why 'fathers' is used in the plural?

YES

NO

NOT SURE

If yes, please do so below:

What is the meaning of 'agbada'?

(iv)

It was the malevolence of the look on her face as she looked at him unseen, that attracted me to the couple. She looked at him as a rival would look at her husband's favourite. He, quite oblivious of the searing look was leaning against the railing ...

Please explain the cultural reference hidden in the underlined sentence. Please indicate if you have understood it immediately, or you have had to work it out.

V

In the space provided after each passage, please explain the meaning of the underlined words/expressions.

(i)

But do you know, this child did not die. It is wonderful but this child did not die. Mmm. ... This strange world always has something to surprise us with ... Kweku Nyamekye. Somehow, he did not die. To his day name Kweku, I have added Nyamekye. Kweku Nyamekye. For, was he not a gift from God through the Mallam of the Bound Mouth? And he, the Mallam of the Bound Mouth, had not taken from me a penny, not a single penny that ever bore a hole. And the way he had vanished! Or it was perhaps the god who yielded me to my mother who came to my aid at last? As he had promised her he would? I remember Maame telling me that when I was only a baby, the god of Mbemu from whom I came, had promised never to desert me and that he would come to me once in my life when I needed him most. And was it not him who had come in the person of the Mallam?

(ii)

Once when the man was traveling to Cape Coast three different policemen had stopped the little bus and asked the driver for his quarter license. The driver had not bought it yet, and each of the policemen had said to him, in front of everybody, 'Even kola gives pleasure in the chewing.' In each case the driver had smiled and given the law twenty-five pesewas, and the law was satisfied. There was only one way.

(iii)

Inside the bus the conductor took down his bag ... drew from within it his day's block of tickets and, laying this on the seat beside him, poured out all the money he had collected so far beside it. Then, checking the coins against the tickets, he began to count the morning's take. It was mostly what he expected at this time of the month: small coins, a lot of pesewas, single brown pieces, with some fives, a few tens and the occasional twenty-five. Collecting was always easier around Passion Week. Not many passengers needed change; it was enough of a struggle looking round corners and the bottoms of boxes to find small coins somehow overlooked. So most people held out the exact fare and tried not to look into the receiver's face with its knowledge of their impotence. Collecting was certainly easier, but at the same time not as satisfactory as in the swollen days after pay day.

GLOSSARY for question III:

<i>Adehyefo</i>	noblemen, freemen, members of royal or chiefly families
<i>Agyanom</i>	fathers, elders
<i>Anuanom</i>	brothers and sisters
<i>Momfre yie!</i>	call for success (a salutation)
<i>Nananom</i>	grandfathers, elders, chiefs
<i>Oman mpanyinfo</i>	town elders
<i>Yie mbra</i>	may success come (a response to greeting calling for success)

APPENDIX 3: READER PROFILES

Reader	Nationality/ ethnic origin	Mother tongue	Knowledge of languages other than English	Reading for pleasure			Functional reading				Number of books read out of 13 listed
				how often	what	in which language	newspapers/magazines	in which language	how often	in which language	
WINNER 1	Belgian	French	Dutch*, German	very often	fiction, gothic novels, poetry	English in original, the rest in French	sometimes	English, French, Dutch	very often	in the language of the author if possible	0
WINNER 2	Belgian	French	Dutch*	often	novels, detective stories	French, English, Dutch	sometimes	French, English, Dutch	often	English, Dutch	0
WINNER 3	Belgian	French	Dutch*	very often	novels and poetry		sometimes	French, English, Dutch	sometimes	English, Dutch	0
WINNER 4	Belgian	French	Dutch, German	often	novels, detective stories	English, Dutch	often	French, English, Dutch	sometimes	Dutch, German	0
WINNER 5	Belgian	French	Flemish*, German	sometimes	novels, detective stories, sci-fi	French, English, Flemish	often	French, English, Dutch	sometimes	Dutch, German	0
WINNER 6	Belgian	French	Dutch, German*	very often	short stories, detective stories, sci-fi	English, French, German	very often	French, English	very often	English, Flemish	0
WINNER 7	Belgian	French	Dutch*	sometimes	romance, novels short stories	French, Dutch, English	often	French, Dutch	very often	Dutch, English	0
WINNER 8	Belgian	French, Dutch		very often	detective stories, novels	French, Dutch, English	sometimes	French, Dutch, English	often	French, Dutch, English	0
WINNER 9	Belgian	French	Dutch*	very often	novels, poetry, comics	English, French, Dutch	sometimes	English, Dutch, French	often	English, Dutch	0
WINNER 10	Belgian	French	Dutch*	often	novels, love & detective stories	French, English, Dutch	often	French, English, Dutch	sometimes	French, English, Dutch	0
WINNER 11	Belgian	French	Dutch	often	novels, detective stories, horror	French, English, Dutch	very often	French, English, Dutch	often	English, French	0
WINNER 12	Algerian	Arabic	French**	often	novels, short stories	French, English	sometimes	French, English	very often	English, French	1
WINNER 13	Russian	Russian	German, Japanese*, Ainu	rarely	detective stories, novels	English	rarely	English, Russian	often	English, Russian, Japanese	0
WINNER 14	Greek	Greek	French, German, Italian	very often	novels, poetry, short stories	Greek, English, French	rarely	Greek	very often	Greek, English, Italian	0

Reader	Nationality/ ethnic origin	Mother tongue	Knowledge of languages other than English	Reading for pleasure		Functional reading				Number of books read out of 13 listed	
				how often	what	in which language	newspapers/magazines how often	in which language	professional literature how often		in which language
WNER 1	British	English	French*, German, Italian, Japanese	sometimes	novels, poetry. Short stories	English	often	English	often	English	0
WNER 2	UK (white European)	English	French*, German, Spanish, Arabic, Portuguese, Mandarin	often	novels, poetry, fact short stories, (biography, philosophy, physics, history, gardening)	English – everything. French – novels, Spanish - novels	often	English	sometimes	English	0
WNER 3	Canadian	English	French, Gaelic, German	very often	poetry, short stories, novels, detective stories, Biographies, autobiographies	English	very often	English	very often	English, German	0
WNER 4	American	English	Russian, Scottish Gaelic, French	sometimes	novels, spiritual writing	English	often	English	very often	English	0
WNER 5	USA	American English	Gaelic, French, German	very often	novels, travel, detective	English, Gaelic	often	English, Gaelic	very often	English, Gaelic, French, German, Irish	0
NGAR 1	DR Congolese	Tshiluba	French**	rarely	general knowledge	English	sometimes	English, French	often	English	1
NGAR 2	DR Congolese	Kiswahili	French**, Lingala*, Kisanga*	sometimes	novels	English	very often	English, French	very often	English	2
NGAR 3	South African	Zulu	Ndebele**, Afrikaans**, Sotho, Tswana, Shona*, Xhosa**, Swati	very often	novels, short stories	English, Zulu, Ndebele	very often	English	sometimes	English	2
NGAR 4	DR Congolese	Kiswahili	Lingala***, Kinyarwanda***, French***	sometimes	short stories, detective stories	English	very often	English	often	English	0
NGAR 5	Ugandan	Rutoro	Runyoro, Kiswahili, Runyankole, Rukiga, Luganda	often	detective stories, short stories, funny jokes	English	very often	English	often	English	0
NGAR 6	Sierra Leone	Tenne, Kro		often	novels, poetry	English	very often	English	very often	English	4
NGAR 7	DR Congolese	Tshiluba	Lingala***, French**, Spanish, Kiswahili**, Kikongo*	rarely	detective stories, documentaries	English, French	very often	English, French, Lingala	very often	English, French	1

Reader	Nationality/ ethnic origin	Mother tongue	Knowledge of languages other than English	Reading for pleasure			Functional reading			Number of books read out of 13 listed	
				how often	what	in which language	how often	in which language	how often		in which language
GR 1	Akan	Akan (Twi)	Akan, Ga, Nzema	often	novels, short stories, poetry	English, Akan (Twi & Fante)	very often	English	very often	English	9
GR 2	Dagaaba	Dagaare	Asante Twi, Pidgin	often	novels, short stories, poetry	English	often	English	very often	English	3
GR 3	Akan	Twi		sometimes	novels	English	sometimes	English	often	English	0
GR 4	Volta Region	Ewe	Twi, Ga, Fante	often	novels, short stories, poetry, detective stories	English	sometimes	English	often	English	0
GR 5	Ghanaian	Twi		rarely	novels	English	very often	English	sometimes	English	3
GR 6	Ghanaian	Ewe	Twi, Ga, Fanti	often	novels, short stories	English	very often	English	often	English	2
GR 7	Ewe	Ewe		sometimes	novels	English	often	English	very often	English	1
GR 8	Bukasa	Buli		often	short stories	English	often	English	often	English	1
GR 9	Ewe	Ewe	Ga, Adangme	sometimes	novels, short stories, detective stories	English, Ewe	often	English	very often	English	3
GR 10	Nzima	Nzima	Akan, Ga	often	novels, detective stories	English	very often	English	sometimes	English	2
GR 11	Ghanaian	Akan		very often	novels, short stories, detective stories, sci-fi, autobiographies	English	very often	English	sometimes	English	0
GR 12	Kasem	Kasem		often	novels, short stories, plays, poems	English, Kasem	often	English, Kasem	very often	English	3
GR 13	Ewe	Ewe	French	often	novels, short stories, poetry	English, Ewe, French	very often	English	often	English	4
GR 14	Ashanti/ Akwapim	Twi		often	detective stories, novels	English	often	English	often	English	1
GR 15	Ewe	Ewe	Ga, Twi, Fante, French	often	novels, short stories, detective stories, adventure stories	English, French	very often	English, French	sometimes	French, English	3
GR 16	Ga/Akan	Ga	Twi, French	sometimes	novels, Christian literature	English, French	sometimes	English, French	very often	English, French	0
GR 17	Ghanaian	Ewe	Ga	sometimes	detective stories	English	often	English	often	English	1
GR 18	Akan	Akan	Fante	sometimes	short stories	English, Akan	often	English	never	English	1
GR 19	Ga	Ga	Twi, Fante	very often	novels	English	sometimes	English	often	English, French, Spanish	0

WNNER Western Non-native English Reader
WNER Western Native English Reader
NGAR Non-Ghanaian African Reader

* Ghanaian Reader
**

Subject regards his/her knowledge advanced
Subject regards his/her knowledge near-native
Subject regards his/her proficiency native

NB. No indication of the level of
knowledge do not necessarily mean low
proficiency in a language.

APPENDIX 4: QUESTIONNAIRE RESULTS

4A Questionnaire item I: *Cushioning*

	Unnecessary		Sufficient explanation of the African-language expressions		Insufficient	
	for adawuro	for aworshia	for adawuro	for aworshia	for adawuro	for aworshia
WNNER 1	*			*		
WNNER 2			*	*		
WNNER 3					*	*
WNNER 4			*	*		
WNNER 5			*	*		
WNNER 6			*	*		
WNNER 7			*	*		
WNNER 8			*	*		
WNNER 9			*	*		
WNNER 10					*	*
WNNER 11					*	*
WNNER 12			*	*		
WNNER 13			*	*		
WNNER 14			*	*		
<i>Sub-total I</i>	<i>1</i> (7.14%)		<i>10</i> (71.42%)	<i>11</i> (78.57%)	<i>3</i> (21.42%)	<i>3</i> (21.42%)
WNER 1	*			*		
WNER 2			*	*		
WNER 3			*	*		
WNER 4			*	*		
WNER 5					*	*
<i>Sub-total II</i>	<i>1</i> (20%)		<i>3</i> (60%)	<i>4</i> (80%)	<i>1</i> (20%)	<i>1</i> (20%)
Total	2 (10.52%)		13 (68.42%)	15 (78.94%)	4 (21.05%)	4 (21.05%)
NGAR 1			*	*		
NGAR 2					*	*
NGAR 3			*	*		
NGAR 4			*	*		
NGAR 5	*	*				
NGAR 6			*	*		
NGAR 7			*	*		
<i>Sub-total III</i>	<i>1</i> (14.28%)	<i>1</i> (14.28%)	<i>5</i> (71.42%)	<i>5</i> (71.42%)	<i>1</i> (14.28%)	<i>1</i> (14.28%)
Overall	3 (11.53%)	1 (3.84%)	18 (69.23%)	20 (76.92%)	5 (19.23%)	5 (19.23%)

WNNER: Western non-native English reader

WNER: Western native English reader

NGAR: Non-Ghanaian African reader

	Unnecessary		Sufficient explanation of the African- language expressions		Insufficient	
	for <i>adawuro</i>	for <i>aworshia</i>	for <i>adawuro</i>	for <i>aworshia</i>	for <i>adawuro</i>	for <i>aworshia</i>
GR 1					*	*
GR 2			*	*		
GR 3			*	*		
GR 4			*	*		
GR 5			*	*		
GR 6					*	*
GR 7					*	*
GR 8					*	*
GR 9			*	*		
GR 10			*	*		
GR 11			*	*		
GR 12	*	*				
GR 13			*	*		
GR 14			*	*		
GR 15					*	*
GR 16			*	*		
GR 17			*	*		
GR 18			*	*		
GR 19			*	*		
Total	1 (5.26%)	1 (5.26%)	13 (68.42%)	13 (68.42%)	5 (26.31%)	5 (26.31%)

GR: Ghanaian reader

4B Questionnaire item II: *Ethnographic explanation*

	Unnecessary		Sufficient		Too long-winded		Insufficient	
	for <i>bampa</i>	for <i>aboefosem</i>	for <i>bampa</i>	for <i>aboefosem</i>	for <i>bampa</i>	for <i>aboefosem</i>	for <i>bampa</i>	for <i>aboefosem</i>
WNNER 1			*	*				
WNNER 2			*	*				
WNNER 3			*	*				
WNNER 4			*	*				
WNNER 5			*	*				
WNNER 6					*	*		
WNNER 7			*	*				
WNNER 8			*	*				
WNNER 9					*	*		
WNNER 10					*	*		
WNNER 11					*	*		
WNNER 12			*	*				
WNNER 13			*	*				
WNNER 14			*	*				
<i>Sub-total I</i>			<i>10</i> (71.42 %)	<i>10</i> (71.42 %)	<i>4</i> (28.57 %)	<i>4</i> (28.57%)		
WNER 1			*	*				
WNER 2			*	*				
WNER 3			*	*				
WNER 4					*	*		
WNER 5			*	*				
<i>Sub-total II</i>			<i>4</i> (80%)	<i>4</i> (80%)	<i>1</i> (20%)	<i>1</i> (20%)		
Total			14 (73.68 %)	14 (73.68%)	5 (26.31 %)	5 (26.31%)		
NGAR 1			*	*				
NGAR 2			*	*				
NGAR 3					*	*		
NGAR 4					*	*		
NGAR 5	*	*						
NGAR 6			*	*				
NGAR 7			*	*				
<i>Sub-total III</i>	<i>1</i> (14.28 %)	<i>1</i> (14.28%)	<i>4</i> (57.14 %)	<i>4</i> (57.14%)	<i>2</i> (28.57 %)	<i>2</i> (28.57%)		
Overall	1 (3.84 %)	1 (3.84%)	18 (69.23 %)	18 (69.23%)	7 (26.92 %)	7 (26.92%)		

WNNER: Western non-native English reader
WNER: Western native English reader
NGAR: Non-Ghanaian African reader

	Unnecessary		Sufficient		Too long-winded		Insufficient	
	for <i>bampa</i>	for <i>aboefosem</i>	for <i>bampa</i>	for <i>aboefosem</i>	for <i>bampa</i>	for <i>aboefosem</i>	for <i>bampa</i>	for <i>aboefosem</i>
GR 1					*	*		
GR 2			*	*				
GR 3			*	*				
GR 4			*	*				
GR 5			*	*				
GR 6			*	*				
GR 7			*	*				
GR 8			*	*				
GR 9			*	*				
GR 10					*	*		
GR 11			*	*				
GR 12	*	*						
GR 13					*	*		
GR 14			*	*				
GR 15			*	*				
GR 16			*	*				
GR 17					*	*		
GR 18			*	*				
GR 19			*	*				
Total	1 (5.26 %)	1 (5.26%)	14 (73.68 %)	14 (73.68%)	4 (21.05 %)	4 (21.05%)		

GR: Ghanaian reader

4C Questionnaire item III: **Glossary**

	GLOSSARY				Glossary slows down your reading			Having to use glossary frequently makes you frustrated		
	is unnecessary	provides sufficient information on the meaning of the African-language words/expressions	provides insufficient information		YES	NO	NOT SURE	YES	NO	NOT SURE
WINNER 1	*				*		*	*		
WINNER 2		*			*					*
WINNER 3		*			*			*		
WINNER 4	*						*		*	
WINNER 5		*			*			*		
WINNER 6	*				*			*		
WINNER 7	*				*			*		
WINNER 8		*			*			*		
WINNER 9		*				*		*		
WINNER 10		*				*		*		
WINNER 11		*			*			*		
WINNER 12		*			*			*		
WINNER 13		*			*			*		
WINNER 14		*				*			*	
Sub-total I	3 (21.42%)	11 (78.57%)			9 (64.28%)	2 (14.28%)	3 (21.42%)	9 (64.28%)	4 (28.57%)	1 (7.14%)
WINNER 1		*			*			*		
WINNER 2		*			*				*	
WINNER 3		*			*			*		
WINNER 4		*			*				*	
WINNER 5		*			*					*
Sub-total II		4 (80%)			5 (100%)			2 (40%)	2 (40%)	1 (20%)
Total	3 (15.78%)	15 (78.94%)			14 (73.68%)	2 (10.52%)	3 (15.78%)	11 (57.89%)	6 (31.57%)	2 (10.52%)

	GLOSSARY			Having to use glossary frequently makes you frustrated		
	is unnecessary	provides sufficient information on the meaning of the African-language words/expressions	provides insufficient information	YES	NO	NOT SURE
NGAR 1	*	*		*	*	
NGAR 2		*		*		
NGAR 3		*		*		
NGAR 4	*				*	
NGAR 5	*				*	
NGAR 6		*		*		
NGAR 7		*		*		
Sub-total III	2 (28.57%)	5 (71.42%)		4 (57.14%)	3 (42.85%)	
Overall	5 (19.23%)	20 (76.92%)		15 (57.69%)	9 (34.61%)	2 (7.69%)

WNNER: Western non-native English reader

WNER: Western native English reader

NGAR: Non-Ghanaian African reader

	GLOSSARY			Having to use glossary frequently makes you frustrated		
	is unnecessary	provides sufficient information on the meaning of the African-language words/expressions	provides insufficient information	YES	NO	NOT SURE
GR 1		*		N/A	N/A	N/A
GR 2		*		*	*	
GR 3		*		*	*	
GR 4		*		*	*	
GR 5		*		*	*	
GR 6		*		*	*	
GR 7		*		*	*	
GR 8		*		*	*	
GR 9	*			*	*	
GR 10	*			*	*	
GR 11				*	*	
GR 12	*			*	*	
GR 13		*		*	*	
GR 14		*		*	*	
GR 15		*		*	*	
GR 16		*		*	*	
GR 17		*		*	*	
GR 18		*		*	*	
GR 19		*		*	*	
Total	3 (15.78%)	15 (78.94%)		16 (84.21%)	1 (5.26%)	1 (6.26%)
				10 (52.63%)	4 (21.05%)	4 (21.05%)

GR: Ghanaian reader

Reasons for frustration at having to use a glossary

	Not frustrated or not sure	Interruption/slowing down/disruption of reading process	Interruption of thoughts/flow of text/story/'picturing' process	Interruption of concentration	Breaking of holistic impression	Distraction from text/story	Wastes time	Disturbs interpretation/text understanding
WNNER 1			*					
WNNER 2	*							
WNNER 3			*					
WNNER 4	*							
WNNER 5			*					
WNNER 6		*		*				
WNNER 7	*							
WNNER 8		*						
WNNER 9			*					
WNNER 10	*							
WNNER 11			*					
WNNER 12		*					*	
WNNER 13		*			*		*	
WNNER 14	*							
Sub-total I	5 (35.71%)	4 (44.44%)	5 (55.55%)	1 (11.11%)	1 (11.11%)		2 (22.22%)	
WNER 1								
WNER 2	*					*		
WNER 3								
WNER 4	*	*						
WNER 5	*							
Sub-total II	3 (60%)	1 (50%)				1 (50%)		

WNNER: Western non-native English reader
WNER: Western native English reader

NGAR: Non-Ghanaian African reader
GR: Ghanaian reader

	Not frustrated or not sure	Interruption/slowing down/disruption of reading process	Interruption of thoughts/flow of text/story/'picturing' process	Interruption/loss of concentration	Breaking of holistic impression	Distraction from text/story	Wastes time	Disturbs interpretation/text understanding
NGAR 1		*						
NGAR 2		*						
NGAR 3		*						
NGAR 4	*							
NGAR 5	*		*					
NGAR 6			*					
NGAR 7								
Sub-total III	2 (28.57%)	3 (42.85%)	2 (28.57%)					
Total	10 (38.46%)	8 (30.76%)	7 (26.92%)	1 (3.84%)	1 (3.84%)	1 (3.84%)	2 (7.69%)	
GR 1	*							
GR 2	*							
GR 3				*				
GR 4		*	*					
GR 5			*	*				
GR 6			*					
GR 7			*	*				
GR 8	*							
GR 9			*	*			*	*
GR 10	*							
GR 11	*							
GR 12						*		
GR 13	*							
GR 14	*							
GR 15		*						
GR 16		*						
GR 17	*							
GR 18	*							
GR 19								*
Sub-total IV	9 (47.36%)	3 (30%)	5 (50%)	4 (40%)	1 (10%)	1 (10%)	1 (10%)	2 (20%)
Overall	19 (42.22%)	11 (24.44%)	12 (26.66%)	5 (11.11%)	1 (2.22%)	2 (4.44%)	3 (6.66%)	2 (4.44%)

4Da Questionnaire items IV (i and ii): No authorial assistance offered

	Do you understand the italicised words?			Can you guess their meaning from the context?			bodua	tro-tro	aplankey	Would a glossary/explanation help you to understand the passages?		
	YES	NO	NOT SURE	YES	NO	NOT SURE				YES	NO	NOT SURE
WNNER 1			*			*	an object like an amulet	a road, a path	a kind of taxi driver		*	
WNNER 2		*			*					*		
WNNER 3			*			*	a kind of sword	?entry	?			
WNNER 4			*			*	talisman?	window?	taxi drivers			*
WNNER 5		*				*	?	market	sailor	*		
WNNER 6		*			*					*		
WNNER 7			*			*	a boomerang	some kind of market	taxi drivers	*		
WNNER 8		*				*		kind of taxi men push or pull to have it going	taxi driver	*		
WNNER 9			*			*	hat?	means of transport: train?	drivers?		*	
WNNER 10			*			*	necklace	banner	inhabitants	*		
WNNER 11			*			*		vehicle	taxi-men	*		
WNNER 12			*			*	voice/call		officers	*		
WNNER 13		*				*				*		
WNNER 14		*				*	weapon? magic thing?		drivers?	*		
Sub-total I		6 (42.85%)	8 (57.14%)	1 (7.14%)	3 (21.42)	10 (71.42%)				11 (78.57%)	2 (14.28%)	1 (7.14%)

WNNER: Western non-native English reader

	Do you understand the italicised words?			Can you guess their meaning from the context?			bodua	tro-tro	aplankey	Would a glossary/explanation help you to understand the passages?		
	YES	NO	NOT SURE	YES	NO	NOT SURE				YES	NO	NOT SURE
WNER 1			*			*					*	
WNER 2	*			*			stick signifying power	?	taxi drivers	*		
WNER 3		*					spear	throughway [motorway]	rickshaw pullers/taxi drivers	*		
WNER 4		*		*						*		
WNER 5		*			*					*		
Sub-total II	1 (20%)	3 (60%)	1 (20%)	2 (40%)	1 (20%)	2 (40%)				4 (80%)	1 (20%)	
Total	1 (5.26%)	9 (47.36%)	9 (47.36%)	3 (15.78%)	4 (21.05%)	12 (63.15%)				15 (78.94%)	3 (15.78%)	1 (5.26%)
NGAR 1		*				*	sword	kerb	audience	*		
NGAR 2			*			*	stick/horse's tail that any African chiefs carry as a symbol of power	kind of vehicle/bus	conductors	*		
NGAR 3		*				*				*		
NGAR 4			*	*			stick, weapon	a special place	conductor, driver	*		
NGAR 5		*		*						*		
NGAR 6		*				*				*		
NGAR 7	*			*		*		mini bus	conductor	*		
Sub-total III	1 (14.28%)	4 (57.14%)	2 (28.57%)	3 (42.85%)		4 (57.14%)				5 (71.42%)	2 (28.57%)	
Overall	2 (7.69%)	13 (50%)	11 (42.30%)	6 (23.07%)	4 (15.38%)	16 (61.53%)				20 (76.92%)	5 (19.23%)	1 (3.84%)

WNER: Western native English reader

NGAR: Non-Ghanaian African reader

	Do you understand the italicised words?			Can you guess their meaning from the context?			bodua	tro-tro	aplankey	Would a glossary/explanation help you to understand the passages?		
	YES	NO	NOT SURE	YES	NO	NOT SURE				YES	NO	NOT SURE
GR 1	*				*		whisk – tail of a horse	short-distance intra-city mini-buses	driver's mate who collects the money from the passengers	N/A	N/A	N/A
GR 2		*			*			passenger-lorry that people pay for travelling			*	
GR 3	*				*						*	
GR 4	*				*		a kind of staff	big bus or lorry that takes a lot of passengers	driver-mates		*	
GR 5	*				*						*	
GR 6	*				*						*	
GR 7			*		*		short stick	short distance running vehicles	mate		*	
GR 8					*						*	
GR 9	*				*		a kind of juju or charm	any vehicle used for intra-city transport	a driver's mate		*	

	Do you understand the italicised words?			Can you guess their meaning from the context?			bodua	tro-tro	aplankey	Would a glossary/explanation help you to understand the passages?		
	YES	NO	NOT SURE	YES	NO	NOT SURE				YES	NO	NOT SURE
GR 10	*			*			whisk	bus	driver's mate		*	
GR 11	*					*		a van for transport	driver's help	*		
GR 12	*			*							*	
GR 13	*					*				*		
GR 14		*			*						*	
GR 15	*			*			rod	vehicle	mates		*	
GR 16	*			*							*	
GR 17	*			*							*	
GR 18	*			*			a tail of an animal believed to contain powers	a passenger car	the driver's assistants (what we normally refer to as 'mate')	*		
GR 19	*			*				public bus	the conductors who collect money on the bus			*
Total/	15 (78.94%)	3 (15.78%)	1 (5.26%)	11 (57.89%)	5 (26.31%)	3 (15.78%)				7 (36.84%)	9 (47.36%)	2 (10.52%)

GR: Ghanaian reader

4Db Questionnaire item IV (iii): No authorial assistance offered

	Can explain fathers			Explanation consistent with culture-bound meaning		Can explain agbada		Explanation consistent with culture-bound meaning	
	YES	NO	NOT SURE	YES	NO	YES	NO	YES	NO
WINNER 1	*				*	*		*	
WINNER 2	*				*	*		*	*
WINNER 3			*		*	*		*	
WINNER 4			*		*	*		*	
WINNER 5			*	*	*	*		*	*
WINNER 6			*		*	*		*	*
WINNER 7			*		*	*		*	*
WINNER 8	*				*	*		*	*
WINNER 9	*			*	*	*		*	*
WINNER 10	*				*	*		*	*
WINNER 11		*			*	*		*	*
WINNER 12		*			*	*		*	*
WINNER 13		*			*	*		*	*
WINNER 14		*			*	*		*	*
Sub-total	5 (35.71%)	4 (28.57%)	5 (35.71%)	2 (14.28%)	8 (57.14%)	13 (92.85%)	1 (7.14%)	5 (35.71%)	8 (57.14%)
WINNER 1			*		*	*		*	*
WINNER 2			*		*	*		*	*
WINNER 3			*	*	*	*		*	*
WINNER 4			*	*	*	*		*	*
WINNER 5		*			*	*		*	*
Sub-total	5 (26.31%)	1 (20%)	4 (80%)	2 (40%)	1 (20%)	5 (100%)	1 (5.26%)	2 (40%)	3 (60%)
Total	5 (26.31%)	5 (26.31%)	9 (47.36%)	4 (21.05%)	9 (47.36%)	18 (94.73%)	1 (5.26%)	7 (36.84%)	11 (57.89%)

	Can explain <i>fathers</i>			Explanation consistent with culture-bound meaning		Can explain <i>agbada</i>		Explanation consistent with culture-bound meaning	
	YES	NO	NOT SURE	YES	NO	YES	NO	YES	NO
NGAR 1		*			*		*		
NGAR 2	*			*		*		*	
NGAR 3			*	*		*		*	
NGAR 4	*			*		*		*	
NGAR 5			*			*		*	*
NGAR 6	*				*	*		*	
NGAR 7	*			*		*		*	
<i>Sub-total</i>	4 (57.14%)	1 (14.28%)	2 (28.57%)	4 (57.14%)	1 (14.28%)	6 (85.71%)	1 (14.28%)	5 (71.42%)	1 (14.28%)
Overall	9 (34.61%)	6 (23.07%)	11 (42.30%)	8 (30.76%)	10 (38.46%)	24 (92.30%)	2 (7.69%)	12 (46.15%)	12 (46.15%)

WNER: Western non-native English reader
WNER: Western native English reader
NGAR: Non-Ghanaian African reader

	Can explain fathers			Explanation consistent with culture-bound meaning		Can explain <i>agbada</i>		Explanation consistent with culture-bound meaning	
	YES	NO	NOT SURE	YES	NO	YES	NO	YES	NO
GR 1	*			*		*		*	
GR 2	*			*		*	*	*	
GR 3	*			*		*		*	
GR 4	*			*		*		*	
GR 5	*			*		*		*	
GR 6	*			*		*		*	
GR 7	*			*		*		*	
GR 8	*			*		*		*	*
GR 9	*			*		*		*	
GR 10	*			*		*		*	
GR 11	*			*		*		*	
GR 12	*			*		*		*	
GR 13	*			*		*		*	
GR 14		*					*		
GR 15	*				*	*		*	
GR 16	*			*		*		*	*
GR 17	*			*		*		*	
GR 18	*				*	*		*	*
GR 19	*			*		*		*	
Total	18 (94.73%)	1 (5.26%)		16 (84.21%)	2 (10.52%)	17 (89.47%)	2 (10.52)	14 (73.68%)	3 (15.78%)

GR: Ghanaian reader

4Dc Questionnaire item IV (iv): No authorial assistance offered

"as a rival would look at her husband's favourite"

	No ideal/ Not sure	Some idea	Close to culture-bound meaning	Understands culture-bound meaning	Interpretation not consistent with culture-bound meaning	Understood meaning immediately	Had to work out meaning	No response
WINNER 1				*		*		*
WINNER 2					*			
WINNER 3					*			*
WINNER 4					*			*
WINNER 5				*		*		
WINNER 6	*							*
WINNER 7				*	*	*		
WINNER 8				*				*
WINNER 9				*		*		
WINNER 10					*	*		
WINNER 11				*		*		
WINNER 12				*	*	*		*
WINNER 13				*				
WINNER 14				*		*		
Sub-total I	1 (7.14%)			7 (50%)	6 (42.85%)	8 (57.14)		6 (42.85%)
WNER 1				*		*		
WNER 2				*		*		
WNER 3				*		*		
WNER 4			*			*		
WNER 5				*		*		
Sub-total II	1 (5.26%)	1 (20%)	1 (5.26%)	4 (80%)	6 (31.57%)	5 (100%)		6 (31.57%)
Total				11 (57.89%)	6 (31.57%)	13 (68.42%)		6 (31.57%)

	No idea/ Not sure	Some idea	Close to culture-bound meaning	Understands culture-bound meaning	Interpretation not consistent with culture-bound meaning	Understood meaning immediately	Had to work out meaning	No response
NGAR 1			*					*
NGAR 2				*				*
NGAR 3				*		*		
NGAR 4				*		*		
NGAR 5				*			*	
NGAR 6				*			*	
NGAR 7				*		*		
Sub-total III	1 (3.84%)		1 (14.28%)	6 (85.71%)		3 (42.85%)	2 (28.57%)	2 (28.57%)
Overall			2 (7.69%)	17 (65.38%)	6 (23.07%)	16 (61.53%)	2 (7.69%)	8 (30.76%)

WNNER: Western non-native English reader

WNER: Western native English reader

NGAR: Non-Ghanaian African reader

	No idea/ Not sure	Some idea	Close to culture-bound meaning	Understands culture-bound meaning	Interpretation not consistent with culture-bound meaning	Understood meaning immediately	Had to work out meaning	No response
GR 1				*				*
GR 2				*		*		
GR 3	*							*
GR 4	*							*
GR 5				*				*
GR 6				*		*		*
GR 7					*		*	
GR 8				*				*
GR 9				*		*		
GR 10				*				*
GR 11		*						*
GR 12				*		*		
GR 13				*		*		
GR 14				*				*
GR 15	*					*		*
GR 16				*				*
GR 17					*			*
GR 18	*					*		*
GR 19				*				*
Total	4 (21.05%)	1 (5.26%)		12 (63.15%)	2 (10.52%)	7 (36.84%)	1 (5.25%)	11 (57.89%)

GR: Ghanaian reader

4Ea Questionnaire item V (i): *Contextualisation*

"Kweku Nyamekye"

	No idea/ Not sure	Some idea	Close to culture- bound meaning	Understands culture-bound meaning	Interpretation not consistent with culture- bound meaning
WNNER 1			*		
WNNER 2			*		
WNNER 3	*				
WNNER 4		*			
WNNER 5					*
WNNER 6					*
WNNER 7		*			
WNNER 8					*
WNNER 9					*
WNNER 10					*
WNNER 11					*
WNNER 12					*
WNNER 13			*		
WNNER 14	*				
<i>Sub-total I</i>	2 (14.28%)	2 (14.28%)	3 (21.42%)		7 (50%)
WNER 1			*		
WNER 2			*		
WNER 3			*		
WNER 4			*		
WNER 5	*				
<i>Sub-total II</i>	1 (20%)		4 (80%)		
Total	3 (15.78%)	2 (10.52%)	7 (36.84%)		7 (36.84%)
NGAR 1					*
NGAR 2	*				
NGAR 3					*
NGAR 4					*
NGAR 5	*				
NGAR 6					*
NGAR 7			*		
<i>Sub-total III</i>	2 (28.57%)		1 (14.28%)		4 (57.14%)
Overall	5 (19.23%)	2 (7.69%)	8 (30.76%)		11 (42.30%)

WNNER: Western non-native English reader

WNER: Western native English reader

NGAR: Non-Ghanaian African reader

	No idea/ Not sure	Some idea	Close to culture- bound meaning	Understands culture- bound meaning	Interpretation not consistent with culture- bound meaning
GR 1				*	
GR 2				*	
GR 3	*				
GR 4				*	
GR 5				*	
GR 6				*	
GR 7				*	
GR 8					*
GR 9				*	
GR 10				*	
GR 11				*	
GR 12				*	
GR 13		*			
GR 14	*				
GR 15				*	
GR 16				*	
GR 17				*	
GR 18				*	
GR 19				*	
Total	2 (10.52%)	1 (5.26%)		15 (78.94%)	1 (5.26%)

GR: Ghanaian reader

INTERPRETATION NOT CONSISTENT WITH CULTURE-BOUND MEANING

(Contextualisation)

"Kweku Nyamekye"

Western Non-Native English Readers

- WNNER 5 'the name of the child who is not dead'
WNNER 6 'The African counterpart of Jesus Christ?'
WNNER 8 'The name of the child as a night name. I think it means the child still is in that period when he risks to return with the spirits of the ancestors. It's a belief used to explain infant mortality.'
WNNER 9 'the name of the child?'
WNNER 10 'a miracle'
WNNER 11 'child who did not die'
WNNER 12 'someone's name'

Non-Ghanaian African Readers

- NGAR 1 'the unexpected'
NGAR 3 'name of someone, a man'
NGAR 4 'the child's name'
NGAR 6 'means an obanje or reincarnated son.'

Ghanaian Readers

- GR 8 'Kweku Nyamekye is the name of a person'

4Eb Questionnaire item V (ii): *Contextualisation*

"kola"

	No idea/ Not sure	Some idea	Close to culture- bound meaning	Understands culture-bound meaning	Interpretation not consistent with culture- bound meaning
WNNER 1		*			
WNNER 2	*				
WNNER 3			*		
WNNER 4			*		
WNNER 5		*			
WNNER 6				*	
WNNER 7					*
WNNER 8			*		
WNNER 9	*				
WNNER 10					*
WNNER 11					*
WNNER 12				*	
WNNER 13	*				
WNNER 14		*			
<i>Sub-total I</i>	3 (21.42%)	3 (21.42%)	3 (21.42%)	2 (14.28%)	3 (21.42%)
WNER 1					*
WNER 2		*			
WNER 3					*
WNER 4					*
WNER 5					*
<i>Sub-total II</i>		1 (20%)			4 (80%)
Total	3 (15.78%)	4 (21.05%)	3 (15.78%)	2 (10.52%)	7 (36.84%)
NGAR 1					*
NGAR 2		*			
NGAR 3		*			
NGAR 4				*	
NGAR 5		*			
NGAR 6				*	
NGAR 7			*		
<i>Sub-total III</i>		3 (42.85%)	1 (14.28%)	2 (28.57%)	1 (14.28%)
Overall	3 (11.53%)	7 (26.92%)	4 (15.38%)	4 (15.38%)	8 (30.76%)

WNNER: Western non-native English reader

WNER: Western native English reader

NGAR: Non-Ghanaian African reader

	No idea/ Not sure	Some idea	Close to culture- bound meaning	Understands culture- bound meaning	Interpretation not consistent with culture- bound meaning
GR 1				*	
GR 2				*	
GR 3				*	
GR 4				*	
GR 5			*		
GR 6			*		
GR 7			*		
GR 8				*	
GR 9				*	
GR 10				*	
GR 11		*			
GR 12				*	
GR 13			*		
GR 14		*			
GR 15				*	
GR 16			*		
GR 17				*	
GR 18				*	
GR 19		*			
Total		3 (15.78%)	5 (26.31%)	11 (57.89%)	

GR: Ghanaian reader

INTERPRETATION NOT CONSISTENT WITH CULTURE-BOUND MEANING

(Contextualisation)

"kola"

Western Non-Native English Readers

WNNER 7 'a poor old man'

WNNER 10 'Even the poor have their quarter license. Everybody has his quarter license.'

WNNER 11 'If you don't pay now it could be more serious. The driver might be forced to pay more afterwards.'

Western Native English Readers

WNER 1 'a kind of bean which costs 25 pesewas?'

WNER 3 'Even something small can/will give satisfaction.'

WNER 4 'Even a small thing can improve the situation.'

WNER 5 'A common, inexpensive and mildly addictive drug.'

Non-Ghanaian African Readers

NGAR 1 'Every little bit counts.'

4Ec Questionnaire item V (iii): *Contextualisation*

"*Passion Week*"

	No idea/ Not sure	Some idea	Close to culture- bound meaning	Understands culture- bound meaning	Meaning not consistent with culture- bound meaning
WNNER 1					*
WNNER 2					*
WNNER 3				*	
WNNER 4					*
WNNER 5					*
WNNER 6	*				
WNNER 7	*				
WNNER 8					*
WNNER 9					*
WNNER 10					*
WNNER 11					*
WNNER 12				*	
WNNER 13					*
WNNER 14					*
<i>Sub-total I</i>	2 (14.28%)			2 (14.28%)	10 (71.42%)
WNER 1				*	
WNER 2				*	
WNER 3					*
WNER 4					*
WNER 5					*
<i>Sub-total II</i>				2	3
Total	2 (10.52%)			4 (21.05%)	13 (68.42%)
NGAR 1				*	
NGAR 2				*	
NGAR 3					*
NGAR 4	*				
NGAR 5			*		
NGAR 6					*
NGAR 7					*
<i>Sub-total III</i>	1 (14.28%)		1 (14.28%)	2 (28.57%)	3 (42.85%)
Overall	3 (11.53%)		1 (3.84%)	6 (23.07%)	16 (61.53%)

WNNER: Western non-native English reader

WNER: Western native English reader

NGAR: Non-Ghanaian African reader

	No idea/ Not sure	Some idea	Close to culture- bound meaning	Understands culture- bound meaning	Interpretation not consistent with culture- bound meaning
GR 1				*	
GR 2				*	
GR 3				*	
GR 4			*		
GR 5				*	
GR 6				*	
GR 7				*	
GR 8			*		
GR 9				*	
GR 10				*	
GR 11				*	
GR 12				*	
GR 13				*	
GR 14	*				
GR 15				*	
GR 16				*	
GR 17				*	
GR 18				*	
GR 19	*				
Total	2 (10.52%)		2 (10.52%)	15 (78.94%)	

GR: Ghanaian reader

INTERPRETATION NOT CONSISTENT WITH CULTURE-BOUND MEANING

(Contextualisation)

"Passion Week"

Western Non-native English Readers

- WNNER 1 "Easter."
- WNNER 2 "This is the commemoration of the week Christus was going to die nearly 2000 years ago."
- WNNER 4 "Reference to Easter, to the sacrifice of Christ and also perhaps metaphorically to people's poverty."
- WNNER 5 "A festive week when people spend their money fast."
- WNNER 8 "A week in which people should be generous with one another."
- WNNER 9 "A street, an area."
- WNNER 10 "Week before Easter – when people share everything they have."
- WNNER 11 "A week in the year, like Christmas, when people are generous. Before Easter."
- WNNER 13 "I have no idea, but if it is a Christian country, it may have something to do with the Passions of Christ."
- WNER 14 "It reminds me of the week before Easter (Christ's Passions) but maybe that's ... Greek (or Christian) transfer!"

Western Native English Readers

- WNER 3 "The week leading up to Good Friday and Easter."
- WNER 4 "Easter week?."
- WNER 5 "A (Christian) festival where the poor are expected to contribute money."

Non-Ghanaian African Readers

- NGAR 3 "Thanksgiving week, but I am not sure."
- NGAR 6 "Refers to pay day, the time of the month when workers and passengers have money."
- NGAR 7 "week following the pay-day/week"



THE UNIVERSITY *of* EDINBURGH

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Author	Warren, Julie
Qualification	PhD
Year	2004

Add itional files from CD- ROM [see Contents pages xii-xiv for details]

**Cultural Reference in Modern Ghanaian English-language Fiction: Ways of
encoding, authorial strategies and reader interpretation**

Katalin Egri Ku-Mesu

For the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy

The University of Edinburgh

2003



To my children

Abstract

Modern Ghanaian English-language fiction came into existence in the mid-1960s. The hybrid nature of this literature, resulting from the fact that it is written by authors of a particular cultural and linguistic background in the language of a different culture, often poses problems of comprehension, and hence interpretation, for readers who do not share the author's cultural and linguistic background. Communication between the Europhone African writer and his multiple audience becomes complex not only as a result of the writer's indigenising the European language so that it can carry his African experience, but also because of the (partial) lack of common ground between reader and writer. The current work studies a particular aspect of this peculiar interpretive situation through examining how cultural reference is encoded in modern Ghanaian English-language fiction, what textual strategies writers employ to facilitate understanding of such reference and the effect these strategies have on reader interpretation.

The findings suggest that the indigenisation of English is necessitated by a 'naming' process – the wish to find names in English for things, phenomena and practices that are culturally alien to it. Indigenisation also serves to inscribe the Ghanaian writer's difference and distance from the culture whose language he has chosen for literary expression, thereby creating a metonymic gap. Readers are divided along this gap, and their position in relation to it is indicative of their ability to interpret untranslated/unexplained African-language words/expressions in the text. The authorial strategies intended to make the texts more accessible to the readers all have some promise, but eventually all may prove ineffective because they try to cater for the needs of a rather mixed and ill-defined readership. The research provides evidence that the Ghanaian writer's indigenisation of English and provision of authorial assistance is driven by the perceived need and tolerance of the audience, and by a compulsion on the writer to conform to a way of writing that is critically recognised as African.

Observations on the limitations of the research and outlines of possible future developments are also offered.

Declaration

In accordance with Postgraduate Study Regulation 3.8.7, I hereby declare that this thesis has been composed by myself, that the work it contains is my own, and that it has not been submitted for any other degree.

Katalin Egri Ku-Mesu
Edinburgh, September 2003

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In the course of this work it was inevitable for me to rely on other people's knowledge of specific Ghanaian and other African languages and cultures. My linguistic informants were:

Akan (Twi and Fante): Prof. Abena Dolphyne, Department of Linguistics, University of Ghana, Legon

Joseph Arko, Department of English, University of Cape Coast, Ghana and (research student at the time at the) Department of Theoretical and Applied Linguistics, University of Edinburgh

Jemima Anderson, Department of English, University of Ghana, Legon

Ewe and Nzema: Joseph Arko

Lingala, Swahili and Tshiluba: Fred Betu Ku-Mesu, originally of Kinshasa, D.R. Congo

On cultural aspects of my work I consulted the following people:

Ghana and its ethnic groups:

Aloysius Denkabe, Department of English, University of Ghana, Legon

Joseph Arko, Department of English, University of Cape Coast, Ghana and (research student at the) Department of Theoretical and Applied Linguistics, University of Edinburgh

Jemima Anderson, Department of English, University of Ghana, Legon

DR Congo and its ethnic groups:

Fred Betu Ku-Mesu, originally of Kinshasa, D.R. Congo

I am grateful to them all for their assistance, which was vital for my work.

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APPENDICES ON CD-ROM

Coded corpus

A Wind from the North
Beyond the Horizon
Changes
Crossroads at Ankobea
Fragments
Grief Child
No Sweetness Here
Of Men and Ghosts
Our Sister Killjoy
The Beautiful Ones Are Not Yet Born
The Catechist
The Clothes of Nakedness
The Dancing Tortoise
The Gab Boys
The Girl Who Can
The Healers
The Narrow Path
The Sound of Pestles
The Strange Man
This Earth, My Brother ...

WordSmith tables for authorial assistance

Full corpus

Cushioning
Contextualisation
Ethnographic explanation
Glossary
No assistance

First generation writers

Cushioning
Contextualisation
Ethnographic explanation
Glossary

No assistance

Later generation writers

Cushioning

Contextualisation

Ethnographic explanation

Glossary

No assistance

Internationally published works

Cushioning

Contextualisation

Ethnographic explanation

Glossary

No assistance

Locally published works

Cushioning

Contextualisation

Ethnographic explanation

Glossary

No assistance

WordSmith tables for indigenised – non-indigenised polarity

Full corpus

Non-indigenised cultural reference

Indigenised signifier

Indigenised signified

Indigenised signifier and signified

First generation writers

Non-indigenised cultural reference

Indigenised signifier

Indigenised signified

Indigenised signifier and signified

Later generation writers

Non-indigenised cultural reference

Indigenised signifier

Indigenised signified

Indigenised signifier and signified
<i>Internationally published works</i>
Non-indigenised cultural reference
Indigenised signifier
Indigenised signified
Indigenised signifier and signified
<i>Locally published works</i>
Non-indigenised cultural reference
Indigenised signifier
Indigenised signified
Indigenised signifier and signified

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1 INTRODUCTION

This work has grown out of my long-standing interest in the African continent and in Europhone African literature in general, and in modern Europhone Ghanaian literature in particular. In shorter projects I have investigated, among other things, the issue of reading for pleasure in Africa and whether African literature can survive without large international publishers. More specifically, I studied the potential of literary texts as sources of sociolinguistic exploration of society through analysing the power relationships in Ghanaian society as presented in Ama Ata Aidoo's short story *No Sweetness Here*, examined how African proverbs are interpreted by a multiple audience, what effects authorial strategies aimed at facilitating reader understanding have on a multiple readership, and explored the applicability of Relevance Theory in the rather peculiar interpretive and communicative situation of hybrid literary texts. Relevant parts of my article 'Whose Relevance? Interpretation of Hybrid Texts by a Multiple Audience' (*Edinburgh Working Papers in Applied Linguistics*, no.8, 1997, 44-53) have been incorporated here.

Ghana's written literary history, one of the longest in Africa, goes back to the 18th century and boasts a theological study in Latin by Antonius Guilielmus Amo (c.1703-c.1750), an antislavery tract by Ottobah Cugoano (c.1745-c.1790), historical and anthropological works in the 19th and 20th century by such authors as Carl Reindorf (1834-1917), Raphael Armattoo (1913-1953) and Adelaide Casely-Hayford (1868-1959), a sarcastic criticism of these in *The Blinkards* (1915), a play by Kobina Sekyi (1892-1956), and *Wayward Lines from Africa* (1946) – a collection of poems which is probably the first publication that can be regarded as creative literature proper – by Michael Francis Dei-Anang (1909-1978)¹.

Modern English-language Ghanaian fiction, however, did not come into being until the mid-1960s, when several talented Ghanaian writers started publishing. This literary upsurge in Ghana coincided with similar outbursts of literary creativity in European languages all over Africa – at the intersection of languages and cultures a new literature was born: Europhone African literature. Chapter 2 puts the development of this literature in historical perspective focusing on the key issues of definition, language, audience and critical standards. The account is that of the growth of Europhone African literature with the understanding that Ghanaian literature forms part of it and shares most features of its development, with a

specifically Ghanaian emphasis². Although creative Ghanaian prose writing includes elite as well as popular literature, the scope of the current work covers only the former.

There exists a plethora of studies of the various aspects of African literature. The most relevant ones for the current study are those which deal with the indigenisation of English in general, and the language of African literature in particular. Among the many, this work has drawn particularly on the works of Bokamba, Hancock and Angogo, B. Kachru, Owusu-Ansah, Smith and Todd in the area of non-native, or indigenised, varieties of English, of Ahlu, Criper, Huber, Kropp Dakubu, and Sey in the area of English in Ghana, and of Achebe, Ashcroft, Ashcroft *et al*, Baker and Eggington, Bamiro, Isola, B. Kachru, Ngugi wa Thiong'o, Saro-Wiwa, Sridhar and Zabus in the area of the language of non-native, and specifically (West) African, English literatures. Studies of the language of Africa literature have, so far, focused on the writer, the creation of the texts and their characteristic features. However, 'meaning is never written as if ready-made inside the text, but is formed within the reading of the text' (Lehtonen, 2000:78). My work aims to contribute to the filling of a gap by concentrating on the reader and on how he copes with indigenised language use in Ghanaian English-language fiction.

The hybrid nature of this literature, resulting from the fact that it is written by authors of a particular cultural and linguistic background in the language of a different culture, often poses problems of comprehension, and hence interpretation, for readers who do not share the author's cultural and linguistic background. Communication between the Europhone African writer and his multiple audience becomes complex not only as a result of the writer's moulding the European language so that it can carry his African experience, but also because of the (partial) lack of common ground - or 'absence' or 'distance' (Ashcroft, 2001b:61-2) - between reader and writer. 'If the linguistic and cultural "extension" of the code is missed, one also misses the interpretation at the linguistic, literary, sociolinguistic and cultural levels' (B. Kachru, 1986:165).

In the current work I study a particular aspect of this peculiar interpretive situation through examining how cultural reference is encoded in modern English-language Ghanaian fiction, what textual strategies writers employ to facilitate understanding of such reference and the effect these strategies have on reader interpretation. My reasons for choosing to study fiction - primarily the novel (82.02% of the corpus) and secondarily the short story (17.97% of the corpus) - rather than poetry or drama coincide with Zabus's:

The Europhone novel provides an adequate testing terrain for the practice of indigenisation because the novel is a flexible, polysemic form that can incorporate other genres, as Mikhail Bakhtine amply demonstrated, and other registers as well. As such, the analysis of its language poses interesting problems valid for other genres and other post-colonial literatures. (1991:4)

In addition, both the novel and the short story can be described as hybrid products which look 'inward' into African lore and 'outward' to imported literary traditions, and it is primarily the language that has diverted them from their inward course.

Instead of studying 'pure' texts and 'qualified' readers, I am interested in the actual production and the actual reading of literary texts, 'which cannot be separated from those cultural practices and relations where producers and readers act' (Lehtonen, 2000:78). Therefore, it is important to understand the idea of culture, the perception members of one particular culture may have of another culture, and to familiarise ourselves with the actual culture that gave rise to the literary works studied here. Thus, Chapter 3 investigates the concept of culture and also examines the special relationship culture has with language. It then introduces us to the cultural and linguistic reality which forms the Ghanaian writer's source of inspiration.

Understanding the relationship of culture with language is an important aspect of my work, in which I have drawn most on Sapir and Whorf's hypothesis of linguistic relativity and work by Jiang, Kaplan, Kramsch, Langacker, La Pergola Arezzo, Tannen, Tengan, Thomas and Wierzbicka.

The distance between the Europhone Ghanaian writer and his primarily Western audience accentuates the demands written language makes on both its producers and receivers. Chapter 4 examines this specific communicative situation through the prism of culture and highlights the problems Ghanaian writers face in terms of their audience, both local and international, as a consequence of their choice of English as the language of literary expression. The English they use, however, is not metropolitan English but one that is moulded to carry their Ghanaian experience. The chapter examines this process of moulding the foreign or exogenous language that has become known as indigenisation. Throughout this work, indigenisation is not going to be examined as indigenisation *per se* pertaining to the unconscious collective process of a speech community but as a literary device, 'the writer's attempt at textualizing linguistic differentiation and at conveying African concepts, thought-patterns, and linguistic features through the ex-colonizer's language' (Zabus,

1991:3). For historical reasons, the yardstick against which the Ghanaian writer's literary language is going to be 'measured' is Standard British English. Since the Ghanaian writer needs to cross cultural boundaries to reach the majority of his audience, Chapter 4 also examines the nature of cross-cultural communication and gives an account of Relevance Theory, a theory of communication and cognition that has been found particularly fitting for the analysis of how the Ghanaian writer's provision or withdrawal of various methods facilitating the understanding of cultural reference affects the reader's interpretation of that reference in Anglophone Ghanaian fiction. After a general description, the applicability of Relevance Theory to the data is explored.

With the study having been placed in the complex context of cross-cultural literary communication via an indigenised exogenous language, Chapter 5 sets out the parameters within which the research is to be conducted. It defines the research objectives, describes the data and the procedures followed. Particularly important is the delineation of the novel approach to the description of indigenised language, i.e. the examination of each cultural reference as a linguistic sign, as well as the definitions of what is regarded in the current study as cultural reference and as indigenised language use.

A detailed linguistic description of the indigenised language examples yielded by the data extracted from the corpus follows in Chapter 6. Such a description is necessary because it highlights the complexities of linguistic variation in cultural reference, examines the areas of divergence from Standard British English and explains their origin, thereby pointing to the source of reader difficulty. As such, it provides a basis for the examination, in Chapter 7, of authorial strategies, and of reader interpretation.

Using data gathered from readers by way of a questionnaire, Chapter 7 explores the concept of the metonymic gap created by the insertion of African-language words or expressions into the English-language text without the provision of any authorial device to facilitate understanding and examines the effect it has on various groups of readers, these being the Ghanaian, non-Ghanaian African and Western readers. It then proceeds to analyse the effects on, and usefulness for, the various groups of readers of the authorial strategies of cushioning, contextualisation, ethnographic explanation and the editorial rather than authorial provision of a glossary.

Chapter 8 analyses the differences between the first and later generations of Ghanaian writers regarding their use of indigenised language and provision of authorial assistance to the reader.

By way of conclusion, Chapter 9 revisits the research objectives and summarises the results and their implications. It also offers observations on the limitations of the research and outlines possible future developments.

Notes on terminology

The terminology used in this work draws on accepted usage in the fields of African (and by the same token, post-colonial) literary theory and criticism, cultural anthropology, and linguistics and its various sub-disciplines such as anthropological linguistics, applied linguistics and sociolinguistics. However, I feel it is necessary to clarify the following.

Standard British English or Standard English and native English are used alternatively to refer to the same variety of English – the language of Great Britain. While the former is used when grammatical acceptability and correctness is of special importance, the latter is preferred when the emphasis is on its culture-specificity.

Because of the complexity of the linguistic situation in West Africa in general, and in Ghana in particular, where “the ‘mother tongue,’ especially in mixed families, is very often the father’s tongue” (Zabus, 1991:2, fn4), it needs to be stated that throughout this study ‘mother tongue’ is used to refer to the writer’s or the reader’s first language or what linguists and language educators call L1.

The ‘author’, ‘writer’ and ‘reader’ as generic entities are referred to as ‘he’. ‘She’ is used only when reference is made to a specific female writer. In the data analysis, while remaining anonymous, individual readers are referred to as ‘he’ or ‘she’ according to their natural gender.

‘Western’ is used throughout this work to refer to all entities that form part of Europe and North America and the culture and civilisation of these regions.

Notes

- ¹ Source: Klein, Leonard S. (ed.). 1988 [1986]. *African Literatures in the 20th Century: A Guide*. Harpenden, Herts.: Oldcastle Books Ltd.
- ² It is a sad fact that although African writers are identified by their nationality (rather than by their ethnic group), Europhone national literatures in Sub-Saharan Africa, perhaps with the exception of the very prolific Nigerian literature, are still relatively rarely referred to as such. It has become more accepted in the literature to talk about Europhone African literature in general as an all-embracing entity, or to refer to regional literatures such as West African, East African, or Southern African literature, or to identify bodies of literature according to their language of creation such as Anglophone, Francophone or Lusophone African literature.

2 AFRICAN LITERATURE AND ITS PROBLEMATIC ASPECTS

2.1 Introduction

Modern African literature in European languages had existed, been studied and its development had kept informing scholarship for over thirty years before it led to the creation, roughly a decade and a half ago, of the new discipline of postcolonialism.

Postcolonial theory or postcolonial studies 'is considered part of the interdisciplinary field of cultural studies, which draws on anthropology, sociology, gender studies, ethnic studies, literary criticism, history, psychoanalysis, political science and philosophy to examine various cultural texts and practices' (Robinson, 1997:12-13). It grows out of the break-up of the European empires in the second half of the 20th century and the subsequent rise of counterhegemonic cultural studies¹, with a scope that remains controversial and has been defined in various ways:

- (1) The study of Europe's former colonies since independence; how they have responded to, accommodated, resisted or overcome the cultural legacy of colonialism during independence. 'Postcolonial' here refers to cultures after the *end* of colonialism. The historical period covered is roughly the second half of the twentieth century. ['Post-independence' studies]
- (2) The study of Europe's former colonies since they were colonized; how they have responded to, accommodated, resisted or overcome the cultural legacy of colonialism since its inception. 'Postcolonial' here refers to cultures after the *beginning* of colonialism. The historical period covered is roughly the modern era, beginning in the sixteenth century. ['Post-European colonisation' studies]
- (3) The study of all cultures/societies/countries/nations in terms of their power relations with other cultures/etc.; how conqueror cultures have bent conquered cultures to their will; how conquered cultures have responded to, accommodated, resisted or overcome that coercion. 'Postcolonial' here refers to our late-twentieth-century perspective on political and cultural power relations. The historical period covered is all human history. ['Power-relations' studies] (Robinson, 1997: 13-14 [15]; original emphasis)

As can be expected, each of these definitions will appeal to, and be useful for, a particular group of scholars and is only one way of looking at postcolonialism, but not the only way. Because modern Europhone African literature – also referred to, at least in its early stages, as resistance literature² - came into being as a response to the cultural legacy of colonialism

shortly before and during independence, the current study falls into the scope of Definition 1 above.

In literature, postcolonial criticism rejects the universalist claims of liberal humanist critics and the Eurocentric norms and practices these promote. In addition to showing that canonical Western literature and literary criticism is often evasive or silent on matters of colonisation and imperialism, postcolonial critics foreground questions of cultural difference and promote hybridity and cultural polyvalency by developing a perspective in which “marginality, plurality and ‘Otherness’ are seen as sources of energy and potential change” (Barry, 1995:198).

As will be seen in the discussion below, literary theorists and critics had been expressing such ideas long before the advent of postcolonialism. Many – e.g. Achebe, Boyce Davies, Chinweizu, Jemie, Madubuike, Ngugi wa Thiong’o, Larson³, Fanon, Lefevere – have been adopted by the new discipline. Others – e.g. Bishop, Egejuru, Iyasere, Owomoyela – have not been referred to as postcolonial theorists/critics despite their clearly expressed anti-Eurocentricism and anti-colonialism. Particularly because of the non-inclusion in the ‘canon’ of postcolonial theorists/critics of some of the finest writers on African literature, whose works I consider indispensable in the study of African literature and its problematic aspects, the following discussion – although informed by postcolonial theory – will treat the subject from a historical rather than from a postcolonial theoretical standpoint.

The current chapter is devoted to the examination of Europhone African literature. After an account of its inception (2.2), special attention will be given to four areas: definition (2.3), language (2.4), audience (2.5) and critical standards (2.6). Although such a detailed description may seem implausible if not irrelevant, we have to remember that the raw material of the current thesis is a selection of African literary texts – Ghanaian English-language novels and short stories. To understand the difficulties involved both in expressing and interpreting cultural difference in these texts, it is vital to understand the development of African literature, and it is important to examine particularly its five aspects highlighted above as they all draw our attention to problems intrinsic in the hybrid nature of these texts and point towards difficulties faced both by their creators and readers.

2.2 The beginnings

From its very inception, African literature has been ridden with problems - the elite, or highbrow, Europhone African literature, that is. For the rich oral traditions, the Onitsha Market type popular literature⁴ and modern African writing in African languages⁵ seem to have been thriving undisturbed and untouched by the turmoil surrounding African writing in European languages.

Two major literary events mark the emergence of modern Europhone African literature. In the autumn of 1947 the first issue of *Présence africaine* appeared in Dakar and Paris. Its editor, Alioune Diop said that its purpose was to 'define the African's creativity and to hasten his integration in the modern world' (Diop quoted in Bishop, 1988:16).

The second important event was the publication, in 1948, of Léopold Sédar Senghor's *Anthologie de la nouvelle poésie nègre et malgache de langue française*. Apart from Senghor's own *Chants d'ombre* published two years earlier and Léon Damas's anthology *Poètes d'expression française (Afrique Noire, Madagascar, Réunion, Guadeloupe, Martinique, Indochine, Guyane)*, this was the first major anthology to indicate that serious poetry was beginning to be written by enough Africans and poets of African descent, and that the world could no longer treat them with continued ignorance and denial. Jean-Paul Sartre's introductory essay *Orphée noire* was equally influential not only in its impact on the African writers (mainly the French-speaking poets), but also in bringing these works to the attention of the non-African world.

Négritude, the emerging literary movement, grew out of the intellectual self-questioning imposed by the French policy of assimilation and was 'a philosophy that asserts an aggressive totality of Africanness albeit in the language and perhaps even in the philosophical spirit of the rejected imperial power' (Angoff and Povey, 1969:18). It was 'a thesis asserted by those intellectuals of Africa whom French colonial policy had most effectively moulded as Black Frenchmen who were worthy of assimilation into the French cultural community' (Angoff and Povey, 1969:20). In their attempt to obtain individuality, these intellectuals felt a burning need to search for an alternative to their Frenchness.

The British, on the other hand, relied on a different colonial practice and made a less concerted effort to acculturate the Africans to their ways. Since they never really faced assimilation, Africans under British rule refused to accept the simplistic philosophy of Négritude to reject

Europe, their refusal being hallmarked by Wole Soyinka's often quoted statement, 'A tiger does not have to proclaim his tigritude.' They, however, had their own intellectual problems born out of the realisation that they were caught up between two traditions originating from two different cultures. The concept of 'culture conflict' actually derives from this recognition. A corollary to the concept of 'culture conflict' was the concept of 'African Personality' (Angoff and Povey, 1969:19) which shows suspicious similarities with Négritude and produced poetry that echoes the mood.

Whether the term is Négritude, 'culture conflict' or 'African Personality', the essential element of the concept expressed is that there are two worlds that meet in the educated African: he not only inherits his own tradition, but shares, of necessity, in the impact of Western culture, as well. It is out of this double heritage that African writers began to create a new literature.

2.3 Problems of definition

When asked to define jazz, Louis Armstrong once said, "Man, if you gotta ask, you'll never know." "Ditto for African literature," one might say. Yet the question, "What is African literature?" keeps cropping up at conferences of writers and critics, in prefaces and introductions to books, in general discussions ... (Barkan, 1985:27)

2.3.1 The conferences

One of the first African critics to address the issue of what African literature is is the Nigerian writer Cyprian Ekwensi. In 1956 he wrote:

What then is African writing? To my own mind African writing is that piece of self-expression in which the psychology behind African thought is manifest; in which the philosophy and the pattern of culture from which it springs can be discerned. (Ekwensi quoted in Bishop, 1988:18)

The matter, however, was not seriously and systematically tackled until 1962, when the Nigerian poet Christopher Okigbo raised it at the Conference of African Writers of English

Expression, which came to be regarded as the seminal conference for African literature, held in June that year at Makerere University, Kampala, Uganda. When asked, at the end of the conference, whether there was such a thing that might be termed as African literature, Christopher Okigbo said, 'If and when the literature emerges, it will have to divine its own laws for its unity; its own form. Until this happens it appears rather premature to talk of African Literature in terms other than geographical' (Okigbo quoted in Bishop, 1988:19).

Bernard Fonlon of Cameroon had these thoughts to offer, placing emphasis, significantly, on expression as the defining element:

The experiences and emotions of the African are essentially universal: colonial humiliation, frustration, sorrow, bitterness, hate, revolt, revenge, exaltation, joy, love - these are human experiences. To my mind what conferred upon these an African character was their expression, their manner. (Fonlon quoted in Bishop, 1988:19)

The sensitive question of whether such white African writers as Alan Paton and Nadine Gordimer can be included in the definition of African literature was addressed by another leading African critic, Ezekiel Mphahlele, who, interestingly, based his distinction on the writer's identification with his characters.

There is a degree of identification in which a white writer in Africa like Mr. Paton or Miss Gordimer stands in relation to the characters and setting of his or her stories which indicates whether either of them is African. In both cases, one can distinctly tell they are on the white side of the colour line. For their identification is stronger with the white characters than with the black. This identification is a much closer and intimate relationship than the mere espousal of a cause which one's characters uphold in the context of a story; in other words, it is not just sympathy. It is a matter of belongingness in relation to the group represented by one section of characters one is portraying and the habitat of that group. What holds good for the white writer is true in the case of the Black one in his segregated world.

This is the distinction between a non-African white writer and a white African writer on the one hand, and between a white and a black African writer on the other. (Mphahlele quoted in Bishop, 1988:20)

Remembering this conference much later, Ngugi wa Thiong'o observes that what he believes to be the real question, i.e. whether what these writers of 'English expression' wrote qualified as African literature, was never seriously asked. The issue of literature and audience and of language as a determinant of national and class audience was not really addressed. Instead, the

debate was about subject matter and the racial and geographical origin of the writer (Ngugi, 1986:6).

The conference on 'African Literature and the University Curriculum' held at Fourah Bay College, the University of Sierra Leone in Freetown in April 1963 also showed considerable concern with the definition of African literature. In his short speech opening a discussion T.R.M. Creighton quoted his own definition of African literature accepted by a Congress of Africanists in Accra a year earlier: 'any work in which an African setting is authentically handled, or to which experiences which originate in Africa are integral' (Creighton, 1965:84). Creighton, however, pointed out that such a definition would raise the problem of what to include in and exclude from the scope of African literature, mentioning such problematic works from this point of view as Conrad's *Heart of Darkness*, Soyinka's poems about being an African in London and Greene's *The Heart of the Matter*. The discussion that followed raised no doubts that writing in any of the indigenous languages of Africa is unequivocally considered to be African literature. At the same time, it voiced opinions that writing by an African in any of the former colonial languages, i.e. in English, French, Portuguese, Spanish or Italian, should primarily be considered as African literature, and only secondarily as English, French, Portuguese, etc., literature. It was suggested that provenance plays an important role in deciding what is, and what is not, African literature. A native African writer, no matter whether black or white, will continue to write African literature whether he writes about an African situation or about his experiences abroad. On the other hand, the works of a non-African writer, such as Joyce Cary, even if they are set in Africa, will continue to be considered as English literature in an African setting.

Four years later, the African-Scandinavian Writers' Conference, held near Stockholm in February 1967, did not address the issue of defining African literature directly, but the question kept lurking in the papers and discussions. In his *Opening Remarks* Per Wästberg quotes, somewhat critically, the definition put forward at the conference at Fourah Bay College, but his conclusion is that 'you cannot define African literature as one single unit with certain characteristics. One is forced to use the term "African literature" in a deliberately loose way, remembering that what constitutes African literature is a number of national and ethnic literatures throughout Africa' (Wästberg, 1968:11). The question he raises here about 'African literature' as a meaningful entity and about it being a cliché into which are squeezed writers representing a multi-levelled reality is a troubling one which does not seem to have had sufficient attention ever since.

There have, however, been critics who believe this issue to be relevant and important enough for consideration. Edgar Wright, when giving his working definition of African literature, confines the term to writers from sub-Saharan or Black Africa and excludes those who are of European descent. He argues that we are dealing with a number of national literatures which have certain common elements though exceptions and variations inevitably occur. Wright maintains that it is the degree of commonness that is important, whose elements he lists as follows:

- (i) There is at most only a brief history of written literature, but a strong tradition of oral literature that is still alive.
- (ii) The vernaculars (there may be many within the country) are still actively used at all levels of normal social and family life.
- (iii) English is the second language common throughout the country, used as a medium of education (at higher if not at lower levels) and as the medium of communication with other countries in Africa and beyond.
- (iv) The past history is that of a colonial territory subject to cultural, political and missionary as well as linguistic influence from Britain.
- (v) The present history is one of achieved independence, with a growing awareness of both national identity and modern problems.
- (vi) There is an acute racial awareness based on colour.
- (vii) Traditional culture (possibly a number of individual cultures) is a major influence on the development of the contemporary national culture and its accompanying attitudes and beliefs. (Wright, 1973:6-7)

Wästberg's and Wright's view finds a supporter twenty years later in Oyekan Owomoyela, who writes that concepts like 'African literature', 'European literature', 'Asian literature' are all geopolitical constructs made up of a number of distinct elements, especially languages and nationalities. Africa comprises a number of different nations, just as Europe and Asia do. Consequently, just as we use 'European literature' as an umbrella term for English, French, German, Russian, etc., literatures and 'Asian literature' as an umbrella term for Chinese,

Japanese, Indian, Korean, etc., literatures, “‘African literature’ must be seen as a convenient shorthand for the many distinctive literatures of the African continent” (Owomoyela, 1993:364).

In the discussions that followed Wole Soyinka’s talk on *The Writer in a Modern African State* at the 1967 Stockholm conference, Alex La Guma seemed conscious about the oversimplified nature of his own definition: ‘African literature or Scandinavian literature or American or English literature is simply that which concerns itself with the realities of its prospective or appropriate societies. African literature concerns itself with the realities of Africa’ (La Guma in Wästberg, 1968:22).

At the same conference, in his paper *Individualism and Social Commitment*, Lewis Nkosi challenges the notion of socially committed literature maintaining that, although being a public figure or a revolutionary is not incompatible with being a poet, it has got very little direct relationship with literature. In his opinion the claim that the poets and writers of Africa should, or are going to, provide a vision of the future of Africa is false and misleading. It is rather the originality writers exhibit in their exploration of the human condition that strikes us as prophetic. ‘A writer’s special commitment is to language and its renewal and to the making of a better instrument for the delineation of human character’ (Nkosi, 1968:48).

Virgilio de Lemos joins Nkosi in addressing the more subtle question of the quality of writing saying that it is not the theme chosen by the writer that determines the quality of a literary work. What is important for the writer is to use the language in a mature and skilful way to influence people through it.

It may be noted here that according to Rand Bishop, who did extensive research on the relevant documents in English and French that appeared between 1947 and 1966, French-speaking African writers made fewer attempts to define African literature than their English-speaking counterparts. Bishop believes that francophone writers were less interested in the search for a definition of African writing because of their preoccupation with Négritude. It also seems likely that they considered Négritude to be the definition of African literature.

2.3.2 *An all-inclusive perspective: Martin Tucker and Oladele Taiwo*

In his book *Africa in Modern Literature* published in 1967 Martin Tucker devotes a full chapter to the problem of defining African literature. The questions he seeks to answer are whether it is a prerequisite for a writer to be African or of African descent to be able to write African literature; whether literature created by writers throughout the world 'about the milieu, essence, and the thematic and psychic particularities of the African continent' (Tucker, 1967:2) is African literature; whether African literature should be restricted to works written in any of the African languages or works by such writers as Hemingway or Cary can be considered as part of African literature. In his attempt to answer these questions he makes a reference to the conclusions of the conference of African writers held at Makerere University College in 1962 discussed above, and quotes that 'the essential elements of African literature were the African viewpoint ... the moral values, the philosophy, and customs of African society' (Bloke Modisane in Tucker, 1967:3). Tucker's own view is that writers not born in Africa may form part of African literature if their works carry the feel and the spirit of the African continent, though he adds that a sense of proportion should be observed with regard to all categories and classifications; it is not only spiritual and psychic qualities that have to be taken into account when determining what distinguishes African literature but geographic content and biography, as well. He establishes four broad divisions by which African writers can, in his opinion, be best characterized:

- 1) the non-African writer who treats the subject matter of Africa in a language other than African;
- 2) the African writer, black or white, who deals with the subject matter of Africa in an African language;
- 3) the African writer whose subject matter is other than Africa but who writes in an African language;
- 4) the African writer who treats the subject matter of Africa but does so in a non-African language which has become part of the means of communication in Africa.

According to this convenient outline all creative writing that has got something to do with the African continent either through subject matter or by the provenance and language of the writer goes under the umbrella of African literature.

Oladele Taiwo rejects the concept that African literature is that which is written by Africans, and that the works of non-African writers cannot be considered as part of it. He maintains that any work with an authentically African background should be considered African literature. He seems to agree with Tucker in that 'any work which is African in content and sympathy should be admitted into the body of African literature' (Taiwo, 1967:180). Somewhat contradictorily however, he supports the idea that African literature should be written in the indigenous languages of Africa and the growth of a literature indigenous to Africa should be encouraged.

2.3.3 *An attack on Eurocentricism: Janheinz Jahn*

A remarkable perspective is taken by Janheinz Jahn who launches an attack on a Eurocentric view of world literature. He points out that even today literature is classified by languages, a method of classification which was justifiable until the beginning of the 20th century. Literature was national literature, and from a literary point of view the nation was identical with the territory where the language was used. To be regarded as 'world literature', a work had to acquire importance outside its language areas and had not only to be translated into other languages, but it had to leave its mark in the literatures of other countries. Since European nations were in close contact with each other, many works crossed the linguistic frontiers and became promoted to the rank of 'world literature. But 'to achieve the same distinction, an important work written in a non-European language depended on three factors: first, a European to discover it; second, a European who knew the language well enough to translate it; and third, the luck to find favour with the prevailing taste in Europe' (Jahn, 1966:16). This meant that masterpieces of Indian, Arabic, Chinese and even the less exotic Hungarian literature were, and still are, excluded from 'world literature'. Though the basic concept of world literature asks for all national literatures, including those still unknown, to be considered equally, 'Europe felt she was the conductor, entitled to decide on key and beat, and also to exclude from the choir those who sang in exotic tones outside her comprehension' (Jahn, 1966:17).

Despite the fact that Janheinz Jahn throws light as early as the mid-1960s on the incomprehension, and one may add patronising, attitude of the Western reading public and critical circles towards non-European literatures, until quite recently this attitude has continued to dominate the way African literature is perceived.

When it comes to defining African literature, Jahn, unlike many others before him, is of the opinion that literature can no longer be classified by language, geographical areas, colour or birth-places of the authors for the simple reason that European languages and Arabic have spread beyond their traditional areas, geography provides no literary categories, and colour and provenance also fall outside the domain of literature. Though he gives no specific criteria, he believes that literature, be it European, American, Asian or African, can only be classified by style and the attitudes it reveals. Only by studying and analysing individual works can we fit them into a tradition of similar attitudes and styles and can we decide which literature they belong to.

Contemporary African literature has, in his opinion, two sources: traditional African literature and Western literature. The boundary between them is the boundary between oral and written literature, with traditional African literature showing no European influences and not being written down, and Western literature exhibiting no African stylistic features or patterns of expression. A work that reveals no African stylistic features or patterns of expression belongs to Western literature even if it is written by an African. Although Jahn acknowledges that simple as it is theoretically, this distinction is hard to make in practice, I believe it casts doubt on his contention that geographical factors and place of origin play no part in classifying which literature a work belongs to. Probably because it is rather difficult to pin down what exactly those African stylistic features and patterns of expression are, and because the question arises whether they can or have to be made uniform throughout Africa, the criteria that the definition of African literature hinges on remain debated even today.

Jahn, however, goes on to say that it is important to find out those “ingredients of ‘Africanism’” (Jahn, 1966: 23) which prompt us to speak about African literature in English, French and Portuguese rather than English, French and Portuguese literature in Africa. He is convinced that a literary work written by, quoting his example, a Yoruba author in English has to be examined not only for the modern ideas and influences from English literature, but also for the stylistic features that come from the Yoruba oral traditions. He seems to recognise the difficulty underlying such investigations but believes that the literary analysis of oral literature can be the first step towards understanding the literary forms of the oral traditions. Following this line of argument, and contrary to his earlier statement about where writers should be placed, Jahn seems to come to a more cautious conclusion when he says that it would be superficial, and probably a mistake, to assign an African writer who writes in a European language to Western

literature on the basis that his work does not exhibit 'Africanisms' which are recognisable at first sight.

