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THE MORPHOLOGY OF CONTEMPORARY GHANAIAN PIDGIN ENGLISH

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Abstract

In most cosmopolitan areas in Ghana there exists a hybrid language called pidgin or broken language. This paper looks at pidgin as an evolving process which finds use in particular contexts. The composition that will be considered include, the lexicon, phonology, and structure, and also compare Ghanaian and Nigerian pidgins, and analyse pidgin as the undocumented lingua franca of the sub region. Data used in the analysis is largely derived from primary sources, and then from some pidgin lyrics of a number of songs. I suggest that Pidgin Ghanaian English should be seen as another language variety which should be of linguistic interest, and needs more enquiries by linguists.

Keywords: Morphology, Pidgin, English, Ghana

INTRODUCTION

Ghana is a multilingual nation, with about eighty indigenous languages spoken. English, the language of the British colonizers, has been the official language since independence, but the majority of the people is semi- to non- literate, and can hardly speak it competently. Like Bentahila and Davies' (1983) observation among Moroccan speakers of French, most Ghanaians normally speak a local language (Ghanaian Language (GL)) at home, English in a formal setting, and use a mixture of the two, or select a local lingua franca, in other casual environments.

West Africans first came into contact with English in the early seventeenth century as a result of colonial expansion. This contact brought English into contact with Niger Congo languages, and this gave birth to many contact languages. Issues of competence and performance, as used by Chomsky come to play in this diglossic setting. Borrowings are used to fill lexical gaps, in both directions (English to GL and vice versa) and code switches signal other performance related pragmatics. Borrowed words from English are modified to the phonological patterns of the Matrix Language.

There is an admixture of English and the major languages, spoken in cosmopolitan areas. This paper aims at looking at this hybrid language, pidgin, as an evolving process, a process that

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started in the wake of the twentieth century, in colonial Ghana[1], through the mid twentieth century, to this point in time. This paper looks at the use of pidgin, or broken English as it is usually called, and analyzes the contexts within which it is used. By morphology, I mean the makeup of the language, its composition, that is, what goes into its making – lexicon, phonology, and structure – and not necessarily its component morphemes.

Pidgin is defined as "a hybrid language with lexical stock from one language and the grammatical structure of another language or languages", Fasold (1984: 62-3). Following from Winford (2003: 270) I see Ghanaian pidgin as a functional contact vernacular that is characterized by a reduced vocabulary and structure, and used as a lingua franca. It is also the product of a sociolinguistic change, as observed by Hymes (1971: 84), involving reduction and convergence.

Who are the users of this language variety, and what are their motivations for its use? How does one pidgin differ from another (say, a Ghanaian pidgin versus a Nigerian one, or even pidgins from the different regions of Ghana)? More importantly, being a teacher, I posit that the preponderance of the use of pidgin in the senior high schools and universities impacts negatively on students' English language in particular, as it is their second language. And, I ask the same question Jurgen Meisel and others (see Wei, Li (2000: 344)) ask, whether these students, like bilinguals, will be able to "differentiate their two [English] linguistic systems"

THE GHANAIAN LANGUAGE SITUATION
As already mentioned, Ghana like her sister African countries, is multilingual, and each linguistic group was an autonomous entity before British colonization. Many languages exist in close proximity but may not be mutually intelligible. This provided fertile ground for inter group hostilities, and mutual suspicion in the pre-colonial era. The new colonizer had to find a way of communicating with the local populace, so a few locals were trained as interpreters to help facilitate local trade, and later to help in the drafting of young men to work in the mines, and also to fight in the two World wars. At the same time, the colonial schools that were established only equipped students with the three R's — reading, writing, and arithmetic. Students only needed to be functionally literate. The world war veterans returned with their brand of English, one that was neither English nor Hausa[2] (since the majority of soldiers were of Northern Ghanaian origin), a soldier (or barracks)-English, as it was called.

