

ENGLISH EXPRESSIONS IN GHANA'S PARLIAMENT

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ABSTRACT: *This paper takes a look at the English language spoken on the floor of parliament by Ghanaian parliamentarians. It attempts to ascertain the English features of Ghanaian parliamentarians and whether the identified features can be described as Ghanaian English. The study was guided by the syntactic features given as typical of WAVE (Bokamba, 1991) and the grammatical description of African Englishes (Schmied, 1991) and a careful reading of the Hansard which is the daily official report of parliamentary proceeding. It is revealed that the English spoken by Ghanaian parliamentarians has identifiable Ghanaian features that can support the claim that their English is typically Ghanaian.*

KEYWORDS: Ghanaian English, Expression, Language, Parliament, Hansard

INTRODUCTION

From the discussions over the last two decades, English is now the world's language. It plays very useful roles in the lives of people and nations across the world. Studies have shown that English is the most commonly spoken and taught foreign language in the world today. In every country in the world recently, English is at least used by some people among the population for some purposes. It is interesting to note that English is a very important language in Francophone West Africa such as Togo (Awuku, 2015); it plays a major role in the Middle East such as Kuwait (Dashti, 2015); and some companies in Japan have adopted English as an in-house lingua franca (Inagawa, 2015). In these countries, English is neither a national language nor a second language yet the position the language occupies in their education, business and media cannot be overemphasised.

English is the irresistible driving force behind recent scientific, industrial and technological revolution of the design and operation of information systems, computer and electronics industries (Alatis & Straehle, 1997: 2). They go on to say that English has a lot of varieties and it is indeed a global language. It is a language that cannot be claimed by any specific tradition, country or group of people as solely tied to them. One can therefore say that English is no longer the sole property of the English people since so many people across the world use it. Questions have been put forward about the ownership of English and even remarks that the users of the language are the owners of the language have been made (Kachru, 1996 cited in Alatis & Straehle, 1997:7). It has now become a tool for communication worldwide and has even acquired localized forms which are sometimes referred to as New Englishes.

English in the former colonies face identifiable diminution (Simo-Bobda, 1997:91). He cites Mauritius as an example where the number of users of English (and French) has decreased between 1972 and 1983. One can argue here that this assertion cannot be said to be true of Ghana. This is because in Ghana, despite the emotional attachment people have for their indigenous languages and the education and advocacy for the need to use the local languages, the number of people who use English has rather increased over the years (Huber, 2008).

Some scholars tend to criticize the dominance of the English language as a world language. There is an objection of English as the international language. There is the opinion that the global super-imposition of English on all other languages is a disadvantage to the non-English-speaking people. This creates inequality, inconvenience and discrimination against the non-English-speaking nations and may lead to such problems as “cultural domination and the colonization of the mind” (Tsuda, 1997: 23).

In Ghana today, English has gained so much prestige that it is looked upon as a symbol of modernization. Some parents even insist on the use of English at home such that their children are acquiring English as their first language. These parents believe that fluency in the English language will give their children economic, social and academic opportunities (Gyasi, 1990:53; 1991:31). English has also gained so much economic influence that it can be said to be spreading fast at the expense of the indigenous languages. In some churches in Ghana, English is used alongside the local languages for preaching, announcements and other social activities.

Some have argued against the distinctiveness of a Ghanaian English as a variety (Ahulu, 1994:29 & Gyasi, 1991: 27). However, it is known that there are some research works and published articles which from a sociolinguistic point of view, give recognition to the English used in Ghana and refer to it as Ghanaian English (Ofori et al., 2014).

Typical African features in pronunciation are now generally accepted whilst deviations in syntax are not often tolerated (Schmied, 1991:173). He also believes that it would be regarded absurd for an African to imitate an Englishman’s accent. He uses “... his attempts to adopt an air of importance were not just ridiculous but actually irritating in the special way in which the efforts of a Ghanaian struggling to talk like some special Englishman are irritating” (Armah,1968:28 cited in Schmied, 1991:173) to support his point.

It is argued that despite the positive attitude of Ghanaians and Africans in general towards the English language, there is evidence of some Ghanaians accepting a Ghanaian accent (Adjaye, 2005: 289). This notwithstanding, much as Ghanaians will do anything to achieve the native like competence of English, they, on the other hand, criticize and raise their eyebrows at people who will go to great lengths to come very close to the Received Pronunciation. Some people even sometimes make fun of such people (Dako, 2001:108; Huber, 2008:90).

