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## Contemporary English Loan-Words in Ewe: A Sociolinguistic Appraisal

**Dr. Mawuli Adjei**
Department of English, University of Ghana, Legon, Ghana
**G. Edzordzi Agbozo**
Department of Language and Literature
Norwegian University of Science and Technology, Trondheim, Norway

*Abstract*
*As part of the colonial hangover, English continues to exert enormous influence on African languages. This is particularly true of registers and technical words connected with modern technology, medicine, law, politics, sports and games, among others. Like most languages, Ewe has been enriched by borrowings and loan words from other linguistic jurisdictions, both proximate and distant. While the corpus of borrowings from other languages appears to be stabilized or static, those from English continue to enlarge. Borrowings from English can be placed in two main categories – those in the domain of literates and those in the domain of non-literates. In this discussion, an attempt is made to highlight the contexts in which English borrowings occur and how they continue to shape the Ewe language.*

*Key words: borrowing, code-switching, Ewe, pedantic rendition, translation*

## 1. Introduction

Language contact has become a part of human evolution and has been the subject of debates in terms of the influence of contact-induced change in the history of languages. The general view today is that, indeed, languages are shaped and enriched by strands from different language sources as peoples and cultures come into contact. As to the range of possibilities, it appears that, in any speech community, "there are in principle no limits (except those imposed by Universal Grammar) to what speakers of different languages will adopt and adapt from one another, given the right opportunity" (Winford, 2003:5). For example, creoles and patois result from socio-culturalism and multilingualism.

Although borrowing and code-switching have been thoroughly investigated by language experts over the years, there are still grey areas and disagreements over identification and analysis, especially with regard to monolingualism and bilingualism. Whereas Poplack and Sankoff (1988) and Muysken (1984) argue that language contact phenomena should be clearly demarcated, Myers-Scotton (1993), Heller (1988) and Bentahila and Davies (1991) contend that borrowing and code-switching are not differentiated by the bilingual speaker and therefore should not be considered as two distinct entities. As noted by Essizewa (2010), citing Myers-Scotton (1988, 1992) and Kachru (1982), one of the main distinctions made by linguists on borrowing and code-switching is that borrowing is used both by monolinguals and bilinguals, whereas code-switching is used only by bilinguals.

As already indicated, borrowing is a major area of study under contact linguistics. However, the degree to which a language admits to borrowing depends on a number of cultural, social, political and technological factors, such as travel, commerce, colonization, conquest, education or other varied mediums of exposure. Once borrowing occurs, it affects the phonology, morphology, syntax, semantics and vocabulary of the language in question.

This research is premised on the assumption that English loan-words in Ewe occur due to the exposure of Ewe speakers to English in different social, formal and informal contexts. As borrowing increases, Ewe is losing many words and Ewe-English code-switching and code-mixing are on the ascendancy.

## 2. Methodology

The data for this study was collected over a three-year period (2008-2011) through individual and group conversations in urban (Lashibi-Tema) and rural settings (Atiteti, Klikor, Weta and Afiadenyigba) in a multiplicity of social interactive contexts. Other sources of data included news broadcasts, social/political discussions/debates and announcements on the Ghana Broadcasting Corporation, Radio Gold (Accra) and Jubilee FM (Keta) as well as interviews.

Over the three-year period, the researchers documented occurrences of code-switching during conversations, in the electronic media (radio and TV) and interviews. The interactive contexts were random, natural and spontaneous. The data was analyzed qualitatively.

## 3. The Ewe Language

Ewe is spoken, with different dialectal variations, by approximately six million people in Ghana, Togo, Benin and marginally in the Badagry area of south-western Nigeria. It belongs to the "Kwa" group of languages. H.B. Capo, a member of the Working Group of the West African Languages Congress, Cotonou, Benin (1980), suggested that Ewe and other related languages be classified under the term "Gbe", meaning 'language' in Ewe, Fon, Ga-Dangbe and others (Fiamafle, 2005:5).

### 3.1. Early and Contemporary Studies of Ewe

The first Ewe grammar was published by J. B. Schlegel, a Bremen missionary in 1857. Schlegel's work marked the beginning of a wave of studies into the various Gbe languages. But it was another missionary, Diedrich Westermann, who was to become one of the most notable scholars of Ewe language and literature in the first half of the twentieth century. Among his most important works on Ewe is his *A Study of the Ewe language* (1930).