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[1] The country was called the Gold Coast under British rule. Independence was won on March 6, 1957. Illiterate men who served in the colonial army and police had to communicate to their British superiors in a non-standard English variety.

[2] Hausa is the lingua franca of the Northern regions, and of Southern Ghanaian communities populated by people of northern Ghanaian and Nigerian extraction.

The attainment of political independence in 1957 saw an increase in education, and an increase in the use of the English language, which was adopted as the official language, partly because it was a neutral ground for the multitude of languages – no one linguistic group would sacrifice their language for another. Many language policies have been enacted since then, but English still remains the official, and national language, and is used for both education and government business. Ndolo (1989) agrees with Ansre (year) (cites Smock 1974: 4) that promoting a single language as the medium of communication within the country will bring about national unity and its concomitant benefits, but this has proved too daunting a task for Ghana in her bid to promote one of the indigenous languages to official status. Each ethnic group fears they will be dominated by any group that gets its language to be used as the national lingua franca, hence the need to continue using an Indo-European language as the most widespread language across the country.

The Place of Pidgin.
 The new World war veterans and the employees of the colonial administration were some of the first to send their children to school, and would communicate with them in their "barracks English". This variety eventually got very popular, and became a common vernacular around major urban centers and in senior high schools. In the senior high schools, teachers of English would frown on this "bastard" language spoken by students, mostly males, and impose sanctions on those who used it. This actually served as impetus for these adolescents, who are not just being defiant, but are also carving out an identity for themselves in using a kind of language that is the preserve of "men". Obeng (1997: 65) observes that,

> Pidgin is also used as a lingua franca to a limited extent, especially
> in senior high school dormitories, military and police barracks, in the
> prisons and even among male university students. Female students do
> not speak Pidgin English although they understand it and whenever
> they are addressed in Pidgin by their male counterparts they respond
> in standard Ghanaian English. Source needed

It is indeed unbecoming of a lady to speak pidgin, hence their reluctance to communicate therein. Trade in and around urban areas has also been a very fertile ground for the development of hybrid languages. This has been from the days when migrant Hausa speaking traders from northern Nigeria and Niger came into the country and added to the diglossic situation, Hausa easily became a High (H) language and was used in the public domain and the local northern Ghanaian language assumed a Low (L)[3] status and was/ is spoken only at home. Akan has come into the fray in recent times, and has replaced Hausa in commercial areas, but is not quite the H language. The former has a wider coverage in Ghana, but one finds a form of pidginized Hausa dominating in the north, alongside Pidgin English. Pidgin English is our focus here. I also agree with Winford (p. 257) that Ghana, and indeed West Africa, is so large and diverse in her

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[3] H and L languages as defined by Fergusson 1972.

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languages that carving out one basis for the formation of the diverse pidgins will run into problems.

Pidgin English.

McWhorter (2003: 134) categorizes pidgins as forms in which people adopt a hands on approach to language acquisition and use, with "just enough to get by", in informal multilingual contexts. According to him,

> This kind of rudimentary but functional way of communicating is called
> a *pidgin*, and pidgins have always formed throughout the world when
> people needed to use a language on a regular basis without having the
> need or motivation to acquire it fully.

While this may seem too easy a process, it will be erroneous, as observed by Nida and Fehderau (1970: 146), that any competent speaker of English could readily adjust their language, to speak pidgin, for pidgin does have a structure of its own. This has been the context within which multilingual communities that were once under a colonial domination have found themselves when it comes to inter-group communication. I draw examples from Ghana and Nigeria[4] because these two West African countries passed through identical histories of language contact with English, under their British colonizers. Liberia and Sierra Leone are the other countries in Anglophone West Africa that share similar but slightly different histories, in that these latter two have creolized Englishes (Krio) because they had populations that were relocated from the New world after the abolition of slavery in the nineteenth century.

In Ghana, the regional pidgins incorporate different lexical items, and sound systems of the major languages of the locality into the pidgin varieties. We thus a slightly different pidgin in Bolgatanga, where *Grune* is the major language, from those found in Tamale (Dagbani), and Accra (Ga, and Akan).