One of the many institutions where English plays a significant role is the Parliament of Ghana. Ghana’s Parliament is very important in the democratic dispensation of the country. It is through this institution that the people feel a part of the governance of the country. A potential member of parliament must be 21 years and a citizen of Ghana; he or she must reside in his or her constituency for at least five years or must hail from that constituency (Article 94, Constitution of the Republic of Ghana). In effect, Ghanaian parliamentarians are not only Ghanaians but are also residents in Ghana. However, proficiency in English or in a local language as well as the educational background of a person is not a prerequisite for one to qualify as a parliamentarian in Ghana.

Although English is referred to as the official language of Ghana, it does not have a constitutional declaration (Huber, 2008:72). Article 24 of the first constitution of Ghana in 1957 accepted English as an official language when specifying that members of parliament had to be proficient in spoken and written English. However, the 1992 constitution does not make mention of English but rather gives prominence to the indigenous languages. It is stated in article 39 that, “The state shall foster the development of Ghanaian languages and pride in

Ghanaian culture". Notwithstanding, English is obviously the only language used in parliament. Based on this, English is described as the de facto official language of Ghana (Ofori et al., 2014:49). It is difficult for a person to be elected as a member of parliament if he or she cannot read and write English because English is the language of all formal occasions (Saah, 1986:373).

Studies have shown that this situation obtains in other African countries also. In some countries, English is even compulsory in parliament.

It is known that English is very significant in the police force and army in Zimbabwe; in university admission in Botswana, Lesotho and Zambia; and in parliament in Malawi. However, many governments of African countries pay lip service to African languages. To show that they support the promotion of indigenous languages, they give them the status of national languages but do not actually work to foster their development or use in the country. The imposition of the English language in certain situations hinders efficient communication (Schmied, 1991:23-24).

Most of our parliamentarians have learnt English as a second language through the school system from Ghanaian teachers who themselves have learnt English probably from other Ghanaian teachers. So they might have acquired the type of English which is different from the English of the native speaker. So the use of non-standard English by Ghanaian parliamentarians should not be underestimated. The trace of locally acquired deviation from the standard language should not be underestimated in countries such as India and Nigeria (Quirk, 1990:8) and Ghana is not an exception.

This paper takes a look at the English language of Ghanaian parliamentarians by analysing the Hansard which is the daily official report of parliamentary proceedings. The study also seeks to deal with whether the English spoken by Ghanaian parliamentarians is a variety of the English language which can be referred to as Ghanaian English.

The study therefore attempts to answer the following research questions: What Ghanaian English features are exemplified in the speeches of Ghanaian parliamentarians? Can the English language spoken by Ghanaian parliamentarians, based on the Ghanaian features identified, be referred to as Ghanaian English?

LITERATURE REVIEW

Various writers have their views about the notion of Standard English. For instance, Fromkin & Rodman (1983: 251) are of the view that the standard dialect is widely circulated, taught to non-native speakers. They claim it is that which is maintained in written form. To them, this dialect is usually understood by a wide range of people. They believe a standard language is not linguistically superior to the other dialects. They also contend that although a standard dialect may have some social functions that binds people together and provides a common written form for speakers, it is not more expressive, not more logical, not more complex and not more regular than any other dialects. So judgments as to one dialect being superior or inferior to the other are not linguistic or scientific but mere social judgements.

According to Trudgill (1983:17 & 1994: 2) as cited in Wardhaugh (1995:31) Standard English is the language of the print and it is commonly taught to non-native speakers who are learners

of the language. Barber (2003: 261) puts forward that there is a standard literary language which is spoken across the English-speaking areas and that it is this variety that can be labelled as Standard English. From the discussion, it is clear that non-native English learners are taught a type of the language that can be seen as the standard variety.

From what these authorities have said about standard language, Standard English can be said to have the following features: it is used in formal writing as well as in other formal situations like news broadcast and politics. It is the prestigious variety because it is spoken by the most educated and powerful members of the society. It is the variety taught in schools and to the non-native speakers who are learning the English language. It is mutually intelligible because it is the same throughout the English-speaking countries. So it binds people of the English-speaking community together as all the speakers of other regional dialects understand it.

