

A Sociolinguistic Study of Mampulli-English Codeswitching in Nalerigu, Ghana

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“For I know the plans I have for you, “declares the Lord,” plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future.” Jeremiah 29:11

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I dedicate this thesis to my children, Nninitigya, Nasara, Wunvela and Mpoa-Wunbla Sumnima

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List of Abbreviations

- 1pl** - first person plural
3pron - third person pronoun
Adv - adverb
advp - adverbial phrase
Aux - auxiliary
CA- Conversational Analysis
Comp - complement
Cond - conditional
Conj - conjunction
Dem - demonstrative
Det - determiner
EL – embedded language
ELI- Embedded Language Island
Empha – emphatic
EoC - Ethnography of Communication
Fut - future aspect
GES- Ghana Education Service
I obj - indirect object
Inf - infinitive
Intent - intentionality
ML – matrix language
MLF - Matrix Language Framework
MOP- Morpheme Order Principle
NaLAP - National Literacy Acceleration Programme
Obj - object
Pat - particle
Pl - plural

Poss - possessive/possessor

Poss adj - possessive adjective

Prep - preposition

Prog - progressive

Prs - present

rel. pron - relative pronoun

SG - singular

SMP- System Morpheme Principle

SUBJ - subject

v – verb

VRA- Volta River Authority

Abstract

Ghana is home to approximately eighty-seven indigenous languages, alongside English as the official language. It is, therefore, common for bilingual Ghanaians to switch between a Ghanaian language and English. Scholars have explored this phenomenon from various perspectives, including its application in pedagogy (Yevudey, 2013), language policy (Agbozo & Rescue, 2021), and multilingual communities (Oppong-Adjei & Yaw-Kan, 2023). However, many of these studies have focused on major southern Ghanaian languages such as Twi, Ga, and Ewe, in relation to English, leaving minority northern languages like Mampulli underexplored. Mampulli is a minority language spoken in Ghana's Northeast Region. This thesis examines Mampulli-English codeswitching among Mampulli speakers. Data was collected through interviews, observation, and recordings of selected radio programmes. The analysis draws on Myers-Scotton's Matrix Language Framework and Hymes' Ethnography of Communication. Recorded radio data were transcribed, glossed and categorised into grammatical categories, namely, nouns, noun phrases, verbs, verb phrases, adjectives, adverbs, prepositions, conjunctions, and clauses. Observational notes and transcribed interviews were analysed thematically. Findings reveal that Mampulli serves as the matrix language, dictating word order and contributing specific morphemes, while English, as the embedded language, introduces morphemes that occasionally deviate from the Matrix Language Framework principles. The study also identifies key sociocultural factors influencing bilinguals' shifts between Mampulli and English such as education, prestige of language, gender, age, and religion. This thesis is the first major study on Mampulli-English codeswitching and represents a significant contribution to Mampulli linguistic research, marking a major investigation into the language in over four decades.

Keywords

Codeswitching, English, Ethnography of Communication, Ghana, Sociolinguistics, Matrix
Language Framework, Mampulli

CHAPTER 1

Research Background

1.1 Introduction

Language is a central element of human society. It is not only a means of communication but also a key symbol of cultural identity. Furthermore, it helps preserve the collective heritage of a community (Carpenter & Tsykarev, 2020). Among the many forms of language, indigenous languages hold particular significance. They express the unique worldviews, customs, and histories of the people who speak them. Despite their cultural and intellectual value, indigenous languages are increasingly under threat. According to the United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues, around 95% of the world's indigenous languages are likely to face extinction or serious endangerment by the end of the twenty-first century. Alarmingly, it is estimated that one indigenous language disappears every two weeks (Requesens-Galnares, 2022, 2023).

In Ghana, the linguistic landscape is very diverse. Estimates of the number of languages spoken in the country range from 45 to 56 (Anyidoho & Dakubu, 2008; Bamgbose, 1999; M. E. K. Dakubu, 2015; M. K. Dakubu, 2015; Obeng, 1997), with more recent surveys indicating up to 87 distinct languages (Eberhard et al., 2020; Ryan, 2018). This multilingual landscape presents both opportunities and challenges. While it reflects a rich linguistic heritage, it also worsens the risk that smaller languages may become marginalised or fall into disuse, particularly if they lack institutional support or official recognition.