Ghanaian Pidgin English.

Herskovits and Herskovits (1937) collected tales in pidgin English from Ashante, Ghana, and these show a lot of lexical items from Akan

> Dis Ananse wen for *Nyame*, dat he wan to change dis *Nyankonsem*
> to call *Anansesem*. He say, *Nyame* tell him dat, "what a charge you
> if you fit bring 'em , I will 'low you to call *Anansesem*."
> p. 53.
> This Spider went to Sky-God, (and requested) that he wanted to rename
> *Nyame* stories *Ananse* stories. He says God told him that, "If you can
> perform a task I give you I will allow you to call them *Anansesem*.

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[4] I shall use the Lagos variety, known as Lagotian Pidgin for illustration.

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This illustrates adult interlanguage at its best whereby an Ashanti tries to communicate with an English researcher. He approximates English as best he can but still falls on his first language for names he cannot find in the target language. It fulfills a linguistic need. We still find this strategy in use today. Pidgin English is a preferred choice where people of diverse language groups want a lingua franca; a speech convergence zone for them.

Others will choose to use pidgin for sociolinguistic purposes. It is used to index solidarity with interlocutors. Lately, many politicians are resulting to its use when on campaign trails in the urban slums and among factory workers. Also, when they speak the prestigious H language, illiterate folk feel an elevation in status, because they are able to communicate with others in their own approximation of the prestige language, even if it is a less than standard form, and students mark their identity by switching to pidgin outside formal school settings.

Ayisoba (From Bolga, Northern Ghana)
The following is an example of a "baby" pidgin in its early years. It has not diverged too far from its lexifier English language, even though it is continually being fed by the substrate languages. English labio-dental fricatives and vowel sounds are approximated to sounds in the respective Ghanaian phonetic inventories. Most Ghanaians will thus substitute /d/, /t/, and /a/ for /ð/, /θ/, and /ə/ in 'father', 'thousand', and 'father' respectively.

    A wan to ʃi u ma fa:dai
    I want to see you my father
    I want to see you, my father

    yestadei i:vini tam yɔ gɜlifirɜn
    yesterday evening time your girlfriend
    yesterday, in the evening your girlfriend

    ʃi kam fain u ʃi no ʃi u.
    she come find you she NEG see you.
    she came seeking you but didn't see you.

    ʃi no ʃi u
    See NEG see you
    She didn't see you

    ʃi tɜl mi ʃe:,
    she tell me say
    she told me that

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ifi ma fada kam
if my father come
when my father comes

a ʃu tel ma fa:da
I should tell my father
I should tell my father

i ʃu put andirɜ tauzin
he should put hundred thousand
he should leave behind a hundred thousand (cedis)

tumo:ro mɔ:nin shi go kam an kɔ:let.
Tomorrow morning she FUT come and collect.
she will come for it tomorrow morning.

ma fa:dai, ma fa:dai
my father, my father
my father, my father

dɜ wei u do i iʃ no fain
the way you do, it is NEG fine
your action is not good (improper)

ɜvri dei an ɜvri nait a ʃɔfa moni ma:tai
every day and every night, I suffer money matter
I always have financial problems.

Ayisoba is here reanalyzing English lexical items using his native Grune semantics. "If" and "when" come to mean the same to him in English, because they mean the same in his mother tongue; and as observed by Heine and Kuteva (2003: 556), a case of polysemy copying comes into play, where grammatical categories easily get copied from his model (L1) to the target language. The English interjection "no" is grammaticalized to cater for all aspects of *negation* or *absence* just like the personal pronoun *dem* "them" has been lexicalized into a plural morpheme in pidgins of the region.