Despite the uncertainties present in his argumentation, Jahn manages to put forth a very important point. Namely, that when discussing the question of what constitutes African literature, it is not the concept of authentically handled African setting, nor experiences originating from Africa, nor a concern with the realities of Africa, not even 'the milieu, essence and the thematic and psychic peculiarities of the African continent' (Tucker, 1967:2), or the moral values, the philosophy and customs of African society that are of primary importance. They may or may not yield literary categories. What needs to be looked at first and foremost is style and patterns of literary expression and their relationship with African stylistic features stemming from traditional African oral literature.

2.3.4 *Africa-centred consciousness: Nadine Gordimer*

'What is African writing? Must one be black or brown in order to write it, or may one be any old colour? Must the work deal with situations that couldn't come about in quite the same way anywhere else in the world? Or can it deal with matters that preoccupy people everywhere? May it be written in one of the world languages which came to Africa in Colonial times, or must it be written in African languages?' - asks Nadine Gordimer in her collection of essays on African literature entitled *The Black Interpreters* (1973:5). The very fact that she opens her book with these questions shows that about a quarter of a century after the emergence of modern African literature the debate on what it actually is and how it should be defined is still very much alive.

Gordimer's own answer is so terse and compact that any summary would only do harm to it. To her, African writing is

any writing done in any language by Africans themselves and by others of whatever skin colour who share with Africans the experience of having been shaped, mentally and spiritually, by Africa rather than anywhere else in the world. One must look at the world *from Africa*, to be an African writer, not look *upon Africa* from the world. Given this Africa-centred consciousness, the African writer can write about what he pleases, and even about other countries, and still his work will belong to African literature (Gordimer, 1973:5).

Gordimer is also aware that when considering African writing, the criteria to be used for definition must be carefully selected. The question here is whether we are approaching it as testimony of social change, or as literature. If we consider it as testimony of social change, then anything written is of interest and justifies publication and study. If, however, we consider it as literature, it is exclusively the quality of the writing and the creative gift of the writer that matters. She believes that from a literary point of view the ideal achievement occurs when a man's experience and his talent are equal to each other. Though this concurrence is far from being common in any literature, this is the only canon which she deems worthwhile in measuring the achievements of literature.

Gordimer maintains that modern African literature is essentially a committed literature because it is motivated by a deep need to protest and demand. It has taken inspiration from the expression and assertion of the African personality, and it is this assertion that underlies political action and seeks recognition through political autonomy. The novel whose theme is the political struggle itself simply represents the most obvious aspects of this commitment.

As far as the future of African writing is concerned, Gordimer builds her judgement on ideas expressed by Claude Wauthier in his book entitled *The Literature and Thought of Modern Africa*. Wauthier suggests that when independence is gained, the purpose of the impetus of the cultural renaissance is fulfilled, and in addition to historical novels about national heroes and about the fight for independence, in the construction of African socialism 'an aggressive literature might be developed, criticising the go-getting of some, the opportunism of others, abusive profits, and customs shackling economic development' (Wauthier, 1966:280). Gordimer believes that if Wauthier is right, African literature will remain essentially a committed literature.

2.3.5 *Self-definition in action and commitment to education: Chinua Achebe*

Chinua Achebe has spoken out and written on many various aspects of African literature though he does not seem to be keen on defining it. At a conference on African literature at Dalhousie University, Canada he said that 'African literature would define itself in action; so why not leave it alone?' (Achebe, 1973:49). He echoes Wästberg when saying that African literature cannot be crammed into a small, neat definition. It is not one unit, but a group of associated

units, 'the sum total of all the *national* and *ethnic* literatures of Africa' (Achebe, 1964:56; cf. Wästberg, 1968:11 quoted in 2.3.1).

Deferring a definition does not mean, however, that Achebe has no clear-cut ideas about African literature. In his paper entitled *Thoughts on the African Novel*, which he delivered at the above-mentioned conference, he expresses his conviction that the African novel has to be about Africa. However, he rejects the suggestion that Conrad's *Heart of Darkness* is African literature on the grounds that Africa is not only a geographical entity but also a 'metaphysical landscape', 'a view of the world ... from a particular position' (Achebe, 1973:50; cf. Gordimer, 1973:5 quoted above), which position is not even a matter of colour since the literary scene in Africa is shared by blacks and whites alike.

Achebe believes in committed literature. His commitment, though, is not to any political cause but to educating his people about their past, thus helping them to raise their self-esteem and regain their true identity.

Here then is an adequate revolution for me to espouse - to help my society regain belief in itself and put away the complexes of the years of denigration and self-abasement. And it is essentially a question of education, in the best sense of that word. ... You have all heard of the African personality; of African democracy, of the African way to socialism, of negritude, and so on. They are all props we have fashioned at different times to help us get on our feet again. Once we are up we shan't need them any more. ...

The writer cannot expect to be excused from the task of re-education and regeneration that must be done. ...

I for one would not wish to be excused. I would be quite satisfied if my novels (especially the ones set in the past) did no more than teach my readers that their past - with all its imperfections - was not one long night of savagery from which the first Europeans acting on God's behalf delivered them. Perhaps what I write is applied art as distinct from pure. But who cares? Art is important but so is education of the kind I have in mind. And I don't see that the two need be mutually exclusive. (Achebe, 1965b:44-45)

On this point, like on many others, Achebe is not without supporters. Such distinguished writers as Camara Laye of Guinea⁶ and Kofi Awoonor of Ghana⁷, just to mention two, agree with him that the African writer has a mission to help people to grasp the significance of the past and civilisation of Africa.

2.3.6 Decolonising African Literature: Chinweizu, Jemie and Madubuike

Attacks on the Eurocentric view of African literature become more and more fierce by the beginning of the 1980s, when a new generation of Africans enters the scene of literary criticism. One of the most powerful and influential books of this period is *Toward the Decolonization of African Literature* by Chinweizu, Onwuchekwa Jemie and Ihechukwu Madubuike. In their attempt to define African literature they employ set theory borrowed from mathematics, which might seem quite outlandish at first sight, though the approach of borrowing a theory from science and applying it to literature is not without examples: the Hungarian Zoltán Abádi Nagy, in his *Válság és komikum* (Budapest: Magvető, 1982), a study of contemporary American literature, applies the theory of entropy successfully to point out tendencies of development in the American novel. Chinweizu, Jemie and Madubuike's concern is with concepts and the sets they denote, evolving and non-evolving sets, and the intensional and extensional definitions. Their conclusion is that

the concept of African literature, like the concept of other national or regional literatures, is one whose denotation is an *evolving set*. It cannot be defined with simple, clear-cut, dictionary-like definition, through an enumeration of necessary and sufficient conditions. ... A fruitful procedure ... would be to approach the matter as one requiring an *extensional definition* in which *family resemblances* are pragmatically employed to decide which of any doubtful or borderline cases should be included with the indisputable canon of African literature. (Chinweizu, Jemie and Madubuike, 1980: 307-308)

The central issue for them is the criteria by which African literature should be judged. In their attempt to define these criteria they seek an answer to what African literature is, i.e. what works and for what reasons can be regarded as part of the body of African literature; and what the relationship between these works and other national and regional literatures is.

The criteria for classification Chinweizu, Jemie and Madubuike apply in defining African literature are *regional literatures* – for example European literature – which include many *national literatures* in different languages, and *language literatures*, some of which include several national literatures. The example they give for *language literatures* is English language literature, which includes British national literature; the national literatures of those countries where English is the native language, e.g. the United States, Canada, Australia and New Zealand; and the national literatures of those countries where English is not the mother tongue of the population but has been established as an official language, which is the case in many of the former British colonies. They observe that attempts to include African literature in the body

of European literatures have been made in the case of African works which are written in a European language, the argument for their inclusion being the very fact that the language used is non-African. However, they strongly oppose such claims and state that it is not language but ethos that is a crucial factor in determining which national or regional literature a particular work belongs to. Although language embodies cultural values and is a vehicle for expressing them, it is not the main generator of these values and as such, is not the only factor to be relied on for literary criteria. In addition, they maintain that *national criteria* are more important in determining critical standards than *language criteria*. To illustrate this they mention that although Chinua Achebe's works are written in English, and therefore may be considered as part of *English-language literature*, they can by no means be criticised with British national values. It is especially the difference between Igbo and British experience and values that makes Achebe mould the English language so that it can carry his Igbo experience and values.

When it comes to the actual definition of African literature, they claim that

works done for African audiences, by Africans, and in African languages, whether these works are oral or written, constitute the historically indisputable core of African literature. Works done by Africans but in non-African languages, and works done by non-Africans in African languages, would be among those for which some legitimate doubt might be raised about their inclusion or exclusion from the canon of works of African literature, and it is for them that some decision procedure would have to be established. (Chinweizu, Jemie and Madubuike, 1980:11-12)

For this decision procedure they suggest four main considerations, which they rank in the following order of importance:

- (1) the primary audience for whom the work is done;
- (2) the cultural and national consciousness expressed in the work, whether through the author's voice or through the characters and their consciousness, habits, compoment and diction;
- (3) the nationality of the writer, whether by birth or naturalization ...;
- (4) the language in which the work is done. (Chinweizu, Jemie and Madubuike, 1980:13-14)

It is based on these criteria that they classify the works of such writers as Amos Tutuola, Ayi Kwei Armah, Efua Sutherland, Ama Ata Aidoo, Flora Nwapa, Davidson Abioseh Nicol, Okot p'Bitek, Denis Brutus, Peter Abrahams, Ngugi wa Thiong'o, Chinua Achebe or Ezekiel

Mphahlele as African literature, and exclude Joyce Cary's *Mister Johnson* and Joseph Conrad's *Heart of Darkness* from the canon of African literature. They acknowledge, however, that classification becomes more difficult in the case of expatriate African writers and works set in places outside Africa. Bringing the examples of Gertrude Stein, James Baldwin, Ezra Pound, Samuel Beckett, T.S. Eliot, W.H. Auden and Vladimir Nabokov, they suggest that it is perhaps not impossible for a writer to belong to two or more regional or national literatures, and it is 'a judicious exercise of commonsense' that has to be called for in borderline situations.

Chinweizu, Jemie and Madubuike have clear-cut ideas about the direction in which they would like African literature to develop. They express great dissatisfaction at the absence of traditional forms of oral literature such as narrative poems, parables, paradoxes, myths, legends, proverbs, songs, dirges, epics and boasts from poetry, and tales, legends, allegories, parables and fables from prose. Their opinion is that privatist and protest poetry has overshadowed traditional forms, themes and treatment in the corpus of modern African poetry, which no longer seems to reflect the diversity of African interests and activities. Although they do not denounce private themes in poetry, they ask that these should be made lucid and accessible. Protest poetry, on the other hand, should not be directed exclusively to Europe and America, but it should also be addressed to an African audience as criticism of the illegal and dishonest acts of Africans. As far as narrative prose is concerned, they would like to see traditional forms not only incorporated into novels and short stories, but also continued in their own right. At the same time, they would like the authors to utilise the traditional style of oral rendition, which would make it possible for the audience to transform from readers to participant-listeners. In this way, some of the dramatic performance dimensions of traditional African narrative could be incorporated into modern African prose writing.

The incorporation and development of traditional techniques of orature should go a long way towards infusing eloquence into our poetry, improving the narrative style of our prose, and imparting a genuinely African flavor to both. Thus, some central concern of experimentation for the decolonization of our prose and poetic techniques would be the continuation of traditional forms with a pouring of new wine into old bottles, as it were; the incorporation of these forms as elements in novels, poems and short stories; the employment of traditional devices in saturating quantities that will impart an African tone to the product; and the development out of all these of new forms and techniques suitable for rendering new aspects of the contemporary African reality. (Chinweizu, Jemie and Madubuike, 1980:261)

Further on they consider three aspects of narrative rhetoric: (1) narrative language; (2) the handling of expository material unfamiliar to some of the African audience; and (3) the utilisation of descriptive and characterisation techniques that derive from African orature.

Of narrative language they say that there is a need for experimentation for two reasons: a) because Africans use the English language differently from the way the English use it; and b) because each African language has its own rhetorical devices which are peculiar to the community and are the legacy of its cultural inheritance. To be able to capture the flavour of African life, the English language has to be flexed and its boundaries expanded so that it could represent these idiomatic and rhetoric usages. If the modern African novel in English is to capture the stylistic features of the African oral narrative, a full range of linguistic resources of African prose traditions, such as proverbs, legends, fables, puns, similes, metaphors, allusions, hyperboles, rhetorical devices of conversation, just to mention a few, need to be rendered in English so that their original flavour is preserved. In addition, there is the task of showing no embarrassment at deviating from standard English and appropriately rendering in the novels the various types of English, i.e. register, that are spoken by Africans.

As far as the introduction of expository material is concerned, Chinweizu, Jemie and Madubuike remind us that the primary audience for the African novel is the African audience, so features that are common to or understandable by most African cultures, e.g. extended family, polygamy, libation pouring, sacrifice to ancestors, do not have to be introduced. 'Expositions required solely by the deficiencies of non-African audiences ought not to be encouraged' (Chinweizu, Jemie and Madubuike, 1980:264). If, however, some information, be it anthropological, sociological or other, which is important for the narrative has to be introduced, it has to be done so that it gets integrated in the narrative flow without interrupting it and without detracting the reader's attention from it.

As for the utilisation of descriptive devices and characterisation techniques, they suggest that African writers should make more use of resources derived from the oral tradition, for example ideophones, descriptive names, praise names, metaphorical descriptions, germane and recognisable allusions, and onomatopoeic imagery.

2.4 Problems of Language

Culture embodies those moral, ethical and aesthetic values, the set of spiritual eyeglasses, through which they [human beings] come to view themselves and their place in the universe. Values are the basis of a people's identity, their sense of particularity as members of the human race. All this is carried by language. Language as culture is the collective memory bank of a people's experience in history. Culture is almost indistinguishable from the language that makes possible its genesis, growth, banking, articulation and indeed its transmission from one generation to the next. (Ngugi, 1986:14:15)

There are perhaps only two African writers who justified their choice of a European language by asserting its intrinsic superiority over African languages. Davidson Abioseh Nicol questioned the technical ability of African languages to adapt themselves to the writers' inspiration. Léopold Sédar Senghor, in turn, openly defended the literary use of French over African languages for aesthetic reasons. In a lyrical outpouring of his admiration he describes the French language in the following words:

... le français est une langue 'de gentillesse et d'honnêteté'. ... je sais ses ressources pour l'avoir goûté, mâché, enseigné, et qu'il est la langue des dieux. ...Et puis le français nous a fait don de mots abstraits - si rare dans nos langues maternelles -, où les larmes se font pierres précieuses. Chez nous, les mots sont naturellement nimbés d'un halo de sève et de sang; les mots du français rayonnent de mille feux, comme des diamants. Des fusées qui éclairent notre nuit. (Senghor quoted in Ngugi, 1986:32)

(... French is a language of 'kindness and honesty'. ...I know its potential because I have tasted it, explored its depth, taught it, and I know that it is the language of gods. ...And then French gave us abstract words - so rare in our mother tongues - which turn the tears into precious stones. In our languages the words are, by nature, surrounded with a halo of sap and blood; French words sparkle with thousands of rays like diamonds. Thousands of brilliant sparks and starts that light up our night. - My translation.)

The Nigerian critic Obiajunwa Wali in his article *The Dead End of African Literature?* published in *Transition* (10, September 1963) refused to accept what Achebe calls the 'fatalistic logic' of the position of European languages in African writing. He argues that African literature must be written in African languages, one of his main arguments being that the African writer writing in a European language would produce only an inferior version of what he or she is capable of creating in an African language:

An African writer who thinks and feels in his own language *must* write in that language. The question of transliteration, whatever that means, is unwise as it is unacceptable, for the “original” which is spoken of here, is the real stuff of literature and the imagination, and must not be discarded in favour of a copy. (Wali Quoted in Bishop, 1988:29)

Wali's view received both support and rejection from fellow critics and writers. Niyi Osundare, for example, suggests that instead of struggling with ‘lexical equivocations’ and ‘masochistic linguistic acrobatics’ the writers would be better off writing in their own languages (in Owomoyela, 1993:359-60). Mphahlele, on the other hand, states that the colonial languages serve as a unifying force within African nations.

English and French have become the common language with which to present a national front against white oppressors. Where the white man has already retreated, as in the independent states, these two languages are still a unifying force. By stages, each of the various states will need to find an African official language for itself. ... In the meantime are we going to fold our arms and wait for that kingdom to come? The creative instinct always runs ahead of social, political, and economic developments; and the creative impulse cannot wait for such developments before it expresses itself. (Mphahlele quoted in Bishop, 1988: 28-29)

Some critics, like the Ghanaian poet Michael Dei-Anang, suggest that the African writer's choice of a second-language as a literary vehicle raises questions of a psychological rather than a technical nature. In his statement in 1960 Dei-Anang wrote:

In the long run ... Africans, whether they be French or Portuguese or English by historical or political affiliation, can best express their innermost feeling in their mother tongue with the complex and expanding matrix of traditional life as a fitting background. (Dei-Anang quoted in Bishop, 1988:30-31)

Others, like Achebe, emphasise the practical nature of the choice: ‘There are scores of languages I would want to learn if it were possible. Where am I to find the time to learn the half-a-dozen or so Nigerian languages each of which can sustain literature?’ (Achebe quoted in Bishop, 1988:31). He is of the opinion that ‘a language spoken by Africans on African soil, a language in which Africans write, justifies itself’ (Achebe, 1973:50). In an earlier paper entitled *The African Writer and the English Language* he explains that given the language situation of Africa with approximately one thousand languages, the former colonial languages, i.e. English, French and Portuguese, function as national languages, and serve as the means of mutual

communication across ethnic and language boundaries. A literature written in one of these languages is a national literature because a whole nation is its actual or potential audience. At the same time, ethnic literatures are written in the indigenous African languages. He defends authors who choose to write in a European language saying that they are not 'unpatriotic smart alecs with an eye on the main chance - outside their own countries. They are the by-products of the same process that made the new nation states of Africa' (Achebe, 1964:57). At the same time, he maintains that a world language like English must be prepared to pay the price of being submitted to different kinds of use. The African writer should aim at moulding English so that it is able to express his peculiar experience while retaining its value as a means of international communication.

Achebe's view is contradicted by Owomoyela, who maintains that put properly in historical perspective, the use of European languages ceases to be a necessity despite the attempt of some 'Europhone writers' and 'Europhile critics' to assert its indispensability (Owomoyela, 1993:365).

Ngugi wa Thiong'o takes a revolutionary stance on the language question claiming that 'the language of African literature cannot be discussed meaningfully outside the context of those social forces which have made it both an issue demanding our attention and a problem calling for resolution' (Ngugi, 1986:4). In his opinion there are two contending social forces exerting influence on the language issue: imperialism in its colonial and neo-colonial phases, which, he says, continues to control the economy, politics and culture of Africa on the one hand, and the struggle of African people to liberate themselves, on the other hand. 'The choice of language and the use to which language is put is central to a people's definition of themselves in relation to their natural and social environment, indeed in relation to the entire universe' (Ngugi, 1986:4). Ngugi claims that this choice for African people has been determined by the European powers which divided Africa into English-speaking, French-speaking and Portuguese-speaking countries; countries which in turn came to define themselves in terms of these European languages. According to him, the writers who opt for European languages accept what Achebe called the 'fatalistic logic of the unassailable position of English in our literature' (Achebe, 1974:xiv) and are preoccupied with how best these borrowed languages can carry the weight of their African experience.

Achebe, Tutuola and Okara are regarded as three alternative models of how the English language can be moulded to this end. Achebe uses proverbs abundantly, which is best

exemplified in his *Things Fall Apart* and *Arrow of God*. He also adopted another device, i.e. the use of relatively simple words of Anglo-Saxon origin in preference to words with Greek or Latin roots, to suggest the 'lyricism and dignified profundity characteristic of traditional discourse' (Owomoyela, 1993:359), but the best examples of this are found in Ayi Kwei Armah's *The Healers* and *Two Thousand Seasons*. Tutuola is famed for calquing (or loan-translation), which is abundant, for example, in his *The Palm-wine Drinkard* and *My Life in the Bush of Ghosts*, though in his case it is attributed to the poor acquisition of the European language. Okara's *The Voice* is reputed for its use of morpho-syntactic relexification (i.e. fashioning English according to the rules of the original African language syntax). A detailed discussion of these various devices collectively known as indigenisation will follow in Chapter 4.

Ngugi is opposed to this 'mission of enriching foreign languages by injecting Senghorian "black blood" into their rusty joints' (Ngugi, 1986:7) for the simple reason that 'it is the final triumph of a system of domination when the dominated start singing its virtues' (Ngugi, 1986:20). Rather, he asks how African writers can enrich their own languages and why African writers do not create literary movements in their own languages. The answer, to him, lies in the impact of colonisation and neo-colonisation:

Berlin of 1884 was effected through the sword and the bullet. But the night of the sword and the bullet was followed by the morning of the chalk and the blackboard. The physical violence of the battlefield was followed by the psychological violence of the classroom. But where the former was visibly brutal, the latter was visibly gentle ... In my view language was the most important vehicle through which that power fascinated and held the soul prisoner. The bullet was the means of the physical subjugation. Language was the means of the spiritual subjugation. (Ngugi, 1986:9)

The consequence of the suppression of African languages and the literature they carried and the elevation of English and other European languages and the literature they carried was alienation; alienation of the African from his own self to other selves and from his own world to other worlds (Ngugi, 1986:12).

Given the linguistic medium of its message, Ngugi identifies creative writing by Africans in European languages as the literature of the petty-bourgeoisie educated in colonial schools and universities. His opinion is echoed by Owomoyela, who writes somewhat later:

Modern African literature is a product of the assimilated elite. When they tried their hands at creative writing they had no other choice of language than that of their education. Also, given the stigma of inferiority that attached to the use of African languages in the colonial era, the educated African felt hardly any misgiving about preferring European substitutes. (Owomoyela, 1993:352)

Ngugi's view is that the accession of this class to political and economic power is reflected in the rise and development of this literature. Since, however, this literature was the literature, to use Ngugi's terminology, of the nationalistic or patriotic bourgeoisie, internationally it helped this class to explain and show to the rest of the world that 'Africa had a past and a culture of dignity and human complexity' (Ngugi, 1986:20); internally, on the other hand, it lent confidence to the petty-bourgeoisie by giving it a 'cohesive tradition and a common literary frame of reference, which it otherwise lacked with its uneasy roots in the culture of the peasantry and in the culture of the metropolitan bourgeoisie' (Ngugi, 1986:21); confidence with which to confront the colonial powers. Initially, then, this literature was part of the anti-colonial and anti-imperialist struggle. But when, after independence, the hopes of the people were betrayed by the bourgeoisie that agreed to a neo-colonial arrangement, it became more critical, disillusioned and bitter in tone. Since the criticism was directed towards the 'traditional' audience of this literature, i.e. towards the imperialist bourgeoisie, the petty-bourgeoisie in power and the military, the literature of the educated elite had to search for new audience in other social strata, mainly amongst the working class and the peasantry. The movement towards the people was, however, impeded by the limits of the European languages. It could not go any further than that section of the petty-bourgeoisie which was still in closest touch with the people: the teachers, students, secretaries, for example. It stopped there, 'caged within the linguistic fence of its colonial inheritance' (Ngugi, 1986:22). Albert Gérard describes this situation as follows:

Paradoxically, they still use the European languages in spite of the obvious fact that the experiences, thoughts, emotions and concerns of any particular community cannot find suitable expression through the inevitably distorting medium of an alien language. The predominance of foreign-language writing merely perpetuates the unfair distribution of power between an elite of esoteric cognoscenti and the muted, blinded majority of those who have not mastered the magic idiom of leadership. (Gérard, 1984:22)

Ngugi observes that the literature in European languages was given the identity of African literature as if there had never existed literature in African languages before. Of the petty-bourgeoisie he ironically remarks that 'if it had been left entirely to this class, African languages would have ceased to exist - with independence!' (Ngugi, 1986:22).

Ngugi shares the opinion of those who maintain that, despite its claims, this literature is not African literature but a hybrid tradition which can best be termed as Afro-European literature, and he defines it as literature written by Africans in European languages in the era of imperialism. Although it undeniably produced many talented writers and many works of genuine critical merit, there is a growing number of African writers who give African languages a written literature. In 1977 Ngugi himself said farewell to the English language as the medium of his creative writing out of his conviction that

African literature can only be written in African languages, that is, the languages of the African peasantry and working class, the major alliance of classes in each of our nationalities and the agency for the coming inevitable revolutionary break with neo-colonialism. (Ngugi, 1986:27)

His book *Decolonizing the Mind* is meant to be his farewell to English as the medium of all his writing. Now he writes in Gikuyu and Swahili, but through translation he hopes to be available to all. His determination, however, is not received without scepticism. It is pointed out that he may not be so sure of his decision if he had not achieved literary acclaim in English, with his non-English works becoming instant subjects of translation to English as a consequence (Saro-Wiwa, 1992:156).

2.5 Problems of audience

Who is the audience of the contemporary African writer? The bored Euro-American liberal literati searching for literary exotica in the African quarters of their empire? The African elite trained away from themselves in institutions of European design? (Kgositsile in Lefevere, 1992:124)

The problems of language choice for creative use inevitably bring with them problems relating to who the audience of modern Europhone African literature is.

With few exceptions, African writers claim to be writing for Africans first and foremost⁸. For a number of reasons, however, we find a rather limited reading public in Africa.

Firstly, high levels of literacy, either in European or African languages, benefiting large sections of the population, have never been widespread on the African continent. During the past couple of decades even existing literacy levels have been seriously undermined by the IMF-imposed Structural Adjustment Programmes which require that governments spend less and less on education because such spending is allegedly a waste of the revenue⁹.

Secondly, as I observe in an earlier article, many of those who are literate in an African or European language, or both, use their literacy functionally to get about the business of everyday life, i.e. they read newspapers, letters, the Bible, specialised professional literature, exam material, etc. (Egri Ku-Mesu 1998b). The habit of reading for intellectual enjoyment seems to be almost non-existent in Africa. Egejuru writes:

My concern is that because of the way we are brought up, we are not given the taste to read novels after we leave school. After elementary school and secondary school, you can hardly find a civil servant buying and reading novels. I don't see what chance you have of getting your books read except at the university level. (1980:99-100)

This brings up an interesting point. Namely, that literature, i.e. elite literature, seems to be associated with reading extensively, with reading long works like novels, which appear in the form of books. On the one hand, this may seem to suggest that whatever is not published in a book form, or does not require extensive reading, for example poetry, short fiction, drama and the like, is not seriously considered to form part of the body of literature. On the other hand, it raises a practical issue: Reading is not only a relatively new phenomenon, but it is closely connected with economic development. Books are expensive, therefore a luxury beyond the reach of most ordinary Africans. The key element for the peoples of Africa is still the struggle with nature, and, for a long time to come, winning that struggle remains their primary goal over such matters of comparatively little import as reading for intellectual enjoyment¹⁰.

The reasons for the lack of interest in reading for pleasure and entertainment cannot, however, be blamed solely on education. Such essentially solitary activities as reading, which go down well in individualistic Western societies, appear to be displaced in interdependent African culture, where shared experience tends to be more valued and appreciated. Chakava writes:

... most Kenyans do not read beyond completion of their formal education unless it is for professional achievement. This habit is largely blamed on the colonial education system, which emphasized education for achievement rather than

education for life. The fact that this attitude still lingers on, thirty years after independence, means there may be more to this problem than meets the eye. Cultural factors also have negative effect on reading. African people, in general, derive more pleasure and are able to communicate more easily through oral and performing arts – through talking, singing, dancing, music, and drama. Communication through the book is a private undertaking, the pursuit of which alienates readers from their own community, whose ideal form of entertainment comes through participation in communal activities. Communication with a book is a one-way process that many Kenyans find idle and boring. This attitude may be due, in part, to the kind of books that Kenyans have been exposed to so far. Many of them do not appeal to the particular and daily concerns of Kenyans and are mostly written in English, a foreign language accessible to less than 20 percent of the country's population. Furthermore, most of the mother tongue languages do not have developed orthographies, so that even when books are written in them, the characters on the page do not always conform to the sounds intended, making reading difficult and helping further to alienate one from a language one knows so well. (1995:392)

Thirdly, Egejuru observes that 'the subject matter of African writers and its presentation seems to respond more to the literary taste of the Western bourgeoisie' (1980:15). The wider African readership appears to favour popular literature over 'high' literature because while popular literature avoids reality through sublimation, elite literature transcends it through symbolic inversion. The common people, however, do not seek complexity in their literature. When they turn to literature, they try to find solutions to the complexities of life; solutions which are readily offered by the often unambiguous world of popular fiction where good is rewarded and evil is punished (Priebe, 1997:87-88).

Ezekiel Mphahlele is of the opinion that if a writer is not fortunate enough to have his book chosen as required reading material in school, 'You don't get read at all!' (in Egejuru, 1980:29). The reality, also expressed by Femi Osofisan¹¹, is that in Africa elite Europhone literature is read by those who are literate in the European language and can afford to spend on it. This is the educated middle class in general, and students of literature and university lecturers in particular. Such a limited audience is hardly capable of supporting the livelihood of its writers.

In practice, whatever their claim may be, African writers write for a predominantly non-African audience. Isola observes that

African writers who publish their works in foreign languages are confusing their market with their audience. A genuine audience inhabits the same literary ecosystem as a writer and can immediately understand the writer's allusions to culturally significant events, objects, people, and situations. In contrast, a market consists of people who do not inhabit the same literary ecosystem as the writer. These people can only try to understand the writer's exotic story and appreciate his literary qualities from a distance.

When Africans write in African languages, their audience is their market. It is necessarily restricted. When Africans write in foreign languages, they might still capture a few readers in their own countries (where literacy rates are as low as ten percent). But their potential market is enormous. (1992:25)

Multiple as it is because it is composed of native and non-native speakers of the European language used by the African writer, the non-African readership is not part of the African writer's ecosystem. It is removed from the writer's world in space and culture and has a different linguistic background. The only common ground between writer and this audience is the knowledge of the language of literary communication. As we have seen, and will see in the next section, such a situation may lead to the misinterpretation, and sometimes even incomprehension, of works by African writers.

2.6 Problems of critical standards

Critical standards derive from aesthetics. Aesthetics are culture dependent. Therefore critical standards must derive from culture. (Okpaku quoted in Bishop, 1988:179)

Fairly soon after its inception, the new literature emerging from Africa began to be supported by critical writing. Articles and critical studies on literary works created by Africans appeared, writers spoke out about their works, motivation and ideology. As we have seen, attempts to define, or rather to outline, what is African literature were made. Debates were launched about whether African literature should be a committed literature, about what language it should be written in, and about critical standards.

2.6.1 Criticism and rejection of Western critical standards

Chinua Achebe is among those African writers who first spoke out against applying Western critical standards to African literature. In his article entitled *Where Angels Fear to Tread* (1962), he denounces Eurocentric criticism. He distinguishes three broad types of critics: 1) 'the peevishly hostile, what-do-they-think-they-are breed', who cannot cope with the demise of the colonial era and turn their anger against the literature of the new independent nations; 2) the

ones who are amazed that Africans are capable of creative writing, and they do it in European languages; and 3) the group of critics who are not patronising and condescending towards the African writers but apply to them the same strict critical standards with which they judge other writers. Achebe dismisses the first two groups as unworthy of consideration but opens a dialogue with the third group. They, however, are doomed to suffering a heavy treatment at his hand. Achebe accuses them of increasing dogmatism, he feels annoyed by their 'cock-sureness' and their pronouncements which he feels they are not qualified to make because they do not have the special knowledge of Africa they think they possess. Though he is ready to give some credit to the conscientious Western critic, he maintains that the theories produced by him are no substitutes for insight. 'No man can understand another whose language he does not speak (and "language" here does not mean simply words, but a man's entire world view). How many Europeans and Americans have our language? I do not know of any, certainly not among our writers and critics' (Achebe, 1962:48).

Bernth Lindfors's classification of critics of African literature makes an insightful comparison:

Critics of African literature tend to be either racists, nationalists or individualists. The racists devoutly believe in the africanité of African literature and usually seek to demonstrate that black African writers think alike and therefore write alike. ... Nationalist critics, on the other hand, are preoccupied with mapping the geography of African literature. ... A formal declaration of literary independence is normally based on the assumption that writers in a given country have more in common with one another than they do with writers in other countries. ... The individualist critic, to complete the trichotomy, concerns himself primarily with differences, for he is interested in defining the unique genius of the individual writer. (Lindfors, 1973:153-54)

Lindfors suggests that African literature could do with some other types of critic as well, for example with the tribalist who would bring an ethnic point of view to the study of African literature.

In a later article on the same issue entitled *Colonialist Criticism*, Achebe continues criticising the Western critic's limited experience and knowledge of Africa. He also argues that colonialist critics, as he calls them, show no willingness to accept 'the value of sensibilities' other than theirs and dismiss the African novel on the grounds that the novel is a peculiarly Western genre. However, he defends the African novel, drawing a witty parallel with music and saying that when the black people of America, deprived of their own musical instruments, started playing the white man's trumpet and trombone, they did indeed blow them in a way these instruments

had not been designed to be blown. The result, he says, was not waltz and foxtrot but jazz, and it was definitely not a loss to the world.

Solomon Ogbede Iyasere is yet another advocate of the conviction that critical assessment of African literature must be done by African critics. His starting point is Eldred Jones's argument at the Seminar on African Literature and the Universities held at Fourah Bay College in April 1963:

When the main critical voices are non-African there is a danger that the writers may come to emphasize the values which they think their foreign readership demands. This could lead to an expatriate literature produced by Africans, and to false artistic values. (Jones, 1965:89-90)

Iyasere says that the view represented by Jones derives from the fact that especially in the early African literary works Western critics emphasised the non-literary elements, such as the social and anthropological details and those aspects of African writing which they found exotic. As a consequence, a number of works of mediocre or no literary quality received critical acclaim from the 'Western liberal chic', as Iyasere puts it. He goes on to say that this situation caused many African writers and critics to agree with Jones, but their reasons for taking such a stand may be different from Jones's. The so-called 'engaged' critics see Western domination in literary criticism as another form of neo-colonialism. They not only object to such domination, but they reject Western critical standards, as well. Iyasere quotes Okpaku's energetic statement about criticism of African art and African critical standards:

The primary criticism of African arts must come from Africans using African standards. We cannot accept either of the existing two approaches to criticism of African literature. It is as undesirable to plead for leniency in criticizing African works as it is absurd for Lewis Nkosi to ask that Western critical standards be used. Western critical standards are developed in the Western tradition and are applied by Western critics to interpret and criticize Western literature to the Western audience. ... So, when the Western critic looks at an African work he immediately tries to find out which Western works it best resembles so he can use this to establish communication with the Western reader. His comparisons are made against the background of Western Literature and, therefore, Western Culture. By the same token, an African critic trying to relate African Literature or any literature to Africa must do so against the background of African Culture. He must draw upon the patterns of the African aesthetic. In other words, he must use African critical standards. (Okpaku quoted in Wright, 1973:4)

Iyasere summarises this view as one according to which 'African literature belongs to Africans alone and not to the public, and only Africans using undefined African standards can validly and judiciously evaluate African creative works' (Iyasere, 1975:21).

At variance with Okpaku and the group of critics who share his views, Iyasere maintains that African critics, despite all their 'inside knowledge,' have failed to provide a more insightful criticism. Most often, Iyasere says, critical responses are 'apologetic defences of mediocre works with a vehement display of misplaced hostility towards anyone ... who dares see fault in the contemporary novelist' (Iyasere, 1975:21). In his opinion the African critic, who himself is in the process of formation and development, seems to be uncertain as to which issues are of primary importance, and he often gets caught up in the kind of criticism which he calls 'a corruption of the critical which illuminates more about the critic's idiosyncrasies than the work examined' (Iyasere, 1975:21).

Iyasere is of the opinion that African critics must be sympathetic and encouraging to African writers but they must not, by any means, let themselves be blinded to their faults. Patriotic zeal, he says, should not be a factor in literary criticism. Relating his comments to the African novel he states: 'We cannot shrink from an honest evaluation of our writers *nor eliminate as "un-African" any formal aspects of the novel at which a writer may not be successful*' (Iyasere, 1975:23; adds emphasis). He criticises Abiola Irele's proposal not to include 'coherence' within the criteria for the evaluation of African literary works and says that to do such a thing would mean the underrating of the achievement and potential of African writers. '*We must not castrate in the name of "Africanism" the literature we cherish*' (Iyasere, 1975:24; added emphasis).

He condemns Western 'gratuitous paternalistic criticism' but insists that it is purely on literary, that is textual, grounds and not on patriotic and racial ones that critics should be put right. Differences of judgement can be settled only by turning directly to the text and by examining closely the work itself. 'If the work cannot stand by itself, for itself, then no amount of cultural apprenticeship nor narcissistic indulgence can defend it' (Iyasere, 1975:24).

Iyasere opposes the practice of passing off socio-anthropological commentary as literary criticism because such commentary, while being valid as extra-textual explanation, will always remain purely informative and descriptive, and not evaluative. He accuses African critics of trading on their cultural background and using it 'as a jumping-off place for an exhibition of our

knowledge of African customs and traditions - our "Africanism". "How African we are!" we seem to say, peddling our cultural heritage in much the same way that Benin bronzes are peddled in New York or Paris' (Iyasere, 1975:25). He insists that the mere fact of being African should not lead any critic to believe that his explanations are inevitably better than those of a non-African scholar-critic. To be a critic requires more than the knowledge of social realities behind the work. The study of literature requires 'a keen aesthetic sensibility, and a thorough knowledge of the techniques of language' (Iyasere, 1975:26).

Oyekan Owomoyela criticises Western critics of African literature for their self-assurance in a field which they have very limited knowledge of, and points out shortcomings, such as critical parentalism and patronising, and arrogant ethnocentrism, that have been pilloried by several African critics before him. However, he touches upon a very important issue, the issue of generalisation, which appears not to have received sufficient attention before. He quotes Nancy J. Schmidt, who notes that

a characteristic of critical works about African literature from the earliest to the most recent is generalizing about entire genres of African literature or the literature of large geographic areas, while providing little or no documentation in support of the generalizations. (Schmidt quoted in Owomoyela, 1991:4)

Owomoyela questions the concept of the whole of sub-Saharan Africa as a homogenous cultural unit and challenges the assumption that the literatures emerging from this area show stylistic and thematic uniformity (cf. Wästberg, 1968:11 quoted in 2.3.1 and Achebe, 1964:56 quoted in 2.3.5). Though he acknowledges the limited validity of such claims on the grounds that 'the writing is in response to the trauma of centuries of subjugation and cultural deprivation' (Owomoyela, 1991:4), he maintains that the conditions of subjugation, and therefore the literary responses it generated, differed; and that traditional modes of expression vary in different parts of Africa. Consequently, separate literary developments can be observed in contemporary African literature.

One can confidently conclude that the perceived need to extend their competence over the whole of the vast continent of Africa, with its numerous languages and ethnic groups, forces some critics into all sorts of errors. Why the literary scholar cannot respectably be an expert on the Ankole or the Bambara to the exclusion of all other groups (or nations) is a mystery. Anthropologists and other social scientists do not seem to be plagued by the same need to pretend to all-inclusive knowledge. As long as literary critics insist on being jacks-of-all-trades, they will keep making silly statements. (Owomoyela, 1991:6)

Owomoyela does not spare the superciliousness of African writers, either. Because they are 'cultivated and treated as atypical flowers in a field of weeds,' he says, they become blind to honest criticism from their fellow African critics if that criticism is not in their favour. The claim that Percy Bysshe Shelley makes at the end of his *A Defence of Poetry* that 'poets are the unacknowledged legislators of mankind' represents an irresistible attraction to African writers, and many are prone to its preposterousness. They often come to possess the arrogance of claiming to be the voices, the mouthpieces of vision, creating the impression that those outside their 'holy' circles are deprived of vision and sensitivity. Such an attitude, in Owomoyela's opinion, must be strongly discouraged. In his view, the African writer's 'obsessive feeling of self-importance and divine election' results partly from the critical acclaim received from Western critics. He believes that if more critics realised the need of writers for more humane understanding and treatment, and for more indulgent criticism, there would be more responsible writing from Africans and 'less playing to the European gallery' (Owomoyela, 1991:16).

In their attempt to decolonise African literature Chinweizu, Jemie and Madubuike declare that African literature must be given a 'separate and autonomous status' from all other literatures and 'genuinely autonomous criteria' should be used in judging it. They insist that 'judging African literature by European criteria, or by criteria allegedly universal which on closer scrutiny turn out to be European, is indeed to define African literature as an appendage of European literature, and to deny its separateness and autonomy' (Chinweizu, Jemie and Madubuike, 1980:10).

In the making of African literature they even assign a definite role to *African* critics. They see these critics as helpers of both writers and audience, but grant them authority only as long as they represent the society for which the writers produce. To be able to carry out their job effectively, African critics must develop an African aesthetic, which must be rooted in an African sensibility. The 'uncontaminated reservoir' of this African sensibility is the African oral tradition, and it is from this oral tradition that the foundation elements of an African aesthetic must be drawn. The African critics, therefore, must begin to collect and analyse the immense body of oral and written traditional material in African languages in order to 'extract guidance towards the formulation of a contemporary African poetics, narrative rhetoric, and dramaturgy' (Chinweizu, Jemie and Madubuike, 1980:291).

2.6.2 *Towards a cross-cultural evaluation of African literature*

In his study of the critical evaluation of African literature Edgar Wright sets out to examine the problems, such as language use and cultural distinctiveness, that African literature poses to the critic and examines the extent to which responsible criticism should modify itself to be able to take care of them.

Wright makes an important point by distinguishing between three types of English: a) English as a mother tongue, e.g. American, Australian or South African English; b) English as a second language, e.g. English in African countries where the first language is vernacular and English is the official means of communication; and c) English that has been undergoing the process of creolisation, e.g. English in the West Indies. He goes on to say that English language literature in Africa is, without exception, second-language literature, so the critic who wants to analyse and discuss the style of a writer immediately finds himself faced with the problems that such a situation raises.

The question of critical authority, however, remains, and responses from African authors reflect disagreement on this sensitive issue. Wright quotes Okpaku at length, who claims that 'judging African literature by Western standards is not only invalid, it is also potentially dangerous to a development of African Arts. It presupposes that there is one absolute artistic standard and that, of course, is the Western standard. Consequently, good African literature is taken to be that which most approximates to Western literature' (Okpaku quoted in Wright, 1973:4).

Wright remarks that Okpaku arrives at the conclusion that Western culture is completely irrelevant in matters of criticism concerning African art (Okpaku in Wright, 1973:4 quoted in 2.6.1). He observes that although Okpaku may be justified for attacking the insularity of certain Western critics, his reference to Nkosi and his quoting of Soyinka's statement that 'African writers do not want to be African writers but writers' show that the African writers themselves are quite divided in their approach to the issue of criticism.

The problem remains, says Wright, because 'African literature in English has roots and contexts that lie outside the traditional cultural and linguistic soil which has nourished the literature of the west' (Wright, 1973:5). Writers using English continue to produce works which become part of the 'world literature' in English, but there are no agreed standards for evaluation, and there is no

wide understanding of the problems involved in establishing such standards. What Wright undertakes to do is not suggesting the standards but showing the problems involved and clarifying how far the critical criteria and standards developed to handle English literature can be applied to judge African literature.

The Western critic, he says, is faced with two basic questions: 1) How universal are critical theories? Can a general critical theory, e.g. a Freudian approach, work when it is applied to a culture whose origins are totally distinct from the one which supplied the source material for its creation? 2) Who are the audience, for whom the works are primarily intended, and who can best appreciate the purpose and the methods of the writer? Behind these two inevitably looms a third question: How far can a white man experience and understand the world of an African, and how far can an African experience and understand the world of the white man? According to Wright the response lies with individual writers and critics, with some, e.g. Tutuola and Okara, emphasizing the gulf, and some, e.g. Soyinka and Armah, stressing the bridges. Though no one can fully understand and share the experience of another, members of the same community have a good deal of common experience which, in turn, serves as common ground for sharing experience with other communities. Literature is a medium that acts on the mind and imagination of the readers and makes them understand customs, behaviour and emotions that were formerly strange or unknown to them.

When Wright returns to the problem of language, he says that writing in second-language English can undoubtedly be popular beyond the linguistic boundaries. Critical comment will, however, probably vary from one linguistic area to another. A local critic can immediately recognise false language or clumsy style, whereas a non-local critic may have trouble differentiating between clumsy style and real creativity.

Wright concludes his discussion on the note that African literature 'has emerged to a state where it deserves and demands the careful consideration that is given to any other writing in English, and is best served by having applied to it standards and procedures as carefully considered as those we apply to literatures whose norms and traditions have already been thoroughly understood' (Wright, 1973:21).

In his book on the forming of critical standards for the evaluation of African literature Rand Bishop observes that Western critics, in their attempt to understand and evaluate African literature, have relied on the literary texts themselves and, with only a few exceptions, failed to

recognise the need to understand the cultural context from which this literature has emerged. He quotes Nancy Schmidt as saying that

it is hoped that students of comparative literature and literary critics will realize that meaningful cross-cultural literary criticism cannot be conducted on the basis of Western literary standards even if the literature is written in a Western language. By trying to apply Western standards to literature which is not wholly within the Western tradition, judgements become inconsistent and criticisms become naive or wholly incorrect. ... Until more is learned about aesthetic standards and the histories of both oral and written literatures in non-Western societies, there can be no basis for a valid cross-cultural literary criticism, which must consider literature primarily in the context of the culture in which it is created and secondarily in terms of the critic's own culture. (Schmidt quoted in Bishop, 1988:8)

He also quotes Okpaku, whom he considers the near-embodiment of the critical standards by which Africans judge African literature:

What then are these African critical standards? The logical place to go to in search of them is the African aesthetic. In particular, we should examine our traditional artistic forms as well as genuine (not "studied") contemporary African tastes and attitudes towards the various art forms. ... The next place to search for these standards would be an examination of those common aspects of life most frequently dramatized in the arts. This would include love, life, hate, honor, duty, death, destruction, pride, prejudice, friendship, fear, violence, birth and reality amongst others. Different cultures not only have different conceptions of these but have different attitudes to them. Not only that, they give them different emphases. All these different conceptions, attitudes, emphases, tastes and preferences constitute the basis on which to build criticism. This is where the search for African critical standards must begin. (Okpaku quoted in Bishop, 1988:9-10)

Bishop does not quite understand what Okpaku means by 'aesthetic,' and he disagrees with him that this is where one should turn in search of critical standards. According to Bishop, it is more feasible to attempt to isolate and identify critical standards and induce an African aesthetic from them, though he does not exclude the derivability of critical standards from aesthetics, either. He does, however, agree that the study of traditional art forms is relevant, but rejects the claim that the examination of various aspects of life will lead to the establishment of critical standards. In his opinion Okpaku's terms 'studied' and 'genuine' create the impression that the African critic is inherently the custodian of African critical standards, which are either to be discovered or are recognised by all 'genuine' African critics.

Bishop believes that 'critical standards may best be inferred from the explicit critical statements made by the critics themselves - that is, that the Africanness or Négritude of a critic is existential rather than essential, that it creates the African critical tradition at least as fast as it can be discovered' (Bishop, 1988:11). He also agrees that the examination of African taste may reveal critical standards. However, he is of the opinion that although the study of the elements of African life can reveal a lot about African culture, it is the attitude to the literary handling of these elements that will actually tell us about the critical standards by which they are judged.

In her book *Beyond Boundaries: African Literature and Literary Theory* Mineke Schipper argues for a cross-cultural approach to African literature. She shares Bishop's view that critical texts reveal the critic's cultural norms and adds that 'different cultures lead to different appreciation of "the other's reality"' (Schipper, 1989:161). She also reminds us that the role the power factor plays in cross-cultural relations should not be forgotten about. When looking at critical comments, one must always take into account whether the author of the text belongs to a globally dominant country and/or culture or to a dominated country and/or culture. 'The critic may not be aware of his own lack of modesty, the superiority complex expressed in his critical comment' (Schipper, 1989:159), which can often lead to counter-criticism from the other culture, revealing striking differences in, sometimes even incompatibility of, norms, views and background. 'Looking carefully at the critical texts from an intercultural comparative point of view, we must constantly take into account the possible cultural differences with all their ideological connotations, expressing group interests and values' (Schipper, 1989:159).

2.6.3 *African feminist criticism*

African feminist criticism stands at the "intersection of ontologies": 'woman', 'African', 'post-colonial', 'feminist' (Ashcroft quoted in Bryce, 1994:621). It is a fairly recent development in African criticism, and as Bryce points out, the terms 'woman' and 'African' become more problematic as the body of creative writing by African women grows (ibid.).

One of the first works to address this issue is *Ngambika: Studies of Women in African Literature* (Eds. Boyce Davies and Adams Graves, 1986). In her introduction Boyce Davies identifies African feminist criticism as engaged criticism 'in much the same way as progressive African literary criticism grapples with decolonization and feminist criticism with the politics of male

literary dominance' (op.cit., 12). It is also derivative criticism in that it borrows its tools from African literary theorists as well as from mainstream feminist theorists. Its task is to 'identify critical approaches and standards and criteria which have been applied so far to the study of African literature from a feminist perspective and which can be utilized and built upon for further examination of women in/and African literature' (ibid.). African feminist critics, when relying on the above mentioned two critical traditions, must strive for a balance, keeping in mind that these traditions have grown out from, and in some cases are the adversaries of, Western literary criticism. What the African feminist critic has to aim at is not reduction but 'refinement geared specifically to deal with the concrete and literary realities of African women's lives' (op.cit., 13).

Although Boyce Davies makes a good job of identifying the precursors and tasks of African feminist criticism, the prescriptive and homogenising tendency of her attempt to define an 'African' feminism signals the existence of two major problem areas: the undifferentiated, uncritical application of Western feminist ideas to African, and other Third World, realities, and the tendency to homogenise the diversity found in Africa, and in the Third World in general.

These problems are highlighted by Chandra Talpade Mohanty, who argues that in an attempt to set up an object that can culturally, materially and discursively be presumed as the Other of the Western female, some feminist writers 'discursively colonize the material and historical heterogeneities of the lives of women in the third world, thereby producing/representing a composite, singular "third-world woman"' (1994:197). In addition, 'a cross-culturally singular, monolithic notion of patriarchy or male dominance leads to the construction of a similarly reductive and homogeneous notion of ... the "third-world difference" – that ahistorical something that apparently oppresses most if not all women in these countries' (op.cit., 198).

Although 'India' and 'Africa' are far from being homogeneous categories, Quayson suggests that a certain measure of generalisation is inevitable for a discussion of women's issues. This, however, should serve the formation of a multifaceted perspective:

Theory is of no value if it cannot be generalized; however, the purpose of generalization is to bring a particular perspective into view which can then be criticized, qualified or even abandoned once it is seen to have served the purpose for which it was set up. (Quayson, 2000:107)

Despite the work on the issues of feminism and postcoloniality done in the past decade or so by such scholars as Spivak, Mohanty, Suleri, Loomba, Katrak and Kanneh¹², Western feminist

discourse remains dominant, which Katrak attributes to the fact that the theoretical production of postcolonial writers is not given due attention or is dismissed as not theoretical enough by Western standards; that those who produce theory and consume it within the realm of Western academia increasingly use postcolonial texts as raw material; and that theoretical production has become an end in itself, drawing interest only from other theorists who speak the same esoteric language in which 'obscurity is regularly mistaken for profundity' (Katrak, 1995:256)¹³.

A further problematic issue is the notion of double colonisation; that women in formerly colonised societies are subjected to oppression both by imperialist and patriarchal ideologies. As both colonial and colonised patriarchies were apprehensive about the spectre of women's independence, they often collaborated to keep them 'in their place'. Women became, and still remain, 'a vocabulary in which colonial and colonised men work out their relations with each other' (Loomba, 1998:222). In Africa 'women are spoken *for, about, and against*' (Nnaemeka, 1997:167, original emphasis). A very important difference between Western feminists and their African counterparts results directly from the status quo of women in their respective societies: whereas the former are concerned with the relative importance of feminist versus class emancipation, for the latter the discussion focuses on feminist emancipation versus the struggle against neo-colonialism, especially in its cultural aspect (Holst Petersen, 1995:251-52). There is ample evidence both in the creative and critical writing of African women that for them the fight against neo-colonialism and Western cultural imperialism comes before the fight for female equality.

That feminism is a historically, culturally and geographically specific concept should gain wider currency against hegemonic tendencies of certain feminist schools that aspire to universality. The Western model of feminism holds little appeal for African women, as is obvious from Dangarembga's comments:

... women in Zimbabwe are wary of being called feminists. It is really a dirty word. ... Western feminists have a very bad name ... People think about lesbianism, about breaking up families and ... I actually don't understand it, quite frankly. I have tried to say to people that feminists want to make the world a better place, but I think men feel threatened, and then women don't want to lose the social security which they gain from having a relationship with a man. The feminist, who in Zimbabwe is usually a single woman, is a threat to the other women, and this means that actually there can not be any solidarity between the women either. (Holst Petersen, 1994: 347-48)

Miriam Tlali talks about the insecurity men feel:

There is a definite fear of feminism in the African men, especially in South Africa ... Anytime you ask him to do something, to go and fetch the child today, or something like that he says, "Look, you are already a feminist." You are a white woman and a feminist. It is thrown into your face in the same way in which Communist is thrown into the face of the blacks in South Africa. (In Katrak, 1996:240)

Lauretta Ngcobo, also from South Africa, points out that the limitations to a certain class and exclusions of working-class women and, in certain cases, men of the Western feminist movement would simply not work in African societies. In Africa women and men have endured racism, colonisation and continuing imperialism together, so an African feminist theory needs to include working-class women and supportive men, as well (in Katrak, 1996:240-1).

Indeed, the notion of feminism as a monolithic concept fails when applied to Africa. Feminist theorising in the African context needs to redefine and transform Western feminist concepts to be relevant to the particular concerns of African women and to their own history and culture. The model suggested by Wilson-Tagoe - the 'women's culture' model - has the potential to break the monolithic concept of feminism by 'presenting a wider framework within which a woman's writing can be defined in terms of cultural contexts and priorities' (1997:12) and by acknowledging 'the variables of nationality, race, ethnicity, history and class as literary determinants which are as significant as gender in a woman's writing' (ibid.).

2.7 Conclusion

As has been shown by the discussion above, modern Europhone African literature is heir to two distinct traditions: African traditional culture and Western culture. The problems involved in its development, interpretation and critical appreciation are, indeed, rooted in its hybrid nature.

The question of what language or languages African literature should be written in seems to be cardinal. Though quite a number of African writers seem to agree that, ideally, African writers should employ African languages as their literary medium, for historical reasons and various practical considerations, many continue to write in European languages. There appears, however, to be a consensus on the acceptability and even desirability of 'doing violence' to the standard forms of European languages in order to let them carry the writer's African experience and capture the rhythms, idioms and flavour of African languages.

The choice of a European language for artistic creation immediately raises questions about the audience of African literature. While economic, cultural and educational factors keep the primarily intended African audience fairly limited, Western readers may be disadvantaged by their spatial, cultural and linguistic distance. Certainly, this distance – also incorporating the critic’s cultural norms and the critical standards rooted in them - has a considerable influence on what critical standards African literature is or should be judged by.

During its five decades of existence Europhone African literature has come to be a Western academia oriented phenomenon. The initial public interest surrounding its birth which was raised by the turbulent political events resulting from the struggle of African peoples for their independence has dwindled away. African Writers Series launched by publishers such as Heinemann and Longman have been significantly downgraded after the rich output of the first three decades of their existence, and the last ten years have seen the odd new title published in these series. The university departments and research centres established for the study of Anglo-Franco- and Lusophone African literature, on the other hand, remain in place and determine much of what is or is not accepted as highbrow modern Europhone African literature. Udentia’s observation that Afro-American journals still have a significant influence in determining the decisive trends in African literature and in deciding what constitutes the canon of African literature is still valid (1993). Although the past decade and a half has produced quite a number of postcolonial literary theorists of ‘periphery’ origin, many of them seem to publish and practice criticism of Eurocentrism in the West, which suggests that postcolonial literary theory may still have more to do with the concern of the West with modifying and adjusting its approach to the ‘Other’. The fact is that the West is still in control, and the question is not ‘whether theories produced by, and in, the central social formations should be applied in the periphery; they *are* in fact applied and *will* be applied, no permission sought’ (Jeyifo, 1993:26; italics as in original).

An answer has, by now, also emerged to the question of what constitutes African literature. The status of works by Africans in African languages has never been questioned. With regard to European language works, African literature has come to comprise works written by Africans of any skin colour, either at home or in the diaspora, whose formative years have been spent in Africa and their life shaped by an African experience, and who ‘look at the world *from* Africa, ... not look *upon* Africa from the world’ (see Gordimer in 2.3.4). Because of the economic, cultural and educational issues discussed in 2.5, the choice of a European language for literary creation predestines African writers to walking the tightrope of aspiring to find their niche at

home while having to seek the favours of an alien audience. The difficulty of this acrobatics 'might still be that Africa is not always thinking of, or speaking to the West' (Kanneh, 1997:83).

Notes

- ¹ The ancestry of postcolonial theory can be traced back to Fanon's *The Wretched of the Earth* published in 1961 and Said's highly influential *Orientalism* (1978). Later works include the now classic Ashcroft, Griffiths and Tiffin 1989, Bhabha 1990, Tiffin and Lawson 1994, and Williams and Chrisman 1994, followed by Mongia 1996, Ashcroft, Griffiths and Tiffin 1995, Moore-Gilbert 1997, Moore-Gilbert, Stanton and Maley 1997, Gandhi 1998, Loomba 1998, Ashcroft 2001a & b, Castle 2001, and Goldberg and Quayson 2002.
- ² The concept of resistance literature is discussed at length for example in Harlow 1987, Sharpe 1989 and Slemon 1990.
- ³ See, for example, Larson, Charles. 1973. Heroic Ethnocentrism: The Idea of Universality in Literature. *The American Scholar*, 42(3) (Summer).
- ⁴ Obiechina's 1973 book is an authoritative study of the Nigerian Onitsha Market literature, while Ikiddeh (1971) and Priebe (1978) examine Ghanaian popular literature.
- ⁵ African writing in African languages seems to have fallen outside Western critical interest, probably because of the linguistic barriers and diversity involved. One of the few studies, if not the only book-length publication, available in this area is Gérard's 1981 work *African Language Literatures: An introduction to the literary history of Sub-Saharan Africa*.
- ⁶ Camara's view on the importance of acquainting the world with African civilisation is succinctly expressed in an interview given to Egejuru (1980:21, 118-19).
- ⁷ Awoonor has spoken on this subject, among others, in an interview at The University of Texas at Austin (Lindfors et al. (eds.), 1972:48-50) and published a study of the history, culture and literature of Black Africa (1975).
- ⁸ Evidence for this can be found, among others, in Egejuru 1980, and indirectly through the discussion of the writer's choice of language in Ngugi 1986, Achebe 1988, *Research in African Literatures* 23/1 1992, and Walder 1998.
- ⁹ Personal communication by Femi Osofisan.
- ¹⁰ Personal communication by Aloysius Denkabe.
- ¹¹ Personal communication by Femi Osofisan.
- ¹² For example, Spivak 1985, 1986, 1991 and 1994; Mohanty 1994; Suleri 1994; Loomba 1994 and 1998; Katrak 1996; Kanneh 1997 and 1998.
- ¹³ It is worth giving a thought to what Stanislaw Andreski says in this respect: 'Obscurity ... is the refuge of mediocre minds. A banal lack of originality may be mistaken for profundity if it is tricked out in pompous language, and presented in terms of the fashionable but irrelevant paraphernalia of more exact sciences: simulation models, algebraic symbols and the like.'

But more sinister than this is the alliance which has grown up between the “academic call-boys” who, knowingly or unknowingly, serve the interests of the wielders of power and the “Foundation moguls” by putting a pseudo-scientific gloss on the crude realities of power and giving their blessing to the *status quo*. In recent times the bulk of the literature has been a sort of mumbo-jumbo sorcery, the effect of which has been to bemuse rather than to enlighten, to maintain rather than to challenge the establishment’ (1972: inside flap of jacket).

3.1 Introduction

As the present work is devoted to the examination of cultural difference expressed through variously encoded cultural reference in the English-language prose of Ghanaian writers, it is a must to include a discussion of the notion of culture. Rather than systematically reviewing different theories of culture, some of those relevant for the current work are examined in 3.2 to clarify what is meant by 'culture' and to provide a conceptual framework for the investigation of cultural reference carried out later.

In 2.4 we have seen that one of the major problems of African, hence Ghanaian, literature is the writer's choice of a European language for literary creation. We have also seen that African, and by the same token other postcolonial, writers prefer to twist and mould – indigenise – the European language so that it can carry their specific cultural experience. As cultural reference is an obvious site for indigenisation by virtue of it being a fusion of culture and language, in 3.3 we shall examine the relationship between culture and language. Although the relationship between language and culture is taken for granted throughout this work, this section is a useful reminder that language is part as well as a reflection of culture.

The Ghanaian writer's world unfolds in 3.4, which begins with the examination of the features of traditional society. To understand Ghanaian society, knowledge of the traditional institutions is required because 'in any situation of change in contemporary Ghana (and Africa for that matter) it is the traditional social practices which give direction to the changes taking place' (Nukunya, 1992:3). Ghanaian traditional society is described in a West African context. Such an approach provides a wider framework in accordance with the view that whatever the differences between the construction and dynamics of different traditional societies may be, they

all share the acceptance of tradition, of the givenness of some actual or symbolic past event, order, or figure as the major focus of their collective identity, as the delineator of the scope and nature of their social and cultural order and as ultimate legitimator of change and of the limits of innovation. In these societies tradition serves not only as a symbol of continuity, but as the delineator of the legitimate limits of creativity and innovation and as the major criterion of their legitimacy (Eisenstadt, 1973:151-2).

It also emphasises the similarities and overlaps that occur throughout the West African sub-region, with the exception of highly Islamised areas such as, for example, Northern Nigeria or Mali.

Traditional society is juxtaposed with modern West African urban culture, and the changes in the individual's social and cultural outlook brought about by a changing economic and social milieu are described. It is pointed out that tradition and modernity coexist in a mutually informative and mutually influential manner.

The section ends with an account of the multilingual linguistic set-up which plays a determining role in the Ghanaian writer's creativity.

The conclusion brings the various threads together into the understanding of culture that this work adopts; an understanding which assigns a central position to the inter-relatedness of culture and language and, as such, facilitates the elucidation of the Ghanaian writer's context of creation.

3.2 Theories of culture

“‘Culture’ is said to be one of the two or three most complex words in the English language,” says Terry Eagleton at the beginning of his book *The Idea of Culture*. Perhaps it is not just in the English language, and perhaps it is not the word itself but the complexity of the concept of culture that has inspired a plethora of definitions¹ by most prominent social and cultural anthropologists of various linguistic background. Yet it is ‘as good a label as any for the overall phenomenon or system of meanings within which sub-systems of social structure, technology, art and so on exist and interconnect’ (Byram, 1989:80):

culture represents a consensus on a wide variety of meanings among members of an interacting community approximating that of the consensus on language among members of a speech-community. Speech is an individual action and each individual speaks somewhat differently from another; yet speakers of a given language can understand one another on their first meeting, though they cannot understand speech in other languages to which they have not been exposed. ... The same holds for culture in general (of which language is one part); namely, that there is a consensus in a community (in this case about the meanings of symbols, verbal and nonverbal), that the consensus is substantively related to the importance of communication in

social life ... It must be emphasized that members of a community can vary greatly in thoughts, feelings, and behavior, yet hold in common understandings of the symbols and representations through which they communicate (LeVine, 1984:68).

The concept of culture as consisting of the shared knowledge of individual minds has produced highly influential views of culture. Goodenough, one of the best known proponents of the view of culture as cognition, sees cultures as systems of knowledge:

A society's culture consists of whatever it is one has to know or believe in order to operate in a manner acceptable to its members. Culture is not a material phenomenon; it does not consist of things, people, behavior, or emotions. It is rather an organization of these things. It is the form of things that people have in mind, their models for perceiving, relating, and otherwise interpreting them. ...

Culture ... consists of standards for deciding what is, ... for deciding what can be, ... for deciding what one feels about it, ... for deciding what to do about it, and ... for deciding how to go about doing it (quoted in Keesing, 1974:46).

In Goodenough's conceptualisation the location of culture is in the minds of individual human beings. Because of differences in biological heritage, personal history and societal roles, however, they do not share exactly the same model of their culture, i.e. they have varying cognitive models of society's culture. Language is a subsystem of culture, and individuals do not share exactly the same model of their language but differ in dialect and idiolect.

Lévi-Strauss, the most influential representative of the structuralist approach, 'views cultures as shared symbolic systems that are cumulative *creations of mind*; he seeks to discover in the structuring of cultural domains – myth, art, kinship, language – the principles of mind that generate these cultural elaborations' (Keesing, 1974:47-48; original emphasis). He assumes that 'the human mind is everywhere the same and cultures are different implementations of basic abstract logical properties of thinking which are shared by all humans and adapted to specific living conditions' (Duranti, 1997:33). People in "traditional" societies and people in western, technologically advanced societies think differently because they have access to different resources in building their theories.

In Geertz's interpretive approach, cultures are treated as systems of shared symbols and meanings:

The culture concept to which I adhere denotes a historically transmitted pattern of meanings embodied in symbols, a system of inherited conceptions expressed in



symbolic forms by means of which people communicate, perpetuate and develop their knowledge about and attitudes toward life (quoted in Wierzbicka, 1997:20-21).

Geertz is interested in the never-ending interpretive process that characterises human experience. In *The Interpretation of Cultures* he writes:

Culture is the fabric of meaning in terms of which human beings interpret their experience and guide their action; social structure is the form that action takes, the actually existing network of social relations (1973:145).

He argues that like language, culture is a semiotic system, its symbols, like linguistic symbols, encoding a connection between a signifying form and a signalled meaning. Symbols are public and communicate meaning from one mind to another. Therefore, cultures do not exist in the minds of individuals but rather between them. He, then, unlike Goodenough, locates culture outside the individual. Although each individual has his or her own perception of culture, culture remains an autonomous system of symbols independent of individual human minds which the individual can use as he or she sees appropriate.

These theories of culture have aspects that are relevant to the current study. Goodenough's view that culture is 'the form of things that people have in mind, their models for perceiving, relating, and otherwise interpreting them' seems to underpin the claim that cultural reference in the work of Ghanaian writers, no matter how it is encoded, may present difficulty of understanding for the reader who does not share the writers' cultural experience. Lévi-Strauss's view of 'cultures as shared symbolic systems' and Geertz's view of culture as a 'historically transmitted pattern of meanings embodied in symbols, a system of inherited conceptions expressed in symbolic forms' draws our attention to the similarity of language and culture as semiotic systems: both linguistic signs and cultural symbols denote something that stands for, or refers to, something else in a meaningful way. By definition, signs consist of a form and a referent; linguistic signs, more specifically, conjoin, as Saussure argues, a form and a concept, signifier and signified. Just as the relationship between signifier and signified is arbitrary, so is the relationship between a cultural symbol and its referent. Neither linguistic signs nor cultural symbols have significance unless they are recognised as such by their users, and just as the meaning of linguistic signs has to be learnt by the speech community, so the meaning of cultural symbols has to be learnt by the members of a particular cultural group.

Influential and relevant though these views of culture are, D'Andrade points out three major problems relating to them:

first, many things one would want to call cultural are not completely or even generally shared; second, culture consists of more than just knowledge; and third, it is not clear whether cultural systems are to be found "inside" or "outside" the minds of individuals (1984:90).

To illustrate that 'culture consists of more than just knowledge', D'Andrade quotes Geertz's example of a Beethoven quartet:

...that a Beethoven quartet is a temporally developed tonal structure, a coherent sequence of modeled sound – in a word, music – and not anybody's knowledge or belief about anything, including how to play it, is a position to which most people are, upon reflection, likely to assent. (In D'Andrade, 1984:90)

He, then, gives the example of marriage, saying that marriage is not the same thing as knowing how to marry people or knowing how to get married or understanding what it is to be married. Marriage is part of culture, any culture, in that there is a constitutive set of rules that individuals know, which are intersubjectively shared and adhered to.

Marriage is a culturally created entity – *an entity created by the social agreement that something counts as that entity*. To agree that something will count as something else is more than simply knowing about it, although knowing about it is a necessary precondition. The *agreement* that something counts as something else involves the *adherence* of a group of people to a *constitutive rule* and to the entailments incurred by the application of the rule. (D'Andrade, 1984:91; original emphasis)

'Getting married' then is the enactment of certain behaviours in certain contexts, and 'being married' entails certain obligations and commitments.

In addition to culturally created things like, for example, family, prestige, deviance, which are all created by social agreement to what counts as what, there exist 'brute facts' (Searle quoted in D'Andrade, 1984:92) such as stone, tree, hand, a person's age, the number of calories consumed during a meal, all of which exist prior to, and independent of, their definition. Although such entities are not culturally created, they are nevertheless affected by culturally based associations and invoke shared connotations, though these cultural connotations do not manufacture the objects themselves.

The example of a Beethoven quartet quoted above directs our attention to yet another cultural phenomenon which does bear importance for the current work. In addition to 'brute facts' and culturally created entities, there exists a cultural category through which much of the shared knowledge and behaviours is expressed symbolically. Artefacts as the tangible products and symbols of culture, whether they come from traditional art forms or from such less orthodox artistic domains as sartorial or culinary styles, are infused with the meanings of the culture that has created them. 'Artefacts of literature, music and the like are the expressions both of the idiosyncratic meanings of individuals and also of the systems of meaning which individuals share' (Byram, 1989:84).

D'Andrade's own definition of culture, lengthy though it is, is worth quoting in full:

The position taken ... treats culture as consisting of learned systems of meaning, communicated by means of natural language and other symbol systems, having representational, directive, and affective functions, and capable of creating cultural entities and particular senses of reality. Through these systems of meaning, groups of people adapt to their environment and structure interpersonal activities. Cultural meaning systems affect and are affected by the various systems of material flow, such as the flow of goods and services, and an interpersonal network of commands and requests. Cultural meaning systems are linked to personality systems through the sharing of specific items that function in both systems for particular individuals. Various aspects of cultural meaning systems are differentially distributed across persons and statuses, creating institutions such as family, market, nation, and so on, which constitute social structure. Analytically, cultural meaning systems can be treated as a very large diversified pool of knowledge, or partially shared clusters of norms, or as intersubjectively shared, symbolically created realities. On the individual level, however, the actual meanings and messages that people learn, encounter, and produce are typically not divided into separate classes of items that can be labeled knowledge, norm, or reality, but rather form multifunctional complexes of constructs, organized in interlocking hierarchical structures, which are simultaneously constructive [create cultural entities], representative [represent the world], evocative [evoke certain feelings], and directive [direct one to do certain things] (1984:116 [96]).

The variability of culture across human populations with regard to economic, organisational and communicative patterns by which humans live, as well as with regard to cultural standards of intellectual, moral and aesthetic judgement is an essential point for the current study. In this respect, D'Andrade's definition of culture is particularly pertinent because from the more abstract level of how cultural meaning systems and personality systems are linked he goes on to relate his observations to the level of the very individuals who constitute the systems and talks about actual meanings these individuals learn, encounter and produce. This approach to cultural meaning through the individual is highly relevant as the current

study proposes to investigate cultural meaning learnt and (re)produced by writers as individual members of their cultural environment, as well as encountered and interpreted by readers as individuals not necessarily sharing the writers' cultural background.

3.3 Language and culture

It is commonly accepted that language is an indispensable and inseparable part of culture – it 'must be understood as cultural practice' (Duranti, 1997:23). In Jiang's view, language is flesh and culture is blood, the two forming a living organism together. 'Without culture, language would be dead; without language, culture would have no shape' (Jiang, 2000:328). This inter-relatedness is reflected in definitions of culture by practitioners of language and literature. According to McCarthy and Carter's general definition culture is 'the set of values and beliefs which are prevalent within a given society or section of society (1994:150). In the context of language teaching, however, they discern more specific definitions with language being an integral part:

First, *culture with a capital C* This refers to the most prestigious artistic achievements of a society: its art, music, theatre and, especially, its literature.

Second, *culture with a small c* This refers to the habits, customs, social behaviour and assumptions about the world of a group of people.

Third, *culture as social discourse* This refers to the social knowledge and interactive skills which are required in addition to knowledge of the language system. (1994:151; original emphasis)

Kramsch contrasts culture with nature and argues that 'nature refers to what is born and grows organically (from the Latin *nascere*: to be born); **culture** refers to what has been grown and groomed (from the Latin *colere*: to cultivate)' (1998:4; original emphasis). In her definition of culture the inter-relatedness of language and culture seems to be central:

1 Membership in a discourse community that shares a common social space and history, and a common system of standards for perceiving, believing, evaluating, and acting. **2** The discourse community itself. **3** The system of standards themselves (1998:127).

Tengan defines culture as 'an observable pattern of human behaviours which are consciously constructed and communicated by the mind through language' (1994:127).

In fact, the study of the relationship between language and culture has had a long history. In the 17th century John Locke's (1632-1704) *An Essay Concerning Human Understanding* published in 1690 already offers the insight that the meanings of words from different languages do not match and that they reflect characteristic ways of living and thinking in a given society, so they provide clues to the understanding of culture. About a hundred years later this is what the German critic and poet Johann Gottfried Herder (1744-1803) writes about cultural elaboration:

Each [language] in its own way is both lavish and lacking, but, to be sure, each in its own way. ...Profusion is the style of the language. In Siam there are eight different ways of saying "I" and "we," depending on whether the master speaks to the servant or the servant to the master. ... Each one of these synonymies is linked to custom, character, and origin of the people; and everywhere the inventive human spirit reveals itself (quoted in Wierzbicka, 1997:10).

The first systematic statement on language as worldview which can be regarded as the precursor of linguistic relativity was presented by the German linguist Wilhelm von Humboldt (1767-1835):

Each tongue draws a circle about the people to whom it belongs, and it is possible to leave this circle only by simultaneously entering that of another people. Learning a foreign language ought hence to be the conquest of a new standpoint in the previously prevailing cosmic attitude of the individual. In fact, it is so to a certain extent, inasmuch as every language contains the entire fabric of concepts and the conceptual approach of a portion of humanity. But this achievement is not complete, because one always carries over into a foreign tongue to a greater or lesser degree one's own cosmic viewpoint – indeed one's personal linguistic pattern. ([1836] 1971:39-40)

The notion of linguistic relativity, associated with Edward Sapir and Benjamin Lee Whorf, is an idea according to which 'lexicalized concepts impose restrictions on possible ways of thinking' (Saeed, 1997:41). The idea that different linguistic frames of reference lead their users to different observations of the world and to different interpretations of these observations is the force of Sapir's famous statement:

Human beings do not live in the objective world alone, nor alone in the world of social activity as ordinarily understood, but are very much at the mercy of the particular language which has become the medium of expression for their society. It is quite an illusion to imagine that one adjusts to reality essentially without the use of language and that language is merely an incidental means of solving specific problems of communication or reflection. The fact of the matter is that the 'real

world' is to a large extent unconsciously built up on the language habits of the group. No two languages are ever sufficiently similar to be considered as representing the same social reality. The worlds in which different societies live are distinct worlds, not merely the same world with different labels attached. (1964:69)

Whorf may have gone too far in emphasising 'the difference between languages and cultures and the conceptual universes associated with them' (Wierzbicka, 1997:7), but his main thesis offers a profound insight which will be recognised by anyone whose experience extends beyond his or her native language:

The background linguistic system (in other words, the grammar) of each language is not merely a reproducing instrument for voicing ideas but rather is itself the shaper of ideas, the program and guide for the individual's mental activity, for his analysis of impressions, for his synthesis of his mental stock in trade. Formulation of ideas is not an independent process, strictly rational in the old sense, but is part of a particular grammar and differs, from slightly to greatly, as between different grammars. We dissect nature along lines laid down by our native languages. The categories and types that we isolate from the world of phenomena we do not find there because they stare every observer in the face; on the contrary, the world is presented in a kaleidoscopic flux of impressions which has to be organized by our minds – and this means largely by the linguistic systems in our minds. We cut nature up, organize it into concepts, and ascribe significances as we do, largely because we are parties to an agreement to organize it in this way – an agreement that holds through our speech community and is codified in the patterns of our language. The agreement is, of course, an implicit and unstated one, but its terms are absolutely obligatory; we cannot talk at all except by subscribing to the organization and classification of data which the agreement decrees. (1956:212-14)

Although it is difficult to prove whether differences in world-views between cultures are to be attributed to differences in linguistic systems, the plausibility of language influencing forms of thought and our perception of the world is hard to doubt. Among others Langacker observes that 'language is culturally transmitted and a primary vehicle for cultural interaction and transmission' (1994:52), and Wierzbicka maintains that human beings do not think even about universal human concepts², such as body parts, the sun, the moon, the stars, rain, wind, fire and water, in the same way. She claims that language does not reflect the world directly, but 'it reflects human conceptualisation, human interpretation of the world' (Wierzbicka, 1992:7). Therefore, words referring to universal human concepts can be as language-specific as those referring to customs, traditions, rituals and beliefs. Quinn and Holland's observation that 'the intuition of native speakers about their language are heavily dependent on the intuitions of these natives as culture-bearers' (1987:16) underpins Wierzbicka's argument.