From 1930 on, there have been many researches into Gbe languages (including Ewe). Much credit goes to Capo, whose researches from the late 1970s and early 1980s resulted in an internal classification of the Gbe languages and in a reconstruction of the proto-Gbe phonology. In his *Renaissance du Gbe* (1988), the internal classification of Gbe was published in full for the first time (Essizewa, 2010).

Other contemporary studies of the Ewe language include Ansre (1961), Duthie (1981), Helma (1995), Atakpa (1997), Ameka (2001), Fiamavle (2005), Essegbey (2008) and Motte (2013).

### 3.2. History of Borrowing

Borrowing from European languages, in contradistinction to Western Sudanic languages with which the Ewe language has had contact, dates far back in time. However, with the arrival of the Dutch and Danish traders on the Gold Coast (circa 1500 to 1650), Ewe was set for external linguistic influences. Although the languages generally used in trade at this time were Portuguese and Dutch, some loanwords remain from this period; for example, *atrapo* ('stairs') from Dutch 'trap' and *ɖuku* ('piece of cloth') from Dutch 'doek' or Danish 'dug'.

European rule was first introduced to the Ewe territory in 1850 by Britain. It did not encompass the entire territory, being extended to Aŋlɔ̃ (Anlo), first in 1850, later more permanently in 1854, and thereafter gradually along the eastern coast. It was only with the coming of Germany in 1884 that attempts were made to establish British rule over the entire Ewe territory in the hinterland and further east along the coast. This expansion was matched by the Germans. Ultimately, as a result of boundary agreements signed between Britain and Germany, the country inhabited by the Ewe was split between the two powers. One part became part of the Gold Coast Colony under British rule and the other part the German Protectorate of Togo (Amenumey, 1989:3-4). Thus, the influence of the English language on the Ewe language can be traced to the impact of colonial and missionary language policy in the Gold Coast in general. As Sackey (1997:128) observes,

Because the country had no single indigenous language which was the mother tongue of all the citizens, and also the language of government, law, education and social intercourse at all levels, it was relatively easy for English, assisted by the colonial government, to penetrate various aspects of social life and activity in varying degrees.

As an area of linguistic study and research, Asilevi (1990), Dzameshie (1994, 1996) and Amuzu (1998, 2005a, 2005b, 2009) have done extensive work on CS among Ewe bilinguals. Asilevi, in particular, stresses that:

This linguistic symbiosis has increasingly become a communicative praxis, socially acceptable as a feature of daily conversational discourse in all aspects of informal interaction, of Ewe-English bilinguals. In essence, this speech habit has become an integral part of their communicative performance and has so permeated the informal speech of the [Ewe] bilingual youth that one can rightly speculate that it will be no distant time when an Ewe native speaker ought to have some knowledge of English before he can function in his own speech community (Asilevi 1990:2).

## 4. Contexts and Domains

Many English words have found their way into Ewe through social, cultural and political influences. Socio-culturally, it is becoming more and more attractive for literates and non-literates alike to lace their speeches with English words. For literates, most of whom are becoming more and more comfortable in the usage of English than Ewe, these English words and expressions come in handy and unconsciously, especially if their cognitive attributes are not indigenous to Ewe. The literates, in turn, have influenced the non-literates for whom a sprinkling of English in everyday speech is a mark of social esteem and civilization. Besides, it is a way of bridging the communication gap between literates and non-literates who interact in close communion on a daily basis.

On the other hand, vocabulary connected with new experiences relating to politics, governance, administration, justice and law are so diffuse that their seepage into Ewe is only a natural consequence. Below are some of those influences:

### 4.1. Technology

Borrowings with regard to lexical items that are technologically outside the customary experience of Ewe speakers tend to retain their form. They are freely received and accommodated in the language. Examples of such borrowings are as follows:

- Me-di  be ma   zu drava.
  [I-want to FUT be driver]
  I want to become a driver.

