

ASPECTS OF AKAN PERSUASIVE LANGUAGE

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This paper treats aspects of persuasive language in routinised traditional events among the Akan. The Akan language is a member of the Kwa group of West African languages and a major language spoken in Ghana. The paper looks at persuasion from the general concept of politeness in speech communication. The paper treats persuasion under both positive and negative politeness strategies. The paper concentrates on three major persuasive strategies, adopting Brown and Levinson's model of positive and negative politeness. These are (a) the use of honorifics and address terms (deference), (b) verbal indirection, and (c) propaganda, slogan and co-opting (exaggeration). The strategies are not mutually exclusive. They overlap at various points and one encounter may adopt two or more of them. The paper discusses the participants and the situations where persuasive language is employed. These include religious worship, consoling the worried, borrowing, politics and advertisement.

1. Introduction

Language is a vehicle of communication whereby one person conveys a message to another for the purpose of informing, ordering, persuading, reassuring, etc. Language therefore provides a conventional resource for influencing people's attitude and behaviour (see Bradac and Hung Ng 1993:117). Messages are thus used to achieve a certain end within discourse (see Leech and Short 1981:256). Discourse is seen as a transaction between the speaker and the addressee in an interpersonal activity whose nature and form are determined by social purpose. In discourse, there is the need for co-operation between the interactants. One of the most important mechanisms for achieving a cordial linguistic atmosphere and avoiding linguistic combat is the effective use of persuasion.

Persuasion forms an integral part of human communication and behaviour in day-to-day activities and social encounters. It is a mental transformation device by which the persuader can implant particular meanings and connotations with the intention of inducing the recipient to view the world from the persuader's perspectives. Parents, teachers, advertisers and governments all over the world use some sort of

persuasion to get things done. It appears that persuasion is based on human ways of thinking and the need to influence others.

In this paper, I will consider Akan persuasive language and its functions in the following contexts: (1) palace language and arbitration, (2) religious worship and supplication to God and the deities, (3) consoling the worried and the depressed, (4) persuasion in borrowing, (5) political, propaganda, co-opting and advertising. These areas have been chosen because they are inevitable in the daily lives of Akans, and the situations discussed fall under three major strategies of Akan persuasion. These are (a) the use of honorifics and address terms, (b) verbal indirection and (c) propaganda, slogan and co-opting.

This paper is aimed at contributing to research in Akan pragmatics that has attracted Akan scholars in recent times. Some of the current works in Akan pragmatics are Yankah (1989), Obeng (1994, 1996, 1997a, 1999). Obeng's works include Akan verbal indirection (1994), proverbs as mitigating strategies (1996), communicative strategies in persuasion and politeness in Akan judicial discourse (1997a), apologies and requests (1999). Another Akan scholar in this field is Akosua Anyidoho. She has worked extensively on women's language and ethnopoetics. Some of her works include *apae* appellation (1991, 1999), gender and verbal art (1993), and *nmwonkor*, the Akan female verbal genre (1994, 1995). The present paper is linked with these earlier works because they all deal with aspects of rhetorics: address forms, deference and the ability to use language to influence others.

1.1. Data Collection Method

I collected the data in this paper from the Akan communities (especially from the Ashanti Region) between 1998 and 2000. Most of the data were collected in natural encounters by participant observation; the data were recorded and subsequently transcribed. Also, I cite the setting of the encounter: time and place, the participants, and the background of the encounter.¹ I state the identity of the participants, their role relationship as well as the content and form of the persuasive encounter. Providing the background helps readers understand the interactants' communicative behaviour and

their roles. I rely on my own intuitive knowledge of Akan folklore, communication, socio-cultural norms, and philosophy.

2. *The Akan Indigenous Concept of Persuasion*

I want to look at how the Akans perceive persuasion and how they employ it in their communicative encounters. The Akan indigenous terms for persuasion are *dàádàá*, glossed as (1) to persuade, win over, lull, entice or (2) cheat, deceive, and delude (cf. Christaller 1933:59). The latter interpretation 'to cheat' implies that the Akans believe that in certain situations, persuasive language and markers may not be referentially true. The speaker is expected to deceive the addressee so as to woo him/her. The link between these two senses is that persuasion may either lead to truth or to untruth. As to vowel length, this is contrastive in Akan (cf. *pi* 'to be thick' vs. *pii* 'many'). In addition, it may be ideophonic in certain words, but *dàádàá* is not one of them.

A partly synonymous term is *defedefe* 'to flatter'; a reduplicated term in which the whole stem *defe* is copied and attached as a prefix (see Dolphyne 1988:124-138). The word *defe* itself is made up of *de* 'sweet' and *fe* 'beautiful', combined to mean 'completely sweet'; the reduplicated form refers to 'sweet or flattery words'. Compare also the word *kor□kor□*, the reduplicated form of the verb *kor□*, which literally translates as 'to pet, fondle, to bring up delicately'. The reduplication may indicate the use of palatable, fine and flattering speech.

It is interesting to note that all the three words cited are reduplications. Reduplication is a type of compounding that consists of the repetition of the whole or part of a stem. In Akan, one of the major functions of reduplication is to denote intensity, repetition or double action. It also gives a vivid description of the activity denoted. To persuade a person thus involves using intensive or repeated expressions. Apart from these three words, there is also the compound *kasabuam*, made up of *kasa* 'language' and *buam* 'fragrant, perfume', implying 'fragrant, sweet smelling language'. In addition, Akan has *kasade* 'sweet language', and *kasapa* 'good language'. These compounds are made up of the nominal *kasa* and the adjectives *de* 'sweet' and *pa*

'good' that relate to positive notions. We can generally infer from these expressions that persuasive language is sweet, pleasant, good, and positive; it strokes, flatters or deceives the addressee.

3. Persuasive Language

To persuade is to cause (another) to believe something, to convince another, to make another adopt a particular idea. In a wider sense, persuasion may involve the attempt to cause a person to act in a certain way, sometimes against his normal will. Persuasion is based on the intentions of the persuader to engender action(s) towards a change in the behaviour or mind of the persuadee (cf. Jamieson 1985:2). One of the ingredients of persuasion is relationship. The persuader's task is to establish or strengthen a cognitive, affective, or social relationship with the persuadee. Persuasion may also be employed as a means of resisting a change, for example when people are persuaded to stick to their existing allegiances, to continue the habit of purchasing certain brands of products, or to continue an established voting pattern.

One of the basic theories of persuasion hinges on *meaning*. One can only influence the other if the persuadee can decode what is meant in the message. In communicative terms, both the persuader and the persuadee must share a common code (in our context, Akan). Furthermore, the notions and concepts encoded in the persuasive language should conform to the general cognitive and socio-cultural framework of the culture concerned, such that they can be easily processed and are relevant to the recipient.