As has been seen in 2.4, the issues raised by linguistic relativity are highly pertinent to the Ghanaian, and by the same token African and other postcolonial, writer who chooses an essentially foreign, or if you like transplanted, language for literary creation. In the attempt to reconcile Ghanaian cultural experience with the desire to express it in an alien tongue, English is bound to be twisted and moulded so that it can convey concepts that are foreign to it. However, it is not only the culture and language contact situation that lends relevance to the fact that language and patterns of thought are interlinked, but also multilingualism in a multiethnic, hence multicultural, milieu. In *Changes – A Love Story* (1991) Ama Ata Aidoo beautifully captures the essence of this link from the point of view of popular opinion:

When Ali was in an English-speaking environment, people found his language ‘quaint’ with its French accent and philosophical turn to everyday phrases. When he was in a Francophone environment, people thought his language enchantingly ‘simple, comme les Anglais!’ (30)

Although monolingual popular opinion, as well as some cognitive scientists³ deny the existence of links between ways of speaking and ways of thinking on the one hand, and the existence of differences in ways of thinking associated with different languages and cultures on the other hand, the existence of such links and differences between language, culture and thought is self-evident to people with an intimate knowledge of two or more languages and cultures.

3.4 The Ghanaian writer’s cultural and linguistic reality

3.4.1 Seeing through culture

‘I am also financing a cement-block house for my mother in the village. They say that it has raised her esteem so much that it has even won her back my father. ... I have issued instructions to them to find a small cement house in town which I can buy for my two kids’ (Darko, 1995:140).

Amma Darko and her heroine, Mara, in *Beyond the Horizon* certainly have a clear idea of the house Mara is building for her mother and of the one she intends to buy for her children. It needs no explanation. Everyone knows what a cement-block house is. Or do we? Some of us, readers, may wonder: What size and shape are those cement blocks? What shape is the house? What kind of internal division does it have? How many rooms? What amenities?

What kind of windows? Sash? Continental European? Louvres? What are louvres, anyway? How about the roof? Tiles? Slates? Corrugated iron? Why has it changed the status of Mara's mother? What place does it have in the paradigm of Ghanaian dwellings? We could keep on asking. As much of our reality is culturally constructed, our concept of a house is influenced by the culture we are part of. The cultural knowledge underlying our cultural understanding of the world is what we see with.

The Ghanaian writer sees the world through the prism of his own culture and wants to tell a Ghanaian story, even if he does that in English, a 'transplanted language in a speech community that does not share the native cultural contexts of the transplanted language' (Y. Kachru, 1987:87). His reality will be an unmistakably West African reality in general, and a Ghanaian reality in particular. Perhaps one of the most salient features of this reality is the coexistence of the traditional and the modern. About one third of the population lives in urban areas⁴, while the rest live in villages and traditional towns. Although there is a growing urban population at the expense of rural areas, this does not significantly alter the overall West African outlook. The claim that 'in spite of the rapidity of social change (necessarily fastest in the urban centres and slower in the villages) the traditional still outweighs non-traditional cultural elements' (Obiechina, 1975:36) has lost none of its pertinence.

3.4.2 *Traditional society*

Traditional society, which West African, therefore Ghanaian society is regarded to be, is collective by nature. The life of a community is bonded together by a common historical and ancestral background and is bound within a limited area; it is based on permanent face-to-face social relationships and co-operation. The present life of the people, indeed every aspect of their human experience - their actions, behaviour, norms, ideas, beliefs, ideals, attitudes and values - is handed down to them orally from generation to generation with as little modification as possible. The identification of the individual with the social and cultural outlook of the group of which he or she forms part means that 'the traditional individual's apprehension of reality is ... the collectively shared vision of reality certified by custom' (Obiechina, 1975:40). Social conformity is at the heart of the existence of a traditional community. Although the individual is less autonomous than in the Western sense, the subordination of the individual's self-interest to the overall interest of the community does not lead to the repression of individual freedom because traditional society is never remote

from the very people who compose it, and because its corporate nature leaves little room for manipulation by ambitious individuals.

The traditional spirit does not dictate uniformity of personal character and temperament. Individuals, even in a traditional community, may differ in character and temperament, and may, sometimes, deviate from the behavioural norms of their community. However, as Obiechina observes,

The traditional did [and does even today] work towards the maintenance of internal social harmony and good external relations. Politics provided [and keep providing] the framework for defining and delimiting social relations, individual rights and obligations, and the specific roles and statuses attaching to different offices, and law was [and still is] directed towards reconciling the parties in every conflict and restoring the state of normality (1975:205; comments in square brackets are my own).

In West Africa the custodians of the traditional are the ancestors. They are the souls of those departed elders who have lead a life of high moral and ethical standards and contributed meaningfully to the welfare of the community. The ancestors live in the world of spirits, yet they are not separated from the living but are considered part of their human families. As Quarcoopome explains, 'in the African context the family is made up of the dead, the living and the generation yet unborn' (1987:128). The ancestors are the guardians of traditions, ethics, family affairs and property and, as such, are believed not only to be continually watching over the living but to have power to influence their affairs, as well. They are constantly kept in mind and held in veneration by the individual and community alike. They are invoked to ensure their help and protection, and it is believed that success and prosperity depends on the favour of the ancestors. Prayers such as the following express the sense of dependence on the ancestors:

You are leaving us today; we have performed your funeral. Do not let any of us fall ill. Let us get money to pay the expenses of your funeral. Let the women bear children. Life to all of us. Life to the chief (quoted in Busia, 1954:201).

Ancestors are the link people have with the spiritual world. They are the intermediaries between men, the divinities and God. Their power and authority is relegated to them from God. This power and authority commands fear, awe and respect from people as the ancestors can not only dispense, on behalf of God, their blessing, help and reward for the observance of the laws and customs but can also punish individuals, families or even whole communities

for displeasing them by breaking the customs or failing to fulfil their obligations to their kinsfolk⁵.

In the traditional world-view, then, spiritual and non-spiritual, the celestial and the mundane exist in a fusion. The constant interplay of these two worlds gives sense to existence in a traditional West African village. At the centre of this traditional universe is man. He is acted upon by forces above the human force – the supreme creator God; the lesser gods connected with cosmic and natural phenomena; the minor spirits, who inhabit the air, the forests and streams; and the ancestors, whose spiritual bond with the living vouches for the continuity of society. Though man is not capable of acting upon these forces, he can regulate his relationship with them by expiating and placating them through sacrifices and religious rites. On the other hand, man has the power to act on the lower forces, such as materials and minerals, without being acted upon by them, and manipulates them to his advantage.

‘Traditional habits of thinking are compounded of empiricism and metaphysics’ (Obiechina, 1975:38). Actions forming part of daily life, such as farming, fetching water, cooking, eating and drinking, making clothes and tools, just to mention a few, comprise a reality which is perceived by the individual through the senses, and as such, require empirico-rational behaviour. At the same time, because both the physical world and the unseen universe are embraced by the traditional world view, the traditional mind also perceives reality at a super-sensory level of consciousness. As Obiechina sums it up,

...religion provides an operative basis for regulating the relationship between man, the gods and the ancestors, while magic provides the answer to the threats of the harmful mystical forces that beset man in this world. Within the traditional setting, therefore, reality is apprehended empirically and rationally as a sensory phenomenon and metaphysically as an invisible force which operates in the universe. Thus, apart from areas of action which can be regarded as truly empirical, there are others which can only be subsumed under religious or magical manifestation. The world of traditional West African village life depends on the constant interplay of these two aspects – the physical, seen world and the unseen world of the gods, ancestors, spirits, witches and magicians (1975:38-9).

Social structure in the traditional system is based on the extended family and the mutual helpfulness and co-operation of its members. The most crucial relationship is that between father and son: ‘it is the foundation of the ancestral authority upon which the continuity of the institutions, common values, attitudes and sentiments of the traditional culture depend’ (Obiechina, 1975:218-19). A father is responsible for bringing up his son in the best traditions of the clan and for providing for his basic necessities. In turn, a son must be

reverent and obedient to his father and when the father dies, he must perform the proper funeral rites to smooth the father's passage to the spiritual world of the ancestors. Sacrificial offerings by the son provide sustenance for the spirit of the dead father, who will continue to exercise tutelary influence over his son and his family.

Most traditional societies are rural communities where farming is the main occupation, although keeping livestock, hunting and fishing is also practised, depending on climate and geographical location. The land is assumed to belong to the ancestors, whose living descendants are entitled to its full use while here on earth. Every male member of a family has land available to him to farm on, which ensures that no man is without employment. Since land is the main source of economic production, wealth, power and status are closely linked with success in farming. Life is regulated by seasonal rhythms which determine the patterns of work. There exists a sexual division of labour, which assigns certain types of agricultural activity and skills to men and others to women. Even the pattern of parent-child relationship is determined, and the desirability of male children explained, by the traditional economy. The father, who is the head of the domestic economic unit, has considerable power over his children. He commands obedience from them and exercises authority over them. As long as he is alive, he receives labour tribute from his grown-up sons as an expression of their filial loyalty. Not only does this help to maintain inner cohesion and solidarity within the family, but it also underlines the great practical importance of having male children as labour force to increase the prospects of agricultural, and consequently economic, success. The father, on the other hand, is obliged to take care of his sons' needs until they set up a family of their own. He has to give them a portion of the family land on which they can lay their economic foundation, build a house for them in the family compound, and pay the bride price for their wives. These obligations on the part of the father ensure that despite the clearly defined economic basis of the relationship between father and son, this relationship is devoid of exploitation.

In Ghana in particular, existing side by side with the patrilineal descent, inheritance and succession⁶, common in the northern and eastern regions of the country, among the Ga people of the Accra region, and partly among the Akwapims and Fantes, matriliney is prevalent among the Akan peoples inhabiting southern Ghana south and west of the Volta River system. In the Akan conception of the nature of man, man is both a biological and a spiritual being. As Busia explains, two sets of bonds, the mother-child bond and the father-child bond, determine two sets of groupings and relationships:

Man as a biological being inherits his blood from his mother; this gives him his status and membership within the lineage, the clan, and the tribe, and his rights and obligations as a citizen; moreover, ... the concept of a life hereafter and of a spirit world, and the consequent worship of the ancestors, provides a religious link and unbroken continuity with all one's matrikin.

As a spiritual being, a man receives a twofold gift of the spirit: that which determines his character and his individuality he receives through his father; but his soul, the underlying part of him, he receives direct from the Supreme being.

... The blood that is transmitted through the mother, the personality that comes indirectly from the Supreme Being through intermediaries, and that 'small bit of the Creator which is in every person's body' and which he receives directly from the Supreme Being, combine to make a man what he is. (1954:199-200)

Matrilineal descent is responsible for the laws of inheritance of property, succession to stools, and marriage. A woman's personal property cannot be acquired by her husband or male members of her family as long as other female members are alive.

The custodian of all knowledge and treasures of the community is the woman:

Ye ko bisa aberewa, "We are going to consult the old woman," places the woman as the final arbiter in all decisions in the Ashanti community. When a tribunal sits to settle a case, its members finally retire to take a decision and this final act culminating in giving justice is referred to as "consulting the old woman." ... However inferior an Ashanti woman may appear to an outside observer she is the final decisive factor in all the activities of the men and the arbiter of what is good or bad for the whole community. (Tufuo and Donkor, 1989:58)

As maintainers of the clan and the bearers of kings, mothers enjoy a high social status. This is emphasised by the respect that is due to them: to be disrespectful to a mother leads to the same consequences as sacrilege.

While the most important bond is between mother and child, Warren (1986:37) informs us that the Akan father is theoretically without legal authority over his children. His natural rights, however, usually allow him to educate, discipline and maintain custody of his offspring.

Powerful and prominent as women may seem, the matrilineal system does not guarantee equality between male and female members of a lineage. The authority in the family lies with the maternal uncle. He has the power to choose spouses for his nephews and nieces and sanction their divorce. His power is great, but the authority he has is a kind of corporate authority as all the blood relations in the family can have a say in his decisions. The head of

the family – the family elder – is male. He represents the family on the local council of elders, acts as the family intermediary with the spirits, is the custodian of family traditions, manages all family property and settles family disputes. He is, however, not an autocrat as any decision he makes has to be upheld by other elders in the family⁷.

Gyamfuaa-Fofie points out that ‘the matrilineal system merely guarantees that nephews will inherit from their uncles through the female line: wealth continues to be confined to males’ (1997:40). She further explains that women in Ghanaian communities have been socialised to accept male supremacy, and have sometimes acted as primary agents in enforcing and re-enforcing restrictive gender rules. Girls are taught that the essence of a woman’s life is marriage and are trained to seek material gain from suitors; they are encouraged to marry wealthy men irrespective of the age difference. They are ‘socialized into the knowledge that success in life is achieved by marrying successful men: the idea that a woman can become successful through self-confidence and hard work is rarely credited’ (ibid., 41). The psychological oppression of women is maintained even through proverbs such as ‘If a woman buys a gun, she must keep it in the room of a man,’ or ‘When a woman rears a sheep, the man must sell it’ (ibid., 41). Although Ghanaian traditional religions do not discriminate against women priests, who can perform the same rites as their male counterparts in the same capacity, Christianity is not free from discriminatory attitudes towards women, and the Bible is often quoted to promote male authority and female submission and humility. Attitudes towards female education have not been favourable, either. Boys have traditionally been privileged over girls in matters of education because it is believed that the resources spent on a girl’s education would be wasted when she married. Girls are, therefore, encouraged to take up trading or farming, or to learn a vocation at best, and marry rather than seek academic success. No matter how high an educational standard a woman has, if she is single, she will not be accorded as much respect as an illiterate married woman. Despite the fact that the Ghanaian educationalist Dr Kwaggir Aggrey clearly spoke out for the education of women when he said ‘If you educate a woman you educate a nation but if you educate a man you educate an individual’ (quoted in Gyamfuaa-Fofie, 1997:43), women’s advancement has been a slow process. On the one hand, not only do women lack self-confidence, but they also allow themselves to be drawn into rumour-mongering, petty jealousies, back-biting and sexual envy, which weaken their morals and hinder their progress. On the other hand, though many men sympathise with the struggle of women for recognition and fulfilment, many perceive a threat to their leadership and authority and try to hinder women’s progress.

Nature forms an integral part of the traditional West African's world order. It is not 'other' as in the industrialised and urbanised West where it is admired and appreciated in forms such as waterfalls, landscapes and beautiful flowers in gardens and parks. Human life is intimately interwoven with physical nature, which is not dead but filled with spirits and vitality.

Behind nature there is supernature, the spirit which animates it and infuses it with occult potency. Everything in nature is either a manifestation of matter, tangible, physical and responsible to sensual perception, or supernature, that which is nature's hidden power and life. The perfect combination of the two aspects ensures the harmony and ordered progress of the traditional world ... Since nature is so intimately woven into the traditional consciousness, it is an ever-present reality constantly within view. Understandably, *it is more an object of veneration than of aesthetic appreciation* (Obiechina, 1975: 43; added emphasis).

This intimacy between man and nature is also reflected in the symbols and images drawn from nature that fill traditional folklore and mythology.

Artistic creation in the traditional environment is collective and utilitarian. Pure and applied art are not strictly differentiated. While religious and ritual activities find expression in masks, statuettes and figurines, art is also put to such common use among traditional people as door-carving, wall- and floor-decoration, pottery, decoration of utensils and tools, and body-decoration such as body-painting, intricate hairdos, body-piercing and cicatrisation. The traditional artist's work is inspired by a 'collectively shared aesthetic vision from which he derives his motifs, symbolism and functional framework' (Obiechina, 1975:53), and is commissioned by the community.

Music has various functions in traditional society: it is entertainment, accompaniment to dance and serves religious and ritual purposes. A musical session, and most dance situations, always establish a rapport between the performers and the audience, inviting the latter to participate. Song and dance express a predominantly collective emotion, be it happiness, exaltation, suspense, sorrow, fear, anger or reverence. Whatever the musical situation, the ultimate effect seems to be the same:

To bring the community together, to forge a social, aesthetic or mystical link among its members and to unite emotional responses around defined rhythmic waves and melodies. Music, dance and song become for the community an instrument for creating social, emotional and aesthetic solidarity (Obiechina, 1975:58).

3.4.3 *Modern urban society*

'For most Africans, life begins in the village, and wherever they go after that, they carry the village within them' (Obiechina, 1975:201). When they enter the modern industrialised urban environment (as distinct from traditional urban settlements which are relatively homogeneous culturally), where elements of the oral kinship-oriented culture coexist with elements of literate individualistic culture, their behaviour and attitudes are infused with certain ambivalence. Although through societies and associations based on ethnic origin and/or place of provenance they may try to recreate a traditional framework reproducing some of the security of the rural community, the individual is compelled to play roles which do not exist in the traditional setting. To fit in the economic system he has to acquire literacy, and through it some specialised skill or profession. As a consequence, he enters a situation where he grows detached from the tradition-oriented community where social hierarchy and status determines the individual's place, and becomes free to assert his individuality. He no longer counts in terms of the group he belongs to, but plays a range of roles which depend on his level of education and professional training. This requires considerable social and mental adjustment.

Modern towns are conglomerations of people drawn together from different traditional areas, so the historical identification, social homogeneity and collective outlook of the traditional community are no longer found there. Though most urban settlers tend to have a background of traditional experience, the lack of a collective world-view and collectively defined reality affects the consciousness of each individual. Obiechina observes that

the metaphysical outlook of the traditional individual becomes the superstitious outlook of the city-dweller, the difference being that the metaphysical apprehension of reality in the former is an essential aspect of the "logically" conceived world-order, but is in the latter a mere fragmentary phenomenon unrelated to the general "realistic" outlook, which is scientific. Belief in magic within the traditional environment is an aspect of the collective cultural equipment and plays an important part in social relations, whereas within the modern setting, it is a private reality. The individual may only have recourse to it in pursuit of private gain or private vengeance (1975:40).

The prototype of the urban individual is characterised by the absence of a unified cultural ethos on the one hand, and by quite a high degree of individual initiative and independent thinking on the other. He tends to be physically and mentally mobile; not so much intelligent as streetwise, shrewd and cunning. The wider scope of experiences in the city makes him

more adaptable to different roles. His lack of a unified cultural and moral vision allows him to adhere to a code of behaviour based on egotism: he is likely to feel free to indulge in 'worldly pleasures' without much restraint and to pursue personal gains and advantages, even through dishonest means, without giving anything back in return.

People in the village look increasingly to their urban relatives for help and fulfilment of their aspirations. More significantly, parents are less willing, or less capable, to meet their traditional obligations to their children who live and work in the towns. This indicates their diminishing traditional authority over their offspring. In turn, urban dwellers show a tendency to 'virtually disregard their traditional reciprocal obligations, duties and responsibilities to relatives outside their nuclear families except the closest and the most immediate' (Nukunya, 1992:155-6). Marital ties and ties to one's children are strengthening at the expense of kinship ties.

The transition from indigenous moral restraint to the complexities of modern discipline has resulted in a conflict of values leading to the psychological and moral bewilderment of the individual. The phenomenon of corrupt practices in Africa has its roots in the ideological flux of this 'in-betweenness'. Mazrui observes that 'politics in Africa ... are sometimes hard to keep clean merely because people are moving from one set of values to another' (1986:240). The priority of ethnic solidarity and kinship obligations over allegiance to the newly created political entity of a nation pressurises African politicians and officials into giving privileges to their kinsmen, thus giving in to nepotism.

Part of the problem of corruption goes back to the colonial administration. Being a case of foreign control, artificial by definition, the colonial regime lacked legitimacy and was alienated from the population. Government property, therefore, lacked respect.

It became almost a patriotic duty to misappropriate the resources of the colonial government when this was possible without risk of punishment or exposure. After all, to steal from a foreign thief could be an act of heroic restoration. Post-colonial Africa still suffers from the cynical attitudes to government property generated by the colonial experience.

... [The nation] is an artificial entity invented by the colonial order, with boundaries which bear no relation to ethnic limits or traditional kingdoms. The Europeans carved up Africa to suit European convenience. ... Why should I regard those colonial frontiers as being more important than the needs of my children? Why should I regard integrity in the service of an artificial national entity as more important than staple food for my children? While I abuse the resources of my

artificial nation in favour of my authentic family, let the innocent cast the first stone.
(Mazrui, 1986:242-3)

Like nepotism, bribery, too, has its roots in traditional culture. Traditional gift-giving in Africa is based on the principle of prior appreciation and reciprocity. It is also a matter of dignity that the beneficiary of a favour should give something in return. Anticipating a favour by extending a favour to one's future benefactor is, however, not necessarily the same as a bribe of money. The changing standards and codes of behaviour brought about by a modern money economy have nevertheless shaded the former into the latter and the continuity with an older custom has lent legitimacy to this practice. As Mazrui observes, 'the central question still persists: is there such a thing as corruption, or is it all a matter of culture? It does seem as if one culture's bribery is another's mutual goodwill' (1986:241).

Yet another factor working against the equilibrium of traditional indigenous cultures is the introduction of literacy associated with the emergence of new cultural elements, new skills, new attitudes and new aspirations. What can, however, be regarded as instrumental in the disruption of the old social order and in accelerating social change is the arrival and growth of the mass media. Their accessibility both to the literate and the non-literate and their availability both in English and the indigenous languages have not only rapidly expanded their audiences, but increased their capacity for spreading new cultural influences, as well. By familiarising the individual with other ways of life and presenting him with changes in the society he lives in and in the world outside it, they not only increase the individual's perceptive power, but exert a considerable influence on the way of life of traditional people.

Christianity has also been instrumental in undermining the ideological matrix – collective solidarity and tradition – that hold traditional society together. The alienation of the converts from their traditional loyalty to the ancestors and the splitting of the collective conscience mean that the community can no longer keep its integrity. Their religious basis undermined, traditional customary laws are no longer effective, and the traditional social framework can no longer cope with the tensions and conflicts arising from the culture-contact.

Although Christianity 'contradicts the narrow appeal of the traditional system to the brotherhood of those bound by common ancestry and marriage' (Obiechina, 1975:258) by offering 'an authority rival to the authority of the ancestors and an appeal to the universal brotherhood of man' (ibid.) and thereby affects the most fundamental, therefore most cohesive, factors of the traditional system, and, as a consequence, facilitates the

fragmentation of traditional society, it has to be acknowledged that it has never put traditional religion in the danger of obliteration. Many of those who become Christian in their youth tend to find their way back later in their life to take a traditional title or to marry an additional wife. Sometimes even those who profess Christian values throughout their life seek the intervention of traditional agents such as priests, medicine men and diviners in times of crisis when the Christian faith fails to provide them with respite and remedy.

Urban West Africans are living through the separation of man from nature, though this process has not gone as far as it has in the industrialised West. With the expansion of urban centres into the forest and the construction of road and railway networks wild nature is forced to recede. Many of the traditional attitudes, especially religious and mystical, cease to exist with this recession.

It is fair to say that the taste for horticulture of all sorts, landscape gardening, ornamental gardening, the development of garden parks, zoos and so on widely noticeable in the environmental and architectural history of the past few centuries in Europe, especially since the eighteenth century, represents modern man's attempt to re-establish some kind of contact with a domesticated nature to replace the relationship which he has all but lost through industrialization and urbanization. Natural woods and forests are replaced with cultivated gardens and parks, natural animals by those in the zoos, natural streams and brooks by ponds, moats and canals. Natural darkness is negated by electricity. The moon is obliterated by the street lights in built-up urban centres (Obiechina, 1975:49).

Nature is being similarly recreated in the West African urban settlements. Most importantly, Western aesthetic attitudes towards and concepts of nature are being developed by individuals, especially the educated middle class, who live in the urban environment or have had a western type education. Nature, however, is never too far. Some people, even after they have been absorbed in the urban settlements, keep visiting sacred woods and enchanted hills and keep worshipping old rivers and streams. Since many urban West Africans live only part of their life in the town and the other part in their ancestral village, they are never completely out of touch with nature, nor have they lost the concepts of nature of their rural relatives.

The significance and social value of art has also been decisively affected by urban social change, the heterogeneous nature of urban populations and the influence of Western artistic philosophy. The vacuum created by the lack of the unified social and cultural outlook essential to aesthetic collectiveness has been filled by 'atelier art of a secular nature, nurtured in Western-type schools and expressing an essentially individual vision' (Obiechina,

1975:71-2). This has brought with it the separation of art from common culture and the growth of coterie audiences. Although the artist working in the modern idiom attempts, from time to time, to draw his inspiration and motifs from traditional folklore and traditional artistic forms, he is no longer a creator integrative of society.

Where the traditional artist works in intimate association with society, taking from it his themes, functional relevance and his symbols, and rewarding the society by sharing with it his vision in the interpretation of public realities, the modern artist is an individual who draws his artistic impulse from his own imagination and makes his creation available to society for its own edification. He is not commissioned by the community to produce his work, as his traditional counterpart would have been, and the community is under no obligation to patronize his product. He may take some of his motifs from the culture but these are used in a way which only his personal imagination will define. The result is often a breakdown in artistic collaboration between artist and society, a collaboration which was implicit in the traditional aesthetic. Artistic individualism is an aspect, and indeed a symptom, of cultural fragmentation (Obiechina, 1975:73-4).

The gap between traditional art and the art of the elite is bridged by a flourishing popular art, which has come into being in the towns. Its 'in-betweenness' comes from the fact that like modern elite art, it is individual, but, at the same time, it is functional, very much like traditional art. It is produced by people who have no or little artistic training but a fair amount of natural talent and disrespect for the canons of modern art schools. Their outstanding qualities are spontaneity, simplicity, gaudiness, and immediacy of impact. The pop artist takes the shortest route between his artistic means and communicative aims. Understanding the import of his work demands little intellectual or imaginative effort from the audience.

Popular art covers a vast area of urban activities. It ranges from sign-writing, poster-painting, murals in public houses and hotels through the carving of masks, walking sticks and various human, animal and plant figures to popular writing and popular music. Popular literature is best represented by pamphlets, novelettes, popular magazines and comic strips. Its attractiveness to the literate but not highly educated is well explained by Priebe:

The common people have little time for complexity in their literature; in fact, when they look to literature they try to find resolution for the complexities of life. Thus the world of the popular novelette is often an unambiguous world where good is rewarded and evil punished. ... The elite literature transcends the reality through symbolic inversion; the popular literature avoids reality through sublimation. The former offers a positive vision; the latter simply reflects real concerns (1978:87-8).

Popular music known as “high life” has become the music of urban populations throughout the English-speaking parts of West Africa. Functionally it harks back to traditional music in that it is entertainment, accompaniment to dance, and it does create social and emotional solidarity. The rhythm is largely traditional, but the instrumentation is mostly Western, with the exception of traditional drums. The popular appeal of “High life” is reinforced by the lack of a rigid formal dance tempo. The “High life” song is similarly simple. It contains satirical or commonplace sentiments, and often observations on modern urban life.

Musical appreciation in the towns is no longer necessarily a community affair. The wide range of varieties of music available to the population, from classical music through popular Euro-American music to the popular music of French-speaking West Africa and the Congo and traditional African music, has made musical taste cosmopolitan. As music is provided by the radio, TV and hi-fi, it increasingly has the tendency to become a more private and individual experience.

Despite all these changes, a large body of traditional thinking survives even among those who have been most intensely subjected to Western acculturation: the middle-class professionals and the university and Western educated West Africans. Though they spend most of their life in the urban centres, through their visits to their relatives in the villages they continue to be exposed to the influence of traditional oral culture. They are proficient speakers of their native languages (Kropp Dakubu, 1997a: chapters 3 & 4), have a comprehensive knowledge of traditional proverbs and speech forms, and are familiar with their folklore (Obiechina, 1975:27). To a great extent, they also share the values and attitudes of their traditional culture:

All those have been embedded in the consciousness of the West African peoples as cultural groups; even the introduction of elements of the Western literary culture has merely modified traditional oral culture but has not destroyed the consciousness deriving from its tradition. So long as the relation between the town and the village remains complementary, and so long as a large number of people live in the villages, and those who live in the towns also live in the villages part of the time, so long will oral tradition continue to inform the consciousness and determine the sensibility of most West Africans (Obiechina, 1975:27-8).

Kropp Dakubu also asserts that ‘the distinction between urban and rural society is not always sharp or absolute’ (1997a:22). The fact that the same people are likely to shift between an urban and a rural existence at different times of their lives has got implications for linguistic patterns. One of the most distinctive characteristic features of urbanism in West Africa is

‘culturally pervasive multilingualism’⁸ (ibid.), which the Ghanaian writer is very much part of.

3.4.4 *Language*

In the West African linguistic set-up Brann (1980) identifies a trilingual model⁹ comprising the mother tongue (L1)¹⁰, other tongue (L2) and further tongue (L3). The mother tongue, which may not necessarily be a standardised variety but merely a dialect of a large standardised language or a member of a language cluster or language group, is ‘the language of tradition, intimacy, initial socialisation and frequently of the first years of primary schooling’ (ibid., 13). It is mainly an oral medium and serves as an in-group language whenever an individual meets a ‘brother’ away from the home setting; this way it can be maintained by urban migrants even when it becomes redundant for the rising generation.

The other tongue may be a lingua franca, like Hausa or Akan, but need not necessarily be that; it can be the standard variety of a language for speakers of local dialects, or a ‘closely related language of a group, of which a member (not necessarily the major one) has become the standard’ (ibid., 8). Just as it is the case elsewhere throughout West Africa, there is hardly any Ghanaian, except for those whose L1 is a standard form, who does not speak at least another Ghanaian language for the purpose of wider communication. The other tongue, then, serves to facilitate inter-ethnic communication in multi-ethnic and multi-lingual areas. It is essentially an L2 habitually used by a person and changes for each individual in accordance with their environment.

While the mother tongue and the other tongue are indigenous languages by virtue of being home and community languages, the further tongue is exogenous by virtue of being imported from abroad. In Ghana it is the former colonial language, English, which most educated and urbanised Ghanaians speak in addition to their L1 and L2. Although there is no agreement on appropriate terminology to be used (e.g. European language, hence Europhone text/literature; non-native English, world English), there seems to be consensus on the fact that it is a transplanted language which by now has become ‘accepted’, ‘received’ or ‘assimilated’ (Brann, 1980:10) depending on the variety one is looking at¹¹. As the language of education and officialdom, it is the further tongue of all educated Ghanaians. In its demotic form of

broken or Pidgin English it has become an ‘other tongue’ for the less or formally not educated, and it may well have become the mother tongue of some few Ghanaians.

Figure 3:1 below shows Kropp Dakubu’s representation of the Ghanaian trilingual situation. She points out that although the trilingual model of multilingualism applies to the Ghanaian situation, “triglossia” is far from stable.

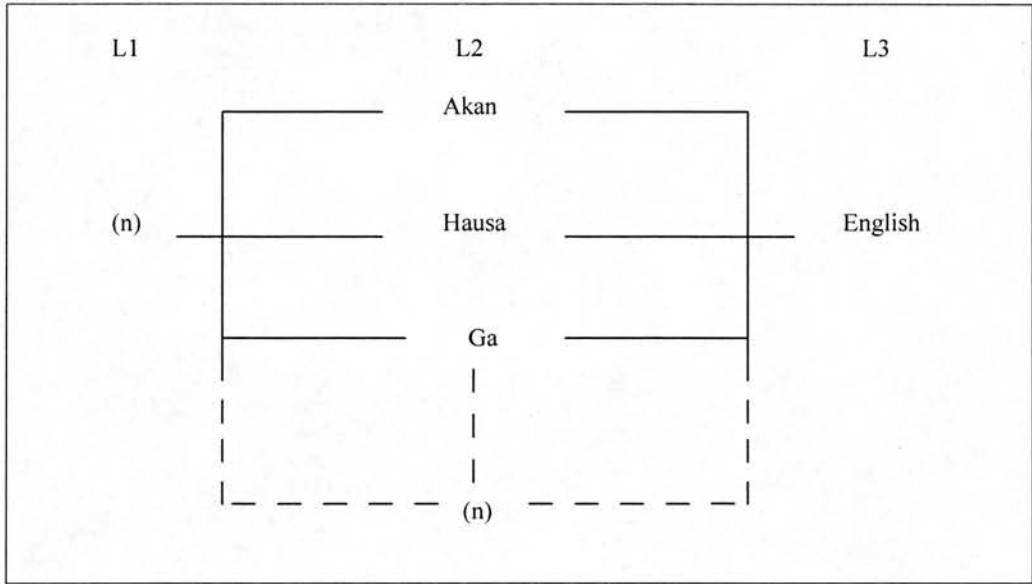


Figure 3.1: The Trilingual Configuration in Ghana; *n* indicates that the number of possible languages in a category is indefinite (adopted from Kropp Dakubu, 1997a:33).

As can be seen, one obvious difficulty is the existence of several languages in common use as a second language (L2), often by the same people. (Only the most widely spoken are listed.) Even when the local community language (L1) can be classed as an indigenous lingua franca, the number of major languages is not necessarily reduced. In Kumasi, for example, the local community language is Akan, which is also the largest single language in Ghana and is apparently spreading as a second language; but Hausa, too, has long been a major presence there. In Accra and in many other towns, Hausa, Akan, and Ga are in competition as lingua francas among migrants, who speak none of them as their community languages, which they continue to use in the urban environment. Even in Larteh and other small towns of Akuapem, a third of the adult population speaks Ga, in addition to Akan and English. ...In Figure [1], the exotic language (L3) is the only term represented by just one language, English. This fact may help to account for the apparently secure

position of this language, despite the notorious inequality of access to it. (1997a:33-4)

Kropp Dakubu further explains that the language situation in Ghana is neither strictly trilingual nor inherently stable, and other factors such as the distinction between the social domain in which a language is used, the immediate social function of a language event, the broader communicative goal or why a particular language is being used, and the relationship between the two also have to be taken into consideration. Variation in space and time also have their sociolinguistic significance. 'For a Larteh-speaking father to choose to speak Akan to his children in Larteh, for example, would signify differently from making the same choice in Akan-speaking Aburi or in Accra ... [and] choosing to speak Hausa in Lagos means something rather different from choosing to speak it in Accra' (Kropp Dakubu, 1997a:40).

It is from this cultural and linguistic multiplicity that each Ghanaian writer forges his or her own medium of expression.

3.5 Conclusion

As discussed in 3.2, culture is viewed as historically created and socially transmitted systems of meaning, communicated through natural language and other symbol systems. Human beings sustain and develop their knowledge about and attitudes towards life in terms of these systems of meaning which, in turn, give form, order, point and direction to their lives. Although individuals can differ to varying degrees in thoughts, feelings and behaviour, the fabric of meaning through which people interpret their experience and guide their action represents a consensus among the members of a community. Common meanings, which exist independently of particular individuals, "are the objects produced by the group. They are not accessible in pure form but are inherent in the expectations of the group as to 'rational' behaviour, and in the artefacts which symbolise and are expressions of the meanings of that behaviour" (Byram, 1989:85).

Although one can talk about culture in general merely in terms of its inter-subjective, ideational aspects, it is difficult to examine a particular culture without making mention of the artefacts it has produced, or even of the way its members use language to talk about

natural objects and phenomena. Artefacts in the physical world are both products and symbols of culture infused with the meanings of the culture that produced them. Works of art as artefacts of culture are 'the expressions both of the idiosyncratic meanings of individuals and also of the systems of meaning which individuals share' (Byram, 1989:84).

Cultural meanings are negotiated, agreed upon and expressed in the language of the community. Language owes its key position in culture to its meta-function: it refers beyond itself to other symbols and phenomena. As such, it is the carrier of the individuals' experience of cultural meaning.

Ruqaiya Hasan writes:

Languages need communities to live in; they develop and change through their use in the living of life, and this characteristically takes place in social contexts of culture. The relationship between language and culture is symbiotic: the one lives through the other. Because language is instrumental in the creation, maintenance, and change in societies, and society of language, language cannot help carrying the social meanings of its speech community. Whenever we use language, we invoke far more of our social reality than people give the utterance credit for in describing its meanings. These facts have consequences both for the maker and the receiver of the message. Literature is no exception to this. (1989:101)

The Ghanaian writer, as any other writer, is surrounded by the realities of his community; his text is inspired and informed by and speak of his culture. His bi- or multilingual background extends the meaning resources of English, his chosen medium of literary creation.

The context of creation has consequences for the readers, who are 'the medium for the text's achievement' (Hasan, 1989:103). The readers' cultural, linguistic, spatial and temporal distance from the writer's reality acts upon the understanding of the text and may present difficulties for those readers who do not share the writer's cultural and linguistic background. One particular area where the reader may experience difficulty is the area of cultural reference. The complexities relating to the writer's encoding and the reader's understanding of cultural reference in the English-language texts of Ghanaian writers will be examined in subsequent chapters.

Notes

- 1 An extensive selection given in Monaghan and Just (2000), Ch.2 includes definitions by Edward Tylor, Franz Boas, Bronislaw Malinowski, Claude Lévi-Strauss, Renato Rosaldo, Ward H. Googenough, Margaret Mead and Adam Kuper.
- 2 A discussion of universal human concepts can be found in Wierzbicka, 1991:9-10, 1992:22, 26-27, 119, 125-30, 174-76, 202-3 and 1997:22, 33.
- 3 A striking example of such denial is presented by Steven Pinker:

As we shall see in this chapter, there is no scientific evidence that languages dramatically shape their speakers' ways of thinking. The idea that language shapes thinking seemed plausible when scientists were in the dark about how thinking works or even how to study it. Now that cognitive scientists know how to think about thinking, there is less of a temptation to equate it with language just because words are more palpable than thoughts (1994:58).

Pinker refuses to consider the possibility that while some categories may be innate, others may, indeed, be imposed by culture and dismisses both the 'strong' and the 'weak' version of linguistic relativity: 'the more you examine Whorf's arguments, the less sense they make' (1994:60). However, his assertion that thought is independent of language lacks credibility because he never looks at any other language than English. There is ample evidence from the fields of linguistics, sociology and anthropology that discredit and disprove Pinker's line of argument, for example Kramsch 1998, Gumperz and Levinson 1996, Hanks 1996, Wierzbicka 1997, 1991 and 1992, Geertz 1973, Malinowski 1935, just to mention a few.
- 4 Data from 1990. Source: <http://www.ghanaweb.com/GhanaHomePage/general/>
- 5 Ancestors and ancestor worship are discussed in more detail in Busia 1954, Sundermeier 1998, and Warren 1986.
- 6 Patriliney in relation to the northern peoples of Ghana is discussed in detail in Fortes 1987.
- 7 Authoritative work on Akan culture was done by Rattray 1923, 1927, 1929 and 1930. Other important works include Manoukian 1950, Danquah 1951, Meyerowitz 1958, Amoah 1975, Gyekye 1987 and Ackah 1988.
- 8 Kropp Dakubu points out that multilingualism has two referents: 'the linguistic repertoire of a social group and the repertoires of individual members of the group' (1997a:22). In her book she uses 'multilingual' to describe a social-geographic unit in which several languages are used, and 'polyglot' to refer to an individual who speaks several languages.
- 9 A trilingual model of multilingualism has been found particularly applicable to Africa. Alexandre (1971:660) classifies languages used in Africa into the local, the national or vehicular, and the European. Abdulaziz-Mkilifi (1972) proposes a "triglossic" model for modern East Africa: the local language, the "indigenous" lingua franca: Swahili, and the European language of international currency.
- 10 Brann identifies a person's first language both as *mother tongue* and as *vernacular*. He links *mother tongue* to the principle of heredity, by which the individual receives the language through the mother. *Mother tongue* is connected with the *jus sanguinis* or heredity by blood and is thus a *genetic* term. *Vernacular*, on the other hand, is connected etymologically and by use to the place of birth, or to the possession or law of the land, the *jus soli* and thus connotes *locality* (1980:3-4).

11

Ghanaian English has been described in detail by Sey 1973, Ahulu 1992 and Kropp Dakubu (ed.) 1997b.

4 WRITTEN LANGUAGE, INDIGENISATION AND PRAGMATIC THEORY

4.1 Introduction

The current chapter examines the relationship between written language and culture (4.2), and offers a discussion of the special form of influence that culture has on language when a particular culture adopts a language that originates outside its boundaries.

Such exogenous languages get moulded by their new users so as to carry the new users' particular experience. The phenomenon widely known as indigenisation is discussed, offering two views on the subject that informed and influenced the current study most: B. Kachru's nativisation (4.2.1) and Zabus's innovative theory called relexification (4.2.2.3).

The relationship between culture and pragmatic theory is examined with special reference to cross-cultural communication (4.3.1). As a particular point of interest for the analysis of the data, Relevance Theory is discussed in detail (4.3.2), and its applicability to the data is explored (4.3.3).

Throughout, particular reference is made to literary use with all examples – except in the overview of Relevance Theory and for the Tshiluba proverb - taken from the works of Ghanaian writers.

4.2 Written language and culture¹

The demands written language makes on both its producers and receivers are different from those of spoken language². In conversation, the speaker and the hearer can negotiate meaning through synchronous joint actions (Clark, 1996:59-91). The writer, however, has to convey his meaning without the benefit of synchrony. Nonetheless, writing and reading are joint actions, perhaps not quite the same way as conversation, but they do require the participants to co-ordinate both on content and process. While, however, in conversation speakers and hearers synchronise the phases of their actions, in the asynchronous setting of writing and reading the writers try to make processing optimal for their readers. They, therefore, have to

anticipate possible reactions and 'must provide for the possible lack of convergence of shared knowledge: of the world, of social conventions, of the language itself' (Widdowson, 1980:239). The actual production and the actual reading of texts

cannot be separated from those cultural practices and relations where producers and readers act. Meaning is never written as if ready-made inside the text, but is formed within the reading of the text, which is affected by the position of the reader in contexts and cultural practices in addition to the text itself (Lehtonen, 2000:78).

The written text is a social situation, 'for it exists in the participations of social beings whom we call writers and readers' (Ashcroft, 2001b:59). It is the 'partial record' of the discourse to be derived by the reader. As Widdowson points out, 'the extent to which this derivation will reconstitute the writer's discourse will depend on how far [the reader] corresponds in actuality to the interlocutor the writer has presupposed' (1980:239). This correspondence depends on factors such as background knowledge, beliefs and expectations, i.e. what the participants of the interaction have in mind. As pointed out by Ashcroft, 'meaning is achieved constitutively as a product of the dialogic situation of reading' (2001b:60). Although people may live in different worlds and may have different experience, understanding and different traditions, the 'social accomplishment of textual meaning occurs despite the cultural distance between writer and reader' (ibid.).

Language users have in mind an assumption of coherence, i.e. an expectation that 'what is said or written will make sense in terms of their normal experience of things' (Yule, 1996:84). What counts as normal experience will be 'locally interpreted by each individual and hence will be tied to the familiar and the expected' (ibid.). Yule explains that the difference between the following two structurally identical notices is that the interpretation of (b) does require some familiarity with suburban life:

- (a) Plant Sale (= someone is selling plants)
- (b) Garage Sale (≠ someone is selling their garage; = someone is selling household items from their garage)

Familiarity triggers off immediate interpretations of known material, dissuading us from considering possible alternatives. They make us create a coherent interpretation for a text that potentially does not have it, let us fill in details automatically and make us construct familiar scenarios for what might appear to be odd events. Whatever interpretation we arrive at, it is based not only on what is in the text, but inevitably on what we have in mind.

Our ability to interpret the unwritten – and the unsaid – automatically is based on pre-existing knowledge structures called schemata. The availability and activation of relevant prior knowledge allows us to make sense of new experiences – and texts in particular - by ‘relating the current input to existing mental representations of entities and situations that we have experienced in the past’ (Semino, 1995:82). What the notion of schema tries to capture is ‘a portion of background knowledge containing generic information about a particular type of object, person, setting or event’ (ibid.). Stereotypical knowledge about settings and situations (e.g. knowledge about different types of houses), which lends a fixed, static pattern to the schema, is a ‘frame’. Knowledge about sequences of related actions used in the comprehension of complex events (e.g. knowledge about going to the doctor’s), on the other hand, is a ‘script’. Assumed elements of a frame or script are not stated explicitly in the discourse; the pre-existing shared background knowledge structure enables the reader to create an interpretation of what is not stated in the text. As Semino (1995) explains,

meanings are not ‘contained’ within the text, but are constructed in the interaction between the text and the interpreter’s background knowledge. If a comprehender lacks or fails to activate adequate schemata for a particular input, he or she may be unable to make meaningful sense of a text, and comprehension may be impaired. Moreover, differences in the availability or selection of schemata may lead to differences in the interpretation of the same text by different people. (1995:83)

It is inevitable that our schemata – our background knowledge for making sense of the world – which we develop in the context of our experiences, will be culturally determined. Readers who share the writer’s cultural background come to a text equipped with the appropriate schemata. However, the absence of these schemata may lead to the breakdown in the reading process not only at the level of inference but also in the comprehension of explicitly stated facts.

Let us now consider how these issues bear on the situation of the Ghanaian writer. The Ghanaian writer’s choice of English as the medium of creation has inherent problems which the writer may disregard altogether, or may acknowledge by employing various techniques to help his readers cope with his text. First, there is the problem of a culturally competent readership. It is perhaps self-evident that the Western readers’ culturally determined background knowledge for making sense of the world does not match that of the Ghanaian writer’s. At the same time, for reasons discussed in 2.5, the Ghanaian writer’s home audience is fairly limited. A further difficulty is due to the fact that Ghana is a multi-ethnic

country, so this limited readership is not homogenous. Although all Ghanaian readers can easily understand reference to any social, cultural, geographical, etc. aspect of life in Ghana as a supra-ethnic national entity, only a relatively small number of them will belong to the same linguistic and ethnic background as a particular writer. Only this small number of readers will be equipped to fully co-ordinate with the writer on content in the joint action of writing and reading.

This situation is further complicated by issues of genre. It can be expected that the Western reader will be familiar with the traditions of both the short story and the novel and will handle them without problems. However, the Ghanaian writer's story-telling schema, rooted in his rich oral traditions, may very well be structured differently from that of the Western tradition³. This difference may affect the way he constructs his story and may cause processing problems for the Western reader. On the other hand, a Fante-speaking Ghanaian reader, for example, may find the English-language novel of his/her fellow Fante writer hard to understand. While all other written literary genres have 'predecessors' in the oral traditions of the peoples of Ghana, and of Africa as a whole, the novel is a rootless, completely foreign and relatively recent import into the African literary scene. It seems that although the Ghanaian reader's cultural and linguistic experience may match the cultural and linguistic experience of the writer, he/she may still find it difficult to respond to the novel as a genre alien to his/her literary traditions⁴.

The problems brought about by the choice of the African, hence the Ghanaian, writer to employ a historically foreign language for literary creation have been discussed in 2.4. For the written literary code, the consequence of this choice is the attempt of the African writer to convey African concepts, thought patterns and linguistics features by indigenising the foreign language, 'thereby redefining and subverting its foreignness' (Zabus, 1991:3-4). The conflict arises from the fact that African writers – and writers all over the world in a similar sociolinguistic situation - operate 'outside the boundaries of either [their] own society or that of [their] adopted language' (Nkosi quoted in La Pergola Arezzo, 1988:40). For many, the solution is the adaptation of the 'foreign' language, be it English, French, Portuguese, or any other language, so that it can carry their specific experience. The Indian Raja Rao says:

We cannot write like the English. We should not. We cannot write only as Indians. We have grown to look at the large world around us as part of us. Our method of expression therefore has to be a dialect which will some day prove to be as distinctive and colorful as the Irish and the American. Time alone will justify it (quoted in Sridhar, 1982:294).

In his essay *English and the African Writer* Chinua Achebe expresses a similar conviction:

The price a world language must be prepared to pay is submission to many different kinds of use. The African writer should aim to use English in a way that brings out his message best without altering the language to the extent that its value as a medium of international exchange will be lost. He should aim at fashioning out an English which is at once universal and able to carry his peculiar experience. ... It will have to be a new English, still in full communion with its ancestral home, but altered to suit its new African surroundings (1965a:222-3).

This process of moulding English to express an Indian, African, Caribbean, etc. vision has been identified as the nativisation of English⁵ by Kachru (1982a), and as indigenisation of the European language by the indigenous African languages by Zabus (1991), a special instance of which she calls relexification.

Indigenisation, or nativisation, is 'a process of linguistic and sociolinguistic change through which an external language becomes part of the culture of a community that uses it as an additional language, while it still retains many features of the language as it is used by native speakers' (Owusu-Ansah, 1997:24). It takes place at all levels of language and affects the phonology, lexis and grammar of the language being indigenised. In Ghana, in the spoken language there is a continuum with the unmixed Ghanaian languages at one end, the unmixed English at the other, and the mixed varieties in between. The two unmixed varieties are used in highly formal situations such as, for instance, the Asantehene's address to the state (unmixed Akan) or board meetings (unmixed English). As the level of formality falls, mixed varieties of various degree are used, for example between work-mates and friends⁶. With regard to educated written English in Ghana, Ahulu argues that those characteristic features which are supposed to yield a Ghanaian variety are 'not consistently or reliably realised and that their Standard English equivalents are used on more than 95% of occasions of use' (1992: Abstarct). His evidence suggests that indigenisation in the written medium is a distinctive feature of the language of literature.

Kachru and Zabus come to the study of the phenomenon they call nativisation and indigenisation, respectively, from different starting points. Kachru examines the 'bilingual's creativity' (Kachru, 1987:125) apropos the question of the pluricentricity of English, addressing the issue of the validity of monolingualism as the norm for description and analysis of the linguistic interaction of multilingual societies. He criticises the limitation of

'using almost identical approaches for the description of the bilingual's and monolingual's creativity' (ibid., 126) and gives an account of the distinctive features of the bilingual writer's textual strategies. His work is ground-breaking and significant in that he identifies all the principal areas regarding the linguistic realisation of distinctiveness.

While Kachru's interest seems to be in sociolinguistic variation, Zabus sets out to systematically examine the indigenisation of language in the West African Europhone novel, both English and French. In a way Kachru provides a 'rough framework', and Zabus does the 'fine tuning' by rigorously analysing the African palimpsest and deciphering the improperly erased remnants of African languages. Her interest is in the stylistic variation deliberately introduced by the West African writer to create a certain cultural effect. It is inevitable that some of her categories for the writer's textual strategies overlap with Kachru's, although she may name them differently. At the same time, her list is more extensive than Kachru's, including such categories as Pidgin and code-switching, and the techniques of cushioning and contextualisation whereby the writer shows awareness of the existence of a varied readership. Identifying the one and the same text as the locus of the change happening between two languages allows Zabus to formulate her theory of relexification, which can well be applied to the study of literature created in similar sociolinguistic situations in other parts of the world.

Although the importance and relevance of Kachru's contribution is unquestionable, it is Zabus's work that provides a theoretical framework that the current study can rely on not only in the description of lexico-semantic and syntactic variation of cultural reference, but also in examining the various strategies writers employ to help readers to cope with cultural reference in their texts.

4.2.1 *Nativisation*

Nativisation has been used to refer to the unconscious collective process of a speech community as well as to the conscious choice of an individual writer.

Kachru considers the body of non-native writing in English to be contact literatures, regarding the concept as an extension of 'contact language'. He argues that such literatures

are 'a product of multicultural and multilingual speech communities' (B. Kachru, 1982a:330) and have formal and thematic characteristics which justify the use of the term 'contact'.

Using a *non-native* language in native contexts to portray new themes, characters, and situations is like redefining the semantic and semiotic potential of a language, making language mean something which is not part of its traditional "meaning." It is an attempt to give a new African or Asian identity, and thus an extra dimension of meaning. A part of that dimension perhaps remains obscure or mysterious to the Western reader. In purely linguistic terms, it entails developing a meaning system appropriate to the new situations and contexts. One has to make various choices to make the linguistic resources of L2 function in situations where formal equivalence is not always possible (B. Kachru, 1982a:341-42).

Contact literatures 'reveal a blend of two or more linguistic textures and literary traditions' (B. Kachru, 1986:161). They lend extended contexts of situation to the English language which are distinct from the ones normally associated with the native varieties of English. These extended contexts of situation, the range of discourse devices and the cultural assumptions in such literatures demand an extended cultural awareness from a reader who is not part of the speech community which identifies with the variety.

Such texts have more than one interpretive context: (1) the surface meaning of English (usually associated with native varieties); and (2) the underlying meaning of the first or dominant language of the author (B. Kachru, 1986:166). This often poses problems of comprehension (i.e. 'comprehension of a text of one variety of English within the context of situation of another variety'; B. Kachru, 1995:275), and hence interpretation (i.e. 'contextualization of the text within the variables which are appropriate for it within the context of its source language'; *ibid.*) for readers who do not share the author's linguistic and cultural background. 'If the linguistic and cultural "extension" of the code is missed, one also misses the interpretation at the linguistic, literary, sociolinguistic and cultural levels' (B. Kachru, 1986:165).

4.2.1.1 Nativisation of context

Nativisation of context, which he also calls contextual nativisation of texts happens when a text is overloaded by cultural and historical presuppositions which are different from what would be the traditionally expected cultural and historical milieu for English literature. Such

texts demand a serious cultural, at times even anthropological, interpretation. The difficulty here is not grammatical but of a lexical and contextual nature. Consider the following example from Agovi's short story, *Naked Triumph*:

So the people waited. That long wait that destroys a people's confidence in themselves. At last, one spoke. A deity spoke. Unheralded, he thundered through the village. He looked fierce, angry and weird. He tossed his head sideways, muttering incoherent things to the air. He threw his powerful *bodua* into the sky and caught it several times. Brown amulets and dark bracelets were fixed tightly around his powerful arms. White, stringed shells hung across his chest, already dripping with sweat; a loose, brownish raffia skirt was attired to his waist. And his feet rang with the sound of little bells around his ankles.

Behind him, two young girls carried white clay in a brass bowl. They scattered it at every throw of his *bodua*. Azule Tano had descended on Ehwaka. His voice rang out: "I am the river that divides the Nzimas from the Agnis. I am Tano the Invincible." A sudden lull descended on the village. Tano, the dark deity, had descended (1989a:6).

One might hazard a guess that without an intimate knowledge of the traditions, customs and beliefs of the Nzema people in the Western Region of Ghana a lot of the detail concerning Tano, his attire, the manner of his descent on the village and his overall nature are lost on the reader.

4.2.1.2 Nativisation of cohesion and cohesiveness

Nativisation of cohesion and cohesiveness involves the redefinition of the native English users' concept of cohesion and cohesiveness in a given variety 'within the appropriate universe of discourse' (B. Kachru, 1986:166). Particularly affected are types of lexicalisation, collocational extension and the use/frequency of grammatical forms. The lexicalisation involves direct lexical transfer, hybridisation and loan translation. The interpretation of such lexicalisation is bound to be affected by the meaning of the underlying language(s) of the author. The following passage offers an example of loan translation:

"Araba, perhaps you are still too weak to think of this, but have you considered that this impatient child chose a very bad time to arrive?"

"His coming has made me so happy I wouldn't have it any other way now," said Araba.

Baako saw the look on his mother's face take on a sudden severity.

"That's not what I'm talking about." She paused, then said with irritation, "I mean the *outdooring*." (Armah, 1969:87; added emphasis)

As Sey explains, 'outdooing' is a loan translation from Ga: *kpodziemo* or 'going out' ceremony means a baby's first appearance in public to be named (1973:86).

4.2.1.3 Nativisation of rhetorical strategies

The nativisation of rhetorical strategies include the transfer to English of consciously or unconsciously devised strategies which correspond to patterns of interaction in the native culture of the author. These patterns make his style 'deviant' from a native English speaker's point of view. Authenticity of speech acts and discourse types is achieved, according to B. Kachru (1986:167) by

- 1 The use of native similes and metaphors ... which linguistically result in collocational deviation:

e.g. 'You good-for-nothing, empty corn husk of a daughter' ... 'You moth-bitten grain' (Aidoo, 1970b:109)

- 2 The transfer of rhetorical devices for "personalizing" speech interaction:

e.g. 'Massa, God knows I know my job.'
'Of course! As a man of the land and your wife's husband you are a man and therefore you do not cook. As a black man facing a white man, his servant, you are a black, not a man, therefore you can cook.'
'Massa, Massa. You call me woman? I swear, by God, Massa, this na tough. I no be woman. God forbid!'
(Aidoo, 1970a: 17)

- 3 The translation ('transcreation') of proverbs, and idioms:

e.g. '...it was the over-confidence of the hare that made the tortoise beat him in the race'
(Darko, 1995: 39)

- 4 The use of culturally-dependent speech styles:

e.g. 'Maami Amfoa, where are you going?'
My daughter, I am going to Cape Coast.
'And what is our old mother going to do with such swift steps? Is it serious?'

My daughter, it is very serious.
 'Mother, may God go with you.'
 Yoo, my daughter.
 'Eno, and what calls at this hour of the day?'
 They want me in Cape Coast.
 'Does my friend want to go and see how much the city has changed since we went there to meet the new Wesleyan Chairman, twenty years ago?'
 My sister, do you think I have knees to go parading on the streets of Cape Coast?
 'Is it heavy?'
 Yes, very heavy indeed. They have opened up my grandchild at the hospital, *hi, hi, hi*. ...
 (Aidoo, 1970c: 40)

5 The use of syntactic devices (categories adopted from Bamiro 1995):

e.g. *Thematisation of complements and adjuncts:*

'This is the white men's second wish,' Isanusi continued. ... The elephants they say they want destroyed, but only for their tusks. ... Leopards they want dead for their hides. ... Land they want from us, but not the way guests ask the use of land. ... On this their cut-off land they would like to have crops grow. But the white men are not accustomed to doing their own planting and it is not in their minds to get accustomed here. They would have the king give them men to work the land ...
 (Armah, 1979b: 82; added emphasis)

Unusual word order in nominal group structure:

The morning following, Densu was weak but his mind was peaceful.
 (Armah, 1979a: 142; added emphasis)

The day following, the travellers spent resting. (Armah, 1979a:152; added emphasis)

4.2.1.4 Linguistic realisation of thought patterns

Last but not least, Kachru discusses the linguistic realisation of thought patterns. He suggests that while English has a linear paragraph structure, other languages may well accommodate different structures, such as the spiral-like structure of Hindi discourse or the circular structure of Marathi. In addition, the system of logic generally employed in the West is based

on the Aristotelian straight line of progressive stages, whereas other, non-European peoples may have preference for non-sequential logic. From this follows that Indian, African, etc. thought-processes ‘manifest themselves in distinct English types’ (B. Kachru, 1986:169).

The phenomenon described by Kachru can be confirmed by many language educators. It seems, however, that his observation relates to expository prose and academic writing rather than creative prose where rules of logic do not necessarily apply. Let us take, for example, the interior monologue and the stream of consciousness technique. The interior monologue is marked by a style which represents an attempt to suggest inchoate thought processes, the rapid succession of thoughts, topic shifts, as well as non-verbal images. Similarly, stream of consciousness is used to represent the free association or flow of thoughts and impressions in a person’s mind rendered in a partly verbalised, and if verbalised, often partly formulated style. These two examples alone demonstrate that literary texts may not be the locus for comparing thought patterns based on systems of logic.

4.2.2 *Indigenisation*

Zabus defines indigenisation as ‘the writer’s attempt at textualizing linguistic differentiation and at conveying African concepts, thought-patterns, and linguistic features through the ex-colonizer’s language. ... When indigenized, it is no longer metropolitan French or English that appears on the page but another register reminiscent of the dominant European language, whether it is a Nigerian Pidgin vaguely suggestive of a variety of English or a French that has “something African to it”’ (1991:3). She regards such texts as palimpsests in that behind the surface of the European language imperfectly erased remnants of the African language can be discerned, and decyphering the palimpsest recovers ‘the trace in filigree of ... African (source) languages’ (Zabus, 1991:3).

Like Kachru, Zabus postulates that indigenisation works in the text and in the context. The strategies she identifies, however, are somewhat different from Kachru’s. These are:

- the use of Pidgin;
- code-switching;

- relexification;
 - (a) calquing;
 - (b) “textual violence”: morpho-syntactic relexification and lexico-semantic relexification⁷;
 - (c) ethno-text;
- cushioning;
- contextualisation by inference.

4.2.2.1 The use of Pidgin

The use of pidgin involves the novelist’s departure from the current oral usage and the creation of an artistic medium in which an ‘artefactual dialect’ (Zabus, 1991:175), rather than reality in West Africa, is manifested. Pidginisation is meant to establish a character rooted in his or her supra-national or urban identity, as well as to represent attitudes towards pidgin speakers, solidarity and power relationships. The following exchange between Zirigu, the middle-aged general keeper and cook of a Government Rest House and his only guest, a young medical doctor, spells out an intricate power and solidarity semantic:

‘Massa, you tink you go like fried fillet of calf? Or braised lamb liver? Yes, here a good one. An escalope of veal with onions and fried potatoes.’
 ‘Zirigu, whom did you say you were going to cook for?’
 ‘Yourself, Massa.’
 ‘But That is not the food I eat.’
 ‘But 'e be white man chop.’
 ‘Zirigu, I no be white man. And that is the second time this morning I've told you that. And if you do it again, I'll pack up and leave.’
 (Aidoo, 1970a:16)

Zirigu’s pidgin signals both his lower education and his lower social status. For him the young doctor is not only the guest to whose service he is assigned, but the doctor’s education reflected in his impeccable English and the status given to him by his highly valued profession make him a ‘big man’ comparable to the former white colonisers. The doctor’s attempt to neutralise the inequality between the cook and himself by changing to Zirigu’s code fails perhaps because his standard English is a constant reminder of their different social standing and of the complexities of historical, political and cultural causes that lead to

such a situation. Nevertheless, his changing to pidgin is significant because the 'speaker can use codes for an identity shift: to obscure one identity and bring into the foreground another' (B. Kachru, 1984:187). '*Zirigu, I no be white man*' not only separates the young doctor from the white race - with which he is identified by virtue of his education and status, but with which he disclaims all association because of the immediate connotations it has with colonisation and its consequences -, but also renounces identification with the black masters who followed suit in exploiting their fellow blacks after independence. Using pidgin for this particular statement marks the young doctor's identification and solidarity with common people like Zirigu and emphasises his Africanness and his attachment to his cultural roots and heritage.

4.2.2.2 Code-switching

Code-switching, in Zabus's view, signals the fact that most West Africans are bi- or multilingual. Switching from the standard variety of English to pidgin indicates a need to do away with the unnaturalness or formality of the standard variety in the given situation. A reverse switch stresses the need to assert the seriousness of the words of the speaker, and always confirms the dominant role and high status of the standard variety in the situation of diglossia. Zabus observes that code-switching from the European to the mother tongue has a cathartic function. It may also emphasise the speaker's difference and independence from the dominant language group or his/her attempt to alienate the non-African locutor.

4.2.2.3 Relexification

Relexification is defined by Zabus using Loreto Todd's formulation: "'the relexification of one's mother tongue, using English vocabulary but indigenous structures and rhythms' – best describes the process at work when the African language is simulated in the Europhone text... [It is] the making of a new register of communication out of an alien lexicon" (Zabus, 1991:101-2). Though it is related to notions of 'transposition', 'paraphrase', 'translation', 'transliteration', 'transference' and 'transmutation', it differs both from translation and auto-translation in that these take place between two texts – the original and the translated version

– whereas relexification is characterised by the absence of an original. Relexification takes place between two languages within the same text. It is also defined in terms of power relationships:

Although these two languages [the European language and the African language] are unrelated, they interact as dominant vs. dominated languages or elaborated vs. restricted codes, as they did and still do to some extent in West Africa where the European language is the official language and the medium of prestige and power. As it hosts such warring tendencies, relexification is a strategy *in potentia* which transcends the merely methodological. On the methodological level, it stems from a need to solve an immediate artistic problem: that of rendering African concepts, thought-patterns and linguistic features in the European language. On the strategic level, relexification seeks to subvert the linguistically codified, to decolonize the language of early, colonial literature and to affirm a revised, non-atavistic orality via the imposed medium. (Zabus, 1991:107)

The method of relexification relates a character to a specific ethnicity.

4.2.2.3.1 Calquing

Zabus considers calquing to be the ancestor of relexification. It is direct or semi-direct loan-translation from the African language resulting in lexico-semantic transplants, shifts, extensions, analogical constructions, transfer of grammatical relations, morpho-syntactic innovations and phrasal transplants. Some of these produce very awkward syntax or ‘fortunate coinage’. Some lexical and phrasal transplants are perceived as graceful, pertinent and poetic. The following extract presents an example of loan translation:

The man threw the sponge he had been chewing into his soap dish, turned up his head and rinsed his mouth with the falling water. (Armah, 1988:102; added emphasis)

Sey explains that twigs from certain plants, beaten into a fibrous mass and dried are used for cleaning the teeth after being moistened and softened by chewing. *Chewing sponge* is a loan translation from the Akan *se wee* (‘sponge chewing’) with the Akan word order adjusted to fit the English pattern (1973:77).

Textual violence is understood as the disregard for, the failure to comply with and the acting against the dictates or requirements of the European prose narrative. It operates (a) on the morpho-syntactic level involving alteration of English syntax to reflect syntactical patterns of the African language; and (b) on the lexico-semantic level resulting in collocational innovation and the inclusion of such forms of the oral narrative as repetition, hyperbolic statements, synecdoche, reification, praise-names, epithets and eulogies characteristic of heroic poetry. Examples of morpho-syntactic variation (categories adopted from Bamiro 1995) include, among others,

(i) *subjectless sentences*

e.g. 'Is a joke,' he says ... (Armah, 1988:25)
 "Is funny, no?" (Armah, 1983:24)

(ii) *omission of function words*

e.g. 'You say truth.' (Armah, 1979b:119)
 "Ghana life sweet oh!" (Armah, 1983:75)

(iii) *reduplication*

e.g. Heavy, heavy is our remembrance, long our dispersal from our way,
 the way. (Armah, 1979b:27)

(iv) *tag questions*

e.g. "You are writing a paper about our organization, not so?" (Armah, 1974:225)
 "It is that, no?" (Armah, 1974:243)

(v) *the use of the progressive aspect with mental processes*

e.g. 'Are you thinking I want to use what you've told me against you?'
 Densu asked. (Armah, 1979a:37)

(vi) *focus constructions such as emphatic premodification*

e.g. 'You are a funny man, you this man,' he said. (Armah, 1988:30)

(vii) *thematisation of complements and adjuncts*

e.g. 'Strange is the community,' he said ... 'Sibiri, daughter of Kimia ,
on her own initiative took a goat and set a trap for the creature. ...
 Now this other permission the white men have been pressing for, let

us look at it. ...But here they have come claiming they have crossed the sea ...' (Armah, 1979b:97-98; added emphasis)

At the lexico-semantic level the following are examples of (a) collocational innovation and (b) repetition (categories adopted from Bamiro 1994):

- (a) Yes, eleven years. But it has been difficult. Oh, it is true I do not think that I am one of these women with a sweet tooth for fish and meats. But if you say that you are going to eat soup, then it is soup you are going to eat. Perhaps no meat or fish may actually hit your teeth but how can you say any broth has soul when it does not contain anything at all? It is true that like everyone else, I liked kontomire. But like everyone else too, I ate it only when my throat ached for it or when I was on the farm. (Aidoo, 1970a:82; added emphasis)
- (b) 'Hear now the end. The white men wish us to destroy our mountains, leaving ourselves wastes of barren sand. The white men wish us to wipe out our animals, leaving ourselves carcasses rotting into white skeletons. The white men want us to take human beings, our sisters and our sons, and turn them into labouring things. The white men want us to take human beings, our daughters and our brothers, and turn them into slaves. The white men want us to obliterate our remembrance of our way, the way, and in its place to follow their road, road of destruction, road of a stupid, childish god.' (Armah, 1979b:83-84; added emphasis)

4.2.2.3.3 The ethno-text

The ethno-text is constituted of proverbs, rules of address, riddles, praise-names, dirges, prayers, greeting formulae, culturally-bound insults and other culturally-bound formulae, which are grafted onto the European-language narrative to capture traditional speech and atmosphere. Consider, for example, Foli's libation speech in Armah's *Fragments* (pp.3-6):

- [1] Where you are going,
[2] go softly.
[3] Nananom,
[4] you who have gone before,
[5] see that his body does not lead him
[6] into snares made for the death of spirits.
[7] You who are going now,
[8] do not let your mind become persuaded
[9] that you walk alone.
[10] There are no humans born alone.
[11] You are a piece of us,
[12] of those gone before

[13] and who will come again.
[14] A piece of us, go
[15] and come a piece of us.
[16] You will not be coming,
[17] when you come,
[18] the way you went away.
[19] You will come stronger,
[20] to make us stronger,
[21] wiser,
[22] to guide us with your wisdom.
[23] Gain much from this going.
[24] Gain the wisdom
[25] to turn your back on the wisdom
[26] of Ananse.
[27] Do not be persuaded you will fill your stomach faster
[28] if you do not have others' to fill.
[29] There are no humans who walk this earth alone.

[30] A human being alone
[31] is a thing more sad than any lost animal
[32] and nothing destroys the soul
[33] like its aloneness.

[34] Always
[35] there has been a danger in such departures.
[36] Much of our blood has run to waste
[37] yet we will not speak of ways
[38] to stop the coming and the going
[39] for we are not mad with the sorrow of moments that pass.
[40] Always
[41] the danger of death,
[42] the death of the body,
[43] death of the soul
[44] alone on seas that know no ending,
[45] hanging in the endless sky
[46] alone beyond all horizons
[47] where our highest hills are themselves too small,
[48] alone in opposite lands,
[49] lands of the ghosts,
[50] alone in white men's lands.

[51] There are dangers in this life
[52] but fathers,
[53] do not fill your grandson here with fears.
[54] The danger of death we have with us
[55] around us everywhere at home.
[56] It is the promise of those gone before.
[57] Let him hear that.
[58] Let him not forget its truth
[59] and give him courage to understand it.
[60] Watch over him, fathers.
[61] Watch over him
[62] and let him prosper

- [63] there where he is going.
 [64] And when he returns
 [65] let his return, like rain,
 [66] bring us your blessings and fruits,
 [67] your blessings
 [68] your help
 [69] in this life you have left us to fight alone.
 [70] With your wisdom
 [71] let him go,
 [72] let him come.
 [73] And you, traveler about to go,
 [74] Go and return,
 [75] Go, come.

In traditional Akan religion prayer as a means of communication between man and god is accompanied by libation, which is the pouring of water or alcoholic drink or the sprinkling of food. This signifies the reunion of the living with the spirits of the ancestors. The prayer itself is an appeal to the spirits of the ancestors and features invocations, praises and requests. 'The requests are often what one wishes best for oneself, one's friends, and those who, by the standards of his particular society, are virtuous enough to continue in this life and prosperity' (Antubam, 1963:41). The enemy and the sinful, who are doomed to condemnation in the traditional mind, are either left out of prayers or are associated with negative wishes. In traditional libation prayers, as Antubam explains, reference has to be made to what is known in Akan societies as the seven basic virtues (*Siare-Nson*, i.e. seven elements of grace): 1) life and good health; 2) God's grace; 3) peace of the world; 4) fertility of sex, potency or procreativity; 5) good eye sight; 6) good hearing power; and 7) rainfall and general prosperity of the land and state (1963:42).

The above prayer is that of an uncle on the special occasion of his nephew, Baako, leaving to study in the U.S. As such, it is tuned to the occasion and does not contain all the 'seven elements of grace'. Specifically it mentions only rainfall and prosperity (ll. 62-68). However, through adhering to other elements of the *Mpaayie* (libation prayers), namely through the invocation of the ancestral spirits (ll. 3-4) and emphasising the bond between the ancestors and the living (ll. 10-13, 56-59) and between the individual and his family and clan (ll. 7-9, 14-15, 19-22, 27-33), through evoking the dangers of the foreign land (ll. 34-51) and asking the ancestors not only to enrich Baako in knowledge (ll. 23-26) and in worldly possession (ll. 62, 65-69) but also to protect him (ll. 5-6, 52-53, 60-61, 70-72), this prayer becomes a powerful appeal to the spirits of the ancestors for the smooth passage to a foreign land and safe return of a son, of 'a piece of us'.

The various culture-specific formulae constituting the ethno-text are bound to reoccur in various forms in all the novels that share the same socio-historic, cultural, ethnic and linguistic background. The discursive elements of the ethno-text are not translated but relexified through a conscious process which stretches relexification to go beyond loan-translation and highlights the essentially world-creating aspect of the former.

4.2.2.4 Cushioning

African-language words or phrases describing culturally bound concepts, objects and occurrences may, as we have seen, be translated or relexified. At the same time, the writer may resort to the method of cushioning or contextualisation to make the text linguistically accessible to the reader. Cushioning involves the juxtaposition of an African-language word or expression with its English equivalent to provide immediate explanation or clarification for the reader who is outside the author's speech community:

I see my uncle among people who are dancing ... Their movements are virile as they jump up and down, each man only covered by a small cloth as he would borrow from his wife or sister, tied around his waist over his shorts, leaving the torso bare. The drums and the *adawuro* (gong-gongs) are more intense in their rhythmic beating than I have ever heard them before ... (Duodu, 1969:51)

I bought her a bottle as well as some of the shampoo soap which makes the hair longer. When she used the soap, her hair turned violet and everybody laughed at her and said her hair looked like *mmefe* - palm nut husks. (Duodu, 1969:99)

4.2.2.5 Contextualisation by inference

Contextualisation, or 'contextualisation by inference' as Zabuz prefers to call it, involves the reader in a guessing game. It is usually achieved through having the reader infer the meaning of an African-language word or expression from the immediate context provided or through the embedding of an African-language word or expression in a dialogue with the aim of letting the characters explain its meaning. Consider the following extract:

How long would it take, and how hard the work, before there would be enough food for five, and something left over for chasing the gleam? Only one way. There would always be only one way for the young to reach the gleam. Cutting corners, eating the fruits of fraud. The timber merchant and his piled up teeth, offering the bribe, the way. Once when the man was traveling to Cape Coast three different policemen had stopped the little bus and asked the driver for his quarter license. The driver had not bought it yet, and each policeman had said to him, in front of everybody, 'Even *kola* gives pleasure in the chewing.' In each case the driver had smiled and given the law twenty-five pesewas, and the law was satisfied. There was only one way. (Armah, 1988:95)

There is an abundance of clues provided by the context. So, although it helps, one does not necessarily need special knowledge of the various customs and practices associated with the consumption of kola nut. The meaning of 'kola', as used in the above passage to mean 'bribe', may be worked out relying solely on the context in which it is embedded.

4.3 Culture and pragmatic theory

4.3.1 Cross-cultural communication

The definition of pragmatic meaning as a three-part relationship of *S* meaning *Y* by *X*, i.e. speaker meaning as distinct from word or sentence meaning (Thomas, 1996:7), may prove to be insufficient even in communication between the members of the same culture. Of course, the probability that people with the same cultural and linguistic background understand each other without difficulty is great. It may, however, happen that the listener fails to recover the meaning intended by the speaker, or arrives at a different interpretation (i.e. misunderstands the speaker). Pragmatic meaning cannot, by its very nature, be identified with speaker meaning only; it does entail listener understanding. It is even more so in cross-cultural communication. The reasons for this are rooted in the fact that

in natural language, meaning consists in human interpretation of the world. It is subjective, it is anthropocentric, it reflects predominant cultural concerns and culture-specific modes of social interaction as much as any objective features of the world 'as such'. 'Pragmatic (attitudinal) meanings' are inextricably intertwined in natural language with meanings based on 'denotational conditions'. (Wierzbicka, 1991: 16-17)

The 'various forms of asymmetry' resulting, for instance, from different and/or unequal access to knowledge 'in situations where participants from different linguistic and cultural

backgrounds come into contact' (Pirainen-Marsh, 1998:334) present themselves even more conspicuously in the communication between the Ghanaian writer and his reader. As we have seen in previous chapters, the uniqueness of the situation is created by a variety of factors: the commonly known problems involved in written (literary) communication, the bi- or multi-linguality of the writer, his choice of English for literary creation, his appropriation and modification of this medium for the expression of his African experience, the existence of a multiple heterogeneous audience, and the existence or absence of the writer's willingness to employ textual strategies to help the reader cope with his text. In addition, indigenisation as a textual strategy is inherently prone to problems of interpretation. Thomas writes: 'Cross-cultural pragmalinguistic failure occurs when the pragmatic force mapped by the non-native speaker onto a given linguistic structure is systematically different from that normally assigned to it by a native speaker of the target language' (1996:10). The Ghanaian writer, in his indigenised text, systematically maps the pragmatic force of his African language(s) onto the linguistic structures of English. The result may not necessarily be cross-cultural pragmalinguistic failure, but the interpretive situation will, nonetheless, be a rather complex one.

Although some aspects of this complex situation may be partially explained in terms of Grice's Cooperative Principle, the maxims may eventually not work in cross-cultural communication⁸. Quoting the example of the Javanese principle of *étok-étok*, which 'allows one both not to say what one knows is true and also to say what one knows is not true' (Wierzbicka, 1991:104), Wierzbicka illustrates that cultural norms which are different from Anglo-Saxon and Anglo-American cultural norms and expectations, which form the basis of mainstream modern pragmatics, render the Gricean maxims – in this particular case the maxim of quality – irrelevant. The anthropological and linguistic literature abounds in examples. Tannen (1991), for instance, gives an overview of more than twenty culturally-bound conversational styles. From Ghana we may bring the example of 'control [among the Akan] on women's speech, particularly within the public domain' (Yankah, 1998: 17). Women, who are regarded as the repositories of knowledge and wisdom, are socially constrained from drawing attention to their personality by publicly demonstrating this knowledge in speech. The power of this norm is such that it is stipulated even by the Akan proverb "The hen knows that day has broken, yet it looks to the cock to announce it" (ibid.). Yankah also mentions the verbal potency of silence in situations when speaking out would lead to the disruption of social harmony. Silence can function both as an act of internalising stress, and, by being an exercise in restraint, as a mark of maturity.

Although Grice allows for the non-observance of the maxims, flouting, violating, infringing, opting out of, and even suspending a maxim makes sense only if applied within the same culture, whose members are expected to entertain the same expectations and observe the same norms of communication. We may agree that in Javanese culture the maxim of quality is suspended; but we are still left with at least two problems. If it is suspended, what takes its place? Furthermore, I, a Hungarian, completely ignorant of Javanese cultural norms, will still find my Javanese interlocutor at best untruthful, but most likely an outright liar.