- Televisin me-le       aƒe-me       na-mi o-a?
  [Television NEG-have home-inside for-you NEG-INT.]
  Don't you have television at home?
- Moto   dzi nɔnɔ       sese.
  [Motor on sit(PROG.) difficult]
  Sitting on a motor-(cycle/bike) is difficult.
- Nye me   nya   naneke tso     kɔmpita   ŋu   o.
  [I    NEG  know  nothing about computer about NEG]
  I know nothing about computers.
- Mekaniki ma ƒe   dɔwɔwɔ      me-dze-a     ŋu-nye     o.
  [Mechanic FOC POSS work(PROG) NEG-like-ASP me-POSS NEG]
  I'm not satisfied with that mechanic's competence.
- Me-se wo  ŋkɔ  le  radio dzi.
  [I-hear your name BE radio on]
  I have heard your name on the radio.
- Tsɔ  aha  ɖeka le   fridzi me vɛ   na-m.
  [Pick drink one   BE fridge in  bring give-me]
  Bring me one drink from the fridge.
- Me-ƒle draya yeye na sr̃ɔ-nye.
  [I-buy dryer  new for wife-my]
  I've bought a new dryer for my wife.

Most of the items dealing with new technology are not filtered through much process of corruption. They are adapted. No approximations are made since these lexical items do not already exist in the Ewe language. In the examples above, "driver", "television", "motor", "computer", "mechanic", "radio", "fridge" and "dryer" are used almost in the form in which they have been borrowed, since the words are associated with phenomena outside the Ewe experience. However, there are exceptions to this practice. For example, although the word *vukula* (driver) exists in Ewe, it has been overtaken by the English "driver", the reason being that *vukula* refers to a canoe paddler or ferryman *(tɔdzivukula)*. Similarly, the English word "mechanic" is used as an omnibus word which stands for a variety of remedial skills in relation to machines or mechanical devices. In both cases, research shows that where an item already exists in Ewe, the English item, due to wider usage and superiority in terms of sophistication and polish, predominates and eventually eliminates the former. Secondly, where an item already exists, there is a natural propensity towards approximation; invariably, the English version is selected.

*4.2. Religion (Christianity)*
The early Bremen missionaries, as part of spreading the Christian faith to the Ewe people, studied the Ewe language and established its orthography. From their time, and with their help, the standard form of Ewe was started with the Aŋl̃ɔ (Anlo) dialect. With time, all the Ewe dialects became part of it. According to Awoonor (1975: 132), "The Bible was [the] first [book] translated into Anlo-Ewe dialect, even though other dialects continued to enjoy currency to some extent, both in the pulpit and in the classroom". However, today, both the pulpit and the classroom can hardly be relied upon as regulators of the language or custodians of its purity. With the rise in Charismatic and Pentecostal revivalism in Ghana in the last three decades, a lot of English words drawn from Christendom have found their way into Ewe vocabulary—used freely by literates and non-literates alike. They include: *ɖikon* (deacon), *elɖa* (elder), *ɖilivrans* (deliverance), *kɔnvɛsin* (convention), *kɔminiɔ* (communion), *Holi Gost* (Holy Ghost), *prɛya kamp* (prayer camp), *anɔitiŋ ɔil* (anointing oil), *ɔlnait* (all-night), *ɛngedzimɛnt* (engagement), *wɛɖiŋ* (wedding), *blɛziŋ* (blessing).
Examples:

- Me zu        *elɖa*.
  [I    become elder]
  *I have become an elder.*

Note, however, that 'elder' is seen as an official position in the Church and is used only in this context; thus its use does not extend to kinship or other social and cultural relationships.

- È-hia        na *ɖilivrans*.
  [You-need for deliverance]
  *You need deliverance.*
- Me da wo ɖe *Holi Gost* ƒe     kpɔkplɔ    te.
  [I put you on Holy Ghost POSS leadership under]
  *I've placed you under the protection of the Holy Ghost.*
- Wo    kplɔ-e     yi ɖe *prɛya kamp*  le Dzodze.
  [They lead-FOC go to prayer camp in Dzodze (name of place)]
  *They've taken him/her to a prayer camp at Dzodze.*
- Mie di    be mia wɔ  *blɛziŋ*   vi-aɖe.
  [We want to we make blessing small-some]
  *We want to have a little/small blessing.*

- E-gblẽ        ɖevi la      ɖe xɔ-me  he-yi   ɔlnait.
  [S/he-leave child DET in room-in and-go all-night]
  *S/he left the child in the room for (an) all-night [worship].*

Note that, although the concept of 'vigil', 'wake' or 'all-night' activity (*ŋudɔdɔ*) exists in the language in connection with funerals, it does not apply in this context, even if it is of a religious or spiritual nature. Thus, like 'elder' in (a) above, many words and expressions drawn from Christendom have acquired a specialized status. The explanation for this development is that these words and expressions are not seen as conveying the same meanings in Ewe even though, practically, they refer to the same things. For instance, '*prɛya kamp*' (prayer camp) or '*kɔnvɛsin*' (convention) will not apply to a place of worship where traditional religious groups such as Brɛkɛtɛ, Yeʋe (Yewe) or Kpɔ̃li worshippers gather for prayers and other rituals. Here, the original Ewe words will apply, even among highly literate people.

