



The Voice

Vol 2

LET YOUR VOICE BE HEARD!

IN THIS ISSUE

Welcome Address

Editorial Board

Welcome to the second edition of the School of Languages' (SOL) annual newsletter, *The Voice*. We hope you enjoyed reading the maiden edition. As was stated in the maiden edition, the purpose of this mainly electronic newsletter is to complement existing information dissemination outlets within the units of the School, the College of Humanities and the larger University community. In this regard, *The Voice* provides an avenue to improve the dissemination of information within the units of SOL, and also to inform members of the University community and beyond of news and events in SOL.

The Voice is an annual electronic publication that covers matters of mutual interest to students, faculty and staff; these include student and faculty events, promotions, awards and research news.

As you familiarize yourself with news, events and announcements in SOL through the pages of this newsletter, we encourage you as a member of faculty or staff or as a student to contribute to subsequent issues by contacting the editorial team with your report, news and announcements as well as your creative short pieces.

Have fun!!

OFFICERS OF THE SCHOOL

Dean, Prof. N. A. A. Amfo

Administrator, Mr. W. N. Torvinyo

Accountant, Mr. R. K. Kuwornu

Research Officer, Mrs. Maana Ampa-Sowa



SOL Student Wins Overall Best Graduating Student Award

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1st SOL Conference (SOLCON1)

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Personality Profile: Prof. Yitan

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Exams/Graduation Matters

Check out the answer to a burning question on grades and graduation on page 15

SOL News

The School of Languages (SOL) saw a lot of activities this semester. These events included:

- First School of Languages Conference (SOLCON₁) and Colloquium on Multilingualism
- SOL Seminar Series
- SOL Workshop on Corpus Linguistics
- SOL Orientation for Fresher
- SOL Writeshop
- French Organizes International Multidisciplinary Colloquiu



Participants at SOLCON₁ and SOL Colloquium on Multilingualism

SOL Seminar Series

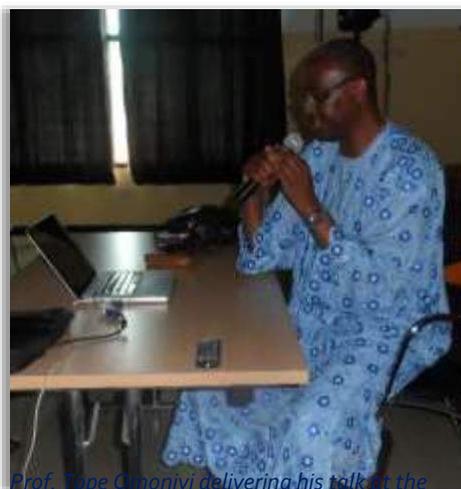
by Sylvia Antwiwaah Tabi

The School of Languages started to run the Seminar Series in the 2014/2015 academic year soon after the School was inaugurated as part of the College of Humanities. The series which runs on Thursdays at 1:00 pm started on the 10th of September 2015. For the 2015/2016 academic year, a total of 8 seminars were held over a period of ten (10) weeks. The series runs presentations covering a range of interesting research topics from both local and international researchers including the following:



Participants at the SOL Seminar Series

- **Surviving with Minimum Bilingualism in Urban Markets in Ghana** - Dr. Gladys Nyarko Ansah & Dr. Jemima Asabea Anderson (both at the Dept. of English, UG)
- **Insights into Ghanaian Christian Glossolalic prayer** - Professor Samuel Obeng Gyasi, a visiting scholar from Indiana University
- **Address Forms in Russian** - Dr Ildiko Csajbok- Twerefou (Russian) and Dr. Mohammed Hafiz (Dept. of Modern Langs), UG



Prof. Tope Omoniyi delivering his talk at the SOL Seminar Series

Autoethnography & Applied Linguistics: Interrogating the Journey to Now-Self – Prof. Tope Omoniyi (UG-Carnegie African Diaspora Fellow, Dept. of Linguistics, UG)

Meaning Modals: An Inquiry into the Semantic Content of some English Modals - Prof. Iyabode Omolara Akewo Daniel (Visiting Scholar, Dept. of English, UG)

Attendance and participation at these series were generally encouraging. We invite you to attend these interesting and stimulating seminar series at 1:00pm every Thursday.

Meet Best Graduating Student (Humanities) 2015

Ms. Wendy Kwakye Amoako

The Voice caught up with Ms. Wendy Kwakye Amoako, the Best Graduating Student (Humanities) 2015, to ask her about her accomplishments.

The Voice: Please tell us a little about yourself.

Wendy: I am the first born and the only girl of 3 children of my parents. Currently, I'm doing my National Service in the Linguistics Department, University of Ghana, Legon.

The Voice: What were some of the challenges that you faced when you got into first year?

Wendy: My mates whom I completed SHS with were in their 3rd year when I got into my first year. Even worse, I got into school with my school daughters. So, it was quite a challenge adjusting.