While acknowledging the (at least partial) applicability of modern pragmatic theories to my data, my interest here does not lie in examining their shortcomings in tackling cross-cultural communication. I chose Relevance Theory for the analysis of how the Ghanaian writer's provision or withdrawal of various methods facilitating the understanding of cultural reference affects the reader's interpretation of cultural reference in Anglophone Ghanaian fiction for several reasons. Relevance Theory has already been used in studies which suggest applicability to the current project. Blass (1990) investigated relevance relations in Sissala⁹ discourse and has shown that Relevance Theory can be successfully applied to analyse an African language in an African culture, both of which are different from the language and culture that gave rise to the theory. Gutt (1991), on the other hand, examines a range of translation phenomena and demonstrates that they can be explained in a relevance-theoretic framework, thus demonstrating the applicability of the theory cross-culturally. While the Gricean Cooperative Principle and the maxims are a set of rules which speakers are expected to conform to regardless of their culture, the Principle of Relevance, as we shall see below, adapts to culture because its requirement is that the speaker should strive to achieve maximum relevance, but there are no restrictions on how it should be achieved – so cultural constraints on communication may come into play.

In the following two sections I will give an outline of Relevance Theory and will explore its applicability to my data.

4.3.2 *Relevance Theory*

Relevance Theory is a theory of ostensive-inferential communication. Sperber and Wilson write:

Inferential communication and ostension are one and the same process, but seen from two different points of view: that of the communicator who is involved in ostension and that of the audience who is involved in inference. (1995:54)

Indeed, the texts studied in this work are the products of acts of ostension, in which the writers 'make manifest an intention to make something manifest' (Sperber and Wilson, 1995:49). As will be seen in Chapter 5, cultural reference is made manifest to the reader in various ways, triggering off different sets of assumptions. It is left to the inferential abilities of the reader to sort out these assumptions and arrive at an interpretation. Relevance Theory carefully examines and accounts for this process and, as such, it shows promise of successful application in the analysis that follows in subsequent chapters of where and why readers may find difficulty in the way authors have chosen to make cultural reference manifest.

The following is a summary of Relevance Theory as presented in Sperber and Wilson (1995) and further explained, among others, by Blass (1990), Gutt (1991), Blakemore (1992) and Wilson (1994).

The basic assumption of Relevance Theory is that human communication and cognition is governed by the search for relevance¹⁰. Although all humans live in the same physical world and share a narrower physical environment, the context for comprehension is drawn not only from this but from what Sperber and Wilson call an individual's cognitive environment (1995:38), and define as follows:

A fact is *manifest* to an individual at a given time if and only if he is capable at that time of representing it mentally and accepting its representation as true or probably true.

A *cognitive environment* of an individual is a set of facts that are manifest to him.

To be manifest, then, is to be perceptible or inferable. An individual's total cognitive environment is the set of all the facts that he can perceive or infer: all the facts that are manifest to him. An individual's total cognitive environment is a function of his physical environment and his cognitive abilities. It consists of not only all the facts that he is aware of, but also all the facts that he is capable of becoming aware of, in his physical environment. ... Memorised information is a component of cognitive abilities. (1995:39; italics as in original)

By assumptions Sperber and Wilson mean 'thoughts treated by the individual as representations of the actual world (as opposed to fictions, desires, or representations of representations)' (1995:2). Relevance as a relation between a given assumption and a given context is defined in terms of contextual effect and processing effort:

Relevance

Extent condition 1: an assumption is relevant in a context to the extent that its contextual effects in this context are large.

Extent condition 2: an assumption is relevant in a context to the extent that the effort required to process it in this context is small. (Sperber and Wilson, 1995:125; italics as in original)

Contextual effects are achieved when new information interacts with a context of already existing assumptions in one of three ways:

(1) by strengthening an existing assumption:

E.g.: I assume that

- 1a. If somebody I know is wearing a wedding ring, and s/he has never worn a wedding ring before, s/he probably got married since I last met him/her.

A few days later I meet Ruby and discover:

- 1b. Ruby is wearing a wedding ring on her left ring finger.

Then, in the above context, from the existing assumption 1a and the new information 1b I can deduce the conclusion in 1c:

- 1c. Ruby is married.

The new information in 1b is relevant in the current context precisely because it provides further evidence for an assumption.

(2) by contradicting and eliminating an existing assumption:

E.g.: In the above context I have formed hypothesis 1a, had new information 1b and formed conclusion 1c. Then I learn that Ruby has just returned from Korea, where she worked as a university lecturer. I also learn that in Korea, women of Ruby's age are married almost without exception. If at her age a woman is still not married, she may face embarrassing questions or situations. To fend off prying into her personal life, Ruby decided to wear a wedding ring, which she has continued to have on even after her return. Now I know:

- 2a. Ruby is not married.

According to Sperber and Wilson, 'when the individual discovers that he is entertaining both a proposition P and its negation -P, the weaker of the two assumptions is abandoned. ... [The new information 2a is] relevant precisely because it contradicts and eliminates an existing assumption; and the more assumptions it eliminates, and the stronger they were, the more relevant it is' (Blass, 1990:46).

- (3) by combining with an already existing assumption to yield a contextual implication (i.e. a logical implication which can be derived neither from the new information, nor from the context alone, but only from these two combined).

E.g.: I have given my e-mail address to several people but not yet to Chris. Suppose I am about to check if I have had any new e-mail messages. I form the following hypothesis:

- 3a. If there is a message from Chris, someone has to have given him my e-mail address.

When I check my mail, I find that

- 3b. Chris has sent me a message.

Then from the existing assumption 3a and the new information 3b I deduce the conclusion in 3c:

- 3c. Someone must have given Chris my e-mail address.

According to Sperber and Wilson, 3c is a contextual implication of 3b in the context of 3a, i.e. it is deducible from 3a and 3b together, but neither from 3a or 3b alone. It is relevant 'precisely because it combines with the context to yield a contextual implication. More generally, new information is relevant in a context if it has contextual implications in that context, and the more contextual implications it has, the more relevant it is' (Blass, 1990:45)

Contextual effects cost mental effort to derive, which results in a trading relationship between mental effort and relevance: the greater the effort required to derive contextual effect, the lower the relevance will be. At the same time, the greater the contextual effects are, the greater the relevance will be.

The processing (or mental) effort needed to understand an utterance depends on (a) the effort of memory and imagination required to construct a suitable context; and (b) the psychological complexity of the utterance itself. Greater complexity implies greater processing effort. If the extra linguistic complexity of an utterance is not balanced by extra contextual effects, it will diminish the overall relevance of the utterance. The source of psychological complexity can be found not only in the linguistic structure of an utterance,

but also in the degree of its familiarity to the receiver and in the frequency of its occurrence. Linguistically simpler utterances may nonetheless be psychologically more complex if they are rarely encountered or are not familiar to the receiver.

According to Sperber and Wilson, an individual automatically aims at maximum relevance, and to achieve this, selects the best possible context in which to process an assumption. The notion of *optimal* relevance states that there should be a balance between processing effort and effect achieved. When such a balance is achieved, the assumption has been '*optimally processed*'. Since an individual is not likely to be interested in contextual effects *per se*, but rather in their contribution to his cognitive goals, Sperber and Wilson redefine contextual effects in an individual as cognitive effects, and '*a positive cognitive effect* as a cognitive effect that contributes positively to the fulfilment of cognitive functions or goals' (1995:265; italics as in the original). By the relevance of an assumption to the individual Sperber and Wilson mean the relevance achieved when that assumption is optimally processed. They define:

Relevance to an individual (comparative)

Extent condition 1: An assumption is relevant to an individual to the extent that the positive cognitive effects achieved when it is optimally processed are large.

Extent condition 2: An assumption is relevant to an individual to the extent that the effort required to achieve these positive cognitive effects is small. (1995:265-66; italics as in original)

A point to note with regard to the definition of relevance given earlier and the one above: Sperber and Wilson claim that in the process of comprehension 'people hope that the assumption being processed is relevant (or else they would not bother to process it at all), and they try to select a context which will justify that hope: a context which will maximise relevance. In verbal comprehension in particular, it is relevance which is treated as given, and context which is treated as variable' (1995:142). Since the context is no longer treated as given, the earlier formal definition of relevance in a context is replaced by a psychologically more appropriate characterisation of relevance to the individual (based, however, on the earlier definition).

According to Sperber and Wilson, relevance is not just a property of assumptions in the mind, but is also a property of phenomena in the environment which lead to the construction of assumptions. So they extend this definition to include not only propositions or

assumptions, but phenomena (and stimuli, a stimulus being a phenomenon designed to achieve cognitive effects) in general, and utterances in particular:

Relevance of a phenomenon (comparative)

Extent condition 1: a phenomenon is relevant to an individual to the extent that the positive cognitive effects achieved when it is optimally processed are large.

Extent condition 2: a phenomenon is relevant to an individual to the extent that the effort required to achieve these positive cognitive effects is small. (1995:153; modified according to instruction on p.266; italics as in original)

Let us consider the example given by Blass (1990:57-58). Suppose one hears Big Ben strike once. Using one's encyclopaedic entry for striking clocks in general, and for Big Ben in particular, one may access the following assumptions:

- a. Big Ben has struck once¹¹.
- b. If Big Ben strikes once, it is one o'clock.

From *a* and *b* one can draw the contextual implication:

- c. It is one o'clock.

However, it would also be possible to access assumptions *d* and *e*:

- d. Big Ben has struck.
- e. If Big Ben strikes, it is not broken.

In normal circumstances, however, the route taken in *d* and *e* seems less likely. According to Sperber and Wilson, the assumption constructed on presentation of a given phenomenon will be determined by the principle of relevance: 'the first interpretation tested and found consistent with the principle of relevance is the only interpretation consistent with the principle of relevance: all other interpretations are disallowed' (Wilson: 1994:51).

The presumption of optimal relevance communicated by every act of ostensive communication is spelt out by Sperber and Wilson as follows:

Presumption of optimal relevance

(a) The set of assumptions **I** which the communicator intends to make manifest to the addressee is relevant enough to make it worth the addressee's while to process the ostensive stimulus.

(b) The ostensive stimulus is the most relevant one the communicator could have used to communicate **I**. (1995:158)

Then they formulate the principle of relevance:

First (or Cognitive) Principle of Relevance

Human cognition tends to be geared to the maximisation of relevance.

Second (or Communicative) Principle of Relevance

Every act of ostensive communication communicates a presumption of its own optimal relevance. (1995:260)

The unique aspect of overt communication is that an addressee is entitled to have steady expectations of relevance. We are, however, cautioned:

Precisely because utterance interpretation is not a simple matter of decoding, but a fallible process of hypothesis formation and evaluation, there is no *guarantee* that the interpretation that satisfies the hearer's expectation of relevance will be the correct, i.e. the intended, one. Because of mismatches in memory and perceptual systems, the hearer may overlook a hypothesis that the speaker thought would be highly salient, or notice a hypothesis that the speaker had overlooked. Misunderstandings occur. The aim of a theory of communication is to identify the principles underlying the hearer's (fallible) choices. Relevance theory claims that the interpretation that satisfies the expectation of relevance is the only one that the hearer has any rational basis for choosing. To claim that a choice is rationally justified, however, is not the same as claiming that it is invariably correct. (Wilson, 1994:47)

Two more aspects of Relevance Theory need to be discussed here as directly pertinent to the current study: implicatures and the connection between relevance and culture. Other relevance theoretic notions will be introduced and discussed in later chapters as, and if, the need arises.

Implicatures, according to Sperber and Wilson, are contextual assumptions and contextual effects that are part of the intended interpretation of an utterance. As such, they should be recoverable in consistency with the principle of relevance. Blass, however, mentions a point noteworthy for cross-cultural investigations:

There has to be a distinction made between the information which the speaker intended the hearer to recover and the process by which hearers recover unintended effects, and which are undertaken on the hearer's own initiative rather than through his desire to identify the intended interpretation. (1990:67)

Let us now consider the example given by Blass (1990:68-69);

- a. Jane: Did you watch the figure-skating last night?
- b. Michael: I don't watch TV.

Utterance *b* is not a direct answer to Jane's question. It, however, gives Jane access to encyclopaedic information¹² about TV programmes, and to the information:

- c. Figure-skating is shown on TV.

Since it is only on TV that Michael could have watched figure-skating, by processing *b* in a context containing *c*, Jane can derive the contextual implication in *d*:

- d. Michael did not watch the figure-skating.

It has to be noted that Blass's setting up the context is rather lame. Jane's initial question *a* shows that Jane opens the conversation with full knowledge about TV programmes, with the assumption in *c* included, in mind. Facts and assumptions about TV programmes form part of her cognitive environment (the set of facts that are manifest to her), otherwise she would not have asked Michael this question. Blass's suggestion that Michael's answer gives Jane access to encyclopaedic information about TV programmes and to the information that figure-skating is shown on TV is, therefore, not correct. Although she is right in deducing that by processing Michael's answer in a context containing the information in *c* Jane can derive the contextual implication in *d*, the context containing this piece of information is not triggered by Michael's answer. It is provided by Jane's total cognitive environment, i.e. all the facts that are manifest to her (cf. definition of cognitive environment above). From Michael's answer it is evident that although he may not share Jane's total cognitive environment, he definitely shares her cognitive environment regarding the facts and assumptions about TV programmes, otherwise he would not have replied as he did: indirectly.

For Sperber and Wilson *c* (if we agree to Blass's line of argument) and *d* are implicatures, i.e. assumptions and conclusions that a rational speaker aiming at optimal relevance expects his audience to supply.

Michael's indirect answer in *b* to Jane's question in *a* suggests that Michael had intended to communicate more than the information that he did not watch the figure-skating; otherwise his utterance in *b* would be inconsistent with the principle of relevance, as simply saying

'No' would have communicated his message and could have achieved the desired effects more economically.

If Jane is to find an interpretation consistent with the principle of relevance, she must access further assumptions and derive further conclusions, which will also be implicatures. She can, for example, access the assumptions in *e* and *f*, and derive the conclusions in *g* and *h*:

- e. The news is a TV programme.
- f. *Dallas* is a TV programme.
- g. Michael does not watch the news.
- h. Michael does not watch *Dallas*.

As Blass suggests, these, however, are probably not the only contextual implications she could draw. She may construct assumptions similar to those in *i* and derive conclusions along the lines of *j*:

- i. People who do not watch TV think they would be wasting their time if they did.
- j. Michael thinks he would be wasting his time if he watched TV.

Thus the indirect answer in *b* can be optimally relevant only if some additional conclusions are derived. These additional conclusions, or implicatures, are needed to offset the extra processing effort incurred by the indirectness of the answer. This means that any element of indirectness in an utterance requires extra processing effort and provides stimulus for a search for additional effects which a more direct formulation would not have achieved.

According to Sperber and Wilson, implicatures may vary in their strength:

The strongest possible implicatures are those fully determinate premises and conclusions ... which must actually be supplied if the interpretation is to be consistent with the principle of relevance, and for which the speaker takes full responsibility. Strong implicatures are those premises and conclusions ... which the hearer is strongly encouraged but not actually forced to supply. The weaker the encouragement, and the wider the range of possibilities among which the hearer can choose, the weaker the implicatures. Eventually, ... a point is reached at which the hearer receives no encouragement at all to supply any particular premise and conclusion, and he takes the entire responsibility for supplying them himself. ... Clearly, the weaker the implicatures, the less confidence the hearer can have that the particular premises or conclusions he supplies will reflect the speaker's thoughts. (1995:199-200)

In formulating and explaining their theory, Sperber and Wilson mention differences that exist among human beings with regard to their physical environment, cognitive abilities and the languages they speak (1995:38). Later on they state that ‘on various social occasions, the expected level of relevance is culturally defined’ (1995:161), but they do not go any further in explaining how culture may affect relevance. It is Blass, who points out that ‘variation in potential assumptions is especially great between different cultures’ (1990:85). She gives the following examples:

- a. He went to McDonald’s. The quarter pounder sounded good and he ordered it.

A Westerner’s encyclopaedic entry for McDonald’s immediately provides access to information about fast food restaurants and the types of hamburger sold in this type of restaurant. Spelling this information out explicitly would, therefore, detract from relevance. In Western culture *b* would be far less relevant than *a* because much of it is known and the effort spent in processing it would not yield enough contextual implications.

- b. He went to a place where food is cooked and sold. It is called ‘McDonald’s’. There he saw ground meat which was formed into patties, fried and put into something baked with flour ...

For a non-Westerner, however, *a* may be completely incomprehensible, while processing *b* may yield greater rewards.

Similarly, information from other cultures, which is not made explicit, may pose a problem for Westerners. While a Sissala would immediately be able to recover the background assumptions needed to understand *c*, a Westerner would have to have them made explicit:

- c. The river had been dry for a long time.
Everybody attended the funeral.

As Blass explains, this utterance is relevant in a context containing the following assumptions:

- d. If a river has been dry for a long time then a river spirit has died.
- e. If somebody has died there is a funeral.

Understanding depends on the hearer's ability to supply the appropriate contextual assumptions. The seemingly unconnected utterances become a coherent text when the appropriate background is supplied.

Blass has another worthwhile point to make. She maintains that 'it is quite conceivable and explainable in relevance-theoretic terms that people of some cultures – of close-knit communities – share so many assumptions about the world that they indeed leave more implicit than people from less homogeneous cultures would, and that their discourses typically include less text than the same discourses would in less homogeneous cultures' (1990:86).

4.3.3 *Applying Relevance Theory to the data*

As has been explained in 4.2.1, the interpretation of hybrid texts, i.e. texts written by authors of a particular cultural and linguistic background in a language of a different culture, is bound to be influenced by the underlying meaning of the writer's first language, which Zabus refers to as 'the source language in filigree' (1991:155).

Although it is widely accepted that each individual and group should and will respond to a text differently, and that all responses are valid, communication between the Europhone African writer and his audience seems somewhat more complex than may be anticipated. This complexity is caused not only by the very nature of hybrid texts, but also by the general problem of (partial) lack of common ground between reader and writer. As has been discussed above, the African writer may claim to write for an African readership (which in itself is far from being uniform) but, especially because he writes in a European language, he is likely to be conscious of a much wider multiple audience. The spacial, cultural, and possible temporal, distance between this multiple audience and the writer, combined with the already described linguistic complexity, may lead to difficulties of interpretation that are usually not encountered outside this particular interpretive situation.

With examples taken from Ghanaian English-language literature (excepting the proverb), I shall examine how Relevance Theory can be used to explain some aspects of this complex problem. The analysis I present here relates to how real readers interpret hybrid texts. Accordingly, the

examples of lexico-semantic variation, syntactic variation and the proverb examined have been part of questionnaires I have used to research this problem area. At this point, however, no direct reference is made to specific findings of these questionnaires. A detailed study of questionnaire data collected specifically for the current work will follow in subsequent chapters.

4.3.2.1 Lexico-semantic variation

In his discussion of the lexico-semantic variation found in Nigerian English Bamiro summarises Bokamba's (1982:91-92) observations relating to the sources of lexical innovations in African English as follows:

Bokamba quite correctly points out that the sources of lexical innovations in African English are mother tongue interference, analogical derivation based on English and the milieu and conditions under which English is learned and used in Anglophone Africa. (1994:48)

While the reader who shares a particular author's sociolinguistic background will have no problem in processing and understanding such innovations, the reader who does not share the author's sociolinguistic background is likely to miss out on the meaning of the majority of them. Consider the following few examples:

(i) coinage

... we were defeated before we went, for we had heard that some people employed secondary school students to sit the exams for them, while others bought exam papers from the right quarters, and yet others knew the people who marked the papers! True enough, many of us bombed (Duodu, *The Gab Boys*, p.120; added emphasis)

to bomb (an examination): schoolboy slang for 'to fail' (Sey, 1973:75)

Young push-babies with frowning faces broke through hedges behind different kind of carriages ... Another black push-baby passed, pushing a white and pink carriage. (Armah, *The Beautiful Ones*, pp.125-126; added emphasis)

push-baby: a maid servant employed to mind babies in the house and take them out for rides in prams (Sey, 1973:88)

(ii) lexical items with semantic restriction

But I'd never thought I was an 'adolescent'. I usually thought of myself as a 'guy' (Duodu, *The Gab Boys*, p.73)

guy: a tough man; one who gives the impression of being fearless; one admired for defying popular authority (Sey, 1973:94)

(iii) *lexical items with semantic extension*

It's only bush women who wear their hair natural. (Armah, *The Beautiful Ones*, p.129)

bush (adjectival): unpolished, uncouth, rustic (person) (Sey, 1973:98)

Though lexical innovations can be assigned a varying number of categories, depending on the criteria applied to the analysis of their origin - Sey (1973) works with six basic categories, Bamiro (1994) with ten - the reason behind the failure of the non-indigenous-language-speaking non-local reader to understand these lexical items seems fairly uniform. Such a reader's assumptions will be less than adequate about the author's physical, social and linguistic background, i.e. his cognitive environment will contain no, or only a very limited number of, assumptions regarding the author's physical, social and linguistic reality, which will impose a serious restraint on the achievable positive cognitive effects. In addition, the so far unencountered lexical item, or an already known word used in an unusual context, represents psychological complexity which increases the processing effort, thus reducing relevance and eventually hindering understanding.

It has to be noted that contextualisation, which may fail to be effective in the case of African-language words, is likely to prove successful in the case of lexico-semantic variation because the context does, in many cases, help to determine the actual meaning of words resulting from lexical innovation.

4.3.2.2 Syntactic variation

'The relexification of one's mother tongue, using English vocabulary but indigenous structures and rhythms' (Todd, 1982:303) resulted not only in lexico-semantic variation in West African, hence Ghanaian, English, but also produced syntactic patterns that reflect the structure of indigenous languages. From among the examples described and analysed by Bamiro (1995) I would like to examine a) the thematisation of complements and adjuncts, and b) the word order in nominal group structure.

a) Thematisation of complements and adjuncts

Bamiro observes that in the Ghanaian Ayi Kwei Armah's novels there is a 'preponderant use of marked structures which reflect the underlying logic of the authors' mother tongues' (1995:198). The following example is taken from Armah's *Two Thousand Seasons*:

'This is the white men's second wish,' Isanusi continued. ... The elephants they say they want destroyed, but only for their tusks. ... Leopards they want dead for their hides. ... Land they want from us, but not the way guests ask the use of land. ... On this their cut-off land they would like to have crops grow. But the white men are not accustomed to doing their own planting and it is not in their minds to get accustomed here. They would have the king give them men to work the land ... (p.82; emphasis added)

According to Bamiro, many West African languages are topic-prominent, therefore a preference for the thematisation of complements and adjuncts can be observed in these languages, which, in turn, is reflected in West African English (1995:198). In the above example the complements 'the elephants,' 'leopards,' 'land' and the adjunct 'on this their cut-off land' are thematised. The reader's difficulty here is seen not in terms of positive cognitive effects but rather in terms of the effort necessary to process the marked theme. The reader who shares Armah's Akan background is likely to process the above utterances with absolute ease and may miss the point that is expected to be recovered from the extra contextual effects yielded by the greater processing effort required to process the marked Theme. Indeed, if the complements and the adjunct are fronted as a result of mother tongue interference and not as a result of a conscious choice on Armah's part, then there are no extra contextual effects to recover. On the other hand, if Armah consciously foregrounded these elements, then he surely intended to make his point salient about what the white man wanted to grab and destroy in his greediness. The non-Akan speaking English reader, faced with the extra linguistic complexity of the marked Theme, has to employ greater processing effort, but his effort is likely to be counterbalanced by the extra contextual effects mentioned above. If, however, Armah consciously fronted the complements and adjunct not because he wanted to convey an implicated meaning but simply because he wanted to retain the flavour of African speech, the Akan-speaking reader may merely overlook this subtlety, and the non-Akan speaking reader may read more into the text than it is supposed to convey.

The reader certainly has a difficult task in trying to recover the intended meaning. In Armah's case one finds an indication in another of his novels, *The Healers*. In *Two Thousand Seasons* the following marked structure is recurrent:

Two girls tried to help the pathfinders: Noliwe and Ningome were their names. (p.54; added emphasis)

There was a woman. Idawa was her name. (p.69; added emphasis)

This woman - Akole was her name - said ... (p.78; added emphasis)

At the same time, in *The Healers* a character who is a native speaker of English prefers to use the unmarked form:

This queen - her name is Victoria - has ears that hear everything that goes on everywhere in the world ... (p.201; added emphasis)

This seems to suggest that the marked structure is Armah's conscious choice, but his reasons for this choice cannot be unambiguously recovered from the text.

b) Word order in nominal group structure

Just like in the case of thematisation of complements and adjuncts, psychological complexity resulting from structural unorthodoxy stands in the way of smooth and effortless information processing in the following examples:

The morning following, Densu was weak but his mind was peaceful. (*The Healers*, p.142; added emphasis)

The day following, the travellers spent resting. (*The Healers*, p.152; added emphasis)

Bamiro suggests that this order within the nominal group, in which the head precedes the modifier in certain syntactic environments, reflects the syntactic structure of Kwa and Gur languages, to which many West African languages, among them Akan, belong (1995:201). He informs us that 'The day following' actually translates in Akan as

<i>Eda</i>	<i>a etoso</i>
The day	following.

However, in Armah's case, although an influence of his mother tongue and possibly of other indigenous languages is the first logical explanation, his familiarity with and proficiency in French make interference from French possible.

Whatever the source, the reader is faced with a non-standard form which, again, may, or may not, cause processing difficulty. Similarly to what happens in the case of thematising complements and adjuncts, the Akan-speaking reader is likely not to discern the anomaly and may process the utterance at minimal effort. At the same time, the non-Akan-speaking reader's expectations will be influenced by the fact that in the grammar of English postmodification of the noun phrase is possible with the *-ing* participle, but the 'antecedent head corresponds to the implicit subject of the nonfinite clause' (Quirk *et al.*, 1985:1263). This suggests that 'the morning following' and 'the day following' may appear to be incomplete to the non-Akan-speaking reader, and he would probably spend time and effort to look for structures like 'the morning following his sleepless night filled with nightmares' or 'the morning following their arrival' before sorting out the meaning of the noun phrase. Though finally not incomprehensible, this structure distracts from relevance because the reader's time and effort spent on processing it will not be rewarded by extra contextual effects.

4.3.2.3 Proverbs

In hybrid literary texts, together with riddles, dirges, praise names and different forms of address, one relatively often encounters proverbs. As part of the linguistic realisation of distinctiveness, they are convenient for the study of how the reader makes sense of 1) the surface meaning of English and 2) the underlying meaning of the indigenous language.

Understanding proverbs has a number of complications. First, most proverbs can be understood both literally and metaphorically. Second, proverbs are so-called echoic utterances echoing the thought, or if you like wisdom, of a people, so a proverb can achieve relevance simply by demonstrating that someone finds it wise to quote in the circumstances. Third, by representing popular wisdom 'in a manifestly sceptical, amused, surprised, triumphant, approving or reproving way, the speaker can express her attitude to the thought echoed, and the relevance of her utterance might depend largely on this expression of attitude' (Sperber and Wilson, 1995:239).

However, what needs to be considered first is the relationship between the thought that is to be communicated and the propositional form of the utterance which is used to represent this thought. For the proverb **Hail has shown the strong man where his home is**¹³ this relationship can be represented as follows:

Level 1: The thought

Misfortune will drive one to seek support from the very people, usually one's family, whom one has ignored.

Level 2: Representation of the thought in L1

MVULA WA MABUE WA KALEJA KALUME KUABO.

rain of ice has shown strong man home

Level 3: Relexification of Level 2 in English

Hail has shown the strong man where his home is.

According to Relevance Theory, an utterance is strictly literal if its propositional form (Level 2) is identical with the propositional form of the thought it is used to represent (Level 1). However, what a communicator often aims to achieve is not literal truth but optimal relevance, as is the case when quoting a proverb. In order to achieve optimal relevance, the utterance 'should give the hearer information about that thought which is relevant enough to be worth processing, and should require as little processing effort as possible' (Sperber and Wilson, 1995:233). As illustrated above, this can be achieved if the propositional form of the utterance shares some, but not necessarily all, the logical properties of the propositional form of the thought whose interpretative expression it is (see Sperber and Wilson, 1995:233).

As shown by our previous examples, another important factor is the set of assumptions the hearer/reader can provide to arrive at the intended interpretation. The greater the number of assumptions provided by the hearer/reader is, the closer to the intended meaning he gets.

In hybrid texts, which are characterised by the absence of the original, the reader has to make do with the English version of Level 3 into which the indigenous language is relexified. However, the surface meaning of the European language does not always yield the underlying meaning of

the first language. It seems that some semantic considerations may provide helpful insight into why this is so.

First of all, 'it seems to be an incontrovertible principle of semantics that the human mind abhors a vacuum of sense, so a speaker of English faced with absurd sentences will strain his interpretive faculty to the utmost to read them meaningfully' (Leech, 1974:8). From this follows that an audience whose sociolinguistic context is different from the communicator's will, by rule, attempt to make sense of the communicator's utterance, and that in this attempt the members of this audience will inevitably draw on *their* cognitive environment, i.e. the facts that are manifest to *them*. Their assumptions, as we have seen, may, or may not, coincide with the assumptions necessary to arrive at the intended meaning of the communicator. Even if the assumptions of the communicator are different from those of his audience, the audience embarks on constructing a context in which the utterance becomes meaningful *to them*.

Second, it is assumed by semanticists that 'the same basic conceptual framework is common to all languages, and is a universal property of the human mind' (Leech, 1974:15). Connotative meaning, however, is open-ended, embracing objectively and subjectively identified characteristics of the referent, and as such, it is considered culture related. While the intended meaning of the proverb **Hail has shown the strong man where his home is** may be guessed by the non-Muluba English-speaking reader, it is more likely that his interpretation will differ, due to differences in connotative meaning, from that understood by the Baluba as used in their native linguistic and cultural context. The Tshiluba word *kalume* connotes the rather negative image of a braggart boasting about his strength, success, achievements and victories over people. At the same time, the English collocation *strong man* tends to be associated with the positive values of determination and perseverance. Similarly, *home* can be associated with goal, success and achievement, a meaning that the Tshiluba *kuabo* (whose literal meaning is better represented by the French *chez eux*) does not have. Further modification of meaning may also result from English being a second/foreign language for the audience. It is not unlikely that the connotative meaning of an English word should get influenced by the connotations attached to the reader's mother-tongue equivalent of that word.

4.4 Conclusion

The examination of the relationship between written language and culture, the account of indigenisation and the exploration of the applicability of Relevance Theory to the data links up directly with two subsequent chapters.

Kachru's and Zabus's remarkable insight into and, especially Zabus's, detailed analysis of what goes on in the Europhone literary text will be exploited in Chapter 6 in the analysis of categories of indigenisation yielded by the data extracted from the corpus.

As we have seen, the absence of synchrony between the writer and reader in the joint action of writing and reading, or what Ashcroft calls, with regard to the postcolonial text, the absence of writers and readers from each other (2001b:62), makes the negotiation of meaning impossible, which leaves the writer with the task of having to anticipate and provide for possible reactions of the reader who, in turn, will have to reconstitute the writer's discourse. The success of this communicative endeavour will depend on the existence or lack of culturally determined shared background knowledge between the writer and the reader.

In Chapter 7, I will investigate, in a relevance theoretic framework, what the writer makes manifest as he is engaged in an attempt to convey his meaning, and what assumptions the reader makes in applying his inferential abilities to sort out the writer's assumptions to arrive at an interpretation.

Notes

- ¹ A historical perspective on the relationship between culture and written language is given in Kaplan 1986.
- ² Detailed descriptions of the difference between spoken and written language can be found, for example, in Brown and Yule 1983 (Chapter 1), Biber 1988, Halliday 1989, Clark 1996 (Chapter 1 and p. 90), and Hughes 1996.
- ³ In an interview Ama Ata Aidoo remarked that 'One doesn't have to really assume that all literature has to be written. I mean one doesn't have to be so patronizing about oral literature. There is a present validity to oral literary communication... I totally disagree with people who feel that oral literature is one stage in the development of man's artistic genius. To me it's an end in itself. One can recite to people; ... you can just sit down and relate a

story. They don't have to be folktales only, there are lots of stories going round. In fact I believe that when a writer writes a short story, it should be possible for the writer to sit before an audience and tell them the story of a boy and a girl in Accra, or London, or Paris. I believe this so strongly; if I have any strong conception of what else could be done in literature, it is this. We don't always have to write for readers, we can write for listeners. ... We cannot tell our stories maybe with the same expertise as our forefathers. But to me, all the art of the speaking voice could be brought back so easily. We are not that far away from our traditions' (Duerden and Pieterse, 1972:23-4).

4 In a personal communication Chantal Zabus told me that in informal conversations with her several Ghanaians expressed their concern about their inability to understand the novels of Ayi Kwei Armah. The existence of problems of understanding related to novels of Ghanaian writers, and of Armah in particular, was confirmed by Kari Dako, Lecturer at the Department of English, University of Ghana.

5 Nativisation as a process is described by Bokamba (1982), Hancock & Angogo (1982) and Zuengler (1982).

6 Social aspects of code-switching in an African environment are examined in Myers-Scotton 1993.

7 A detailed linguistic description and categorisation of morpho-syntactic and lexico-semantic variation can be found in Bamiro 1994 and 1995.

8 A critique of Gricean pragmatics and the description of a different, semantic approach to cross-cultural communication, illustrated with examples from over ten languages can be found in Wierzbicka 1991.

9 The Sissala people live in the south of Burkina Faso and in Northern Ghana.

10 Note that 'the assessment of relevance is not the goal of the comprehension process, but only a means to an end, the end being to maximise the relevance of any information being processed (Sperber and Wilson, 1995:142).

11 In the given context – one hears Big Ben strike once – 'Big Ben has struck once' is a fact in the ordinary sense of the word. It has to be noted, however, that in Relevance Theory assumptions are 'thoughts treated by the individual as representations of the actual world (as opposed to fictions, desires, or representations of representations)' (Sperber and Wilson, 1995:2).

12 According to Sperber and Wilson, information stored in memory falls into three types: logical, encyclopaedic and lexical. 'The *logical entry* for a concept consists of a set of deductive rules which apply to logical forms of which that concept is a constituent. The *encyclopaedic entry* contains information about the extension and/or denotation of the concept: that is, about the objects, events and/or properties which instantiate it. The *lexical entry* contains information about the natural-language counterpart of the concept: the word or phrase of natural language which expresses it' (1995:86). The encyclopaedic entry for the concept *computer*, for example, would contain a set of assumptions about computers, and for the concept *write* about writing. As we do not all have the same assumptions, for instance, about computers or writing, encyclopaedic entries vary across speakers and times. Also, they are open-ended as new information keeps being added to them all the time; as a consequence, they can never be regarded as complete (1995:87-88).

13 Tshiluba, D.R. Congo; oral source: Fred Betu Ku-Mesu

5 RESEARCH OBJECTIVES AND METHODS

5.1 Introduction

The cultural and linguistic issues discussed in Chapters 2, 3 and 4 point the current research towards taking a cross-cultural perspective and examining cultural reference in the English-language prose works of Ghanaian writers with a focus on the linguistic description of the various ways of encoding cultural reference, on the methods writers use to facilitate reader understanding of cultural reference, and on how these various factors may affect reader understanding. Remaining in the domain of cultural reference, the present work will also examine whether a later generation of the empire still 'writes back' using the same strategies as the glorious first generation. The objectives of the research are laid out in 5.2, whereas 5.3 discusses the methods of investigation, including the data (5.3.1), the coding of cultural reference (5.3.2) and the methods of analysis (5.3.3).

5.2 Objectives

The fact that 'Africa is not always thinking of, or speaking to the West' (Kanneh, 1997:83) raises the issue whether the Western audience, for whom modern African literature is not primarily intended but who, for reasons discussed in 2.3, are the main consumers of this literature today, experiences any difficulty in understanding African writing in European languages.

Given the various African national and pan-African readership as the primarily intended audience of this literature¹, the concept of African culture considered as a unified whole by such influential authors as Jahn (1961), Abraham (1962) and Soyinka (1976) has to be addressed and the issue of plurality within African cultures considered.

Indeed, a recognition of 'the cultural and philosophical *difference* of what is African within these texts' (Kanneh, 1997:69, original emphasis) will form the basis of the current research, and the recognition of cultural difference in general define its direction.

The present work, which falls within the broad framework of investigating (cross-) cultural understanding of literary texts², will focus on a specific area, namely the area of cultural reference as present in the works of Ghanaian writers and has three objectives:

- 1 to describe lexical, semantic and syntactic variation in the indigenised forms of cultural reference in the English-language prose works of Ghanaian writers;
- 2 to analyse how the textual strategies Ghanaian writers employ to facilitate reader understanding of cultural reference encoded in various ways affect interpretation by various groups of readers, these groups being the Ghanaian reader, the non-Ghanaian African reader, and the Western reader;
- 3 to investigate, within the perspective of post-colonialism set out in Chapter 2, whether the ways of encoding cultural reference in the English-language prose works of Ghanaian writers have remained the same over time or have changed, creating a difference in approach between the first and a later generation of Ghanaian writers to expressing the African experience.

It is hoped that the findings will (a) highlight the linguistic complexity involved in expressing culture in hybrid literary texts; (b) add to our understanding of the nature of pragmatic meaning in cross-cultural literary communication; and (c) have implications for the issue of post-coloniality in literature.

5.3 Methods

5.3.1 The data

There are two different kinds of data examined in this study:

- (a) The raw material for the current research, i.e. cultural reference encoded in a variety of ways, has been extracted from a corpus of Ghanaian fiction.
- (b) Data regarding the effect of authorial strategies on reader interpretation was collected by way of a questionnaire.

5.3.1.1 The corpus

English-language prose works of Ghanaian writers constitute the primary data of the current research. The selection of works was inevitably influenced by availability, although every effort was made to ensure that early as well as recent writing is represented, and nationally published writers are included alongside internationally known and acclaimed authors. The following is the full list of works included in the research (the abbreviations in brackets will be used in the rest of this work when mention of the full title is not practicable):

Abruquah, Joseph W. (b. 1921)	<i>The Catechist</i> (1965)	(Catechist)
Agovi, Kofi (b. 1944)	<i>A Wind from the North and Other Stories</i> (1989)	(Wind)
Aidoo, Ama Ata (b. 1942)	<i>No Sweetness Here</i> (1970)	(No Sweetness)
	<i>Our Sister Killjoy</i> (1977)	(Our Sister)
	<i>Changes – a love story</i> (1991)	(Changes)
	<i>The Girl Who Can and Other Stories</i> (1997)	(Girl Who Can)

Aidoo, Kofi Osei (b. 1950)	<i>Of Men and Ghosts</i> (1991)	(Of Men)
Armah, Ayi Kwei (b. 1939)	<i>The Beautiful Ones Are Not Yet Born</i> (1968) <i>Fragments</i> (1969) <i>The Healers</i> (1978)	(The Beautiful Ones) (Fragments) (Healers)
Awoonor, Kofi (b. 1935)	<i>This Earth, My Brother ...</i> (1971)	(This Earth)
Codjoe-Swayne, Naa Otua (b. 1959)	<i>The Dancing Tortoise</i> (1994)	(Dancing Tortoise)
Darko, Amma (b. 1956)	<i>Beyond the Horizon</i> (1995)	(Beyond)
Darmani, Lawrence (b. ca 1950)	<i>Grief Child</i> (1991)	(Grief Child)
Djoleto, Amu (b. 1929)	<i>The Strange Man</i> (1967)	(Strange Man)
Duodu, Cameron (b. 1932)	<i>The Gab Boys</i> (1967)	(Gab Boys)
Kwakye, Benjamin Kwame (b. 1967)	<i>The Clothes of Nakedness</i> (1998)	(CoN)
Selormey, Francis (b. 1927)	<i>The Narrow Path</i> (1966)	(Narrow Path)
Yankah, Kojo (b. ca 1950)	<i>Crossroads at Ankobea</i> (1982)	(Crossroads)
Yeboah-Afari, Ajoa (b. ca 1950)	<i>The Sound of Pestles and Other Stories</i> (1986)	(SoP)

For the purpose of the analysis of cultural reference, a corpus was established containing the first, middle and last chapter/short story of each volume. In the case of the novels such a selection was decided on to ensure that the sample contained different parts of the narrative. Such a consideration, of course, was unnecessary in the case of the short stories. Occasionally, when a chapter/short story was found too short in comparison with others, a neighbouring chapter/story was added to the corpus to ensure a proportionately equal representation of each

work. The corpus, in its final form, comes from the above 20 volumes with a size of 210,187 words.

For the purpose of comparison, the writers have been sorted into two groups: those comprising the first generation of modern Europhone Ghanaian writers, and those comprising the later generation. Abruquah, Armah, Awoonor, Djoletto, Duodu and Selormey – the writers of the first generation – all grew up in pre-independence Ghana. Their experience of colonial existence determines their artistic outlook and their need to assert their African identity in the Achebean sense discussed in 2.1.5. The writers of the later generation – Agovi, A. A. Aidoo, K. O. Aidoo, Codjoe-Swayne, Darko, Darmani, Kwakye, Yankah and Yeboah-Afari – were either very young or not even born at independence in 1957. The experience determining their artistic outlook is that of life in post-independence Ghana. Confident in their already established African identity, they are likely to be free from the grip of the post-colonial angst so characteristic of the first generation.

5.3.1.2 The questionnaire

A questionnaire was designed to gather data on the effect of authorial strategies on the comprehension and interpretation of cultural reference in Ghanaian creative prose texts by different audiences, these being, as has been mentioned in 5.2 above, the Ghanaian reader (a far from homogeneous entity falling into two broad categories: the Ghanaian reader who shares the writer's broader cultural and narrower ethnic and linguistic background, and the Ghanaian reader who shares the writer's broader cultural but not the narrower ethnic and linguistic background), the non-Ghanaian African reader and the Western reader.

The first section of the questionnaire elicits data on the ethnic/linguistic background and reading habits of the subjects to enable the researcher to draw up reader profiles. The main body focuses on the writer's strategies regarding indigenised cultural reference: I on cushioning, II on ethnographic explanation, III on the use of a glossary, IV on the absence of authorial assistance, and V on contextualisation.

The texts chosen for the questionnaire come from 10 out of the above 20 works. The indigenised cultural reference they contain is expressed, in most cases, by a single lexical item, and has been chosen for the following reasons:

- Questionnaire items I (i & ii):
Adawuro (gong-gongs) and ‘doing *aworshia* – that is, working all night’ offer two different techniques for cushioning.
- Questionnaire items II (i & ii):
An ethnographic explanation is offered by the writer for *bampa* and *aboefosem*, which presents an opportunity to assess the effect of such an explanation on the reader.
- Questionnaire items III (i & ii):
The two passages contain Akan words and expressions for which a glossary is provided, which makes it possible to gather information on the readers’ use of and attitude to glossaries.
- Questionnaire items IV (i & ii):
Bodua, *tro-tro* and *aplankeys* come from Nzema, Pidgin and Ga, respectively, and as such, offer an opportunity to reveal differences within a multilingual and multi-ethnic Ghanaian readership.
- Questionnaire item IV (iii):
‘Fathers’ may present difficulty because of its culture-related unusual plural form.
Agbada is a loan word from Yoruba, and as such is expected to present difficulty to all reader groups.
- Questionnaire item IV (iv):
The sub-clause ‘as a rival would look at her husband’s favourite’ offers an opportunity to examine if the cultural reference hidden in it, for which no authorial

assistance is given, is understood by the different reader groups. It also gives an opportunity to see if the readers understood it immediately or used greater processing effort to work the meaning out.

- Questionnaire item V (i):
Being one of the 245 personal names found in the corpus, *Kweku Nyamekye* gives an opportunity to examine what significance names have in different cultures and how they are understood by different readers.
- Questionnaire item V (ii):
Kola may present difficulty because of its spelling and its culture-embedded reference to corruption, which may not be understood by non-Ghanaian readers.
- Questionnaire item V (iii):
Despite a very suggestive context provided by the author, 'Passion Week' may present difficulty because of its Christian meaning (the fifth week of Lent, beginning on Passion Sunday and ending on Palm Sunday).

The questionnaire was administered to 45 subjects including 19 Ghanaian, 7 non-Ghanaian African and 19 Western readers. Although it is possible to divide these groups into subgroups – the Ghanaian readers into subgroups relative to each writer's ethnic and linguistic background, the non-Ghanaian African readers into subgroups relative to their ethnicity, and the Western readers into subgroups according to them being native or non-native speakers of English –, the current research does not intend to compare subgroups within the three main groups unless the difference they show is significant. To ensure comparability of the three main groups, it was required that all subjects be literate in English, possess a fairly advanced, near-native or native proficiency in English and be educated at least to post-secondary level, the minimum level of education required being second year at university regardless of specialisation. Europeans with African experience were purposefully excluded from the sample population as data supplied by them might have affected the generalisability of the results. Although there was a possibility that

the data provided by the subjects might vary according to their age and sex, these factors did not seem significant enough to influence subject selection or subsequent data analysis.

The questionnaire can be found in Appendix 2, and the data gathered in Appendices 3 and 4.

5.3.2 *Coding cultural reference*

5.3.2.1 A working definition of cultural reference

The discussion of culture in 3.2 and 3.3 identifies some important features of culture, which are:

- culture as historically created and transmitted systems of meaning embodied in symbols;
- consensus in a community about the meanings of symbols, verbal and non-verbal;
- meaning communicated by means of natural language and other symbol systems;
- consensus in a community about what counts as ‘rational’ behaviour;
- social organisations;
- customs;
- artefacts as products and symbols of culture.

Summarily, culture can be regarded as ‘any of the customs, worldview, language, kinship system, social organization, and other taken-for-granted day-to-day practices of a people which set that group apart as a distinctive group’ (Scollon and Scollon, 1995:126). In other words, ‘culture includes *all* cultural practices and products, and the assessment of the processes of their production, consumption, the process of their representation and exchange, and the interrelationship of all these elements’ (Ashcroft, 2001a:20, original emphasis).

Since Ghana appears in the works studied not only through its various peoples but also as a supra-ethnic national entity, for the purposes of the current research cultural reference needs to be defined at two different levels. At the level of ethnic groups, any reference, in any form of encoding, to any of the ideational or material aspects of the culture of each individual writer’s ethnic group which give that group ‘a distinctive identity and which is used to organize their internal sense of cohesion and membership’ (Scollon and Scollon, 1995:127) will be treated as

cultural reference. At the national level, any reference, in any form of encoding, to any of the ideational or material aspects of Ghanaian culture which give the Ghanaian people as a composite group a distinctive identity will also be treated as cultural reference.

5.3.2.2 Types of cultural reference

A preliminary examination of the works listed above in 5.3.1.1 shows that the following types of cultural reference are recurrent:

Physical world

- 1 *physical environment/cultural artefacts* – this category includes nature and the man-made world, cultural artefacts ranging from household utensils to sculptures, music and (oral) literature

e.g.: He threw his powerful *bodua* into the sky and caught it several times. (Wind, p.6; italics as in original)

bodua: cow-tail whip

- 2 *food and drink*

e.g.: Even though they had eaten they were pressing their mother to give them some of the *apranpransa* she had bought. (Of Men, p.2; italics as in original)

apranpransa: maize meal prepared with palm soup

- 3 *clothing*

e.g.: He got up and got dressed, wearing a *batakari* over a shirt. (Fragments, p.144; italics as in original)

batakari: a smock-like loose long shirt made of thick hand-woven material

Human Relationships

- 1 *socio-economic roles of the sexes* – this includes the role assigned to men and women in society as well as non-formalised sexual relationships between non-married people
e.g.: ‘Zirigu, now you better shut up your mouth before you annoy me. Since when did you start teaching me how to do my marketing? This is my job. A woman’s job. (No Sweetness, p.19)

- 2 *marriage/separation/divorce* – this category embraces all aspects of pre-marriage relationships and arrangements, married life including extra-marital affairs, and separation and divorce including divorce settlement
e.g.: But marital rape? No. The society could not possibly have an indigenous word or phrase for it. Sex is something a husband claims from his wife as a right. Any time. And at his convenience. Besides, any ‘sane’ person, especially sane woman, would consider any other woman lucky or talented or both, who can make her husband lose his head like that. (Changes, p.12)

- 3 *parent-child/grown-up-child relationship* – this category focuses on the place assigned to children in society, including the nature of the mother-child/father-child, and more generally, grown-up-child relationship, the behaviour expected from children in these relationships and the way they are treated by the grown-up world both within and outside their families
e.g.: ‘The good child who willingly goes on errands eats the food of peace.’ This was a favourite saying in the house. Maami, Aunt Efua, Aunt Araba ... oh, they all said it. (No Sweetness, p.103)

...Maami came in from the conversation with the other mothers. When she saw the figure of Yaaba, her heart did a somersault. Pooh, went her fist on the figure in the corner. Pooh, ‘You lazy lazy thing.’ Pooh, pooh! ‘You good-for-nothing, empty corn husk of a daughter...’ She pulled her ears, and Yaaba screamed. (No Sweetness, pp.108-9)

...I want to know whether Maami called me her child. Does it mean I am her child like Adwoa is? But one does not ask our elders such questions. (No Sweetness, p.113)

- 4 *family, kinship* – this category focuses on the concept of family and nature of kinship ties

e.g.: ‘The bungalow gets too lonely for her. Here, there would be other children for her to play with. Nearly all her cousins ...’
 ‘Please, don’t call them her cousins,’ her mother-in-law had reprimanded.
 ‘But ... but Maa,’ Esi had virtually stammered, ‘aren’t they her cousins?’
 ‘You know that in our custom, there is nothing like that. Oko’s sisters’ children are Ogyaanowa’s sisters and brothers. ...’ (Changes, p.68)

Spiritual world

1 *traditions (both religious and secular)/customs/beliefs/superstitions*

e.g.: The medicine man (naturally, after I had met his demand of a bottle of London Dry Gin and a pure white fat hen) covered me from head to toe with white powder, mixed a pounded mixture of herbs and the dried marrow of some unnamed wild animals with water and made me drink a whole calabashful of it. It tasted like hell. Then he smeared my body with sticky egg yolks and made me lie down on the floor for twelve whole hours, if not more, while he left to go and eat and, as I heard later, even had a hot afternoon quickie with his youngest wife. Then he returned, tapped me several times with his goat-tail wand, ordered me to get up and told me with all the certainty of his magical powers that nothing bad, no grain of harm, would ever come to me in Europe. All was going to be golden for me there and, though I was going there poor, I would return with wealth and bring honour to Naka. And I, like my mother and all the other villagers, believed him. (Beyond, p.55)

2 *ancestors/deities* – this category concentrates on the place of ancestors and deities in the cosmogony of the peoples of Ghana, the reverence due to them, their impact on everyday life and the customs and traditions connected with them

e.g.: Quietly I went past him into the doorway where he had stood offering libation to those gone before, and in the same place where he had let fall those miserly drops I poured down everything in the glass, and it was only after that that I opened my mouth again:
 “Nananom, drink to your thirst, and go with the young one. Protect him well, and bring him back, to us, to you.”
 As I came back into the room Foli met me with words,
 “But I poured ...”
 “It was not enough,” I answered him. ...The spirits would have been angry, and they would have turned their anger against him. He would have been destroyed.” (Fragments, p.8)

- 3 *birth/death/funeral/afterlife* – this category includes the beliefs, customs and practices associated with birth, death, funeral and afterlife

e.g.: ‘... You know the child is only a traveler between the world of spirits and this one of heavy flesh. His birth can be a good beginning, and he may find his body and this world around it a home where he wants to stay. But for this he must be protected. Or he will run screaming back, fleeing the horrors prepared for him up here. ...’ (Fragments, p.97)

And the child that came so briefly has gone back where he came from ... The little one is gone; soon he will be the elder of his great-grandmother there. (Fragments, p.198-9)

- 4 *Christianity/Islam*

e.g.: Edzi demonstrated the seriousness of her intentions by being baptized into the Roman Catholic Church, and after that the families gave in. The marriage was celebrated with all the traditional customs and blessed in the Catholic Church. (Narrow Path, p.5)

When Mma Abu accepted that she could not deal with the matter of Fusena and marriage any longer, she went to consult the family *mallam*. The *mallam* read from the Holy Book, threw his cowries, drew his lines, and told her not to worry. Her time would come. (Changes, p.59; italics as in original)

Proverbs and sayings

e.g.: As Mark Brown, ‘The African Cow Boy’, would say, ‘A beggar has no choose’. (The proverb in Twi is ‘*Su kom na nnsu nam*’: ‘Clamour for food and not for meat.’)(Gab Boys, pp.28-9, italics as in original)

Strangers should not be served palm soup – ‘*Ohoho nndzi abenkwan*’ (Catechist, p.111; italics as in original)

Proper names

- 1 *personal names* – names of people, deities, personified creatures

e.g.: Akobi Ajaman (male; Beyond), Esi Sekyi (female, Changes), Azule Tano (deity; Wind)

- 2 *place and geographical names, real or imaginary* – including street names, names of residential areas, resorts, etc.

e.g.: Ankobea (Crossroads), Labadi Pleasure Beach (CoN), Esikafo Aba Estates (The Beautiful Ones)

Modernity

- 1 *formal education* – all aspects of education including the actual physical reality of a school/university, the joys and tribulations of going to school, pupil vs. teacher behaviour, the school/university as institution, the social value of education, the high esteem in which educated people are held and the privileges they enjoy
e.g.: Not like one of these *yetse-yetse* things who think putting a toe in a classroom turns them into goddesses. (No Sweetness, p.121; italics as in original)

- 2 *work/profession/office* – types of work, professions, posts and offices both modern and traditional, religious and secular
e.g.: A man who once shocked the entire village and beyond when he threatened to give the dying chief's linguist a 'banana funeral' because the old man owed him eight shillings and sixpence ... (Beyond, p.4; added emphasis)

... he realised that the furthest he could go with his level of education was a messenger clerk at the Ministries, at best. (Beyond, p.5; added emphasis)

- 3 *corruption* – all forms, manifestations and practices of corruption in Ghanaian society
e.g.: When he opens the office door there is loud, pleased laughter inside, and a voice with a vague familiarity says, 'No. This is only your *kola*. Take it as *kola*.' Another laugh. 'I was sure you would understand, if only I could find you properly. My friend, if you get the logs moving for me, I will see you again. Don't worry. I will take you to my own house.' (The Beautiful Ones, p.107; italics as in original)

- 4 *Europe/Europeans (the Western world) in the view/belief of Ghanaians*
e.g.: 'But ... but Maa,' Esi had virtually stammered, 'aren't they her cousins?'
'You know that in our custom, there is nothing like that. Oko's sisters' children are Ogyaanowa's sisters and brothers. Are we Europeans that we would want to show divisions among kin?' (Changes, p.68)

As these are cultural categories, whose boundaries are often not clear-cut, overlaps between the categories above may occur. For instance, the referents of place and geographical names

apparently form part of the physical environment, proper names may denote deities, and proverbs and sayings may relate, for example, to married life or to the parent-child relationship. Sorting them into separate categories was not always easy. However, the principle followed was to put the references into cultural categories that were most strongly suggested by their immediate context.

The data extracted from the corpus and analysed in this work relates only to the above 18 cultural categories. Other types of cultural reference are not taken into consideration.

5.3.2.3 Linguistic categories

Linguistically, these various types of cultural reference are realised in the studied texts either in a standard, non-indigenised form, or, as has been discussed in 4.2.1 and 4.2.2 , in an indigenised form.

Although, when examining the linguistic characteristics of indigenisation, it is customary to talk about lexico-semantic and morpho-syntactic variation (e.g. Bamiro 1994 and 1995, Zabus 1991), I would like to depart from this tradition and approach indigenisation from a different angle, examining each cultural reference as a linguistic sign, ‘the union of a form which signifies, which Saussure calls the *signifiant* or signifier, and an idea signified, the *signifié* or signified’ (Culler, 1976:19; original emphasis). The two elements of the linguistic sign are ‘united in the brain by an associative bond ... and each recalls the other’ (Saussure, 1959:66). Instances of cultural reference as discrete linguistic entities may show unusual features regarding either form or meaning, or both.

Before further investigating the variation possible in the signifiers/signifieds, we need to establish clearly the distinction between what is regarded as non-indigenised and indigenised language use. I quoted B. Kachru on this earlier in 4.2.1:

Using a *non-native* language in native contexts to portray new themes, characters, and situations is like **redefining the semantic and semiotic potential of a language**, making language **mean something which is not part of its traditional “meaning”**. It is

an attempt to give a new African or Asian identity, and thus an extra dimension of meaning. (1982a:341; italics as in original, bold added)

If we follow this line of argument, practically all cultural reference can be considered indigenised in that it refers to cultural signifieds that mean ‘something that is not part of [the] traditional meaning’ of English. Let us take ‘I shouldn’t shake hands with anyone at the airport’ (*Beyond*, p.55) as an example. The cultural signified of this expression is a superstition, according to which by shaking hands with you people who envy you because you have the opportunity to travel to the much admired Western world may take your luck away or may put ‘bad medicine’ in your palm which will make everything go wrong for you on your journey. Obviously, such a meaning is not carried by the above expression as part of its native British English meaning.

Meaning ‘something which is not part of [the] traditional meaning’ of English cannot, however, be the only criterion to decide whether a linguistic item is indigenised or not. Zabus, also quoted earlier in 4.2.2, talks about ‘textualizing linguistic differentiation’ and about discerning ‘behind the surface of the European language imperfectly erased remnants of the African language’ (1991:3). This implies that to be considered indigenised, a linguistic item must exhibit some kind of modification at the lexical, and/or semantic, and/or syntactic level. Let us examine, for instance, ‘kill me quick’ (*CoN*, p.1). It is a grammatically standard second person imperative form. It is, however, an example of indigenised language use as it is an apparent innovation, a coinage meaning locally brewed hard liquor of a very high alcohol content – a signified which, again, is not readily recovered in the context of native British English.

Because the signified of a cultural reference is always problematic by virtue of it carrying in itself the distinctive identity of a group of people, it is difficult to draw the line between what is non-indigenised cultural reference whose meaning falls beyond the cultural experience of the reader and indigenised cultural reference whose signified is problematic. Let us return to our earlier examples. ‘I shouldn’t shake hands with anyone at the airport’ is clearly grammatically well-formed and semantically perfectly normal in Standard English. As such, it can be considered non-indigenised, especially because it does not, by itself, have a culture specific meaning. At the time of the SARS epidemic it would have been perfectly normal for someone travelling to the Far-East to say ‘I shouldn’t shake hands with anyone at the airport’, perhaps

with the thought 'lest I get infected' in mind. Why the non-Ghanaian reader may find it difficult or even impossible to understand the meaning of this utterance in its entirety is because the culturally bound superstition it refers to falls beyond his cultural experience. At the same time, although grammatically well-formed and semantically normal in Standard English, 'kill me quick' is an example of indigenised cultural reference whose signifier is problematic as the phrase undergoes nominalisation, and whose signified is problematic because its culture-bound meaning is not recoverable in the context of native English. Another example of indigenised language use is 'a cement-block house in the village' (*Beyond*, p.140). Its first element 'cement block' is an unusual form – a collocation which, although perfectly intelligible, does not exist in Standard British English. It is a coinage in Ghanaian English and refers to a rectangular block of concrete used for building/construction. Although, technically speaking, it should be a 'concrete block', the word 'concrete' in Ghanaian English appears to be reserved to refer to a mixture of cement and gravel or sand that is used in the foundation of buildings or is not moulded into blocks. 'Cement', used adjectivally, refers to any mixture with cement as one of its ingredients, and in 'cement block' it is to distinguish this particular kind of block from bricks that are made of clay or mud (Sey, 1973:77, 118). It also refers to a cultural signified whose meaning is not recoverable in a native British English context: namely, a particular type of dwelling in the cline of Ghanaian dwellings which is contrasted with the clay or mud houses usually found in villages and, being regarded better than those, carries a positive value judgement, which is reflected in the respect given to anybody who owns such a house.

So for the purposes of the current study cultural reference as defined in 5.3.2.1 will be considered indigenised if either its linguistic form, i.e. the signifier, or the concept it signifies, i.e. the signified, or both, have been modified so that the resulting linguistic entity is either non-existent in Standard British English, or shows irregularity of form, or meaning, or both.

It has to be re-emphasised that, although it is possible to examine them separately, the signifier and the signified are intimately united. While variation in the signifier primarily affects the linguistic form in which the cultural reference is expressed, it may, particularly in the case of loan translation³, result in the modification of meaning, although the latter still remains easily recoverable and, in most cases, unproblematic. At the same time, variation in the signified refers to a change in meaning while the form remains completely unchanged. Variation in the signifier and signified results in the change of both form and meaning.

Table 5.1 below shows the non-indigenised – indigenised dichotomy together with the possible variation within the indigenised category. The examples have either been examined above or will be looked at in detail in later chapters, particularly in 6 and 7.

NON-INDIGENISED	INDIGENISED		
	<i>variation in the signifier</i>	<i>variation in the signified</i>	<i>variation in the signifier & signified</i>
'I shouldn't shake hands with anyone at the airport' (Beyond, p.55)	Dzenawo's son was to be <i>outdoored</i> . (This Earth, p.11) You broke <i>not so?</i> (Beautiful Ones, p.106) 'e be white man chop (No Sweetness, p.16)	Passion Week (Beautiful Ones, p.1) hot drink (Fragments, p.5)	kola (Beautiful Ones, p.95) akpeteshie (Beautiful Ones, p.103) kill me quick (CoN, p.1)

Table 5.1: The non-indigenised – indigenised distinction

Instances of African language expressions and Pidgin English may fit in the 'variation in the signifier' category because of their non-standard form, and also the 'variation in the signifier and signified' category because their signified may refer to an entity which falls outside the cultural context of native-speaker English. I have decided to categorise instances of Pidgin English as indigenised linguistic entities showing variation in the signifier because in understanding written text, recognition of form may play a role in the comprehension of meaning. Such a view seems to be supported by the findings of interactive, reader-driven reading models⁴ according to which comprehension also depends on the printed text, and by Rumelhart, who found that reading was not only a cognitive but also a perceptual process (1977:573). A further point, discussed in detail in 6.2.3 is that, in most instances, once the irregularities of form are eliminated in Pidgin, it becomes intelligible and no longer presents a difficulty for comprehension of meaning, as

illustrated by the above example: *'e be white man chop – it is white man's food*. Instances of African language expressions, on the other hand, are categorised as indigenised linguistic entities showing variation in the signifier and signified. As foreign words in the English text, they show variation in the signifier. Also, they are, almost without exception, used to refer to cultural signifieds that form part of the writer's, but not of native British, cultural environment, and as such, are likely to present problems of understanding for readers who do not share this environment.

African language, or seemingly African language, words in the studied texts also present another kind of difficulty. Because a lot of words and expressions have been absorbed by English – particularly in its regional varieties – whose origin can be traced back to other languages and cultures, it is not always easy and straightforward to decide whether a word belongs to the lexis of standard British English or not, i.e. whether it can be considered non-indigenised or indigenised. A quick look at the etymological component of *The New Shorter Oxford English Dictionary* (1993 edition) entries for the following words occurring or recurrent in the corpus sheds light on a puzzling variety:

- (a) nim *n.* var. of NEEM
 neem *n.* [Hindi *nīm* f. Skt *nimba*]

- (b) cassava *n.* [Taino *casávi*, *cazábbi*, inf. by Fr. *cassave*, Sp. *cassava*]
 yam *n.* [Port. *inhame* or Sp. † *iñame* (mod. *ñame*), prob. of W. African origin
 (cf. Fulani *nyami* eat.)]

- (c) kente *n.* [Twi = *cloth*]
 fufu *n.* var. of FOO-FOO
 foo-foo *n.* [Twi *fufuu*]
 gari *n.* var. of GARRI
 garri *n.* [f. a W. Afr. lang.]

With regard to whether to consider the above words – and other words of similar origin – indigenised or not in the context of the current research, I have made decisions taking both cultural and linguistic factors into consideration. It will, however, be obvious that I regard cultural experience of the signified as being of overriding importance in this particular matter.

Although 'nim' is clearly of non-African origin, its signified, a tropical tree (*Azadirachta indica*, family Meliaceae) is part of the Ghanaian natural environment, but not of the natural environment of Britain. This signals very little, or rather no, likelihood of 'nim' being part of native British cultural experience – 'nim' is something foreign to it. This foreignness is reinforced by 'nim' being a borrowing in English. Considering 'nim' in the light of this double – cultural and linguistic – foreignness, I have decided to regard it as indigenised.

'Cassava' and 'yam', on the other hand, are regarded as non-indigenised. 'Cassava' is of non-African origin, whereas 'yam' may be traced back to a West African language. Regardless of their origin, they are both borrowings in English. Their signifieds are tropical plants, very much part of everyday Ghanaian reality. So far, they are very similar to 'nim'. What makes a difference, however, is that they have been known and available in Britain long enough to become part of British culinary experience – they can be bought in big supermarkets as well as at greengrocers', figure in recipes and are prepared and eaten just like other 'common' tropical fruits and vegetables such, for example, as orange, banana, pineapple, coconut, okra and sweet potato.

The words in group (c) above are invariably considered indigenised. Not only are they borrowings in English from Twi, a Ghanaian language, or in the case of 'gari' from an unspecified West African language which could as well be a Ghanaian language, but their signifieds are essential elements of Ghanaian reality and as such fall outside native British cultural experience. It is more than probable that in an otherwise standard British English text these words would be used in an anthropological or ethnographic context and would refer exclusively to culturally defined objects.

Some words are categorised both as non-indigenised and indigenised/problematic signified, depending on whether they are used in their literal sense or in a culturally defined meaning. For example, 'mother' is non-indigenised when it is used to refer to somebody's biological mother, as in 'my poor mother back home in black Africa' (*Beyond*, p.2). It is, however, indigenised when it is used as a form of respectfully addressing an older woman, as in

'Maami Amfoa, where are you going?'
My daughter, I am going to Cape Coast.

‘And what is our old mother going to do with such swift steps? Is it serious?’
My daughter, it is very serious.
‘Mother, may God go with you.’ (*No Sweetness*, p.40)

5.3.2.4 Authorial strategies

The authorial strategies that may either facilitate or hinder reader understanding of cultural reference have been identified as cushioning, contextualisation, ethnographic explanation, providing a glossary, and complete withdrawal of assistance to the reader.

These methods, as well as the findings of the questionnaire regarding them, will be discussed in Chapter 7.

5.3.2.5 Codes

In the actual coding of cultural reference, I have adopted codes which make the identification of an item fairly easy:

Codes for the source of cultural reference:

BH	<i>Beyond the Horizon</i>
BO	<i>The Beautiful Ones Are Not Yet Born</i>
CA	<i>Crossroads at Ankobea</i>
CL	<i>Changes – a love story</i>
CN	<i>The Clothes of Nakedness</i>
DT	<i>The Dancing Tortoise</i>
FR	<i>Fragments</i>
GB	<i>The Gab Boys</i>
GC	<i>Grief Child</i>
GW	<i>The Girl Who Can and Other Stories</i>
MG	<i>Of Men and Ghosts</i>
NP	<i>The Narrow Path</i>
NS	<i>No Sweetness Here</i>
OS	<i>Our Sister Killjoy</i>
SM	<i>The Strange Man</i>

SP	<i>The Sound of Pestles and Other Stories</i>
TC	<i>The Catechist</i>
TE	<i>This Earth, My Brother ...</i>
TH	<i>The Healers</i>
WN	<i>A Wind from the North and Other Stories</i>

Codes for the types of cultural reference:

pw	Physical World
1	physical environment/cultural artefacts
2	food and drink
3	clothing
r	Human Relationships
1	relations between the sexes
2	marriage/separation/divorce
3	parent-child/grown-up-child relationship
4	family, kinship
sw	Spiritual World
1	traditions/customs/beliefs/superstitions
2	ancestors/deities
3	birth/death/funeral/afterlife
4	Christianity/Islam
ps	Proverbs and Sayings
pn	Proper Names
1	personal names
2	place and geographical names
m	Modernity
1	formal education
2	work/profession/office
3	corruption
4	Europe/Europeans (the Western world) in the view/belief of Ghanaians

Codes for the linguistic categories:

NI	non-indigenised linguistic item
Isr	indigenised linguistic item with variation in the signifier
Isd	indigenised linguistic item with variation in the signified

Isrd indigenised linguistic item with variation in the signifier and signified

Codes for writer strategies to facilitate reader understanding of indigenised language:

cont contextualisation
cush cushioning
ethno ethnographic explanation
glos glossary
0 no assistance to reader

The order in which these codes follow each other is the following: source – type – linguistic features – writer strategies.

Examples: I shouldn't, say, shake hands with anyone at the airport <BH> <sw1> <NI> <0>
kill me quick <CN> <pw2> <Isd> <0>

The following is a coded passage from K. O. Aidoo's *Of Men and Ghosts*, p.5:

These days Kani <MG> <pn1> <Isrd> <0> rarely went into the bush <MG> <pw1> <NI> <0>. Even when he did it was to visit some of his labourers <MG> <m2> <NI> <0> staying in cottages <MG> <pw1> <NI> <0> on two of his farms <MG> <pw1> <NI> <0>. He was from a long line of men who had been prosperous. At the root of it had been someone called Kankanfo <MG> <pn1> <Isrd> <cush> - the field marshal - who had lived sometime before the great war in which white men had burnt down the paramount town <MG> <pw1> <Isr> <0> of the State of Return-on-Hearing-it <MG> <pn2> <Isrd> <0>. This man, legend had it, was so powerful that he could sell people to white men at Sweetness-Stop <MG> <pn2> <Isrd> <0>. Now Kani <MG> <pn1> <Isrd> <0> had big farms <MG> <pw1> <NI> <0> and many plots <MG> <pw1> <NI> <0> uncultivated yet. He had a store <MG> <pw1> <NI> <0> too. In it were some merchandise of the white man. It was brought from Sweetness-Stop <MG> <pn2> <Isd> <0> by the porters <MG> <m2> <NI> <0> of Kani <MG> <pn1> <Isrd> <0> who carried his rubber <MG> <pw1> <NI> <0> to sell there.

5.3.3 *Methods of analysis*

In preparation to be able to address the objectives set out in 5.2 above, the corpus of coded texts was processed with the help of WordSmith Tools (Oxford University Press, 1996) for the various cultural, linguistic and authorial strategies categories, and tables were obtained. Likewise, the data collected by the questionnaire was transferred into tables for ease of analysis. This completed, the following procedures have been followed.

For **Objective 1**, the tables obtained by means of WordSmith Tools were meticulously sifted through manually and the data were sorted into categories according to the linguistic characteristics of the examples. Then a detailed linguistic analysis of variation found in the signifier, signified, and signifier and signified, respectively, was carried out, drawing on the work done in this field particularly by Bamiro (1994, 1995), Sey (1973), Ahulu (1992), Zabus (1991) and Huber (1999). It has to be noted, however, that although some of the categories of variation in this study are inevitably found to be the same as categories of indigenisation described by other researchers, both the categorisation and the ensuing analysis are data driven, and only categories required by this specific data are adopted and examined.

For **Objective 2**, the various authorial strategies intended to facilitate reader interpretation of cultural reference are described, and their effect on reader interpretation analysed in the framework of Relevance Theory (described in 4.3.2), using evidence provided by the questionnaire. Although not void of basic quantifying, the analysis is carried out using a mainly qualitative approach necessitated by the nature of the data and the theoretical framework chosen.

For **Objective 3**, based on data obtained by means of WordSmith Tools, the first and the later generation of Ghanaian writers are compared with regard to their use of indigenised language, particularly of indigenised cultural reference, and of authorial strategies intended to facilitate reader understanding. Although primarily qualitative, this analysis makes use of more quantification.

5.4 Conclusion

The present chapter sets out the parameters within which the current research is to be conducted. Particularly important is the delineation of the novel approach – of examining each cultural reference as a linguistic sign – to the description of indigenised language, as well as the definitions of what is regarded in the current study as cultural reference and as indigenised language use.

The findings are reported in chapters 6, 7 and 8.

Notes

- ¹ Evidence for this can be found, among others, in Egejuru (1980), and indirectly through the discussion of the writer's choice of language in Ngugi (1986), Achebe (1988), *Research in African Literatures* 23/1 (1992), Walder (1998).
- ² The 'classics' in this area are B. Kachru (1982b, 1986, 1995) and Smith (1987). Others include Zabus (1991), Y. Kachru (1995), Baker and Eggington (1999) and Lehtonen (2000).
- ³ Various examples of loan translation, including *covercloth*, are analysed in 6.2.1.5.
- ⁴ For example Rumelhart (1977), Stanovich (1980), Kintsch and van Dijk (1978), Just and Carpenter (1980), Anderson and Pearson (1984) and Pearson and Tierney (1984).

6 CULTURAL REFERENCE: CATEGORIES OF INDIGENISATION IN THE DATA

6.1 Introduction

The aim of the current chapter is to give a detailed linguistic description of the indigenised language examples yielded by the data. Such a description is necessary because it highlights the complexities of linguistic variation in cultural reference, examines the areas of divergence from Standard British English and explains their origin, thereby pointing to the source of reader difficulty. As such, it provides a basis for the examination, in Chapter 7, of authorial strategies, and of reader interpretation.

In Chapter 4 I examine categories of indigenisation as suggested by Kachru, Zabus and Bamiro. While they are indicative of areas of interest, they conform to what is required by the specific data they are used for. As I have taken a novel approach to indigenisation described in 5.3.2, I will examine linguistic variation in the signifier (6.2), in the signified (6.3) and in the signifier and signified (6.4), and will adopt categories which are required by my data. The Ghanaian languages involved in the analysis are those of the writers' mother tongues or those used in Ghana as lingua franca: Akan (Fante and Twi), Ga, Ewe and Hausa.

The conclusion (6.5) brings together the linguistic and cultural categories and examines their relationship.

6.2 Variation in the signifier

As discussed in 5.3.2, variation in the signifier affects primarily the linguistic form in which the cultural reference is expressed and occurs both at lexical and syntactic level. The data yields the following categories:

- *Lexical innovation*: (a) clipping, (b) unusual collocations, (c) backformation, (d) loan translation, (e) multiple word-formation processes, (f) irregular spelling
- *Syntactic variation*: (a) irregular tag questions, (b) omission of function words, (c) omission of the dummy subject 'it', (d) omission of direct object in ditransitive verbs, (e) irregular use of count/non-count nouns

As further explained in 5.3.2, Pidgin in this study is regarded as presenting a case of problematic signifier. However, as our interest here is not in its linguistic description, which would fall far beyond the scope of the current work, but rather in its literary representation, it will be discussed below independently from the above categories.

Where possible because of the relatively small number of examples within a category, there will be an attempt to examine each one of them individually. Where the number of examples within a category exceeds the feasibility of their individual examination, some of the most pertinent examples will be analysed, while the rest will be relegated to a full list of all the examples of cultural reference found in the corpus of Ghanaian writing under investigation. The full list can be found in Appendix 1.

6.2.1 *Lexical innovation*

6.2.1.1 Clipping

The data yields only four examples of clipping:

- (1) *B* (Gab Boys, p.178) <pn1>
- (2) *Bibi* (Girl Who Can, p.131) <pn1>

B is a popular pet name for any woman whose English first name starts with B, e.g. Beatrice, Bernadette, Bridget, etc. English names starting with other letters do not readily get clipped this way, nor do Ghanaian language women's names. This process, however, is quite productive in

that if a woman's name is the combination of an English first name and a Ghanaian language family name, e.g. Bernadette Boatemaa, she will most likely be called BB (pronounced 'bee-bee'), alternatively *Bibi*, by her family and friends.

(3) *Sis* (SoP, p.1) <pn1>

Clipped from 'Sister', it is the affectionate way of addressing or referring to a female sibling. Unlike its full form, it is not used in combination with names. Similarly to it, however, it can refer both to a younger or an older sister. It has to be noted, though, that the full form + name version, e.g. 'Sister Abena', is more respectful and is required in certain situations, for instance when speaking about or addressing one's older sister. Calling an elder sister simply by her name would be a sign of disrespect.

(4) *mokes* (Gab Boys, p.13) <pw3>

Mokes, clipped form 'moccasins' is very likely to be outdated in-group slang ('The Gab Boys' was written in 1967) influenced by American English.

6.2.1.2 Unusual collocations

Although 'it may be argued that lexical (in)congruity is dependent on semantic (in)compatibility' (Wales, 1989:77), the collocations found in the data are unusual and unexpected rather than semantically incompatible. They can be divided in the following groups:

(i) *Writers' creations*

(5) *adjustable chair* (Girl Who Can, p.2) <pw1>

(6) *paramount town* (Of Men, p.5) <pw1>

(7) *waste box* (The Beautiful Ones, p.7) <pw1>

These are neither habitual collocations in Ghanaian English, nor traceable to Ghanaian language expressions, but rather individual writer's creations in an attempt to add more linguistic *couleur locale* to their work.

(ii) *Collocations with redundant elements*

(8) *backyard garden* (Wind, p.11) <pw1>

In this collocation not only is 'yard' redundant, but 'backyard' is a loan translation from the Twi *enfikyirifuo* – *enfikyiri* (backyard) + *efuo* (farm). It may be noted that there is no Akan word for 'garden' – both the Fante *haban* and the Twi *efuo* mean 'farm' as traditionally people in Ghana used to have farms, not gardens. As 'garden' is a borrowing in Akan from English, and 'backyard' a loan translation from Akan into English, (8) is a collocation that may be called a 'cross' loan-blend. An example of a loan-blend proper is *tro-tro lorry* (SoP, p.61; Appendix 1: 859), where 'tro-tro' is a borrowing from Pidgin into English and 'lorry' is a borrowing from English into Ghanaian languages, particularly Fante of the Akan group and Ga, and Pidgin. The expression itself is tautologous as 'tro-tro' is Pidgin for 'lorry'.

