MULTILINGUALISM

INTRODUCTION:
-- Multilingualism is the term used to refer to a speech community which makes use of two or more languages.
-- Many, perhaps most, of the countries of the world are decidedly multilingual.
-- Multilingualism cuts across the whole social fabric in Africa and Ghana.
-- It forms a socio-political and socio-linguistic characteristic of most speech communities in Africa and in Ghana.
-- Understanding what multilingualism means to a society is at the core of the sociolinguistics of society.

WHO IS A MULTILINGUAL?
-- A multilingual refers to a person who has the ability to speak two or more languages with an appreciable degree of proficiency. Some scholars prefer to use the term bilingual for an individual who has the ability to speak two languages, and reserve the term multilingual for those who speak more than two languages.

TYPES OF MULTILINGUALISM
There are two types of multilingualism: individual multilingualism and societal multilingualism.
-- Individual multilingualism: -- Individuals based on their unique social circumstances “find the need or opportunity to learn an additional language.” Such opportunities may show up in the course of the individual’s geographical and/or social mobility, or through marriage, or through some other exposure to another language” (Amuzu 2009: 82).
-- Individual multilingualism is an almost everyday phenomenon in Africa and in Ghana among adults. Individual multilingualism refers to a situation where a person speaks two or more languages.
-- Societal multilingualism: is a situation where two or more languages are (functionally) used in a society because several people know all or a combination of them. That is, societal multilingualism refers to the situation in which a community uses two or more languages. The definitions of individual and societal multilingualism subsume bilingualism, which involves the use of just two languages.
-- The question is: What are the causes of individual and societal multilingualism in Ghana? My notes on Genetic classification of languages indigenous to Ghana provides several examples on individual and societal multilingualism in Ghana, and the reasons.

HOW MULTILINGUAL NATIONS DEVELOP:
-- Historically, there are four distinguishable strands which have produced multilingual states:
(1) migration [e.g. territorial expansion and immigrants];
(2) imperialism [colonization, annexation—absorption of a nation into another, economic imperialism – exportation of lg. through trade];
(3) federation – diverse ethnic groups or nationalities under the political control of one state; and,
(4) border area multilingualism.
-- A given state may have become multilingual due to the effects of more than one of these strands, and it is not always easy to decide which one applies in a particular case.

LANGUAGES THAT SPEAKERS NORMALLY ADD TO THEIR LANGUAGES:
Linguae francae; National languages; Official languages; Other special purpose languages

Linguae francae
-- Multilingualism is linked to the rise, and spread of linguae francae. For inter-group communication, other languages need to be learned and used. Such languages which are habitually used by many non-native speakers for inter-group communication are referred to as linguae francae or ‘vehicular’ languages.
-- A lingua franca is a language of wider communication (LWC). As the definition suggests, it is “used to facilitate communication among speakers of different languages” (Brown and Attardo 2005: 122) – that is, the dominant language used in inter-group encounters in most domains, such as in the market, at public places, in the mass media.

1 That is, there are individuals or groups of people who use two or more languages regularly and who often apply the languages they use for different purposes or switch between them in very systematic ways.
2 Formal education tends to add competence in another language since in many if not most African schools the medium of instruction is not the children’s mother tongue or preferred language.
Such vehicular languages, unless they are *pidgins*, have also their own native speakers who may constitute a majority population or are ‘rulers’ in a given area or have otherwise higher socioeconomic prestige, factors which may have contributed to the fact that their language was chosen by others to serve as a *lingua franca*.

Consequences of the spread of *linguae francae*: The spread of *linguae francae* in Africa can result in increasing instances of language shift, usually after periods of bilingualism involving the mother tongue language and the *lingua franca*.

Large-scale language shift within a speech community may then result in language death of the mother tongue. *Linguae francae* are, therefore, at times accused of *glottophagia*.

Likewise, language planners who propagate the further spread of a *lingua franca* through the educational system, for instance, may find themselves accused of assisting *linguicide* and thereby depriving a speech community of its primordial means of identification.