The Voice: Tell us about your academic life on campus.

Wendy: I wasn't really happy about the courses I was given. Here you are, given something you don't want to do. Some class mates of mine also complained of the combinations they were offered. But I told myself that I have come to school to study, and it doesn't matter what I have been given. I will just do my best. I

wanted to become a banker. However, my desire changed totally when I got to level 300 second semester. I realized that gradually I was developing interests in the courses that I was reading especially, linguistics.

The Voice: When you were informed that you were going to be the valedictorian for the class of 2015, how did you feel?

Wendy: Words cannot explain how I felt. In fact, it was a moment of mixed feelings. I was overwhelmed and surprised at the same time. Even though I knew my GPA was good I always knew there were students who

were better than I was. I didn't dream of being elected the valedictorian.

The Voice: Any advice for the freshmen?

Wendy: What I have learnt is that sometimes we are narrow minded about certain issues. Nothing in life is a waste of time or effort. Whatever opportunity you are given, from the beginning it may look like something you do not want. But just take it and see what you can do with what you have for you to advance in life. They should take their study seriously, remain focused and research a lot.



Ms. Wendy Kwakye Amoako, Best Graduating Student, Humanities, 2015

Freshers' Orientation 2015

The School of Languages, in conjunction with the Placement Coordinators' Committee, organized a programme to welcome and orient freshmen on Thursday, 8th October, 2015 at the Modern Languages Annex. Presidents of the various students Associations of the Departments within the School gave welcome addresses in various languages: Kiswahili, French, English, Arabic, Russian, Spanish, Chinese and Akan.

In his address, the Chairman of the Placement Coordinators' Committee, Dr. Fusheini Hudu mentioned the Committee's intention to organize a career day

for students in the School in order for them to appreciate the significance of Second Language Acquisition.

In her address, The Dean, School of Languages, Prof. Nana Aba A. Amfo congratulated the freshmen not only on their admission into the University but on their admission into one of the youngest and most vibrant schools in the University. She urged the students to have a different and positive perspective about the offer they had been given to read languages in the University. She stated that the future will reveal how important it is to possess a foreign language and wished all students success in their studies and stay on campus.

Dr. Antwi-Boasiako, a member of the Committee gave a talk on 'Job Prospects for Language Students.' This addressed the burning question of what job opportunities there are for graduates who read Languages in the University.

Dr. Grace Diabah, a Senior Lecturer at the Linguistics Department, advised students on academic matters. She stressed the need for students to focus on the single most important reason for coming to the University to go home with a degree, and a good one at that. She further encouraged students to see their academic advisors and course coordinators anytime they have problems with their academic work. She ended her speech by drawing students' attention to

the importance of reading notices around the campus.

Dr. Jemima Anderson, a Senior Lecturer at the English Department continued the advice on academic matters. She mentioned the fact that, Lecturers are always ready and willing to assist students with their entire academic issues. She said she personally believes that, a first class student is moulded from level 100 and not at level 400. Therefore, students who wish to graduate with first class degree are to put in their best

efforts right from their first year. The freshmen were given opportunity to either ask questions or make contributions/comments on how the School could be a part of their success. The Heads of Departments and Senior Members present at the gathering were given few minutes to make comments.

The French and Chinese clubs put up performances at the event.

Members of the Committee:

- **Dr. E. Dzregah** (the chair of the Committee, Department of English)
- **Dr. Fusheini Hudu** (Department of Linguistics)
- **Dr. Albert Antwi Boasiako** (Department of Modern Languages)
- **Dr. Kouadio Djeban Yeboua** (Department of French)

Book Donation by Ghana Association of Hispanics to the Department of Modern Language

The event took place at the Casa Hispanica on Thursday, 25th February, 2016 at 12:35p.m. The books were presented by Dr. Joana Boampong, a Senior Lecturer, Spanish Section of the Department of Modern Languages on behalf of the Ghanaian Association of Hispanists (GAH).

The GAH was founded in August 2009 and has operated with the following purposes and mission:

To establish a professional network among its members;

To gain recognition and promote the academic contributions of members of the Association to Hispanic studies through conferences, newsletters, journals, and other media;

To attract and provide resources for the sustainable promotion of Hispanic studies among students in Ghana and other African countries;

To advance the scholarly dialogue on Afro-Hispanic studies.

1st School of Languages Conference (SOLCON1)

The School of Languages, University of Ghana, in collaboration with the Language Centre and the Central University College held a three-day conference from the 27th to 29th of October 2015 at the Institute of Statistical, Social and Economic Affairs, University of Ghana. The Conference, which was on the theme “Multilingualism in the African context: resource or challenge?” also featured a

colloquium on the use of the mother tongue as a medium of instruction in schools in contemporary Ghana. This Conference was the first to be held since the School of Languages was created in the 2013/2014 academic year, and it brought together over 200 language scholars from many tertiary institutions in the country as well as 12 other countries in various parts of Africa, Europe and North America.