Samuel Obeng (personal communication) citing examples mostly from Southern Ghana, observes that in many of the pidgins spoken in Ghana, when a word ends in a consonant and is followed by another word that begins with a consonant, the following may occur:

(a) the final consonant of the first word may be deleted. In some cases, the loss of the final

consonant is replaced by compensatory lengthening of the vowel preceding the lost consonant, as in:

sit down	si don
stand up	tan ap
bad luck	baa lok
just now	jos nao
by heart	baa ha:t
come out	kom ot

Morphology.

Reflexive pronouns are marked by post-posing the word sef 'self,' bodi 'body,' or skin 'skin' (often pronounced ski to the pronoun stem. Reflexive pronouns include the following:

myself	masef; mabodi; maskin
yourself	josef; yobodi; yoskin
himself/herself/itself	i(m)sef; i(m)bodi; i(m)skin
yourself (pl)	josef/wunasef; yobodi/wunabodi; yoskin/wunaskin
themselves	demsef; dembodi; demskin

Tense and Aspect

Future.
Future is marked in two ways here. The use of "go" and "wan". "Wan" also indicates an intention to do an action at a later time.

dei/dem go kom.	They will come
dei/dem go chop.	They will eat.
A go go.	I shall go.

Perfect
The present and past perfect forms are marked by the completive marker don and a combination of the completive marker, done, and a grammaticalized form of the verb finish. The excerpts below exemplify the above claim.

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Present Perfect

A krai/ A krai finish   I have cried

Past Perfect

A don krai / A krai lon tam   I had cried

Imperative

The first imperative, the direct command, has the same form as the present tense whereas the second imperative, the indirect command is marked by the structure: [mek + NP]. Examples are given   below:

First Imperative English Gloss Second Imperative English Gloss

krai	Cry	mek i/im krai	let him cry
go	go	mek dem go	let them go
chop	eat	mek dem boys chop	let the boys eat

Modal Auxiliaries

Modal auxiliaries express speakers attitude toward the factual content of an utterance e.g., intentionality (want to), uncertainty (may), ability (can), possibility (could), necessity (ought to), obligation (must).

Modal auxiliary verbs in West African Pidgin English are: (go) fit 'can/could;' fo 'ought to;' mon 'must' or 'have to.' Ghanaian speakers are however, not consistent with their choice of these auxiliaries as their neighbours. Modal auxiliaries are exemplified in the sentences below:

u go fit stei fo ma haus   You may stay at my house
u go fit go dea   You can/could go there.
u no fo rosh   You ought not to rush.
u mon go   You must go.
u fo go/Yu mon go   You have to go

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Negative Constructions.
Negation is marked by preverbal no or neva/neba. The structure of basic negative sentences is: [N + Neg. + Tense + Aspect + Verb + O]. Negative constructions are examplified below:

I don't know them	A no sabi dem
The dog didn't bite him	De dok (I) neva bait am;
He did not go	I neva/neba go
He will not go	I no go go
I did not go	A neva/neba go

Serial Verb Constructions.
Serial verb constructions are commonly used in verbal actions that involve motion. For example:

I enta go de bar 'He entered the pub'
De boy I (bi) lai daun slip 'The boy laid down and slept'
De man I bi ron go insaid de room go slip 'The man ran to the room and slept'
I bi kari de lood gif am 'He carried the load for him'
I bi ron go for de maket 'He ran to the market'

College Pidgin.

Campus pidgin tends to combine campus jargon with English and Ghanaian languages like Akan, Hausa, Dagbani, or Ga, depending on the dominant language spoken in the college community. The norm is to use this lingua franca outside the lecture room. Examples include the following:

Dis wan bi inte[5] bola bird
This one is internal rubbish-dump bird
This an ugly college girl friend.

A si u **che**
I see you keep-long
I have not seen you in a long while

Yo mata haad paa
Your matter hard ADJ (degree)

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[5] *Inte* and *exte* are college jargon that refer to lovers of students who are fellow college students, and non- college students respectively. *Bola bird* is a pejorative term for an ugly person.

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You are hard to deal with.