### National languages

The term *national language* may be used to refer to some or all languages of the state in order to stress their function for national unity and identity. That is, in multilingual countries, the government often declares a particular language to be national language for political reasons. The declaration may be a step in the process of asserting the nationhood of a newly independent or established nation, for instance, as in the case of Swahili in Tanzania, Hebrew in Israel, Malay in Malaysia, and Indonesian in Indonesia. A declaration of a language as the national language of a country is an acknowledgment of the language’s symbolic importance to the country as a whole, as well as to the indigenous speakers of that language.  

### Official languages

An official language is simply a language which may be used for government business. (That is, it is “the language reserved for all official functions in a country. It is used for government business, higher education, court proceedings, and commerce. It is usually the case that social mobility is conditioned by acquisition of the official language. Non-native speakers therefore have strong motivation to learn this language. … in Africa, foreign (ex-colonial) languages have functioned as the officials” (Amuzu 2009: 85).)

### Other special purpose languages

Speakers may be encouraged to learn an additional language for some special purposes. An example is Arabic in the non-Arabic-speaking Islamic world.

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3 [It is the language of a political, cultural and social unit — an indigenous language which has been “promoted by the government to be used as the language of culture and heritage by all citizens irrespective of ethnic group” (Amuzu 2009: 85). That is, it is generally developed and used as a symbol of national unity. Its functions are to identify the nation and unite the people of the nation. It is usually the language that had served as the *lingua franca* of the anti-colonial political movement for independence — this guarantees a language its prestige and the positive attitudes that people show towards it. -- A successful national language needs to serve a variety of functions. The following have been identified as important. (i) Unifying, (ii) Separatist, (iii) Prestige, (iv) Frame-of-reference function]
INTRODUCTION:
-- Ghana is a multilingual nation by which we mean that the people of Ghana speak many different languages. Because of the multiplicity of languages, many individuals in Ghana are thrown into contact with speakers of other languages and so pick up languages other than their mother tongue.
-- My notes on “genetic relationship of languages indigenous to Ghana” helps to paint a good picture of the multiplicity of languages in Ghana, and the fact that most Ghanaian’s are highly bilingual or multilingual.
-- The complex language situation, with so many languages in contact, promotes the use of several languages by the same individuals. There are some monoglots, speakers of just one language. But many a Ghanaian is readily bilingual in two of our vernaculars.4 The fluent mastery and use of two languages, bilingualism, can occur by accident of birth, where the two parents speak different languages, or through a long sojourn in another linguistic area, or marriage, etc.
-- It is generally said that there are some fifty languages spoken by the indigenous population. The exact number of languages is not easy to determine because of the difficulty sometimes of deciding whether a speech variety is a language in its own right or simply a dialect5 of another language with which it is to some extent mutually intelligible. The number of languages in Ghana is put as high as 60 by some scholars, or as low as 37. The University of Ghana Language Center's Language Map lists 44. For our purpose, we will pitch the number of languages indigenous to Ghana at 44.
-- There are nine government-sponsored languages in Ghana: Akan, Ga, Dangme, Nzema, Dagbani, Dagaare, Gonja and Kasem. The Bureau of Ghana Languages (BGL) cites eleven Government-sponsored languages, namely: Akuapem Twi, Asante Twi, Ewe, Mfantse, Ga, Dangme and Nzema (with their Headquarters in Accra) and Dagbani, Dagaare, Gonja and Kasem (with their headquarters in Tamale).
-- The Bureau of Ghana Languages (BGL) describes itself as “the focal point for the development, promotion, orthographic control and learning of Ghanaian languages and other cultural aspects. It also influences Government Policies on Ghanaian languages through the co-ordination of all agencies involved in promoting Ghanaian languages” (http://www.ghanaculture.gov.gh)

LANGUAGE CONTACT AND CODES Switching:
-- Bilinguals in conversation sometimes go from one language to the other, for various reasons, and this phenomenon is called codeswitching.6 Reasons for codeswitching are: (i) one of the speaker’s language may be more suitable for certain topics than others (e.g. domestic affairs); (ii) when one wants to quote a wise saying or the words of another person; (iii) it may be used to signal solidarity between speakers – i.e. when speakers share certain social relations; (iv) to explain a point.