I consider persuasion to be perlocutionary. A perlocutionary act is performed by means of saying something, e.g. getting someone to believe that something is so, persuading someone to do something, moving someone to anger, consoling someone in his distress, etc. The use of persuasive language as a perlocutionary act affects the intellect, emotions and reactions of the addressee (see Lyons 1977:730). Persuasive language must be polite and devoid of face threatening acts.

3. 1. Theoretical Framework: Persuasion and Politeness

In this paper, I discuss Akan persuasion under the linguistic theory of politeness as outlined by Brown and Levinson (1987) and scholars such as Leech (1983), Ide (1989), Fasold (1990), Fraser (1990), Bonvillain (1993), Holmes (1995), Foley (1997), Kasper (1997), and others. Without going into details, I will briefly consider politeness and link it with persuasion. The theory of politeness has been widely discussed in sociolinguistics, pragmatics, anthropology, and social psychology. Politeness is defined as proper social conduct and the tactful consideration for others.

Linguistic politeness is the redressing of the affronts to face posed by face-threatening acts to addressees. It refers to ways in which linguistic actions and expressions are properly and appropriately carried out in social interaction so as to avoid being offensive. In persuasion, the speaker tries to be as tactful and respectful as possible and to avoid face threat (see Grundy 2000:146).

Brown and Levinson (1987:101-211) discuss **positive** and **negative** politeness. The two types can be combined to make persuasion effective. Positive politeness strategies include statements of friendship, solidarity, and compliments. Brown and Levinson list 15 strategies under positive politeness. These include the following (H is for Hearer): *attend to H's interests, needs, wants, use solidarity in-group identity markers, be optimistic, offer or promise, exaggerate interest in H and his interests, avoid disagreements, joke*, etc. We will analyse Akan persuasion along the lines of some of these. One major aspect of positive politeness is the exaggeration that serves as a marker of face-redress. We will realise later on that in using persuasion during borrowing, seeking for healing, and consoling, the speaker (persuader) exaggerates the use of address and honorific terms and other expressions.

Persuasion could be considered as a positive politeness strategy, used as a kind of social accelerator to boost the level of intimacy between the persuader and the persuadee. When such a stand is adopted in a persuasive communicative scenario, the speaker will be able to get the addressee to comply with his/her intentions.

Negative politeness is oriented to the addressee's negative face and his desire for autonomy (see Brown and Levinson 1987:129-211, Foley 1997:272). Negative politeness strategies typically emphasise avoidance

and minimizing of imposition and so the speaker (persuader) maintains that s/he will minimally interfere with the addressee (persuadee). Brown and Levinson (1987:129-211) discuss ten strategies of negative politeness. Those that tally with our discussion on Akan persuasion include *be indirect, apologise, minimise the imposition, give deference, and other distancing styles*. The negative politeness strategies in Akan persuasion are discussed in the excerpts in section 4, under honorifics and indirection. We will later see that a persuader can employ negative and positive strategies within a single encounter; however, in a hierarchical status-conscious society like Akan the emphasis is on negative politeness. Politeness is more appropriately seen as adherence to social norms and values.

It is argued that the Brown and Levinson model of face is an exponent of western culture, which focuses too much on individualistic needs (see Kasper 1997:379). The common objection to Brown and Levinson's model is that the intended universality of the theory is untenable. In talking about face wants, Brown and Levinson always mention *the speaker, the addressee, the individual, and his/her private sphere* (singular). In contrast, Goffman's view of face seems more compatible with non-western face constructs, and this is exactly what pertains to the Akan face concept. Goffman's sociological notion of face sees face as a public (rather than personal) property on loan from the society. Akan society, like other African communities, places a high premium on communalistic needs. The Akan face concept and the persuasive expressions associated with it are based on communal and societal needs. They do not therefore consider only the speaker and the addressee.

Thus, while Akans share standards of 'societal behaviour' that would be recognizable in the framework of a social distribution of responsibility, Brown and Levinson's face theory has its main focus on individual behaviour and responsibility. The Akan socio-cultural concept includes a folk audience that shares responsibility for the fulfilment of the act to which the user of *face expressions* commits. The face indexicalises and reproduces social and pragmatic issues that affect the entire society. Matsumoto (1988, 1989) and Ide (1989) complain that Brown and Levinson's 'face constructs' do not capture the principles of Japanese interaction because they do not include the

acknowledgement of societal relations. Gu (1990) shares the same sentiments and argues that among the Chinese, politeness is more appropriately seen as adherence to social norms than attending to individual's face wants.

Persuasive strategies avoid conflict and provide harmony among communicative participants, and aim at politeness. It will be seen that Akan persuasive expressions strengthen the antipersonalistic and communal aspect of Akan culture. This aspect is in line with Ide's (1989:225) definition of linguistic politeness as the

language usage associated with smooth communication, realised through (1) the speaker's use of intentional strategies to allow his or her message to be received favourably by the addressee and (2) through the speaker's choice of expressions to conform to the expected and/or prescribed norms of speech appropriate to the contextual situation in individual speech communities.

It is the first part of Ide's definition that deals with persuasion.

4. Strategies used in Persuasion

This section answers the question of how a communicatively competent Akan speaker achieves his/her desired goals in communicative encounters by persuading his/her addressee(s). The section discusses four major, related strategies speakers use to persuade their addressees. The persuader needs various communicative skills and communicative competence to get his/her intentions fulfilled. These skills conform to politeness, one of the values associated with societal and socio-cultural norms. The strategies mentioned here are general conversational strategies of politeness, used in social interaction. This is so because social interaction is all about influencing people. All the excerpts discussed deal with persuasion within the context of social interaction. The effect of persuasive language will also depend on the credibility of the persuader and his or her position in the society.

Persuasive language occurs within a sociolinguistic and pragmatic context. Context is one of the central concepts of social and anthro-

pological issues. According to Dilley (2002:438), 'ethnographic interpretation by social and cultural anthropologists relies on a sense of context'. Contextualisation is a form of social practice that has a performative character. The features and characteristics of the socio-cultural environment help us to understand things better. The context can have multiple interpretations: It can be linguistic, referring to parts of the utterance and the linguistic units that give a grammatical and semantic contribution to the interpretation. It can also be social, embracing the wider situation, either of the speaker or of the accompanying social activities (see Dilley 2002:445)

Duranti and Goodwin (1992:6-8), in discussing the role of context, outline four basic parameters of context. These are (a) *the setting* – a social and spatial framework within which encounters are situated; (b) *the behavioural environment* – the use of bodies of behaviour for framing talk; (c) *language as context* – the way talk itself invokes context and provides context for other talk; and (d) *the extra-situational context* or background knowledge and frames of relevance (cited in Dilley 2002:445).