Other examples are

(9) *cinema house* (Beyond, p.61; Girl Who Can, p.4) <pw1>

(10) *trading shop* (Crossroads, p.8) <pw1>

(11) *transport trucks* (Beyond, p.57) <pw1>

where 'house', 'trading' and 'transport' are redundant, respectively. It seems likely that in Ghanaian English 'trading' is used to emphasize the difference between retail outlets and other kinds of shops, e.g. workshops where things are made or repaired rather than sold, and 'transport', analogously to 'transport-ship' and 'transport-plane', emphasizes the difference between trucks used for transporting goods and those used for the conveyance of people.

(iii) *Collocations with a synecdochic element*

- (12) *grammar education* (No Sweetness, p.72) <ml>

This collocation is unusual because the ellipsis of ‘school’ creates a synecdoche non-existent in British English, in which ‘grammar’ stands for the notion of grammar school.

‘Cement’ is the ‘bonding’ element in (13)-(18) below:

- (13) *cement block* (Catechist, p.109) <pw1>
(14) *cement block walls* (Strange Man, p.) <pw1>
(15) *cement-block house* (Beyond, p.) <pw1>
(16) *cement verandah* (Gab Boys, p.89) <pw1>
(17) a small *cement house* in town (Beyond, p.) <pw1>
(18) *cement paper* (This Earth, p.171) <pw1>

In (13)-(17) ‘cement’ stands for concrete, of which it is only an ingredient. Sey explains that in Ghanaian English ‘cement is used adjectivally to qualify any structure with cement as one of its ingredients, to distinguish it from structures made of clay or mud’ (1973:77). Neither ‘cement block’, nor ‘concrete block’ are habitual collocations in British English, ‘breeze block’ being the commonly used expression. Whereas in British English ‘cement’ does not readily collocate either with ‘verandah’ or ‘house’, *cement floor* (This Earth, p.182) and *cement path* (This Earth, p.170; SoP, p.75) are accepted - therefore non-indigenised – collocations.

(18) is different from the rest of the group in that here ‘cement’ is not an ingredient, but the content of the sack whose material becomes recycled as wrapping paper.

(iv) *Collocations (or their elements) retaining older forms*

- (19) *trafficator bulb* (Wind, p.26) <pw1>

The use of ‘trafficator’ instead of ‘indicator’ shows a tendency to retain older forms that are no longer current in present-day British English.

(v) *Analogical construction*

(20) *the mouth of the road* (No Sweetness, p.130) <pw1>

The above expression is based on physical similarity as well as linguistic analogy: a road junction is likened to the mouth of a river. In Standard British English ‘mouth’ does not readily enter into association with ‘road’, which makes (20) unusual – perhaps poetic in certain contexts. Ama Ata Aidoo uses it as a stylistic device to continue to signal that the character is grounded in his native speech community and is thinking and interacting in his native language.

6.2.1.3 Backformation

(21) *Sissie* (Girl Who Can, No Sweetness, Our Sister) <pn1>

Sissie is a hypocorism created by clipping ‘sister’ to ‘sis’ and adding *-ie*. It retains a close connection with one of the core meanings of ‘sister’: a female fellow citizen, a female of the same race, colour, class, profession, etc. (*The New Shorter Oxford English Dictionary*). A favourite with Ama Ata Aidoo (all instances come from her works), it is used as a personal name. The characters called *Sissie* are invariably modern emancipated Ghanaian women on a study trip in Western Europe or North America, and by choosing such a name Aidoo emphasizes their strong roots in and unsevered ties with Africa.

6.2.1.4 Loan translation

The data yields an interesting variety of loan translations. Some are ‘loan translation proper’, i.e. translations from African languages into English:

- (22) *bush meat* (Gab Boys, p.184) <pw1>
- (23) *covercloth* <pw3> (Fragments, p.142) <pw3>
- (24) *cover cloths* <pw3> (Fragments, p.137) <pw3>
- (25) *market-money* (SoP, p.36) <pw1>
- (26) *outdoored*: ‘Dzenawo’s son was to be *outdoored*.’ (This Earth, p.11) <sw1>
‘Once John has not been *outdoored* he is not a chief.’
(Crossroads, p.48) <sw1>
- (27) *outdooring* (Crossroads, p.48, 49 / Fragments, p.87) <sw1>
- (28) *sponge* (Beautiful Ones, p.101, 102) <pw1>
- (29) *sponge strands* (Beautiful Ones, p.102) <pw1>

(22) denotes ‘game’ as opposed to meat from home-bred animals. Sey (1973:76) explains that in Ghanaian English it is a loan translation from the Akan *ha nam* and it can mean either meat – *nam* – from the forrest/bush – *ha mu* – or meat from a hunting expedition – *ha* – as *ha* is homonymous. The fact that Ahulu identifies *bush meat* as a non-standard form (1992:14), ‘game’ being the standard at the acrolectal level in Ghana, also testifies to it being indigenised.

(23) and (24) are differently spelt variants of the same word. They refer to a piece of cloth worn by women as a stole. Sey (1973:89) identifies the Fante word *ahatado* – ‘that which covers’ – as its source.

I have been able to identify (25) as a translation from the Hausa *kudi cin kasuwa* – ‘money + of + market’. However, it is very likely that other Ghanaian languages have the same or a similar expression. This highlights the fact that in a multilingual environment, such as Ghana, it may not be possible to trace a loan translation in English back to an ultimate source language – there may be more than one. Our choices are influenced not only by our limited knowledge, if any, of

Ghanaian languages, but also by our limited knowledge of a writer's linguistic repertoire and by our limited access to informants whose knowledge of languages may vary but is not infinite.

(27) is a loan translation from the Ga *kpodziemo* – 'going out' (Sey, 1973:86). As a noun, it refers to the ceremony that marks the child's first appearance in public and is held on the eighth day after a child's birth. It is also used in a verb form, as in (26). Although the Akan people call a similar ceremony *ntetea* – eighth day ceremony (Rattray, 1927:61, 409) –, it is the loan translation from Ga that is used universally in English. As evidenced both by (26) and (27), the same expressions are also used analogously in English to refer both to the act of presenting a newly elected chief in public and to the presentation ceremony.

Sey identifies (28) as a loan translation from the Akan *sa wee* – 'sponge chewing' – and gives the meaning as 'twigs from certain plants, beaten into a fibrous mass and dried; used for cleaning the teeth after being moistened and softened by chewing' (1973:77). In English the word order fits the adjective + noun pattern: 'chewing sponge'. If the context makes the meaning clear, the adjectival element can be omitted and 'sponge' used alone, as in (28), or in collocation with other words, as in (29).

(30) is a case of what can be regarded as a 'loan translation cum blend':

(30) *chop money* (No Sweetness, p.131; Wind, p.49) <pw1>

The source is the Fante *edzidzi sika* or Twi *edidi sika* – 'eating + money'. The first half of 'eating money', which would be a loan translation proper, gets replaced by 'chop' – a borrowing from Pidgin, creating the blend. Different from 'housekeeping money' in Standard British English, which includes all the expenses of the maintenance of a household, *chop money* is money given to somebody to buy food for the household or the family (Sey, 1973:79).

The remaining examples of loan translation in the data are a special kind of 'two-tiered' calque:

(31) *clothing store* (CoN, p.211) <pw1>

(32) *my little aunt* (No Sweetness, p.131) <r4>

(33) *lorry road* (Gab Boys, p.88) <pw1>

(34) *motor road* (Narrow Path, p.3) <pw1>

In (31) ‘store’, as many other words for things and ideas originally associated with British and/or European culture, is borrowed into Akan from English, and is habitually used in conjunction with *ntama* – ‘clothing’. The expression *ntama store* is then translated back to English resulting in *clothing store*. In (32) ‘aunt’ is borrowed into Fante, then *ante ketsewa* – ‘aunt younger/junior’, a term used to refer to an aunt who is younger than you – is translated back into English. Similarly, in (33) and (34) ‘lorry’ and ‘motor’, get borrowed into Akan, then the Akan expressions, *lorry okwan* and *motor okwan*, get translated back into English. The result is the co-occurrence of words which is unexpected and not commonly used in British English.

6.2.1.5 Multiple word-formation processes

The data has only four examples of this variation:

- (35) *enstool*: ‘you are going to be *enstooled* officially’ (Crossroads, p.50) <sw1>
‘whether he will be *enstooled* at all’ (Crossroads, p.54) <sw1>
- (36) *enstoolment* (Crossroads, p.11) <sw1>
- (37) *destool*: ‘The people of Kramo village rebelled and *destooled* their chief.’ (Crossroads, p.54) <sw1>
‘the Ankobea chief was going to be *destooled*’ (Crossroads, p.105) <sw1>
‘Nana Kwesi Mensa IV would be declared *destooled*’ (Crossroads, p.108) <sw1>
- (38) *destoolment* (Crossroads, p.107) <sw1>

The word-formation process involves the conversion of the noun ‘stool’ into a transitive verb with the meaning ‘put or set a person on a stool’. By way of derivation we then get ‘enstool’ –

install, set a chief on a stool (the symbol of the ruler's office), formally invest with the authority of a chief –, which is based on the analogy with 'enthroned'. 'Destool' – depose, remove from a stool, remove a chief from office and authority – is formed in the same way and is analogous with 'dethrone'. Further derivation (and analogy with 'enthronement' and 'dethronement') results in the nouns 'enstoolment' and 'destoolment' denoting the action of enstooling/destooling or the fact of being enstooled/destooled.

6.2.1.6 Irregular spelling

(39) The *Beautiful Ones Are Not Yet Born* (title; also p.183) <pw1>

'Beautiful' occurs in the part of Armah's novel included in the corpus five times with the correct spelling. The unique phrase with the irregular spelling appears only twice: as the title and at the end of the novel as decoration on the back of a small bus. It is believed that Armah himself saw the phrase on a 'mammy wagon', a truck converted to carry people, and found it appropriate for his symbolic fable. This suggests that such an irregularity is not so much a common feature of Ghanaian English as it is an individual product indicative of the original producer's – identifiable as the driver/owner of the 'mammy wagon' – educational, hence English language, standard.

6.2.2 Syntactic variation

6.2.2.1 Irregular tag questions

The irregular tags observed in the data are *no?* and *not so?*:

(40) You would all have laughed at me, *no?* (*Girl Who Can*, p.48) <sw1>

(41) You broke *not so?* (*Beautiful Ones*, p.106) <pw1>

In English the structure of tag questions is based on contrasting polarity: a positive main clause is followed by a negative tag if a positive answer is expected, and a negative main clause by a positive tag if a negative answer is expected. In many African languages, however, 'the parallel structure consists of a single clause with a postposed particle' (Bamiro, 1995:194). As Bamiro points out, in Akan 'the contrasting polarity tags are collapsed in the expression *mebua?*' (ibid, p.195) – 'am I lying?' or *entefaa?* – 'is it not so?':

Oba ha, *mebua?* – He came here, am I lying?

Oba ha, *entefaa?* – He came here, is it not so?

Oamma ha, *mebua?* – He did not come here, am I lying?

Oamma ha, *entefaa?* – He did not come here, is it not so?

At the same time, *not so?* may equally be influenced by Pidgin, which also has the tag *no bi so?* (Todd, 1982:301). Bokamba observes that 'there has been a strong and mutual influence between WAVE (i.e. West African Vernacular English) and the pidgin Englishes. Consequently, certain aspects of the syntax of these otherwise distinct varieties have become undistinguishable for certain classes of speakers' (1991:503-504). This is further corroborated by the fact that *You broke not so?* appears in Armah's novel as graffiti in a Pidgin textual environment.

Sey (1973:43) points out that the Akan interrogative particle *nkyi* can precede both a positive and a negative statement to indicate that a confirmation of the statement is required:

Nkyi oba ha? – He came here?

Nkyi oamma ha? – He did not come here?

Although the uniformity of the interrogative particle both for positive and negative statements may have an indirect influence on the indiscriminate use of the tag *no?* in English, it seems more likely that *no?* has come about as the collapsed form of the Pidgin *no bi so?* or the 'clipped' translation of the Akan *entefaa?* – 'is it not so?'.

6.2.2.2 Omission of function words

As observed in Bamiro 1995, the sources of omission of function words in African English are difficult to determine with certainty. Bokamba (1982:80-81) attributes an important role to interference from African languages. At the same time, the influence of Pidgin English is not negligible as it ‘does not use overt articles or auxiliary items that correspond to the English ones’ (Bamiro, 1995:192). The data yields examples for (i) the omission of articles and (ii) the omission of the main linking verb ‘be’.

(i) Omission of articles

- (43) *Who born* □ *fool* (Beautiful Ones, p.106) <pw1>
(... a fool)

(ii) Omission of the main linking verb ‘be’

- (42) *You* □ *broke not so?* (Beautiful Ones, p.106) <pw1>
(You are broke ...)
- (44) *Who* □ *born fool* (Beautiful Ones, p.106) <pw1>
(Who was born ...)
- (45) *Contrey* □ *broke* (Beautiful Ones, p.106) <pw1>
(Contrey [countryman] is broke)
- (46) *Money* □ *sweet pass all* (Beautiful Ones, p.106) <pw1>
(Money is sweet ...)
- (47) *Vagina* □ *sweet* (Beautiful Ones, p.106) <pw1>
(Vagina is sweet)

This tendency to omit the linking verb 'be' is normally observable where the context or other grammatical features are adequate.

(42)-(47) all appear in Armah's novel as graffiti in a Pidgin contextual environment, which, in this particular instance, makes a strong case for Pidgin rather than a Ghanaian language as the most likely influence.

6.2.2.3 Omission of the dummy subject 'it'

- (48) *Money sweet* □ *pass* ■ *all* (Beautiful Ones, p.106) <pw1>
(... it pass[es] all)

Bamiro (1995:191) attributes the omission of the dummy subject 'it' both to the influence of West African languages, and to the 'strong mutual influence between WAE [West African English] and pidgin English', which has contributed to the simplification of West African English, at least among those speakers who belong to the lower educated social strata, and whose linguistic behaviour is characterised by the use of Pidgin. This view is corroborated not only by the fact that the linking verb 'be' is omitted, but by yet another tendency towards simplification in (48): the omission of the Present Simple 3rd person singular suffix -s, and by the fact that, as has been indicated above, (48) features in the novel in a Pidgin context.

6.2.2.4 Omission of direct object in ditransitive 'give'

The discussion of ditransitive 'give' will be confined to the construction 'give somebody something to drink' as the data yield the following example:

- (49) *We give our ghosts* □ *to drink*. (Fragments, p.7) <sw1>
(We give our ghosts something/wine/gin to drink.)

It seems very unlikely that the omission of the direct object in (49) is an influence from Akan, Armah's mother tongue. In Fante the verb 'drink' is *nom*. The noun 'drink' is *anondze*, which consists of the nominalising morpheme *a-*, the root morpheme *-nom-* with its assimilated end consonant *n*, and the derivational morpheme *-dze* which means 'thing'. The noun *anondze* literally means 'drink thing', and is used as the direct object in the sentence

<i>Ye</i>	<i>ma</i>	<i>hon</i>	<i>anondze.</i>
S	V	O _{ind}	O _{dir}
(We	give	them	drink [thing].)

In the context of pouring libation, which is the context for (49), normally the noun *nsa* – 'alcoholic beverage' – is used as O_{dir}:

<i>Ye</i>	<i>ma</i>	<i>hon</i>	<i>nsa.</i>
S	V	O _{ind}	O _{dir}
(We	give	them	wine/gin/etc.)

This shows that in Akan the direct object of 'give' in this construction is invariably expressed by a noun (or possibly a pronoun) and in the given context cannot be omitted as wine, gin, etc. is an essential element of libation pouring.

(49) is spoken by an old woman, and thus gives the impression that the actual words uttered are spoken in Akan, which makes Akan appear to be the source of the irregularity in English. The above examples, however, show that this is not the case. In 4.3.2.3 mention has been made of Armah's proficiency in French as a possible source of interference. In French the expression 'to give somebody something to drink/to give somebody a drink' is *donner à boire à quelq'un* (Collins-Robert French Concise Dictionary), where, unlike in English, *donner* (give) has no obligatory direct object possibly because *boire* (drink) semantically determines the range of what it can be. While the following sentences are grammatically correct in French, in their English counterparts it is not possible to omit the direct object:

Donne-moi à boire.
(Give me [something] to drink.)

Il m'a donné à boire.

(He gave me [something] to drink.)

Nous leur donnons à boire.

(We give them [something] to drink.)

(49) is embedded in the context of the Akan tradition of pouring libation, and has a non-English speaker locutor, which points to Fante as the source language behind the grammatical irregularity of this sentence. I have demonstrated, however, that the interference is more likely to be from French, of which Armah is a highly competent user. Because the 'transference' (Zabus, 1991:104) happens not between Fante and English, but between French and English, I consider this a case of 'false indigenisation', the end product of which is made to look as if it originated in an indigenous language but in fact it does not.

6.2.2.5 Irregular use of count/non-count nouns

The only examples found in the data are

(50) a couple of *quids* (Gab Boys, p.183) <pw1>

(51) a *white calico* (Wind, p.15) <pw3>

'Quid' belongs to the same group of nouns as, for example, 'sheep', 'salmon' and 'trout', which do not mark for plural. The singular-plural contrast in their case is morphologically absent, but it can be recovered from the syntax. Sey points out that in Akan there are nouns which are morphologically similar (1973:29). It is, therefore, unlikely that the irregularity in (50) can be traced back to interference from Akan. Ahulu observes that 'difficulties that are related to the determination of the NP's number generally involve questions that relate to the head noun. For example, in structures like *a lot of boys*, *a number of questions*, *plenty of friends*, etc., which is the head: *lot* or *boys*, *number* or *questions*, *plenty* or *friends*? The fact that the answer could be either item in each pair (e.g., it could be *lot* or *boys*) makes it necessary to allow that the syntactic number of an NP may not be determined by its head noun' (1992:34), which

undoubtedly adds to the difficulty of a non-native user of English. It seems probable, however, that 'quid' being the informal expression for a pound in money, the irregular plural in (50) results from a generalisation based on their close semantic association, as well as from the underdifferentiation of their morphology.

(51) is not an impossibility in Standard British English, where it refers to a particular sort of calico cloth which is plain white as opposed to printed. In Ghanaian English *calico* undergoes semantic extension to mean 'head-cloth/head-dress made of calico'. As this meaning gets lexicalised in *calico*, it, in turn, acquires the count property of 'head-cloth/head-dress, which allows it to combine with the indefinite article.

6.2.3 *Pidgin*

As has been mentioned earlier, my current interest in Ghanaian Pidgin¹ is not in its detailed linguistic description as a spoken variety but in its sociolinguistic aspects and literary representation.

In Ghana Pidgin is predominantly an urban phenomenon, and it is not as widespread as in other English speaking West African countries, for example in Nigeria (Criper, 1971:14, Huber, 1999:156). It is usually associated with illiteracy and with the uneducated section of society, and as such, is stigmatised (Huber, 1999:140, 148, 154-63; Zabus, 1991:51). In his study Huber establishes the existence of two distinct varieties of Ghanaian Pidgin that form a continuum 'with basilectal varieties that are associated with the less educated sections of society, to more mesolectal and acrolectal forms that are usually spoken by speakers who have at least progressed to the upper forms of secondary school' (1999:139-40). Huber identifies these varieties as the 'educated' and 'uneducated' varieties of Ghanaian Pidgin, but notes that this Pidgin continuum is not the same as Criper's (1971) or Sey's (1973:14-8) clines², which describe various approximations to Standard Ghanaian English. He further observes that

Pidgin 'basilect' is only *associated* with uneducated contexts, because it is in these settings that it is most often heard. The educational attainment of a speaker is not,

however, a sufficient indicator whether or not he or she speaks basilectal or acrolectal Pidgin. Although a number of differences exists between 'basilectal' and more 'acrolectal' GhaPE [Ghanaian Pidgin English], the structural differences are not so vast as to warrant speaking of a continuum in the sense that this term is usually used by Creolists with reference to e.g. the situation in the Caribbean. (op.cit., p.140)

Huber points out that the difference between the two varieties of Ghanaian Pidgin is not so much in their structure or phonology as it is in their lexis and the functions they serve. Uneducated or basilectal Ghanaian Pidgin is used as a lingua franca in highly multilingual settings; at the same time, more educated or acrolectal varieties do not fulfil basic communication needs – they function as in-group languages to express group identity and solidarity (op.cit., p.140). Another important point is that although a rough correlation can be established between basilectal Ghanaian Pidgin and uneducated speakers with no or little command of Standard Ghanaian English, and between more acrolectal Ghanaian Pidgin and (more) educated speakers with a better command of Standard Ghanaian English, this does not necessarily imply that the latter is more Standard Ghanaian English-like than the former. Furthermore, uneducated Ghanaian Pidgin, by virtue of it being used in linguistically heterogeneous contexts 'characterized by low educational attainment of the speakers – in other words, settings which diminish (but not necessarily exclude) the usefulness of an areal Ghanaian lingua franca such as Twi (or Hausa) and at the same preclude StGhaE [Standard Ghanaian English] as a language of interethnic communication' (Huber, 1999:142), can be called a non-institutionalised variety. Educated Ghanaian Pidgin, on the other hand, can be called an institutionalised variety as it is acquired and used in well-defined institutions such as secondary schools and universities. As Pidgin has wide currency in the Ghanaian police and armed forces, the Pidgin spoken by policemen and soldiers can be considered another institutionalised variety.

Apart from the varieties described above there is yet another pidginised English in Ghana which is called 'Minimal Pidgin' by Criper (1971:14), 'Broken English' by Sey (1973:2) and 'Houseboy Pidgin' by Huber (1995:fn2). This variety is different from other Ghanaian Pidgin varieties in that it is not transmitted from one generation of speakers to the next as the other varieties are but is a synchronic simplification process. It is an English-lexicon variety used by illiterate speakers to communicate with their English speaking superiors and is 'characterized by high inter- and intra-individual variability and a strong influence from the speakers' first

language. This jargon is very much dependent on the speaker's mother tongue and is an *ad hoc* means of communication' (Huber, 1999:153).

Because of its inferior status, Pidgin in Ghana is rarely used in the printed or electronic media or in films. When it occurs, it is spoken by uneducated characters, or its association with a certain jocularity is exploited for popular humour. Some of the more political magazines use mock Pidgin in satire. In Ghanaian novels Pidgin is statistically more infrequently and more episodically represented than, for example, in novels in Nigeria³ (Zabus, 1991:51). Prevalent sociolinguistic prejudice is complemented by technical difficulty. Being primarily a spoken medium, Pidgin has no written or orthographic tradition, so scripting it for use in literature may well prove demanding for the writer. Agheyisi demonstrates the various levels through which its written representation progresses to become what Zabus calls an 'artefactual dialect' (1991:175):

Level 1: Andrew kari yu trɔbu komot fɔ dE. yu nɔsi se na wok i dè du. hEn! wetin yu dè tɔk? ... if yu hiE di moni we dEn tek bayam yu gÒ rɔn.

Level 2: Andrew, kari you trobu komot fo de. Yu no si se na wok i de du. Hen! Wetin yu de tok? ... If yu hear di moni we den tek buyam yu go ron.

Level 3: Andrew, carry you trobu comot fo dere. You no see say na work i dey do? Hen! Wetin you dey talk? ... If you hear de money wey dem tek buy'em, you go run.

Level 4: Andrew, carry you trouble come out for dere. You no see say na work he dey do? Hen! What ting you dey talk? ... If you hear de money which dem take buy'em, you go run.

Level 5: Andrew, carry your mischief come out from there. You no see that is work he doing? Hen! What thing you talking? ... If you hear the money that they paid, you go run.

Level 6: Andrew, cut out your mischief from there; can't you see that she is busy? Ha, what are you saying? ... If you heard how much they paid for it, you would run. (1984:217)

Even at the risk of stripping Pidgin of its essentially African elements and making it look like just a corrupted version of Standard English, for the sake of intelligibility the writer may opt for Level 3, which offers maximum accuracy of transcription with a moderate approximation to English. However, the transcription of Level 3 'may tax the patience even of a well-meaning local or international reader' (Zabus, 1991:176), so most writers settle for the 'interlanguage' of

Level 4 whose intermediate approximation to English does not jeopardise ease of comprehension by a reader who is literate in Standard English.

The writer's competence in Pidgin may also influence the way in which it is represented in a literary text. The following dialogue is from Awoonor's *This Earth, My Brother* (1971:38):

- Seidu!
- Sah!
- Where dey cook?
- Ah no know, sah. Look lak igo for im jolley house.
- That's what they are. They can't let their whoring women alone. What chop he make?
- Lamb chop, sah.
- Make table, Seidu.

Zabus (1991:74) points out that the un-Pidgin use of 'where' instead of *husplès* and 'know' instead of *sabi* may indicate either that Ghanaian Pidgin has evolved differently from other Pidgins, or that Awoonor's knowledge of Pidgin is limited. Although Zabus's doubts regarding Awoonor's competence may be justified, it may very well be the case that Awoonor is merely opting for maximum intelligibility. If we consider that the exchange is between the Englishman Mr. Smith and his Ghanaian steward boy, Seidu, we may identify the variety used as 'Houseboy Pidgin' with its inter- and intra-individual variability, which makes it even more difficult to decide what influenced Awoonor's choices most. We can, however, accept Zabus's observation that writers in general lack the proper training in the stylistic rendering of West African Pidgin (1991:74).

It is hardly surprising then that the data has a fairly small number of examples:

(52) *aspiti* (This Earth, p.176) <pw1>
(hospital)

(53) *broder* (This Earth, p.176) <r4>
(brother)

- (54) *motri* (This Earth, p.176) <pw1>
(mortuary)
- (55) *masa* (This Earth, p.173, 176) <m2>
(master)
- (56) *Golcos* (Gab Boys, p.9) <pn2>
(Gold Coast)
- (57) the real “*cash-dey*” sections of this city (Girl Who Can, p.3) <pw1>
(“money is there” – affluent)
- (58) “*Make God help you pass well and go for overseas,*” he told me. “*Then you go fit look for your father.*” (Wind, p.53) <m4>
(“May God help you to do well in your exams and go overseas” ...
“Then you will be able to look after your father.”)
- (59) *Pray for detention*
□ *Jailman chop* ■ *free* (Beautiful Ones, p.106) <pw1>
(Pray for detention, a prisoner eats free)
- (60) *Socialism chop* ■ *make I chop* (Beautiful Ones, p.106) <pw1>
(Socialism is corrupt, let me have my share)

While examining (42)-(48) above for irregularities they exhibit, it has been noted that they appear in a Pidgin context and show a likely influence from Pidgin, so it seems logical to include them here:

- (42) *You broke not so?* (Beautiful Ones, p.106) <pw1>
(You are broke, aren't you?)
- (43/44) *Who born fool* (Beautiful Ones, p.106) <pw1>
(Nobody is a fool)

(45) *Contrey broke* (Beautiful Ones, p.106) <pw1>
(Contrey [countryman] is broke)

(46/48) *Money sweet pass all* (Beautiful Ones, p.106) <pw1>
(Money is better than anything else)

(47) *Vagina sweet* (Beautiful Ones, p.106) <pw1>
(Sex is good)

The above examples all exhibit characteristics of Pidgin: (42)-(48) show syntactic irregularities described in 6.2.2 (a), (b) and (c), while (52)-(56) are phonetically corrupted forms. (57) has the Pidgin multifunctional *dey*, which, in this case, functions as the present tense of 'be' or 'exist' (Sey, 1973:3). (58) has a variety of features characteristic of Pidgin: *make* used as a modal verb to express the imperative in 3rd person singular; the semantically extended use of *pass* to mean 'pass an examination'; the irregular use of *for* in the expression 'go overseas'; the use of *go* as a modal verb to indicate future; the use of *fit* to express ability/capability; and the irregular use of the phrasal verb *look for* to mean 'look after'. In addition to the omission of the indefinite article and the Present Simple 3rd person singular suffix -s, (59) has the Pidgin *chop* for 'eat', whereas in (60) the semantic field of *chop* is extended to encompass a more abstract meaning associated with corruption. In (60) the Present Simple 3rd person singular suffix -s is also omitted, and *make*, with the nominative and not the accusative form of 'I', is used again as a modal verb to express the imperative in 1st person singular.

These examples provide further evidence from a corpus of Ghanaian English language prose that Zabuss's term 'artefactual dialect' is a befitting description of the literary representation of Pidgin. The examples above are 'double' approximations: approximations to Pidgin in an attempt to represent an essentially spoken variety, and approximations to Standard English to ensure intelligibility for the reader, both converging at Agheyisi's Level 4 into an 'interlanguage' which does not exist outside the world of fiction⁴.

6.3 Variation in the signified

In the current data variation in the signified is meant to refer to a change in meaning while the form remains unaffected. The examples in the data can be sorted into the following categories:

- *Lexical innovation*: a) conversion; b) acronyms and symbols
- *Semantic changes*: a) semantic extension; b) semantic restriction; c) semantic restriction and extension; d) semantic shift; e) semantic transfer
- *Proverbs and sayings*

Because of the relatively large number of examples found in the data that show variation in the signified, it is not feasible to examine each one of them and thus produce an explanatory list below. Instead, the most pertinent examples in each category will serve as illustration of the observations made.

6.3.1 *Lexical innovation*

As has been seen in 6.2, lexical innovation involves the creation of new lexical items by way of coinage, clipping, creating unusual collocations, compounding, backformation, blending, borrowing, loan-translation, derivation and multiple word-formation processes. These all bring about changes that affect the form one way or another: either an already existing form gets altered or a completely new one comes to be created. Conversion and the creation of acronyms and symbols, however, leave the form unchanged while altering the meaning.

6.3.1.1 Conversion

Only three examples of a special kind of functional shift have been found in the data. These are:

- (61) *Doctor* (SoP, p.74) <pn1>
- (62) *Lawyer* (This Earth, p.173) <pn1>
- (63) *Master* (SoP, p.66) <pn1>

The change is from common noun to proper name, which can be used instead of a person's name in all situations. The category change involves a shift in meaning: while the common noun is neutral, the proper noun has a positive connotation reflecting respect, admiration and high social status. This type of conversion seems to be fairly productive in Ghanaian English, and is dependent on what is perceived as a prestigious profession and on whom respect is due or offered to in a given situation. Other examples I have come across in Ghana include 'Engineer', 'Teacher', 'Driver', 'Surveyor', and also military ranks, e.g. 'Sergeant' and 'Commander'.

6.3.1.2 Acronyms and symbols

The view taken in this study is that acronyms and symbols present a case of variation in the signified. Although they are created by a truncation of words to their initial letters, thus bringing about a change in the form of the words they are created from, the actual representation of the symbols and acronyms is constant – it remains a letter, or a succession of letters and is recognized as such. It is rather the meaning behind a letter, or a particular combination of letters that may be difficult or impossible to decipher if the symbol or acronym is not familiar.

The data has eight examples. (64)-(67) and (69)-(70) are alphabetisms while (68) is pronounced as a single word, following French pronunciation rules. (64) is further complicated by 'Kansawora' being a fictional name in Armah's novel, and also because the acronym appears already in Chapter One, whereas 'Kansawora' does not get mentioned until we reach Chapter Two, which creates an information gap for the reader.

- (64) *K.C.C.* (Beautiful Ones, p.7) <pw1>
[Kansawora City Council]
- (66) *U.T.C. / UTC building* (Beautiful Ones, p.9 / 107) <pw1>
[United Trading Company]
- (66) *G.N.T.C.* (Beautiful Ones, p.9) <pw1>
[Ghana National Trading Company]
- (67) *U.A.C.* (Beautiful Ones, p.9; This Earth, p.178) <pw1>
[United Africa Company]
- (68) *C.F.A.O. / the French C.F.A.O.* (Beautiful Ones, p.10 / 9) <pw1>
[Compagnie Française Africaine Occidentale]
- (69) *CPP* (Beautiful Ones, p.110) <pw1>
[Convention People's Party]
- (70) *OBK* (Gab Boys, p.12, 13, 14) <m2>
[‘Office Book Keeper’]
- (71) *¢500* (SoP, p.74) <pw1>
[500 cedis]

(70) is somewhat different in that after deciphering the acronym we are presented with a case of semantic transfer (see 6.3.2.5 below). ‘Office Book Keeper’ has little to do with keeping the accounts; it refers to the person in charge of a local authority police station.

The vertical line crossing the capital C vertically in (71) signals that it refers to a unit of money – just as other money symbols crossed either vertically or horizontally, such as £ and \$, do. One cannot, however, decipher it unless one knows the monetary system in Ghana (which used to be 1 cedi = 100 pesewas; now only the cedi is used).

6.3.2 *Semantic change*

6.3.2.1 Semantic extension

These are cases where the English forms retain their meaning while acquiring additional meanings unknown in Standard British English. In most cases, the connection between these extended meanings and the standard meanings is recoverable.

The words and expressions with extended meaning most frequently occurring in the data are:

- (75) *cloth(s)* (Catechist, p.107; Changes, p.6; Crossroads, p.1, 11, 51, 53, 109; Dancing Tortoise, p.135; Gab Boys, p.90, 94, 100, 101, 192; Healers, p.110, 116; Narrow Path, p.12; No Sweetness, p.67, 74, 131; Of Men, p.5, 50, 55, 108, 113; SoP, p.40, 41, 43; This Earth, p.4, 9, 11, 101; Wind, p.17, 47) <pw3>

and its combinations with pre-modifiers

- (76) *mourning cloth* (This Earth, p.105) <pw3>
(77) *bedcloth / sleeping cloth* (Changes, p.9 / 10) <pw1>
(78) *undercloth* (Of Men, p.48) <pw3>,

as well as

- (83) *linguist / the chief's linguist* (Of Men, p.5, 113, 116 / Beyond, p.4; Narrow Path, p.1) <m2>
(86) *Passion Week* (Beautiful Ones, p.1, 3, 111) <sw4>.

While retaining its standard meaning, *cloth* in Ghanaian English is also used to refer to any Ghanaian traditional wear as distinct from European clothing. This can be the colourful woven Kente cloth (Rattray, 1927: 221-63; Antubam, 1963:152), the Akunintam – ‘the cloth of the great’ – with appliqué or embroidery (Warren, 1986:70), or the stamped Adinkra cloth (Rattray, 1927:264-68; Antubam, 1963:151), or imported cotton material called ‘wax’ or ‘super wax’.

Today, a cloth is worn in a toga-like fashion by men; for women it is either a dress or a set of a blouse and two ‘cloths’, one of which is wrapped around the waist as a skirt, and the other worn either folded along the long end and wrapped around as a shorter top skirt or as a head-dress. The pre-modifiers in (76)-(78) indicate the occasion or purpose for which the cloth is worn or used.

In its extended meaning, *linguist* refers to the King of Ashanti’s or a chief’s spokesman – a repository of the history of the clan he represents and a ‘walking storehouse’ of proverbs. He is not only an eloquent and diplomatic speaker – a ‘linguist’ –, but an influential high state office bearer: in addition to his judicial powers, he is the number one advisor to the King or to the chief (Rattray, 1927:276-78; Danquah, 1928:41). *Spokesman* also occurs in the data (Appendix 1, 84) with the same extended meaning.

In (86) the Christian meaning of *Passion Week* is extended somewhat jocularly and irreverently to include reference to the last week of the month when financial hardship is rife and pay day is eagerly awaited.

Kinship terms such as *mother* and *father* are extended to refer, in addition to one’s biological mother and father, to other older female and male members of the extended family, as well as to be used as a respectful address to older people one is not necessarily related to, or to people held in high esteem:

- (93) *mother* (Gab Boys, p.186; Of Men, p.105; No Sweetness, p.59;
Wind, p.4) <r4>

In the following passage Chicha, a teacher, visits the house of one of her pupils. The boy’s mother establishes rapport appropriate to the social context by addressing the teacher as ‘my child’, who, in turn, pays her respects by addressing the boy’s mother as ‘Mother’:

She looked up and smiled. Her smile was a wonderful flashing whiteness.
‘Oh Chicha, I have just arrived.’
‘So I see. *Ayekoo*.’
‘*Yaa*, my own. And how are you, my child?’
‘Very well, Mother. And you?’

‘Tanchiw. Do sit down, there’s a stool in that corner. (No Sweetness, p.59)

Other examples include

- (95) *two of my mothers* (Gab Boys, p.191) <r4>
- (96) *one of her mothers on her mother’s side* (Girl Who Can, p.47) <r4>
- (97) *any other mothers and grandmothers we considered close enough* (Girl Who Can, p.47) <r4>

A special case is calling one’s own daughter ‘Mother’ – a term of endearment based on the idea of likeness and the child being named after one of her grandmothers, combining respect and fondness for one’s own mother and respect with fondness for the daughter through a projection of her future role as a mother:

She was his eldest daughter and his favourite child He called her ‘Mother’, particularly when he was in a good mood. (Wind, pp.3-4)

The same idea underlies the use of *my brother, my father, my husband* (Appendix 1, 110, 111 and 112, respectively) in a mother’s addressing her son:

‘Mama, here I am,’ a piping voice announced.
‘My husband, my brother, my father, my all-in-all, where are you?’ And there he was. All at once, for the care-worn village woman, the sun might well have been rising from the east instead of setting behind the coconut palms. Her eyes shone. Kwesi saluted me and then his mother. (No Sweetness, p.63)

In addition to what has been said above, *fathers* as a plural entity (Appendix 1, 101, 102 and 103) refers not only to one’s older male relatives in the extended family, but also to the ancestors who inhabit the other world:

The big crowd which had ushered Okomfo into the *ahenfie* also followed him out. The chief fetish priest of Ankobea had come back indeed [from the dead]. He had talked and they had heard him. Ankobea waited to see what new thing he would bring from the fathers. (Crossroads, p.12)

Among all the kinship terms found in the data, *auntie* seems to have the widest range of extended meanings:

(105) *auntie* (Catechist, p.17) <r4>

An old man's reference to his third wife, (105) seems to be an isolated case dependent on individual preference rather than generally accepted usage.

(106) *Auntie* (Grief Child, p.178; SoP, p.41) <r4>

(107) *Auntie Abena* (SoP, p.40, 41) <r4>

(108) *Auntie Esi* (CoN, p.5, 96) <r4>

(109) *Auntie Boatemaa* (SoP, p.63, 69, 70) <r4>

While (106) and (107) are respectful ways of addressing a woman older than the speaker, (108) is used by a male character to express his fondness and respect for the addressee, and (109) by a girl to address her stepmother.

6.3.2.2 Semantic restriction

Semantic restriction is defined here as the restriction of meaning in Ghanaian English of a word or expression to a limited area within its Standard British English semantic field. As the data yield only four examples, we shall examine them all.

(114) *compound* (Changes, p.6; CoN, p.1, 211; Dancing Tortoise, p.285; Grief Child, p.84, 88, 90, 91, 92, 178, 181; Narrow Path, p.2, 85, 180; Of Men, p.47, 102; Strange Man, p.1; This Earth, p.5, 8, 9, 175; Wind, p.17, 44, 54) <pw1>

(115) *missus* (Girl Who Can, p.132) <r2> – Sey 67, 71, 95

(116) *police constable* (Gab Boys, p.10) <m2>

(117) *general police* (Gab Boys, p.12) <pw1>

Compound in Ghanaian English is restricted to an enclosure on which a school, church, factory, etc. stands, or to an ensemble of huts/houses of various sizes surrounded by a fence or wall that is occupied by the members of an extended family. In large towns it can also refer to living quarters within an enclosure shared by the same ethnic group:

When she was younger and growing up in the big compound with her cousins and other members of the extended family, she had had to be extremely careful about starting a quarrel with anyone. (Changes, p.6)

In the end, everyone reached home. Home to cheerless iron huts known as Compounds. In our area, we had Dagarti Compound, Frafra Compound, Green Compound and other Compounds designed to harbour different shades of humanity. (Wind, p.44)

Missus is restricted to addressing or referring to a wife, who is literate and is married in church or at a registry office according to Western European custom. It is not used for women married according to Ghanaian traditional custom (Sey 1973:67, 71, 95):

As for asking her mother-in-law to move in to look after the house, the children and Kobla, that too was another problem. "Hei, it never works out." Again, "except for one or two blessed people. Much of the time, the old lady bustles around, cooking her son all his favourite dishes, while dropping a few hints here and there about how much better *off* she always knew he would have been with one of the simple unspoilt girls from the village ..."

"My dear sister, there have been cases where the missus came back with her degrees and diplomas to find a brand new wife installed by the husband's family." (Changes, pp.131-2)

Police constable (or constable) and *general police* (or general policeman) in Ghanaian English tend to be restricted to refer only to an educated policeman or educated policemen, who are distinguished from the *escort police* (Appendix 1, 82) by their black suit and cap. *Escort police* are illiterate policemen who wear a khaki jacket and shorts and a red fez cap (Sey, 1973:92, 102). While (116) and (117) are cases of semantic restriction, *escort police* represents a case of semantic extension. In *The Gab Boys*, however, Duodu clearly uses *police constable* and the 'amalgamation' *escort police constable* (Appendix 1, 81) to refer to an illiterate policeman. Sey quotes the 1937 *Gold Coast Handbook* with regard to *general policemen* and *escort police*, which is an indication that their meanings had been well established in Ghanaian English by the time Duodu wrote his novel. It can be argued that Duodu's idiosyncratic use of these terms is not

a reflection of his own confusion about the meaning of these expressions but is intended to be an indirect comment on the self-proclaimed worldly-wisdom of the character who uses them.

6.3.2.3 Semantic restriction and extension

There are cases in Ghanaian English when a lexical item that has undergone semantic restriction acquires an additional meaning which is unknown in Standard British English. The examples from the data I would like to examine are

- (119) *carriers* (No Sweetness, p.69) <m2>
- (121) *mate / mates* (Gab Boys, p.97, 99, 100, 101, 104; SoP, p.61 / This Earth, p.172, 176) <m2>
- (122) *the driver's mate* (Gab Boys, p.96; SoP, p.61) <m2>
- (123) *lorry mate* (Gab Boys, p.99) <m2>
- (125) *reckon*: 'He *reckoned* the dowry.' (No Sweetness, p.67) <r2>
'I hope you had something to *reckon* against him?' (No Sweetness, p.67) <r2>
'You forgot to *reckon* the Knife Fee.' (No Sweetness, p.67)
<r2>
'He also *reckoned* the price of the trunk.' (No Sweetness, p.68)
<r2>
'There was only the Cooking Cost for me to *reckon* against his.'
(No Sweetness, p.68) <r2>
- (126) *soup* (Catechist, p.110, 113; Gab Boys, p.94; Dancing Tortoise, p.289, 292; No Sweetness, p.82; Of Men, p.8; SoP, p.68, 69) <pw2>
- (130) *stew* (Catechist, p.110) <pw2>
- (135) *stool* (Crossroads, p.47, 51, 52, 53, 107, 108) <pw1>

In (119) *carrier* is restricted to 'porter' and acquires the additional meaning of one who bears load or luggage from one place to another by carrying it on the head. Sey explains that in Ghanaian English 'carry' is restricted to mean 'carry on the head'. This is due to interference

from Fante, which has a variety of verbs to distinguish between carrying on the head and carrying on other parts of the body (1973:119).

Maami Ama turned round to look at her. ‘What are you putting yourself to so much trouble for? When Nana Kum said the boy ought to go and stay with his father, did I make any objection? He is at the school. Go and fetch him. Tomorrow, you can send your carriers to come and fetch his belongings from my hut.’ (No Sweetness, p.69)

The rural setting in Ama Ata Aidoo’s short story where access to any means of transport is limited, and the fact that carrying load on the head rather than in the hands or on the back is a common practice in Ghana, underscores the Ghanaian English meaning of *carrier*.

(121) and its combinations in (122) and (123), and also in (858) (Appendix 1) are frequently used expressions in Ghanaian English. *Mate* is restricted to ‘a helper or assistant to a more skilled worker’ (*The New Shorter Oxford English Dictionary*, 1993 edition) and extended, at the same time, to mean a helper to the driver of a vehicle, particularly of a tro-tro, used for transporting people, who hails passengers at a *lorry station* (Appendix 1, 853), collects fares and gives change, allocates places to passengers and room to luggage, ensures that the vehicle is fully (or rather over)packed, tells the driver where people want to get off, runs errands for the driver, etc. Sey categorises *mate* as a case of semantic shift (1973:121), but he does not provide enough evidence for the ‘re-arrangement of the characteristic patterns within the semantic field’ (ibid., p.72) of the word. I, however, argue that the added-on element of the ‘conductor’ whose very role is defined differently from that in Standard British English, makes *mate* to be a case of semantic restriction and extension rather than that of semantic shift.

As illustrated in (125), *reckon* is restricted to ‘give an account of items received’ (*The New Shorter Oxford English Dictionary*, 1993 edition) and is extended to the listing, in a traditional divorce proceeding, of expenses the parties to be divorced incurred during their marriage and seek repayment of. This additional meaning is completely unknown in Standard British English.

Unlike in British English, where *soup* can also mean ‘fog, thick cloud’, and *stew* ‘an agitated, anxious, or angry state’ as well as ‘a pond or tank in which edible fish are kept until they are needed for the table’ (*The New Shorter Oxford English Dictionary*, 1993 edition), in Ghanaian

English both (126) and (130) are restricted to food or dish and extended to give a specifically Ghanaian meaning to these words. They are best described in comparison to each other, although one cannot be defined in terms of the other. *Soup* is a liquid or semi-liquid food made of the basic ingredients of water, meat, fish (including crustaceans), vegetables and pepper. It is prepared by boiling the ingredients without the addition of oil. If one starts making a dish by boiling the meat with onion, one is making soup. If, however, one starts by frying onions in oil and then adds the ingredients, which are largely the same as for soup, one is definitely making stew. *Stew* is a dish of deep-fried meat, fish, snails, mushroom and a lot of vegetables and pepper. It is thicker than soup. Because the ingredients, with the exception of oil, are the same, one can have, for example, both groundnut soup and groundnut stew. The difference is in the way of preparation, consistency and in what it is eaten with. Neither soup nor stew is served as a separate course. Although rice, *kenkey* [a coastal Ghanaian staple of cooked corn meal] and *banku* [similar to *kenkey* but milder in taste] can be eaten both with soup and stew, *fufu* [pounded yam or a mixture of pounded yam and plantain] is eaten only with soup and *tuo* [T.Z. or *tuonzafi* – an originally Hausa staple made from rice, millet, corn or sorghum] is eaten only with stew.

Restricted to a seat without arms or back on a single central pedestal, *stool* has the additional meaning of the throne and symbol of authority of a chief, and in case of the Ashanti state, the Golden Stool is the shrine and symbol of the national soul.

6.3.2.4 Semantic shift

Semantic shift is defined here as ‘a meaning shift which results in a special case of what the expression denotes in its lexical meaning’ (Löbner, 2002:52). The data yields one example:

(136) *hot drink* (Fragments, p.5) <pw2>

Hot here means ‘producing an effect as of heat or burning, especially on the nerves of taste’ (*The New Shorter Oxford English Dictionary*). However, unlike in Standard British English, in collocation with ‘drink’ it does not refer to the temperature at which the drink is consumed.

Rather, it refers to the strongly alcoholic, intoxicating quality of the drink, which, because of its high alcohol content, produces a burning feeling in the mouth and throat:

Only after those words did Foli think to begin pouring out the schnapps he had been holding in those hands of his which hate so much to let hot drink escape. (Fragments, p.5)

6.3.2.5 Semantic transfer

Semantic transfer is understood here as the use of words or expressions almost completely outside their Standard British English semantic field. The data has examples, which seem to be cases of idiosyncratic usage, as in (137), or of outdated slang, as in (145), or are becoming obsolete, as in (138):

(137) *action film* (Beyond, p.61, 62) <pw1>
[Used to refer to pornographic films.]

(145) *piece/pieces* (Gab Boys, p.98, 99) <pw1>
[Used to refer to discarded stubs of cigarette collected to be reused later.]

(138) *airtight trunks* (Gab Boys, p.103) <pw1>
[Refers to a large metal box – the local version, especially in rural settings, of a wardrobe – for keeping clothes, especially women’s clothing, in. According to Sey, an ‘airtight’ with some items of clothing was a pre-marriage gift a man was expected to present his fiancée with (1973:115).]

Others, such as (142) and (143) are frequently used expressions in Ghanaian English:

(142) *lorry / lorries* (Crossroads, / p.8; Narrow Path, p.9, 10, 14, 184 / 3; No Sweetness, p.128; SoP, p.61; This Earth, p.178, 179 / 7, 177) <pw1>

Unlike in Standard British English, where *lorry* means ‘a long flat low wagon without sides’ or ‘a large strong motor vehicle for transporting goods, troops, etc., especially an open one with a flat platform’ (*The New Shorter Oxford English Dictionary*, 1993 edition), in Ghanaian English *lorry* refers to a small roofed truck, usually converted, for carrying passengers, which, until recently, has been the chief means of local and short to medium distance transport in Ghana. *Lorry park*, consequently, is the place where passenger vehicles – particularly *lorries* – wait to collect passengers, and not ‘an open space or lot reserved for the parking of lorries’ (*The New Shorter Oxford English Dictionary*, 1993 edition). It is synonymous with *lorry station* (Appendix 1, 853), but Sey observes that in big towns such as Accra, Kumasi and Secondi-Takoradi *lorry park* is more likely to be used (1973:76-7).

6.3.3 *Proverbs and sayings*

Proverbs and sayings found in the data are categorized as presenting variation in the signified. Except for the occasional African word thrown in, the form shows no variation – all the 38 examples are perfectly well formed sentences and their literal meaning is not at variance with Standard British English semantic fields. However, as mentioned in 4.3.2.4, proverbs echo the wisdom of a people, and they do so at a metaphorical, rather than literal, level through culturally dependent metaphors and associations. In our case, these metaphors and associations relate to the physical, social and cultural reality of the different peoples of Ghana, so the meanings these metaphors and associations convey are not consistent with their Standard British English interpretation.

In 4.3.2.4 I also illustrate how a thought underlying a proverb gets represented in an L1, and then explain why differences occur between the L1 representation and its relexification in English. (179) below shows no significant difference between the Fante source language and the relexified English version. However, the English, French, Lingala and Hungarian equivalents of the same proverb illustrate that different cultures conceptualise the same idea differently.

- (179) *The bamboo fence does not creak if nothing strikes it.* (Wind, p.8)
[Fante: *Se biribi anka mpapa a mpapa nye krada* – ‘if nothing touches the raffia fence, the fence will not creak’]

There’s no smoke without fire.

Il n’y a pas de fumée sans feu.

[French: word by word equivalent of the English version]

Mayi eninganaka pamba te.

[Lingala: Water doesn’t move without a reason.]

Nem zörög a haraszt ha a szél nem fújja.

[Hungarian: Brushwood doesn’t rustle if the wind’s not blowing it.]

(167) illustrates that connotations do vary from culture to culture. While in English ‘snake’ connotes treacherousness, deceit, secrecy and lurking danger, in Akan it is associated with might and strength:

- (167) *Some animal has swallowed the snake.* (Of Men, p.47)
[Akan: *Aboa bi amen owo*. Meaning: Somebody is mightier/tougher than their opponent. A snake, which usually swallows other animals, can only be eaten by a mightier/fiercer animal.]

In the majority of cases, however, one needs considerable ethnographical knowledge to understand the proverbs of a different culture. (150) and the ensuing elaboration illustrate this.

- (150) *Nobody points out his village to another with his left finger.* (Gab Boys, p.189)
[Akan: *Obi nfa nensa benkum nkyere n’egya kurom* – ‘Nobody points to his father’s village with the left hand.’]

The Akan, as many other peoples in Africa, distinguish between the functions of the right hand and left hand. The right hand is used for eating, pointing, offering and accepting – the latter two can also be done by both hands together. The left hand is used for cleaning oneself after the toilet. Children are taught to use their left hand to wipe their bottom – never the right one! The association of the left hand with excrement is so strong that the Fantes, for example, call it *atebin* – ‘wiper of excrement’ – instead of using the Akan *benkum* – ‘left hand’. Children are told by their parents not to put something down using their left hand lest the object should get lost. So if a child loses something, he/she may say: ‘I put it down with my left hand’. From this follows that pointing to one’s father’s village with one’s left hand would not only be improper, but also rather disrespectful and disgraceful. At the metaphorical level (150) is a reminder or warning that one should not talk badly about or debase where one comes from and the people one respects.

6.4 Variation in the signifier and signified

Variation in the signifier and signified, as applied to the data, affects both the linguistic form in which the cultural reference is expressed and the meaning. The examples found in the data can be categorised as follows:

- *African language expressions*
- *Lexical innovation*: (a) borrowing, (b) coinage, (c) collocations containing African words, (d) unusual collocations and compounds, (e) conversion

6.4.1 African language expressions

6.4.1.1 Words/expressions referring to the natural environment and various aspects of culture

By virtue of being foreign in an English text, African language words and expressions can be regarded in the context of the current study as presenting a case of variation in the signifier and signified. For many, a translation is sufficient:

- (203) *onyina* (Gab Boys, p.90)
silk cotton tree

Others, like items of food and clothing, or family terms, need a description or a note on usage:

- (225) *waakye* (SoP, p.65)
A meal of rice and beans boiled together.

- (247) *Nana* [female] (No Sweetness)

- (248) *Nana* [male] (Crossroads, Gab Boys, No Sweetness, Of Men)

Nana is the Akan word both for grandmother and grandfather. Either on its own, or in combination with male names, it is also used to address or refer to older respectable male members of the family, clan, or community. Similarly, it serves as a term of respect in referring to dead ancestors, and is used for the relationship we call 'grandchild'. Rattray observes that when calling a grandchild *Nana*, "an Ashati is addressing the infant not as 'grandchild' but as 'grandparent' or ancestor" (1927:321n).

Yet others, such, for example, as words for traditions, customs, traditional titles, ancestors and deities, benefit from a detailed, often ethnographical, explanation:

- (259) *Akwanbo* (Of Men, p.viii)
(290) *Okyeame* (Crossroads, Of Men)

It is likely that identifying *Akwambo* (alternatively *Akwanbo* as in 259) to the non-Akan reader as ‘path-clearing festival’ will give little idea of its meaning. It is more elucidating to give an explanation, however short: *Akwambo* is the most important festival among the Agona people of Ghana, during which the path from one village to another is cleared – the path which is supposed to have been used by the ancestors during the time of migration. It is held at harvest time in the month of September or October, and as such, it is also the festival of the new yam. Through the symbolism of the ancestors’ path, the harvest and the ceremony in the village shrine – during which a bottle of rum is half-emptied and filled up again from a bottle newly brought to the shrine – *Akwambo* marks and celebrates the continuity between old and new.

Similarly, it may not suffice just to translate *okyeame* as the ‘chief’s linguist’. For a real understanding of what it actually means it is necessary to have the explanation given in 6.3.2.1 above.

6.4.1.2 Names

6.4.1.2.1 Personal names

Personal names⁵ may seem rather complicated to the outsider as the naming systems of the peoples of Ghana include information, among other things, about the day the bearer was born on, the order in which he/she was born into the family, the patrilines of the father, physical characteristics at birth, special events at the time of birth, etc. It is beyond the scope of this study to provide a detailed description of these systems here, but the examples chosen from the data below illustrate the idea:

- (341) *Baako* (Fragments)
- (366) *Foli* (Fragments)
- (346) *Boi / Kwadwo Boi* (Gab Boys)
- (451) *Tete / Mr Tete* (Strange Man)

Baako is an Akan serial name given to the first born child, male or female. The first born male child can also be called *Ako*. The Ewe name the first born male child *Foli*, the Ga name it *Tete*. *Kwadwo Boi* is a male born on Monday (Kwadwo) and is the fifth born in the family (Boi). The writer Ama Ata Aidoo is one of twins and was born on Saturday – a fact recoverable from the first two elements of her name. Ama is the day name given to girls born on Saturday, while Ata is given to twins regardless of their sex.

Muslim and Hausa names such as Bukari, Ibrahim, Idrissu, Issah, Issaka, Mahama, Yaro, Fati, Fusena, and Mariama (Appendix 1, 351, 368, 369, 370, 371, 412, 459, 509, 510 and 527, respectively) signal close connection with Northern Ghana, where Islam has had a long established presence and a strong influence.

(456) *Wangara* (Wind)

Kropp Dakubu explains that “‘Wangara’ in Ghana is a term (ultimately from Arabic) that refers to people of Mande origin and their Mande language. However, it seems that at least some of the people so called are of diverse origins’ (1997a:175, n21). She also observes that there is a strong tradition among the Northern peoples of Ghana to use ethnic or place names or some other appellation not used at home while working in the south (ibid., p.179, n24).

Some Akan surnames appear to be Anglicised versions of indigenous Akan names. According to Warren and Andrews they occur particularly on baptismal certificates especially if the Ghanaian was baptized into a Christian church by a foreign missionary (1990:35-7). The data has the following examples:

(308) *Dr Aggrey* (No Sweetness)

[Akan: *agyir / egyin* – ‘cat’]

(336) *Ataa Quarshi* (Strange Man)

[Akan: *Kwakye* – ‘male, Thursday-born, the gift’]

(350) *Budu Baiden-Danielson* (Strange Man)

[Akan: *Badu* – ‘tenth-born child’]

- (373) *John Kofi Blankson* (Crossroads)
[Akan: *kuntu* – ‘blanket’]

There are names, which are the combination of various foreign and/or indigenous elements, such as

foreign title + indigenous surname

- (312) *Dr Agyekumhene* (Dancing Tortoise)
(532) *Mrs Ofori* (Grief Child)

(foreign title +) foreign first name + indigenous surname

- (374) *Jonathan Dumenyo / Paul Dumenyo* (This Earth)
(513) *Grace Mensah* (No Sweetness)
(486) *Miss Beckie Annan* (Grief Child)

traditional title + indigenous day name + family name

- (407) *Opanyin Kwesi Addai* (Crossroads)

indigenous kinship term + indigenous day name + family name

- (309) *Agya Kwaku Amankwaa* (Gab Boys)
(505) *Maame Esi Abokuma* (Crossroads)
(515) *Mena Araba Jesiwa* (Healers)

While in the data these combinations are the most frequently occurring ones, others are also possible.

6.4.1.2.2 Geographical names

Geographical names may also present an interest with regard to their meaning and history, if they are recoverable:

- (600) *Ga* (Girl Who Can, Healers)
- (610) *Keta* (Dancing Tortoise, Girl Who Can, Narrow Path, This Earth)
- (622) *Kumase* (Girl Who Can) / *Kumasi* (Crossroads, Fragments, Gab Boys, Wind)
- (647) *Oguaa* (Girl Who Can)
- (685) *Winneba* (Crossroads)

Central Accra is often referred to, especially by the Gas, as *Ga*. *Keta* means ‘head of the sand’ – the people who migrated from the North built their settlement at the ‘head of the sand’ on the beach. *Kumasi* is ‘under the kum tree’ – when the Ashanti kingdom was founded, there was a choice between two towns to be the capital. The spiritual leader, Okomfo Anokye, planted two kum trees in two different towns. One survived and one died. Where the tree survived, there is *Kumasi*; where the tree died, there is Kumawu – ‘kum is dead’ (a town about 50 miles west of *Kumasi*). *Oguaa* means ‘market’ and it is the original Fante name of Cape Coast. *Winneba* is the phonologically corrupted version of Windy Bay – the original Akan name of this town is Simpa.

Two of the place names in the data are used metonymically:

- (552) *Achimota* (Beautiful Ones, p.110; Dancing Tortoise, p.131) <m1>
- (570) *Anloga* (Dancing Tortoise, p.131) <m1>

Similarly to (848) examined in 6.4.2.3 below, *Achimota* and *Anloga* stand for educational institutions. In this case the referents are secondary schools situated in these locations.

6.4.2 *Lexical innovation*

6.4.2.1 Borrowing

The data has seven loan-words, one from Yoruba, four from Pidgin, one from Swahili and one of unknown origin, which present variation both in form and meaning:

- (692) *agbada* (Changes, p.89) <pw3>
 (693) *booklong* [people] (Changes, p.12; Wind, p.26) <m1>
 (694) *comot*: 'the marriage was 'comot, kaput, finished, kabisa'(Changes, p.159) <r2>
 (695) *jot* (Beautiful Ones, p.5) <pw1>
 (696) *kabisa*: 'the marriage was 'comot, kaput, finished, kabisa'(Changes, p.159) <r2>
 (697) *too known* [people] (Wind, p.27) <m1>
 (698) *tro-tro* (SoP, p.62) <pw1>

(692) is a borrowing from Yoruba and refers to men's traditional wear, a rather long and voluminous shirt worn all over West Africa. (693), (694), (697) and (698) are borrowed from Pidgin. *Booklong* and *too known* can be used synonymously and refer to somebody with academic qualifications. They can also be used critically of people who try to be over-clever. *Comot* literally means 'come out/get away/get out', depending on the context, however, it can acquire various meanings. Here it apparently means 'finished, broken down'. *Tro-tro* is Pidgin for 'lorry' (see 6.2.1.2 and 6.3.2.5).

(695) seems to be of uncertain origin. There is some likelihood that it is borrowed from Pidgin; or it is possible that it is now outdated Ghanaian English slang for 'cigarette'.

(696) is Swahili for 'absolutely, exactly, quite, totally, completely, definitely, extremely, very'.

6.4.2.2 Coinage

Examples of coinage found in the data fit the broad description of coinage as the invention of new terms. At the same time, coinage here is meant in the sense used by Sey: 'compounds and derived words (i.e. non-simple words) which are not T.E. [Target English, i.e. British English] in meaning though they may be identical in form to T.E. free collocations. ... There are cases ...

where the collocations sound unlikely in T.E. ... In both cases, however, the expressions are constructed in accordance with T.E. productive patterns' (1973:70).

The examples are names created in English for things and phenomena that exist in Ghana and are characteristic of the cultural experience of the peoples of Ghana, and as such, are non-existent in Standard British English. They include creative personal names and nicknames, creative geographical names, vocational names, names of institutions of various sorts, brand names and names of things, phenomena and cultural practices. Some of the most interesting examples are personal and geographical names, and names of things.

Creative personal names and nicknames give the sum total of a character by describing his or her personality, most outstanding characteristic feature, quality or appearance or something they have done or have connection with. They may also reflect the name giver's affection, criticism, dislike, etc. towards the character.

(700) *Mystique Mysterious* (CoN, p.1) <pn1>

(705) *His High Dedication* (Gab Boys, p.198) <pn1>

Mystique Mysterious is a shady character, a drug dealer, his eyes 'always hidden behind a pair of dark sunglasses, his barrier against the curiosity of those who were drawn by his unnatural quality of energy and power'. By referring to him by such a name, people 'combined their respect for him, their fear of him, the fascination they felt for the unreachable person behind the shades' (CoN, p.1). *His High Dedication*, on the other hand, is a sarcastic reference to Kwame Nkrumah, the first president of the Republic of Ghana.

The creative geographical names in the data all come from Kofi Osei Aidoo's novel. They are created by a play on some of the morphological and phonological features of the original Akan place names they are 'transcreated' from. With the help of an informant I have managed to trace some of them back to their real place name original. Below are a couple of examples for illustration:

(718) *Pool-of-Water* (Of Men, p.53)

(726) *Thousand-Farmers* (Of Men, p.vii, 109)

The real place referred to by (717) is the town of Nsuta in the Ashanti Region. The Akan word *nsutae* means ‘pool of water, lake’. (725) is identifiable as Akwapim from the Akan words *apim* meaning ‘thousand’ and *kwua* meaning ‘farming’.

(743) *grass-cutter* (Gab Boys, p.94, 184) <pw1>

(753) *Kill Me Quick* (CoN, p.1) <pw2>

(755) *white-white* ((Beautiful Ones, p.109; Fragments, p.131) <pw3>

(743) refers to a wild forest animal, a rodent, whose meat is considered to be a delicacy. (753) is the rather suggestive English name used for *akpeteshie* (Appendix 1, 211), the locally made strong alcoholic drink. (755) is used to refer to a white jacket or shirt and white trousers worn together.

6.4.2.3 Collocations with African words

These collocations are characterized by having a non-English first element, an approximation of whose meaning is, however vaguely, suggested by the second English element by way of associations and analogy.

(761) *akpeteshie bars* (Wind, p.52) <pw1>

(762) *Attukpai taxi station* (Gab Boys, p.104, 105) <pw1>

(830) *Volta Region* (Dancing Tortoise, p.129, 135) <pn2>

Thus, for example, if ‘wine bar’ is a place where people drink wine, *akpeteshie bar* may well be a place where people drink *akpeteshie*, whatever drink it may be.

Attukpai taxi station, while suggesting that *Attukpai* is the location at which taxis wait for their fare, has an anomaly in that ‘taxi station’ itself is an irregular collocation. ‘Station’ in Ghanaian English has undergone semantic extension and, in addition to ‘train’, ‘bus’ and ‘coach’ it includes ‘taxi’, ‘lorry’ and ‘car’ in its collocational range. (While ‘taxi station’ is fairly easy to

understand, ‘lorry station’ and ‘car station’ benefit from clarification. As has been explained in 6.3.2.5 above, they are synonymous expressions and refer to the place where passenger vehicles, particularly lorries – roofed trucks used for carrying people – wait to collect passengers.)

Volta Region is deceptive in that, based on the analogy, say, with Brong-Ahafo Region, one may identify ‘Volta’ as an African word. However, it is not. It is the Volta River that gives its name to this region, and it was the Portuguese who called this river *Rio da Volta* – “River of Return”. Wilks suggests that because they found no more gold trade, the Portuguese turned back at the Volta – and named it “River of Return” (1993:15). Kropp Dakubu, however, is of the opinion that it is “Change River”, *volta* meaning ‘alteration’ (as well as ‘return’), and the river was given this name by the Portuguese because of its periodic fluctuation in the direction of the current at its mouth (1997a:142).

In a few cases, the African words come in the middle or at the end of the collocation, as in

- (788) *a fifty-pesewa coin / a single fifty-pesewa coin* (Beautiful Ones, p.2)
<pw1>
(800) *clan of Batawo* (This Earth, p.11) <r4>

(849) is an interesting example because of the metonymy involved:

- (849) *Legon man*: ‘You ino be *Legon man*?’ (Wind, p.26) <m2>

The University of Ghana is situated in Legon, so the place name has come to stand for the institution. The expression *Legon man*, therefore, refers not just to any man who comes from Legon, but specifically to those associated with the University, and particularly to university lecturers.

6.4.2.4 Unusual collocations and compounds

The collocations and compounds listed here are different from those in 6.2.1.2 in that not only is the combination of words occurring together unusual, but they also show variation regarding their meaning. The examples I would like to examine are

(850) *body-check cabins* (Beyond, p.57) <pw1>

(857) *steward boys* (SoP, p.62) <m2>

(850) seems odd in Standard British English because *body-check* is used in various sports and means ‘the placing of one’s body in the way of an opponent in order to impede him’ (*The New Shorter Oxford English Dictionary*). In Ghanaian English it undergoes semantic transfer to mean ‘security check’. In addition, *cabin* retains the meaning ‘a booth, a small room’, which has become obsolete in Standard British English. The collocation thus created refers to the small booths at airports where security checks are carried out.

In (857) *steward* first gets restricted to ‘a passengers’ attendant’, then is extended to refer to an attendant working in somebody’s house rather than on a ship, train or airplane. Then it is combined with *boy*, and produces an unusual collocation in Standard British English. The expression is synonymous with ‘houseboy’ and refers to a boy or a man who works in a house as a servant.

6.4.2.5 Conversion

The examples of conversion showing variation for signifier and signified exhibit the same kind of functional shift from vocational or traditional office terms to proper names as described in 6.3.1.1, albeit in Akan, or in a form that looks like Akan:

(863) *Chicha* (No Sweetness, p.56, 57, 58, 59, 60, 61, 62, 63, 64, 68, 71, 72)
<m2>

(864) *Kankanfo* (Of Men, p.5) <m2>

- (865) *Kyikya* (Of Men, p.117) <m2>
 (866) *Nana* (Crossroads, p.10, 11, 49, 50, 52, 53, 54, 103, 104, 105, 108; Gab Boys, p.189, 191; Of Men, p.6) <m2>
 (867) *Nana Kyeame* (Gab Boys, p.187) <m2>
 (868) *Okyeame* (Crossroads, p.54, 55, 104, 105) <m2>

(863) and (865) are peculiar because both are the phonological version of 'teacher' as pronounced by an Akan speaker of English, (863) scripted according to English spelling rules, (865) according to Akan spelling rules.

These vocational or traditional office terms are used the same way as the English vocational terms in 6.3.1.1, the only difficulty being their meaning. *Kankanfo* means 'field marshal', *Nana* is 'grandparent, chief or the respectful term of addressing an elder or office bearer' (see 6.4.1). *Okyeame* is the 'chief's linguist' (see 6.3.2.1 and 6.4.1), and *Nana Kyeame* is the combination of *Nana* and *Okyeame* where the 'o' is omitted because the preceding word ends in a vowel. This conversion process is fairly productive in Akan in that most, if not all, vocational and traditional office terms can be used to refer to or address people in lieu of their proper name.

6.5 Conclusion

Although the main purpose of identifying a set of cultural categories in this study has been to extract from the chosen texts data, i.e. discrete linguistic items, that can be examined in terms of the indigenised/non-indigenised polarity, it may be interesting to take a look at the correlation between linguistic variation and cultural categories.

Elsewhere I have argued that literature, just as everyday language, is symptomatic, though in a different way, of the social system in which it has been created. Although literary texts can be a rich source of data if approached with the intention of asking what they have to say about social, cultural, political and economic relations, it is not possible to make a straight jump from imaginative literary language to objective statements of fact. What literature has is the potential to contribute new information and modify and refine the findings reached by other methods

(Egri Ku-Mesu, 1998a:3). With regard to indigenised language use in African literature in general, and in the Ghanaian English language literary texts that provide the data for the current study in particular, we need to bear in mind that ‘post-colonial writing *represents* neither speech nor local reality but constructs a discourse which may imitate them’ (Ashcroft, 2001b:63; italics as in original). This is a ‘new, indigenized medium conceived *in vitro*’ (Zabus, 1991:4; italics as in original) that Zabus calls ‘third code’ (ibid.), or in the context of relexification a ‘new register of communication ... forged as a result of the particular language-contact situation in West Africa and the artist’s imaginative use of that situation’ (op.cit., 102).

What gets expressed in indigenised language, and to what extent, depends on a variety of factors which include the writer’s inclination for, and perhaps mastery of, using indigenised language, his deliberate choices or unconscious reflexes, stylistic considerations, the subject matter, and the audience. From the fact, for example, that the data has only one indigenised example in the ‘socio-economic roles of the sexes’ (r1) category we cannot assume that such relationships are not spoken about in Ghanaian society, and that if they are, it is done necessarily using linguistic options other than indigenised English. What this simply means is that relationship between the sexes either falls outside the subject matter of the works studied, or that the writers have, for various considerations, chosen to treat this topic using non-indigenised language. When we consider the relationship between linguistic variation and cultural categories in terms of numbers shown in Table 6.1 overleaf, we need to have these limitations in mind.

The table shows that indigenisation is strongest in the category of proper names, and the overwhelming majority of both personal and geographical names are in Ghanaian languages. This is, perhaps, self-evident as one has to use Ghanaian names if one is writing about Ghana. Although in the framework of the current study they are considered indigenised both for signifier and signified as they are foreign words in the English text, they represent a category of their own because they inevitably contribute to the Ghanaianess of the text.

One may argue that when reading a novel, one does not have to know what a name means because even if names are understood as meaningful, they will have no significance in the text of the novel other than signalling a person, a place, etc. In 7.3.1 I will show in detail that this is not necessarily so. Here I will mention only that those who understand the Akan name Oko (Appendix 1, 434), which means ‘sribe’, ‘war’, ‘battle’, ‘struggle’, have a more immediate and

Linguistic categories	pw			r			sw			ps	pn		m				Total
	1	2	3	1	2	3	4	1	2		3	4	1	2	3	4	
Lexical innovation	92	6	8	1	6	3	14	2	1		21	43	13	16		226 (26.03%)	
Syntactic variation	9		1				2									12 (1.38%)	
Pidgin	5					1						1	1		1	9 (1.03%)	
Semantic change	18	11	4	3	1	21	1	1	1				16			76 (8.75%)	
African language expressions	24	16	5			24	8	14	1	3	245 (Male: 167 Female: 76 Family: 2)	147	19	1		507 (58.41%)	
Proverbs and sayings										38						38 (4.37%)	
Sub-total	148	33	18	1	9	1	49	24	17	41	266	191	13	52	1	868 (100%)	
Total	199 (22.92%)			60 (6.91%)			44 (5.06%)			41 (4.72%)	457 (52.64%)		67 (7.71%)				868 (100%)

pw: Physical World sw: Spiritual World ps: Proverbs and Sayings pn: Proper Names m: Modernity
 (For sub-categories please refer to 5.3.2.2 and 5.3.2.5.)

Table 6.1: Linguistic variation vs. cultural categories

fuller understanding of the main character Esi's situation and decisions in Ama Ata Aidoo's *Changes*.

The naming systems of the peoples of Ghana reflect distinct ways of thinking about the world, our life in it, and what is regarded as important. For Ghanaians names do not merely signal people. Personal names are an important part of one's identity. As has been seen in 6.4.1.2.1, they may carry information about the circumstances at birth, the patrilineal clans of the father, the day on which one was born, etc., and, very importantly, they identify a person with his or her ethnic group. Although colonisation, Islam, Christianity and various trends and fashions have influenced the indigenous naming systems, the various ethnic groups in Ghana use their traditional names – if not exclusively, then traditional elements in combination with the newer arrivals such as Muslim and Christian names or Europeanised/Anglicised surnames.

The fact that 167 (68.16%) of all African language personal names are male names in the data testifies to male dominance in public and family life in Ghanaian society and underpins what has been said in this respect in 3.4 and 4.3.1.

Geographical names, in addition to resisting translation, further emphasise a sense of belonging. Suffice to say that even today many Ghanaians, after long years spent in urban centres or abroad, are taken back to their village to be buried and rest with their ancestors (cf. close ties between traditional village and modern urban life discussed in 3.4). The names of settlements are historical texts (Kropp Dakubu, 1997: 10-1). In 6.4.1 it is shown that the meaning of place names reflect events in the history of the peoples of Ghana or have other culturally dependent meaning which cannot be truly expressed in a foreign language. Furthermore, we have seen that even if some place or geographical names in modern Ghana carry a colonial legacy, people do refer to them by their original indigenous names (see examples for place names in 6.4.1 above or Appendix 1, 598: *Firaw* – the Akan name for the River Volta).

The cultural category that shows the second largest number for indigenised language use is 'physical world' embracing the subcategories of physical environment/cultural artifacts, food and drink and clothing. This is the category which locates people in the material world that

surrounds them. The familiarity and intimacy with one's surroundings requires a language that can express this close relationship. As Wierzbicka explains,

There is a very close link between the life of a society and the lexicon of the language spoken by it. This applies in equal measure to the outer and inner aspects of life. ... Words with special, culture specific meanings reflect and pass on not only ways of living characteristic of a given society but also ways of thinking. (1997:1 & 5)

It would seem strange for Ghanaians to exist in and talk about their world in foreign terms – so they appropriate English as much as possible to suit this world. The same applies generally to the categories of 'relations' and 'modernity', and specifically to the subcategories of marriage/separation/divorce, family and kinship, formal education and work/profession/office.

Indigenisation in the 'spiritual world' category is rather low in the data. This, again, does not mean that in the real world matters related to the subcategories – traditions/customs/beliefs/superstitions, ancestors/deities, birth/death/funeral/afterlife and Christianity and Islam – do not get discussed in indigenised English. However, the fact that this is a very complex area whose understanding requires a lot of cultural knowledge suggests that in the interest of effective communication writers opt for a relatively less indigenised English to convey their meaning.

The relatively low occurrence of proverbs and sayings in the texts shows interesting tendencies. First of all, the fact that only three proverbs are actually rendered in Akan points to the writers' awareness of an audience beyond their ethnic and national boundaries. Secondly, the 4.72% share of proverbs and sayings in the overall number of examples of indigenised cultural reference found in the corpus suggests that despite oral tradition continuing to inform the consciousness and to determine the sensibility of most West Africans, independence, industrialization, and urbanization have been having a corrosive effect on the traditional mindset and have begun to cause the modification and abandonment of traditional discourse routines, which eventually may lead to the discontinuation of certain traditional figures and elements of speech.

The almost negligible level of syntactic variation and near-absence of Pidgin in the data provide further evidence for the claims made about the status of Pidgin in Ghana in 6.2.3, and for

Ahulu's claim that 'the realization of grammatical categories in the English written by educated Ghanaians which have been claimed to be those which yield Ghanaian features overwhelmingly reflects standard practice. ... in structure the educated Ghanaian departs rarely from the patterns and forms of standard English' (1992:244).

The fact that an overwhelming majority of indigenised linguistic items in the data are found in the lexical domain – as various forms of lexical innovation, semantic change and African language expressions – suggests that the indigenisation, or rather appropriation, of English is necessitated by a 'naming' process – the wish to find names in English for things, phenomena and practices that are culturally alien to it.