The issue of standardisation of the various varieties of the English language has also arisen. According to Wardhaugh (1995:30), standardisation is the codification through a process of a language which includes grammar, spelling books and dictionaries and literature. He asserts that standardization of a language brings people in a big society together and also sets one community apart from another. This process is very significant as it offers and equips all speakers with a standard written as well as spoken form of the language. Some attempts have been made to standardize some varieties of English which have given rise to dictionaries of some Englishes like “Australian English”, “Singaporean English” and “South African English”.

One thing about the immense impact and authority of Standard native English is that it is encoded in printed books, taught in schools and also spoken by perceived educated people.

(Greenbaum, 1990:81 cited in Bamgbose, 1997:19).

Kachru (1988:5) categorizes the spread of English as: The Inner Circle, the Outer (or Extended) Circle and the Extending Circle. He cites United States of America, United Kingdom, Canada, Australia, and New Zealand as examples of the Inner Circle countries. He then gives Bangladesh, Ghana, India, Kenya, Malaysia, Nigeria, Pakistan, Philippines, Singapore, Sri Lanka, Tanzania, Zimbabwe and Zambia as examples of the Outer Circle countries and finally gives China, Egypt, Indonesia, Israel, Japan, Korea, Nepal, Saudi Arabia, Taiwan, and Union of Soviet Socialist Republic as the Extending Circle countries.

Ghanaian English and other varieties of English have been defined in various ways. For instance, Dako (2001:1) refers to Ghanaian English as a way of speaking English in a manner that can be identified with the geographic territory Ghana. The main idea here is that there is a variety of English distinguishable as Ghanaian. To her, this variety of English is used within the borders of Ghana alone. She believes there is a particular way in which Ghanaians speak English irrespective of their ethnic background although L1 transference is also identifiable in the English of Ghanaians. In other words, Ghanaian English is not a fully described and recognized variety but it is the English that educated Ghanaians use (Dako, 2002:48).

On the other hand, Egyptian English is seen as a form of English which highly educated Egyptians speak which has phonological features transferred from Arabic (Alatis & Straehle, 1997:6). They seem to agree with Dako (2001) in their definition of varieties of the English language. Alatis & Straehle restrict Egyptian English to the English spoken by educated Egyptians as Dako does in connection with Ghanaian English. They also agree with the view

that the indigenous language or L1 influences the English spoken by non-native speakers of the English language.

Dako (2002:48) identifies the spoken language as Ghanaian English while the vocabulary items peculiar to Ghana, she terms Ghanaianisms. However, Ghanaian English is seen by some scholars like Huber (2008) as habits or mannerisms and not a clear-cut distinguishable variety of English which is different from the British Standard English or specific Ghanaian usage. Huber (2008: 74) and Sey (1973: 6) explain that these mannerisms and the features that occur in the English of Ghanaians are as a result of factors like interference of the indigenous languages which Ghanaians are likely to have acquired as first languages before perhaps learning English as a second language through the school system and the linguistic competence of the speaker.

From these discussions, Ghanaian English can be said to be a particular way of speaking English by Ghanaians who have had some formal education. This variety of English is spoken within the borders of Ghana and it is influenced by the indigenous languages or L1.

METHODOLOGY

The corpus used for this work is the daily official report of parliamentary proceedings (that is the Hansard). Hansard is a report of nearly the exact speeches of speakers but it is possible clear mistakes and repetitions are corrected while the meaning remains unchanged (Lidderdale, 1976: 253 cited in Hibbert, 2003: 107). From Hibbert (2003:111), it is evident that transcribers and editors of the Hansard of South African Parliament can make changes (without necessarily changing the meaning) to the recorded speeches of MPs before they are finally published. In other words, there may be differences between what is said on the floor of South African Parliament and what is finally published. It is important to note that Hibbert (2003) presents a study on the dichotomy between what is said in parliament and what is actually published. Some of the changes, to some degree, actually result in a change in the intended meaning of the speakers. Unlike the South African experience, the investigation of the present study reveals that the editors who work in the Hansard department of Ghana's parliament only record and transcribe exactly what is said on the floor of parliament without editing any part of it. They have no obligation to alter anything recorded in parliamentary discourse.