We will see later on in this paper that Akan persuasion embraces all these parameters. To be able to combine the verbal and social messages, one must know the rules of communication and understand communication in the ethnographic encounter. In addition, the persuasive speaker must consider the social variables of gender, rank, age, power, and distance of the addressee (see Brown and Levinson 1987:15). Obeng (1997a:51) aptly captures this phenomenon when he states that 'the social status of an addressee and in particular the role relationship and relative statuses of the conversational participants help to shape the kind of language that can be used in the communicative situation'.

The major persuasive strategies adopted from the general theories of communication and politeness include (1) *honorifics and address forms*, (2) *indirection, including the use of circumlocution, idioms, metaphor, proverbs, and* (3) *propaganda*. Syntactic, phonological, and prosodic features can also contribute effectively to persuasion.

The proper use of the above strategies creates a cordial atmosphere of mutual communication. A speaker is not limited to a single persuasive strategy in all situations. The nature of the ethno-

graphic situation and the type of interlocutors one meets predicts the strategies to be used.

Persuasive appeals are more likely to be successful when they are made with the full cognisance of the conceptual and cognitive frameworks of the persuadee. Again, they must be couched in linguistic and sociolinguistics rules and codes (languages) familiar to the interactants (see Bonvillain 1993:292). The effective use of persuasive language thus depicts the communicative competence of the speaker.

Persuasive language has a variety of sociolinguistic and pragmatic functions among the Akan. This section discusses some functions of persuasion, together with the communicative situations under which they are effectively employed. One of the major functions of persuasive language is to maintain co-operation among participants in a communicative interaction. It also recognises and respects the rights and the face wants of the participants (see Bonvillain 1993:131-143, Brown and Levinson 1987:62).

Persuasive language can, therefore, be considered as a key which should be custom-designed so as to fit well into the lock of the mental and cognitive complex state of the receiver. A wrong key would not normally open a lock. Metaphorically speaking, the sender of any message has to get a duplicate key which is appropriate for a particular mental lock, for intended meaning to be realised and decoded easily (see Jamieson 1985:68).

Persuasive strategies and utterances emanate from the persuader, then traverse a persuasive realm to the persuadee. The strategies, coupled with the physical scenario created, impinge on the psychological intellect of the persuadee, who may then react towards the persuader. In normal cases, the persuader expects a positive reaction, either in the form of an utterance, promise, activity, donation, etc., from the persuadee.

4.1. Honorifics and Address Forms in Persuasion

I will start with honorifics and address forms since they seem to be employed in all types of persuasive encounters. These fall under

Brown and Levinson's (1987:178) strategy 5 under negative politeness, stated as 'give deference'. According to Agha (1998:152), 'honorific registers are functionally stratified cultural formations that permit language users to calculate many aspects of the pragmatic context of usage'. The context discussed above with its social variables can be considered as the default persuasive strategy in Akan.

Honorification as a persuasive strategy is an aspect of the face concept and in particular, negative politeness. Fraser (1990:219) identifies four major views of politeness. These are (1) *the social norm view*, (2) *the conversational maxim view*, (3) *the face saving view*, and (4) *the conversational contract view*. In being polite, a speaker adopts series of politeness strategies. One of them is to use the proper address forms and honorifics. One can therefore argue that functionally, an honorific is a politeness strategy (see Kasper 1998:679). These views are applicable to Akan persuasion.

In discussing the conversational contract view, Fraser (1990:232-234) contends that acting politely is virtually the same as using language appropriately, and refers to this aspect of linguistic activity as deference. Since one of the functions of honorifics is to show deference, I posit that the use of honorifics is a strategy within the conversational contract view of politeness. A speaker who uses honorifics in a social encounter is communicatively competent and aware of the social contract aspect of politeness.²

One can persuade one's addressee by according him/her some form of deference. In one case, the deference strategy is where the Speaker (S) humbles and abases himself. The other is where S raises the status and image of the Addressee. In both cases, the Addressee is placed at a higher social status than the speaker. The technique used to achieve this is the use of honorific terms or address forms as a way of deferring towards the addressee (see Brown and Levinson 1987:178, Yankah 1991, 1995, Obeng 1994, 1997a, Agha 1998). Let us look at the following:

Excerpt 1

Background: An unemployed man aged 30 went to an elderly rich man to ask him for help.

A: *Opeemu, Daasebre, Owura wei deε ε-n-ye hwεε. W'akoa*
 The Mighty, Magnanimous Master this as for it neg. be nothing your servant
me ba -a ha se w'adaworoma anka me-de m'abiasem bi
 I come past here that your grace would I put my need some
re-be -to w'-anim. Na anka □dεεfo□ w- a-twa
 prog. Come put your face. And if would be Gracious one you perf. turn
w'ani a- hwε w'akoa
 your eyes consec look your .servant.

'The Mighty, The Magnanimous One, and Master, it is nothing serious. I, your servant/maid, came here with the intention of putting my needs before you so that you would lift your eyes and help me'.

In the above, the honorific terms are *Opeemu*, 'The Mighty One', *Daasebre*/*□dεεfo□*, 'The Magnanimous One', and *Owura* 'Master'. All the above terms raise the Addressee's image. On the other hand, the expression *akoa* 'servant' humbles and abases the speaker in the presence of the addressee. The speaker, in applying this persuasive technique, stands a better chance of making the addressee sympathise with him/her and provide help. S does not in any way coerce the Addressee to comply, but S stands to gain from the Addressee (all things being equal). The Speaker also uses the illocutionary force mitigator marker *anka* 'if it would be', to indicate that he is in no way forcing the addressee. He is saying 'if it would be possible'. This is a 'hedge', meant to reduce the face threat.

4.1.1. Address Forms and Honorifics in Palace Language and Arbitration

Address forms, honorifics and deference in persuasion are popularly used at the king's court. There is a special type of court language called

ahemfie kasa, which is characterised by politeness, formality, honorifics, appropriate address forms, and indirection. The palace is the traditional seat of justice, administration and power. Arbitrations take place almost every day and people are found guilty of going contrary to societal norms and values. In all these cases, it is the use of appropriate persuasive language that can keep boiling hearts at bay. My uncle Opanin Kwaku Addai of Edwinase in Asante had a proverb, which states that *asem biara nni h□ a etuo ato mu da, ne nyinaa yede ano yi ara na eka*. 'There is no case that has been settled with a gun fire, everything is done by word of mouth'. This is to emphasise that the word is mightier than the gun in the settlement of cases and conflicts.

During the settlement of cases at arbitration, people seek representatives who plead on their behalf by using the type of persuasion referred to as 'presentational persuasion'. According to Johnstone (1989:147-148),

presentational persuasion could be said to be based on the assumption that being persuaded is being moved, being swept along by a rhythmic flow of words and sounds in the way people are swept along by poetry.