LANGUAGE CONTACT AND DIGLOSSIA/TRIGLOSSIA:
-- It is not uncommon in Ghana to meet individuals who a bilingual or trilingual using the different languages as appropriate socially and functionally. In other words, there is functional compartmentalization of some of our languages such that some of our language situations can be described as diglossic or triglossic.

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4 Vernacular: is the non-official variety (i.e. dialect or language) in a particular context. It is usually the low status variety used to express solidarity or identity in informal contexts.

5 A dialect: is a language variety in which the use of grammar and vocabulary identifies the regional and social background of the user.
Types of lect: (a) Idiolect: is the speech mannerisms of the individual language user. (b) Social dialect (or sociolect): conveys information about the speaker’s class, social status, educational background, occupation, etc. (c) Regional dialect (or regiolect/topolect): conveys information about the speaker’s geographical origin.

6 Codeswitching: is the alternation of linguistic varieties (i.e. either alternation of dialects of the same language, or different languages) in the same conversation. Types: (a) Intersentential codeswitching: involves alternation between varieties between sentences. (b) Intrasentential codeswitching (or codemixing): involves switches from one variety to the other within the same sentence.
Diglossia: is the reservation of highly valued segments of a community’s linguistic repertoire for situations perceived as more formal or guarded; and the reservation of less highly valued segments or any degree of linguistic relatedness to the higher valued segments for situations perceived as more informal and intimate. [[That is, diglossia inevitably involves functional stratification of high and low in society.]]

LANGUAGE CONTACT – MAJORITY AND MINORITY LANGUAGES:
-- As already pointed out in my notes on genetic classification of languages in Ghana, languages indigenous to Ghana may be grouped on the basis of number of speakers into majority and minority languages. A majority language is one which has a much higher number of speakers than neighboring languages have, for example Akan. Features of majority language: -- often their speakers are socio-politically and sometimes economically more powerful than speakers of minority languages and so make such languages ready candidates for inter-group communication. In other words, majority languages readily function as dominant languages or linguae francae in situations of horizontal/geographical language barriers. Through migration a majority language in one locality may become a minority language in another locality (Garenne (Frafra) – is a dominant language in Bolga in the Upper East but a minority language in Accra. A minority language can also function as a dominant language, example, English in Ghana.

LANGUAGE CONTACT – LANGUAGE SHIFT AND DEATH:
-- When ethnic groups come to live together in a community, they bring with them their languages. As a result, the languages are said to come into contact with one another. Language contact leads to Language shift (i.e. this is when subsequent generations of speakers of minority languages begin to move away from the use of their own native language to the use of the majority language. Language shift is defined as

“`The replacement of one language by another as the primary means of communication and socialization within a community. (Mesthrie et al. 2000).`

-- Factors the promote language shift are: when the community does not see its language as offering any advantages to their children – they learn the new language to be able to get a job – i.e. when knowledge of the new language is prerequisite for success.

LANGUAGE CONTACT – BORROWING:
-- Borrowing is defined as the incorporation of an item from one language into another. Agbedor (2006) has the following to say about borrowing. His work focuses on borrowings into the Ewe language>
-- When a language is faced with new concepts and objects which need to be named, it can either rely on its own resources (i.e. its own linguistic material) to create the new words, or it resorts to borrowing.
-- The degree of borrowing may differ depending on the amount and duration of contact between the languages involved.
-- Hock (1986) distinguishes two main types of borrowing: a) dialect borrowing (borrowing from dialects of the same language), and b) foreign borrowing.
-- linguistic differences between dialects of the same language are relatively minor, and this makes detecting of borrowings very difficult (Hock 1986).
-- a number of factors may influence the use of loan words, namely: age, degree of acculturation and attitude: The educated and young folk are most susceptible to borrowing especially for prestige purposes or because of lack of full knowledge of their own languages
-- It is usually elderly people who protest against the use of loan words, especially where native equivalents exist.
-- Reasons for borrowing: (i) to fill lexical gap; (ii) economy of effort – i.e. to reduce the time and effort required to say the same thing.