Notes

- ¹ Relatively little research has been done about Ghanaian Pidgin. The most comprehensive work up to date is Huber 1999. Other significant works include Criper 1971, Sey 1973, Dadzie 1985, Amoako 1992 and Asante 1995. The literary treatment of Pidgin is extensively discussed in Zabus 1991.
- ² Criper and Sey divide the continuum of English in Ghana into four stages of competence depending on the educational attainment of the speaker and whether English was acquired at school or not. The stages of the two clines do not match exactly. In addition, Criper identifies Type IV as Broken English, whereas Sey excludes it from his classification. The following table of comparison is adopted from Huber (1999:138):

Criper (1971)	Sey (1973:14-8)
Native English	<i>Stage 4: Ambilingualism</i> bilingual who has virtual equal command of both L1 and the second language – rare in Ghana
<i>Type I: Higher (Educated)</i> university graduates, often experience in a native English-speaking community	<i>Stage 3: University Level</i> in several registers command of English almost native
<i>Type II: Middle (Educated)</i> secondary school leavers	<i>Stage 2: Secondary School Stage</i> 5-7 years in addition to stage 1
<i>Type III: Lower (Educated)</i> middle school leavers	<i>Stage 1: Incipient Bilingual Stage</i> 7-10 years of formal education
<i>Type IV: Sub</i> no formal education	Broken English

- 3 Nigerian novelists have demonstrated a lack of prejudice in their treatment of Pidgin. Some of the most well-known novels exploiting this linguistic variety are Ekwensi's *People of the City* and *Jagua Nana* – 'the first full-fledged Pidgin creation in West African Fiction' (Zabus, 1991:66), Achebe's *A Man of the Peple*, and Emecheta's *The Joys of Motherhood*. So far the most conscious and sustained linguistic experiment – comparable in a way to Okara's *The Voice* – with non-standard speech is Saro-Wiwa's *Sozaboy: A Novel in Rotten English*.
- 4 Huber (1999:283-85) gives two written examples of Pidgin: 'Zongo Gossip' from the *Evening News*, 4 January 1966 – the first text of a series of 11 intended to popularise government policy – , and 'Broda Wahala' from the *Uhuru Magazine*, 2 (3) 1990, and mentions the *Legon Observer* as another source of printed Pidgin texts. He identifies the variety in the articles as a broken variety of spoken Pidgin. He points out that in the 1980s and early 90s these magazines/newspapers featured Pidgin in political satire. Because of being associated with the illiterate section of Ghanaian society, who, by implication, were considered politically ignorant, 'Pidgin served the function of making the political statement in this genre more elusive and the author less vulnerable to criticism by the authorities' (Huber, 1999:183). Huber, however, emphasizes that because it is stigmatised, Pidgin is rarely used in the press. The articles he reprints as examples should be considered as exceptional cases.
- 5 Ghanaians have very elaborate systems of naming. While most of these cut across ethnic boundaries, a few are peculiar to one or another ethnic group. An account of the notion of Akan names is given in Antubam 1963. A detailed description covering the Ewe, Ga, Dangme, Akan, Nzema, Gonja, Dagbani, Waale/Dagaare and Kasem linguistic areas is given in Egblewogbe 1987. Warren and Andrews have a useful list of Europeanised Akan surnames with their possible origin and meaning (1990:35-7).

7 CULTURAL REFERENCE: AUTHORIAL ASSISTANCE AND READER INTERPRETATION

7.1 Introduction

‘Many literary texts are unique in the sense that they are deliberately constructed to be *inconsiderate*’ (Zwaan, 1996:241, original emphasis). This ‘inconsiderateness’ can manifest itself at all three levels of text representation identified by van Dijk and Kintsch (1983): the *verbatim representation*, which is derived from the surface structure of the text; the *textbase representation*, containing a *microstructure* and a *macrostructure*, the former reflecting semantic meaning of the text, the latter the main ideas that connect larger sections of the text; and the *situation model*, which is the combination of text information and the reader’s prior knowledge, including his/her goals and attitudes. These three levels tie in neatly with the terms proposed by Enkvist for the discussion of interpretability: intelligibility, comprehensibility and interpretability proper (1991:7). According to Enkvist,

a piece of text is intelligible to those who can recognize in it phonological, lexical and syntactic structures. Intelligibility thus presupposes pattern recognition, the correct perception of structures. A text is comprehensible to those who can assign to it a definite meaning, a semantic structure. And a text is interpretable to those who can build around that text a scenario, a text world, a set of states of affairs, in which that text makes sense. ... Intelligibility is thus the syntactic component of interpretability (which includes phonology, lexis, and syntax); comprehensibility is its semantic component including syntax plus semantics; and interpretability its pragmatic totality involving pragmatics as well as semantics and syntax. (ibid., 7-8)

Indigenised texts may, by definition, be regarded as particularly ‘inconsiderate’ because, as explained in 4.2.1, they have two interpretive levels: (1) the surface meaning of the language in which the text is created – in our case English; and (2) the underlying meaning of the first or dominant language of the author. In Chapter 6 I examined and explained lexical, syntactic and semantic variation of cultural reference found in the studied texts, thereby addressing the issue of intelligibility and comprehensibility.

In the current chapter I will focus on interpretability and will investigate how the ‘inconsiderateness’ of the indigenisation of cultural reference in the text of Ghanaian writers is offset by authorial intervention.

In 5.3.2.4 the following authorial strategies to facilitate reader understanding of indigenised language were identified: cushioning, contextualisation, ethnographic explanation and the provision of a glossary. These, as well as the lack of authorial intervention will be discussed below in the framework of Relevance Theory, outlined in 4.3.2, drawing on data collected by way of a questionnaire (cf. 5.3.1.2).

In the discussion of the questionnaire results I will compare the readers' interpretations of indigenised cultural reference to what I call, for want of a better expression, 'correct meaning'. By 'correct meaning' I understand the meaning of an English or Ghanaian language word or expression as accepted and used in its appropriate cultural context, ethnic or national, by the respective speech communities¹ of Ghana. The examples of indigenised language examined here are all instances of cultural reference used by the authors as such in order to express their Ghanaian cultural experience. Therefore, the meaning of these words and expressions is not a matter of authorial intention. Or rather, the meaning intended by the author corresponds to the meaning as accepted and used by Ghanaians in the appropriate cultural context.

The words 'assumption' and 'relevance' will be used throughout the chapter in the relevance theoretic sense (cf. 4.3.2), not as they are used in common parlance.

7.2 No authorial intervention

In 4.3.2 I identified the texts studied here, by virtue of them having been produced with an audience in mind, as products of ostension, in which the writers 'make manifest an intention to make something manifest' (Sperber and Wilson, 1995:49). Being visible traces of the mother tongue or the most dominant language of the writer, African words in the English language text make it manifest that, indeed, such texts are, to use Zabus's metaphor, palimpsests and that 'behind the scriptural authority of the European language, the earlier, imperfectly erased remnants of the African language can still be perceived' (Zabus, 1991:3). They signal at least bi-, but in most cases multilingualism, and 'a linguistic stratification, i.e. a multi-tiered system that differentially distributes the European language, the African language(s) and the languages in contact' (Zabus, 1991:3).

Language variance has been found to have an important role in inscribing difference, and to be metonymic of the cultural difference it inscribes (Ashcroft et al., 1989:52-3). The presence of untranslated and unexplained African words in the English text creates a metonymic gap, which is

that cultural gap formed when appropriations of a colonial language insert un glossed words, phrases or passages from a first language, or concepts, allusions or references which may be unknown to the reader. Such words become synecdochic of the writer's culture – the part that stands for the whole – rather than representations of the world, as the colonial language might. Thus the inserted language 'stands for' the colonized culture in a metonymic way, and its very resistance to interpretation constructs a 'gap' between the writer's culture and the colonial culture. The local writer is thus able to represent his or her world to the colonizer (and others) in the metropolitan language, and at the same time, to signal and emphasize a difference from it (Ashcroft, 2001b:75).

While the concept of the metonymic gap is plausible, the suggestion that the inserted unexplained African language words resist interpretation seems to have less validity. On the one hand, such a point of view takes account only of a readership which excludes those who share the author's cultural and/or linguistic background, thereby tacitly agreeing that modern English-language African literature is, indeed, written for and read by a non-African audience. On the other hand, although the Western reader may find such words unintelligible and incomprehensible as defined by Enkvist, the very fact that he recognises them as synecdochic of the writer's culture and as signals of an intricate linguistic reality proves that he is able to build a text world around them in which they make some kind of sense, albeit not necessarily literal sense.

The insertion of an African language word or expression in the English text without any authorial assistance provided is significant because it becomes an ostensive stimulus that the writer has found most relevant to communicate the set of assumptions he intends to make manifest to the reader in a manner that is relevant enough to make it worthwhile for the reader to process this ostensive stimulus (cf. Presumption of optimal relevance, Sperber and Wilson, 1995:158, quoted in 4.3.2). As we have seen above, the function of such an authorial device is the distancing of the mother tongue culture of the writer and the other tongue culture represented by the language chosen for creation. It is along the gap thus created that we can expect readers to be divided.

7.2.1 Ghanaian readers

It seems sensible to expect the Ghanaian reader to be situated on the same side of the metonymic gap as the writer. However, we have to recall that in 5.3.2.1 Ghana is identified both as a multitude of ethnic groups and also as a supra-ethnic national entity, and, consequently, a working definition of cultural reference is given both at the level of ethnic groups and at the national level. While at the national level it is reasonable to expect the reader and the writer to be on the same side of the metonymic gap, at the level of ethnic groups we can expect the Ghanaian readership to be fragmented along cultural and linguistic lines.

From the reader profiles (Appendix 3) we learn that the Ghanaian readers in my survey come from seven ethnic groups. Seven are bilingual in their mother tongue and in English; three are trilingual: two in their mother tongue, another Ghanaian language and English, one in the mother tongue, French and English; nine are polyglots: seven speaking their mother tongue, English and up to three other Ghanaian languages, two speaking their mother tongue, English, up to three other Ghanaian languages and French. Relative to each individual writer's background, there are readers who share the writer's physical, cultural and linguistic environment – they share a cognitive environment², which implies that they are capable of making the same assumptions. Since it is manifest which people share this cognitive environment – the writer and readers from his ethnic group – we can call it a mutual cognitive environment, in which every manifest assumption is manifest to the people who share this environment (Sperber and Wilson, 1995:41-2). Readers who do not belong to the writer's ethnic group will not share a mutual cognitive environment with the writer. However, because of similarities of their physical environment, overlaps in culture, and their linguistic knowledge, the cognitive environments of these readers can still intersect with that of the writer: i.e. they will share sets of facts that are manifest to them all.

The readers' familiarity with the texts does not interfere with the findings. One particular reader (GR1) had read 9 books – she is an exception. For the remaining 18 readers, who had read 0 to 4 of the 13 books listed in the questionnaire, the average number of books read per head was 1.5.

The results of Questionnaire Item IV (i & ii) (Appendix 4Da) reveal that the explanations the Ghanaian readers provide for the Nzema *bodua* (a whisk – the tail of a horse or cow believed

to have magical powers and usually forming part of a fetish priest's regalia – Agovi: *A Wind from the North*, p.6), Pidgin *tro-tro* (a short-distance, primarily intra-city passenger vehicle often converted from a truck or van – Codjoe-Swayne: *The Dancing Tortoise*, p.99) and Ga *aplankey* (the *tro-tro* driver's assistant, commonly known in Ghana as the driver's mate, or simply mate, who hails passengers at lorry stations and collects money from the passengers – Codjoe-Swayne: *The Dancing Tortoise*, p.99)³, which are left untranslated/unexplained in the text, reflect that all the readers who gave an explanation have a perfect understanding of *aplankey*, and show either a perfect understanding of *tro-tro* (GR1, GR2) and *bodua* (GR1, GR10, GR18), or a good grasp of their core concept but lack or misunderstanding of refining detail: e.g. *bodua*, though similar, is not exactly a staff (GR4) or rod (GR15), and while magical powers are its dissociable characteristic feature, it is not simply a juju or charm (GR9); *tro-tro* is not any vehicle (GR9, GR15) for intra-city transport or a large vehicle for a lot of passengers (GR4). The fact that *aplankey* is widely understood by the Ghanaian readers regardless of their ethnic origin and knowledge of languages suggests that it has become a supra-ethnic currency in inter-ethnic communication and may be used in the Ga original not only in an English but also in, let us say, Akan or Ewe context. It has to be noted, however, that this applies only to the originally Ga speaking areas in the south of the country – Accra and the surrounding Ga settlements where Ga has become a vehicle for inter-ethnic communication. Further north where Akan dominates and in the north where Hausa is the lingua franca, it would be unrealistic to expect *aplankey* to be understood. *Tro-tro*, as indicated in 6.4.2.1 is a loan-word in Ghanaian English from Pidgin, and as such, does not necessarily require knowledge of Pidgin from anyone to understand it. At the same time, it is synonymous with *lorry* (see 6.3.2.5), which itself is a loan-word in Ghanaian languages, for instance in Fante and Ga (Sey, 1973:2). Based on this we may assume that *tro-tro* is used in indigenous language contexts as well. This suggests that, similarly to *aplankey*, it has acquired a supra-ethnic character and is widely used across languages. Unlike the Ga word, however, it has a much broader sphere of usage because of the spread of Pidgin all across Ghana. While *tro-tro* and *aplankey* have a wide currency, *bodua* is understood in its entirety only by those whose mother tongue is Nzema (GR 10) or the closely related Akan (GR1, GR18). Since its meaning is specific to the traditions of a particular ethnic group, the Nzema (an Akan people), other Ghanaian readers can provide only approximations because their cognitive environment – i.e. all the facts an individual is aware of and is capable of becoming aware of in his/her physical environment – contains information specific to what the regalia of a fetish priest in their own culture is, which may be similar but not identical – hence the difference in the interpretation of the word.

3 of the 19 Ghanaian readers – GR2, GR8 and GR14 – claim not to understand the above three words and they also indicate their inability to guess their meaning from the context. While GR2 actually provides a fairly good definition for *tro-tro*, he feels that a glossary or explanation would not have helped him understand, we assume, the other two words and hence the passages in which they figure. GR8 and GR14, on the other hand, are unable to provide any definitions and feel that a glossary or explanation would have benefited them. The reader profiles show that GR2's mother tongue is Dagaare, a northern Ghanaian language, and he claims knowledge of Twi (Akan) and Pidgin. His knowledge of Pidgin may be regarded as an explanation of his ability to provide a definition for *tro-tro*, although, as has been pointed out above, because of its frequent occurrence in Ghanaian English and possibly in indigenous Ghanaian languages, one does not necessarily have to know Pidgin to understand it. The fact that GR2's linguistic repertoire does not contain Ga, and that he comes from a spatially distant and culturally different environment, explains his inability to understand *aplankey*. At the same time, his knowledge of Twi (Akan), which, as indicated above, is closely related to Nzema, raises expectations of his ability to understand *bodua*. His inability to do so suggests that his knowledge of Twi is limited, is probably restricted to the domain of inter-ethnic communication, and lacks in-depth understanding of culture-specific information to an extent which makes it impossible for him to interpret the Nzema word. This is further emphasised by his own cultural distance – he is a Dagaaba from northern Ghana. GR8 and GR14's case is more straightforward. GR8 is a Buksa from northern Ghana, speaks Buli as his mother tongue – i.e. he is both culturally and linguistically removed from the mainly Akan and Ga speaking southern Ghanaian communities – and claims no knowledge of any other Ghanaian language. Even though this explains his inability to understand *bodua* and *aplankey*, it would be reasonable to expect him to be able to provide an explanation for *tro-tro*. The fact that he offers none suggests either that he comes from a part of Ghana where the influence of Pidgin, a primarily urban phenomenon, is little felt and the synonymous but more 'standard' *lorry* is used, or simply he did not feel it worth his while to provide evidence of his ability to understand *tro-tro* in the questionnaire. GR14, on the other hand, identifies his ethnic origin as Ashanti/Akwapim and speaks Twi as his mother tongue, although he speaks no Ga – hence his inability to understand *aplankey*. His long absence from Ghana⁴, however, distances him both from his mother tongue – and culture – and from Ghanaian English and/or Pidgin, and renders him incapable of understanding either.

The only Ghanaian reader who shows uncertainty about understanding the untranslated/unexplained words is GR7, an Ewe, who claims to speak no other Ghanaian language than Ewe. He, however, indicates his ability to infer their meaning from the context, and gives a good approximation for *bodua*, an acceptable explanation for *tro-tro* and the exact meaning for *aplankey*. While at this juncture it may be accepted that he worked out the meanings from the context, the supra-ethnic character and frequent occurrence of *aplankey* and *tro-tro* render such a claim doubtful. In fact, whether the meaning of *bodua* can be inferred from the context will also be questioned below. What we can almost certainly assume is that the relevance of these words for GR7 is not particularly great because his signalling the potential benefits he could have had from a glossary/explanation indicate that he used substantial mental/processing effort to work out the meanings.

An interesting problem arises from the comparison of answers to whether the readers understand the untranslated words, whether they can guess their meaning from the context, and whether they would find a glossary/explanation useful. Out of 19 Ghanaian readers 15 claim to understand the words; out of these 15, 10 say they can infer the meaning from the context; and out of the 10, 7 indicate no benefit from a glossary and 2 are not sure about it. 2 (GR1, GR3) out of the 15, however, say they cannot guess the meaning from the context, and 3 (GR6, GR11, GR13) are unsure about being able to work out the meaning from the context. Those unsure all indicate that they would have found a glossary useful – despite claiming to understand the words, two of them (GR6, GR13) provided no explanation at all, and one (GR11) explained only the supra-ethnically used *tro-tro* and *aplankey*, but not the more culture specific *bodua*. The puzzling question is how we can explain that although there are 15 Ghanaian readers who understand the untranslated words, two thirds of them indicate ability to infer the meanings from the context, while one third say they cannot, or are not sure whether they can, work out the meanings from the context. If, indeed, it is not possible to guess the meanings from the context, how is it possible that all 15 readers understand the unexplained words?

First, let us re-examine the passages used in the questionnaire:

So the people waited. That long wait that destroys a people's confidence in themselves. At last, one spoke. A deity spoke. Unheralded, he thundered through the village. He looked fierce, angry and weird. He tossed his head sideways, muttering incoherent things to the air. He threw his powerful *bodua* into the sky and caught it several times. Brown amulets and dark bracelets were fixed tightly around his powerful arms. (Agovi: *A Wind from the North*, p.6)

Mawusi stood beside the *tro-tro* and watched the people going to and fro. The place was very noisy. The *aplankeys* were shouting for passengers; and there were quite a few beggars, singing for alms. (Codjoe-Swayne: *The Dancing Tortoise*, p.99)

In Agovi's text there are enough contextual clues to give the Ghanaian reader access to a schema in his encyclopaedic memory with a number of dominant and highly accessible assumptions about deities, their character, their appearance. Deities, however, are specific to ethnic groups, so one needs to have intimate knowledge of the religious traditions and customs of a specific ethnicity to be able to provide details regarding a particular deity's attire and regalia. Sperber and Wilson assume that "the 'meaning' of a word is provided by the associated concept" (1995:90). It is, however, the encyclopaedic entry that 'contains information about the extension and/or denotation of the concept: that is, about the objects, events and/or properties which instantiate it' (ibid., 86). Encyclopaedic entries vary across speakers and times: we do not all have the same assumptions – 'thoughts treated by the individual as representations of the actual world' (ibid., 2) – about, let us say, Kwame Nkrumah or snakes (for the latter see 6.3.3), and, as Blass points out, variation in assumptions can be particularly great between different cultures (1990:85). While each of our 15 Ghanaian readers claiming to understand *bodua* will have a stereotypical image of what a deity is, only the Nzema (GR10) and the Akan (GR1, GR18) will have the precise cultural information in their encyclopaedic entry to provide the exact meaning for *bodua*. GR4, GR9 and GR15 (those who provided definitions), all Ewe, will have different assumptions in their encyclopaedic entries regarding a deity's attire, regalia and their functions. Their interpretations – 'a kind of staff,' 'a kind of juju or charm,' and a 'rod,' respectively – reflect their knowledge of Akan (GR4, GR15) or the lack of it (GR9), and show variation not only between cultures but also between individuals within the same culture. It is not unreasonable to conclude, then, that while the contextual clues in the text are sufficient to trigger a stereotypical image based on similarities of and overlaps between the cultures of southern Ghanaian ethnic groups, they do not provide enough information to enable the readers to work out the exact meaning of *bodua* from the context.

There are, however, 10 Ghanaian readers who claim to understand the three words and to be able to guess their meaning from the context. 5 (GR4, GR9, GR10, GR15, GR18) provide an explanation for *bodua*, 5 (GR5, GR12, GR16, GR17, GR19) do not. As we have seen above, GR10 and GR18 do not actually need a context to know the meaning of *bodua* – it forms part of their cognitive environment. GR4, GR9 and GR15 manage to conjure up a schematic image, but their interpretations differ from the intended one mainly because of cultural

difference, not linguistic competence. This confirms that linguistic knowledge alone without cultural knowledge may not be sufficient for successful communication to take place.

It is more difficult to assess those readers who have not provided definitions despite claiming to understand the words and to be able to guess their meaning from the context. I may only assume that they felt their positive claims automatically indicated their ability to explain the words, therefore they did not find it worthwhile to actually write down their definitions. With no definitions to check and compare, however, it is impossible to verify whether and to what extent they actually understand the untranslated words. I would like to argue, however, that based on the findings above, it is not unreasonable to assume that GR5, an Akan with Twi (Akan) as his mother tongue, and GR16, who identifies her ethnic origin as Ga/Akan – an indication of her cultural competence – and in addition to her mother tongue Ga speaks Twi (Akan), do have the full and exact meaning of *bodua* in their cognitive environment. The others, GR12, a Kasem with the knowledge of Kasem only, GR17, an Ewe with Ewe as mother tongue and knowledge of Ga, and GR19, a Ga with Ga as mother tongue and knowledge of Twi (Akan), may have an encyclopaedic schema about deities, but their assumptions regarding exact details will differ according to their individual cultures. When they claim to be able to infer the meaning from the context, they access the stereotypical image of a deity, not the meaning of *bodua*. When they claim to understand the word, they add on their individual assumptions, which are likely to result in a meaning which is not, or not fully, consistent with the intended one. I take this to be further evidence that the Ghanaian reader does actually rely on his encyclopaedic knowledge and not on the context for the meaning of untranslated words. Since it is not plausible to suggest that there may be Ghanaian readers with no encyclopaedic entry for ‘deity’, we may assume that those culturally and linguistically distant (GR2, GR8, GR14) may not have an extension of the entry for ‘deity as different from own’ and are unable to provide any assumptions for such an extension. Those, however, who claim understanding invariably have an encyclopaedic entry for ‘deity’, together with its extensions, providing a schema which they fill in with their individual assumptions. The ensuing meaning is more or less consistent with the writer’s intended meaning according to the reader’s cultural and linguistic proximity to him.

Especially because of its brevity, the passage from Codjoe-Swayne’s *The Dancing Tortoise* provides further evidence that the Ghanaian reader relies on his cognitive environment rather than on the context for the interpretation of untranslated words. The text provides few, if any, clues to facilitate the inference of the meaning of *tro-tro*; it could be exchanged, for

example, for 'kiosk' without any detrimental effect on the text stylistically or contentwise. The single clue for *aplankeys* is 'shouting for passengers', but this is insufficient information to guide someone to the correct meaning. After all, taxi and bus drivers could also shout for passengers. The fact that the 9 definitions provided for *aplankey* are all correct, and that the 10 definitions for *tro-tro* are either correct or show a grasp of the concept, proves that Ghanaian readers not only have these encyclopaedic entries but readily access them regardless of the context. Their claim to be able to work out the meaning from the context is, therefore, a misconception. It seems that they believe they can work out the meaning of the untranslated words from the context because they understand them. They do not realise that there is no need for an inferential process, particularly because they already know the meaning. Readers GR2, GR8 (Dagaaba and Buksa from Northern Ghana) and GR14 (an expatriate for a long time) can actually be considered as a mini control group: they do not understand the words and because of insufficient contextual clues they cannot work out the meaning from the context, either. This suggests that those who understand the words must have pre-existing knowledge of them, which makes having to resort to inference highly unlikely. The only two readers who signal understanding of the words but indicate that it is not possible to work out their meaning from the context are GR1 and GR3. As she provides no definitions for any of the untranslated words, GR3 is difficult to comment on. Her responses are, however, consistent. Because she understands the words, she finds a glossary/explanation would not have benefited her. On the other hand, GR1, an accomplished linguist possessing not only fluency but detailed linguistic knowledge of Akan, Ga and Nzema, provides correct definitions for all the three words, and clearly shows awareness that her understanding is not a result of an inferential process. Being an Akan with Twi (Akan) as mother tongue, she has not only the linguistic but also the cultural competence. Her acute awareness of her cognitive environment makes her render the question concerning the usefulness of a glossary/explanation non-applicable rather than give a negative answer.

The fact that 4 readers – GR6, GR11, GR13 and GR18 – who claim to understand the untranslated words also indicate that they would find a glossary/explanation useful confirms the existence of an encyclopaedic schema that is to be completed with ethnicity-specific details. Where they cannot provide these details, these readers would welcome a glossary for a full understanding of the exact meaning. 12 (63.15%) Ghanaian readers, on the other hand, feel that a glossary/explanation is non-applicable, would not help them, or are unsure about

its benefits. This shows that a considerable majority of the sample are confident in their ability to make sense of the untranslated words.

These findings confirm that there exists a multi-tiered distribution of Ghanaian readers. At the supra-ethnic national level they all share cultural and linguistic experience with the writer(s) and each other. This is the level that embraces them all and situates them on one side of the metonymic gap – the writer's. At the level of ethnic groups subdivisions occur according to cultural and linguistic proximity to the writer. There are readers who are both culturally and linguistically distant – they share experience with the writer at the supra-ethnic national level. Readers who know the writer's language but are not fully conversant, or not familiar at all, with his culture are able to share in the writer's experience to the extent their linguistic and encyclopaedic knowledge allows. This highlights the overriding importance of cultural knowledge even in inter-ethnic communication within the same national boundaries. Full appreciation of the writer's meanings is shown only by those readers who share both the writer's cultural and linguistic experience. The diagram below illustrates this complex situation.

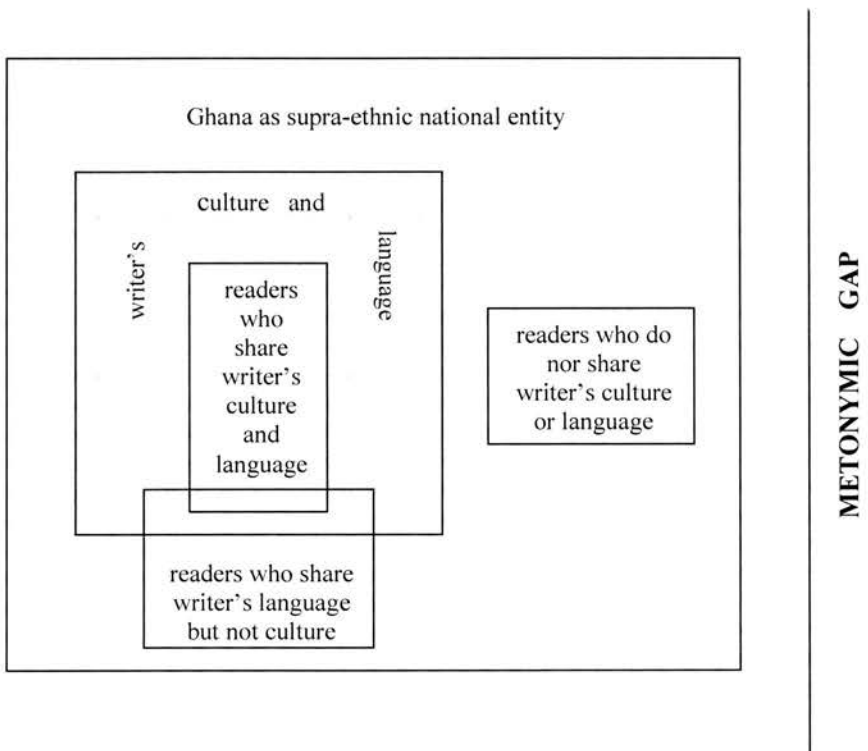


Figure 7.1: Position of Ghanaian readers in relation to the metonymic gap

While acknowledging that there is a Ghanaian readership that shares supra-ethnic cultural and linguistic experience, this complex situation effectively dissolves the notion of the Ghanaian reader as a monolithic entity and highlights the complexity to be encountered in a multi-ethnic multilingual environment.

7.2.2 *Non-Ghanaian African readers*

By virtue of sharing a common African heritage, it is reasonable to expect that the non-Ghanaian African reader would exhibit some affinity if not with the Ghanaian writer's linguistic experience, then at least with his cultural experience.

Like the Ghanaian sample group, the non-Ghanaian African readers are all polyglot, though none of them speaks either Akan, Ga or Pidgin, or any other indigenous Ghanaian language. Small though this reader group is, its members represent East, South, Central and West Africa – they come from 6 ethnic groups which are distant from the writers'. While it is obvious that these readers cannot share a fully mutual cognitive environment with the writer(s), the similarities of their physical environment and overlaps between their cultures will make it possible for them to have some sets of facts that are manifest to them all, with regard to which they are able to make the same assumptions as the writer(s).

The non-Ghanaian African readers' familiarity with the texts is not a factor to be considered. The seven readers had read 0 to 4 of the 13 books listed in the questionnaire, resulting in an average of 1.4 books read per head.

Overall, the responses of this group to Questionnaire Item IV (i & ii) are more uniform than the Ghanaian readers'. Only one reader (NGAR7) claims to understand the untranslated words. He also indicates that he is able to work out the meanings from the context. He has a good grasp of *tro-tro* and gives a correct definition for *aplankey*, and although he cannot explain *bodua*, he is confident that a glossary/explanation would not have helped him. Four readers (NGAR1, NGAR3, NGAR5 and NGAR6) say they do not understand the untranslated words; three of these (NGAR1, NGAR3 and NGAR6) indicate that they are not sure whether they can guess the meaning from the context. NGAR3 and NGAR6 do not attempt explanations; NGAR1 does but all three are incorrect. NGAR5 says he can work out

the meanings from the context but provides no definitions, so it is difficult to verify to what extent he can recover the correct meanings. All four signal, however, that they would have benefited from a glossary/explanation. On the other hand, NGAR2 is not sure whether he understands the words or whether he can guess their meaning from the context; yet he demonstrates good understanding of *bodua*. His cognitive environment, however, conditions him to construct assumptions about chiefs and their symbol of power as first, therefore relevant, interpretation rather than about deities and what their magical powers are vested in, which point to cultural difference between him and the writer. He has an equally good grasp of *tro-tro*, and provides the correct meaning for *aplankey*. He is the only other reader who indicates he would not have benefited from a glossary/explanation, which signals self-assurance regarding the meanings arrived at. NGAR4 is uncertain whether he understands the untranslated words but claims to be able to guess their meaning from the context. His explanations for *bodua* and *tro-tro* are incorrect, but he gives the correct meaning for *aplankey*. He also indicates that he would have found a glossary/explanation useful.

Overall, an overwhelming 85.71% (6 out of 7) of the group indicate that they do not understand the words, or are unsure whether they do. This is the only group where no reader says he/she is not able to guess the meaning from the context – 42.85% (3 out of 7) say they can, 57.14% (4 out of 7) say they are not sure they can. 57.14% (4 out of 7) attempt to explain the untranslated words, and 71.42% (5 out of 7) finds a glossary/explanation would have helped them to understand the words. This clearly shows that for the non-Ghanaian African readers the lack of linguistic knowledge may well be a barrier to activating and accessing cultural knowledge. As they have no pre-existing knowledge of the languages involved, their claim to be able to guess the meaning from the context must be accepted as genuine, and the explanations provided as the results of an inferential process. At the same time, we have seen above that the texts do not contain sufficient contextual clues. Like those Ghanaian readers who share neither the writer's cultural nor his linguistic background, when working out the meaning of the untranslated words, the non-Ghanaian African readers rely not so much on the context as on their existing cultural knowledge. Information in the texts triggers off these readers' schemata in their encyclopaedic memory about deities, vehicles used for transporting people and their crew which get filled in with their assumptions based on their knowledge of their own culture and on their knowledge of other African cultures. The fact that good approximations of the correct meaning are provided for *bodua* and *tro-tro* and that three explanations out of four given for *aplankey* are correct is evidence that their cognitive environment contains assumptions regarding the writer's physical and social

reality, i.e. they share cultural knowledge with the writer and they are capable of making the same assumptions as the writer. That this cultural knowledge is accessed by the members of the sample who represent a wide ethnic and regional variety testifies to such cultural knowledge being supra-ethnic, supranational, pan-African in nature. As Figure 7.2 below shows, this cultural knowledge places the non-Ghanaian African reader on the same side of the metonymic gap as the writer.

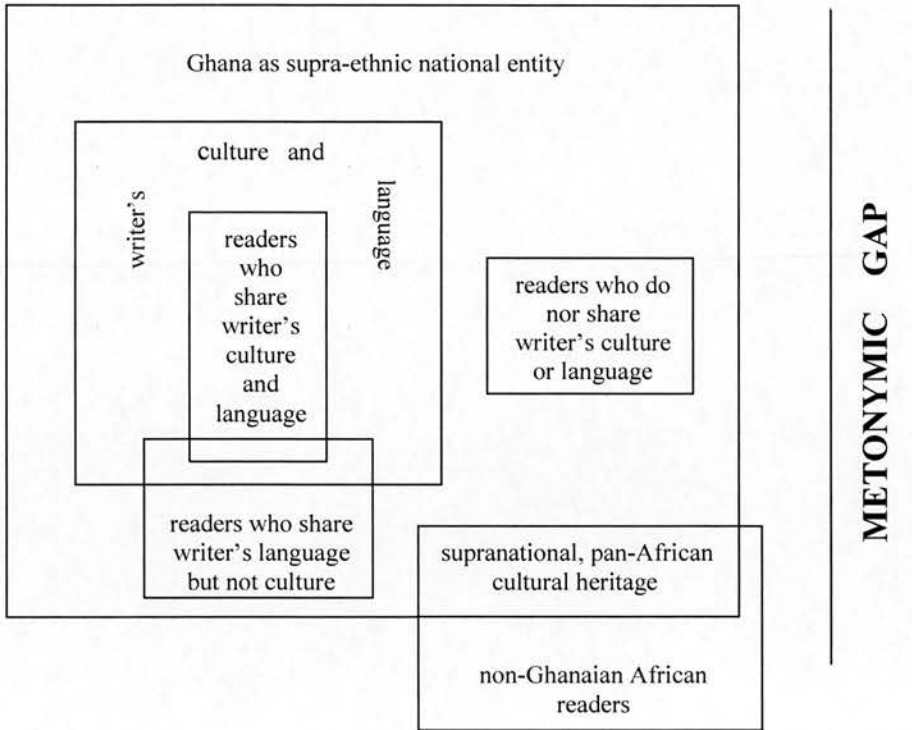


Figure 7.2: Position of non-Ghanaian African readers in relation to the metonymic gap

7.2.3 Western readers

The concept of the metonymic gap entails that, because of their cultural difference, the colonial and other readers in the metropolitan language are not on the same side of the metonymic gap as the writer. We shall see below if the questionnaire results provide evidence for this.

The 19 Western readers constituting the sample are all polyglot, but none of them speaks any indigenous Ghanaian language. They come from 7 different ethnic/national backgrounds in

Europe and North America. 14 are non-native, and 5 are native speakers of English, but, as stated in 5.3.1.2, the group is not examined for differences between native and non-native speakers of English unless these differences are significant. As neither their physical environment, nor their culture show similarities or overlaps with the writers', we may exclude the possibility of them sharing a mutual cognitive environment with the writers. Nor will they be expected to have any sets of facts regarding culture, language (except for the knowledge of English) and physical environment that are manifest to them all.

They can be considered completely unfamiliar with Ghanaian literature as only one reader (WNNER12) has read one book out of the 13 listed in the questionnaire.

The responses of this group to Questionnaire Item IV (i & ii) also show greater uniformity than the Ghanaian readers'. Only one reader (WNER2) claims to understand the untranslated words and to be able to guess their meaning from the context. Unfortunately, her claim cannot be verified as she does not give any explanations/definitions. She, however, indicates that she would have benefited from a glossary. This suggests that despite her claim, she is uncertain about the meanings and her understanding of the words is impressionistic rather than precise. The other 18 readers say either that they do not understand the untranslated words (9) or that they are not sure they do (9). 4 indicate that they cannot guess the meaning from the context, 12 that they are not sure they can. Only another two, WNNER10 and WNER4, say they can guess the meaning from the context. They, however, are uncertain about their explanations/definitions as they indicate that they would have found a glossary helpful. Indeed, none of their definitions – 'necklace' for *bodua*, 'banner' for *tro-tro*, 'inhabitants' for *aplankeys* and 'spear' for *bodua*, 'throughway' for *tro-tro*, 'rickshaw pullers/taxi driver' for *aplankeys*, respectively – is consistent with the intended meaning of the words. Overall, out of the 19 readers 15 – an overwhelming 78.94% – indicate that they would have benefited from a glossary; only 3 say it would not have helped them, and 1 is not sure about its benefits. This indicates that, on the whole, these readers are rather uncertain whether they have arrived at the correct interpretation of the untranslated words.

We have seen above that the passages containing the untranslated words provide insufficient clues for anyone to guess the correct meaning of these words without any linguistic, or, more importantly, cultural knowledge. The fact that 16 (84.21%) of the Western readers cannot – or feel unsure whether they can – work out the meaning of the words from the context confirms the cultural distance between them and the writer: they live in a different world

with different experience, traditions, habit, understanding and expectation. The set of facts the writer has in his cognitive environment is not manifest to them – they do not share the writer’s cognitive environment either mutually or partially. The explanations provided for all three words, none of which is consistent with the correct meaning, confirm that in the inferential process – similarly to the other two groups – the Western readers rely on their cognitive environment. As the set of assumptions manifest to them is different from that of the writer’s, they do not have encyclopaedic schemata about African deities, Ghanaian means of transport and the people associated with them. They may have some marginal, but by no means specific, knowledge of the ‘kind of thing’, which is evidenced by the explanations that come closest to the correct meaning: ‘weapon? magic thing?’ (WNNER10) and ‘stick signifying power’ (WNER3) for *bodua*, ‘means of transport: train?’ (WNNER9) and ‘vehicle’ (WNNER11) for *tro-tro*, and ‘taxi-driver/taxi-men/drivers’ (9 out of the 12 explanations provided) for *aplankeys*. The fact that drawing on assumptions in their cognitive environment cannot lead them to fully correct explanations confirms their cultural difference and distance from the writer. This distance and difference locates them on the other side of the metonymic gap, as shown in Figure 7.3 below.

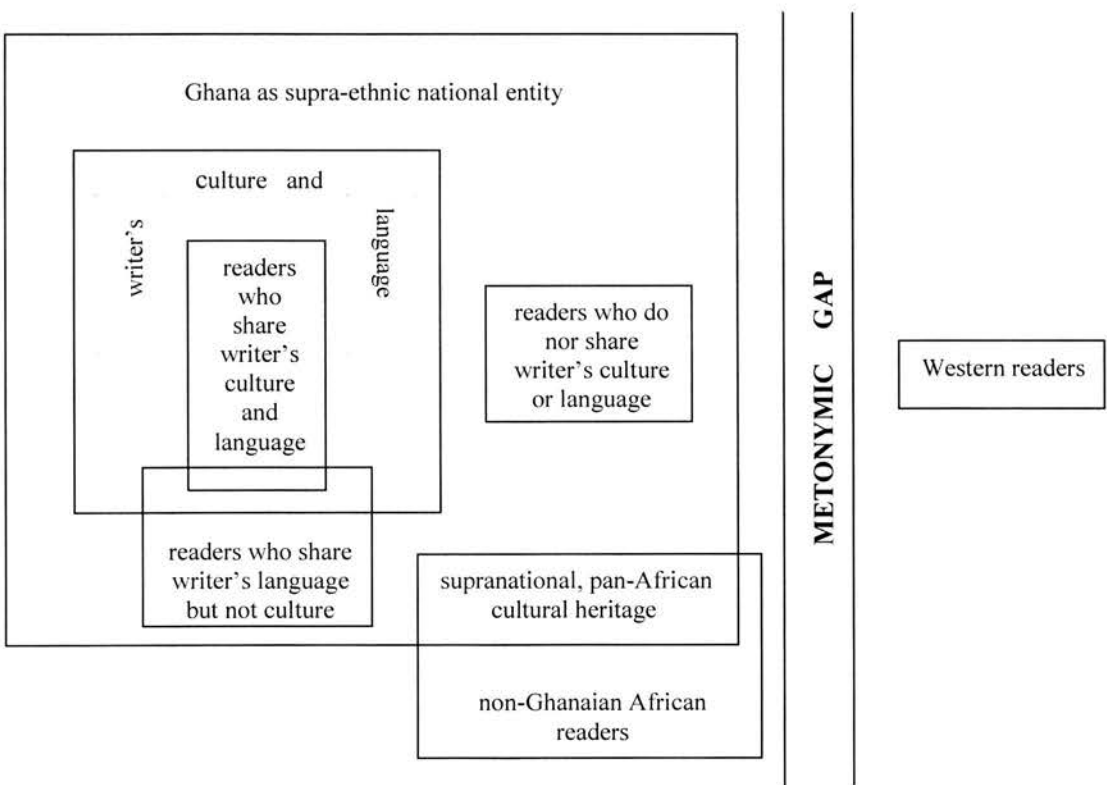


Figure 7.3: Position of Western readers in relation to the metonymic gap

7.2.4 *The metonymic gap and beyond*

The questionnaire results confirm that, indeed, the African language words left untranslated/unexplained in the texts of Ghanaian writers form a cultural gap between the writer's culture and the culture represented by English, the metropolitan language chosen for literary creation. Leaving these words without any authorial assistance to the reader, the writer makes it manifest that he concedes 'the importance of *meanability*, the importance of a situation in which meaning can occur' (Ashcroft, 2001b:76; italics as in original) and opts for the inscription of difference, distance and the absence of writer and metropolitan reader from each other as a result of them being located in different cultures. Whether the reader understands these words or not is not crucial for the understanding of the story – if it were, there would probably be an authorial strategy present in the text to assist the reader. Such words become synecdoches for the writer's culture. Their function is to signal cultural difference and to contribute to the creation of the Africanness of the text. The readers' position in relation to the gap thus created is indicative of their ability to interpret these untranslated/unexplained words. For the majority of Western readers, these words remain symbols of the writer's difference of experience, while the Ghanaian and other African readers can access their culture-bound meaning fully or to varying degrees depending on the similarity of their cultural experience to the writer's.

As the main tenet of the concept of the metonymic gap is cultural difference, the following discussion will focus on Ghanaian writers/readers and Western readers but not on non-Ghanaian African readers as they are on the same side of the metonymic gap as the Ghanaian writer.

The findings of Questionnaire Item IV (iii) (Appendix 4Db) confirm that readers are divided along a cultural – and to a lesser extent linguistic – gap, although I have argued above that it is not possible to rule out entirely that knowledge of a particular language may facilitate access to cultural knowledge. *Agbada* (A. A. Aidoo: *Changes*, p.89) is a borrowing from Yoruba, a Nigerian language only spoken in Ghana by immigrants, yet 89.47% (17 out of 19) of the Ghanaian readers claim to be able to explain *agbada*, and 73.68% (14 out of 19) actually get it right. This is comparable to the non-Ghanaian African readers (none of whom is Yoruba or speaks Yoruba), 85.71% (6 out of 7) of whom claim to understand *agbada*, and 71.42% (5 out of 7) provide the correct explanation. At the same time, although a very high proportion – 94.73% (18 out of 19) – of the Western readers claim to understand this word,

only 36.84% (7 out of 19) of them can come up with the correct explanation. We have to recall that the processing or mental effort needed to understand an utterance depends on (a) the effort of memory and imagination required to construct a suitable context; and (b) the psychological complexity of the utterance itself. Greater complexity implies greater processing effort, hence lower relevance. For the Western reader *agbada* has little relevance – it is the source of great psychological complexity because it is a foreign word, confronted with which the majority of Western readers find it difficult, if not impossible, even on spending considerable processing/mental effort, to construct a suitable context which would enable them to understand it adequately. For the Ghanaian and non-Ghanaian African readers *agbada* is a foreign word, too. They can, however, get round the psychological complexity it represents because in their cognitive environment they have assumptions about men's traditional wear in West Africa that can be described as voluminous. They also know that a person bearing the name Ali is very likely to be Muslim, and they have information on the type of voluminous garment Muslim men wear. So they can construct a suitable context in which to interpret *agbada* with very little effort, so the relevance of this word for them is great.

Although the untranslated/unexplained African language words woven into the English text are the immediately obvious means of creating a metonymic gap, difference can also be, and is, inscribed in English, as is evidenced by the responses regarding *fathers* (A. A. Aidoo: *Changes*, p.89) in the same questionnaire item. 73.68% (14 out of 19) of the Western readers do not understand, or are not sure about, *fathers*. Only 26.31% (5 out of 19) of them say they understand the meaning, but only 21.05% (4 out of 9) of them can provide an explanation consistent with the culture-bound meaning. At the same time, 57.14% (4 out of 7) of non-Ghanaian African readers say they understand *fathers*, and 57.14% (4 out of 7) actually give an explanation consistent with the culture-bound meaning. Not surprisingly, the Ghanaian readers show the highest level of understanding: 94.73% (18 out of 19) claim they understand *fathers*, and the correct explanation is given by 84.21% (16 out of 19). This shows that the Western reader's knowledge of English alone is not sufficient for the interpretation of *fathers* as a culture-bound plural entity (see 6.3.2.1). Albeit an English word, *fathers* has little relevance for the Western reader. It represents psychological complexity because of its plural form, which is rarely, if ever, used in reference to a woman's male parent, grandparent and their male siblings and cousins. Because of the Western reader's unfamiliarity with the extended family system and the relationships within it, it also requires from the Western reader considerable effort of imagination to construct a

suitable context in which it can be adequately understood. This further supports the argument that the metonymic gap is created by the unfamiliarity of cultural concepts, regardless of whether these concepts are encoded in an indigenous African language or English.

As we have seen, inscribing difference by creating a metonymic gap is a means of expressing the writer's cultural identity. However, the fact that Western readers do not have the same experience as the writer does not mean that they have 'incommensurable mental frameworks' (Ashcroft, 2001b:75) and that they cannot understand the writer's meaning. Experience cannot be conflated with meaning just as possession of a language is not necessarily the possession of a measured amount of knowledge about the world. 'The meanings of words are tied to the established ways of using a language, that is, how language interferes with reality to give it meaning. Meanings are not born from innate differences in reality, but from the distinctions with which a language grasps reality' (Lehtonen, 2000:40). Especially because meanings are not born from innate differences in reality, the distance between the Ghanaian writer and Western reader can be traversed. In their responses to Questionnaire Item IV (iv) (Appendix 4Dc) Western and Ghanaian readers exhibit similar levels of understanding of cultural reference encoded in English and left without authorial assistance to the reader. The reference to polygamy in '*as a rival would look at her husband's favourite*' (Yeboah-Afari: *The Sound of Pestles*, p.43) is identified by 12 out of 19 (63.15%) Ghanaian readers. Very similarly, 11 out of 19 (57.89%) Western readers pick up the reference to polygamy, and 9 out of the 11 (81.81%) claim to have understood the meaning immediately. In relevance theoretic terms this means that it took these Western readers little effort of memory to construct the context of a type of marriage which allows the man to have more than one wife in which to interpret the reference. They also used minimal processing/mental effort to achieve positive cognitive effects – 68.42% indicating that they understood the meaning immediately, and none indicating that they needed to work out the meaning – so the relevance of this cultural reference for them is great. The culture-bound meaning has been adequately understood – successful communication across the metonymic gap has taken place.

Every culture has its idiosyncratic as well as universal aspects. While the untranslated/unexplained African language words function as symbols of the idiosyncratic aspects of the Ghanaian writer's culture, the data provide evidence that cultural reference encoded in English falls into two categories:

- (1) cultural reference pertaining to the idiosyncratic aspects of the writer's culture, e.g. *fathers* [collective name for a woman's male parent, grandparent and their male siblings and cousins];
- (2) cultural reference pertaining to the universal aspects of the writer's culture, e.g. '*as a rival would look at her husband's favourite*' [marriage, jealousy, polygamy].

Type 1 references are cultural concepts unknown to the culturally distant metropolitan/Western reader, while Type 2 references are more likely to relate to 'human nature' existent within every particular culture.

Skilled readers have the ability to execute linguistic processes to derive the meaning of a text, i.e. word meanings and propositional structure. They also have the ability to construct an interpretation of the information presented in the text. The process of interpretation 'operates on the propositional structure (i.e., the meaning) and constructs a referential representation. This representation includes information about the real world referents of words, properties attributed to objects, and knowledge about the situation. Interpretation relies on inferential processes that function to integrate explicit information in the text with general world knowledge' (Long et al., 1996:190). When faced with African-language words in the English text, Western readers are unable to derive the word meaning, and consequently most of them are unable to proceed with interpretation. Faced with Type 1 cultural reference, Western readers can undoubtedly derive word meanings and propositional structure. Since, however, their cognitive environment does not contain information about the real world referents of the words, the majority of them are unable to construct referential representations. Their inferential processes are impeded by the lack of world knowledge which could be integrated with explicit information in the text to yield an interpretation. It has been demonstrated above, however, that the metonymic gap can be traversed. Although African-language words and Type 1 cultural reference can be, and are, successfully interpreted by some Western readers, the metonymic gap is most often traversed when they are faced with Type 2 cultural reference. This type of cultural reference pertains to experiences which can be partially shared, even if never identical, across space and time. It is this shared universal experience which makes it possible for Western readers to integrate text meaning with their existing assumptions about the world, which allows them to cross the metonymic gap and recover culture-bound meanings.

7.3 Cushioning⁵

Cushioning, as we have seen in 4.2.2.4, is a method of indigenisation whereby African-language words or phrases describing culturally bound concepts, objects and occurrences in a literary text are juxtaposed with their English equivalent to provide immediate explanation or clarification. It aims at 'naming and identifying the gap between mother tongue and other tongue without necessarily bridging it' (Zabus, 1991:7). As such, I regard it as an authorial strategy whose aim is to make the text accessible to the reader who does not share the author's cultural and linguistic experience.

When resorting to the method of cushioning, the writer makes manifest a number of things: (a) that by the insertion of an African-language word he is signalling cultural difference; (b) that he is aware of a fairly mixed, or a rather ill-defined, readership; (c) that at that point in the text he deems it important for the reader from a different cultural and linguistic background – be it other ethnic Ghanaian, non-Ghanaian African or Western – to have an idea about the meaning of the African-language word; and (d) that he finds tagging an explanatory word or phrase onto the African word the most relevant way of communicating his message so that the reader can achieve the desired effects more economically. While the function of inserting untranslated/unexplained African-language words in the text is the distancing of the mother tongue culture of the writer and the other tongue culture represented by the language chosen for creation, cushioning functions as a shorthand solution aimed at bridging the metonymic gap and assisting the reader to negotiate the 'culture bump' (Leppihalme, 1997) efficiently.

In their discussion of cushioning, which they call 'glossing', Ashcroft *et al* write:

Parenthetic translations of individual words, for example, 'he took him into his *obi* (hut)', are the most obvious and most common authorial intrusion in cross-cultural texts. Although not limited to cross-cultural texts such glosses foreground the continual reality of cultural distance. But the simple ostensive matching of '*obi*' and 'hut' reveals the general inadequacy of such an exercise. Juxtaposing the words in this way suggests the view that the meaning of a word is its referent. But it becomes clear in reading that the Igbo word '*obi*' is one of the buildings which makes up the family's communal compound. If simple ostensive reference does not work even for simple objects, it is even more difficult to find a referent for more abstract terms (1989:61-2).

Ashcroft *et al*'s use of 'referent' in a broad linguistic sense to mean any kind of designation, textual as well as situational, is not helpful in the discussion of cultural meaning. Since we

are concerned with word meaning⁶ here, and, with one exception (Questionnaire item IV (iv), Appendix 4Dc), also throughout the analysis of the questionnaire results, a semantic approach in which reference 'is concerned with the relations between words and extra-linguistic reality: what words stand for or refer to in the outside world or universe of discourse' (Wales, 1989:396), may be more felicitous. If we compare the descriptive meaning⁷ of *obi* and 'hut', the difference is clear:

Expression (type)	Descriptive meaning	Referent type
<i>obi</i> (noun)	one of the buildings of a family's communal compound*	object
hut (noun)	a small, simple, or crude house or shelter, esp. one made of mud, turf, etc., or constructed for temporary use**	object

Table 7.1: The descriptive meaning of obi and 'hut'

(The table has been adopted from Löbner (2002:24). * Meaning as given by Ashcroft *et al* (1989:61). ** Definition adopted from *The New Shorter Oxford English Dictionary* (1993 edition).

The referent of *obi* is a real-world object – so is the referent of 'hut', but the two objects are not the same. The Saussurean framework also supports a relationship between a word and what it refers to in the real-world: 'The linguistic entity exists only through the associating of the signifier with the signified. Whenever only one element is retained, the entity vanishes; instead of a concrete object we are faced with a mere abstraction' (Saussure, 1959:102-3). The signified of *obi*, likewise its referent, can only be a real object, not an English word. The latter can only be its translation, or rather an attempt at its translation. Because different cultures conceptualise the world differently, it is difficult to find exact equivalents, especially in the case of single words referring to culturally defined entities such, for example, as human dwelling or emotions. Reading Ashcroft *et al* in this context, one is to

find their doubting that 'the meaning of a word is its referent' rather absurd. Had they used 'translation' instead of 'referent', it would be easier to see their point, for the translation of a word does not always yield exact equivalence.

Above I chose my words carefully to say that the writer resorts to cushioning because he deems it important for the reader *to have an idea* – but not precise understanding – *of the meaning of the African word*, and that cushioning is a *shorthand* solution. Cushioning gives immediate access to meaning, thereby contributing to the feeling of comfort of the reader not sharing the writers cultural and linguistic background, but the images these English translations suggest to the reader unfamiliar with the writer's culture may prove inadequate, or perhaps even misleading.

Ashcroft *et al*'s suggestion that cushioning "(ironically) accords the english [sic] word the status of the 'real'" (ibid., 62) is untenable on two counts. First, we have seen that 'hut' is *not* the referent of *obi*, only its approximation rendered in English, and as such it cannot purport to be the 'real thing'. Second, there is no set word order for cushioning. As Zabus (1991:160-1) also points out, the two words can be swapped as we find, for example, in Achebe's *Things Fall Apart*: 'the elders, or *ndichie*' (p.9), '*jigida*, or waist beads' (p.49). We can, however, agree that particularly because of the difference between the concept carried by the African word and the concept carried by the English word, there is a gap in-between "which is metonymic of the breach that resulted from the clash between two worlds, that of the 'palm-wine shack' and that of 'the steeple', that were forcefully brought 'in contact'" (Zabus, 1991:160).

Ashcroft *et al* also worry that cushioning 'may lead to a considerably stilted movement of plot as the story is forced to drag an explanatory machinery behind it' (1989:62). However, their concern seems to be irrelevant to Ghanaian fiction. In my 210,187 word corpus, in 18 categories of cultural reference there are only 32 instances (0.015% of the corpus) of cushioning.

Questionnaire Item I (Appendix 4A) aims to find out about the readers' perception of the (in)adequacy of cushioning. The two passages used in the questionnaire come from different parts of the same novel, and the cushioned words are '*adawuro*' (gong gongs – Duodu: *The Gab Boys*, p.51) and 'doing *aworshia* – that is, working all night' (Duodu: *The Gab Boys*, p.105), respectively. While the former has a standard form – the 'cushions' are usually linked to the African word by 'or', or appear in-between brackets, dashes or commas either before

or after the African word – the latter is unusual because it uses the connector ‘that is’. As such, it succinctly highlights that the actual role of the English words in cushioning is to provide short, easily accessible explanatory notes, quick glosses in the body of the text to reduce the interruption to the reading process caused by the insertion of an African (i.e. foreign) word⁸. This supports my argument that these English words cannot be mistaken for the referents of the African words and therefore cannot be accorded ‘the status of the real’. The relationship between a word and its translation is not that of referentiality, but that of equivalence which, as we have seen, is a matter of degree depending on the concepts involved.

Although there are two passages containing a cushioned word each, only one question follows relating to both. This may seem to create a methodological difficulty as readers may want to react to each cushioned word separately. My holistic approach, however, is vindicated as out of the total sample of 45 readers only 2 (4.44%) indicated the need to react to the two cushioned items separately. The tables have been created to reflect this need, however slight.

7.3.1 *Western and non-Ghanaian African readers*

While being somewhat uncertain about the answers of the non-Ghanaian African readers, I expected to find that Western readers would find the explanation provided by cushioning insufficient, while Ghanaian readers would overall find it unnecessary. Contrary to my expectation, a convincing majority – Western readers: 68.42% for *adawuro* and 78.94% for *aworshia*; non-Ghanaian African readers: 71.42% for both words; Ghanaian readers: 68.42% for both words – of each reader group says that cushioning provides sufficient explanation of the African-language words. The implications of such findings for the Western and non-Ghanaian reader groups are that cushioning does provide a bridge across the metonymic gap. In case of non-culture-specific concepts like ‘doing *aworshia*’, the metonymic gap is created by linguistic, and not by cultural difference, so the reader’s difficulty is linguistic, not conceptual. Cushioning the Ga word in English gives the reader of English immediate access to the concept, thereby eliminating the gap caused by the foreign word.

In case of a culture-specific concept or object such as *adawuro*, cushioning it in English gives the readers access to their encyclopaedic entry for 'gong-gong'. As their assumptions about percussion instruments vary according to their respective culture and knowledge of the world, their understanding of what *adawuro* is will vary accordingly. Western readers are likely to access their lexical entry for the non-reduplicated form 'gong' as it is a loan word with identical meaning not only in English, but also in many European languages, e.g. French, German, Spanish, Hungarian and Russian. The assumptions in their encyclopaedic entry for 'gong' is of an instrument of Asian origin, which is a round piece of metal that hangs in a frame, makes a resonant sound when hit with a stick, and is used as a musical instrument in an orchestra or to give signals, e.g. summonses to meals. Since the reduplicated 'gong-gong' has a rather vague meaning – any of various simple percussion instruments (*The New Shorter Oxford English Dictionary*, 1993) – it is unlikely to influence these readers' assumptions strongly, apart from increasing their uncertainty about the exact meaning of *adawuro*. Non-Ghanaian African readers, on the other hand, will have different assumptions. In their cognitive environment they will have culture-specific encyclopaedic and language-specific lexical entries for 'gong-gong'. For a Lingala speaking Congolese reader it will be *kingongolo*, referring to a bottomless cone-shaped steel instrument with a handle at its point which is hit with a stick, or to its very urban version – a glass bottle hit with a piece of cutlery. For the Igbo reader it will be *ogene*, referring to a cowbell-shaped metal instrument with a handle which is hit with stick and is used singly or as a pair. The close similarity between *kingongolo* and *ogene* suggests a very probable similarity with *adawuro*, thereby implying a fuller understanding on the part of the non-Ghanaian African reader of the cushioned pair '*adawuro* (gong-gong)'.

All readers, Western or African, aim at achieving optimal relevance, and not necessarily at recovering literal meaning. To achieve this, they make interpretive assumptions about the writer's informative intention, selecting the best possible context in which to process an assumption. There is no guarantee, however, that the interpretation that satisfies the reader's expectations of relevance will be the correct, i.e. the intended, one. Although neither the Western nor the non-Ghanaian readers are likely to recover the correct meaning, their interpretations are relevant enough in the given context to ensure no disruption in the reading process. The implication for cushioning culture-specific concepts is that although cushioning may not provide sufficient information for the reader to recover the full meaning of the African-language word, it provides enough information for him to have a close enough idea to take him across the metonymic gap.

7.3.2 Ghanaian readers

As mentioned above, the Ghanaian readers' results also deviate from my expectations. Even if we acknowledge the diversity of the Ghanaian readership, because of their cultural and linguistic knowledge, it would not be unreasonable to expect that a good number of the Ghanaian readers would find cushioning in the two passages unnecessary. Instead, only 1 (5.26%) Ghanaian reader finds it unnecessary, while 13 (68.42%) find it provides sufficient explanation of the African-language words, and 5 (26.31%) find the information it provides insufficient. From this I gather that the majority of the Ghanaian readers may not have reacted to this question spontaneously as readers, but stepped outside the reading process and engaged in a linguistic exercise, examining the cushioned pairs on their own merit to decide whether the English words provided sufficient explanation of the African-language words.

In this context it is not surprising that 13 readers find 'working all night' and 'gong-gong' adequate. As we have seen, 'doing *aworshia* – that is, working all night' is a simple unproblematic case of translation, which does not involve any culture specific concept, and it is found to be such by the Ghanaian readers. In the case of '*adawuro* (gong-gong)', the most likely reason for the Ghanaian readers to find 'gong-gong' a sufficient explanation is that in their memory they have two lexical entries (some readers may have more, depending on the number of languages they speak) for the encyclopaedic entry for the concept in question – one Akan, and one English. Since the two lexical entries refer to the same concept, they carry the same information, therefore for some of the Ghanaian readers one is an adequate explanation, or translation, of the other.

Those 5 readers who find that cushioning gives insufficient explanation of *aworshia* and *adawuro* must have compared the signifieds, or referents, of the African words with those of the English words. Although we have seen that the 'doing *aworshia* – that is, working all night' pair is unproblematic because of its culture-independent concept, for these readers 'working all night' may still prove insufficient. *Aworshia* is a Ga slang word⁹. In the relevance theoretical framework 'a translation should communicate the same interpretation as that intended in the original, [that is,] it should convey to the receptors *all and only those explicatures and implicatures that the original was intended to convey*' (Gutt, 1991:94; italics as in original). Although 'working all night' conveys the correct meaning, it does not carry the appropriate stylistic value – so this may explain why the more perceptive Ghanaian readers find it inadequate.

In the case of *adawuro* it is not unreasonable to assume that although these readers may have an Akan and an English lexical entry in their memory for the encyclopaedic entry for the concept, they also have a separate encyclopaedic entry for the concept 'gong-gong'. When faced with the pair '*adawuro* (gong-gong)', they compare the concepts. As the two concepts are not identical, because *adawuro* refers to a concrete musical instrument while 'gong-gong' refers to the type (any of various simple percussion instruments) rather than the concrete instrument, these readers find that the natural language expression of the concept 'gong-gong' does not provide sufficient explanation for the concept *adawuro*.

7.4 Contextualisation

As has been seen in 4.2.2.5, contextualisation is a method of indigenisation whereby African-language words or phrases describing culturally bound concepts, objects and occurrences are embedded in an immediate context providing clues as to their meaning, or in a dialogue with the aim of letting the characters explain their meaning. The reader is involved in a guessing game and is expected to infer the meaning from the context. Similarly to cushioning, it aims at 'naming and identifying the gap between mother tongue and other tongue without necessarily bridging it' (Zabus, 1991:7). Because of its function in the text, I regard contextualisation an authorial strategy whose aim, just like that of cushioning, is to make the text accessible to the reader who does not share the author's cultural and linguistic experience.

When the writer decides to create an explanatory context for an African-language word or for a culture-bound concept expressed in English, as in cushioning, he makes several things manifest: (a) that he is inscribing difference; (b) that he is aware of a mixed readership; (c) that leaving the African-language word untranslated or the culture-bound concept expressed in English unexplained will lead to a breakdown of communication with readers with different cultural and linguistic experience; (d) that at that point in the text he finds building a context round the African-language word the most relevant way of communicating his message so that the reader can achieve the desired effects more economically.

The context intended to give clues to the reader to help him infer the meaning of the African-language word is the public interpretation of the writer's thoughts, and the readers construct a mental interpretation of this, i.e. of the original, thoughts. Questionnaire Item V (i, ii & iii) (Appendices 4Ea, 4Eb and 4Ec) intends to find out whether the interpretive expression of the writer's thoughts is relevant enough for the readers to construct the correct interpretive assumptions about the writers informative intention.

7.4.1 Contextualisation of African-language words

In Questionnaire Item V (i) our interest lies in what is communicated to the reader by the name *Kweku Nyamekye* (A.A. Aidoo, *A Gift from Somewhere*, p.81), which, in turn, will depend on the implicit contextual assumptions the reader can recover and on the implicit conclusions he can derive. Some implicit assumptions can be expected to be recovered by all readers, but as we shall see, there is considerable variation in potential assumptions between the Akan-speaking Ghanaian reader, the non-Akan-speaking Ghanaian or non-Ghanaian African reader and the Western reader.

To find out to what extent the name *Kweku Nyamekye* makes sense to the reader, i.e. how relevant it is, we have to consider the processing effort required to understand it and the positive cognitive effects achieved. As we have seen, the processing effort depends on two main factors: a) the effort of memory and imagination needed to construct a suitable context; and b) the psychological complexity of the utterance. The Akan-speaking Ghanaian reader immediately knows that implicit assumptions about the concept and practice of giving personal names must be used to process this utterance. The name *Kweku Nyamekye* gives him access to his encyclopaedic information about day names or soul names derived from the name of the tutelary god of the day of the week on which the child is born (Egblewogbe, 1987:190), *Kweku* being the name given to a male child born on Wednesday, and, more importantly, about names suggesting exceptional circumstances. *Nyamekye* means 'god has given', and this name is given to a much awaited child who is believed to be the gift of God, and as such, is much loved and protected by its mother. Since the Akan-speaking reader has immediate access to this information, the effort needed to construct the suitable context is minimised. The psychological complexity of the utterance is also limited not only because the linguistic structure of the utterance is fairly straightforward, but also because both words, *Kweku* and *Nyamekye*, are

frequently encountered ones, which makes the full name fairly easy to process. Consequently, the relative lack of complexity of the utterance leads to no distraction from relevance.

Let us recall that positive cognitive effects are 'achieved when newly presented information interacts with a context of existing assumptions in one of three ways: by strengthening an existing assumption, by contradicting and eliminating an existing assumption, or by combining with an existing assumption to yield a contextual implication: that is, a logical implication derivable neither from the new information alone, nor from the context alone, but from the new information and the context combined' (Wilson, 1994:45). The name *Kweku Nyamekye* is especially relevant to the Akan-speaking reader because it interacts with his existing assumptions about the world, i.e. it has positive cognitive effects. It not only strengthens his existing assumptions, but combining with the assumption concerning the position of the boy's mother as a no longer favoured first wife, it may yield, or at least forecast, the contextual implication that *Kweku Nyamekye* is a child not very much liked by his father, a fact that we learn only towards the end of the story.

As we have seen, the Akan-speaking reader has immediate access to his encyclopaedic entries for personal names, which then triggers easy and quick processing of the information. Therefore he is distracted from relevance if the name *Kweku Nyamekye* is explained explicitly. It is unnecessary for him to spend time processing the contextualisation in which the assumptions needed to understand the name are made explicit. By contrast, for the non-Akan-speaking Ghanaian or non-Ghanaian African, and the Western reader, for whom the name *Kweku Nyamekye* may prove to be entirely incomprehensible, the rewards for processing the contextualisation following the name may be great. Since all the Ghanaian and non-Ghanaian African readers can be expected to be familiar with African naming systems, understanding this name for them is primarily a language, not a cultural, problem. It may be assumed, however, that the non-Akan-speaking Western reader's cognitive environment, i.e. the set of assumptions that are manifest to him, does not include implicit assumptions about 'talking' names. For him *Kweku* is a first name, a string of sounds used to identify a particular person, whereas *Nyamekye* is taken to be a surname indicating this particular person's kinship with the father. Because of his unfamiliarity with the structure and functions of Ghanaian personal names, the non-Akan-speaking Western reader, and for that matter, the non-Akan-speaking African reader, both Ghanaian and non-Ghanaian, who may be familiar with the concept of 'talking' names but who, due to the lack of his knowledge of the language involved, cannot understand the meaning of this name, is sure to welcome the contextualisation which makes

explicit the assumptions necessary to understand the importance of the name and the reasons behind giving it to the child in the story. The contextualisation, then, becomes informationally useful (i.e. achieves relevance) for all non-Akan-speaking readers not only because the explicitness of the information considerably reduces the processing effort, but also because the newly presented information interacts with the context of their existing assumptions about the structure and meaning of personal names by contradicting and eliminating them, i.e. it has positive cognitive effects (cf. 4.3.2).

In a literary text contextualisation proves to be a highly relevant way of providing information especially because of its unintrusive nature. However, the above example seems to suggest that contextualisation in hybrid texts may not fully achieve its aim of explaining or clarifying meaning. As has been shown, for the Akan-speaking reader the contextualisation is superfluous, may halt the flow of reading, distract from relevance and consequently create the impression of the text being dull. We have to note, however, that, similarly to cushioning, contextualisation becomes burdensome for the readers who shares the writer's language only if it is used too frequently. This does not seem to be the case in Ghanaian English-language fiction. Although contextualisation is by far the most favoured method of providing authorial assistance because of its relative unintrusiveness (54.35% of all assistance in the data is contextualisation), in the corpus of 210,187 words, in 18 cultural categories I have found only 337 instances (0.16% of the corpus) of cultural reference that are contextualised.

On the other hand, the non-Akan speaking reader may benefit from the contextualisation in that it may be his only source of information that can lend some kind of relevance to the name *Kweku Nyamekye*. Since, however, his cognitive environment may not contain assumptions about how the system of Ghanaian personal names works, the new information is not able to combine with an existing assumption to yield a contextual implication. This distracts from relevance and means that the non-Akan-speaking reader loses out on recovering the subtle details that lead to a full(er) understanding of the story.

The questionnaire results show that 78.94% (15 out of 19) of the Ghanaian readers have a full understanding of *Kweku Nyamekye*. This indicates that for the Ghanaian non-Akan speakers – GR7, GR9, GR12, GR13 and GR17 – the new information provided by the context interacted with their already existing assumptions about names by providing further evidence for their assumptions, i.e. by strengthening them, and led to the correct interpretation of the name, i.e. the contextualisation for them proved informationally useful.

The only Ghanaian reader whose interpretation is not consistent with the culture-bound meaning of the name is GR8, a Buli speaker with no knowledge of Akan or any other Ghanaian languages. His lack of knowledge of Akan prevents him from providing the appropriate contextual assumptions for *Kweku*, which is only partially explained by the context. He also fails to construct an interpretation of the information explicitly presented in the text for *Nyamekye*. Ultimately, the interpretation that satisfies his expectation of relevance – ‘*Kweku Nyamekye* is the name of a person’ – is not the intended one because it stops at the recognition of *Kweku Nyamekye* as a person’s name without actually providing the meaning it has.

Interestingly, the 2 readers – GR3 and GR14 – who have no idea/are not sure about the meaning of the name are both mother tongue speakers of Twi (Akan). We may assume that these two readers responded as they did not because they did not have assumptions in their cognitive environment about *Kweku* being the day name given to a Wednesday born male child and about names, like *Nyamekye*, suggesting exceptional circumstances at birth, but because they did not consider it worth their while to process the information and attempt an answer at all.

The results of non-Ghanaian African and Western readers signal the ineffectiveness of contextualisation even in the case of such relatively clear explanations as those provided for *Kweku* (and) *Nyamekye*. In these two groups no reader is able to recover the full culture-bound meaning of the name. However, the interesting aspect of the findings for these two groups of readers is not necessarily in cultural difference. Out of the 26 readers of the two groups combined, 8 manage an interpretation close to the culture-bound meaning. As can be expected, *Kweku* represents an almost insurmountable difficulty for them. Not only would it require them to have assumptions about the writer’s culture and language that they do not have in their cognitive environment, but it is not fully explained by the context, either. The context does contain the information that *Kweku* is a day name, but has no clues which would help recover that the name *Kweku* is given to a male child born on Wednesday. It is only WNNER2 and WNNER13 who manage to figure out that *Kweku* is the day name of the child, but as no further information is available from the text, they cannot provide any further assumptions. However, 6 of these 8 readers are able to construct the correct interpretation of *Nyamekye* – ‘Gift of God’ – based on the information explicitly presented in the text. A majority of the 6, i.e. 4 (66.66%), are native speakers of English, which is 80% of all the English native speakers of the sample (a total of 5). This indicates that while native English

readers are able to process explicit information provided by the context with no or relatively little effort resulting in great relevance, non-native readers of English may find it difficult to cope with the devices of cohesion and coherence in the text, and may not recover even explicitly stated information. This highlights the fact that the Ghanaian writer in particular, and the African writer in general, in addition to the difficulty caused by the difference in cultural and linguistic experience, faces another difficulty when writing for an international audience – that of the competence of the readers in English.

Questionnaire Item V (ii) (Appendix 4Eb), where the context provided by the writer for *kola* is far less explicit than the context for *Kweku Nyamekye*, presents similar results, although with a slightly different distribution. The majority of Ghanaian readers – 11 out of 19 (57.89%) – are able to derive the right contextual implications, i.e. the information in the text combines with their existing assumptions about *kola* to yield the interpretation ‘bribe’. The remaining 8 readers (42.10%) either have some idea (3 – 15.78%), or their interpretation is close to the culture-bound meaning (5 – 26.31%). This indicates either that their encyclopaedic entry for *kola* contains the concept ‘bribe’, or that the context in which it is presented is capable of making them recognise, to various degrees, what the interpretive relation between the propositional form *kola* and the thought it represents is. To put it simply, they either know what *kola* means in its figurative meaning, or the context helps them to infer the (more or less) correct meaning.

The results of non-Ghanaian African and Western readers also show that contextualisation works for some readers – 15 out of 26 readers show various degrees of understanding – and not for others – 3 out of 26 have no idea/are not sure – and leads to misunderstanding yet for some others – 8 out of 26 provide an interpretation which is not consistent with the culture-bound meaning. This confirms that while the contextualisation of African-language words in the English text has advantages for readers in all the three reader groups, it ultimately proves ineffective because, as Zabrus puts it, it relies “on the non-indigenous reader’s ‘act of reading’” (1991:162) and it tries to cater for the needs of a fairly mixed and ill-defined readership.

7.4.2 Contextualisation of culture-bound concepts expressed in English

By extension, culture-bound concepts expressed in English may also get contextualised to help the reader understand their meaning. By virtue of referring to something that exists in the writer's culture but not in the culture where the language of his artistic creation is rooted, these are words and expressions that have undergone indigenisation – either their form (signifier) or their meaning (signified) or both have been modified so that they can carry experience distinct from that carried by British English.

'Passion Week' (Armah, *Beautiful*, pp.1-2) in Questionnaire Item V (iii) (Appendix 4Ec) has undergone semantic extension. In its extended meaning it no longer refers to the Holy Week before Easter, but to the week before pay-day when money is scarce. The analogy based on the tribulations of Christ is obvious and implies comparable suffering caused by destitution and misery. 78.94% (15 out of 19) of the Ghanaian readers recover this meaning, while another 10.52% (2 out of 19) have a close enough idea. No Ghanaian reader misinterprets 'Passion Week', which suggests that either it forms part of their cognitive environment, or that the information provided by the context generates the right interpretive assumptions in the readers, i.e. the contextualisation is effective. The only 2 readers who have no idea are GR14 and GR19. We have seen earlier that GR14 spent a considerable part of his life abroad, which puts him out of touch with life and reality in Ghana at both levels – ethnic and national. We could assume that his encyclopaedic entry for 'Passion Week' contains no assumptions regarding its extended culture-specific meaning. At the same time, it may be the case that he simply did not consider it worth his while to read the passage and answer the question, which is very likely to be the case with GR19.

The contextualisation of 'Passion Week' seems to be less successful for non-Ghanaian African and Western readers, who are not likely to have assumptions about its extended meaning in their cognitive environment. While it does not work only for 11.53% (3 out of 26) of the readers of the two groups combined (whatever the reasons for this may be), 23.07% (6 out of 26) recover the culture-bound meaning, and 3.84% (1 out of 26) have a close enough idea – for them contextualisation undoubtedly has its benefits. However, 61.53% (16 out of 26) fail to achieve a match between the interpretive expression of the writer's thought and their interpretive assumptions about the writer's informative intention¹⁰ – they misinterpret 'Passion Week'. The explanations provided by these 16 readers show that a convincing majority (12 out of 16, i.e. 75%) interpret it in its original Christian meaning. According to Sperber and Wilson, when two

assumptions are found to contradict each other, the weaker assumption will automatically be abandoned. ‘The contextualisation of a new assumption in a context which contradicts it can result in the rejection ... of some or all of the new information itself. In this case, there will be no significant contextual effect’ (1995:115). The existing assumptions of these readers based on their own cultural experience are so strong that the new information provided by the context fails to contradict and eliminate them; in fact, the new information is rejected, and the extended culture-specific meaning of ‘Passion Week’ is not recovered.

The implications of these findings are that the contextualisation of indigenised English-language words/expressions referring to culture-specific concepts is problematic because the one English word/expression signifies two concepts – the original native English concept, and the Ghanaian culture-specific concept (cf. interpretive contexts in 4.2.1). It is successful for Ghanaian readers, in case they need to rely on it, because the new, Ghanaian culture-based information provided by the writer’s context is stronger than their already existing assumptions about a concept rooted in the culture whose language – English – it is expressed in. The stronger new information contradicts and eliminates the existing assumptions and leads to the recovery of the indigenised culture-specific meaning. For the non-Ghanaian readers, African and Western alike, contextualisation may hold some promise, but eventually proves to be ineffective because the inferential process is not able to take these readers beyond their already existing assumptions about the original native English-based concept (12 of 19 Western readers and 1 out of 7 non-Ghanaian African readers provided an interpretation consistent with the Christian meaning). It is not unreasonable to assume that the non-Ghanaian African readers have to wrestle with an additional difficulty resulting from the fact that in *their* indigenised variety of English the same word/expression may refer to yet another concept, which means that they will have three different concepts to choose from.

7.5 Ethnographic explanation

The ethnographic explanation of African-language words referring to culture-specific objects and concepts in the English-language literary text is considered by Zabus (1991:158) to be the ancestor of contextualisation. The reason behind such a rather intrusive authorial device is the need African writers feel to explain African culture to a Western readership and to correct previous misrepresentations of African culture.

Similarly to contextualisation, when the writer decides to provide an ethnographic explanation for an African-language word, he makes it manifest that: (a) with the insertion of the African-language word he is inscribing difference; (b) he is aware of a mixed readership; (c) leaving the African-language word unexplained will lead to a breakdown of communication with readers from different cultural and linguistic background; (d) at that point in the text he finds giving a fairly precise ethnographic kind of explanation of the African-language word – i.e. making explicit the assumptions necessary to understand the meaning of such a word – the most relevant way of communicating his message so that the reader can achieve the desired effects more economically.