Because of the homogeneity of the Hansards, the simple random sampling method was used to select the Hansard of the month of July 2010 edition from the Fifth Parliament of the Fourth Republic. Both the printed and the soft copies were acquired from the Parliament House and the internet respectively. Both copies come in twenty-one pieces each and the soft copy comes in Pdf. Each working day appears four times with the exception of Friday which appears five times. All twenty-one pieces were read thoroughly and the relevant portions were identified and selected for the analysis. The analysis was done mainly qualitatively.

This body of data was analysed to find out whether there are traces of Ghanaianisms and Ghanaian tendencies in the expressions of Ghanaian parliamentarians and whether our parliamentarians use Ghanaian features of English when speaking the language.

Guided by the syntactic features given as typical of WAVE (Bokamba,1991) and the grammatical description of African Englishes (Schmied,1991) and a careful reading of the Hansard, the following came up: Traces of Ghanaianisms such as lexical borrowings, direct

translation from local languages and long structures; the use of *will* and *would*; the occurrence of resumptive pronouns; the use of articles and other determiners in noun phrases; the use of prepositions (Omission, substitution and addition); idiomatic usage; tenses, especially the past perfect and the present perfect tenses; concord; plurality; the interrogative word order in indirect questions; repetition; and editorial issues. In the Hansard, there are many examples to demonstrate each category mentioned above, however, two to four examples are given here to illustrate each point raised. Most of the examples can be obtained from Jibril (2011).

ANALYSIS OF DATA

Ghanaian Tendencies

Examples of expressions spoken by some members of parliament that are mostly used by Ghanaians include:

1. In all the games that were played, one thing came out very clearly — **the boys were understanding themselves** and I hope that the Ghana Football Association (GFA) **would** move ahead to maintain this **crack** of boys, give them all the necessary support. (July 6, 2010, p. 15)

The expression *the boys were understanding themselves* is a Ghanaian tendency. There is a tendency for Ghanaian speakers of English to extend the *-ing* formation to all verbs.

2. **We ourselves** must commit ourselves to the programme to develop and we cannot do so effectively if we do not commit ourselves to peace. (July 14, 2010, p.32)

Ghanaian English speakers have the tendency of loading the beginning of sentences or statements: left branching. *We ourselves* is emphatic, that is, emphasis is placed on ‘we’ which is also a Ghanaian occurrence.

3. Hon Minority Leader, **I have not heard from the mouth of** the Hon Member from the mountains, who is a learned friend. (July 19, 2010, p.46)

The expression *I have not heard from the mouth of* is a direct translation from some Ghanaian languages.

Ghanaianisms/ Lexical Borrowings

The first three examples below contain words that have been identified as Ghanaianisms. These are words that are heard often in formal and informal conversations or speeches delivered in English. It is also possible to find them in written documents such as the dailies. The fourth example contains what can be described as lexical borrowing or code-mixing.

4. Madam Speaker, I take this opportunity to say a big **Ayeekoo** to the Black Stars... I want to say **Ayeekoo** and well done to all of them. (July 6, 2010, p. 16)

Ayeekoo is a Twi word which means well done.

5. When we go to meet the **kayayei** that is good enough but in the absence of nothing beyond that, it is cosmetic. Let us do the things that will send the **kayayei** back to where they came from. (July 14, 2010, p. 32)

Kayayei is a combination of Hausa and Ga words. *Kaya* means „goods“ in Hausa and *yei* is girls in Ga. This is a local term used to refer to female head porters.

6. ...the barber in Esikadu, the hairdresser in Kibi, will be able to continue to do their business — the cocoa farmer in Suhum, the **nika nika** boy in Wa Central. (July 13, 2010, p. 42)

Nika is a borrowed word from Hausa which means „to grind“. In Ghana it is reduplicated to refer to the corn mill. Also reduplication is a word formation process typical of most Ghanaian languages.

7. Mr Speaker, the meaning of “serious fraud” is serious deceit or we call it **nyansa krono**, in our local language. It is serious deceit or **nyansa krono** [Interruption] Have you heard it before? [Laughter] — Why should I sit down? Serious deceit or **nyansa krono**, that is the way I define “serious fraud”. (July 19, 2010, p. 25)

Nyansa krono is an expression in Twi which means „fraud“. The speaker here uses this term to explain “serious fraud”.

The use of *will* and *would*

Some of these may be due to editorial issues. The editors may have put down *would* instead of *will* because of various reasons. However, whether it is an editorial issue or MPs’ usage, it still represents the use of English in Ghana and for that matter, the use of English in Ghana’s parliamentary proceedings.