Wai u de **wahala** mi so?
Why you PROG worry(Hausa) 1SG so?
Why are you worrying me so?

i **twa** ntro
1SG cut deception.
He is lying.
(From Akan idiomatic expression.)
wana padi bomb de exam/**mfodwo[6].**
3PL (GEN) paddy bomb the exam
Our friend flunked the examination.

Negatives

a no/neva sii am
I didn't see him /I haven't seen him

I no no notin
S/he doesn't know anything.

A no go tɔtʃ am, I bi gburagbura!
I NEG touch it, it rough (IDEO (Dagbani))
I will not touch it, for it is rough.

Resyllabification.
In resyllabifying the borrowed English lexical items pidgins ensure that English borrowings fit into the phonology of the new spoken variety. The resyllabification often involves consonant deletion or the insertion of vowels within consonant clusters.
Example include:

Masef	myself (deletion of 'l')
hɛlɛp	help (vowel insertion)
tɔtʃ	touch (/ɔ/ substituted for /ʌ/)
hɔsipitul	hospital (vowels inserted to break consonant clusters)

Common Features of Ghanaian Pidgin English.

On a general basis, Ghanaian languages have a (V) - CV-CV syllable structure; and speakers would modify any new lexeme that they encounter when they try to speak a new language to fit

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[6] Name of first registrar of the University of Ghana, which has become synonymous with examinations on campus.

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into this pattern. In the following song Ayisoba[7] modifies the structure of the English word "if" VC to a VCV *ifi* , "hundred" is resyllabified into *andire* – VC-CV-CV because the Grune syllable has a vocalic coda. /s/ and /ʃ/ are free variants, so the English words "see" and "she" /ʃi:/ are homophonous to him.

Dem is attached to nouns to mark plurality, as in forms like *John-dem(s)*[8] "John and others"

The tense system relies on specific contexts to determine whether an action is present or past. The present tense is largely unmarked as in

> a it rais
> I eat rice
>
> u it rais
> You eat rice
>
> i it rais
> S/he eats rice
>
> A de do am
> I HAB/PROG do it
> I do it/ I am doing it.
>
> A jos de do am
> I just PROG do it
> I am now doing it.

To mark a past action, pidgins here either use a completive as in *finis/finiʃ* "finish", or *pas* "pass" in addition to the base verb form. Inflections for tense are largely inexistent.

> i bi mi do am
> It COP 1SG do it
> It was I who did it
>
> Na im do am
> FOC 3SG do it
> It was him who did it.

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[7] Ayisoba is a Ghanaian singer who has had no formal instruction in English language.
[8] Even though "them" has been relexified into the plural marker *dem* the English plural suffix –s is sometimes attached to mark plurality.

i it de fuud finish
3SG eat the food Completive.
He ate the food

De boy chop am finish
The boy eat 3SG Completive.
The boy ate it

Dem jos de do am nau nau
3PL just PROG do 3SG now
They are now doing it

Wi jos lef nau nau
We just left now
We only just left

Make u lef am go
IMP you leave 3SG go
Leave him and go

I teik spuun it rais.
3SG take spoon eat rais
He ate rice with a spoon.

Ma olman wok/waka go taun
1SG GEN old man walk go town.
My father walked to town.

Some Lagotian Pidgin Examples, from Fela Anikulapo's music[9] . (see Appendix 1 for full song.)