The objective of the presentational persuasion is to make one's claim maximally present in the audience's consciousness. This is achieved by repetition, paraphrasing, and calling aesthetic attention to the claim by embellishing it with the stylistic devices of the particular language. In Akan, the best device in such a situation is the effective use of proverbs, honorifics and address terms. The use of deferential terms of address and reference in the right communicative contexts adds to a judicial professional's credibility and may influence a jury's decision (see Obeng 1997a:35-37). The use of the right address forms and titles shows the communicative competence of the speaker. In contrast, the wrong use of address forms is a face threat and offensive, and attracts stronger social rebuke.

Presentational persuasion is an artistic verbal skill which some experts in societies have. The *dwanetoafo*□ 'interveners' or 'mouth speakers' in Akan society are people with forensic or rhetorical skills; they also hold socio-political influence. Such people use persuasive

language as their weapon to get what they need and to save their clients. Such people are highly respected advocates and traditional diplomats, who have mastery of Akan customary law and constitution. In the absence of lawyers in the traditional judicial system, there is an institutionalised instance called *dwanetoabene* 'appeal chief/chief intervener' (or *dwanetoabemmaa* 'female appeal chief'), where an offender who is proven guilty by a court may plead for leniency.³

Let us look at a situation where a subject has realised that he has sinned against his Lord, and an intervener is pleading on his behalf by using presentational persuasion.

Excerpt 2

Venue: Otumfo's Palace – Kumase

Period: May 1998

Context: A young man KO (aged 28) has offended the king and consults an elderly renowned speaker of Akan to intervene on his behalf.

Intervener: *Daasebre, Otumfo, wei des mpanimfo se abɔfra*
 Magnanimous, Powerful this as for elders say child
gya ne nan gu n'agya nan so a, ye-ɔpa na ye-n-twa
 leave his leg pour his father leg on then we-rub and we neg. cut
n-twene. Wo ara w'- akoo se w-a- fom
 neg. throw away. Your own your servant says he perf. wrong
wo Oburu. Fa kye no Amu Daasebre Oburumuanakoma
 you Oburu. Take give him Amu Magnanimous Giver of Full Fresh Animal.
Pagya w'eani kakra na fa no se ɔ-ye abɔfra a ɔ-n- nim.
 Lift your eyes a little and take it that he-be child who he neg. know
hwee.
 nothing.

'The Magnanimous and Powerful One. It is the elders who have an adage that if the child excretes on the laps of his father it is wiped away but the lap is not cut off. Your own servant says that he has offended you Oburu. Forgive him Amu. The Magnanimous and the 'Giver of Full Fresh Animal' just raise your eyes and consider him to be a child who does not know what he is doing'.

In this discourse, the intervener uses apologetic devices, honorifics and proverbs as persuasive devices. He lowers the offender (an adult) to the level of an ignorant child who must be pardoned.

The uses of the honorific terms *Daasebre* 'The Magnanimous One' and *Otumfo* 'The Powerful One' reveal some pragmatic implications. The term *Daasebre* literally means 'to become tired of thanking' ('magnanimous'). An Addressee who is honoured by the Speaker as being magnanimous will be in a position where it becomes impossible for him to say 'No', and not do something in favour of the speaker. The term *Otumfo* is used here to imply that the addressee has power to himself and would not be hampered by anyone if he decides to forgive the speaker.

The use of the expression *wo ara w'akoa se wafom wo Oburu* 'your own servant says he has offended you *Oburu*', is a form of a complex and implicit apology. The young man acknowledges his fault. According to Obeng (1999:722) 'an implicit apology may include admission of guilt, acceptance of blame, and providing reasons for the offence committed'. In the above case, the acceptance is followed by *fa kye no Amu* 'Forgive him Amu'. Both the acceptance and the plea for forgiveness are embellished with the deferential titles *Oburu* and *Amu*.

These honorific titles are meant to pave the way for influencing and persuading the king. The level of the persuasion is effectively heightened by an apology, coupled with deferential markers. The attachment of these deferential markers is the norm with respect to royal interaction among the Akan.⁴ To see that honorifics elevate the status and maximise praise of the Addressee, let us consider the dialogue below, where the speaker uses positive politeness strategy 4: *in-group identity markers* (see Brown and Levinson 1987:107-112). According to Brown and Levinson, some of such terms used to convey in-group membership include generic names and terms of address like 'Mac', 'mate', 'buddy', 'honey', 'dear Mom', 'brother', 'sister', 'sweetheart', etc.

Excerpt 3

Participants: Two Old Friends Who Have not Met for Several Years

Venue: Kumasi

Date: May 2000.

A: *Me nua* *ye- hyia -e a- kyε.*
 My brother, we meet past perf. long.

'My brother, it has been a long time since we met'.

B: *Ye-w□ h□ o.*
 We be here o.

'We are there'.

A: *M-abu wo a-ma⁵ m'ani a- gye papaapa. Wo-n ye*
 I perf. see you perf. give my eyes perf. collected very much. You neg. be
nipa ketewa. Me-se abo□ε na a-ku wo sei. Aduane ben
 person small I say beauty it is perf. kill you like this. Food which
na wo-die na ε-ye a m-a-be-hwa wo. Wo nua
 it is you eat and it be then I fut. come sponge you. Your brother
ma ye-nna Nyame ase na w- a-boa wo. Biribi w□ wo
 let us lie God under and he perf. help you. Something be your
bo na ma me bi nni.
 body and give me some eat.

'I am very happy to meet you. You are not a mean person. You are adorned with beauty. What food have you been eating, so we can come and sponge on you. My brother let us thank God for he has helped you. You are rich and so please offer me something'.

B: *Wo ne wo ngoro ho yi wo- n- nyae-e!*
 You and your playing on body this you neg. stop past.

'Oh! You! you have not stopped with your flattery'.

A: *Wo nua ε-n- ye agor□ o, m-a- hu wo a-ma m'ani*
 Your brother it-neg. be game o. I-perf. see you perf. let my eyes

a- gye pa ara. Hwe n'ataade papa bi ne ne mpaboa
 perf. collect very much. Look his uniform good some and his shoe.
Wo kɔnmuade yi koraa na ε-re-ku me yi Wo bonam ani na
 Your necklace this even it is it prog.kill me this Your body surface it is
a- ye tokotoko nahanaba saa yi. Saa des ε- ye ma wo.
 Perf. be soft smooth that this. Really as for it be good for you.

'My brother I am not flattering you. I am very happy to see you. Look at the expensive uniform and shoes he is wearing. It is even your necklace that pleases me. Your skin looks very smooth and nice. You are really having the time of your life'.

In this dialogue, A praises B throughout the discourse. Apart from lifting up B's feelings, the persuasive devices also create harmony and a good relationship. The speaker also uses the in-group term, *me nua* 'my brother' even though they are not brothers.