8. Tomorrow, it **would** be another person’s turn, then he **would** also be sunk. (July 6, 2010, p. 6)
9. A country that thinks about its future **would** definitely have to factor in the aged because when it becomes very difficult, we **would** all admit, when it becomes very tough, whether we like it or not, we **would** quickly run to the old man in the house to find out... (July 5, 2010, p. 15)
10. Let him come here, I **would** prove to him where he slept in Tema, Courtesy Hotel — the owner — I **would** bring everybody to Parliament, if he did pay the bills. (July 6, 2010, p. 8)

In example 8, future time is expressed but the speaker uses *would* and in example 9, although the speaker uses the verbs *thinks* and *becomes* which are in the present tense, he prefers to use *would* instead of *will*. What is becoming the trend in Ghanaian English is that most speakers prefer the use of *would* to *will*.

The occurrence of resumptive pronouns

Some pronouns are used to refer to things mentioned earlier. This use of pronouns can be found in these examples:

11. What men can do, women can do **it** better. (July 6, 2010, p. 17)
12. Mr. Speaker, we would have to look at the meaning of serious fraud in the Serious Fraud Act, which we are trying to amend and incorporate **it**. (July 19, 2010, p. 24)

There is the use of *it* in these instances even though references have already been made to them.

13. Mr. Speaker, today being Friday, there are these other matters that I do not think we should take **them**. (July 9, 2010, p. 34)

Here, **them** is used to refer to *matters* which is mentioned early on.

Articles in noun phrases

In many instances in the data, the definite and indefinite articles are omitted. For instance,

14. So, Hon Colleagues let me plead with you, that if we take a cue from the discussion, () majority of us here are interested in trying to rather maintain the dignity of this House by not inviting Mr. XXX. (July 6, 2010, p. 11)

Here, there is an omission of the definite article *the* or the indefinite article *a* in the noun phrase "...majority of us".

15. The question, I believe, was that both () Ashaiman Circuit Court and the Madina District Court had not been automated. (July 8, 2010, p. 9)

The definite article *the* in the noun phrase "...Ashaiman Circuit Court" has been omitted.

16. But when you deliberately say that if there is () need to come, we would come; we plan our programmes within and without and I personally think we should veer away from that situation where we go and come back. (July 9, 2010, p. 9)

In this sentence, the definite article *the* in the noun phrase *need* has been omitted.

Prepositions

Substitution: in these instances, the prepositions are substituted with others.

17. Yes, I have to, in consultation **of** the House, make the decision. (July 9, 2010, p. 11)

The preposition *of* has been used instead of *with*.

18. Ghana played five matches against Serbia, Australia, Germany, the United States of America (USA) and finally, **with** Uruguay. (July 6, 2010, p. 15)

In this sentence, the preposition *with* has been used in place of *against*.

Insertion: In these examples, speakers prefer to insert prepositions in expressions to create effects. For instance the use of *out* after *voice* is one of the expressions that are commonly heard in spoken English in Ghana.

19. In that case, we should be given a bit of a free hand for people to voice **out** their opinions about this because the insults to Parliament are getting a bit out of hand. (July 6, 2010, p. 3)

20. . . .1.6 million **of** pieces of uniforms have been planned for distribution countrywide.

Also, *of* before *pieces* is an example of an insertion of preposition. (July 7, 2010, p. 14)

Omission

21. The MPs are not there, so he might need information as to where MPs are resident to be able to come to a conclusion () whether they have the strength at the various districts to meet that demand. (July 2, 2010, p. 13)

Here, there is an omission of the preposition *on* between *conclusion* and *whether*.

22. Quickly, because () 12:30 p.m., we have to be somewhere else (July 6, 2010, p. 8)

There is an omission of the preposition *by* or *at* between *because* and *12.30 pm*.

Idiomatic expressions

23. Before the conference, I think the Hon Minister for Education is here, he would **bear with me** that even before the national conference, they came out and said that they rather agreed to the 4-year and not the 3-year. (July 15, 2010, p. 30)

In this statement, the idiom *bear with me* which is a way of asking someone to be patient has been used. The idiom *bear me out* which is a way to show that something is true will help to bring out the clear meaning the speaker seeks to express.