Di chief for we village e **don** come, go back for im house.
The chief of our village **has** come **and** then gone back to his house.
Police dey come (imperfective aspect) can mean `the police is coming` and `the police usually comes`

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[9] courtesy http://ntama.uni-mainz.de/content/view/44/37/

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Contrast with Nigerian (Lagos/Lagotian) pidgin.
A few examples of sentences in the two broad varieties of pidgins, Ghanaian and Nigerian, will further illustrate the fact that Lagotian pidgin has a wider coverage, and poised to become a creole. It is more structured or elaborated than the Ghanaian varieties, and has a lot in common with Krio, and indeed some of the English based creoles in the Caribbean (compare with the use of the past tense marker *bin* of Guyanese creole, see Winford p.354). Fela Anikulapo Kuti's music is an exemplar of Lagotian pidgin, an extended pidgin for the millions of Nigerians in the economic capital of Africa's most populous nation[10]. Lagotian pidgin has the following personal pronouns –

PERSON	SG Subj.	SG Obj.	PL Subj.	PL Obj	GEN. SG	GEN. PL
1	a	mi	wi	Wi	ma	wana/wi
2	u	u	una	Una	u/yo	u/yo
3	i	im/am	dei	Dem	im	dem

These pronouns are the same ones used by the Krio of Liberia and Sierra Leone, and the two may sound like dialects of the same language to a stranger.
Examples from Winford p.354 also show the similar pronouns used in Guyanese creole,

> Jan bin go do *am*.
> John PAST FUT do *am*.
> John would have done *it*.

Ghanaian pidgin in contrast hardly has the kind of structure found in the Nigerian one. It basically makes a distinction in first person singular (*a, mi, ma* – SUBJ., OBJ., and GEN. respectively),*wi*, *os*, PL; Second Person and *u* for SG,PL and GEN (*yo*); Third person *i/im* (SUBJ)*,im*(GEN.)*, am*(OBJ.). It is the case however, that we find people mix these forms, hence the assertion that most Ghanaian pidgins are really adult interlanguages, where people try to approximate Standard English with varying degrees of success.
Ghanaian:

> 1. dei it/chop am finish.
>   3PL eat finish
>   They have eaten it.

Lagotian:

> 1. Dem don chop am.
>   3PL PAST eat it.
>   They ate it.

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[10] Population 13,427,000 (2000 estimate).
Microsoft ® Encarta ® Premium Suite 2005. © 1993-2004 Microsoft Corporation. All rights reserved.

Ghanaian:

2. Dei de do am so/ Na so dei de do am/ dei do am so **che**[11].

    3PL always PROG do it so/ FOC so 3PL PROG do it/ they do it so keep-long.

    They have always been doing it like that/that's how they always do it.

Lagotian:

2. dei bin de do am so.

    3PL PAST PROG do it so.

    They have been doing it that way.

Ghanaian:

3. i kip long/ i **che**

    It keep long/ it keep-long

    It has been a long while.

Lagotian:

3. i don tee

    It MOD long

    It has been a long while

Ghanaian:

4. dei it/chop am

    They have eaten it

Lagotian:

4. dei bin it/chop am.

    3PL ASPECT eat it

    They have eaten it

Ghanaian:

5. i bi him **no)o**).

    It COP 3SG EMPHATIC

    He is the actual person

Lagotian:

5. na him true-true

    FOC 3SG true

    It is actually him.

Ghanaian pidgins have no regular way of marking plural, unlike the Lagotian Pidgin is regular in its use of *dem*, while Ghanaians have no definite marker. The plural of *pikin* 'child' is

Lagotian:

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[11] From Akan word meaning "long time". The Lagotian counterpart to this is *tee*.

Pikin dem

Ghanaian: Three different forms for 'children'
Pikins
Pikin dem
Pikins dem

Whereas Lagotian pidgin always marks a past with *don*, Ghanaians will mix the unmarked *a taya* with *a don taya* "I am tired"

Pidgin for Development.

Does pidgin have a role in the development agenda of a nation? This is a pertinent question worth dilating on. Ghana is still largely an illiterate society, with a large chunk of its population hardly able to fluently communicate in English. Our proliferation of languages does little to help us integrate linguistically. Some people find it irritating when addressed in some other "hostile" Ghanaian language, yet they cannot access information via the official medium of verbal interaction in Ghana – English. A middle ground will be pidgin, whereby the language is watered down for all. The well-educated can access it, just as the not-so-fortunate illiterate folk can also approximate the Queen's language. People will understand each other better, and the potential to segregate based on language disparity will also be minimized.