Again, it has to be noted that this authorial device is likely to tax the readers if it is overused. In Ghanaian fiction this is not the case. In my corpus of 210,187 words in 18 cultural categories I have found 79 cases (0.037% of the corpus) of ethnographic explanation, which actually include not only explanations of African words such as *Kundum*, *akpeteshie* and *waakye*, but also of culture-specific concepts expressed in English such as ‘the chief’s linguist’, and ‘the poison-bark trial’.

Questionnaire Item II (Appendix 4B) has two passages from Kofi Aidoo’s *Of Men and Ghosts*, each containing an Akan word, *bampa* (p.57) and *aboefosem* (p.83), respectively, which are explained at length. My initial expectations were to find that Ghanaian readers would deem the explanations too long-winded or unnecessary, while Western and non-Ghanaian African readers, who do not understand Akan, would find them handy, providing (occasionally in-) sufficient information.

7.5.1 *Western and non-Ghanaian African readers*

Contrary to my expectations, while 18 out of 26 (69.23%) readers of the Western and non-Ghanaian African reader groups combined found the ethnographic explanation sufficient, over a quarter (26.92%) found it too long-winded. This means that the extra mental effort they needed to process the ethnographic explanation was not offset by positive cognitive effects – i.e. the relevance of the explanation for them was low. This suggests that for a

significant proportion of the non-Ghanaian readership, be it Western or African, ethnographic explanations are tedious.

Many of the African-language words that the Ghanaian writer's text is interspersed with seem to function primarily to inscribe difference and seem not to be essential for the development of the story. They contribute to the creation of Africanness and are perceived by the readers as such. Understanding them (fully) may not be the readers' expectation – after all, they are reading fiction, not an anthropological or ethnographic description – so they may not feel it worth their while to 'wade' through lengthy explanations even if they offer more insight.

7.5.2 *Ghanaian readers*

As with cushioning, because of their cultural and linguistic knowledge, it would not have been unreasonable to expect that a good number of the Ghanaian readers would find the ethnographic explanation in the two passages unnecessary. Instead, only 1 (5.26%) finds it unnecessary, while 14 (73.68%) find it sufficient, and 4 (21.05%) find it too long-winded. Again, it seems that the majority of the Ghanaian readers may not have reacted to this question spontaneously as readers, but stepped outside the reading process and engaged in a linguistic exercise, examining whether the ethnographic type explanation of the Akan words provided by the writer gave a correct and sufficient description of the concept expressed by these words.

The fact that almost three quarters of the Ghanaian readers feel the ethnographic description gives sufficient explanation vindicates the writers. At the same time, the fact that over a fifth of the Ghanaian readers find this kind of explanation tedious signals that the Ghanaian readers may not find such explanation informationally useful, i.e. relevant.

7.6 Glossary

Providing a glossary either as footnotes or at the end of a book is the least frequently used assistance to readers. Very often it is not an authorial but an editorial intervention which the writer may have little control over. That it is not a frequent phenomenon in Ghanaian fiction is shown by the fact that out of the twenty books forming the subject of this study only two, Ama Ata Aidoo's *Changes – A Love Story* and Kojo Yankah's *Crossroads at Ankobea*, have a glossary. It is interesting to note that *Changes* was first published in 1991 for an international audience by The Women's Press Ltd. (London) and contained a glossary. Sub-Saharan Publishers Ltd. (Accra) subsequently published it in 1994 for the domestic audience – with the glossary retained. *Crossroads* was published in 1982 by Asempra Publishers (Accra) for the domestic audience – with a glossary. The 172 instances of glossed words found in the corpus in the 18 categories of cultural reference come from these two novels. *Changes* is represented by one single word, while *Crossroads at Ankobea* by multiple occurrences of 21 words.

While cushioning, contextualisation and the ethnographic explanation are textual strategies leaving no choice for the readers to avoid them, a glossary is an extra-textual device giving the readers the freedom to use it when and only if they want to.

Questionnaire Item III (Appendix 4C) has two short passages from *Crossroads at Ankobea* (p.79 and p.98) with seven words/expressions to look up in the glossary extracted from the glossary at the end of the novel and provided at the end of the questionnaire. The results show that an overwhelming majority – 78.94% of Western readers, 71.42% of non-Ghanaian African readers and 78.94% of Ghanaian readers – of all the three reader groups finds the information provided by the glossary on the meaning of the Akan words/expressions sufficient. At the same time, an equally high proportion of each group – 73.68% of Western readers, 85.71% of non-Ghanaian African readers and 84.21% of Ghanaian readers – indicate that using a glossary slows down their reading. While 42.30% of all non-Ghanaian readers, both Western and African, and 42.10% of Ghanaian readers do not get frustrated at having to use a glossary or are not sure about it, 57.69% of all non-Ghanaian readers and 52.63% of Ghanaian readers indicate frustration. The most frequently quoted reason for frustration is the 'interruption of thoughts/flow of text/story/picturing process' (26.66% of all readers), closely followed by 'interruption/slowing down/disruption of reading process' (24.44% of all readers) and 'interruption/loss of concentration' (11.11% of all readers).

6.66% of all the readers feel that using a dictionary wastes time, while 4.44% feels it distracts from the text/story. Another 4.44% feel it disturbs interpretation/text understanding, and 2.22% say it breaks the holistic impression created by the story.

These results clearly show that although glossaries may provide adequate information for the reader, an overwhelming majority of readers across cultures and languages find them inconvenient as they considerably slow down and frustrate the reading process by interrupting concentration and image building.

7.7 Conclusion

The reader of Ghanaian literature – and, by the same token, the reader of other African and other post-colonial literatures – is involved in a double guessing game: the interpretation of literary works within which there is the interpretation of culture-specific concepts expressed either in an African language or in English. The focus of the current work has been on the latter, in the investigation of which the concept of the metonymic gap has a central role.

As has been discussed, the metonymic gap is a complex concept as it can be created by cultural and/or linguistic difference. If the difference is purely linguistic, represented by an African-language word/expression, it inscribes difference and functions metonymically only when left untranslated/unglossed as it is “its very resistance to interpretation [that] constructs a ‘gap’ between the writer’s culture and the colonial culture” (Ashcroft, 2001b:75). Once an authorial strategy gives the reader access to the meaning of the African-language word, it stops being a synecdochy standing for the writer’s culture and functions simply to add to the *couleur locale* and the creation of Africanness. On the other hand, if the difference is conceptual rather than linguistic, an African-language word may add to the overall complexity of the concept, but the gap remains even if the concept is expressed in English. Whether presented in the text in English or in an African language, such a concept will inscribe cultural difference, and authorial strategies aimed at reducing or neutralising such difference may, though does not necessarily have to, prove ineffective.

The data provide evidence that the metonymic gap, because it is a cultural gap, exists between the Ghanaian writer and the Western reader but does not pertain to the non-

Ghanaian African reader who shares a pan-African cultural heritage and experience with the Ghanaian writer. The data show, however, that it is not impossible for the Western reader to cross the metonymic gap. As Ashcroft observes, 'perhaps the most fascinating and subtle aspect of the transformative function of post-colonial writing is its ability to signify difference, and even incommensurability between cultures, at the very point at which the communication occurs' (2001b:81). The authorial strategies of cushioning, contextualisation, and ethnographic explanation, and the, usually editorial, device of inserting of a glossary all have some benefits for some of the readers in each reader group – the Ghanaian, non-Ghanaian African and Western. However, eventually none of them prove to be efficient because they all try to cater for the needs of a mixed, ill-defined readership. Whether these authorial strategies have been used with the same intensity by the first and the later generation of writers will be examined in the next chapter.

Notes

- ¹ By 'speech community' I understand 'a social group who claim a variety as their own and maintain its distinctiveness from the varieties spoken by their neighbours. ... A speech community is not necessarily coextensive with a language community. A speech community is a group of people who do not necessarily share the same language, but share a set of norms and rules for the use of language. The boundaries between speech communities are essentially social rather than linguistic' (Romaine, 1994:22).
- ² Let us recall that Sperber and Wilson define an individual's total cognitive environment as 'the set of all the facts that he can perceive or infer: all the facts that are manifest to him. An individual's total cognitive environment is a function of his physical environment and his cognitive abilities. It consists of not only all the facts that he is aware of, but also all the facts that he is capable of becoming aware of, in his physical environment. The individual's actual awareness of facts, i.e. the knowledge that he has acquired, of course contributes to his ability to become aware of future facts. Memorised information is a component of cognitive abilities' (1995:39).
- ³ The texts that provide the context for the words analysed in this chapter can be found in the questionnaire in Appendix 2, and also in the corpus on the CD as specified by the titles and page numbers.
- ⁴ Personal communication by Kari Dako, Department of English, University of Ghana.
- ⁵ Zabus (1991:158) informs us that the word was first used by Peter Young, 'Tradition, Language and the Reintegration of Identity in West African Literature in English' in Wright, Edgar (ed.). 1976. *The Critical Evaluation of African Literature*. Washington, D.C.: Inscape, 21-50. He borrowed it from Howard Stone, 'Cushioned Loan Words,' *Word*, 9:1 (April 1953), 12.

- 6 'The **meaning of a word**, more precisely a content word (noun, verb, adjective), is a concept that provides a mental description of a certain kind of entity' (Löbner, 2002:22; emphasis as in original).
- 7 'The descriptive meaning of a content word is a concept for its potential referents' (Löbner, 2002:23).
- 8 Zabus suggests that 'in attempting to name the gap between autotelically referential signs, writers take their readers along a tortuous route marked with gaps and blanks' (1991:161). She argues that cushioning "may defer understanding or overstimulate the reader's mind. The synonymous pairs are functionally very much like what Wolfgang Iser called 'the blanks' that suspend *good continuation* ... Those blanks which syncopate the reading and break up the 'connectability' of a text, [Iser] goes on, 'condition the clash of images, and so help to hinder (and, at the same time, to stimulate) the process of image building.' When recurrently used, ... cushioning is more likely to create in the non-Igbo reader mental deferment rather than stimulation, since the impetus for image-building is sapped up by the unfamiliar synonymous pairs'" (ibid.).
- 9 Personal communication by Prof. Abena Dolphyne, Department of Linguistics, University of Ghana.
- 10 Cf. Sperber and Wilson: 'We see verbal communication as involving a speaker producing an utterance as a public interpretation of one of her thoughts, and the hearer constructing a mental interpretation of this utterance, and hence of the original thought. Let us say that an utterance is an *interpretive expression* of a thought of the speaker's, and that the hearer makes an *interpretive assumption* about the speaker's informative intention' (1995:230-1; italics as in original).

8 CULTURAL REFERENCE: ENCODING AND AUTHORIAL STRATEGIES IN THE FIRST VS. LATER GENERATION OF GHANAIAN WRITERS AND IN LOCALLY VS. INTERNATIONALLY PUBLISHED WORKS

8.1 Introduction

In the two previous chapters I gave a linguistic analysis of the various types of cultural reference found in 20 of the prose works of 15 Ghanaian writers in 18 cultural categories described in 5.3.2.2. I have also examined the methods these writers use to assist their readers to understand such reference and the effectiveness of these methods for Ghanaian, non-Ghanaian African and Western readers.

In this chapter I will investigate whether the encoding of cultural reference and the provision of authorial assistance have changed from the first to the later generation of Ghanaian writers and between locally and internationally published works.

As laid out in 5.3.1.1, the first generation of modern Europhone Ghanaian writers is characterised by a formative experience of colonial existence which determines their artistic outlook and their need to assert their African identity and to educate the (Western) world about African culture and history. The writers included in this study who belong to this first generation are Abruquah, Armah, Awoonor, Djoletto, Duodu and Selormey. The writers of the later generation have a formative experience of life in post-independence Ghana, and their artistic outlook is determined by confidence in their already established African identity and – perhaps with the exception of the two oldest writers of this group, Agovi and A. A. Aidoo – by freedom from the grip of the post-colonial angst so characteristic of the first generation. The writers included in the study who belong to this later generation are Agovi, A. A. Aidoo, K. O. Aidoo, Codjoe-Swayne, Darko, Darmani, Kwakye, Yankah and Yeboah-Afari.

The works of the first generation of writers were all published internationally in Heinemann's African Writers Series (with the exception of Duodu's *The Gab Boys*, which was published by Collins). The later generation is divided: six works have been published by various publishers internationally, and six locally. As mentioned in 7.5, Ama Ata Aidoo's *Changes – a Love Story* is the only novel that has been published both internationally and by

		First generation of writers				Published	
	author	dates	work(s)	Date of publication	number of words in study	locally	internationally
1	Abruquah, Joseph W.	1921-	<i>The Catechist</i>	1965	4,058		*
2	Armah, Ayi Kwei	1939-	<i>The Beautiful Ones ... Fragments</i> <i>The Healers</i>	1968 1969 1978	11,805 12,301 7,039		* * *
3	Awoonor, Kofi	1935-	<i>This Earth, My Brother...</i>	1971	14,279		*
4	Djoleto, Amu	1929-	<i>The Strange Man</i>	1967	9,731		*
5	Duodu, Cameron	1932-	<i>The Gab Boys</i>	1967	19,091		*
6	Selormey, Francis	1927-	<i>The Narrow Path</i>	1966	8,287		*
<i>Sub-total I</i>					86,591	0	8
Later generation of writers							
1	Agovi, Kofi	1944-1996	<i>A Wind from the North</i>	1989	9,534	*	
2	Aidoo, Ama Ata	1942-	<i>Changes – A Love Story</i> <i>The Girl Who Can</i> <i>No Sweetness Here</i> <i>Our Sister Killjoy</i>	1991 1997 1970 1977	10,675 8,352 12,256 9,745	*	* * *
3	Aidoo, Kofi Osci	1950-	<i>Of Men and Ghosts</i>	1991	13,403	*	
4	Codjoe-Swayne, Naa Otua	1959-	<i>The Dancing Tortoise</i>	1994	12,357	*	
5	Darko, Amma	1956-	<i>Beyond the Horizon</i>	1995	10,697		*
6	Darmani, Lawrence	ca 1950-	<i>Grief/Child</i>	1991	10,708		*
7	Kwakye, Benjamin Kwame	1967-	<i>The Clothes of Nakedness</i>	1998	8,619		*
8	Yankah, Kojo	ca 1950-	<i>Crossroads at Ankobea</i>	1982	9,613	*	
9	Yeboah, Afari, Ajoa	ca 1950-	<i>The Sound of Pestles</i>	1986	7,637	*	
<i>Sub-total II</i>					123,596	6	6
Total					210,187	6	14

Table 8.1: First vs. later generation of Ghanaian writers: works and place of publication

a local publisher. It is, however, listed as published internationally because locally it was not published until three years after its international publication. Table 8.1 on the previous page contains details of names, dates, titles and place of publication.

8.2 Indigenisation of cultural reference

Perhaps because of the high status of Standard British English in Ghana highlighted, among others, by Sey (1973:6-7) and Ahulu (1992:13-4), Ghanaian prose writing has never tended to be prone to over-abundance of indigenisation. Table 8.2 below shows clear evidence of this.

Overall, only about one third, more precisely 32.20%, of cultural reference in the 18 cultural categories examined is indigenised. We have to remember, however, that the examined cultural reference is only 6.61% of the corpus, and we are talking about 32.20% of this, which is a very small proportion indeed. Such a relatively low proportion of indigenisation reflects Ahulu's (1992) findings that educated Ghanaians use Standard English in written English. Ahulu examined those aspects of educated written English in Ghana in a corpus of English – the English of the national newspapers – written by educated Ghanaians which have been claimed to yield the characteristics of Ghanaian English. His analysis shows that 'the divergent ("characteristic") features are not consistently or reliably realised, and that their Standard English equivalents are used on more than 95% of occasions of use. Any given deviant form occurs in less than 10% of instances of use and sometimes alternates with the standard form without any apparent contextual determinant' (1992:241). Ahulu's work relates to grammatical form only, and does not analyse lexical modification. My data show a correspondingly low level of indigenisation – 2.72% of all indigenised cultural reference – in the signifier, i.e. lexical form. It is followed by 7.18% in the signified, i.e. meaning, or, in Ahulu's terminology, lexical modification, and by 90.08% in both the signifier and signified. This tendency of indigenisation being lowest in the signifier, somewhat higher in the signified, and by far the highest in the signifier and signified is maintained in all the sub-corpuses – first vs. later generation of writers and locally vs. internationally published works. As I observed in 6.5, this is evidence that indigenisation – at least with regard to cultural reference – is necessitated by a wish to find names in English for things, phenomena and practices that are culturally alien to it. The form tends to get modified only as far as it is

necessitated by the modification of meaning. Ahulu's findings certainly show a tendency, underpinned by my data, that has significant implications for the literary use of English in Ghana: namely, that even if we take into consideration that "a 'new' language is being forged as a result of the particular language-contact situation in West Africa and *the artist's imaginative use of that situation*" (Zabus, 1991:102; added emphasis), Ghanaian fiction conforms to what is regarded to be the 'African way' of writing and using English for literary expression to an extent which may perhaps be considered a 'minimum entry level' for being recognised as African writing. It has to be recognised, though, that quantification in this area is not available, is very likely to be next to impossible and any estimation is bound to be impressionistic.

	All 20 works	Generation		Published	
		first	later	locally	internationally
Number of words in (sub-)corpus	210,187	86,591	123,596	60,896	149,291
Overall number of cultural reference—ONCR (% in relation to (sub-)corpus	13,908 6.61%	5,699 6.58%	8,209 6.64%	4,949 8.12%	8,959 6.00%
Non-indigenised cultural reference (% in relation to ONCR)	9,429 67.79%	4,362 76.53%	5,067 61.72%	3,199 64.63%	6,230 69.53%
Indigenised total (% in relation to ONCR)	4,479 32.20%	1,337 23.46%	3,142 38.27%	1,750 35.36%	2,729 30.46%
signifier (% in relation to indigenised total)	122 2.72%	82 6.13%	40 1.27%	29 1.65%	93 3.40%
signified (% in relation to indigenised total)	322 7.18%	122 9.12%	200 6.36%	116 6.62%	206 7.54%
signifier and signified (%in relation to indigenised total)	4,035 90.08%	1,133 84.74%	2,902 92.36%	1,605 91.71%	2,430 89.04%
Indigenised total (% in relation to (sub-)corpus)	4,479 2.13%	1,337 1.54%	3,142 2.54%	1,750 2.87%	2,729 1.82%

Table 8.2: Indigenisation of cultural reference in the works of first vs. later generation of Ghanaian writers and in locally vs. internationally published works

(N.B. The data presented in this table relate only to the 18 cultural categories described in Chapter 5.)

Both the first and later generation of Ghanaian writers exhibit the use of a similar proportion of cultural reference in the 18 cultural categories in their works – 6.58% and 6.64% of the sub-corpora, respectively. The first generation writers indigenise 23.46% of their cultural reference, while the later generation writers indigenise 38.27% of it. This difference of 14.81% is by far the greatest, both in terms of indigenisation and, also, in terms of authorial assistance, as we shall see later. The explanation for this is twofold. As we have seen earlier, whatever their claims may be, the first generation of Ghanaian writers wrote exclusively for an international readership. To be recognised as African writers, not only did they have to have an African subject matter and an African perspective, but they also needed to modify their language to carry their African experience. After all, the appropriation of English was part and parcel, an essential requirement, of being an African writer, and almost certainly implies conscious choices of indigenised language. At the same time, these writers had to make sure that they moulded English so that it would stand out as distinctively African yet be accessible and palatable to an international audience. This, coupled with an overall preference of the educated Ghanaian for Standard English, explains the low proportion – a mere 1.54% of the sub-corpus – of indigenised cultural reference in the works of the first generation writers.

Among the later generation of writers in the study, six published internationally, six locally. By the time they started publishing, two things had happened. An international readership had been groomed, by the first generation of Ghanaian and other African writers, to read and appreciate African literature; and a small home audience had been established that had ‘inside knowledge’ and acute appreciation for what could be regarded as Ghanaian forms of expression. The existence of such a domestic readership, however small, can be regarded as an important influence on the conscious choices individual writers made in terms of increased indigenised language use. In addition, it is not unreasonable to assume that the indigenisation of English as the unconscious collective process of a speech community both at ethnic and national level had seeped into the personal repertoire of these writers and contributed to the unconscious use of indigenised language in their writing. These factors explain the higher proportion of indigenised cultural reference in the works of the later generation writers. We have to remember, however, that this is still not a very high proportion – only 2.54% of the overall size of the sub-corpus.

When we compare locally published works with internationally published ones, we have to remember that all locally published works have been written exclusively by later generation writers, while the internationally published ones include all the works of the first generation and also works of the later generation.

Locally published works contain a larger proportion of cultural reference – 8.12% of the sub-corpus – than internationally published ones, which contain only 6.00% of the respective sub-corpus. Also, 35.36% of all cultural reference in the locally published works is indigenised as compared to 30.46% in the internationally published ones. This fits the earlier findings regarding the difference between the first and later generation writers. The data provide strong evidence for a distinct division along ‘first generation–internationally published, later generation–locally published’ axes, and the few internationally published later generation works do not seem to make a significant difference. Although they increase the proportion of indigenised language use in internationally published works by 7%, they do not interfere with the general tendency which shows a higher proportion of indigenised language use in locally published works.

Whereas it is not surprising that, in order to cater for the needs of a loosely defined fairly mixed audience, internationally published works contain a smaller proportion of indigenised language than locally published ones, I did not anticipate that later generation writers would use more indigenised language than first generation ones. One could quite legitimately think that being firmly established in their African identity, later generation writers are emancipated from having to use indigenised language to assert their Africanness. The data provide evidence to the contrary. Later generation writers do appropriate English to a greater extent than first generation writers do, but the reason for this may not necessarily be the desire to assert Africanness. On the one hand, following from the development of African literature, it may rather be a need to conform to the popular and critical expectations of what is regarded as African literature. On the other, indigenisation in the Ghanaian speech community, both at national and at ethnic level, with specific regard to lexical modification as part of a writer’s personal linguistic repertoire may account for this.

8.3 Authorial strategies

Ghanaian writers do not seem to over-assist their readers in understanding cultural reference. In the corpus of 20 works in the 18 cultural categories examined they leave 95.54% of the cultural reference unexplained/untranslated, and offer assistance to the readers only in 4.45% of the cases. This accounts for 0.29% of the corpus. The worries of critics, mentioned in 7.2, 7.3 and 7.4, that authorial strategies aimed at making the text accessible to readers who do not share the author's cultural and linguistic experience can be detrimental to the movement of the plot because 'the story is forced to drag an explanatory machinery behind it' (Ashcroft *et al*, 1989:62) are certainly unfounded in the case of Ghanaian prose writing. Table 8.3 below provides evidence for this.

A clearly observable tendency in Ghanaian fiction that may partially be responsible for the low occurrence of 'assisted' cultural reference is the withdrawal of authorial assistance once it has been given. This means that once a cultural reference has been cushioned, contextualised or provided with ethnographic explanation, it will re-occur in the text without these 'props'. For example, in *The Gab Boys* we can witness the gradual withdrawal of authorial assistance. On page 10 'abuse deal' occurs for the first time provided with an ethnographic explanation. Later in the text the Akan-English collocation appears without authorial assistance and finally even the English part of the collocation is omitted. Similarly, on page 12 *OBK* is contextualised, but later in the text assistance is withdrawn. In *Crossroads at Ankobea* on page 10 *ahenfie* appears for the first time cushioned as 'the chief's palace', but then the cushioning is dropped and only *ahenfie* is used, with the expectation that the reader can recall the meaning. *Crossroads*, however, is exceptional in that, in addition to the various authorial strategies deployed in the text, a glossary is available for the reader throughout.

As has been mentioned in 7.5, unlike other authorial strategies, a glossary is an extra-textual device and is very often not an authorial but an editorial intervention. Furthermore, the 172 instances of glossed words found in the corpus in the 18 categories of cultural reference come from two novels: *Changes* is represented by one single word, while *Crossroads at Ankobea* by multiple occurrences of 21 words. This shows that providing a glossary is rather uncharacteristic of Ghanaian fiction. Furthermore, the fact that practically one novel accounts for all the instances of assistance through a glossary creates an imbalance and

seems to distort the findings. Consequently, I have decided to exclude the glossary from the following comparisons.

	All 20 works	Generation		Published	
		first	later	locally	internationally
Number of words in (sub-)corpus	210,187	86,591	123,596	60,896	149,291

Number of cultural references examined for authorial assistance - NCREAA (% in relation to (sub-)corpus)	13,903 6.61%	5,711 6.59%	8,192 6.62%	4,948 8.12%	8,955 5.99%
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No assistance (% in relation to NCREAA)	13,283 95.54%	5,511 96.49%	7,772 94.87%	4,643 93.83%	8,640 96.48%
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Overall number of authorial assistance – ONAA (% in relation to NCREAA) <i>[ONAA minus glossary]</i>	620 4.45%	200 3.50%	420 5.12%	305 6.16%	315 3.51%
	<i>[620-172=448 3.22%]</i>		<i>[420-172=248 3.02%]</i>	<i>[305-171=134 2.7%]</i>	<i>[315-1=314 3.50%]</i>
cushioning (% in relation to ONAA)	32 5.16%	17 8.5%	15 3.57%	12 3.93%	20 6.34%
contextualisation (% in relation to ONAA)	337 54.35%	136 68%	201 47.85%	99 32.45%	238 75.55%
ethnographic explanation (% in relation to ONAA)	79 12.74%	47 23.5%	32 7.61%	23 7.54%	56 17.77%
glossary (% in relation to ONAA)	172 27.74%	0 0%	172 40.95%	171 56.06%	1 0.31%
Overall number of authorial assistance – ONAA (% in relation to (sub-)corpus) <i>[ONAA minus glossary (% in relation to (sub-)corpus)]</i>	620 0.29%	200 0.23%	420 0.33%	305 0.50%	315 0.21%
	<i>[620-172=448 0.21%]</i>		<i>[420-172=248 0.20%]</i>	<i>[305-171=134 0.22%]</i>	<i>[315-1=314 0.21%]</i>

Table 8.3: Authorial assistance

(N.B. The data presented in this table relate only to the 18 cultural categories described in Chapter 5.)

The overall tendency among Ghanaian writers is to use cushioning the least – only 5.16% of all assistance is cushioning. More preference is given to ethnographic explanation – 12.74% of all assistance is ethnographic explanation; and the most preferred – and, of course, least intrusive – strategy is contextualisation with 54.35% of all assistance. This tendency is maintained throughout the sub-corpus: first vs. later generation writers and locally vs. internationally published works. The preference for contextualisation underpins Zabuz's observation that contextualisation 'will always be in use because of the very ubiquity of the concept of context' (1991:164).

As with indigenisation, when comparing groups of writers and works for authorial assistance, we recognise the 'first generation–internationally published, later generation–locally published' axes and can relate the findings accordingly. First generation writers, who have published exclusively internationally, provide assistance for 3.50% of their cultural references, which is identical to the proportion of 'assisted' cultural reference in internationally published works. The fact that internationally published works include works by later generation writers does not make a difference. At the same time, later generation writers show a decrease in assistance: only 3.02% of their cultural references are 'assisted'. Similarly, decreased assistance – given for 2.7% of the cultural references – is found in locally published works. Although a tendency towards decrease is clearly discernible along this axis, there is a 0.32% difference between later generation writers and locally published works, which can realistically be accounted for by the fact that the sub-corpus of later generation writers includes internationally published works which contain a larger number of 'assisted' cultural reference than locally published ones.

If we examine the various categories of assistance, we invariably find that first generation writers cushion, contextualise and ethnographically explain more than later generation writers, and that internationally published works contain more cushioned, contextualised and ethnographically explained cultural reference than locally published ones. To put it in terms of our axes, a higher proportion of 'assisted' cultural reference is found in the 'first generation–internationally published' axis, and a lower proportion in the 'later generation–locally published' axis. Such findings can directly be related to the relative position of reader groups to the metonymic gap. Locally published works cater for an audience that is located on the same side of the metonymic gap as the writer. Authorial assistance is given to the extent that the writer feels necessary for bridging the mostly linguistic, and to a much lesser degree cultural, differences that exist between him and other ethnic groups in Ghana.

Perhaps aspiration and the potential to reach a wider international audience may be contributing factors. At the same time, internationally published works target a rather mixed and ill-defined audience, most of whom, by virtue of being Western, are located on the other side of the metonymic gap. Because in this case there is an obvious cultural difference between the writer and his audience, the writer weaves in more cushioned, contextualised and ethnographically explained cultural reference to make his text accessible to such an international audience than he would do for his local readership.

8.4 Conclusion

From the above it is possible to come to a number of conclusions. Firstly, indigenisation of English in the works of Ghanaian writers is the result of unconscious and conscious processes. It is unconscious in that it flows from the personal linguistic repertoire of the writer which reflects the linguistic processes at work in his speech communities at ethnic and national levels. It is conscious in that writers appropriate and mould English to the extent which is thought to be comfortably accommodated by their audiences and is regarded sufficient enough for them to belong to what is critically deemed to be the body of African literature.

Secondly, authorial assistance is fairly scarcely provided, it is audience driven, and as such involves conscious decision-making on the part of the writer. It is linked to the concept of the metonymic gap – the greater and more discernible the cultural difference, the more assistance is given to the reader.

Thirdly, indigenisation in the works of Ghanaian writers is in reverse ratio to authorial assistance. Whereas there is a higher proportion of indigenisation and lower proportion of authorial assistance in locally published works, there is a lower proportion of indigenisation and higher proportion of authorial assistance in internationally published works. Such a finding provides further evidence for authorial assistance to be audience driven.

Fourthly, there is a small yet discernible difference between the first and later generation of writers both in terms of indigenisation and authorial assistance. However, because both generations need to conform to the critical requirements of what is regarded as African

writing, this difference is not a generational one, and therefore it is not a literary developmental issue. The difference between the two generations is caused by the perceived needs and tolerance of the audience they write for.

9 CONCLUSION

9.1 Research findings

My aim in this thesis has been to examine how cultural reference is encoded in modern English-language Ghanaian fiction, what textual strategies writers employ to facilitate understanding of such reference and the effect these strategies have on reader interpretation. To this end, I set myself three objectives:

- 1 to describe lexical, semantic and syntactic variation in the indigenised forms of cultural reference in the English-language prose works of Ghanaian writers;
- 2 to analyse how the textual strategies Ghanaian writers employ to facilitate reader understanding of cultural reference encoded in various ways affect interpretation by the Ghanaian reader, the non-Ghanaian African reader, and the Western reader;
- 3 to investigate whether the ways of encoding cultural reference in the English-language prose works of Ghanaian writers have remained the same over time or have changed, creating a difference in approach between the first and a later generation of Ghanaian writers to expressing the African experience.

Accordingly, in Chapter 6 I gave a detailed linguistic description of the examples of indigenised cultural reference yielded by the data extracted from the corpus. The approach I took is that of examining each cultural reference as a linguistic sign, and consider it indigenised if either its linguistic form, i.e. the signifier, or the concept it signifies, i.e. the signified, or both, have been modified so that the resulting linguistic entity is either non-existent in Standard British English, or shows irregularity of form, or meaning, or both. In Table 9.1 below I have summarised the linguistic categories of indigenisation of cultural reference yielded by the data. The table highlights the complexity of variation in the expression of cultural reference. It also demonstrates that in the writer's attempt to mould the English language so that it can express his

African experience both form and meaning get modified. The figures presented in Table 6.1 show that variation is greatest in the lexical domain and involve various forms of lexical

Variation in the signifier	<i>Lexical innovation</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • clipping • unusual collocations • compounding • backformation • loan translation • multiple word-formation processes • irregular spelling
	<i>Syntactic variation</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • irregular tag questions • omission of function words • subjectless sentences • omission of O_{dir} in ditransitive verbs • irregular use of prepositions • irregular use of the plural -s
Variation in the signified	<i>Lexical innovation</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • conversion • acronyms and symbols
	<i>Semantic change</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • semantic extension • semantic restriction • semantic restriction and extension • semantic shift • semantic transfer
	<i>Proverbs and sayings</i>	
Variation in the signifier and signified	<i>African language expressions</i>	
	<i>Lexical innovation</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • borrowing • coinage • collocations containing African words • unusual collocations and compounds • conversion

Table 9.1: Categories of indigenisation of cultural reference in the data

innovation, semantic change and African language expressions. This suggests that the indigenisation, or rather appropriation, of English is necessitated by a ‘naming’ process – the wish to find names in English for things, phenomena and practices that are culturally alien to it. ‘Vocabulary is a very sensitive index of the culture of a people’ (Sapir, 1964:36). The choice of the Ghanaian writer to indigenise primarily words and expressions describing the physical environment, cultural artefacts, food and drink, clothing, family and kinship, marriage,

separation, divorce, education, work and profession not only gives insight into the way of living and thinking characteristic of his society, but also serves to inscribe his difference and distance from the culture whose language he has chosen for literary expression.

Not only does language variance have an important role in inscribing difference, but as I explained in Chapter 7, it is metonymic of the cultural difference it inscribes. I have argued that the metonymic gap can be created by cultural and/or linguistic difference. In case the difference is linguistic, represented by an African-language word/expression, it inscribes difference and functions metonymically only when it is left untranslated/unexplained as it is “its very resistance to interpretation [that] constructs a ‘gap’ between the writer’s culture and the colonial culture” (Ashcroft, 2001b:75). Once an authorial strategy gives the reader access to the meaning of the African-language word, it stops being a synecdochy standing for the writer’s culture and functions simply to add to the *couleur locale* and the creation of Africanness in the text. If, however, the difference is conceptual rather than linguistic, an African-language word may add to the overall complexity of the complex, but the gap remains even if the concept is expressed in English. Whether presented in the text in English or in an African language, such a concept will inscribe cultural difference.

Readers are divided along the metonymic gap. The findings confirm that the Ghanaian reader as a monolithic entity does not exist. While the Ghanaian readership shares supra-ethnic national cultural and linguistic experience which situates it on the same side of the metonymic gap as the writer, it is also fragmented along cultural and linguistic factors by virtue of individual readers being members of various ethnic groups. The Ghanaian readers’ appreciation of the writer’s meanings is dependent on their cultural and linguistic proximity to the writer. Those who are culturally and linguistically distant from the writer share experience with him at the supra-ethnic national level. Readers who know the writer’s language but are not fully conversant, or not familiar at all, with his culture are able to share in the writer’s experience to the extent their linguistic and encyclopaedic knowledge allows. Full appreciation of the writer’s meanings is shown only by those readers who share both the writer’s cultural and linguistic experience. This underlines the overriding importance of cultural knowledge and competence even in inter-ethnic communication within the same national boundaries.

The research provides evidence that in relation to the writer and the metonymic gap, non-Ghanaian African readers are in a position similar to those Ghanaian readers’ who share neither the culture of the writer’s ethnic group nor his language. Although the non-Ghanaian African

readers' lack of knowledge of Ghanaian languages may well be a barrier to activating and accessing cultural knowledge, they are part of the same pan-African cultural heritage as the writer, and this supra-ethnic, supranational, pan-African cultural knowledge places the non-Ghanaian African reader on the same side of the metonymic gap as the writer.

Western readers, on the other hand, do not share a mutual cognitive environment with the writer. The research results confirm the cultural difference and distance between them and the writer. This difference and distance locates the Western readers on the other side of the metonymic gap.

The readers' position in relation to the metonymic gap is indicative of their ability to interpret the untranslated/unexplained African-language words/expressions in the text. While the Ghanaian and other African readers can access their culture-bound meanings fully or to varying degrees depending on the similarity of their cultural experience to the writer's, for the majority of Western readers these words/expressions remain symbols of the writer's difference of experience. However, the results show that if the difference is inscribed in English, albeit in indigenised English, Western readers can traverse the metonymic gap, especially if the cultural reference pertains to the non-idiosyncratic, universal aspects of the writer's culture.

The authorial strategies intended to help the reader traverse the metonymic gap all have some promise, as well as shortcomings. Cushioning offers a shorthand solution for all readers who do not speak the writer's language. Although it may not provide enough information for these readers to recover the full meaning of an African-language word, the information it gives is sufficient for them to have a close enough idea of the meaning to avoid a disruption in the reading process and to get across the metonymic gap.

Evidence provided by the research results suggests that contextualisation of African-language words in the English text works for some readers, but not for others, and leads to misunderstanding in some cases. It ultimately proves ineffective because it relies "on the non-indigenous reader's 'act of reading'" (Zabus, 1991:162), involving the reader in a guessing game requiring exceptional insight, and it tries to cater for the needs of a mixed and ill-defined readership. The contextualisation of indigenised English-language words/expressions referring to culture-specific concepts presents further problems by virtue of the one English word/expression signifying two concepts – the original native English concept, and the Ghanaian culture-specific concept. It works for the Ghanaian readers, in case they need to rely

on it, because the new Ghanaian culture-based information provided by the writer's context is stronger than their already existing assumptions about the original native English concept. For Western and non-Ghanaian African readers such contextualisation may eventually prove ineffective because the inferential process may not be able to take these readers beyond their existing assumptions about the original native English-based concept. In addition, the non-Ghanaian African readers may experience further difficulty resulting from the fact that in *their* indigenised variety of English the same word/expression may refer to a different concept.

The ethnographic explanation of African-language words has been shown to be found tedious by a significant proportion of each reader group. Many of the African-language words in the English text function primarily to inscribe difference and to contribute to the creation of Africanness, and are perceived by the readers as such. Understanding them (fully) may not be the readers' expectation – after all they are reading fiction, not an anthropological or ethnographic treatise. Consequently, they may not feel it worth their while to wade through lengthy explanations even if they offer deeper insight.

The results provide clear evidence that despite providing adequate information, glossaries have been found inconvenient by an overwhelming majority of readers in all three groups as they considerably slow down the reading process and frustrate it by interrupting concentration and image building.

Ghanaian writers indigenise and provide authorial assistance to various degrees. In Chapter 8 I compared the first generation of Ghanaian writers with the later generation and internationally published works with locally published ones. The results show that there is a lower proportion of indigenised cultural reference in the works of the first generation of writers, all of whom published exclusively internationally, than in the works of the later generation of writers, who have published both locally and internationally. First generation writers, influenced by popular and critical expectations to conform to what was perceived and regarded as the distinctively African way of writing, almost certainly exercised a conscious choice to use indigenised language. While they moulded English so that it could carry their African experience, they had to make sure that they remained accessible and palatable to an essentially international audience. By the time later generation writers started publishing, an international audience had been groomed to read and appreciate African literature, and a small domestic readership had been established that had an inside knowledge and acute appreciation for what could be regarded as Ghanaian forms of expression. The existence of such a domestic audience has

certainly been an important influence on the conscious choices of later generation writers to indigenise English to a greater extent. At the same time, in addition to the still compelling necessity for writers to write 'differently' in order to be regarded as African writers, indigenisation of English as the unconscious collective process of a speech community both at ethnic and national levels may have found its way to the personal linguistic repertoire of these writers and contributed to the unconscious use of indigenised language in their writing.

The research results also provide evidence that first generation writers cushion, contextualise and ethnographically explain more than later generation writers, and that internationally published works contain more cushioned, contextualised and ethnographically explained cultural reference than locally published ones. Such findings can directly be related to the relative position of readers to the metonymic gap. Internationally published works target a rather mixed and ill-defined audience, most of whom are situated on the other side of the metonymic gap. The apparent cultural difference between the writers and these readers serves as an incentive for the writers to provide more assistance. At the same time, locally published works cater for a readership that is situated on the same side of the metonymic gap as the writer. Although aspiration and the potential to reach a wider international audience may be a contributing factor in the provision of authorial assistance, in locally published works authorial assistance is given only to the extent that the writer feels necessary to bridge the primarily linguistic, and to a much lesser degree cultural, differences that exist between him and other ethnic groups in Ghana.

Both the use of indigenised language and the provision of authorial assistance become highly problematic and stand in the way of the appreciation of Europhone African, and by the same token other postcolonial, writing by a wider international audience if either of them, or both are overdone. The data provide evidence that in Ghanaian fiction this is not the case. In my corpus of 210,187 words there are only 4,479 instances of indigenised cultural reference in the 18 cultural categories examined, which constitutes a mere 2.13% of the corpus. Similarly, there are only 620 instances of authorial assistance provided, which is an even slighter 0.29% of the corpus, and means that authorial assistance is provided only for 13.84% of the indigenised cultural reference. These figures suggest that Ghanaian writers appropriate and mould English only to the extent which is thought to be comfortably accommodated by their audiences but is still sufficient enough for them to be recognised as belonging to what is critically deemed to be the body of African literature. The data suggests that the very small yet discernible difference between first generation and later generation writers both in terms of indigenisation and

authorial assistance is audience-driven, caused by the perceived needs and tolerance of the readership they write for rather than a generational, hence literary developmental issue.

However low the proportion of indigenised language is in the works of Ghanaian writers, the research results have demonstrated that by inscribing cultural difference and thereby creating a metonymic gap, Ghanaian writers trade in meanability, defined by Ashcroft as 'a situation in which meaning can occur' (2001b:76), for the expression of their distinctive cultural experience. The results have confirmed that because of its cultural distance, it is the Western readership that copes with indigenised cultural reference in these texts the least, and that the difficulty it faces is both linguistic and conceptual. The fact that the African readership, Ghanaian and non-Ghanaian alike, has been found to be situated on the same side of the metonymic gap as the writer by virtue of it sharing in a pan-African cultural heritage gives credit to the concept of African culture being a unified whole. At the same time, the results also provide evidence that the African readership is fragmented according to its members' linguistic and cultural proximity to the writer, thus highlighting the existence of plurality within African culture.

Communication between the Ghanaian writer and his multiple audience owes its difficulty to the peculiarity of the interpretive and communicative situation. The cultural difference between the writer and his audience and their absence from each other are accentuated by the existence of more than one interpretive context – the surface meaning of English and the underlying meaning of the writer's mother tongue. The research results provide evidence that only those readers can fully recover the writer's meaning with whom he shares a mutual cognitive environment. The smaller the number of assumptions the reader can provide, the further he gets from the intended meaning. Lack of knowledge of the writer's mother tongue automatically restricts the reader to reliance on the surface meaning of English, thereby limiting him to assumptions derived from the propositional form of the English-language representation of a concept, violating the underlying meaning of the invisible but discernible mother-tongue original. Such a situation inevitably carries the potential for misinterpretation. However, the fact that Ghanaian writers use indigenised language sparingly reduces the risk of reader frustration at the inability to (fully) recover intended meanings and saves the reader from a loss of interest in and appreciation of the Ghanaian writer's cross-cultural text.

9.2 Limitations and possible future developments

The major limitation of the research lies in the size of the corpus and in the size of the sample population. As described in 5.3.1.1, the corpus is made up of the first, middle and last chapter/short story of each of the 20 volumes of Ghanaian fiction selected for the study. The selection contains all the major works of elite Ghanaian prose literature and represents a well-balanced cross section of this writing regarding time and place of publication. Although the inclusion in the study of the first, middle and last chapter/short story ensures that the sample contains different parts of the narrative, in terms of indigenised language use such a selection can only indicate tendencies in the full texts. Whether these tendencies are carried through can be established only by an analysis involving the full texts of the novels and all the short stories in a volume. Similarly, the findings regarding the linguistic variation in indigenised cultural reference do not contain all the linguistic categories that an analysis of the full texts/volumes would yield.

The relatively small size of the sample population (45 subjects including 19 Ghanaian, 7 non-Ghanaian African and 19 Western readers), particularly of the non-Ghanaian African readers' group, means that the evidence from the questionnaires may not always be substantial. As a consequence, on occasion the interpretation of the questionnaire results is inevitably speculative.

A minor limitation is caused by the fact that the analysis of cultural reference is limited to 18 cultural categories (cf.5.3.2.2) and leaves others outside the scope of the research. Although these 18 categories embrace all the major areas, covering all aspects of Ghanaian culture and breaking down the categories to discrete areas – e.g. instead of having the category 'physical environment/cultural artefacts' including nature and the man-made world, cultural artefacts ranging from household utensils to sculptures, music and (oral) literature, introduce separate categories for 'plants', 'animals', 'buildings', 'sculptures', 'music', etc. – would give a fuller and more refined picture.

One possible future development of this research follows from its limitations. A study of the indigenisation of cultural reference in Ghanaian English-language fiction on a much larger scale involving the full texts of the novels and complete volumes of short stories, and perhaps more works, as well as a considerably bigger and more balanced sample population would produce results with a higher degree of reliability.

Relying on evidence provided by the data I have made the claim that Ghanaian English-language fiction does not abound either in indigenised language use or authorial assistance regarding the treatment of cultural reference. The figures quoted above and also in Chapter 8 indicate a low occurrence of indigenised cultural reference and an even lower occurrence of authorial assistance – 2.13% and 0.29% of the corpus, respectively. Statistically this means that every 46th word in the corpus is an indigenised cultural reference and that authorial assistance is provided for every 7th indigenised cultural reference. Practically speaking, the corpus in its current layout comprises 417 pages. All the examined indigenised cultural reference put together makes up 8.8 pages, and authorial assistance is provided for 1.2 pages out of the 8.8. Whether these numbers reflect low proportions indeed, can be verified if we compare them with figures gained, using the same methods, from other African national English-language literatures, for example Nigerian, Kenyan or Zimbabwean. A comparative study involving at least one, but preferably more, of these national literatures could elucidate this question.

In addition to looking at differences between earlier and later generation writers and locally and internationally published works, it would be interesting to investigate whether there is a difference between male and female Ghanaian writers with regard to their use of indigenised cultural reference and provision of authorial assistance. Such a study could also be extended to include other national literatures.

As indigenised language use in the works studied is not limited to cultural reference alone, one possible study could examine and analyse all indigenised language use and the provision or absence of authorial assistance.

The reader profiles provide evidence (cf. 7.2.1, 7.2.2 and 7.2.3) that elite Ghanaian English-language fiction is not widely read. Taking the issues raised in 2.5 as a starting point, a study could be devoted to the investigation of the domestic and international audience of Ghanaian, and by extension Europhone African, literature, the role large international publishers play in making it available worldwide and what the future may hold for it.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1:

FULL LIST OF THE EXAMPLES OF INDIGENISED CULTURAL REFERENCE FOUND IN THE CORPUS

The list contains all the examples of indigenised cultural reference found in the corpus. Although their frequency is not measured, page numbers provided give an idea – this can, however, be considered no more than an approximation as a particular cultural reference may occur several times on the same page. Page numbers are not given where it proves unfeasible, for example in the case of personal or geographical names, family relations or traditional titles, some of which have such a high frequency as makes it impracticable to indicate all the sites of their occurrence.

The numbering and titles of sections correspond to those in Chapter 6.

6.2 Variation in the signifier

6.2.1 Lexical innovation

6.2.1.1 Clipping

- (1) *B* (Gab Boys, p.178) <pn1>
- (2) *Bibi* (Girl Who Can, p.131) <pn1>
- (3) *Sis* (SoP, p.1) <pn1>
- (4) *mokes* (Gab Boys, p.13) <pw3>

6.2.1.2 Unusual collocations

- (5) *adjustable chair* (Girl Who Can, p.2) <pw1>
- (6) *paramount town* (Of Men, p.5) <pw1>
- (7) *waste box* (The Beautiful Ones, p.7) <pw1>
- (8) *backyard garden* (Wind, p.11) <pw1>
- (9) *cinema house* (Beyond, p.61; Girl Who Can, p.4) <pw1>
- (10) *trading shop* (Crossroads, p.8) <pw1>
- (11) *transport trucks* (Beyond, p.57) <pw1>

- (12) *grammar education* (No Sweetness, p.72) <m1>
- (13) *cement block* (Catechist, p.109) <pw1>
- (14) *cement block walls* (Strange Man, p.) <pw1>
- (15) *cement-block house* (Beyond, p.) <pw1>
- (16) *cement verandah* (Gab Boys, p.89) <pw1>
- (17) a small *cement house* in town (Beyond, p.) <pw1>
- (18) *cement paper* (This Earth, p.171) <pw1>
- (19) *trafficator bulb* (Wind, p.26) <pw1>
- (20) *the mouth of the road* (No Sweetness, p.130) <pw1>

6.2.1.3 Backformation

- (21) *Sissie* (Girl Who Can, No Sweetness, Our Sister) <pn1>

6.2.1.4 Loan translation

- (22) *bush meat* (Gab Boys, p.184) <pw1>
- (23) *covercloth* <pw3> (Fragments, p.142) <pw3>
- (24) *cover cloths* <pw3> (Fragments, p.137) <pw3>
- (25) *market-money* (SoP, p.36) <pw1>
- (26) *outdoored*: ‘Dzenawo’s son was to be *outdoored*.’ (This Earth, p.11) <sw1>
‘Once John has not been *outdoored* he is not a chief.’
(Crossroads, p.48) <sw1>
- (27) *outdooring* (Crossroads, p.48, 49; Fragments, p.87) <sw1>
- (28) *sponge* (Beautiful Ones, p.101, 102) <pw1>
- (29) *sponge strands* (Beautiful Ones, p.102) <pw1>
- (30) *chop money* (No Sweetness, p.131; Wind, p.49) <pw1>
- (31) *clothing store* (CoN, p.211) <pw1>
- (32) *my little aunt* (No Sweetness, p.131) <r4>
- (33) *lorry road* (Gab Boys, p.88) <pw1>
- (34) *motor road* (Narrow Path, p.3) <pw1>

6.2.1.5 Multiple word-formation processes

- (35) *enstool*: ‘you are going to be *enstooled* officially’
(Crossroads, p.50) <sw1>
‘whether he will be *enstooled* at all’ (Crossroads, p.54)
<sw1>
- (36) *enstoolment* (Crossroads, p.11) <sw1>
- (37) *destool*: ‘The people of Kramo village rebelled and *destooled* their chief.’ (Crossroads, p.54) <sw1>
‘the Ankobea chief was going to be *destooled*’
(Crossroads, p.105) <sw1>
‘Nana Kwesi Mensa IV would be declared *destooled*’
(Crossroads, p.108) <sw1>
- (38) *destoolment* (Crossroads, p.107) <sw1>

6.2.1.6 Irregular spelling

- (39) The *Beautiful Ones Are Not Yet Born* (title; also p.183) <pw1>

6.2.2 Syntactic variation

6.2.2.1 Irregular tag questions

- (40) You would all have laughed at me, *no?* (Girl Who Can, p.48) <sw1>
(41) You broke *not so?* (Beautiful Ones, p.106) <pw1>

6.2.2.2 Omission of function words

- (42) *You* □ *broke not so?* (Beautiful Ones, p.106) <pw1>
(43) *Who born* □ *fool* (Beautiful Ones, p.106) <pw1>
(44) *Who* □ *born fool* (Beautiful Ones, p.106) <pw1>
(45) *Contrey* □ *broke* (Beautiful Ones, p.106) <pw1>
(46) *Money* □ *sweet pass all* (Beautiful Ones, p.106) <pw1>
(47) *Vagina* □ *sweet* (Beautiful Ones, p.106) <pw1>

6.2.2.3 Omission of the dummy subject 'it'
(48) *Money sweet* □ *pass all* (Beautiful Ones, p.106) <pw1>

6.2.2.4 Omission of direct object in ditransitive 'give'
(49) *We give our ghosts to drink.* (Fragments, p.7) <sw1>

6.2.2.5 Irregular use of count/non-count nouns
(50) a couple of *quids* (Gab Boys, p.183) <pw1>
(51) *a white calico* (Wind, p.15) <pw3>

6.2.3 Pidgin

- (52) *aspiti* (This Earth, p.176) <pw1>
(53) *broder* (This Earth, p.176) <r4>
(54) *motri* (This Earth, p.176) <pw1>
(55) *masa* (This Earth, p.173, 176) <m2>
(56) *Golcos* (Gab Boys, p.9) <pn2>
(57) the real “*cash-dey*” sections of this city (Girl Who Can, p.3) <pw1>
(58) “*Make God help you pass well and go for overseas,*” he told me.
“*Then you go fit look for your father.*” (Wind, p.53) <m4>
(59) *Pray for detention*
Jailman chop free (Beautiful Ones, p.106) <pw1>
(60) *Socialism chop make I chop* (Beautiful Ones, p.106) <pw1>

6.3 Variation in the signified

6.3.1 Lexical innovation

6.3.1.1 Conversion

- (61) *Doctor* (SoP, p.74) <pn1>
- (62) *Lawyer* (This Earth, p.173) <pn1>
- (63) *Master* (SoP, p.66) <pn1>

6.3.1.2 Acronyms and symbols

- (64) *K.C.C.* (Beautiful Ones, p.7) <pw1>
- (65) *U.T.C. / UTC building* (Beautiful Ones, p.9 / 107) <pw1>
- (66) *G.N.T.C.* (Beautiful Ones, p.9) <pw1>
- (67) *U.A.C.* (Beautiful Ones, p.9; This Earth, p.178) <pw1>
- (68) *C.F.A.O. / the French C.F.A.O.* (Beautiful Ones, p.10 / 9) <pw1>
- (69) *CPP* (Beautiful Ones, p.110) <pw1>
- (70) *OBK* (Gab Boys, p.12, 13, 14) <m2>
- (71) *¢500* (SoP, p.74) <pw1>

6.3.2 Semantic change

6.3.2.1 Semantic extension

- (72) *announcer* (Of Men, p.6) <m2>
- (73) *buses* (Crossroads, p.8) <pw1>
- (74) *bush ancestors* (Beyond, p.58) <sw2>
- (75) *cloth(s)* (Catechist, p.107; Changes, p.6; Crossroads, p.1, 11, 51, 53, 109; Dancing Tortoise, p.135; Gab Boys, p.51, 90, 94, 100, 101, 192; Healers, p.110, 116; Narrow Path, p.12; No Sweetness, p.67, 74, 131; Of Men, p.5, 50, 55, 108, 113; SoP, p.40, 41, 43; This Earth, p.4, 9, 11, 101; Wind, p.17, 47) <pw3>
- (76) *mourning cloth* (This Earth, p.105) <pw3>
- (77) *bedcloth / sleeping cloth* (Changes, p.9 / 10) <pw1>
- (78) *undercloth* (Of Men, p.48) <pw3>
- (79) *dress* (Gab Boys, p.12) <pw3>
- (80) *emigration* (Beyond, p.56, 57) <pw1>
- (81) *escort police constable* (Gab Boys, p.9-10) <m2>
- (82) *escort police* (Gab Boys, p.12) <m2>
- (83) *linguist / the chief's linguist* (Of Men, p.5, 113, 116 / Beyond, p.4;

- Narrow Path, p.1) <m2>
- (84) *spokesman / the chief's spokesman* (Gab Boys, p.188, 189 / 187)
<m2>
- (85) *lobby* (Of Men, p.3) <pw1>
- (86) *Passion Week* (Beautiful Ones, p.1, 3, 111) <sw4>
- (87) *python* (Fragments, p.8) <pw1>
- (88) *rival* (SoP, p.43) <r2>
- (89) *send*: 'When I was young he used to send me.' (Gab Boys, p.191)
<r3>
- (90) *soap* (Gab Boys, p.99) <pw1>
- (91) *toffees* (SoP, p.61) <pw2>
- (92) *umbrella*: red umbrella/royal umbrella (Healers, p.308) <pw1>
- (93) *mother* (Gab Boys, p.186; Of Men, p.105; No Sweetness, p.59;
Wind, p.4) <r4>
- (94) *my mother* (No Sweetness, p.69) <r4>
- (95) *two of my mothers* (Gab Boys, p.191) <r4>
- (96) *one of her mothers on her mother's side* (Girl Who Can, p.47) <r4>
- (97) *any other mothers and grandmothers we considered close enough*
(Girl Who Can, p.47) <r4>
- (98) *one of my grandmothers* (Gab Boys, p.191) <r4>
- (99) *Mammy* (This Earth, p.175) <r4>
- (100) *Mama* (Gab Boys, p.186) <r4>
- (101) *my fathers* (This Earth, p.102, 175) <r4>
- (102) *her fathers / Esi's fathers* (Changes, p.89) <r4>
- (103) *his fathers / the fathers* (Crossroads, p.12) <r4>
- (104) *Papa* (Nimo) (Grief Child, p.15) <r4>
- (105) *auntie* (Catechist, p.17) <r4>
- (106) *Auntie* (Grief Child, p.178; SoP, p.41) <r4>
- (107) *Auntie Abena* (SoP, p.40, 41) <r4>
- (108) *Auntie Esi* (CoN, p.5, 96) <r4>
- (109) *Auntie Boatemaa* (SoP, p.63, 69, 70) <r4>

- (110) *my brother* (No Sweetness, p.63) <r4>
- (111) *my father* (No Sweetness, p.63) <r4>
- (112) *my husband* (No Sweetness, p.63) <r4>
- (113) *my master* (No Sweetness, p.73, 129) <r4>

6.3.2.2 Semantic restriction

- (114) *compound* (Changes, p.6; CoN, p.1, 211; Dancing Tortoise, p.285; Grief Child, p.84, 88, 90, 91, 92, 178, 181; Narrow Path, p.2, 85, 180; Of Men, p.47, 102; Strange Man, p.1; This Earth, p.5, 8, 9, 175; Wind, p.17, 44, 54) <pw1>
- (115) *missus* (Girl Who Can, p.132) <r2>
- (116) *police constable* (Gab Boys, p.10) <m2>
- (117) *general police* (Gab Boys, p.12) <pw1>

6.3.2.3 Semantic restriction and extension

- (118) *agent* (Beyond, p.56, 57, 58, 59, 60, 61, 136) <m2>
- (119) *carriers* (No Sweetness, p.69) <m2>
- (120) *gangway* (Beyond, p.57) <pw1>
- (121) *mate / mates* (Gab Boys, p.97, 99, 100, 101, 104; SoP, p.61 / This Earth, p.172, 176) <m2>
- (122) *the driver's mate* (Gab Boys, p.96; SoP, p.61) <m2>
- (123) *lorry mate* (Gab Boys, p.99) <m2>
- (124) *messenger / court messengers* (Crossroads, p.52 / Crossroads, p.11) <m2>
- (125) *reckon*: 'He *reckoned* the dowry.' (No Sweetness, p.67) <r2>
 'I hope you had something to *reckon* against him?' (No Sweetness, p.67) <r2>
 'You forgot to *reckon* the Knife Fee.' (No Sweetness, p.67) <r2>
 'He also *reckoned* the price of the trunk.' (No Sweetness, p.68) <r2>
 'There was only the Cooking Cost for me to *reckon* against his.' (No Sweetness, p.68) <r2>

- (126) *soup* (Catechist, p.110, 113; Gab Boys, p.94; Dancing Tortoise, p.289, 292; No Sweetness, p.82; Of Men, p.8; SoP, p.68, 69) <pw2>
- (127) *antelope soup* (Of Men, p.5) <pw2>
- (128) *mutton soup* (SoP, p.74) <pw2>
- (129) *palm soup* (Catechist, p.110, 111; Beautiful Ones, p.13) <pw2>
- (130) *stew* (Catechist, p.110) <pw2>
- (131) *ground nut stew* (This Earth, p.101) <pw2>
- (132) *palm nut stew* (Gab Boys, p.) <pw2>
- (133) *rice and stew* (This Earth, p.170) <pw2>
- (134) *steward* (SoP, p.68) <m2>
- (135) *stool* (Crossroads, p.47, 51, 52, 53, 79, 107, 108) <pw1>

6.3.2.4 Semantic shift

- (136) *hot drink* (Fragments, p.5) <pw2>

6.3.2.5 Semantic transfer

- (137) *action film* (Beyond, p.61, 62) <pw1>
- (138) *airtight trunks* (Gab Boys, p.103) <pw1>
- (139) *corn-dough* (Narrow Path, 184) <pw1>
- (140) *gong-gong man* (Catechist, p.107) <m2>
- (141) *knocker* (Gab Boys, p.10) <pw1>
- (142) *lorry / lorries* (Crossroads, / p.8; Narrow Path, p.9, 10, 14, 184 / 3; No Sweetness, p.128; SoP, p.61; This Earth, p.178, 179 / 7, 177) <pw1>
- (143) *lorry park* (No Sweetness, p.128; This Earth, p.180) <pw1>
- (144) *newsvendor* (Catechist, p.107) <m2>
- (145) *piece/pieces* (Gab Boys, p.98, 99) <pw1>
- (146) *cabin biscuits* (Beautiful Ones, p.102) <pw2>
- (147) *small boys* (Beautiful Ones, p.109) <m2>

6.3.3 Proverbs and sayings

- (148) *One cannot swallow the head and claim the eyes were not affected.*
(Crossroads, p.51)
- (149) *If a thief promises to give up stealing, everyone should remember that stealing is in his fingertips, and he can always go back to it.*
(Dancing Tortoise, p.285)
- (150) *Nobody points out his village to another with his left finger.* (Gab Boys, p.189)
- (151) *When a child learns how to wash its hands, it eats with its elders from the same bowl.* (Gab Boys, p.196)
- (152) *It's the same thing if a horse doesn't go to the battle front, but its tail does.* (Girl Who Can, p.8)
- (153) *Mother is gold and mother is silk.* (Girl Who Can, p.133)
- (154) *In marriage, a woman must sometimes be a fool.* (No Sweetness, p.61)
- (155) *Our people say a bad marriage kills the soul.* (No Sweetness, p.62)
- (156) *What does one do, when one's only waterpot breaks?* (No Sweetness, p.74)
- (157) *When flour is scattered in the sand, who can sift it?* (No Sweetness, pp.73-4)
- (158) *A clay dish once broken can never be mended again.* (Of Men, p.1)
- (159) *A crab has never given birth to a bird before.* (Of Men, p.4)
- (160) *And then I would say, 'I see her skin has changed.'* (Of Men, p.52)
- (161) *Eating and talking are said to share a deer skin. They may decide to quarrel without warning.* (Of Men, p.8)
- (162) *Every matter that arises has a brother somewhere.* (Of Men, p.46)
- (163) *He who fires a gun in the night must not fear to wail in the day.* (Of Men, p.115)
- (164) *He who was not afraid to fire a gun in the night must not be afraid to wail during the day time.* (Of Men, p.109)
- (165) *I cannot imagine myself eating the rump of a moor hen in public.*
(Of Men, p.52)
- (166) *Only a stranger would be given a one-eyed hen to eat.* (Of Men, p.53)
- (167) *Some animal has swallowed the snake.* (Of Men, p.47)

- (168) *This insolent boy has trodden on my walking stick. (Of Men,p.52)*
- (169) *Whatever is sweet has some bitterness in it. (Our Sister, p.115)*
- (170) *The follower imitates the walk of the leader. (SoP, p.37)*
- (171) *The right hand washes the left and vice-versa. (SoP, p.76)*
- (172) *The sound of pestles in a neighbour's house is no indication of the kind of soup with which the fufuo is to be served. (SoP, p.77)*
- (173) *When you hear the sound of fufuo pestles at work in the neighbourhood, my child, don't be intimidated; pound your poor man's fufuo, for no matter how wealthy your neighbours seem to be, your soup may be of the same quality or even better than theirs! (SoP, p.76)*
- (174) *A goat who visits somebody's house should not weep because its head has been cracked with a club. (This Earth, p.9)*
- (175) *You don't make a juju for a dog which forbids him to touch palm oil. (This Earth, p.95)*
- (176) *As long as we eat, we have to build new hopes. (Wind, p.9)*
- (177) *If a man cannot pay a fine and a relative pays for him, it is not considered a shame. (Wind, p.3)*
- (178) *It is only those who have double eyes that can see into their [the gods'] deeds. (Wind, p.8)*
- (179) *The bamboo fence does not creak if nothing strikes it. (Wind, p.8)*
- (180) *The sheep that tried to break down the solid barn in anger, regretted the loss of its beautiful fur. (Wind, p.9)*
- (181) *Was it not mere folly to insult the crocodile while crossing the river on its back? (Wind, p.14)*
- (182) *When bile spoils the taste of a pot of soup, a new one is cooked. (Wind, p.9)*
- (183) *When this head is still alive, the knee is not allowed to wear a hat. (Wind, p.4)*
- (184) *Who are you to insult the crocodile in midstream? (Wind, p.9)*
- (185) *You don't foolishly dance around a trap if it has caught your favourite prey. (Wind, p.2)*

6.4 Variation in the signifier and signified

6.4.1 African language expressions

6.4.1.1 Words/expressions referring to the natural environment and various aspects of culture

Physical environment / cultural artefacts <pw1>

- (186) *adawuro* (Gab Boys, p.51)
- (187) *ahenfie* (Crossroads, p.10, 11, 12, 107, 108)
- (188) *akonkordieh* (Gab Boys, p.90, 92, 93)
- (189) *atitnpen* (Gab Boys, p.194)
- (190) *atumpnan* (Gab Boys, p.190)
- (191) *bampa* (Of Men, p.57)
- (192) *bodua* (Wind, p.6, 7, 8)
- (193) *cedi* (Beautiful Ones, p.2, 3, 4)
- (194) *eto* (Gab Boys, p.92, 93)
- (195) *fetefre* (Gab Boys, p.194)
- (196) *funtumia* (Of Men, p.vii)
- (197) *igya* (Fragments, p.131)
- (198) *mmefe* (Gab Boys, p.99)
- (199) *Obrapa* (Gab Boys, p.11)
- (200) *Okwakuo* (Of Men, p.viii) – bird
- (201) *okyereben* (Gab Boys, p.89)
- (202) *Oman* (Crossroads, p.105, 107)
- (203) *onyina* (Gab Boys, p.90)
- (204) *Otuiedu* (Of Men, p.5)
- (205) *pesewa/pesewas* (Our Sister, p.114/Beautiful Ones, p.1)
- (206) *ropohpoh* (Gab Boys, p.13)
- (207) *sokosare* (Of Men, p.7)
- (208) *tukpei* (Of Men, p.7)
- (209) *yomo-be-Ga* (Gab Boys, p.99)

Food and drink <pw2>

- (210) *akara* (This Earth, p.175)

- (211) *akpeteshie* (Beautiful Ones, p.103; CoN, p.2, 8, 100; This Earth, p.7)
- (212) *ampesi* (Crossroads, p.52)
- (213) *apem* (Gab Boys, p.184)
- (214) *apranpransa* (Of Men, p.2)
- (215) *egusi* (Girl Who Can, p.52)
- (216) *fufu* (Beautiful Ones, p.110; Catechist, p.110; Fragments, p.134; Of Men, p.8)
- (217) *fufuo* (Gab Boys, p.94; SoP, p.68, 69)
- (218) *gari* (Crossroads, p.49)
- (219) *jolof* (Girl Who Can, p.50)
- (220) *kenkey* (Beautiful Ones, p.8, 10, 99; Catechist, p.113; Changes, p.3)
- (221) *koko* (This Earth, p.175)
- (222) *kontomire* (No Sweetness, p.82)
- (223) *mmorosa* (Gab Boys, p.191)
- (224) *oto* (No Sweetness, p.129)
- (225) *waakye* (SoP, p.65)

Clothing <pw3>

- (226) *aboefosem* (Of Men, p.83)
- (227) *agbada* (Changes, p.89)
- (228) *kaba* (This Earth, p.175)
- (229) *kente* (Narrow Path, p.2, 182)

Family relations <r4>

- (230) *Agya* (Gab Boys)
- (231) *agyanom* (Crossroads)
- (232) *anuanom* (Crossroads)
- (233) *Awo* (Our Sister)
- (234) *Ebusua* (Crossroads)
- (235) *Egya* (Crossroads)
- (236) *Eja* (Healers)
- (237) *Emama* (Our Sister)
- (238) *Ena* (Our Sister)
- (239) *Iyie* (Our Sister)

- (240) *Maame* (Crossroads, No Sweetness, SoP)
 (241) *maame/mame* (Wind)
 (242) *Maami* (No Sweetness)
 (243) *Maeto* (Our Sister)
 (244) *Mamaa* (Wind)
 (245) *Mena* (Healers)
 (246) *Naana* (Fragments)
 (247) *Nana* [female] (No Sweetness)
 (248) *Nana* [male] (Crossroads, Gab Boys, No Sweetness, Of Men)
 (249) *nananom* (Crossroads)
 (250) *Nna* (Our Sister)
 (251) *Nne* (Our Sister)
 (252) *Paa* (Wind)
 (253) *Paapa* (SoP)

In combination: *Agya Kwaku Amankwaa* (Gab Boys), *Agya Toroh* (Gab Boys), *Eja Ababio* (Healers), *Maame Abokuma* (Crossroads), *Maame Esi Abokuma* (Crossroads), *Maami Ama* (No Sweetness), *Maame Agyenkwa* (Crossroads), *Mena Araba Jesiwa* (Healers), *Paa Wangara* (Wind)

Traditions / customs / beliefs / superstitions <sw1>

- (254) *abuse* (Gab Boys, p.11)
 (255) *Ananse* (Fragments, p.4)
 (256) *okra* (Crossroads, p.50, 53)

Traditional festivals / sacred days <sw1>

- (257) *Ahobaa* (No Sweetness, p.59, 64)
 (258) *Ahobaada* (No Sweetness, p.64)
 (259) *Akwanbo* (Of Men, p.viii)
 (260) *Akwasidae* (Crossroads, p.54)
 (261) *Kundum* (Catechist, p.107)

Ancestors / deities <sw2>

- (262) *Afedomeshie* (This Earth, p.11)

- (263) *Ashiagbor* (This Earth, p.11)
 (264) *Atitsogbui* (This Earth, p.11)
 (265) *Dalosu* (This Earth, p.5)
 (266) *Kweli* (Girl Who Can, p.141)
 (267) *Letsu* (This Earth, p.11)
 (268) *Mamaa / Azule Mamaa* (Wind, p.2, 5, 6, 7, 16/2, 6)
 (269) *Mamagbo* (This Earth, p.11)
 (270) *Mpoimpoi* (Beyond, p.54)
 (271) *Nananom* (Fragments, p.4, 8, 199)
 (272) *Nyidevu* (This Earth, p.11)
 (273) *Tano / Azule Tano* (Wind, p.7, 9, 13/6, 7, 9)
 (274) *Tigare* (Crossroads, p.98, 103, 104)
 (275) *Wotodzo* (This Earth, p.11)

Christianity / Islam <sw4>

- (276) *"Momma akra nyinaa mmrebre won ho ase nhe: tumi a ewo anuonyam no ase. Na tumi biara nni ho se nea efi Nyankopon; nanso tumi a ewowo ho no, Onyankopon na wahye ato ho. Enti obiara a one tumi no di asi no, one nea Onyankopon ahye ato ho di asi; na won a wodi asi no benya afobu .."* (Crossroads, p.106)

Proverbs <ps>

- (277) *Owo asee: 'You women are no good – owo asee!'* (Catechist, p.16)
 (278) *Tarkwa ewu ntsem muo!* (Girl Who Can, p.6)
 (279) *Ohoho nndzi abenkwan.* (Catechist, p.111)

Work / profession / office <m2>

- (280) *the Apegya* (Of Men)
 (281) *aplankey / aplankeys* (Dancing Tortoise)
 (282) *asafomba* (Crossroads)
 (283) *wansam / Hausa wansams* (Gab Boys)
 (284) *Amankrado* (Of Men)
 (285) *Ankobeahene* (Crossroads)
 (286) *Kankanfo* (Of Men)
 (287) *Mallam* (No Sweetness)

- (288) *Nana* (Crossroads, Gab Boys, Of Men)
- (289) *Okomfo* (Crossroads)
- (290) *Okyeame* (Crossroads, Of Men)
- (291) *Omankrado* (Crossroads)
- (292) *oman mpanyinfo* (Crossroads)
- (293) *Opanin* (Gab Boys)
- (294) *Opanyin* (Crossroads)
- (295) *Osagyefo* (Gab Boys)
- (296) *Osofo* (Crossroads)
- (297) *Sanaahene* (Of Men)
- (298) *Tufuhene* (Crossroads)

In combination: *Amankrado Amponsa* (Of Men), *Nana Ankobea* (Crossroads), *Nana Kani* (Of Men), *Nana Kum* (No Sweetness), *Nana Kyeame* (Gab Boys), *Nana Mensa* (Crossroads), *Opanin Ampoma* (Gab Boys), *Opanyin Kwame Egyaben* (Crossroads), *Okomfo Dua* (Crossroads), *Okyeame Sintim* (Of Men), *Opanyin Kwesi Addai* (Crossroads), *Sanaahene Ogyeabo* (Of Men)

Corruption <m3>

- (299) *kola* : ‘This is only your *kola*. Take it as *kola*.’ (Beautiful ones, p.107)
 ‘Even *kola* nuts can say "thanks".’ (Beautiful Ones, p.182)
 ‘Even *kola* gives pleasure in the chewing.’ (Beautiful Ones, p.95)

6.4.1.2 **Names**

6.4.1.2.1 *Personal names <pn1>*

Male names

- (300) *Aaron Kuku* (This Earth)
- (301) *Ababio / Eja Ababio* (Healers)
- (302) *Addai* (Crossroads)
- (303) *Adonu* (This Earth)

- (304) *Adu* (Grief Child)
- (305) *Adu Ampofo Antwi* (Gab Boys)
- (306) *Afanyie* (Catechist)
- (307) *Agbefia* (Narrow Path)
- (308) *Dr Aggrey* (No Sweetness)
- (309) *Agya Kwaku Amankwaa* (Gab Boys)
- (310) *Agya Toroh* (Gab Boys)
- (311) *Agyei* (Of Men)
- (312) *Dr Agyekumhene* (Dancing Tortoise)
- (313) *Akobi / Cobby / Cobby Ajaman* (Beyond)
- (314) *Akoto* (Strange Man)
- (315) *Mr Akporley* (Gab Boys)
- (316) *Akwasi Asamoah* (Gab Boys)
- (317) *Ali/Ali Kondey / Mr Kondey* (Changes)
- (318) *Amamu* (This Earth)
- (319) *Amaning / Kwadwo Amaning* (Gab Boys)
- (320) *Amankrado Amponsa* (Of Men)
- (321) *Amoa Awusi* (Of Men)
- (322) *Ampoma / Opanin Ampoma* (Gab Boys)
- (323) *Anaafi / Kwesi Anaafi* (Crossroads)
- (324) *Anakpo* (This Earth)
- (325) *Anan* (Healers)
- (326) *Anane* (Grief Child)
- (327) *Ankomah / Mr Ankomah* (Wind)
- (328) *Ansah / Yaw Ansah* (Gab Boys)
- (329) *Mr Apaloo* (Dancing Tortoise)
- (330) *Appau Boateng* (Crossroads)
- (331) *Appia* (Healers)
- (332) *Appiah* (Grief Child)
- (333) *Mr Aryee* (Gab Boys)
- (334) *Asafoakye* (Of Men)
- (335) *Ata* (Healers)
- (336) *Ataa Quarshi* (Strange Man)
- (337) *Attipoe / Mr Attipoe* (This Earth)

- (338) *Awulai Kodwo-Ackah / Awulai Kwadwo-Ackah Ahuma / Chief Ackah* (Wind)
- (339) *Ayerakwa* (Of Men)
- (340) *Azakyi* (Wind)
- (341) *Baako* (Fragments)
- (342) *Baba* (CoN)
- (343) *Bekoe* (No Sweetness)
- (344) *Benoa* (Of Men)
- (345) *Boahene* (Of Men)
- (346) *Boi / Kwadwo Boi* (Gab Boys)
- (347) *Botoi* (Strange Man)
- (348) *Boye* (Grief Child)
- (349) *Braimah* (Gab Boys)
- (350) *Mr Budu Baiden-Danielson / Mr Baiden-Danielson* (Strange Man)
- (351) *Bukari / Gabriel Bukari* (CoN)
- (352) *Buntui* (Healers)
- (353) *Chief Kushieto* (Dancing Tortoise)
- (354) *Cobbie* (Grief Child)
- (355) *Mr Dadzie* (Crossroads)
- (356) *Damfo* (Healers)
- (357) *Mr Degbe* (Dancing Tortoise)
- (358) *Densu* (Healers)
- (359) *Doku / Dr Doku* (SoP)
- (360) *Egyaben / Kwame Egyaben / Opanyin Kwame Egyaben* (Crossroads)
- (361) *Ehwenpopro* (Of Men)
- (362) *Entea* (Of Men)
- (363) *Esuman* (Healers)
- (364) *Ewusi* (Crossroads)
- (365) *Fiiifi* (No Sweetness, SoP)
- (366) *Foli* (Fragments)
- (367) *Gariba* (Fragments)
- (368) *Ibrahim* (This Earth)
- (369) *Idrissu* (Fragments)
- (370) *Issah* (Gab Boys)

- (371) *Issaka* (CoN)
- (372) *Jojo's Father* (CoN)
- (373) *John Kofi Blankson* (Crossroads)
- (374) *Jonathan Dumenyo / Paul Dumenyo* (This Earth)
- (375) *Joseph Lartey* (Crossroads)
- (376) *Kani / Kwabena Kani / Nana Kani* (Of Men)
- (377) *Kanto* (Healers)
- (378) *Klu* (Strange Man)
- (379) *Kobla* (Dancing Tortoise, Girl Who Can)
- (380) *Kodjo / Kodjo Fi* (No Sweetness)
- (381) *Kodzo / Kodzo Dzide* (This Earth)
- (382) *Kofi* (CoN, Crossroads, Narrow Path, No Sweetness, Wind)
- (383) *Kofi Abbam* (Catechist)
- (384) *Kofi Ackah Miezah* (Wind)
- (385) *Kofi Billy* (Beautiful Ones)
- (386) *Kofi Ntim* (CoN)
- (387) *Kojo Ankrah* (Crossroads)
- (388) *Kojo / Kojo Ansah* (CoN)
- (389) *Kojo Ewusi* (Crossroads)
- (390) *Kpoley / Papa Kpoley* (Wind)
- (391) *Kubi* (Changes)
- (392) *Kukrubinsin / Kwame Kukrubinsin* (Of Men)
- (393) *Kwabena Nketia* (Gab Boys)
- (394) *Kwadwo Darko* (Gab Boys)
- (395) *Kwadwo Pra* (Of Men)
- (396) *Kwame* (Crossroads, Gab Boys, No Sweetness)
- (397) *Kwame Appianda* (Crossroads)
- (398) *Kwame Kaakyire* (Gab Boys)
- (399) *Kwame Duro* (Gab Boys)
- (400) *Kwamena* (Catechist)
- (401) *Kwaku* (SoP)
- (402) *Kwasi / Kwasi Asamoah / Akwasi Asamoah* (Gab Boys)
- (403) *Kwasi Wusu* (Gab Boys)
- (404) *Kweku / Kweku Sam* (No Sweetness)
- (405) *Kweku Nyamekye* (No Sweetness)