LANGUAGE CONTACT – PIDGINIZATION (PIDGIN ENGLISH IN GHANA)
-- Language contact leads to the creation of a completely new language, Pidgin.
-- What is pidgin?: It is a variety resulting from multilingual (usually trilingual) contact; it has no native speakers. It derives from the need to communicate across languages in a situation of asymmetrical power relationships.
-- Pidgin: It is no-one's native language (or has no native speakers).
-- Emergence (Why do pidgins develop?) It develops as a means of communication between people who do not have a common language in a situation where there is also a third dominant language.
-- Function: It has a narrow range of functions (in a very restricted set of domains), because those who use them have other language -- pidgin is an addition to their linguistic repertoire used for a specific purpose, such as trade or perhaps administration; i.e. it has referential function, rather than to signal social distinctions or express politeness. Nobody uses a pidgin as a means of group identification, or to express social distance.

-- Structure: Consequently the structure of a pidgin is generally no more complicated than it needs to be to express these functions -- pidgins a simplified structure and a small vocabulary compared with fully developed languages. [[when one group speaks a prestigious world language and the other a local vernacular, the prestige language tends to supply more of the vocabulary, while vernacular languages have more influence on the grammar of the developing pidgin; Pidgins are based on one of seven European languages: English (35), French (15), Portuguese (14), Spanish (7), German (6), Dutch (5), and Italian (3)]]

-- Stereotype: Some people consider pidgins to be a debased form of a European or the lexifier language. ???Pidgin languages do not have high status or prestige and, to those who do not speak them, they often seem ridiculous languages.

-- Obeng (2004) – In his West African Languages in contact with European languages – traces the evolution of pidgin English in Ghana. He establishes that the Dutch, Germans, the English and the French were the major colonial powers that stayed long enough on the West African coast to have a major significant impact on the linguistic landscape of the sub-region. Pidgin English developed through trade by the indigenous people with the British.

-- Below is data on Ghanaian pidgin English according to Obeng 2004.

**A.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Simplification (deletion, insertion-to avoid final C)</th>
<th>ENG</th>
<th>PID</th>
<th>ENG</th>
<th>PID</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 captain kapiti</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>self sef</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>2 story toli</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>my ma</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>3 strong trol</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>down don</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>4 stand tan</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>wife waf</td>
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<tr>
<td>5 want wan</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>now nao</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>6 just jos</td>
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**B.**

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<tr>
<th>PID</th>
<th>ENG</th>
<th>PID</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>7 Ago finish.</td>
<td>“I went.”</td>
<td>16 A (de) wan go.</td>
<td>“I’m about to go.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8 A bi go.</td>
<td>“I went.”</td>
<td>17 A de/di krae</td>
<td>“I am crying”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9 A chop.</td>
<td>“I ate.”</td>
<td>18 A de/di chop</td>
<td>“I am eating.”</td>
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**C.**

<table>
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<tr>
<th>PID</th>
<th>ENG</th>
<th>PID</th>
<th>ENG</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 i (don) taya.</td>
<td>She is tired</td>
<td>8 i go krae</td>
<td>He’ll cry</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>i bit m.</td>
<td>He beats me</td>
<td>9 i de wan krae.</td>
<td>He’s about to cry</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 i bit yu(sef)</td>
<td>He beats you</td>
<td>10 i de/di krae ~ I de/di krae naunau</td>
<td>He is crying</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 i bit am/I</td>
<td>He beats him</td>
<td>11 i bi de/di krae</td>
<td>He was crying</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 i bit wi</td>
<td>He beats us</td>
<td>12 i no go (yet/since); I no N don go</td>
<td>He has not gone</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 i beat yu/wuna</td>
<td>He beats you (p1)</td>
<td>13 i neva/neba go</td>
<td>He did not go</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 i bit dem/am</td>
<td>He beats them</td>
<td>14 i no go go</td>
<td>He will not go</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 i taya /i don taya.</td>
<td>She is tired</td>
<td>15 i krae</td>
<td>He cries</td>
</tr>
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D.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PID</th>
<th>ENG</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Dem (don) taya They are tired</td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Dem chop. They ate</td>
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<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Dem chop They eat</td>
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<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Dem go chop They will eat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Dem de wan krae. They are about to cry</td>
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<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Dem de wan chop. They are about to eat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Dem de/di krae. They are crying</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Dem de/di chop. They are eating</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Dem hi de/di krae. They were crying</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Dem hi de/di chop. They were eating</td>
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<table>
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<tr>
<th>PID</th>
<th>ENG</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>A de wan krae. I’m about to cry</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>I de wan krae. He’s about to cry</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>A de wan go. I’m about to go’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>A bi de/di krae I was crying</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>I bi de/di krae He was crying</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>A bi de/di chop I was eating</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>Dem bi de/di krae They were crying</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>Dem bi de/di chop They were eating</td>
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OTHER LANGUAGES IN GHANA
(Based on Dzameshie LING 224, and Dakubu 2004):