The word *ngorobo* 'flattery' used by the addressee, implies that he is aware of the deceit of the speaker's rhetorics, even though the speaker says that he is not flattering him. The addressee openly comments and acknowledges persuasion here as implicit insincerity, meant to deceive. All the same, as a competent speaker of the Akan language, and being conversant with the grammar of indigenous communication, he is not much bothered about the situation. The speaker is here applying the positive politeness strategies of hedging opinions and joking (see Brown and Levinson 1987:116, 124).

4.2.1. Honorifics at Religious Worship, Supplication and Healing

In the natural world, every creature (human beings and animals alike) feels good when praised. Praises boost people's ego and sometimes make them act freely and willingly. The word for praise in Akan is *nkamfo*. Praises are constantly used at the palaces, shrines, before elders, in the Christian domain, before one's benefactors. Praises are couched in the form of honorifics, appellations, titles or other attributive adjectives. Worshippers also employ approbation face work to raise the images of the supernatural beings.⁶

At the shrines of traditional African religion, attendants and worshippers who seek protection, healing or justice, try to use persuasive language as an appeal to have their wishes fulfilled. In much the same way, in Christian worship and supplication towards God, persuasive language and all the ingredients of praises are used. The most popular persuasive strategies are honorifics and appellation. Some of the most common appellations Christians use for God are *Nana* 'grandfather'. Others include *ɔdɛɛfo* 'The Gracious One', *Otumfo* 'The Powerful', *ɔbɔadeɛ* 'The Creator', *ɔkɛsɛɛ* 'The Mighty One'.

One can derive the ideas about the Akan concept of God from this use of honorifics. Also, the Akan speaker may coin any of these honorifics during worship and praise of God. A more recognised type is the one found in the type of Akan Methodist lyrics called *Abibidwom*. The singer can recount multiples of these honorifics before the congregation joins in with a refrain. Another church, called African Faith Tabernacle, also uses these honorifics and even plays them on the Akan Atumpan talking drums. The drummers sometimes wake up at dawn to praise God on the talking drum. The African Saviour Church of Ghana (called Gyidi, with headquarters at Osiem in the Eastern Region of Ghana) also embarks on similar songs of appellation. All these are used as persuasive mechanisms intended to praise, apologise for wrongdoing and request something from God. Let us consider the use of persuasive language at a healing section.

Case 4

Participants: A Patient and a Traditional Priest/Healer

Venue: Agona Asaman Ashanti

Date: April 1999

Background of the Case:

A patient with a chronic disease who has moved from one doctor to another finally rushes to a traditional healer and narrates his predicament.

Patient: *Nana w'-adaworoma, me ho m- fa me,*
 Nana your grace my body neg. take me
m-a-kyinkyinakyinkyini nso me-n-nya ayaresa. M-a- te
 I perf.comb reduplicated but I neg. obtain healing. I perf. hear
sε w'- aduro deε tatabwe. Me-nni anidaso biara.
 that your medicine as for potent I neg. have hope any.
Sε w-an- nye me a, me- nni baabi bio me-k□. Enti me-de
 If you neg. accept me then I neg. have place again I go. So I put
me ho nyinaa m-a- ma wo. Me-dan wo Owura, Nana! me-dan
 my body all perf. give you. I rely you Master Nana! I rely
wo □deεfo□.
 you gracious one.

'Nana by your grace, I am not feeling fine. I have combed all places for far too long without healing. I have heard that your medicine is very potent. I do not have any hope anywhere. If you do not accept to heal me, I have no other place to go. I have therefore entrusted my whole life in you. I rely on you Master, Nana! I rely on you The Gracious One'.

In this text, the sick person refers to the priest as *Nana* 'Grandparent'. The speaker gives reverence to the priest, elders of the deities and the deity itself. He appeals to them to sympathise with him and try to heal him. The use of the expression *w'adaworoma* 'by your grace' marks an asymmetrical relationship between the speaker and the addressee. The speaker considers himself a subordinate to the healer. The use of such persuasive expressions is meant to reduce any imposition on the superordinate addressee (see Obeng 1997b:29, Yankah 1995).

The patient tells the healer how he had suffered and moved from one priest to another. He uses the expression *makyinkyinakyinkyini*, 'I have combed all places', a reduplicated form of the verb *kyin* 'to comb'. Consulting various priests for healing implies that they did not have the solution to his ailments. This is intended to place this particular priest on a higher level than all the other priests. The speaker also uses the expressions:

Menni anidaso biara 'I do not have hope anywhere'.

Menni baabi bio mek □ 'I have no other place to go'.

These expressions indicate that if the priest fails to heal him, he is doomed forever. To amplify the trust he has in the priest, he says 'I have therefore entrusted my whole life in you. I rely on you Master, *Nana* ('Grandparent')! I rely on you, 'The Gracious One'. The speaker repeats the expression on reliance to emphasise the need for the priest to attend to him.

4.2. Verbal Indirection

Indirection is one of the strategies under negative politeness (cf. Brown and Levinson 1987:132). Indirection is widely employed as a persuasive technique among the Akan. It is a tactful strategy used to avoid conflict. Leech (1980:109) states clearly that

In general, the more tactful a directive is, the more indirect and circumlocutory it is. Negative politeness is the degree to which the individual behaviour of a particular person (whether verbal or otherwise) exceeds the normal degree of tact required in a given situation.

Indirection ranges from circumlocution to the use of proverbs, idioms, euphemisms, evasion, etc. In this section, we will consider how indirection is used in consoling the worried, borrowing, propagandizing, advertising and co-opting.

4.2.1. Use of Indirection in Consoling the Worried and Depressed

People who are bereaved or have encountered problems are normally to be comforted among the Akan. In order to do this, we need to use catchy and persuasive words that can touch their emotions and alleviate their fears and sorrow. Words of comfort and allusions to previous experiences of others are used. The consolee is made to feel that s/he is not the only one who has undergone such predicaments

and agonies before. This type of persuasion is termed *analogical persuasion*. According to Johnstone (1989:149),

analogical persuasion works by calling to mind, explicitly or implicitly, traditional wisdom, often in the form of parable or fable-like stories. Analogical rhetoric persuades by teaching, reminding its audience of time-tested values by the indirect mode of story telling.

It makes allusions to past issues and events. This is by far the most frequent type of persuasion the Akans use to console a bereaved person. The Akans would present this as an advice (*afotuo*). The following is a discourse where a speaker consoles a mother who has lost her newborn baby.