In her welcome address at the Opening Ceremony, the Dean of the School of Languages, Professor Nana Aba Appiah Amfo noted that multilingualism is part of what defines the African continent hence, there is every need to deliberate on the challenges and opportunities it brings to our continent. She lauded the role of the Language Centre and the Central University College in the organization of the Conference.

The Vice-Chancellor of Central University and former Pro-Vice Chancellor of the University of Ghana, Professor Kwesi Yankah, traced the history of the collaboration between the Central University College and the University of Ghana, and assured the audience

of his determination to deepen this collaboration. He expressed delight in the fact that months after the conference organisation committee had chosen the use of mother tongue in education as a theme for its colloquium, the Minister of Education triggered a debate with her expression of her determination to strengthen the policy on mother tongue as medium of instruction in schools. This coincidence, he noted, made the colloquium all the more relevant.



Prof. Kwesi Yankah delivering his address at SOLCON1

The theme of the Conference was addressed in a keynote address by Professor. Tope Omoniyi, a professor of Sociolinguistics from



From left to right: Prof. N. A. A. Amfo, Prof. Tope Omoniyi and Prof. Agyei Mensah

UG-Carnegie African Diasporan Fellow. He noted that contrary to popular belief, multilingualism in

Africa is a resource, not a problem, adding that while Africa only has one-seventh of the world's population, the over 2000 languages spoken on the continent makes it a home to one-third of the world's languages. This gives Africans a comparative advantage, given the crucial role of language in development. The challenge faced by Africans is how to harness that resource for greater integration and development.

The Colloquium on Language of Education brought together all stakeholders in education, such as academics, educationists, policy experts and parents to deliberate on Ghana's mother tongue policy in schools and to assess its relevance to our educational system. Discussants agreed on the relevance of the policy and underscored the need to take

measures to address the challenges bedeviling the policy. They also emphasised the need to make the policy more inclusive by embracing more Ghanaian languages and making room for the use of more than one language within schools in multilingual urban areas.

Over 100 parallel and two plenary presentations were made during the three-day conference which touched on all aspects of language and literature including language in multilingual settings, language teaching and learning, language in education, language policy and planning and language use in various domains such as politics, business and religion.

The closing ceremony was witnessed by the Minister of Education, Hon. Professor Naana Opoku Agyeman, who gave a brief statement on the language of education policy. The ceremony was chaired by the Pro-Vice Chancellor for Academic and Student Affairs of UG, Professor Kwame Offei. Also present at both the opening and closing ceremonies were the Provost of the College of Humanities, Professor Samuel Agyei-Mensah and the Director of the Language

Centre, Dr. Gordon Adika.



Prof. Naana Opoku Agyeman (middle) with colleague professors after her address at SOLCON1



Participants at SOLCON1 listening to a lecture



Dr. S. K. Adika

PERSONALITY PROFILE

Prof. Helen Yitah

Helen Yitah is an Associate Professor of English and Head of the Department of English, University of Ghana (UG). Born in Navrongo in the Upper East Region of Ghana, she began her education at Abatey Primary School, then a girls' school, from where she sat the Common Entrance Examination and went on to Bawku Secondary School, having been attracted mainly by the letters "BAWSCO" which were inscribed on the school bus.

She obtained her B.A. degree in English and Linguistics (First Class Honours) and an MPhil in English at UG. In 2002 she was appointed Lecturer in the Department of English, where she taught for a year before she won a Fulbright scholarship to study in the USA.

She holds a PhD. in English (Postcolonial Literature) from the University of South Carolina (USC) Columbia, where she was also Assistant Director of the First Year English Program from August 2005- May 2006 and, Visiting Assistant Professor from 2006 to 2007.

Her teaching experience spans undergraduate courses in Composition, British and African American literature (at USC), undergraduate and graduate courses in African Literature, American and British Literature, The New Literatures in English, The Short Story, Masterpieces of

Criticism, Auto/Biographical Writing, Text and Context in the Renaissance, Writing and Representation, and Contemporary African Thought and Opinion. She has also supervised/directed and examined graduate theses, undergraduate long essays and independent studies at UG.