24. We forget that **what comes, goes round comes round**. (July 6, 2010, p. 6)

The idiom, *what goes round comes round*, has been expanded here. Sometimes, the words in the idiomatic expressions are replaced with other words that do not necessarily change the meaning the speaker intends to convey. One of such example is this:

25. There is no point to **recreating the wheel**. (July 6, 2010, p.17)

Tenses

The Present Perfect Tense

There are some instances where speakers prefer the present perfect tense where one can equally use a simple past tense since the speakers refer to things that happened in the past.

26. Expectedly, members of the Committee **have felt** that Government would not shirk its responsibility. (July 12, 2010, p. 10)

27. It **has happened** in this World Cup trial matches, where the coach of Argentina, Maradona, of all people, used his hand to score a goal and named it —the hand of God. (July 6, 2010, p. 15)

Simple Past Tense

28. Madam Speaker, we have looked at the content of the Motion and we **realised** that at the end of the day, if we decide to call on a particular authority to address the issues that we raise here, then there must be somebody specific to be able to do that. (July 13, 2010, p. 9)

Here, the simple past tense has been used. The present perfect tense *have realised* can be used since the activity here happened in the past but has an effect on the present. Again, the verb in

the first clause is in the present perfect tense so one will expect the verb in the second clause to be in the present perfect tense. This is true of the example below.

29. Where is the Hon Member getting these figures from because already, he **said** certain things that I have never heard of in my life. (July 13, 2010, p. 16)

The Past Perfect Tense

30. Madam Speaker, on an occasion, this House **had probed** into a perception of corruption relating to the Judiciary and we even formed a special committee to go into this. (July 6, 2010, p. 9)

31. ... a few days ago, about Friday or so, the Office of the President **had called** on the PURC to meet the stakeholders. (July 12, 2010, p. 3)

In these instances, the past perfect tense has been used in place of the simple past tense *probed* and *called*.

Concord

There are issues with the concord of some of the English expressions obtained from the data. Obviously, there are some verbs that do not agree with their subjects. For instance, in the example,

32. Madam Speaker, I am further aware that *the freedom* of speech and expression which **include** the freedom of the Press and the other media are established by article 21 (1) of our Constitution. (July 6, 2010, p. 9)

freedom is the head word in the subject (Noun Phrase) which must agree with the verb *include(s)*. In the next two examples, the underlined verbs do not agree with their subjects.

33. *An individual* **campaign** and participates in District Assemblies, period. (July 2, 2010, p. 27)

34. Mr Speaker, the *concerns* that have been raised by Members of the House on this particular Report **does** not show that the Finance Committee did not do its work. (July 15, 2010, p. 5)

Plurality

35. With **this few words**, Mr Speaker, I support the motion. (July 14, 2010, p. 19)

Here, the noun phrase *this* is used instead of *these*.

36. We have **that weaknesses** as humans — and as Ghanaians. (July 6, 2010, p. 5)

In this sentence, *these* or *those* could have been used instead of *that*.

37. We have almost finished; there are only one or two outstanding things to be done. (July 30, 2010, p. 55)

Since the verb is closer to the word *one*, *is* is more appropriate to be used.

The interrogative word order in indirect questions

From the data, it is seen that some of the statements made on the floor of parliament are declarative sentences which contain indirect questions. Since they are indirect questions, they should not have the word order for questions where the auxiliary or the operator comes before the subject. The examples of the interrogative word order in indirect questions can be seen in:

38. May I respectfully find out from the Hon Minister *when would these strategies be fully developed in order to ensure the rapid implementation of the policy.* (July 7, 2010, p. 16)

39. Mr Speaker, I want to know from the Hon Minister, *when would this be done?* (July 19, 2010, p. 5)

40. Would he tell this House, specifically, *when would Offinso North District be provided with the vocational institution within this four-year period?* (July 7, 2010, p. 16)

Repetition

In some instances, speakers use two words that have similar meanings in a single statement. For instance, the words *properly* and *well* which refer to the same thing are used. The words *price* and *tariffs* on the one hand and *currently* and *now* on the other hand are two pairs that have same meanings.

41. Mr Speaker, I think that he must **properly** read the rendition **well** and support his argument. (July 12, 2010, p. 15)

42. I want to state emphatically that indeed, both sides of the House are in total agreement that the PURC is an independent body that sets the **price** of **tariffs**. (July 13, 2010, p. 42)

43. I agree with you; but what is **currently** before us **now** is US\$1.5 billion. (July 14, 2010, p. 42)

Word creation

There are words used in the data that are not listed in the English Dictionary. They may be due to MPs' creativity. The following sentences contain a few examples.