Excerpt 5

Participants: Afua and Akua

Venue: Kokofu Edwinase in Ashanti Region

Subject: Death of New Born Baby

Date: September 15th 1999

A: *Afua fa ma Nyame. Onyame no ara na nim nea*
 Afua take give God. God the himself it is know what
 □-re-ye. *Am-ma no saa nso a anka ε-n-ye.*
 he prog do. Neg.Past come it that also then would it-neg. good.
Obi n- nim □haw a anka □-de re-be- to wo so. Fa
 Somebody neg. know trouble that would he put prog. Come put you on. Take
no se wo-de ab□fra no a- t□ wo tiri. (1). Mpanin se abina a ye-de
 it that you use child the perf. buy your head. (1) Elders say pot that we take
ke□ nsuo no b□ a na a-see na nsuo no hwie gu des a
 go water the break that it is perf. spoil, and water the pour scatter as for then
ε-n-ye hwee. Wo-nim nnaano yi ara na Akosua Mansa sie- e
 it neg. be nothing. You know last days this just and Akousa Mansa bury-past
ne m- ma mpanimfo□ a w□- a- so w□n adwe b□ mmienu. An-
kyere
 his pl. Child adults that they perf. reach their nut crack two. Past neg. longer
pii na ne kunu nso firi- i mu. □no koraa se □- te wiase
 many and her husband also move past inside. She even that she stay world
re-didi. (2) Mpanin se asem yaw b□ bor□dedwo so. Mia

prog eat. (2) Elders say matter painful strike roasted plantain on. Press

w'-ani na pε biribi ka w'-ano. Na saa ara na
 your eyes and find something touch your mouth. And that just it is
w'awafεfo □ *yε no.* (3) *Sε yε-ka sε yε- re- hwε nea etuo*
 your colleagues do it. (3) If we say that we prog. look what gun
a- yε des a anka yε-re- n- we nammono. *To biribiara gu*
 perf. do as for if would we prog. neg. chew flesh meat. Throw everything away
na Onyame bε-hyε wo anan- mu. Wo- n- kae nea ε- to- o
 and God fut. fix you leg inside. You-neg. remember what it happen past
Job □ *werchoni.*

Job the miserable.

'Afua! Surrender everything to God. It is God himself who knows what he is doing. If it had not happened that way it would have been worse. Nobody knows the danger ahead of you. Assume that you have mortgaged your own head (life) with the child. (1) The elders say that 'if the pot for fetching water is broken that is a problem, but if the water just pours away, it is mild'. Do you know that it is only quite recently that Akosua Mansa buried her two children who could manage their own affairs? Not long after that, she lost her husband. She is still surviving in this world. (2) The elders say that painful events are used as sauce for roasted plantain dish. Try and find something to eat, for that is how other people react to such situations. (3) If we consider what the gun has done, we will never eat fresh meat. Forget about everything, for God would repay you with a child. Don't you remember what happened to Job?'

In this situation, the speaker did everything possible to convince the addressee. She embellished her speech with comparisons, biblical allusions, proverbs, idioms and honorifics. All these were aimed at inducing the addressee to forget her sorrow. The underlined sentences 1, 2 and 3 are proverbs, and proverb performance in discourse adds more to the persuasion. Yankah (1989:109) states that 'three main factors motivate Akans to use proverbs: (1) to persuade, (2) for social change, and (3) to embellish discourse. In the first category, the speaker wishes to cause a change in opinion'. The above speaker also underscores her point by making allusions to what had happened to Job in the Bible. When this comparison is made, the present situation seems mild and trivial.

4.2.2. Use of Indirection in Borrowing

Persuasion is employed effectively in requests for favours and demands, where persuaders create the rhetorical impression that their arguments are logically incontrovertible. This aspect of persuasion is labelled *quasilogical persuasion*. The goal of the quasilogical persuasion is to convince, and make it impossible for the audience or addressee to refuse the persuader's demand or request (see Johnstone 1989:145).

In borrowing, the borrower persuades the moneylender to sympathise with him/her and respond to his/her demands. One can also borrow material things like a cloth, or a car. In all these cases, the Speaker has to abase himself/herself and raise the image of the lender. The various strategies of honorifics, titles and address forms, apologetic devices, self-demeaning, and persuasive utterances apply here.

One major strategy employed in borrowing is circumlocution. In most cases, the borrower starts with digressive conversations that have nothing to do with the borrowing at all. These may include enquiry about health, clothing, farming, family matters, etc. After establishing the preparatory grounds for the appropriate rapport with the lender, s/he then comes out with the request. In effect, s/he tries to test the pulse of the lender to see if the situation is suitable for the request. The circumlocution, the preparatory work and the strategies are designed to save face. Let us examine the conversation below.

Excerpt 6

Subject Matter: Seeking for a Loan

Participants: A Poor Person and a Rich Person

Venue: Bekwai Ashanti Region

Date: January 23rd 2000

Background of the Case: A poor person named AK wants to solicit a loan from BO, the rich person. Instead of going straight to talk about

the money, he keeps using persuasive devices until he finally mentions the money.

A: *Wo nua na ε- te sen.*
Your brother and it stays how.

'Your brother how is it?'

B: *Me ho ye.*
My body be good.

'I am OK'

A: *Nna-nsa yi me-hunu-u wo a- keye pa ara. Na wo-hye bene*
Days three this I see-past you perf. long very much. And you fix where
na abo [fɛ] adware wo? Saa des mo a mo-w□ sika
and beauty bath you? That as for you (pl.) that you have money
yi mo-re- didi des.
This you prog. eat really.

'I have not been seeing you these days. Where have you been these days, you are now very handsome. As for those of you who have money you are really enjoying'.

B: *Me-w□ ha yi ara, adwuma no na a- b□ me so□.*
I pres. be here, this just work the it is perf. strike me on.

'I am here except that the work load has been very heavy'.

A: *Wo-kaa-e a se anka [w'akoa] me-be- boa-a wo.*
You say past then if would [your servant] I come help past you.

'If you had told me, I your servant, would have come to help'.

B: *Me nua ε-n- ye hwee. Me re- n- tumi m- fa wo- n- ye*
My brother it neg. be nothing. I prog. neg. can neg. take you neg. be
akoa saa.
servant that.

'My brother that is nothing. I cannot use you as a servant'.

KOFI AGYEKUM

A: *Wo nana nna-nsa yi me-se asem a a- to me. Me*
 Your Nana days three this I say matter that perf. happen me. My

mma mmienu yare. Me yere a anka □-be-boa me nso a ye- a-
 children two be sick. My wife that would she fut. help me too that we-perf.
be se no se ne maame a-wu. Me fa-berε mu a-ye
 come tell her that her mother perf. die. My take place inside perf. be
den. Me ho sika nyinaa a-sa, kapr'ba a ye- a- tu
 difficult. My body money all perf. finish penny that we perf. pierce
mu tokuro mpo me-nni bi. Wei na anka me-se
 inside hole even I neg. have some. This and would I say
me-re be- hu wo na anka w'-adaworoma wo-aboa me sika kakra
 I prog. come see you and would your grace you help me money little
ama me-de atete me ho, na a-n-ye saa a, gye se ak□mfo bi
 give I use tear my body and perf neg. be that then except suicide some
na me-k□-hyε di me hia.
 it is I go fix eat my poverty.