Her research interests and publications are in gender identity in literature, specifically on oral and written Ghanaian literature, children's literature in Ghana, African literature, African American literature and American literature. Her articles have appeared in many international

African Literatures, Obsidian III, Proverbium, The Journal of Postcolonial Writing, Children's Literature, Children's Literature in Education, The Journal of African Cultural Studies and The Southern Quarterly. She has also contributed to anthologies and encyclopedias, including *The Encyclopaedia of Postcolonial Literatures in English. (2nd Ed), Sex and Gender in an Era of Aids: Ghana at the Turn of the Millennium (2006), Broadening the Horizon: Critical Introductions to Amma Darko (2007), and Essays in Honour of Ama Ata Aidoo at 70: A Reader in African Cultural Studies (2012).*



Prof. Helen Yitah
(Head, Department of English)

Awards and honours conferred on Professor Yitah include William J. Fulbright Fellowship, 2003-2005; Rhude M. Patterson Fellowship for an Outstanding Woman in the Humanities (USC) – 2005; a First Place Award for Oral Presentations in the Humanities (USC) – 2005; W.T.C. Bates Award for Outstanding Graduate Student Writing (USC) – 2005 and First Year English Advocate (USC) - 2006/2007. In 2010 she was the

Bankhart Gender Speaker at Wabash College, Indiana. Prof. Yitah's other awards and honours include two UG Research Grants (2009-2011 and 2013-2015), The International Women's Forum

Leadership Foundation (IWF), Fellowship 2013-2014 and a Distinguished Scholar for University of Pretoria's Mellon Multidisciplinary Research Project.

She is an alumna of the International Women's Forum Leadership Foundation (IWF), having won an award as a Fellow of the Columbia Center for the Study of Social Difference (CSSD), Columbia University, and has served on the Millennium Excellence Awards Prize, Literature Category, (2015). She continues to serve on judging panels for other literary prizes including the "Love on the Road" Short Story competition and the Brunel University African Poetry Prize.

Prof. Yitah was the Editor of Legon Journal of the Humanities from 2009 to 2015. She is also copyeditor for the Ghana Geography Journal and the Ghana

Social Science Journal. She currently serves as reviewer/editorial advisor to several international journals including: Research in African Literatures, Multi-Ethnic Literature of the US (MELUS), and The Research Review and Oral Tradition. She is a member of the International Advisory Board for the Journal of African Cultural Studies.

At UG she has sat and continues to serve on various boards and committees, including the Akafo Hall Council; the Business and Executive Committee; The University Academic Board; the

Superannuation Board; Faculty of Arts Board; Faculty of Arts Appointments Committee; Faculty of Social Studies Board; Faculty of Arts Proposal Review Committee; Admissions Board and UG Handbook Review Committee.

She has been the UG Representative on the Appointments Board of the Methodist University College and currently serves on the Appointments Boards of several UG affiliated institutions, including the Ghana Institute of Languages and the Islamic University College, Ghana.

Professor Yitah's extension activities include her work with several NGOs in Ghana. She is an executive member of AAWORD Ghana; a Founding Member and Member of the Board of Directors of Student Aid (STAID), an NGO that offers financial assistance to selected University of Ghana

Medical students from poor backgrounds; Chairperson of the Governing Board of Swift Aid, an NGO that supports kayayei (head porters) from the northern part of Ghana who work and sleep on the streets of Accra; and Editorial Consultant for MBAASEM Foundation.

She has served as a resource person on projects including the University of Ghana-Carnegie

Project, the Mimotra Against AIDS project, Accra, and Project ACT (Active by Choice Today)—a programme by the Department of Psychology, University of South Carolina to encourage

adolescents to engage in physical activities in order to keep healthy.

She was the presenter for the award-winning "Read a Book a Week", a weekly book review programme on Radio Universe, University of Ghana (2002-2003). She edited the MBAASEM/Daily Graphic Writers Page, a literary arts page (sponsored by a collaborative effort between MBAASEM Foundation and Graphic Communications Group), from 2008-2010. She has also engaged in freelance editing, including Manu Herstein's *Akosua and Osman* which won a Cane Prize in 2012. Her more recent extension activities have resulted in a Carnegie Grant which saw the establishment of The University of Ghana-Carnegie Writing Centre which was launched in October 2013, and of which she is the founding Director.

DEPARTMENT OF FRENCH HOLDS INTERNATIONAL MULTIDISCIPLINARY COLLOQUIUM

The Department of French held a multidisciplinary international colloquium on Education, Linguistics, Cultures and Language Didactics. The Colloquium, which run from 11th to 13th February 2016 took place at the Maison Française, University of Ghana, Legon, was under the theme 'The contexts of teaching/learning French: realities, obstacles and prospects'. The rationale behind the colloquium was to commemorate Ghana's 10th anniversary as an affiliate member of the comity of francophone countries in 2006.

Ghana's acknowledgement of the importance of French in the country dates back to pre-independence times. Indeed, it is this acknowledgement which led to the introduction of the French language into the country's educational curriculum since 1948 at the Achimota College (Ayi-Adzimah: 2010). This long history of French in Ghana culminated in Ghana becoming an "affiliate member of francophone nations" at the 2006 Bucharest summit, though the status of affiliate member is reserved for States and governments to whom French is a language "used habitually and routinely and who share the values of the francophone world".