CONCLUSION

The varieties of Pidgin English spoken in Ghana differ in lexical content, even though Ghanaians can mutually understand each other when they hear a different regional pidgin. It is however difficult to comprehend urban Lagos (Lagotian), or Liberian[12] pidgins, which they often come into contact with. These latter categories are on their way to becoming creoles, and have a lot in common with Krio, for example. Unlike Nigerian pidgin, some of which are actually extended pidgins, Ghanaian pidgin seems to be a simplified variety of English and other languages. I cannot like Winford (see p. 269), comfortably say Ghanaian pidgin is not a "corrupted" form of the English language. It is an interlanguage for the adults who try to approximate Standard English, but an in-group language for the young, who use it as a secret, prestigious code among themselves. It is only educational authorities who see it as a debased form.

This is a genuine and interesting case of language contact, at the early stages of the pidginization to creolization continuum. Unlike David Laitin (1994) who stops short of suggesting a solution

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[12] Ghanaians first came into contact with the Liberian variety which was referred to as Kru English through soldiers returning from peace keeping duties in Congo. Ghana has also been home to hundreds of thousands of Liberia refugees of the civil war since 1989.

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to the problem of choosing a national language for Ghana, I suggest Pidgin Ghanaian English should be seen as another language variety which should be of linguistic interest. Teachers should not discourage students from using it, but should rather educate them to know the contexts within which to use either code, pidgin or Standard English. Parents should speak one language at a time to the children, and not mix their languages at home, since this can lead to children mixing their lexicons at this early stage.

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Appendix 1. Music in Lagotian Pidgin.
Courtesy http://ntama.uni-mainz.de/content/view/44/37/
Sorrow, Tears and Blood – Fela Kuti
1 Everybody run run run Everybody runs away
2 Everybody scatter scatter Everybody scatters
3 Some people lost some bread Some people (have) lost some money
4 Someone nearly die someone has nearly died
5 Someone **just** die someone has just died
6 Police dey come, Army dey come the police is coming, the army is coming
7 Confusion everywhere there is confusion everywhere
8 Several minutes later Several minutes later
9 All den cool down brother everything has calmed down, brother
10 Police **don go away** the police has gone then
11 Army don disappear The army has disappeared then
12 Dem leave Sorrow, Tears, and Blood They leave Sorrow,Tears, and Blood
13 Dem regular trade mark Their regular trade mark
14 My people **self dey** fear too much My people also has too much fear
15 Dem dey fear for the thing **we no see** We fear the things we can not see
16 Dem they fear for the air around us We fear the air around us
17 We fear to fight for freedom We fear to fight for freedom
18 We fear to fight for liberty We fear to fight for liberty
19 We fear to fight for justice We fear to fight for justice
20 We fear to fight for happiness We fear to fight for happiness
21 We always get reason to fear We always find a reason to fear:
22 We no want die We don`t want to die
23 We no want quench we don`t want to be extinguished
24 My mama dey for house my mother is at home
25 My pikin dey for house my children are at home
26 I get one wife I have a wife
27 I get one car I have a car
28 I get one house I have a house
29 I just marry I just got married
30 So policeman go slap your face So the policeman will slap your face and
31 You no go talk you will not say anything
32 Army man go whip your yansh the soldier will whip your back and
33 You go dey look like donkey you will look like a donkey
34 Rhodesia dey do dem own Rhodesia does not care

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35 Our leaders dey yab for nothing Our leaders' words are useless

36 South Africa dey do dem own South Africa, they do their own thing

37 Dem leave Sorrow, Tears, and Blood They leave Sorrow,Tears and Blood

38 Dem regular trade mark (Chorus), Their regular trademark

39 Dem regular trade mark Their regular trademark

40 Dem regular trade mark (Chorus) Their regular trade mark

41 That is why-y-y That is why everybody runs away

42 Everybody run run run...