'Your Nana, I tell you, I am confronted with too many problems these days. Two of my children are sick. My wife who could have helped me has lost her mother. I have no place to go. All my money is finished. I do not even have a 'penny'. That is why I said I was coming to see you so that if by your grace you could help me with a little money to make ends meet, else I may commit suicide so as to go and rest for good'.

B: *Me nua n-ba wo ho. Wo-re-k□- kum wo ho sen?*
 My brother neg. worry your body. You prog. go kill your body what?
Twen, m-ε-boa wo, m-ε-ma wo C200,000. Fa no kwa.
 Wait, I fut. help you I fut. Give you C200,000. Take it free.

'My brother never be worried. Why are you going to commit suicide? Wait, I will help you. I will give you C200,000 (two hundred thousand cedis, about thirty U.S. dollars). Take it for free'.

A: *Me-da wo ase pii.*
 I lie you under many.

'Thank you very much'.

In the above discourse, the demand for the loan is put on hold until the latter part of the conversation. This strategy has become so prototypical that the Akan lament that if you are seeking a loan from a rich person, s/he would make you reveal all your secrets and then refuse to give you the money.

In the above encounter, the borrower referred to himself as *akoa* 'servant'. The word is a general term for a man; it is also used for a servant. The borrower is saying that the rich man is a lord. The Akans also say that '*ano a yede b□ bosea no enye no na yede tua*'. Literally, 'the mouth used in asking for a loan is not the one that is used in paying back'. It implies that there is a difference between the strategies used in borrowing and those used when one returns the borrowed item. The borrower is always sober and humble; and this confirms the higher degree of persuasion in borrowing. At the end of the above encounter, we see that the poor man was able to achieve his goal, and what was intended to be a loan turned out to be a gift. The persuader employs Brown and Levinson's strategy 13: give reasons (p. 128), and gave the reasons why he wanted the loan.

The expression *anka* is an illocutionary force mitigator used in polite and indirect requests to avoid face-threat. The word *anka* is used here to communicate unfulfilled intentions and desires. In its first usage, A said that if B had told him, he would have come to help, but since he was not called, his intentions did not materialise. The second and third uses of *anka* are understood to refer to potential future state of affairs that are seen as going to happen very close to the point of utterance, here the request to B to help A with money. The use of *anka* is well articulated by Amfo (2001:17-30). According to her, the core meaning of *anka* is that the proposition expressed represents a state of affairs that fails to exist at the time of utterance, a state which is not factual, but rather hypothetical and unreal (ibid.:26).

4.3. Propaganda, Slogans, Co-opting and Advertising in Persuasion

This section considers the use of propaganda, slogans and co-opting as persuasion in politics and in advertising. These persuasive strategies

have affective connotations involving utterances and pictures that try to make the addressee react positively to the persuader.

4.3.1. Propaganda and Slogans

Propaganda is a deliberate attempt by some individual or group to form or control or alter the attitudes of other groups by the use of communication (see Qualter 1962:271). It is a publicity meant to spread ideas or information so as to persuade or convince people.

In politics, governments use persuasion to secure their positions. Most authoritarian regimes use propaganda and political ideology as persuasion to influence the people to accept certain guidelines, policies and ideologies of their regimes. Examples of such regimes are: most African military regimes, the former USSR, Idi Amin of Uganda (1971-79), Mobutu of Zaire (1965-1997), and Pinochet of Chile (1973-1990) (see Hutchinson 1994:530-543). The images of these regimes, although unfavourable to the group, are made to appear superb. The opposition parties prefer to use presentational persuasion and make voters see the negative side of the incumbent.

The Encyclopaedia Britannica (1982:40-42) discusses propaganda fronts, image-makers, predisposition, inducements, role models and parental symbols. The propaganda strategies used by politicians make persuadees form positive and credible (or negative) concepts and images about politicians. The predispositions and inducements include (1) the persuadees' stored memories and past associations with related symbols, (2) economic inducements such as gifts, bribery, pay raises, threats of job loss, etc., (3) physical inducements such as love, violence protection, etc. and (4) social pressures that may either encourage or inhibit the persuadee to think or do as the propaganda advocates.

In contemporary politics, political parties use the language of persuasion and plentiful promising to canvas for support and votes from non-affiliated party voters and for the continued allegiance of their own past supporters. The Akan politicians, in order to woo their supporters, use 'pure' Akan language full of persuasion when they are campaigning for votes. 'Pure' Akan language is devoid of code switching and code mixing with English; it is also embellished with idioms, euphemisms and proverbs.

The politicians try to use the language the people understand best, and which has all the indigenous persuasive markers. Persuasion in these contexts may be short-lived: even if the voters become convinced on the spot and would have voted for the politician if the voting were to take place soon after the encounter, with time, they may change their stand.

In the 1996 and 2000 elections in Ghana, the major opposition party, New Patriotic Party (NPP), used a persuasive slogan. *Hwe w'asetanam na to aba pa* 'Consider your living conditions and vote wisely'. Living conditions under the then ruling party, the National Democratic Congress (NDC), were very precarious. School fees were escalating, utilities were very costly, and taxes were high. Ironically, salaries were woefully inadequate. The then strongest opposition party (NPP, the current ruling party) therefore felt that if this slogan should go down well with the people, they would vote for them.

The NPP party thought that to persuade the masses to vote for a change, people had to consider their state and conditions of affairs and vote wisely. Unfortunately, the propaganda did not work and the party did not win in the 1996 election. In the 2000 election, they repeated the slogan and this time added another slogan 'Positive Change'. They told the people that the time had come to change the ruling government and the change should be a positive one. This time, they were able to win. On assuming power in January 2001, the NPP government repeated its slogan **Positive Change** and also added **Zero Tolerance for Corruption**. These persuasive slogans were meant to make the masses believe that the new government could revitalise the dying economy of Ghana by curbing corruption, which is the major cancer of the economy. If the new government went to war against corruption all the way down to zero level, it would help develop the economy, since large portions of the national income and resources are siphoned off through corruption.

When the NPP party assumed power in January 2001, the majority of the Ghanaian populace had confidence and goodwill for the government. People even called in to radio stations to advise the government to increase petroleum prices and other taxes so as to raise enough money for infrastructure. This was to help the government to honor its campaign promises. In January 2003, the government felt

that people should be ready to pay a realistic price for fuel, so that the economy could be run without the government's heavy fuel subsidies. It raised the petrol price from ten thousand, five hundred cedis to twenty thousand cedis (from about one U.S. dollar fifty cents to three dollars). Diesel also shot up from nine thousand cedis to seventeen thousand five hundred cedis (about one dollar twenty cents to two dollars twenty cents). The increase affected the prices and services of everything and people complained bitterly.