While highlighting the progress chalked by the language in the country, the colloquium also

engaged researchers in, and established the nexus among four major research areas:

Education;
Linguistics;
culture and
the didactics of language

The colloquium brought together several stakeholders including professional teachers and trainers to upgrade their knowledge in the teaching/learning of French. The colloquium attracted about 200 participants from eleven countries, namely: Ghana, Togo, Benin, Côte d'Ivoire, Mali, Niger, Egypt, Nigeria, Syria, Cameroon and France. In all, fifty paper presentations were delivered by researchers from universities across the named countries.

Present at the Opening Ceremony were the Vice-Chancellor of the University of Ghana, Legon, the Provost of the College of Humanities, a representative of the Dean of the School of Languages, a representative of the Minister of Foreign Affairs and Regional Integration, Heads of the Departments of French and Modern Languages, students and faculty of the French and Modern Languages Departments, as well as several officials from some embassies and other institutions. Also present as a special guest was the Director of the West Africa Regional Office for Francophonie (BRAO/OIF), Mr. T. Urayenez, and

several diplomatic representatives from France, Switzerland and Côte d'Ivoire.

The major thrusts of the multidisciplinary colloquium included:

- Teaching conditions in Africa and world-wide: realities and multiple perspectives;
- The place of French and the teaching of French in a bi-multilingual setting;
- Professional training of teachers;
- Francophonie in Africa and world-wide;
- Cultural diversity and conflict of cultures in the act of teaching.

The Organizing Committee comprised Dr. Robert Yennah, the Head of Department, Dr. Koffi Agbefle, Dr. Ayih Ayitey, Dr. Sewoenam Chachu and Mr. Mawushi Nutakor, all of the Department of French.

PROJECT REPORT

Language and Migration in Accra Project

(Led by: Dr. Gladys Ansah, Department of English)

This is a multisite project that discusses the language-migration nexus among female migrants, popularly known as Kayayei, in three urban markets in Accra, the capital of Ghana. The project in part examines linguistic challenges and coping strategies among these female migrants. Data were collected from three very busy and popular markets in Accra: Abogboghoshie, Madina and Dome markets. The main objectives of the project were:

To analyze the significance of language for the integration of female migrants from northern Ghana into their host community in Accra.

To understand how new migrants from sociolinguistically less diverse communities cope with the language challenge in Accra, a highly sociolinguistically diverse community.

To explain the role language plays in the social arrangements of female migrants and subsequently, restructuring of Accra.

To explain factors that influence language policy and language capital amongst migrants in Accra.

Major findings of the project include:

Akan (Twi) is the dominant language of business/interaction in all the three markets.

Majority of our respondents (93%) were ethnolinguistically non-Akan, originated from northern Ghana (Northern, Upper East and Upper West Regions). In addition, majority were seasonal migrants, moving to Accra only during the dry season and going back during the farming season.

As anticipated, several of these migrants had linguistic challenges in these markets.

Several mechanisms and strategies are developed to cope with these linguistic challenges. Chief of these strategies was identified as incipient bilingualism in migrants' L1 and Akan (Twi). Most of these migrants have not really learnt the dominant spoken language, Twi, in these markets. Instead, they have learnt few sentences which are very crucial in their everyday economic activities especially their dealings with customers. While it has been established in the literature that the desire by migrants to learn or adopt a second language is often motivated by the desire to interact meaningfully in the new community and integrate with members of the host community, the findings of this study suggest

that language choice in migratory circumstances may be equally motivated by economic reasons. The majority of our respondents who choose Akan to transact business in these markets, especially, Madina and Agboghoshie, appear not to be interested in interacting with speakers of the host communities beyond economic engagements. As we observed during the fieldwork, when these migrants were not working they moved or sat in clusters, and interacted with each other in their first languages. Besides, majority of the migrants did not appear to make any conscious effort to learn the second language beyond understanding certain basic words, phrases and sentences meant to ensure their effective engagement in the market economy.

Finally, this study also revealed that the settlement patterns of migrants in the host communities have consequences for language contact and linguistic habits that may emerge. In our particular case, she found that migrants from dominant linguistic backgrounds tend to form linguistic islands in the urban markets and the surrounding migrant communities.

Film-making in Ghana - The Journey

by Eugene A. Brown Nyarko

The pictures were either in black and white or sepia and you would often see most of the characters in "KHAKI" and white, or their printed African costumes. They were not very colourful because the cameras made them so, but the story lines left households discussing for years or probably left the nation with a unique jargon. I believe you still remember *Marijata, na woyɛ ɔwo* and *Diabolo Man*. Yes, that was the beginning of film making in Ghana.

Film-making in Ghana has gone through major changes over the years. We have not only moved to an era where we get beautiful, or I should say, colourful pictures and great sounds but also to an era where we can watch it anytime we feel the desire to do so.

The journey started quite so well and has produced veterans in the movie industry both for Ghallywood and Nollywood. The industry has died and resurrected. There have been times one could not spend a Sunday night without the popular *Akan Drama*. If you are very young or probably were born in the late 90's, you wouldn't have a practical clue to this. There have also been times when actors acted instead of reading scripts to their audience.