### 4.3. Death/Health/Medicine

As Ewe society becomes more and more sophisticated and modernized, many Ewe words are losing ground to English in such spheres as death, healthcare, funerals, marriage etc. Medical conditions such as AIDS, diabetes, stroke and malaria, which are major killers in Africa, have been duly assimilated into Ewe. Apart from AIDS, which is a relatively new pandemic and therefore non-existent in Ewe vocabulary, diabetes (*suklidɔ*), stroke (*akpaɖekadɔ*) and malaria (*asrã*) are well known in Ewe. Yet, for a majority of Ewe speakers today, it is more convenient to say '*dabitis*', '*strok(i)*' and '*maledia*'. This is partly due to the fact that these conditions – particularly malaria and AIDS – have been subjects of massive publicity, sensitization and education among the populace. In the case of AIDS (which was initially regarded as an alien condition), there were earlier attempts to craft an Ewe word for it, such as '*Esi(vi)*' (a corruption of AIDS and parody of the female Sunday-born name Esi), '*kuɖidɔ*' (wasting sickness) and '*ɖikanaku*' (grow lean and die), but these have fizzled out. However, in some areas, '*ɖikanaku*' is still used, in a pejorative sense, because of the high mortality associated with AIDS.

In like manner, medical vocabulary and pharmacopoeia such as '*ɖɔkita*' (doctor)—which also stands for any medical facility (clinic, hospital, dispensary)—'*nɔs(i)*' (nurse), '*pɛnɛsili*' (penicillin), '*aspiri*' (aspirin) and '*biko*'' (Vitamin B-Complex) have long been borrowed into Ewe. New vocabulary include '*mɔtsri*' (mortuary), '*tiata*' (theatre), '*ganakologis*' (gyaenacologist), '*dripu*' (drip – intravenous infusion) and '*ambulas(i)*' (ambulance).

### 4.4. Governance/Politics/Law

For a long time, vocabulary pertaining to government/governance, politics, Western jurisprudence and administration have excited literate and non-literate speakers of Ewe. These have their foundations in the colonial administration and are still very much influential in displacing Ewe words in such domains, especially since decentralization and grassroots politics under the PNDC government in the mid-1980s and the transition to constitutional rule in 1992. The following words are now commonly used in Ewe: *MP* (MP: Member of Parliament), *Palimɛnti* (Parliament), *Asembli* (Assembly), *Asembliman* (Assemblyman), *kɔmiti* (committee), *voti* (vote), *gɔvment* (government), *lɔya* (lawyer), *sansin* (sanction), *mosin* (motion), *apil* (appeal), *dzadz(i)* (judge), *haikɔt(u)* (high court), *madzistret* (magistrate), *dok* (dock), *seketri* (secretary), *trezɔ* (treasurer), *mitin* (meeting), *masialɔ* (martial law), *kɔmisin* (commission).
Examples:

- E-di        be ye-a-yi      *Paliment* godogodo.
  [S/he-want to FOC-FUT-go Parliament by all means]
  *S/he wants to go to Parliament by all means.*
- Mie-di      be mia *fɔm*(e) *kɔmiti*     ne wo-a        ge-de  nya    la    me.
  [We-want to we form    committee to FOC-FUT go-into matter DET in]
  *We want to form a committee to look into the matter.*
- *Voti*  me-le          asi-wo       o-a?
  [Vote NEG-MODAL hand-you NEG-INT.]
  *Don't you have a vote?*
- *Gɔvment-e-a*            me   agbagba dzem kuraa o.
  [Government-FOC-DET NEG effort    cut    at all  NEG]
  *The government isn't pulling its weight at all.*
- Me-yi-na   *redzitresin* wɔ  ge.
  [I-go-ASP registrations do FUT]
  *I'm going to do registration (I'm going to register).*
- Me ɖe        *apil.*
  [I   extract appeal]
  *I have appealed.*
- E-dze        be wo-a     *sansin* ame-si-wo       me va    *mitin*
  [S/he-right that they-FUT sanction person-who-PL NEG come meeting
  la o.
  DET NEG]
  *They have to sanction those who absented themselves from the meeting.*