After nearly three years in office, the NPP government has not been able to fulfil its promises on the creation of employment, the abolition of the *cash and carry* system in the health sector, the reduction in school fees and utility tariffs on electricity and water. (*'Cash and carry'* is the terminology for the system where people have to pay money on the spot before they are attended to at the hospital or at the health centres).

It is reported in both the print and electronic media that many of the people who were persuaded by the slogan **Positive Change** and **Zero Tolerance for Corruption** are complaining that they have been misled. Listening to Akan phone-in-programmes on the local FM stations, one finds that some people are really disappointed. Some even remark 'all politicians are the same, when they are in the opposition they seem to be sensitive to the plight of the masses, but when they assume power they act differently'. While the NPP propaganda did not work the first time (1996), the second time (2000) it worked but was short-lived.

The National Democratic Congress (NDC) that was the predecessor of NPP is capitalising on the current trends of economic affairs and has also come up with slogans to neutralize those used by the NPP. The two most important ones are *Me dɔfo adaadaa me* 'My lover has deceived me' and *Sankɔfa* 'go back to pick it'. These two slogans are to persuade the electorate to vote the NDC back into power, since the supposed lover, NPP, has deceived the people.

All of the above indicates that persuasive language is effective in politics. It has a perlocutionary effect on the voters. The perlocutionary effect of persuasion must be backed up by concrete actions, or else its effect is short-lived. When the persuadee feels that s/he has been deceived, s/he loses faith in the persuader. Listeners form

positive or credible concepts of cognitive models and images about politicians as they examine the latter's propaganda strategies.

4.3.2. Co-opting in Advertising

Co-opting is a technique frequently used in advertising. It consists basically in seducing the hearer and the viewer through promised identification with some prestigious environment or a set of right people, young, smart, rich, etc. (see Mey 2001:210). In advertising, the message that comes either directly from the seller or in the form of the advertisement is both informative and persuasive to influence the would-be customer. The motive of the advertiser is to persuade the potential buyer to make a particular purchase. Persuasion makes the consumer accept the projected image of the commodity, as presented by the advertiser.

The market women at the various markets in Ghana, especially Kumasi Central Market and Makola in Accra, employ persuasive language to get customers. They use intimate expressions and terms of endearment like *me nua* 'my sibling', *me kunu* 'my husband', *me dɔfo* 'my lover', *aboɔfe* 'the handsome/beautiful one', etc. These terms place the seller in the camera angle of the buyer. There are many instances where people have bought goods and have gone home to regret. Upon enquiries, some informants remarked that they think the women use charms to change people's mind to buy their wares. Thus, persuasive market language transforms itself into a charm that has the power to change minds. Similarly, the adverts on our televisions and in newspapers are meant to persuade customers to buy.

5. Conclusion

This paper has looked at persuasion as a mechanism meant to influence a person either to produce a change in attitude and mind, or to resist a change. It is a mental transformation device by which the persuader implants particular meanings and connotations with the intention of inducing the recipient to view the world from the

persuader's perspectives. It is also a harmonious verbal technique used to avoid conflict among participants within a communicative scenario.

To use persuasion in communication, the speaker needs various communicative skills and competence that must conform to the existing socio-cultural norms and values. The tone of the discourse must be very cordial. Many of the effects of persuasive language arise from the use of words with emotionally toned connotative meanings.

Persuasive strategies, like positive politeness strategies, are used as a social accelerator to boost the level of intimacy between the Speaker and the Hearer. They indicate that the Speaker wants to draw closer to the Addressee(s). However, it must be emphasised that persuasion can only materialise if the addressee is willing to comply and conform.

Persuasion is a means of saying something and getting someone to believe that it is so, e.g. by persuading someone to do something, consoling someone in his distress, etc. The effects are normally positive and in favour of the speaker, since the speaker lures the addressee to view the world from the point of view of the speaker.

The paper concentrated on three major persuasive strategies adopted from L's negative and positive politeness strategies. These are (a) honorifics, deference, apologetic devices, address forms, (2) verbal indirection, including idioms, proverbs, euphemisms etc., and (3) propaganda, slogans, co-opting and advertising. The paper analysed these strategies together with three types of persuasion namely *presentational persuasion*, *analogical persuasion*, and *quasilogical persuasion*. Each of them has the intent to influence the addressee.

The paper also looked at the various functions of persuasion and identified some of the various communicative contexts under which persuasion is employed. These included (1) palace language and arbitration; (2) religious worship and the supplication to God and the deities; (3) consoling the worried and the depressed; (4) persuasion in borrowing; (5) political, propaganda, co-opting and advertising. There are many other situations where persuasive language is employed that are outside the purview of this paper.

I am of the view that there is an element of persuasion in any social encounter. Persuasion influences interpersonal and societal relationships. Persuasive language is a duplicate key that unlocks the mental and cognitive complex state of the addressee (see Jamieson

1985:68). The proper use of persuasion in Akan routinised traditional events, as outlined in this paper, strengthens the relationship between language, culture, sociolinguistics and pragmatics. A deep insight into the rules and regulations of all these disciplines regulates the speech and social behaviour of participants during communicative events.

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Notes

1. I sincerely thank the following from whom I collected most of the data used in this paper. They are Okyeame Antwi Boasiako and Amoateng, both of the Asante palace; Messrs. Agyemang Prempeh and Boateng, teachers of Ahmadiya and Kumasi High School; Mr. Frimpong of Agona Asaaman; Madam Akua Akyaa of Kokofu Edwinase; and Mr. Bosie Amponsah of Love FM, Kumase.
2. Apart from the lexicon, honorific utterances are accompanied by non-speech signs like gestures, dress or bodily comportment of the interlocutors. This is clearly manifested at the palace where speakers have to bow down, remove their sandals, lower their wrapped traditional clothes and speak in a gentle and humble tone when greeting a chief.
3. The expression *dwane toa* literally means 'run to engage' (see Yankah 1995:64, Obeng 1997a:27).
4. In the Akan traditional political system, when a stool becomes vacant, and a new chief is to be enthroned, the various contestants within the royal family make their campaigners use various forms of persuasive language to solicit their positions from the kingmakers. They employ historical allusions and most importantly oratory and rhetorics, since public speaking is one of the most important characteristics of an Akan chief. In Akan society, apart from the Okyeame, people in public positions are also expected to have oratorical skills.

5. In Akan orthography, subject pronouns and their verbs are written together as single units, that is why I put a dash between a subject pronoun and a verb with all its affixes, such as *wo-a-ma* 'you have given'.
6. Leech's (1983:13) approbation maxim minimises dispraise and rather maximises praise for others. It says 'avoid saying unpleasant things about others particularly about the addressee'. In applying the approbation maxim, the speaker also adds negative politeness strategies like honorifics, exaggeration, and apology. West and Tuner (2000:365) state 'approbation face work involves minimizing blame and maximising praise for another. Approbation face work exists when an individual focuses less on the negative aspects of another and more on the positive aspects'.

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