If you ever wanted to see Super O.D, Maame Dokono, Odompo or

Osofo Dadzie in action, all you

had to do was to finish your chores early, roam about your neighbourhood to find one 'krakye' in your vicinity who owned a T.V set that would take about 15 minutes to tune or heat up and enjoy the show.

Then in later years, the popular *I Told You So* was filmed. It was the first Ghanaian movie. The movie combines comedy in the local dialect to tell the story of how young women use wealth as a tool for marriage. At the end of the story, one gets a reminder of what might now be the cliché: "all that glitters is not gold." It featured actors and actresses who have now come to be known as veterans such as Margaret 'Araba Stamp' Quainoo, Lord Bob Cole and others. These names have just triggered memories, I guess. The movie is a classic. I should think that, this movie paved the way for what would later become great movies like *Love Brewed in the African Pot*, *Kukurantumi: Road to Accra* and *Heritage Africa*.

Then, it is as if that era of quality storyline movies died and the new era with a great dose of witchcraft, voodoo, nudity and shallow screenplay emerged. As for such movies, I dare not give examples because you know more than I do since we are all in the era. I do not doubt the fact that quality Ghanaian movies is

still emerging but I am rather worried about how the effort we put in them is so little. I am worried

about the overly poor depiction of our culture. I am also worried because we do not want to learn from veteran movie producers and industry players and I am also troubled about how we portray our own culture in ways that mock our identity; portraying ourselves in backward ways so much so that they paint us in ways we find so hard to change.

Most Ghanaian movies have now become something most people wouldn't want to watch twice. It is not because they do not want to watch them but because the movies never inspire you to watch them again.

I cannot condemn "Kumawood" neither can I downplay about what has now been described as "Accrawood" by Ghanaians because the former some few years ago revived Film making in Ghana. A new revolution of Film making was sparked by them. They have both also played huge roles in making Ghallywood special and broadcasting our rich Ghanaian culture abroad. However, there is this one thing I have always wanted them to know, and that is dealing with their approach to what they consider "reality" in movies.

Yes, we might think they do but we must know that reality is not always about voodoo or witchcraft or poverty and neither is it always a love story. It is about

our beautiful culture, the lovely people and amazing sceneries. Reality, also, is not always about abusive words. Yes, all these come together to form the realities of life and define who we are but to continue to tell just a single story about ourselves will be like flattening our own experiences. That is very dangerous. I think we will talk more about this some other time.

The Ghanaian movie industry then produced veterans who seem to have been lost now but the truth is, those people understood what movie making was about. They didn't just make it script reading, they put life in the scripts. They worked so hard to make you get glued to your T.V set. The likes of Regina Pornotey, Monica Quarcopoom, Victor Lutterodt, Mac Jordan Amartey, Kofi Bucknor, Professor Martin Owusu, Kofi Middleton Mends, Grace Omaboe (Maame Dokono)S, Grace Nortey, David

Dontoh, Akorfah Edjeani Asiedu, Shiela Nortey, Eunice Banini, Edinam Atatsi, Mawuli Semevor, Dzifa Gomashie, Juliet Asante and George Williams have played very vital roles in bringing the journey this far. They made movie watching a delight and cinemas made money.

Now, a new breed of great talent has also emerged. In fact, we cannot talk about movie making in Ghana without talking about great directors and producers such as Kwaw Ansah, Shirley Frimpong Manso, Nyankonton Productions, Abdul Salam Mumuni, AA Productions, Leila Djansi and others one cannot also talk about movies without the mention of Kofi Adu, Jackie Appiah, Rose Mensah, Meczy Asiedu, Yvonne Nelson, Nana Ama McBrown, Emelia Brobbey, Yvonne Okoro, John Dumelo, Gloria Sarfo, Majid Michel, Ama K., Abebrese, Naa Ashorkor and other great talents. They are

doing very well but there is more room for improvement. We cannot go on watching Ghanaian movies and keep hearing American accents or see subtitles that do not in any way correspond with whatever is being said in the local language.

Inasmuch as there are still flaws in our productions, I believe the journey from the days of *I Told You So* to this day of *Adams Apples* has not been easy but these people have done and are still doing very well in selling Ghana Abroad. We can chide them but we should know that when a handshake crosses the elbows, it gets a different name.