-- There are a number of languages that are used in Ghana, but which are not indigenous to Ghana. Some of these are spoken by large numbers of people, and they help people of different language communities to communicate with each other and with the larger world beyond Ghana’s borders. Non-Ghanaian languages used in Ghana can roughly be classified by their geographical origin: European and African. The use of European languages is usually related to literacy and the requirements of modern life, while non-Ghanaian African languages are used in more traditional situations.

European languages in Ghana: English, French7, Russian, Spanish, Chinese8, Pidgin in Ghana.
African languages – West African languages in Ghana: Fulani, Moore, Jula and Hausa9
African languages as languages of literacy in Ghana: Swahili10, Arabic11

7 French: The presence of French in Ghana is linked to the fact that all the countries that share borders with Ghana are French-speaking. French is studied in some basic schools in Ghana; the Somanya College of Education trains teachers of French; Alliance Francaise is a French organization which offers courses in French language to those interested in learning the language; French is also studied at the University level and at the Ghana Institute of Languages.

8 Russian, Spanish, Chinese are also taught at the University of Ghana, Legon.

9 Hausa is a Chadic language with its original home being Northern Nigeria. It is spoken in sections of big towns and cities called zongo (from Hausa word zango “camping place of a caravan”). Hausa speakers are concentrated in certain parts of Accra, e.g. Sabon Zongo; there are also concentrations of Hausa speakers in Nima, Mamobi and Madina.

10 Swahili, a Bantu language, is the major lingua franca of East Africa, especially in Tanzania, Kenya and Uganda. It is studied in the Modern Languages Department of the University of Ghana.

11 Arabic is spoken in parts if Africa, as well as the Middle East and Saudi Arabia, which is the original home. It is the language of the Islamic religion.
ENGLISH IN GHANA

History of English in Ghana

A brief History on English in Ghana (based on Sackey, J. A. 2004.
The English Language in Ghana: A historical perspective. In Kropp Dakubu (ed.) English in Ghana.

Introduction:
According to Sackey, the story of English in Ghana may be conveniently divided into three parts:

(A) The first deals with the first arrival of the British in Ghana (then the Gold Coast).

(B) The second provides details of acts and policies of colonial administration and missionaries that impacted on the development of the English language.

(C) And the third briefly explores our post-independence experience with the English language.

(A) The first arrival of the British in Ghana:
The first arrival of the British dates back to the 1550s. It was essentially a trade contact. Their purchase of Danish and Dutch possessions in 1850 and 1872 respectively, placed the affairs of the country and its destiny in their hands. One interesting policy of the European traders was to train Africans as interpreters. There was an expedition of 1554 which took away five Negroes from the Gold Coast to learn the English language at London in England. Pidginized versions of the language began to develop. During this trade period the learning of the English language took place in the forst and castles. The earliest known schools were established in the castles of Elimina, Christiansborg, Accra, and Cape Coast. But it was particularly the English school at Cape Coast that survived into colonial times. It officially started during the chaplaincy of Rev. Philip Quaque – his aim was to give his pupils a sound moral education; he was the earliest example, or victim, of linguistics and cultural assimilation. The period of British trade contact with Ghana could be summed up; it brought new languages into contact and helped to introduce new skills which were previously not available to the receiving communities. A number of English words entered the vocabulary of the receiving languages. References may be made to words like krakye, (Akan) “clerk” and plete (Akan, Ga) “plate” which were clearly derived from English, as well as trade names like carpenter, cook, bricklayer, goldsmith, blacksmith, canoeman, etc. Elements of the language of trade – English – that entered the indigenous languages were often orally transmitted and did not necessarily imply literacy in English by the indigenous people who used them.