- Wo    da  *sansin*  ɖe ame-aɖe-wo    dzi.
  [They put sanction on person-some-PL on]
  *They have placed a sanction on some people.*
- E-gbugbɔ  bia-m  *masialɔ*   be  *dzadzi*-e   me-nye    ha?
  [S/he-again ask-me martial law that judge-FOC me-POSS (emphasis)]
  *S/he rather asked me martial law if I was a judge.*

Items (b), (f), (g), (h) and (i) have syntactic, lexical and semantic implications. It is interesting to note that in example (b) the loan-word, "committee", is not borrowed in isolation but comes complete with its normal English co locative word "form"—as in *to form a committee*. It is interesting to note that Ewe 'doing words' such as *wɔ* (do), *ɖo* (establish) *fofu* (put together/assemble) etc. are disregarded in preference for the English word "form".

In example (f), whereas in English, as a verb, "appeal" is used both transitively and intransitively, as well as a noun, in Ewe, it is used simply as a noun—literally, "I have extracted (*ɖe* (with low tone)) an appeal".

However, in examples (g) and (h), "sanction" is used both as a verb (g) and a noun (h). In (h) in particular, *ɖe* (with high tone) (placed/imposed) which precedes the loan-word *sansi* corresponds almost perfectly with English usage, as in: "They have imposed sanctions on Iran."

Example (i) is an entirely different proposition. The expression "martial law" is used out of context. *Masialɔ* ("martial law") in Ewe means a question that is considered impolite and annoying or simply a retort during a hot exchange between two feuding persons. Its military/martial import derives from its authoritative and brusque composition; as if from a superior officer talking down to an inferior officer, demanding a "yes" or "no" answer. It is probably from the concept of 'court martial'.

*4.5. Purity versus Corruptibility*

There are linguistically-induced attitudes to whether a borrowed item retains its original form or is corrupted in usage. One area where purity is maintained is in the use of abbreviations and acronyms. By their nature, acronyms change in different languages due to word order. For example, AIDS (Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome) becomes SIDA (Syndrome Immune Deficitaire Acquis) in French. This is not the case in Ewe. Users of the language do not think it necessary to convert to Ewe the English words which the abbreviations or acronyms represent. They are thus assimilated wholesale. The following abbreviations are notable:

       CYO (Catholic Youth Organization)
       IGP (Inspector-General of Police)
       MTTU (Motor Transport and Traffic Unit)
       GPRTU (Ghana Private Road Transport Union)
       AMA (Accra Metropolitan Authority)
       MP (Member of Parliament)
       JSS (Junior Secondary School)

Once these acronyms are internalized, they are used as normal Ewe words and inflected as such as in the following examples:

- *CYO*-vi-wo    ʋu  ƒo-ge   egbea.
  [CYO-child-PL drum beat-FUT today]
  *The CYO 'children' are going to drum today.*
- Wo   bu   fɔ̃   *IGP* la  vevie.
  [They count crime IGP DET severly]
  *They reprimanded the IGP severely.*
- *MTTU*-tɔ-wo    ga-tso   mɔ.
  [MTTU-POSS-PL again-cross road]
  *The MTU people have mounted a road check again.*
- *JSS*-vi-a-wo    gbɔ  na.
  [JSS-child-DET-PL come PROG]
  *The JSS 'children' are coming.*

A pattern of usage that crystallizes from the examples above is that, where an abbreviation represents a collective entity, seen as people belonging to a body, it is usually inflected with a plural marker affix (*'tɔwo'* for adult collectivity and *'viwo'* for juvenile / youthful / diminutive collectivity). However, where the abbreviation represents a unitary / individual referent or a collective seen as one unit or body, the definite article '*la*' ('the') is affixed (as in *IGP la*; *MP la*).