In the Womb of My Mother

by Ortiz Antwi

My father brought the idea
 You accepted it and kept me safely in your womb
 Like a tenant you were my landlord
 fed on what you ate, drank on what you drank
 Your joy and happiness made me kick you from the inside
 To let you know I was happy too
 I overheard all your contemplations
 I knew right from your womb what a wonderful woman you are
 I enjoyed all the sweet melodies you sung for me
 With my eyes closed I imagined your beauty
 I was filled with enthusiasm and wishes
 I wanted to come out and say to you "I love you"
 I wanted to come out and call you "mama" so I kicked you
 You were thrilled that your baby was strong

But I had my reasons
 I was becoming of age so I became impatient
 But all of a sudden I heard you cry I
 I could hear voices instructing you
 Push! Push! you are doing well, push!
 I could not bear the thought of my mums cry
 So I decided to come out but this time it was easier
 I felt like I was being pushed out
 I felt the pain in your cry
 I knew what I would do when I am out
 Finally I was out and to my surprise
 I saw people who were just like me but bigger
 I cannot kick them all; I thought
 So I began to cry to win their sympathy and to let my
 mum go

Research News

Projects

THE LANGUAGE AND MEDICINE PROJECT

(Led by Prof. Nana Aba Appiah Amfo, Department of Linguistics)

This project sought to examine the gap between lay people's conceptualization and hence articulation of psychiatric and other medical conditions and that of medical practitioners. It examined the expression of mental illnesses within Akan communities, focusing on (1) how people with mental challenges are described and referred to in our everyday interactions; (2) how the expression of mental illnesses is captured in 'traditional wisdom', as espoused in Akan proverbs, idioms and popular sayings; (3) how patients of mental illnesses and other medical conditions (and their caregivers) present their symptoms to medical practitioners; (4) how health workers interpret the patients' presentation of symptoms in mental and general health care.

Recent Publications

Agbefle, Koffi Ganyo (2015). Pour un bilinguisme langues nationales-français à l'école primaire au Togo : s'inspirer de l'expérience anglophone ghanéenne? *Journal No spécial du Projet ELAN-OIF Afrique, Université de Montpellier III*.

Nutakor M. & Agbefle, K. G. (2015). Approche communicative et enseignement/apprentissage du FLE dans le contexte plurilingue ghanéen. Regard sur trois manuels d'enseignement: Arc-en-ciel, Latitudes et Panorama. *International Journal of Humanities and Cultural Studies (IJHCS)*1(3).

Adjei, Mawuli, Sela Kodjo Adjei (2015). Still Animation as an Alternative Means of Disseminating Ananse Stories for Ghanaian Children. In Bea Lundt & Ulrich Mazolph (Ed.), *Narrating (Hi)Stories: Storytelling in West Africa* (pp.19-46). Zurich: Lit Verlag GMBh & Co.

Agbetsoamedo, Yvonne and Agbedor, Paul (2015). Ewe. In N. Grandi & L. Kortvelyessy (Eds.), *Edinburgh Handbook of Evaluative Morphology*. Edinburgh University Press.

Dzahene-Quarshie, Josephine & Lioba Moshi (2014). The Dilemma of language in Education Policies in Ghana and Tanzania. *Cross-Cultural Studies* 34, 149-174.

APPOINTMENTS AND PROMOTIONS

2015/2016 ACADEMIC YEAR

<u>Name</u>	<u>Position & Date</u>	<u>Department</u>
Dr. Grace Diabah	Senior Lecturer, 2015	Linguistics
Dr. Tenon Kone	Lecturer, 2015	Spanish
Mr. Kofi Darko Ankrah	Assistant Lecturer, 2015	English
Mr. Mubarak Hidir Mohammed	Assistant Lecturer, 2015	Arabic
Ms. Nina Okagbue	Tutor, 2015	French
Mrs. Elisabeth Marie-France Kuoaoovi	Tutor, 2015	French

EXAMS/GRADUATION MATTERS

Get reliable answers and advice for all questions about courses, examinations and graduation from SOL experienced Academic Advisors

Question:

Must I re-sit courses I failed (Grade F) at lower levels (level 100 and level 200) even if I have since left the Department or I am no longer a student of that Department?

Answer:

All core courses, from level 100 to level 400 MUST be passed in order to graduate. Since all level 100 and level 200 courses are core, Grade F in any level 100 and level 200 course must be redeemed (retaken and passed).

FOR MORE INFORMATION

Do you have burning questions regarding course requirements, grading system, grades and examinations? Please write to the Editor, SOL Newsletter.

EMAIL:
thevoiceofsol@gmail.com

My Short Skirt: A Retrospective

The first short skirt I ever owned was a tutu. I was four years old. It was a shocking puff of pale-pink tulle that stuck straight out from my waist. It matched the pastel tones of the rest of the outfit, the mandatory leotard and ridiculously itchy tights, but there was always something special about that tutu. I would wear it at home all the time, over my ordinary day-time clothing. I could put on everything else, from the soft-soled ballet slippers to the mandatory hair bun and feel nothing. The second time I slipped that sparkly tutu on, I felt like a proper princess. The centre of attention. A star. They oohed and ahhed over me in that tutu, pinched my cheeks and called me adorable.