44. Ms. XXX (*on behalf of XXX*) asked the Minister for Lands and Natural Resources what measures had been put in place to prevent illegal miners from their **trespassory** acts within the concession of Owere Mines Limited. (July 9, 2010, p. 7)

45. I will take two more **supplementaries** so that we close this chapter (July 16, 2010, p. 18)

46. So take the tenure of the Motion, take the **intendment** of the sponsors of the motion, then you would fall squarely within the ambit of Order 93. (July 12, 2010, p. 17)

Editorial Issues

It is quite obvious that some of the findings in the printed Hansard cannot be attributable to the parliamentarians who spoke in the house during the month under review. These revelations can only be seen as issues relating to the work of the recorders or editorial team.

Spelling

The use of *monitary* for *monetary* can only be an editorial issue since both words sound the same. Similarly, the use of *abiter* for *arbiter* cannot be attributed to the person that made such a statement since he spoke without necessarily giving a written statement to the house. Probably, the recorders wrote down exactly what they thought they had heard. However, the use of *arranged* for *arraigned* is difficult to tell whether it is an issue of spelling or the exact recording of what the recorders heard.

47. Let him go and ask the International **Monitary** Fund (IMF) if they support this loan. (July 14, 2010, p. 53)

48. ...that the Executive are those who will implement the decisions of this independent body and in their view, the only neutral, impartial **abiter** in this matter is the court. (July 12, 2010, p. 17)

49. Nine persons were eventually arrested and **arranged** before the Magistrates Court, Takoradi, in the case of The Republic v. XXX and 8 Others in April, 2008. (July 16, 2010, p. 16)

Typing

50. Mr Speaker, would the Hon Minister confirm that the policy of supplying school uniforms to school children in the deprived areas is based on information that there are kids in this country that do not have school uniforms because their parents cannot afford, and that they are going to be given one school uniform each to be **won** every day for the three years? (July 7, 2010, p. 13)

Looking at this statement, it becomes clear that the word to be used to convey the intended meaning is *worn*. This is true of the next two examples which contain words such as *gallary* instead of *gallery* and *deligence* instead of *diligence*.

51. Madam Speaker, Hon XXX has never been a member of PURC Board. [*Interruptions.*] He is just playing to the **gallary**, he has never been a member. (July 13, 2010, p. 16)

52. If it comes the following week, can anybody say Parliament can do **deligence** on these bills within one week or even two weeks? It is impossible. (July 9, 2010, p. 17)

DISCUSSION

The English language in Ghana is a New English which is learnt as a second language through the school system and used in formal occasions like in parliamentary discourse. The results of this study confirm that the English language used by Ghanaian parliamentarians is a variety of English that can be referred to as Ghanaian English. This Ghanaian variety of English is reflected in the speech of Ghanaians in general and for the purpose of this study, the speech of Ghanaian parliamentarians. The analysis of the Hansard shows that Ghanaian Parliamentarians, educated as they are, speak English as the average Ghanaian does.

For instance, the use of *this* in the example *with this few words* might be as a result of Ghanaian pronunciation features. That is in Ghanaian English, / ɪ / and / i: / are confounded and not two

separate phonemes (Koranteng, 2006). Similarly, Huber (2008) asserts that there is no distinction between these vowels in Ghanaian English. However, Dako (2001) and Adjaye (2005) disagree with this position.

Again, Wiredu (1998) lists certain verbs related to the senses which are not used with the *-ing* form but there is a tendency for Ghanaian speakers of English to extend the *-ing* formation to all verbs as displayed by the data. De Klerk & Gough (2002: 362) observe that the BSAfE variety makes an extensive use of the present continuous tense. This shows clearly that this is a feature common to the New Englishes. However, it is not uncommon to hear native speakers of English extend the *-ing* form to verbs that Wiredu (1998) agrees should not be used in this manner.

One linguistic feature that has emerged from the analysis is code mixing which is a product of bilingualism. For instance, the structure *serious deceit or nyansa krono* is a clear instance where the speaker switches from English to Twi. To Dako (2002:48), it is known by many Ghanaian English speakers that there is a frequent use of indigenous words in English: in speaking and in writing. This is well known and easily observable in Ghanaian English.