It is also to be noted that these abbreviations can be used independently – without any inflexions—when they are employed in a strictly nominal sense as in:

- *IGP* me  le  dukɔ-a     me o-a?
  [IGP NEG BE country-DET in NEG-INT]
  *Isn't there an IGP in the country?*
- Wo   le  *JSS* tu-ge    na-mi.
  [They BE JSS build-FUT for-us]
  *They are going to construct a JSS for us.*

- *CYO*  le   mia kpe-m.
  [CYO BE you invite-PROG]
  *CYO is inviting you.*
- *MP* yeye le   mia si.
  [MP new BE we POSS]
  *We have a new MP.*

So pervasive is the seepage of English words and expressions into the mainstream of Ewe discourse that even folk narratives/storytelling (*glitoto*) is affected. It is interesting to note that borrowing is very extensive at the elementary school level. In a field survey at Tegbi in the Keta District to test pupils' competence in storytelling in Ewe, the following borrowings were recorded by Komasi (2005):

- Esi    wo ɖo     *kritika point*a nu       la…
  [When it   reached critical point mouth DET…]
  *When it got to the critical point*…
- Ame-sia-me           ɖu nu   nyuie *fine*.
  [Person-every-person eat thing well fine]
  *Everyone ate very well (fine).*
- E-wɔ      *sign* na kese    be   ne    va.
  [S/he-make sign to monkey that AUX come]
  *He signaled (made a sign) to monkey to come.*
- Wo   kpɔ dzidzɔ ale gbegbe be,  wo   ŋutɔ     a-nyã      be,   *yes*.
  [They see joy    so  much that, you yourself  FUT-know that, yes ]
  *They were so overjoyed that you yourself will affirm that, 'yes' (this is real enjoyment).*
- Gbeme-lã     aɖe-wo  do    *jeans*.
  [Wild-animal some-PL wear jeans]
  *Some of the (wild) animals wore jeans.*

### 4.6. Morphological Adaptation

Morphological changes are closely related to the phenomenon of corruptibility. Whereas corruptibility is a form of 'bastardization' of a given borrowed lexical item, morphological adaptation has to do with changes of grammatical and syntactic structure. The change involves the alteration of the internal structure of the borrowed item, giving it a new form and shuffling it across word classes and parts of speech. Commenting on morphological integration of loanwords across languages, Windford (2003:48) notes that:

In general, loanwords pose little problem for syntactic adaptation, simply behaving like their counterparts of different syntactic categories in the recipient language. However, morphological adaptation can prove more difficult, especially if the recipient language has complex rules involving case, number, gender, and the like. In many cases, borrowed words are treated like native stems of equivalent category status, and take the bound morphology and other properties appropriate to the class they are assigned to.

One area of morphological change in Ewe loan words is reduplication. Reduplication is a morphological process in which the root or stem of a word, or part of it, is repeated. The Gbe languages, like most other Kwa languages, make extensive use of reduplication in the formation of new words, especially in deriving nouns, adjectives and adverbs from verbs. Thus in Ewe, the verb *lǎ̃*, 'to cut', is nominalised by reduplication, yielding *lã̃lǎ̃*, 'the act of cutting' (Essizewa, 2010).

**English**                **Ewe**
vote (noun/verb)  *voti* (noun/verb)
voting (noun)             *voti* wɔwɔ (voti (noun) + doing (noun))
voting (noun)             *tivovo* (noun) + inversion + reduplication
Examples:

- Egbea enye *voti* (noun) wɔ gbe.
  [Today is    vote        make day]
  *Today is voting day.*
- Me yina *voti* (verb) ge.
  [I go-PROG vote    FUT]
  *I am going to vote.*
- Aleke *tivovo*-a (noun)                      le   dzi yi m-ee?
  [How vote (inversion + reduplication)-DET BE on go PROG-INT]
  *How is the voting progressing?*
- *Voti* wɔwɔ (noun)  vivi-na       na Ghana tɔ-wo.
  [Vote make (NOM) sweet-PROG to Ghana POSS-PL]
  *Ghanaians enjoy voting.*

**English**                  **Ewe**
get (verb)                   *get* (verb)
getting (pres. cont.)        *getem* (get (verb) + *em* (-ing)
Examples:

- Me *get* nutsu-vi    la.
  [I   get man-small DET]
  *I've got the young man.*
- Me *get*-ee.
  [I    get-FOC]
  *I've got him/her.*
- Srɔ̃-nye   ƒe   lã-me-a            *get*-em    better.
  [Wife-my POSS flesh-inside-DET get-PROG better]
  *My wife's condition is getting better.*