My next short skirt came when I was about 9 years old. I was out of ballet classes at that point but that had in no way decreased my desire for frilly, pink, nonsensical clothing. It was two tiers of filmy pink chiffon that looked like liquid cotton candy when I twirled. I would've worn it everywhere if they'd let me. I was 'such a pretty girl' in that skirt. That's what they said in appreciative tones as I spun round the garden in tight circles. I only ever stopped when the dizziness overwhelmed me and I found myself flat on my back with the grass tickling my thighs.

At thirteen, my short skirt was a very brief expanse of denim fabric. I cut it out of a pair of old jeans and it didn't leave very much to the imagination. We all wore our skirts like that. DIY projects with intentionally frayed hemlines cut from faded fabric that leant our little rich girl reputations some much needed street credit. This skirt got mixed reviews. My parents hated it; they told me just as much in long rants that I never really listened to...because the boys loved them. I was very young and very dumb and that combination meant that in any given situation, what our thoughtless teenage male counterparts threw at us would seem infinitely wiser than parental advice. We wore them as often as we could. Our parents gritted their teeth; the boys rubbed their hands in delight.

At sixteen, I graduated to a black, faux-leather skirt so tight that walking became a near impossibility. It looked extremely 'cool' though, so I would just have to put up with the awkwardness of my short steps and hope that I could restore proper circulation in my thighs later with a vigorous massage and a mumbled prayer. The conversation had changed completely. On every side all I ever heard was that I was 'asking for it'

if I left the house looking like that. I did not understand what the 'it' in that equation could possibly be referring to so I left it alone and focused on how edgy I looked. The conversation raged on in spite of me.

By the time I hit twenty-one, the short skirts stopped. I switched to jeans and floor-length dresses. I just wanted them to shut up. I wanted the world to stop screaming about us. Me and my short skirts, every other girl and their short skirts, we belonged to ourselves. Not them.

It didn't matter. Apparently now, the short skirt wasn't the only invitation. We had to wonder whether we looked a man in the eye for a moment too long because that was 'asking for it' too. If we laughed at a joke he told at a bar, the same rule applied. What were we even doing in those bars, anyway? Why didn't we keep ourselves holed up at home like the rest of the good girls? To be a woman outside of my house was to be in a perpetual state of open invitation. My short skirt wasn't the problem. In truth, it had never been.

LINGUISTICS STUDENTS' ASSOCIATION (LINGSA) REPORT

by James Darko

Linguistics is our best tool for bringing about social change and SF is our best tool for testing such changes before they are implemented in the real world, therefore the conjunction of the two is desirable and should be useful. -Suzette Hade Elgin

To some, it was a dream come true; to others, it was just a decision they had to but to us, it was a great opportunity well seized to be admitted into the Linguistics Department and to be elected as LINGSA executives. As fresh fastidious students, ignorant but curious to unravel what Linguistics is, our curiosity is not only in Linguistics but also LINGSA. Recounting and reflecting on the days as freshmen in the department of linguistics, LINGSA was one of the least things we ever dreamt of but along the way we happened to fall in love with it. LINGSA happens to be one of the prestigious student associations existing on our campus. Linguistics Students' Association is the full name and language is what we study.

Language as a tool in the hand of linguists has always been fascinating. As ancient as language is, we cannot turn a blind eye to its relevance in society. In the year 1990, LINGSA was founded to fraternize with all students in the department of linguistics across all the

University of Ghana campuses. This initiative was geared towards recognising students' needs and meeting them. Countless achievements have been chalked by LINGSA through the efforts and toils of its leaders several years down the line from its birth till now. There are several prominent personalities in the caucus of the nation at large and department in particular who have been associates of LINGSA.

The road has not been very easy in especially leading a bunch of prospective linguists and nation builders. It has been accompanied by fierce struggle and sandwiched with challenges. In all these, we find comfort in the words of Niccolo Machiavelli "where the willingness is great, the difficulties can't be great. Where there is a will, there is a way". We saw ways in our will to making impact and have fortunately increased our membership to about 600 registered students at both Legon campus and City campus.

"Without debate, without criticism, no administration, no

country, no republic can survive" J.F. Kennedy. The 2015/16 LINGSA executives have instituted LINGSA PARLIAMENT to provide a platform where students will deliberate and brainstorm on issues pertaining to Linguistics, the association and current national and international affairs. As our slogan goes "No Language, No society", we continue to encourage the entire students of Linguistics to see LIFE in the course they are reading. Linguistics is more practical than what we imagine and think of it. Since language is the fulcrum of linguistics and Society exist only where there is a language, LINGUISTS are the most equipped personalities to transform society.

LINGSA is looking forward to a day not far from now when every affair of society will not be determined by scientists nor politicians but linguists. At that point, society will be an empire *ad infinitum* with the cutlass right in the hands of the farmer.

AYEKOO LINGSA... STILL NO LANGUAGE NO, SOCIETY!!!

The Voice

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