Mampulli is one such language. It belongs to the Mabilia subgroup (Bodomo & Abubakari, 2017; Bodomo et al., 2020) of the Gur language family (Bendor-Samuel, 1971; Naden, 2015) and is mainly spoken in northeastern Ghana, as well as in parts of Togo and

Burkina Faso (Naden, 1980). Despite its widespread use in Ghana's newly created Northeast Region, the language has received limited academic attention. Only a few recent studies have begun to document its linguistic features and social roles.

The status of Mampulli is further complicated by recent administrative changes in Ghana's governance structure. The creation of the Northeast Region has brought new language policy challenges, particularly in the education sector. Historically, Dagbani served as the dominant regional language in the former Northern Region and was used in formal domains such as education and government (Andoh-Kumi, 2015; Carter Jr et al., 2020). However, with the restructuring of regional boundaries, Dagbani's role has changed in the Northeast Region, and Mampulli has emerged as a potential candidate for regional language status.

This shift in linguistic power dynamics presents both an opportunity and a challenge. On the one hand, it creates space for Mampulli to gain formal recognition and use. On the other hand, the language lacks the necessary pedagogical resources and institutional support for such a transition. The absence of teaching materials, teacher training, and curriculum development in Mampulli compromises not only educational quality but also the intergenerational transmission of cultural knowledge (Carpenter & Tsykarev, 2020; Owu-Ewie, 2017). As scholars such as Bodomo (1996), Prihandoko et al. (2019), and Anyidoho (2018) argue, language plays a crucial role in shaping effective governance, social cohesion, and economic development. Without adequate resources, minority languages like Mampulli are at a disadvantage in contributing to these broader national goals.

Moreover, the linguistic profile of Mampulli speakers adds another layer of complexity. Most speakers are multilingual, fluent not only in Mampulli but also in Dagbani and English (Appiah & Ardila, 2020). This multilingualism leads to frequent CS, where speakers switch between languages during conversations. CS, a well-known feature of multilingual

communities, has been studied extensively by scholars such as Gumperz, Myers-Scotton, and Grosjean.

In Ghana, researchers have studied codeswitching in a variety of social and linguistic contexts (Albakry & Ofori, 2011; Amenorvi, 2019a; Amuzu, 2012; Bakuuro, 2020; Brobbey, 2015; Oppong-Adjei & Yaw-kan, 2023). Although CS is observed in interactions involving Mampulli-English bilinguals, studies focusing specifically on Mampulli-English pair are scarce. This lack of research is a notable gap in the literature, particularly given the complex sociolinguistic environment of Mampulli-speaking communities. The speakers' rich multilingual abilities likely influence how and why they switch languages, and this deserves closer academic study.

This thesis aims to address this gap by examining Mampulli-English CS in Nalerigu, the capital of the Northeast Region. The study employs two main theoretical frameworks. The first is Myers-Scotton's (1993b) Matrix Language Framework model, which explains the grammatical structure of bilingual speech. The second is Hymes' (1964) *Ethnography of Communication*, which helps to interpret language use within wider social and cultural contexts. Together, these frameworks allow for a detailed understanding of both the structural forms and social underpinnings of CS.

In this study, CS is understood as the regular and rule-governed alternation between two distinct languages. It is not treated as a variation within a single language. According to the MLF model, one language, called the ML, provides the grammatical structure of the sentence. The other, known as the EL, supplies certain words or phrases. At the same time, the research views CS as socially meaningful. Speakers use it not only to construct grammatically acceptable utterances but also to manage social relationships, assert cultural identity, and fulfil specific communicative goals within different interactional contexts.

Furthermore, this thesis seeks to examine the patterns and motivations behind Mampulli-English CS. It investigates which English structures appear in switches and explores the sociocultural reasons for switching. Through this, the study seeks to understand the language hierarchy between Mampulli and English. It aims to shed light on the complex linguistic realities of a marginalised yet resilient speech community.

The study employs a qualitative method for data collection and analysis. Selected radio programmes that feature dialogue with visible instances of codeswitching were recorded. These were then transcribed, glossed, and translated into meaningful English. Because codeswitching is not constant, this method was used on an ad hoc basis. The next step involved observing three youth groups, one family, and conducting interviews with older speakers, programme hosts, panellists and callers. The interviews were also recorded and transcribed. Observational notes were analysed using thematic analysis to uncover the social and cultural factors influencing codeswitching. For the structural analysis, the MLF model was applied. For the sociocultural analysis, Hymes' Ethnography of Communication was used. Although the two frameworks come from different traditions, together they provide a comprehensive understanding of bilingual interaction.