(B) Impact of colonial and Missionary Language Policy
-- Here, Sackey examines the impact of certain acts and policies of colonial administrators and missionaries on the entrenchment of the English language.
-- From 1750 to 1821, British possessions were administered by merchant companies whose main trade interests were slaves. Afterwards. The British Government became more directly involved in administering the country and extending influence beyond the coastal towns. The impact of some of the various social and administrative institutions that were established by British colonial governments on the spread and influence of the English language was immense. The centrifugal point was at first the castle schools. After Philip Quaque’s death in 1816, a successor, James Henry Short was appointed. Under Short, the castle school at Cape Coast had an enrolment of 75 pupils and a separate school for girls was also established to provide literate female company for British serving officers and administrators (Holman 1840: 201).
-- During the governorship of Sir Charles McCarthy (1822-1824), he made sure that English was more properly taught in government schools and English ways of life were more widely diffused among the local population. Rev. Denny who became school master of the Cape Coast Castle School in 1824, was guardedly optimistic. As he put it,

“I am happy to observe of late a sensible improvement and an increasing taste in evident for imitating European manners. This is chiefly displayed in the articles of dress, in their houses, and in social parties and in attention to moral appearance. Rev. Denny laid great emphasis on the study of the English language “which is otherwise lost and which I order under a penalty to be exclusively spoken in the school”.

-- Throughout the 1950s, English continued to be used as the medium of instruction in government schools and several Wesleyan mission schools. In 1822 and 1887 two educational ordinances were passed, under these ordinances, schools which used the indigenous languages as medium of instruction could not qualify for grants-in-aid. As Lord Derby put it at the Colonial Office in Britain in 1883, “Instruction in the native language may safely be left to the stimulus of self-interest
and government subsidies are not required for its encouragement. The Wesleyan mission supported colonial language policy in education and being an English mission were immensely favored by the colonial governments.

-- Until the 1880s, English was generally not only the medium of instruction in all Wesleyan schools, but also the language of preaching in their churches. In comparing Basel Mission policy of encouraging use of the indigenous languages with the Wesleyan emphasis on English, there were more advantages for Methodist youth in respect of job opportunities in the government sector. The colonial government and also Rev. Thomas Freeman, the Wesleyan Methodist Superintendent, revised their opinion about English medium education with its acceptance of the Phelps-Stokes Report which advocated use of the indigenous language in lower elementary stages of all schools, except in areas of linguistic differentiation where a common language of African origin could not be used.

-- In 1955, the Barnard Committee was charged to investigate the possibilities of adopting English as the medium of instruction throughout the elementary school course. Although the committee thought otherwise, but permitted English medium schools to continue, a major dissenting view was expressed by one of the members, J.T.N. Yankah, who was confident that the indigenous languages had not much to offer since they had no literature worthy of the name. As he put it,

"the spread of education in this country will more and more put English into the position of the second mother tongue, for the new world in which the people find themselves now, English is the only nearest dominant language which can fix the peoples' ideas and make them transmissible. (Yankah 1956: 44).

-- It seems a bit odd that it was an African government preparing itself for independence in 1957 that, in 1955, cast doubts on the use of the indigenous languages as medium of instruction by appointing the Barnard Committee. Apart from political reasons of national unity, the government appeared to have been overwhelmed by its overriding concern with falling standards in English which affected the children's prospects for higher education.

-- English was the language of nationalist movements – it was the languages they used “to condemn colonialism both on the political platform and on paper with all the animus and vehemence they could command” (Boadi 1971: 50). They had to use English to reach the largest possible number of people within the shortest possible time and at the least expense. As the language of formal education, English had, necessarily, to be learned at school. Without it, there could be no full participation in the economic and political life of the urban societies that were emerging.