**English  Ewe**
adjust (verb)        *dzos* (verb) + elision of initial vowel + elision of final consonant
Examples:

- Polisi-wo  *dzos*    ali-me  nɛ.
  [Police-PL adjusted waist-in for him/her]
  *The police have held {adjusted} him/her by the waist.*
- E-dze   be   wo-a      *dzos*   akpa deka vie.
  [It-right that they-FUT adjust side   one   small]
  *They have to adjust {balance up} one side a little.*

**English**                  **Ewe**

- tackle (verb)               *tak* (verb) + elision of final syllable
  attack (verb)        *tak* (verb) + elision of initial vowel + retention of final consonant
  Examples:
- Fiafi-wo  *tak*-ee      le  mɔ dzi.
  [Thief-PL attack-FOC  BE path on]
  *Thieves attacked him on the way.*
- Wo   ɖe    *taki*  e-te           tso megbe.
  [They extract tackle FOC-under from back]
  *He was tackled from behind.*

**5. Implications for Ewe Studies, Teaching and Translation**

How do English loan-words in Ewe function in Ewe studies and in the translation of Ewe texts into English in contemporary times? Fiamavle's *Ewe Language Course* and *Ewe Language Course Handbook* (2005) raise a number of issues. As a study guide, it takes the learner through grammar, syntax, register, semantics, and pragmatics and discourse analysis. However, there are a few problems when it comes to dealing with vocabulary. On pages 32, 45, 46, 97, 145 and 206, the translations appear pedantic and out of touch with the realities of current usage. The examples below illustrate our point:

On page 32, "football" is translated as "*afɔbɔlu*." In current usage, "football" would simply be translated as "*bɔlu*" (ball) without the prefix "*afɔ*" (foot), to distinguish it from other ball-based games. The tendency is to refer to such other games in their corrupted forms as, for instance, "*vɔle*" (volleyball), "*tenes*" (table tennis or lawn tennis), "*netbɔl*" (netball) etc.

On page 45, "lift" (escalator) is translated as "*amekɔmɔ*", literally 'machine that carries people'. Practically, there is no such thing in Ewe usage, archaic or contemporary. "*Lifti*" (for illiterates), or "*lift*" (for literates) is standard usage. On page 46, "hanger" is translated as "*awukuɖeŋutinu*", literally 'something on which a shirt is hung'. Again, not only is it cumbersome and mouthful but also unknown to Ewe users. The corrupted form, "*haŋga*", is commonly used by both literates and non-literates. And there are hundreds of lexical items that function in that way.

It must, therefore, be emphasized that pedantic renditions, driven by a desire to capture the linguistic purity of Ewe, as one notices in Fiamavle's book, is not reflective of how the Ewe language is developing in relation to English, in particular, and other languages in general.

The effect of such pedantic renditions, for the purposes of Ewe teaching and learning, is that learners may be caught between the "pure" and "corrupted" forms of Ewe vocabulary from environmental input; following the behaviorists argument on language acquisition (Karmiloff and Karmiloff-Smith, 2001). What is likely to emerge from this confusion is what we term "Angloewe" (Anglo-Ewe).

With regard to translation, a possible result is that translated material from English into Ewe might make use of these pedantic renditions in literal translations, making the translated texts clumsy and unintelligible, rather than choosing the current Ewe-English hybrid forms.  By way of prognosis, on the horizon we foresee a full integration of English loans into Ewe, causing some semantic change which can turn them into false friends and posing challenges to translators.

## 6. Conclusion

It is obvious from the discussions above that, like other languages in Africa and elsewhere where indigenous languages have had contact with English, the Ewe language continues to borrow liberally from English. The reasons for this phenomenon are many and varied. From a sociolinguistic perspective, many Ewe speakers—literates and non-literates alike—believe that to be seen to be enlightened, one needs to demonstrate acquaintance with English. Secondly, in contemporary Ewe linguistic communities, both rural and urban, English is filtering through discourses at many levels. Most importantly, as more and more Ewe speakers become educated, urbanized and Christianized, and are influenced by the electronic media where media practitioners themselves engage in code-switching and code-mixing, the Ewe language will continue to be influenced by English.

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