- (406) *Kwesi* (No Sweetness, Catechist)
- (407) *Kwesi Addai / Opanyin Kwesi Addai* (Crossroads)
- (408) *Kwesi Mensah / Kwesi Mensa III* (Crossroads)
- (409) *Mr Kyempim / the Honourable Kyempim* (SoP)
- (410) *Kyikya Fitiye* (Of Men)
- (411) *Mr Lomo* (Strange Man)
- (412) *Mahama* (Grief Child)
- (413) *Mawule Klevor* (Dancing Tortoise)
- (414) *Mawusi* (Dancing Tortoise)
- (415) *Mensa / Old Mensa* (Strange Man) / *Nana Mensa* (Crossroads)
- (416) *Mr Mensah* (Catechist)
- (417) *Moses Gyamfi* (Crossroads)
- (418) *Nai Odum* (Of Men)
- (419) *Nana Kyeame* (Gab Boys)
- (420) *Nani* (Narrow Path)
- (421) *Nda* (Wind)
- (422) *Nimo* (Grief Child)
- (423) *Nkrumah* (Our Sister) / *Kwame Nkrumah* (SoP)
- (424) *Nyankoman Dua* (Healers)
- (425) *Nyidevu* (This Earth)
- (426) *Obeng* (Strange Man)
- (427) *Odaso* (Healers)
- (428) *Odoi* (Strange Man)
- (429) *Odole* (Strange Man)
- (430) *Odotei* (Strange Man)
- (431) *Ofori* (Grief Child, Strange Man)
- (432) *Ogyeaboo* (Of Men)
- (433) *Okai* (Strange Man)
- (434) *Okoko* (Changes)
- (435) *Okomfo Dua* (Crossroads)
- (436) *Okyeame Sintim* (Of Men)
- (437) *Old Anang* (Strange Man)
- (438) *Opong* (Of Men)
- (439) *Osey* (Beyond)
- (440) *Otenagya* (Of Men)

- (441) *Oto* (Gab Boys)
 (442) *Owiredu* (Of Men)
 (443) *Paapoe / Paa-poe* (Gab Boys)
 (444) *Saanyo* (Of Men)
 (445) *Sanaahene Ogyeabo* (Of Men)
 (446) *Sebo* (Crossroads)
 (447) *Skido* (Fragments)
 (448) *Takyi* (Of Men)
 (449) *Mr Tamakloe* (Dancing Tortoise)
 (450) *Tawia* (Strange Man)
 (451) *Tete / Mr Tete* (Strange Man)
 (452) *Togbi* (Dancing Tortoise)
 (453) *Tokpo* (This Earth)
 (454) *Topa* (This Earth)
 (455) *Vincent Agawu* (Dancing Tortoise)
 (456) *Wangara / Paa Wangara* (Wind)
 (457) *Wharjah* (Wind)
 (458) *Yaovi* (Gab Boys)
 (459) *Yaro* (Grief Child, This Earth)
 (460) *Yaw* (Gab Boys)
 (461) *Yaw Abu* (Gab Boys)
 (462) *Yaw Dade* (Crossroads)
 (463) *Yaw Gare* (Gab Boys)
 (464) *Yaw Mensah* (Gab Boys)
 (465) *Yaw Nyankuma* (Of Men)
 (466) *Yeboah* (Grief Child)

Female names

- (467) *Abanowa* (Girl Who Can)
 (468) *Abena / Auntie Abena / Abena Tutu* (SoP)
 (469) *Adisa* (This Earth)
 (470) *Adjo* (Grief Child)
 (471) *Adjoa Moji* (Girl Who Can)
 (472) *Adukwei* (CoN)
 (473) *Afi-Yaa* (Girl who Can)

- (474) *Afoa* (Of Men)
- (475) *Awoa / Adwoa Ntimaa / Ntimaa* (Of Men)
- (476) *Adwoba* (Wind)
- (477) *Afriyie / Afriyie Kyempim* (SoP)
- (478) *Ahuma / Ahu* (Wind)
- (479) *Ajoa* (Healers)
- (480) *Ajovi* (Dancing Tortoise)
- (481) *Akos* (Grief Child) – short for Akosua
- (482) *Akua* (Of Men)
- (483) *Akwawua* (Of Men)
- (484) *Ama* (Grief Child, No Sweetness) / *Maami Ama* (No Sweetness)
- (485) *Ama Nkoroma* (Healers)
- (486) *Miss Annan / Miss Beckie Annan* (Grief Child)
- (487) *Anoa / Yaa Anoa* (Fragments)
- (488) *Araba* (Fragments)
- (489) *Asonkye* (Of Men)
- (490) *Ayowa* (Of Men)
- (491) *Birago* (Grief Child)
- (492) *Boaduwaa* (Of Men)
- (493) *Boatema / Auntie Boatema* (SoP)
- (494) *Bozoma* (Wind)
- (495) *Mrs Degbe* (Dancing Tortoise)
- (496) *Dekpor* (Narrow Path)
- (497) *Dokuwa* (Of Men)
- (498) *Dzenawo* (This Earth)
- (499) *Eba* (Wind)
- (500) *Edzi* (Narrow Path)
- (501) *Efua* (Catechist, Fragments)
- (502) *Emefa* (Dancing Tortoise)
- (503) *Esi* (CoN)
- (504) *Esi /Esi Sekyi* (Changes)
- (505) *Esi Abokuma / Maame Esi Abokuma / Maami Abokuma*
(Crossroads)
- (506) *Esiama* (Beyond)
- (507) *Esi Amanyiwa* (Healers)

- (508) *Essenam* (Dancing Tortoise)
- (509) *Fati* (CoN)
- (510) *Fusena* (Changes)
- (511) *Goma* (Grief Child)
- (512) *Grace Ason* (No Sweetness)
- (513) *Grace Mensah* (No Sweetness)
- (514) *Gyeyewaa* (Of Men)
- (515) *Jesiwa / Araba Jesiwa / Mena Araba Jesiwa* (Healers)
- (516) *Jiffa* (Dancing Tortoise)
- (517) *Jojo's Mother* (CoN)
- (518) *Mrs Kluvi* (Dancing Tortoise)
- (519) *Kosiwo* (This Earth)
- (520) *Letitia Armah* (Dancing Tortoise)
- (521) *Maume Agyenkwa* (Crossroads)
- (522) *Maanan* (Beautiful Ones)
- (523) *Mama Agawu* (Dancing Tortoise)
- (524) *Mamadze* (Narrow Path)
- (525) *Mansa* (Grief Child)
- (526) *Manzakyi / Manza* (Wind)
- (527) *Mariama* (Girl Who Can)
- (528) *Mary Tutu* (SoP)
- (529) *Masa* (This Earth, p.95)
- (530) *Menawo* (Of Men)
- (531) *Mrs Mensah* (Strange Man)
- (532) *Mrs Ofori* (Grief Child)
- (533) *Ogyaanowa* (Changes)
- (534) *Opokuya* (Changes)
- (535) *Oyo* (Beautiful Ones)
- (536) *Rebecca Dumenyo* (This Earth)
- (537) *Susa* (Grief Child)
- (538) *Mrs Tete* (Strange Man)
- (539) *Tona* (Narrow Path)
- (540) *Vera Mensah* (Dancing Tortoise)
- (541) *Yaa* (Grief Child)
- (542) *Yakuvi* (Narrow Path)

Reference to families

- (543) *the Ofories* (Grief Child)
(544) *the Tamakloes* (Dancing Tortoise)

6.4.1.2.2 Geographical names <pn2>

- (545) *Abenase* (Grief Child)
(546) *Aberasu-so* (Of Men)
(547) *Abetifi* (Crossroads)
(548) *Ablome* (This Earth)
(549) *Aboadee* (Of Men)
(550) *Accra* (Beautiful Ones, Catechist, CoN, Crossroads, Dancing Tortoise, Fragments, Gab Boys, Narrow Path, Strange Man, This Earth)
(551) *Achease* (Healers)
(552) *Achimota* (Beautiful Ones, p.110; Dancing Tortoise, p.131) <m1>
(553) *Ada* (Healers)
(554) *Adabraka* (Gab Boys, Strange Man)
(555) *Adidome* (Dancing Tortoise)
(556) *Afram* (Catechist)
(557) *Afranse* (Healers)
(558) *Agave* (This Earth)
(559) *Agona* (Crossroads)
(560) *Ahafo* (Gab Boys)
(561) *A'koon* (Wind)
(562) *Akosombo* (Gab Boys)
(563) *Akropong* (Healers, This Earth)
(564) *Akwaduro-so* (Of Men)
(565) *Akwatia* (This Earth)
(566) *Alowule* (Wind)
(567) *Amedzofe* (This Earth)
(568) *Anecho* (This Earth)
(569) *Ankobe* (Crossroads)
(570) *Anloga* (Dancing Tortoise, p.131) <m1>

- (571) *Anomabu* (Catechist)
- (572) *Anyinasu-so* (Of Men)
- (573) *Apam* (CoN)
- (574) *Ashante/Ashanti* (Gab Boys)
- (575) *Asuokooso* (Of Men)
- (576) *Atakpame* (This Earth)
- (577) *Atuabu* (Catechist)
- (578) *Awutu* (CoN)
- (579) *Bakano* (Healers)
- (580) *Bamboi* (Fragments)
- (581) *Bams0* (No Sweetness)
- (582) *Bole* (Fragments)
- (583) *Bosuso* (Gab Boys)
- (584) *Brepa* (Crossroads)
- (585) *Buama* (Grief Child)
- (586) *Buanyo* (Grief Child)
- (587) *Dawa* (This Earth)
- (588) *Deme* (This Earth)
- (589) *Denu* (Narrow Path, This Earth)
- (590) *Domeabra* (Healers)
- (591) *Dumasi* (Grief Child)
- (592) *Edwinase* (Healers)
- (593) *Ehwaka* (Wind)
- (594) *Ekupem* (Healers)
- (595) *Enyinase* (Healers)
- (596) *Esuano* (Healers)
- (597) *Eweland* (This Earth)
- (598) *Firaw* (Of Men) – River Volta
- (599) *Fran* (Fragments)
- (600) *Ga* (Girl Who Can, Healers) – Central Accra
- (601) *Ga* (Fragments) – village in Northern Ghana
- (602) *Gambaga* (This Earth)
- (603) *Gindabo* (Fragments)
- (604) *Han* (Fragments)
- (605) *Ho* (Dancing Tortoise)

- (606) *Jang* (Fragments)
- (607) *Jefiso* (Fragments)
- (608) *Kaleo* (Fragments)
- (609) *Kaneshie* (This Earth)
- (610) *Keta* (Dancing Tortoise, Girl Who Can, Narrow Path, This Earth)
- (611) *Kete Krachi* (This Earth)
- (612) *Kibi* (Gab Boys)
- (613) *Koforidua* (Gab Boys)
- (614) *Kojokrom* (Beautiful Ones)
- (615) *Kokompe* (Gab Boys)
- (616) *Koo'dua* (Girl Who Can) – Koforidua
- (617) *Kpando* (Dancing Tortoise)
- (618) *Kpetwei* (Dancing Tortoise)
- (619) *Kramo* (Crossroads)
- (620) *Kuli* (This Earth)
- (621) *Kulmasa* (Fragments)
- (622) *Kumase* (Girl Who Can) / *Kumasi* (Crossroads, Fragments, Gab Boys, Wind)
- (623) *Kwahu* (Gab Boys)
- (624) *Lampurga* (Fragments)
- (625) *Legon* (Beautiful Ones)
- (626) *Lilixia* (Fragments)
- (627) *Mankessim* (Catechist)
- (628) *Mankuma* (Fragments)
- (629) *Monenu* (This Earth)
- (630) *Naka* (Beyond)
- (631) *Nakwaby* (Fragments)
- (632) *Naro* (Fragments)
- (633) *Ndumsuazo* (Wind)
- (634) *Nima* (This Earth)
- (635) *Notsie* (This Earth)
- (636) *Nsawam* (Gab Boys)
- (637) *Nsu Ber* (Healers)
- (638) *Nsu Nyin* (Healers)
- (639) *Nsupa* (Grief Child)

- (640) *Ntanoa* (Of Men)
- (641) *Nyankom* (Fragments)
- (642) *Nzema* (Wind)
- (643) *Nzima* (Catechist)
- (644) *Obuasi* (Beautiful Ones)
- (645) *Odaso* (Halers)
- (646) *Odumase* (Healers)
- (647) *Oguaa* (Girl Who Can) – Cape Coast
- (648) *Osino* (Gab Boys)
- (649) *Osu* (Dancing Tortoise, This Earth)
- (650) *Penyie* (This Earth)
- (651) *Pirisi* (Fragments)
- (652) *Pra* (Healers)
- (653) *Pusupusu* (Gab Boys)
- (654) *Sabuli* (Fragments)
- (655) *Sajumase* (Gab Boys)
- (656) *Sawla* (Fragments)
- (657) *Segakope* (Dancing Tortoise)
- (658) *Sekondi* (Gab Boys, Wind)
- (659) *Seripe* (Fragments)
- (660) *Sibele* (Fragments)
- (661) *Sikyi* (Crossroads)
- (662) *Suhum* (Gab Boys)
- (663) *Sumanyi* (Beyond)
- (664) *Sunyani* (SoP)
- (665) *Supong* (Gab Boys) / *Suppong* (Of Men)
- (666) *Surdo* (No Sweetness)
- (667) *Susa* (Gief Child)
- (668) *Tafo* (Gab Boys)
- (669) *Takoradi* (Gab Boys, Girl Who Can)
- (670) *Tanina* (Fragments)
- (671) *Techiman* (Healers)
- (672) *Tema* (Gab Boys)
- (673) *Teple* (This Earth)
- (674) *Teselima* (Fragments)

- (675) *Tikobo* (Wind)
- (676) *Tinga* (Fragments)
- (677) *Tumu* (Fragments)
- (678) *Tuna* (Fragments)
- (679) *Twafoo* (Of Men)
- (680) *Twafour / Twafuor* (Gab Boys)
- (681) *Twinen* (Wind)
- (682) *Volta* (This Earth)
- (683) *Wa* (Fragments)
- (684) *Walewale* (Grief Child)
- (685) *Winneba* (Crossroads)
- (686) *Yeji* (Fragments)
- (687) *Yenaye* (This Earth)
- (688) *Yidala* (Fragments)
- (689) *Zaberima* (Of Men)
- (690) *Zomayi* (Narrow Path)
- (691) *Zongo* (SoP)

6.4.2 Lexical innovation

6.4.2.1 Borrowing

- (692) *agbada* (Changes, p.89) <pw3>
- (693) *booklong* [people] (Changes, p.12; Wind, p.26) <m1>
- (694) *comot*: ‘the marriage was ‘*comot*, *kaput*, finished, *kabisa*’(Changes, p.159) <r2>
- (695) *jot* (Beautiful Ones, p.5) <pw1>
- (696) *kabisa*: ‘the marriage was ‘*comot*, *kaput*, finished, *kabisa*’(Changes, p.159) <r2>
- (697) *too known* [people] (Wind, p.27) <m1>
- (698) *tro-tro* (Dancing Tortoise, p.99; SoP, p.62) <pw1>

Creative personal / proper names, nicknames <pn1>

- (699) *Service* (Gab Boys, p.104, 105)
- (700) *Mystique Mysterious* (CoN, p.1)
- (701) *I'll-twist-you* (Strange Man, p.166)
- (702) *Mama Kiosk* (Beyond, p.54, 56,139)
- (703) *Joe Boy* (SoP, p.35, 40)
- (704) *Old Row* (This Earth, p.172)
- (705) *His High Dedication* (Gab Boys, p.198)
- (706) *Motor* (Gab Boys, p.89)

'Personification'

- (707) *The Tailless Animal* (No Sweetness, p.128, 130) <pw1>

Creative geographical names <pn2>

- (708) *Between-Two-Rivers* (Of Men, p.53))
- (709) *Bite-and-Eat* (Of Men, p.vii)
- (710) *Brother-of-Man* (Of Men, p.110)
- (711) *Cottage of Cows* (Of Men, p.vii, 5)
- (712) *Dwarf* (Of Men, p.vii)
- (713) *Fire-has-Cocked-the-Eye* (Of Men, p.53)
- (714) *Kingdom of Soldier-Ants* (Of Men, p.vi)
- (715) *Land-and-Polish* (Of Men, p.103, 116)
- (716) *Land-of-Grass* (Of Men, p.vi)
- (717) *Make-Gifts-at-Times* (Of Men, p.45, 105, 115)
- (718) *Pool-of-Water* (Of Men, p.53)
- (719) *State of Return-on-Hearing-it* (Of Men, p.vi, 5, 112)
- (720) *State of the Great River* (Of Men, p.vii)
- (721) *Sweetness-Stop* (Of Men, p.v, vii, 5, 102, 108, 109, 110, 112)
- (722) *The-Beneath-of-Dancing* (Of Men, p.v, vii, 8)
- (723) *The-Children-of-Ghosts* (Of Men, p.vii)
- (724) *The-Hand-for-Eating* (Of Men, p.vii)
- (725) *The-Hand-That-is-Not-for-Eating* (Of Men, p.vii)
- (726) *Thousand-Farmers* (Of Men, p.vii, 109)
- (727) *Truth-Won't-Desert-the-Head* (Of Men, p.vii)

Work / office <m2>

- (728) *the fish-and-cassava women* (No Sweetness, p.131)
- (729) *Left Flank chief* (Of Men, p.55)
- (730) *lorry-station boiled-eggs-hawker* (Beyond, p.60)
- (731) *Right Flank chief* (Of Men, p.5, 55, 101, 114)
- (732) *Sparkers-of-Fire* (Of Men, p.115)

Names of institutions (of all kinds) <pw1>

- (733) *Ghanavision* (Fragments, p.132)
- (734) *Kill Me Quick / Kill Me Quick kiosk* (CoN, p.96 / 2)
- (735) *Man Pass Man / Man Pass Man Bar* (Crossroads, p.50, 52 / 10, 52)

Brand names <pw1>

- (736) *Mansion* (Beautiful Ones, p.12)
- (737) *Ronuk* (Beautiful Ones, p.12, 104)
- (738) *Thermogene* (Gab Boys, p.100)
- (739) *Tuskers* (Beautiful Ones, p.1)

Names of things, phenomena, cultural practices

- (740) *banana thrash* (Of Men, p.104) <pw1>
- (741) *chewing sticks* (SoP, p.64) <pw1>
- (742) *chop-box* (This Earth, p.178) <pw1>
- (743) *grass-cutter* (Gab Boys, p.94, 184) <pw1>
- (744) *land poll* (Gab Boys, p.9, 13, 14) <pw1>
- (745) *mosquito pole* (This Earth, p.101) <pw1>
- (746) *mammy truck* (This Earth, p.171) <pw1>
- (747) *plaiting thread* (SoP, p.43) <pw1>
- (748) *quarter license* (Beautiful Ones, p.95) <pw1>
- (749) *shampoo soap* (Gab Boys, p.99) <pw1>
- (750) *stool regalia* (Crossroads, p.51) <pw1>
- (751) *talking drums* (Grief Child, p.90) <pw1>
- (752) *kenile-de-juice* (Gab Boys, p.180, 182, 187) <pw2>
- (753) *Kill Me Quick* (CoN, p.1) <pw2>
- (754) *palaver sauce* (Girl Who Can, p.52) <pw2>
- (755) *white-white* ((Beautiful Ones, p.109; Fragments, p.131) <pw3>

- (756) *Cooking Cost* (No Sweetness, p.68) <r2>
- (757) *Ejecting Fee* (No Sweetness, p.67) <r2>
- (758) *Knife Fee* (No Sweetness, p.67) <r2>
- (759) *Knocking Fee* (No Sweetness, p.67) <r2>
- (760) *banana funeral* (Beyond, p.4) <sw3>

6.4.2.3 Collocations with African words

- (761) *akpeteshie bars* (Wind, p.52) <pw1>
- (762) *Attukpai taxi station* (Gab Boys, p.104, 105) <pw1>
- (763) *Buama train station* (Grief Child, p.90) <pw1>
- (764) *Dagarti Compound* (Wind, p.44) <pw1>
- (765) *Frafra Compound* (Wind, p.44) <pw1>
- (766) *Hohoe hospital* (SoP, p.72) <pw1>
- (767) *Korle Bu Hospital / Korle-Bu Hospital* (Strange Man, p.169, 279 /
Dancing Tortoise, p.281) <pw1>
- (768) *Kpetwei station* (Dancing Tortoise, p.99) <pw1>
- (769) *Volta Hall* (SoP, p.70, 74) <pw1>

- (770) *Ago beams* (This Earth, p.10) <pw1>
- (771) *agrey beads* (This Earth, p.6) <pw1>
- (772) *atumpan drums* (Gab Boys, p.192) <pw1>
- (773) *dawuru gong* (Of Men, p.112) <pw1>
- (774) *Kuli waterpot* (This Earth, p.10) <pw1>
- (775) *kyirem drums* (Gab Boys, p.51, 185, 190, 199) <pw1>

- (776) *Ago palm* (This Earth, p.7) <pw1>
- (777) *akonkordieh flowers* (Gab Boys, p.90) <pw1>
- (778) *akonkordieh tree* (Gab Boys, p.88, 93) <pw1>
- (779) *nim tree* (Beautiful Ones, p.) <pw1>
- (780) *odum tree* (Gab Boys, p.196) <pw1>
- (781) *wawa tree* (Grief Child, p.10) <pw1>

- (782) *a cedi note* (Beautiful Ones, p.182) <pw1>
- (783) *a few cedis* (SoP, p.76) <pw1>

- (784) *five cedis* (SoP, p.41) <pw1>
- (785) *thirty cedis* (SoP, p.38, 39, 41) <pw1>
- (786) *one thousand cedis* (SoP, p.66) <pw1>
- (787) *a few thousand cedis* (SoP, p.66) <pw1>
- (788) *a fifty-pesewa coin / a single fifty-pesewa coin* (Beautiful Ones, p.2) <pw1>
- (789) *50 pesewas* (Crossroads, p.49) <pw1>
- (790) *twenty-five pesewas* (Beautiful Ones, p.95) <pw1>
- (791) *two pesewas* (SoP, p.61) <pw1>
- (792) *Aserewa-Sika-Nsuo bird* (Of Men, p.viii) <pw1>
- (793) *kokokyinaka bird* (Gab Boys, p.196) <pw1>
- (794) *gari and beans with palm oil* (Beautiful Ones, p.110) <pw2>
- (795) *nkantomire stew* (Crossroads, p.52) <pw2>
- (796) *adinkra cloth* (Dancing Tortoise, p.290) <pw3>
- (797) *dumas cloth* (Of Men, p.83) <pw3>
- (798) *Joromi top* (SoP, p.43) <pw3>
- (799) *Ayokoo clan* (Of Men, p.7, 112) <r4>
- (800) *clan of Batawo* (This Earth, p.11) <r4>
- (801) *Ahobaa festival* (Catechist, p.107) <sw1>
- (802) *Akwambo festival* (Crossroads, p.104, 105) <sw1>
- (803) *etwam marks* (Gab Boys, p.88) <sw1>
- (804) *the Great Oath of Saturday and Kwanyaako* (Gab Boys, p.199) <sw1>
- (805) *Kundum festival* (Catechist, p.107, 110; Wind, p.2, 3) <sw1>
- (806) *Odenkye dance* (Of Men, p.112) <sw1>
- (807) *Odwira festival* (Of Men, p.114, 115) <sw1>
- (808) *abuse deal* (Gab Boys, p.10, 11) <sw1>
- (809) *Ankobebe gods* (Crossroads, p.9) <sw2>

- (810) *god of Mbemu* (No Sweetness, p.81) <sw2>
- (811) *Accra-Denu road* (This Earth, p.171) <pn2>
- (812) *Achimota/Nima/Barracks intersection* (Changes, p.99) <pn2>
- (813) *Awudome Cemetery* (This Earth, p.176) <pn2>
- (814) *Dabala junction* (This Earth, p.177) <pn2>
- (815) *Kaneshie estates* (Gab Boys, p.184) <pn2>
- (816) *Kramo village* (Crossroads, p.54, 55) <pn2>
- (817) *Labadi Beach / Labadi Pleasure Beach* (CoN, p.99/96) <pn2>
- (818) *Nima police station* (This Earth, p.171) <pn2>
- (819) *Nsawam Road* (This Earth, p.170) <pn2>
- (820) *Osu Cemetery* (This Earth, p.105) <pn2>
- (821) *Winneba road* (Crossroads) <pn2>
- (822) *Yensua Hill* (Beautiful Ones, p.10) <pn2>
- (823) *Agona area* (Crossroads, p.10) <pn2>
- (824) *Agona Ankobea Traditional Area* (Crossroads, p.10) <pn2>
- (825) *Akyem, Kwahu, and Ashante food growing areas* (Gab Boys, p.96)
<pn2>
- (826) *Ankobea Traditional Area* (Crossroads, p.56) <pn2>
- (827) *Busanga, Frafra and Dagarti country* (Wind, p.43) <pn2>
- (828) *Mossi and Fulani country* (Wind, p.43) <pn2>
- (829) *Sikiyi Traditional Area* (Crossroads, p.55) <pn2>
- (830) *Volta Region* (Dancing Tortoise, p.129, 135) <pn2>
- (831) *Aka River* (This Earth, p.7) <pn2>
- (832) *River Badua* (Crossroads, p.6, 7, 8, 47) <pn2>
- (833) *Twafuor stream* (Gab Boys, p.102) <pn2>
- (834) *Achimota College* (Strange Man, p.7) <m1>
- (835) *Anloga Secondary School / Anloga Secondary* (Dancing Tortoise,
p.133 / 131) <m1>
- (836) *Buama Primary School* (Grief Child, p.91) <m1>
- (837) *Keta Secondary School* (Dancing Tortoise, p.133) <m1>

- (838) *Kpando Secondary Technical School / Kpando Technical / Kpantec*
(Dancing Tortoise, p133 / 131 / 134) <m1>
- (839) *Legon University* (SoP, p.70) <m1>
- (840) *Sunyani Secondary School* (SoP, p.69) <m1>
- (841) *Sunyani Secondary School prospectus* (SoP, p.75) <m1>
- (842) *Tema Secondary* (Dancing Tortoise, p.131) <m1>
- (843) *University of Legon* (Beautiful Ones, p.7) <m1>
- (844) *Accra taxi driver* (SoP, p.75) <m2>
- (845) *Ankobebe chief* (Crossroads, p.105) <m2>
- (846) *Anona masters of eloquence* (Healers, p.2) <m2>
- (847) *asafo company* (Crossroads, p.5, 6, 8) <r1>
- (848) *Kramo chief* (Crossroads, p.55) <m2>
- (849) *Legon man: 'You ino be Legon man?'* (Wind, p.26) <m2>

6.4.2.4 Unusual collocations and compounds

- (850) *body-check cabins* (Beyond, p.57) <pw1>
- (851) *desk clerk* (Beyond, p.56) <m2>
- (852) *highlife singer* (Changes, p.166) <m2>
- (853) *juju-money* (SoP, p.65) <pw1>
- (854) *lorry station* (This Earth, p.102) <pw1>
- (855) *palava sauce* (Crossroads, p.54) <pw2>
- (856) *search clerks* (Beyond, p.57) <m2>
- (857) *steward boys* (SoP, p.62) <m2>
- (858) *talking mokes* (Gab Boys, p.13) <pw3>
- (859) *tro-tro driver's mate* (SoP, p.61) <m2>
- (860) *tro-tro lorry* (SoP, p.61) <pw1>
- (861) *tro-tro station* (Dancing Tortoise, p.99, 138) <pw1>
- (862) *tro-tro queue* (SoP, p.36) <pw1>

6.4.2.5 Conversion

- (863) *Chicha* (No Sweetness, p.56, 57, 58, 59, 60, 61, 62, 63, 64, 68, 71, 72) <pn1>

- (864) *Kankanfo* (Of Men, p.5) <pn1>
- (865) *Kyikya* (Of Men, p.117) <pn1>
- (866) *Nana* (Crossroads, p.10, 11, 49, 50, 52, 53, 54, 103, 104, 105, 108;
Gab Boys, p.189; Of Men, p.6) <pn1>
- (867) *Nana Kyeame* (Gab Boys, p.187) <pn1>
- (868) *Okyeame* (Crossroads, p.54, 55, 104, 105) <pn1>

APPENDIX 2: QUESTIONNAIRE

SURVEY ON INTERPRETATIONS OF HYBRID TEXTS

Purpose of Research

My Ph.D. research focuses on how different audiences interpret hybrid texts, i.e. literary texts written by writers of a particular culture in the language of another culture. The texts chosen for the survey are all written by Ghanaian writers in English, and the basic question is what meaning Ghanaian vs. non-Ghanaian vs. European readerships attribute to them.

Doing the Questionnaire

This questionnaire is not a test of knowledge, consequently there are no good or bad answers to the questions. What I would like to find out is what you think, so when answering the questions, especially when you are asked to explain the meaning a particular extract/expression/word has for you, please make sure you answer spontaneously, without too much thinking, giving the first meaning that comes to you. I would also like you not to discuss your answers with anyone before completing the questionnaire and not to change them afterwards, either. Please do not think about what others may or may not think, or how other people may answer the questions, but focus on what your reaction/response is to the texts.

Your answers will be treated as anonymous. The reason why I ask you to provide your name is purely technical: I would like to be able to contact you in case I need some clarification.

Thank you for your co-operation in advance.

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ABOUT YOURSELF

Name:

.....

Nationality and/or ethnic origin:

.....

Mother tongue:

.....

Knowledge of other languages:

Language

Proficiency

(e.g. (near) native,
intermediate, advanced,
elementary)

.....
.....
.....
.....
.....
.....

Do you read for pleasure/entertainment? (please circle.)

never

rarely

sometimes

often

very often

What do you read for entertainment? (e.g. novels, short stories, poetry, detective stories, sci-fi, etc.)

.....
.....
.....

In which language(s) do you read the above?

.....
.....

Do you read newspapers and/or magazines? (Please circle.)

never rarely sometimes often very often

In which language(s) do you read them?

.....
.....

Do you read specialised literature in you profession/field of study?

never rarely sometimes often very often

In which language(s) do you read it?

.....
.....

Have you read any of the following? (Please tick.)

- Kofi Osei Aidoo: Of Men and Ghosts**
- Cameron Duodu: The Gab Boys**
- Kojo Yankah: Crossroads at Ankobea**
- Kofi Agovi: A Wind from the North**
- Naa Otua Codjoe-Swayne: The Dancing Tortoise**
- Ayi Kwei Armah: Fragments**
- Ayi Kwei Armah: The Beautiful Ones Are Not Yet Born**
- Ayi Kwei Armah: Two Thousand Seasons**
- Ayi Kwei Armah: The Healers**
- Ama Ata Aidoo: No Sweetness Here**
- Ama Ata Aidoo: Changes**
- Joseph W. Abruquah: The Catechist**
- Ajoa Yeboah-Afari: The Sound of Pestles**

I

(i)

I see my uncle among people who are dancing ... They are many, all men. Their movements are virile as they jump up and down, each man only covered by a small cloth such as he would borrow from his wife or sister, tied around his waist over his shorts, leaving the torso bare. The drums and the *adawuro* (gong-gongs) are more intense in their rhythmic beating than I have ever heard them before ...

(ii)

It was about 1.30 a.m. when I reached the Attukpai taxi station, but there were still a lot of cars about, doing *aworshia* - that is, working all night.

Do *you* find 'gong-gongs' and 'working all night' in the above passages

- (a) unnecessary;
- (b) sufficient explanation of the African-language expressions which precede them;
- (c) insufficient as explanation.

Please tick whichever applies.

II

(i)

He, on the other hand, was sitting on his *bampa*. This was what some people slept on. It was part of the floor specially raised for sleeping. A reed quilt covered with plantain thrash and rags served as a mattress.

(ii)

To Kani he gave tobacco. And this was so much that the people of Ayowa's father had a sufficient tuft each. The husband-to-be did not forget to include *aboefosem* - a strip of red cloth which was worn by knotting it to a girdle and passing it between the thighs and fastening it to

the waist band again. Its significance: to cover the man's organ which had brought the wife-to-be into the world.

Do *you* find the explanation following the African-language words in the above passages

- (a) unnecessary;
- (b) sufficient;
- (c) too long-winded;
- (d) insufficient.

Please tick whichever applies.

III

(i)

Nananom, *agyanom*, and *anuanom*, I am very happy that you have shown me the respect of attending to my call despite the short notice. I thank you all.

(ii)

“Ankobebe *adehyefo*, our present chief wants us to drink a bad tonic, and we shall not allow it.” He was more emphatic now, and the heads which nodded were a reassuring response to him. “if he will not sacrifice to the gods as Tigare demands, then I am afraid he should say goodbye to our stool and quit,” Egyaben said.

“By all means!”

“He cannot play with our lives!”

“Ankobebe *momfre yie!*” Egyaben greeted for order.

“*Yie mbra,*” they all responded and then were quiet.

“Let us therefore send a resolution to the *oman mpanyinfo* and the chief, giving the chief a last chance to ...”

The above two passages come from the same novel. For a glossary please turn to the very end of this questionnaire.

Do *you* think the glossary

(a) is unnecessary;

(b) provides sufficient information on the meaning of the African-language words/expressions;

(c) provides insufficient information.

Please tick whichever applies.

Do you feel that having to use a glossary slows down your reading?

YES

NO

NOT SURE

Please circle whichever applies.

Does having to use the glossary relatively frequently make you frustrated?

YES

NO

NOT SURE

Please circle whichever applies.

If YES, please explain why you feel frustrated.

IV

(i)

So the people waited. That long wait that destroys a people's confidence in themselves. At last, one spoke. A deity spoke. Unheralded, he thundered through the village. He looked fierce, angry and weird. He tossed his head sideways, muttering incoherent things to the air. He threw

his powerful *bodua* into the sky and caught it several times. Brown amulets and dark bracelets were fixed tightly around his powerful arms.

(ii)

Mawusi stood beside the *tro-tro* and watched the people going to and fro. The place was very noisy. All the *aplankeys* were shouting for passengers; and there were quite a few beggars, singing for alms.

Do you understand the italicised words in the above passages?

YES NO NOT SURE

Please circle whichever applies.

Can you guess their meaning from the context?

YES NO NOT SURE

bodua:

tro-tro:

aplankey:

Do you think a glossary or some kind of explanation would make it easier for *you* to read and understand the above passages?

YES NO NOT SURE

Please circle whichever applies.

(iii)

But Ali was impatient. Eventually they agreed on a Sunday about a month ahead, depending of course on whether or not Esi's fathers wanted to see Ali at all. When he started rummaging through the pockets of his voluminous *agbada*, Esi wondered what he was looking for. He soon pulled out a small box, flipped it open and revealed a gold ring ...

Can you explain why 'fathers' is used in the plural?

YES

NO

NOT SURE

If yes, please do so below:

What is the meaning of 'agbada'?

(iv)

It was the malevolence of the look on her face as she looked at him unseen, that attracted me to the couple. She looked at him as a rival would look at her husband's favourite. He, quite oblivious of the searing look was leaning against the railing ...

Please explain the cultural reference hidden in the underlined sentence. Please indicate if you have understood it immediately, or you have had to work it out.

V

In the space provided after each passage, please explain the meaning of the underlined words/expressions.

(i)

But do you know, this child did not die. It is wonderful but this child did not die. Mmm. ... This strange world always has something to surprise us with ... Kweku Nyamekye. Somehow, he did not die. To his day name Kweku, I have added Nyamekye. Kweku Nyamekye. For, was he not a gift from God through the Mallam of the Bound Mouth? And he, the Mallam of the Bound Mouth, had not taken from me a penny, not a single penny that ever bore a hole. And the way he had vanished! Or it was perhaps the god who yielded me to my mother who came to my aid at last? As he had promised her he would? I remember Maame telling me that when I was only a baby, the god of Mbemu from whom I came, had promised never to desert me and that he would come to me once in my life when I needed him most. And was it not him who had come in the person of the Mallam?

(ii)

Once when the man was traveling to Cape Coast three different policemen had stopped the little bus and asked the driver for his quarter license. The driver had not bought it yet, and each of the policemen had said to him, in front of everybody, 'Even kola gives pleasure in the chewing.' In each case the driver had smiled and given the law twenty-five pesewas, and the law was satisfied. There was only one way.

(iii)

Inside the bus the conductor took down his bag ... drew from within it his day's block of tickets and, laying this on the seat beside him, poured out all the money he had collected so far beside it. Then, checking the coins against the tickets, he began to count the morning's take. It was mostly what he expected at this time of the month: small coins, a lot of pesewas, single brown pieces, with some fives, a few tens and the occasional twenty-five. Collecting was always easier around Passion Week. Not many passengers needed change; it was enough of a struggle looking round corners and the bottoms of boxes to find small coins somehow overlooked. So most people held out the exact fare and tried not to look into the receiver's face with its knowledge of their impotence. Collecting was certainly easier, but at the same time not as satisfactory as in the swollen days after pay day.

GLOSSARY for question III:

<i>Adehyefo</i>	noblemen, freemen, members of royal or chiefly families
<i>Agyanom</i>	fathers, elders
<i>Anuanom</i>	brothers and sisters
<i>Momfre yie!</i>	call for success (a salutation)
<i>Nananom</i>	grandfathers, elders, chiefs
<i>Oman mpanyinfo</i>	town elders
<i>Yie mbra</i>	may success come (a response to greeting calling for success)

APPENDIX 3: READER PROFILES

Reader	Nationality/ ethnic origin	Mother tongue	Knowledge of languages other than English	Reading for pleasure			Functional reading				Number of books read out of 13 listed
				how often	what	in which language	newspapers/magazines	in which language	how often	in which language	
WINNER 1	Belgian	French	Dutch*, German	very often	fiction, gothic novels, poetry	English in original, the rest in French	sometimes	English, French, Dutch	very often	in the language of the author if possible	0
WINNER 2	Belgian	French	Dutch*	often	novels, detective stories	French, English, Dutch	sometimes	French, English, Dutch	often	English, Dutch	0
WINNER 3	Belgian	French	Dutch*	very often	novels and poetry		sometimes	French, English, Dutch	sometimes	English, Dutch	0
WINNER 4	Belgian	French	Dutch, German	often	novels, detective stories	English, Dutch	often	French, English, Dutch	sometimes	English, Dutch	0
WINNER 5	Belgian	French	Flemish*, German	sometimes	novels, detective stories, sci-fi	French, English, Flemish	often	French, English, Dutch	sometimes	Dutch, German	0
WINNER 6	Belgian	French	Dutch, German*	very often	short stories, detective stories, sci-fi	English, French, German	very often	French, English	very often	English, Flemish	0
WINNER 7	Belgian	French	Dutch*	sometimes	romance, novels short stories	French, Dutch, English	often	French, Dutch	very often	Dutch, English	0
WINNER 8	Belgian	French, Dutch		very often	detective stories, novels	French, Dutch, English	sometimes	French, Dutch, English	often	French, Dutch, English	0
WINNER 9	Belgian	French	Dutch*	very often	novels, poetry, comics	English, French, Dutch	sometimes	English, Dutch, French	often	English, Dutch	0
WINNER 10	Belgian	French	Dutch*	often	novels, love & detective stories	French, English, Dutch	often	French, English, Dutch	sometimes	French, English, Dutch	0
WINNER 11	Belgian	French	Dutch	often	novels, detective stories, horror	French, English, Dutch	very often	French, English, Dutch	often	English, French	0
WINNER 12	Algerian	Arabic	French**	often	novels, short stories	French, English	sometimes	French, English	very often	English, French	1
WINNER 13	Russian	Russian	German, Japanese*, Ainu	rarely	detective stories, novels	English	rarely	English, Russian	often	English, Russian, Japanese	0
WINNER 14	Greek	Greek	French, German, Italian	very often	novels, poetry, short stories	Greek, English, French	rarely	Greek	very often	Greek, English, Italian	0

Reader	Nationality/ ethnic origin	Mother tongue	Knowledge of languages other than English	Reading for pleasure			Functional reading				Number of books read out of 13 listed
				how often	what	in which language	newspapers/magazines		professional literature		
							how often	in which language	how often	in which language	
WNER 1	British	English	French*, German, Italian, Japanese	sometimes	novels, poetry. Short stories	English	often	English	often	English	0
WNER 2	UK (white European)	English	French*, German, Spanish, Arabic, Portuguese, Mandarin	often	novels, poetry, short stories, fact (biography, philosophy, physics, history, gardening)	English – everything. French – novels, Spanish - novels	often	English	sometimes	English	0
WNER 3	Canadian	English	French, Gaelic, German	very often	poetry, short stories, novels, detective stories, Biographies, autobiographies	English	very often	English	very often	English, German	0
WNER 4	American	English	Russian, Scottish Gaelic, French	sometimes	novels, spiritual writing	English	often	English	very often	English	0
WNER 5	USA	American English	Gaelic, French, German	very often	novels, travel, detective	English, Gaelic	often	English, Gaelic	very often	English, Gaelic, French, German, Irish	0
NGAR 1	DR Congolese	Tshiluba	French**	rarely	general knowledge	English	sometimes	English, French	often	English	1
NGAR 2	DR Congolese	Kiswahili	French**, Lingala*, Kisanga*	sometimes	novels	English	very often	English, French	very often	English	2
NGAR 3	South African	Zulu	Ndebele**, Afrikaans**, Sotho, Tswana, Shona*, Xhosa**, Swati	very often	novels, short stories	English, Zulu, Ndebele	very often	English	sometimes	English	2
NGAR 4	DR Congolese	Kiswahili	Lingala***, Kinyarwanda***, French***	sometimes	short stories, detective stories	English	very often	English	often	English	0
NGAR 5	Ugandan	Rutoro	Runyoro, Kiswahili, Runyankole, Rukiga, Luganda	often	detective stories, short stories, funny jokes	English	very often	English	often	English	0
NGAR 6	Sierra Leone	Tenne, Kro		often	novels, poetry	English	very often	English	very often	English	4
NGAR 7	DR Congolese	Tshiluba	Lingala***, French**, Spanish, Kiswahili**, Kikongo*	rarely	detective stories, documentaries	English, French	very often	English, French, Lingala	very often	English, French	1

Reader	Nationality/ ethnic origin	Mother tongue	Knowledge of languages other than English	Reading for pleasure			Functional reading			Number of books read out of 13 listed	
				how often	what	in which language	how often	in which language	how often		in which language
GR 1	Akan	Akan (Twi)	Akan, Ga, Nzema	often	novels, short stories, poetry	English, Akan (Twi & Fante)	very often	English	very often	English	9
GR 2	Dagaaba	Dagaare	Asante Twi, Pidgin	often	novels, short stories, poetry	English	often	English	very often	English	3
GR 3	Akan	Twi		sometimes	novels	English	sometimes	English	often	English	0
GR 4	Volta Region	Ewe	Twi, Ga, Fante	often	novels, short stories, poetry, detective stories	English	sometimes	English	often	English	0
GR 5	Ghanaian	Twi		rarely	novels	English	very often	English	sometimes	English	3
GR 6	Ghanaian	Ewe	Twi, Ga, Fanti	often	novels, short stories	English	very often	English	often	English	2
GR 7	Ewe	Ewe		sometimes	novels	English	often	English	very often	English	1
GR 8	Bukasa	Buli		often	short stories	English	often	English	often	English	1
GR 9	Ewe	Ewe	Ga, Adangme	sometimes	novels, short stories, detective stories	English, Ewe	often	English	very often	English	3
GR 10	Nzima	Nzima	Akan, Ga	often	novels, detective stories	English	very often	English	sometimes	English	2
GR 11	Ghanaian	Akan		very often	novels, short stories, sci-fi, autobiographies	English	very often	English	sometimes	English	0
GR 12	Kasem	Kasem		often	novels, short stories, plays, poems	English, Kasem	often	English, Kasem	very often	English	3
GR 13	Ewe	Ewe	French	often	novels, short stories, poetry	English, Ewe, French	very often	English	often	English	4
GR 14	Ashanti/ Akwapim	Twi		often	detective stories, novels	English	often	English	often	English	1
GR 15	Ewe	Ewe	Ga, Twi, Fante, French	often	novels, short stories, detective stories, adventure stories	English, French	very often	English, French	sometimes	French, English	3
GR 16	Ga/Akan	Ga	Twi, French	sometimes	novels, Christian literature	English, French	sometimes	English, French	very often	English, French	0
GR 17	Ghanaian	Ewe	Ga	sometimes	detective stories	English	often	English	often	English	1
GR 18	Akan	Akan	Fante	sometimes	short stories	English, Akan	often	English	never	English	1
GR 19	Ga	Ga	Twi, Fante	very often	novels	English	sometimes	English	often	English, French, Spanish	0

WNNER Western Non-native English Reader
WNER Western Native English Reader
NGAR Non-Ghanaian African Reader

* Ghanaian Reader
**

Subject regards his/her knowledge advanced
Subject regards his/her knowledge near-native
Subject regards his/her proficiency native

NB. No indication of the level of
knowledge do not necessarily mean low
proficiency in a language.

APPENDIX 4: QUESTIONNAIRE RESULTS

4A Questionnaire item I: *Cushioning*

	Unnecessary		Sufficient explanation of the African-language expressions		Insufficient	
	for adawuro	for aworshia	for adawuro	for aworshia	for adawuro	for aworshia
WNNER 1	*			*		
WNNER 2			*	*		
WNNER 3					*	*
WNNER 4			*	*		
WNNER 5			*	*		
WNNER 6			*	*		
WNNER 7			*	*		
WNNER 8			*	*		
WNNER 9			*	*		
WNNER 10					*	*
WNNER 11					*	*
WNNER 12			*	*		
WNNER 13			*	*		
WNNER 14			*	*		
<i>Sub-total I</i>	<i>1</i> (7.14%)		<i>10</i> (71.42%)	<i>11</i> (78.57%)	<i>3</i> (21.42%)	<i>3</i> (21.42%)
WNER 1	*			*		
WNER 2			*	*		
WNER 3			*	*		
WNER 4			*	*		
WNER 5					*	*
<i>Sub-total II</i>	<i>1</i> (20%)		<i>3</i> (60%)	<i>4</i> (80%)	<i>1</i> (20%)	<i>1</i> (20%)
Total	2 (10.52%)		13 (68.42%)	15 (78.94%)	4 (21.05%)	4 (21.05%)
NGAR 1			*	*		
NGAR 2					*	*
NGAR 3			*	*		
NGAR 4			*	*		
NGAR 5	*	*				
NGAR 6			*	*		
NGAR 7			*	*		
<i>Sub-total III</i>	<i>1</i> (14.28%)	<i>1</i> (14.28%)	<i>5</i> (71.42%)	<i>5</i> (71.42%)	<i>1</i> (14.28%)	<i>1</i> (14.28%)
Overall	3 (11.53%)	1 (3.84%)	18 (69.23%)	20 (76.92%)	5 (19.23%)	5 (19.23%)

WNNER: Western non-native English reader

WNER: Western native English reader

NGAR: Non-Ghanaian African reader

	Unnecessary		Sufficient explanation of the African- language expressions		Insufficient	
	for <i>adawuro</i>	for <i>aworshia</i>	for <i>adawuro</i>	for <i>aworshia</i>	for <i>adawuro</i>	for <i>aworshia</i>
GR 1					*	*
GR 2			*	*		
GR 3			*	*		
GR 4			*	*		
GR 5			*	*		
GR 6					*	*
GR 7					*	*
GR 8					*	*
GR 9			*	*		
GR 10			*	*		
GR 11			*	*		
GR 12	*	*				
GR 13			*	*		
GR 14			*	*		
GR 15					*	*
GR 16			*	*		
GR 17			*	*		
GR 18			*	*		
GR 19			*	*		
Total	1 (5.26%)	1 (5.26%)	13 (68.42%)	13 (68.42%)	5 (26.31%)	5 (26.31%)

GR: Ghanaian reader

4B Questionnaire item II: *Ethnographic explanation*

	Unnecessary		Sufficient		Too long-winded		Insufficient	
	for <i>bampa</i>	for <i>aboefosem</i>	for <i>bampa</i>	for <i>aboefosem</i>	for <i>bampa</i>	for <i>aboefosem</i>	for <i>bampa</i>	for <i>aboefosem</i>
WNNER 1			*	*				
WNNER 2			*	*				
WNNER 3			*	*				
WNNER 4			*	*				
WNNER 5			*	*				
WNNER 6					*	*		
WNNER 7			*	*				
WNNER 8			*	*				
WNNER 9					*	*		
WNNER 10					*	*		
WNNER 11					*	*		
WNNER 12			*	*				
WNNER 13			*	*				
WNNER 14			*	*				
<i>Sub-total I</i>			<i>10</i> (71.42 %)	<i>10</i> (71.42 %)	<i>4</i> (28.57 %)	<i>4</i> (28.57%)		
WNER 1			*	*				
WNER 2			*	*				
WNER 3			*	*				
WNER 4					*	*		
WNER 5			*	*				
<i>Sub-total II</i>			<i>4</i> (80%)	<i>4</i> (80%)	<i>1</i> (20%)	<i>1</i> (20%)		
Total			14 (73.68 %)	14 (73.68%)	5 (26.31 %)	5 (26.31%)		
NGAR 1			*	*				
NGAR 2			*	*				
NGAR 3					*	*		
NGAR 4					*	*		
NGAR 5	*	*						
NGAR 6			*	*				
NGAR 7			*	*				
<i>Sub-total III</i>	<i>1</i> (14.28 %)	<i>1</i> (14.28%)	<i>4</i> (57.14 %)	<i>4</i> (57.14%)	<i>2</i> (28.57 %)	<i>2</i> (28.57%)		
Overall	1 (3.84 %)	1 (3.84%)	18 (69.23 %)	18 (69.23%)	7 (26.92 %)	7 (26.92%)		

WNNER: Western non-native English reader
WNER: Western native English reader
NGAR: Non-Ghanaian African reader

	Unnecessary		Sufficient		Too long-winded		Insufficient	
	for <i>bampa</i>	for <i>aboefosem</i>	for <i>bampa</i>	for <i>aboefosem</i>	for <i>bampa</i>	for <i>aboefosem</i>	for <i>bampa</i>	for <i>aboefosem</i>
GR 1					*	*		
GR 2			*	*				
GR 3			*	*				
GR 4			*	*				
GR 5			*	*				
GR 6			*	*				
GR 7			*	*				
GR 8			*	*				
GR 9			*	*				
GR 10					*	*		
GR 11			*	*				
GR 12	*	*						
GR 13					*	*		
GR 14			*	*				
GR 15			*	*				
GR 16			*	*				
GR 17					*	*		
GR 18			*	*				
GR 19			*	*				
Total	1 (5.26 %)	1 (5.26%)	14 (73.68 %)	14 (73.68%)	4 (21.05 %)	4 (21.05%)		

GR: Ghanaian reader

4C Questionnaire item III: **Glossary**

	GLOSSARY				Glossary slows down your reading			Having to use glossary frequently makes you frustrated		
	is unnecessary	provides sufficient information on the meaning of the African-language words/expressions	provides insufficient information	YES	NO	NOT SURE	YES	NO	NOT SURE	
WINNER 1	*			*		*	*			
WINNER 2		*		*					*	
WINNER 3		*		*			*			
WINNER 4	*					*		*		
WINNER 5		*		*			*			
WINNER 6	*			*			*			
WINNER 7	*			*			*			
WINNER 8		*		*			*			
WINNER 9		*			*		*			
WINNER 10		*		*	*		*	*		
WINNER 11		*		*			*			
WINNER 12		*		*			*			
WINNER 13		*		*			*			
WINNER 14		*		*	*		*	*		
Sub-total I	3 (21.42%)	11 (78.57%)		9 (64.28%)	2 (14.28%)	3 (21.42%)	9 (64.28%)	4 (28.57%)	1 (7.14%)	
WINNER 1		*		*			*			
WINNER 2		*		*			*	*		
WINNER 3		*		*			*			
WINNER 4		*		*			*	*		
WINNER 5		*		*			*		*	
Sub-total II	4 (80%)	15 (78.94%)		5 (100%)	2 (40%)	3 (60%)	2 (40%)	2 (40%)	1 (20%)	
Total	3 (15.78%)	15 (78.94%)		14 (73.68%)	2 (10.52%)	3 (15.78%)	11 (57.89%)	6 (31.57%)	2 (10.52%)	

	GLOSSARY			Having to use glossary frequently makes you frustrated		
	is unnecessary	provides sufficient information on the meaning of the African-language words/expressions	provides insufficient information	YES	NO	NOT SURE
NGAR 1	*	*		*	*	
NGAR 2		*		*		
NGAR 3		*		*		
NGAR 4	*				*	
NGAR 5	*				*	
NGAR 6		*		*		
NGAR 7		*		*		
Sub-total III	2 (28.57%)	5 (71.42%)		4 (57.14%)	3 (42.85%)	
Overall	5 (19.23%)	20 (76.92%)		15 (57.69%)	9 (34.61%)	2 (7.69%)

WNNER: Western non-native English reader

WNER: Western native English reader

NGAR: Non-Ghanaian African reader

	GLOSSARY			Having to use glossary frequently makes you frustrated		
	is unnecessary	provides sufficient information on the meaning of the African-language words/expressions	provides insufficient information	YES	NO	NOT SURE
GR 1		*		N/A	N/A	N/A
GR 2		*		*	*	
GR 3		*		*	*	
GR 4		*		*	*	
GR 5		*		*	*	
GR 6		*		*	*	
GR 7		*		*	*	
GR 8		*		*	*	
GR 9	*			*	*	
GR 10	*			*	*	
GR 11				*	*	
GR 12	*			*	*	
GR 13		*		*	*	
GR 14		*		*	*	
GR 15		*		*	*	
GR 16		*		*	*	
GR 17		*		*	*	
GR 18		*		*	*	
GR 19		*		*	*	
Total	3 (15.78%)	15 (78.94%)		16 (84.21%)	1 (5.26%)	1 (6.26%)
				10 (52.63%)	4 (21.05%)	4 (21.05%)

GR: Ghanaian reader

Reasons for frustration at having to use a glossary

	Not frustrated or not sure	Interruption/slowing down/disruption of reading process	Interruption of thoughts/flow of text/story/'picturing' process	Interruption of concentration	Breaking of holistic impression	Distraction from text/story	Wastes time	Disturbs interpretation/text understanding
WNNER 1			*					
WNNER 2	*							
WNNER 3			*					
WNNER 4	*							
WNNER 5			*					
WNNER 6		*		*				
WNNER 7	*							
WNNER 8		*						
WNNER 9			*					
WNNER 10	*							
WNNER 11			*					
WNNER 12		*					*	
WNNER 13		*			*		*	
WNNER 14	*							
Sub-total I	5 (35.71%)	4 (44.44%)	5 (55.55%)	1 (11.11%)	1 (11.11%)		2 (22.22%)	
WNER 1						*		
WNER 2	*							
WNER 3		*						
WNER 4	*							
WNER 5	*							
Sub-total II	3 (60%)	1 (50%)				1 (50%)		

WNNER: Western non-native English reader
WNER: Western native English reader

NGAR: Non-Ghanaian African reader
GR: Ghanaian reader

	Not frustrated or not sure	Interruption/slowing down/disruption of reading process	Interruption of thoughts/flow of text/story/'picturing' process	Interruption/loss of concentration	Breaking of holistic impression	Distraction from text/story	Wastes time	Disturbs interpretation/text understanding
NGAR 1		*						
NGAR 2		*						
NGAR 3		*						
NGAR 4	*							
NGAR 5	*		*					
NGAR 6			*					
NGAR 7								
Sub-total III	2 (28.57%)	3 (42.85%)	2 (28.57%)					
Total	10 (38.46%)	8 (30.76%)	7 (26.92%)	1 (3.84%)	1 (3.84%)	1 (3.84%)	2 (7.69%)	
GR 1	*							
GR 2	*							
GR 3				*				
GR 4		*	*					
GR 5			*	*				
GR 6			*					
GR 7			*	*				
GR 8	*							
GR 9			*	*			*	*
GR 10	*							
GR 11	*							
GR 12						*		
GR 13	*							
GR 14	*							
GR 15		*						
GR 16		*						
GR 17	*							
GR 18	*							
GR 19								*
Sub-total IV	9 (47.36%)	3 (30%)	5 (50%)	4 (40%)	1 (2.22%)	1 (10%)	1 (10%)	2 (20%)
Overall	19 (42.22%)	11 (24.44%)	12 (26.66%)	5 (11.11%)	1 (2.22%)	2 (4.44%)	3 (6.66%)	2 (4.44%)

4Da Questionnaire items IV (i and ii): No authorial assistance offered

	Do you understand the italicised words?			Can you guess their meaning from the context?			bodua	tro-tro	aplankey	Would a glossary/explanation help you to understand the passages?		
	YES	NO	NOT SURE	YES	NO	NOT SURE				YES	NO	NOT SURE
WNNER 1			*			*	an object like an amulet	a road, a path	a kind of taxi driver			*
WNNER 2		*			*					*		
WNNER 3			*			*	a kind of sword	?entry	?			
WNNER 4			*			*	talisman?	window?	taxi drivers			*
WNNER 5		*				*	?	market	sailor			
WNNER 6		*			*					*		
WNNER 7			*			*	a boomerang	some kind of market	taxi drivers			
WNNER 8		*				*		kind of taxi men push or pull to have it going	taxi driver			
WNNER 9			*			*	hat?	means of transport: train?	drivers?			*
WNNER 10			*			*	necklace	banner	inhabitants	*		
WNNER 11			*			*		vehicle	taxi-men	*		
WNNER 12			*			*	voice/call		officers	*		
WNNER 13		*				*				*		
WNNER 14		*				*	weapon? magic thing?		drivers?	*		
Sub-total I		6 (42.85%)	8 (57.14%)	1 (7.14%)	3 (21.42)	10 (71.42%)				11 (78.57%)	2 (14.28%)	1 (7.14%)

WNNER: Western non-native English reader

	Do you understand the italicised words?			Can you guess their meaning from the context?			bodua	tro-tro	aplankey	Would a glossary/explanation help you to understand the passages?		
	YES	NO	NOT SURE	YES	NO	NOT SURE				YES	NO	NOT SURE
WNER 1			*			*					*	
WNER 2	*			*			stick signifying power	?	taxi drivers		*	
WNER 3		*				*	spear	throughway [motorway]	rickshaw pullers/taxi drivers		*	
WNER 4		*									*	
WNER 5		*			*						*	
Sub-total II	1 (20%)	3 (60%)	1 (20%)	2 (40%)	1 (20%)	2 (40%)				4 (80%)	1 (20%)	
Total	1 (5.26%)	9 (47.36%)	9 (47.36%)	3 (15.78%)	4 (21.05%)	12 (63.15%)				15 (78.94%)	3 (15.78%)	1 (5.26%)
NGAR 1		*				*	sword	kerb	audience		*	
NGAR 2			*			*	stick/horse's tail that any African chiefs carry as a symbol of power	kind of vehicle/bus	conductors		*	
NGAR 3		*				*					*	
NGAR 4			*		*		stick, weapon	a special place	conductor, driver		*	
NGAR 5		*				*					*	
NGAR 6		*				*					*	
NGAR 7	*					*					*	
Sub-total III	1 (14.28%)	4 (57.14%)	2 (28.57%)	3 (42.85%)		4 (57.14%)				5 (71.42%)	2 (28.57%)	
Overall	2 (7.69%)	13 (50%)	11 (42.30%)	6 (23.07%)	4 (15.38%)	16 (61.53%)				20 (76.92%)	5 (19.23%)	1 (3.84%)

WNER: Western native English reader

NGAR: Non-Ghanaian African reader

	Do you understand the italicised words?			Can you guess their meaning from the context?			bodua	tro-tro	aplankey	Would a glossary/explanation help you to understand the passages?		
	YES	NO	NOT SURE	YES	NO	NOT SURE				YES	NO	NOT SURE
GR 1	*				*		whisk – tail of a horse	short-distance intra-city mini-buses	driver's mate who collects the money from the passengers	N/A	N/A	N/A
GR 2		*			*			passenger-lorry that people pay for travelling			*	
GR 3	*				*						*	
GR 4	*				*		a kind of staff	big bus or lorry that takes a lot of passengers	driver-mates		*	
GR 5	*				*						*	
GR 6	*				*						*	
GR 7					*		short stick	short distance running vehicles	mate		*	
GR 8					*						*	
GR 9	*				*		a kind of juju or charm	any vehicle used for intra-city transport	a driver's mate		*	

	Do you understand the italicised words?			Can you guess their meaning from the context?			bodua	tro-tro	aplankey	Would a glossary/explanation help you to understand the passages?			
	YES	NO	NOT SURE	YES	NO	NOT SURE				YES	NO	NOT SURE	
GR 10	*			*			whisk	bus	driver's mate		*		*
GR 11	*					*		a van for transport	driver's help	*			
GR 12	*			*									
GR 13	*					*				*			*
GR 14		*			*						*		
GR 15	*			*			rod	vehicle	mates		*		
GR 16	*			*							*		
GR 17	*			*							*		*
GR 18	*			*			a tail of an animal believed to contain powers	a passenger car	the driver's assistants (what we normally refer to as 'mate')	*			
GR 19	*			*				public bus	the conductors who collect money on the bus				*
Total/	15 (78.94%)	3 (15.78%)	1 (5.26%)	11 (57.89%)	5 (26.31%)	3 (15.78%)				7 (36.84%)	9 (47.36%)	2 (10.52%)	

GR: Ghanaian reader

4Db Questionnaire item IV (iii): No authorial assistance offered

	Can explain fathers			Explanation consistent with culture-bound meaning		Can explain agbada		Explanation consistent with culture-bound meaning	
	YES	NO	NOT SURE	YES	NO	YES	NO	YES	NO
WINNER 1	*				*	*		*	
WINNER 2	*				*	*		*	*
WINNER 3			*		*	*		*	
WINNER 4			*		*	*		*	
WINNER 5			*	*	*	*		*	*
WINNER 6			*		*	*		*	*
WINNER 7			*		*	*		*	*
WINNER 8	*				*	*		*	*
WINNER 9	*			*	*	*		*	*
WINNER 10	*				*	*		*	*
WINNER 11		*			*	*		*	*
WINNER 12		*			*	*		*	*
WINNER 13		*			*	*		*	*
WINNER 14		*			*	*		*	*
Sub-total	5 (35.71%)	4 (28.57%)	5 (35.71%)	2 (14.28%)	8 (57.14%)	13 (92.85%)	1 (7.14%)	5 (35.71%)	8 (57.14%)
WINNER 1			*		*	*		*	*
WINNER 2			*		*	*		*	*
WINNER 3			*	*	*	*		*	*
WINNER 4			*	*	*	*		*	*
WINNER 5		*			*	*		*	*
Sub-total	5 (26.31%)	1 (20%)	4 (80%)	2 (40%)	1 (20%)	5 (100%)	1 (5.26%)	2 (40%)	3 (60%)
Total	5 (26.31%)	5 (26.31%)	9 (47.36%)	4 (21.05%)	9 (47.36%)	18 (94.73%)	1 (5.26%)	7 (36.84%)	11 (57.89%)

	Can explain <i>fathers</i>			Explanation consistent with culture-bound meaning		Can explain <i>agbada</i>		Explanation consistent with culture-bound meaning	
	YES	NO	NOT SURE	YES	NO	YES	NO	YES	NO
NGAR 1		*			*		*		
NGAR 2	*			*		*		*	
NGAR 3			*	*		*		*	
NGAR 4	*			*		*		*	
NGAR 5			*			*		*	*
NGAR 6	*				*	*		*	
NGAR 7	*			*		*		*	
<i>Sub-total</i>	4 (57.14%)	1 (14.28%)	2 (28.57%)	4 (57.14%)	1 (14.28%)	6 (85.71%)	1 (14.28%)	5 (71.42%)	1 (14.28%)
Overall	9 (34.61%)	6 (23.07%)	11 (42.30%)	8 (30.76%)	10 (38.46%)	24 (92.30%)	2 (7.69%)	12 (46.15%)	12 (46.15%)

WNER: Western non-native English reader
WNER: Western native English reader
NGAR: Non-Ghanaian African reader

	Can explain fathers			Explanation consistent with culture-bound meaning		Can explain <i>agbada</i>		Explanation consistent with culture-bound meaning	
	YES	NO	NOT SURE	YES	NO	YES	NO	YES	NO
GR 1	*			*		*		*	
GR 2	*			*		*	*	*	
GR 3	*			*		*		*	
GR 4	*			*		*		*	
GR 5	*			*		*		*	
GR 6	*			*		*		*	
GR 7	*			*		*		*	
GR 8	*			*		*		*	*
GR 9	*			*		*		*	
GR 10	*			*		*		*	
GR 11	*			*		*		*	
GR 12	*			*		*		*	
GR 13	*			*		*		*	
GR 14		*					*		
GR 15	*				*	*		*	
GR 16	*			*		*		*	*
GR 17	*			*		*		*	
GR 18	*				*	*		*	*
GR 19	*			*		*		*	
Total	18 (94.73%)	1 (5.26%)		16 (84.21%)	2 (10.52%)	17 (89.47%)	2 (10.52)	14 (73.68%)	3 (15.78%)

GR: Ghanaian reader

4Dc Questionnaire item IV (iv): No authorial assistance offered

"as a rival would look at her husband's favourite"

	No ideal/ Not sure	Some idea	Close to culture-bound meaning	Understands culture-bound meaning	Interpretation not consistent with culture-bound meaning	Understood meaning immediately	Had to work out meaning	No response
WINNER 1				*		*		*
WINNER 2					*			
WINNER 3					*			*
WINNER 4					*			*
WINNER 5				*		*		
WINNER 6	*							*
WINNER 7					*			
WINNER 8				*				*
WINNER 9				*		*		
WINNER 10					*	*		
WINNER 11				*		*		
WINNER 12					*	*		*
WINNER 13				*				
WINNER 14				*		*		
Sub-total I	1 (7.14%)			7 (50%)	6 (42.85%)	8 (57.14)		6 (42.85%)
WNER 1				*		*		
WNER 2				*		*		
WNER 3				*		*		
WNER 4			*			*		
WNER 5				*		*		
Sub-total II	1 (5.26%)	1 (20%)	1 (5.26%)	4 (80%)	6 (31.57%)	5 (100%)		6 (31.57%)
Total				11 (57.89%)	6 (31.57%)	13 (68.42%)		6 (31.57%)

	No idea/ Not sure	Some idea	Close to culture-bound meaning	Understands culture-bound meaning	Interpretation not consistent with culture-bound meaning	Understood meaning immediately	Had to work out meaning	No response
NGAR 1			*					*
NGAR 2				*				*
NGAR 3				*		*		
NGAR 4				*		*		
NGAR 5				*			*	
NGAR 6				*			*	
NGAR 7				*		*		
Sub-total III	1 (3.84%)		1 (14.28%)	6 (85.71%)		3 (42.85%)	2 (28.57%)	2 (28.57%)
Overall			2 (7.69%)	17 (65.38%)	6 (23.07%)	16 (61.53%)	2 (7.69%)	8 (30.76%)

WNNER: Western non-native English reader

WNER: Western native English reader

NGAR: Non-Ghanaian African reader

	No idea/ Not sure	Some idea	Close to culture-bound meaning	Understands culture-bound meaning	Interpretation not consistent with culture-bound meaning	Understood meaning immediately	Had to work out meaning	No response
GR 1				*				*
GR 2				*		*		
GR 3	*							*
GR 4	*							*
GR 5				*				*
GR 6				*		*		*
GR 7					*		*	
GR 8				*				*
GR 9				*		*		
GR 10				*				*
GR 11		*						*
GR 12				*		*		
GR 13				*		*		
GR 14				*				*
GR 15	*					*		*
GR 16				*				*
GR 17					*			*
GR 18	*					*		*
GR 19				*				*
Total	4 (21.05%)	1 (5.26%)		12 (63.15%)	2 (10.52%)	7 (36.84%)	1 (5.25%)	11 (57.89%)

GR: Ghanaian reader

4Ea Questionnaire item V (i): *Contextualisation*

"Kweku Nyamekye"

	No idea/ Not sure	Some idea	Close to culture- bound meaning	Understands culture-bound meaning	Interpretation not consistent with culture- bound meaning
WNNER 1			*		
WNNER 2			*		
WNNER 3	*				
WNNER 4		*			
WNNER 5					*
WNNER 6					*
WNNER 7		*			
WNNER 8					*
WNNER 9					*
WNNER 10					*
WNNER 11					*
WNNER 12					*
WNNER 13			*		
WNNER 14	*				
<i>Sub-total I</i>	2 (14.28%)	2 (14.28%)	3 (21.42%)		7 (50%)
WNER 1			*		
WNER 2			*		
WNER 3			*		
WNER 4			*		
WNER 5	*				
<i>Sub-total II</i>	1 (20%)		4 (80%)		
Total	3 (15.78%)	2 (10.52%)	7 (36.84%)		7 (36.84%)
NGAR 1					*
NGAR 2	*				
NGAR 3					*
NGAR 4					*
NGAR 5	*				
NGAR 6					*
NGAR 7			*		
<i>Sub-total III</i>	2 (28.57%)		1 (14.28%)		4 (57.14%)
Overall	5 (19.23%)	2 (7.69%)	8 (30.76%)		11 (42.30%)

WNNER: Western non-native English reader

WNER: Western native English reader

NGAR: Non-Ghanaian African reader

	No idea/ Not sure	Some idea	Close to culture- bound meaning	Understands culture- bound meaning	Interpretation not consistent with culture- bound meaning
GR 1				*	
GR 2				*	
GR 3	*				
GR 4				*	
GR 5				*	
GR 6				*	
GR 7				*	
GR 8					*
GR 9				*	
GR 10				*	
GR 11				*	
GR 12				*	
GR 13		*			
GR 14	*				
GR 15				*	
GR 16				*	
GR 17				*	
GR 18				*	
GR 19				*	
Total	2 (10.52%)	1 (5.26%)		15 (78.94%)	1 (5.26%)

GR: Ghanaian reader

INTERPRETATION NOT CONSISTENT WITH CULTURE-BOUND MEANING

(Contextualisation)

"Kweku Nyamekye"

Western Non-Native English Readers

- WNNER 5 'the name of the child who is not dead'
WNNER 6 'The African counterpart of Jesus Christ?'
WNNER 8 'The name of the child as a night name. I think it means the child still is in that period when he risks to return with the spirits of the ancestors. It's a belief used to explain infant mortality.'
WNNER 9 'the name of the child?'
WNNER 10 'a miracle'
WNNER 11 'child who did not die'
WNNER 12 'someone's name'

Non-Ghanaian African Readers

- NGAR 1 'the unexpected'
NGAR 3 'name of someone, a man'
NGAR 4 'the child's name'
NGAR 6 'means an obanje or reincarnated son.'

Ghanaian Readers

- GR 8 'Kweku Nyamekye is the name of a person'

4Eb Questionnaire item V (ii): *Contextualisation*

"kola"

	No idea/ Not sure	Some idea	Close to culture- bound meaning	Understands culture-bound meaning	Interpretation not consistent with culture- bound meaning
WNNER 1		*			
WNNER 2	*				
WNNER 3			*		
WNNER 4			*		
WNNER 5		*			
WNNER 6				*	
WNNER 7					*
WNNER 8			*		
WNNER 9	*				
WNNER 10					*
WNNER 11					*
WNNER 12				*	
WNNER 13	*				
WNNER 14		*			
<i>Sub-total I</i>	3 (21.42%)	3 (21.42%)	3 (21.42%)	2 (14.28%)	3 (21.42%)
WNER 1					*
WNER 2		*			
WNER 3					*
WNER 4					*
WNER 5					*
<i>Sub-total II</i>		1 (20%)			4 (80%)
Total	3 (15.78%)	4 (21.05%)	3 (15.78%)	2 (10.52%)	7 (36.84%)
NGAR 1					*
NGAR 2		*			
NGAR 3		*			
NGAR 4				*	
NGAR 5		*			
NGAR 6				*	
NGAR 7			*		
<i>Sub-total III</i>		3 (42.85%)	1 (14.28%)	2 (28.57%)	1 (14.28%)
Overall	3 (11.53%)	7 (26.92%)	4 (15.38%)	4 (15.38%)	8 (30.76%)

WNNER: Western non-native English reader

WNER: Western native English reader

NGAR: Non-Ghanaian African reader

	No idea/ Not sure	Some idea	Close to culture- bound meaning	Understands culture- bound meaning	Interpretation not consistent with culture- bound meaning
GR 1				*	
GR 2				*	
GR 3				*	
GR 4				*	
GR 5			*		
GR 6			*		
GR 7			*		
GR 8				*	
GR 9				*	
GR 10				*	
GR 11		*			
GR 12				*	
GR 13			*		
GR 14		*			
GR 15				*	
GR 16			*		
GR 17				*	
GR 18				*	
GR 19		*			
Total		3 (15.78%)	5 (26.31%)	11 (57.89%)	

GR: Ghanaian reader

INTERPRETATION NOT CONSISTENT WITH CULTURE-BOUND MEANING

(Contextualisation)

"kola"

Western Non-Native English Readers

WNNER 7 'a poor old man'

WNNER 10 'Even the poor have their quarter license. Everybody has his quarter license.'

WNNER 11 'If you don't pay now it could be more serious. The driver might be forced to pay more afterwards.'

Western Native English Readers

WNER 1 'a kind of bean which costs 25 pesewas?'

WNER 3 'Even something small can/will give satisfaction.'

WNER 4 'Even a small thing can improve the situation.'

WNER 5 'A common, inexpensive and mildly addictive drug.'

Non-Ghanaian African Readers

NGAR 1 'Every little bit counts.'

4Ec Questionnaire item V (iii): *Contextualisation*

"*Passion Week*"

	No idea/ Not sure	Some idea	Close to culture- bound meaning	Understands culture- bound meaning	Meaning not consistent with culture- bound meaning
WNNER 1					*
WNNER 2					*
WNNER 3				*	
WNNER 4					*
WNNER 5					*
WNNER 6	*				
WNNER 7	*				
WNNER 8					*
WNNER 9					*
WNNER 10					*
WNNER 11					*
WNNER 12				*	
WNNER 13					*
WNNER 14					*
<i>Sub-total I</i>	2 (14.28%)			2 (14.28%)	10 (71.42%)
WNER 1				*	
WNER 2				*	
WNER 3					*
WNER 4					*
WNER 5					*
<i>Sub-total II</i>				2	3
Total	2 (10.52%)			4 (21.05%)	13 (68.42%)
NGAR 1				*	
NGAR 2				*	
NGAR 3					*
NGAR 4	*				
NGAR 5			*		
NGAR 6					*
NGAR 7					*
<i>Sub-total III</i>	1 (14.28%)		1 (14.28%)	2 (28.57%)	3 (42.85%)
Overall	3 (11.53%)		1 (3.84%)	6 (23.07%)	16 (61.53%)

WNNER: Western non-native English reader

WNER: Western native English reader

NGAR: Non-Ghanaian African reader

	No idea/ Not sure	Some idea	Close to culture- bound meaning	Understands culture- bound meaning	Interpretation not consistent with culture- bound meaning
GR 1				*	
GR 2				*	
GR 3				*	
GR 4			*		
GR 5				*	
GR 6				*	
GR 7				*	
GR 8			*		
GR 9				*	
GR 10				*	
GR 11				*	
GR 12				*	
GR 13				*	
GR 14	*				
GR 15				*	
GR 16				*	
GR 17				*	
GR 18				*	
GR 19	*				
Total	2 (10.52%)		2 (10.52%)	15 (78.94%)	

GR: Ghanaian reader

INTERPRETATION NOT CONSISTENT WITH CULTURE-BOUND MEANING

(Contextualisation)

"Passion Week"

Western Non-native English Readers

- WNNER 1 "Easter."
- WNNER 2 "This is the commemoration of the week Christus was going to die nearly 2000 years ago."
- WNNER 4 "Reference to Easter, to the sacrifice of Christ and also perhaps metaphorically to people's poverty."
- WNNER 5 "A festive week when people spend their money fast."
- WNNER 8 "A week in which people should be generous with one another."
- WNNER 9 "A street, an area."
- WNNER 10 "Week before Easter – when people share everything they have."
- WNNER 11 "A week in the year, like Christmas, when people are generous. Before Easter."
- WNNER 13 "I have no idea, but if it is a Christian country, it may have something to do with the Passions of Christ."
- WNER 14 "It reminds me of the week before Easter (Christ's Passions) but maybe that's ... Greek (or Christian) transfer!"

Western Native English Readers

- WNER 3 "The week leading up to Good Friday and Easter."
- WNER 4 "Easter week?."
- WNER 5 "A (Christian) festival where the poor are expected to contribute money."

Non-Ghanaian African Readers

- NGAR 3 "Thanksgiving week, but I am not sure."
- NGAR 6 "Refers to pay day, the time of the month when workers and passengers have money."
- NGAR 7 "week following the pay-day/week"