(C) The postcolonial perspective:
The final part of the story of English in Ghana can now be told, and it relates to the period after independence in 1957. The pre-colonial and colonial periods have seen the implantation of the English language, its growth in terms of numbers of speakers and its institutional uses in administration, law, commerce etc. by those who had formally learned it. The institutional structures making use of English did not cease after independence; instead, they multiplied, as many more people sought the opportunity to read and write English, if not speak it fluently. English today has, somewhat, retained its pre-eminent positions as the language anybody must know if he is seeking a job in the civil and public sectors of the economy. Entry into the universities is still predicated on the pass of English.

(D) Conclusions and more comments on English in Ghana:
-- English became the official language of Ghana because of Ghana’s colonial past – Ghana was colonized by the British, officially from 1844 to 1957, when the country gained independence.

-- In debates on the national language question, three approaches are discernible: status quo, radical12, and gradualist.

12 The radicalist approach replaces the colonialist language with an indigenous language as the official language of the country. Language has symbolic importance to the nation that makes this choice. The use of an indigenous language makes the people feel united; it helps them to identify with each other and contrast with those who do not speak this language. Nationalism is the main drive here, not nationism. The main political movements to have opened a debate in parliament on the national language question are the Convention People’s Party (CPP) in 1961 (when it was decided that Akan, the language the majority favored, was not developed enough to handle high technical and technological language at that stage) and in 1965, which had to wait till 1971 to be raised under the Progress Party (PP) – this was resolved in favor of English which the majority believed was serving a neutral binding force, and that the choice of an indigenous language might raise opposition from speakers of other languages. NLC, NRC/SMC and PNDC kept silence over the national language issue.

The gradualist approach tries to achieve a compromise between the nationalist consideration of having an indigenous language for authenticity and the nationist requirement for a language for running the country in an efficient manner. They do so by promoting both a colonialist and an indigenous language to the official status.
Ghana opted for the status quo approach over the radical and the gradualist approaches. The status quo approach is that which tends in the direction of nationism -- rapid economic development, better education, and technological advance. Any language that can make it possible for the newly independent nation to attain these goals in the shortest possible time is welcome. English was chosen as Ghana’s official language to enhance inter-ethnic co-operation, and to facilitate the country’s access to the international world of science and technology. This choice was also made in a context whereby none of the indigenous languages were well-developed to perform the role of an official language and language of education.

--- Nationism focuses on the more pragmatic problems of governing. Today English is the language for general government administration and education in Ghana for this reason. The process of governing requires communication both within the governing institutions and between government and the people; education requires a medium of instruction (or several) that efficiently transmits knowledge to school children; and most Ghanaians believe that the language that does the job best and at the least cost to choose for these roles is the English, the language of its colonial masters.

-- English is probably the most important European language used in Ghana. It is the official language, and also the language of education. An official language is the language in which the laws of a country are made – it is for government business; i.e. its function is utilitarian rather than symbolic.

-- English serves as a second language to a lot of people in Ghana. That means that many people speak English in addition to their native languages. (The number of people, however, who speak English as a first language (L1) is very small.)

-- The number of people who speak English is expectedly higher in the urban areas than in the rural communities.

-- Some Domains of English Use: the majority of people who speak English in Ghana learned it in school, so knowledge of English is directly linked to formal education.

-- There are also gender difference among people who speak English in Ghana – it is widely believed that more men speak English than women because in some areas in Ghana, due to the traditional division of labor, some parents are more willingly to send their male children to school than girls.

-- Being the official language and the language of education and governance, English is used in several domains. It is used in all government businesses, in schools and the mass media. It is the major language of literacy. It is the language of instruction from class one. It is the main language used in the media. English is also used in most churches in the urban centers because the congregation in most of these churches are multiethnic.

-- In his article, Towards a communicative approach to Teaching English as a second language in Ghana, Dr. Alex K. Dzameshie has this to say about the teaching of English in Ghana – the question he tries to address in this paper is: “What should be the primary goal of teachers who teach English as a second language (ESL) in Ghana? He puts his observations and advice this way:

“…the current approach in [English as a second language] ESL pedagogy in Ghana that generally sees language as grammar rather than as a means of communication is deficient … [he then] advocates a communicative, skill-oriented approach whose ultimate goal and mission should be not merely to equip learners with grammatical competence but more crucially, with adequate communicative competence in this language. This will enable ESL learners to communicate in socioculturally appropriate ways in English with both native and non-native users of English.”