From the analysis, it is made bear that members of parliament in Ghana make use of Ghanaianisms or lexical borrowings like *nika nika*, *kayayei* and *ayeekee* in very formal situations such as parliamentary speeches. The issue is not about the fact that speakers lack the necessary English words. These Ghanaianisms are words which have been spoken and written for a very long time. Dako (2003: 32-33) explains *ayeekee* with the meaning well done or congratulations is an Akan word. It is observed in her work that *ayeekee* and *akwaaba* are used in official circus to welcome guests. This makes this example of Ghanaianism nearly a formal Ghanaian identifiable way to receive foreign visitors. It should be noted at this point that it is quite uncommon for *ayeekee* or *akwaaba* to be used to welcome guests from Ghana. Even if the guest is a Ghanaian, they may be used if the person is not necessarily Akan. So, *ayeekee* or *ayeekee* is very formal and that it is not inappropriate for parliamentarians to use it on the floor of parliament. Also, Dako (2003:151) identifies *nika-nika* as a Ghanaianism and explains it is a Hausa coinage used to refer to corn mill. One other local word identified by Dako (2003: 119) is *kaya* which she explains as porter or carrier. There is *kayayoo* which is a female porter with *kayayee* as its plural. Recently, the word *kayayee* has appeared in most political discourse, especially before the 2016 elections and in parliament after the opposition won the elections. The new government, in the maiden budget, abolished the market toll that *kayayee* pay each time they go to the market so it is a word that is mostly heard on radio during English as well as Akan programmes and also seen in newspaper and online publications.

Another point worth mentioning is that some of the parliamentarians use some words that appear to be English but are the result of their creativity. New words introduced by Ghanaian parliamentarians include the adjective *trespassory* and the nouns *intendment* and *supplementaries*. Same can be said of Black South African English (BSAfE) which has produced words such as *jubulated*, *situated* and *destructured* (Hibbert, 2003: 114). Also, the analysis has revealed some idiomatic expressions such as *recreating the wheel* and *what comes, goes round comes round*. Many of such idioms are what one can observe in Ghanaian English and many are clear examples of innovation. Gough (1996: 68) cited in Hibbert (2003: 114) is clear on this point when it is observed that one of the frequent features of New Englishes is the idiosyncratic use of proverbs.

Additionally, a major Ghanaian feature observed in the data is the use of direct translations from some local languages: such as *I have not heard from the mouth of the Hon Member*. This statement is commonly heard in Ghanaian languages such as Twi which has: *me ntee nfii n'ano* and Ga which has: *nnuko kejeko enaabu*.

Further, the parliamentary texts exposes some grammatical issues which some studies have shown that are features of Ghanaian English as well as other West African varieties of English. These include the use of *will* and *would*, tenses, concord, prepositions, and the occurrence of resumptive pronouns. Among these grammatical issues is the use of articles and other determiners in noun phrases. It is worth mentioning that the heavy presence of omission or insertion or interchanging of articles, according to Platt et al. (1984: 55) cited in Hibbert (2003: 112), is one of the common features of the New Englishes.

Finally, a very important observation is the editorial issue: spelling in the Hansard. The analysis reveals some spellings like *won* instead of *worn*; *deligence* instead of *diligence*; and *gallary* instead of *gallery*. Obviously, our parliamentarians cannot be held responsible for this. This can only be laid at the door of the editors. This gives indication to the point that the recorders have no obligation to alter what is said on the floor of parliament otherwise, the computer on which these words are typed will obviously correct them automatically if the right settings are done. The editorial policy of the Hansard department of the Ghanaian Parliament is very different from the case in the South African Parliament. However, due to the bulky nature of recorded speeches of parliamentarians to be transcribed on daily basis, it will serve a lot of good if editors are allowed to only do spelling check with the use of computers.

CONCLUSION

In summary, this study indicates that, Ghanaian parliamentarians have an appreciable level of formal education: they use the English language extensively in all formal situations and they have a good command of the English language which is mainly acquired through formal education in Ghana.

They speak English as the average Ghanaian does and they make use of Ghanaian English features and tendencies that are common to the Ghanaian as well as to the speakers of other African varieties of English.

Though Ghanaians vote for people who are mostly educated as their parliamentarians, because the perception is that such people are fluent in the English language, the English spoken by Ghanaian parliamentarians has identifiable features that can support the claim that their English is typically Ghanaian.

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