1.2 Research Problem

Ghana is a linguistically diverse country where codeswitching is a regular and an integral part of everyday speech. Among the many indigenous languages spoken in Ghana, Mampulli, a member of the Mabilia subgroup within the Gur language family, has not been widely studied, especially regarding how it is used alongside English in bilingual conversations. This gap is significant given Mampulli's cultural and communicative importance in the recently established Northeast Region of Ghana, where it is the main spoken language, particularly in Nalerigu, the regional capital.

The expansion of local media, especially radio, has increased Mampulli-English codeswitching. Broadcasts often feature deliberate shifts between the two languages, offering valuable data for the exploration of how bilingual speakers manage grammar, express meaning, and signal social identity. However, limited academic work has focused on the linguistic patterns and social motivations that influence such language use.

Structurally, it is not yet clear how Mampulli functions within bilingual speech, whether it maintains its grammatical framework or whether English influences its syntax. From a sociolinguistic perspective, more work is needed to investigate why speakers alternate between the two languages. Factors such as topic, audience, identity, and language attitudes likely play a role, but these remain unexplored. As English becomes more dominant in formal and educational domains in Ghana, there are growing concerns that frequent switching could weaken the position of Mampulli and affect its long-term vitality.

For these reasons, a detailed study of Mampulli-English codeswitching in Nalerigu is both timely and necessary. This study, therefore, focuses on the grammatical structures in Mampulli-English codeswitching and the social factors that trigger it. The study explores how bilingual speakers navigate between languages in a setting where traditional linguistic practices meet contemporary forms of communication. The outcomes of this study will add to existing knowledge in sociolinguistics and bilingualism, while also informing policies on language education and the protection of indigenous languages in Ghana.

1.3 Research Objectives

The primary aim of this study is to investigate the phenomenon of Mampulli-English codeswitching as it occurs in Nalerigu, the administrative capital of Ghana's Northeast Region.

The study seeks to explore both the structural and sociocultural aspects of bilingual language use in this context.

Specifically, the research aims to:

1. identify English structures employed by Mampulli-English bilinguals.
2. investigate the sociolinguistic factors that drive codeswitching behaviour among Mampulli-English bilinguals in Nalerigu.

1.4 Summary of Ghana's Linguistic Background

Ghana is a West African country situated South of the Saharan desert. It is bordered by Francophone countries, Ivory Coast to the West, Togo to the East and Burkina Faso to the North (Briggs, 2019). Linguists suggest that languages spoken in Ghana range between fifty and ninety languages (Bamgboşe, 2000; Bokamba, 2014; Rosekrans et al., 2012). These languages belong to the Gur, Kwa or Mande of the Niger-Congo language family (M. E. K. Dakubu, 2015; Lewis; Obeng, 1997). Approximately fifty out of this range being distinct languages (Dako & Quarcoo, 2017). The total count of Ghanaian languages is usually an approximation because there is not an agreed number of the languages hence different studies quote different figures. The lack of consensus is likely because of challenges with the classification of languages in that some classification models may consider all dialects of a language as one while others treat them as different languages. For instance, Akan, a southern Ghanaian language and its Akwapim-Twi, Asante-Twi, Fante and Bono dialects, are sometimes counted as one language but other times as separate languages. Languages are as dynamic as the people who speak them and as such can only grow when they are put to active use by their

speakers. However, statistics on Ghanaian languages seem to focus on counting the languages in Ghana to the neglect of investigating their intricacies and development.

These challenges notwithstanding, Ghana clearly presents a multilingual situation operating in more than fifty languages spoken by about 30 million people across sixteen geographic and administrative regions (Ghana Statistical Service, 2021). Data from Ghana's 2021 Population and Housing Census indicates that indigenous languages are distributed among four major ethnic groups: Akan, Mole-Dagbani, Ewe and Guan (Obeng, 1997; Owu-Ewie & Eshun, 2019). Additionally, two international languages Hausa and English are in widespread use in education, governance and trade. Hausa was introduced in the country from Nigeria by Nigerian trade settlers and its use has since been extended into a household language especially in Muslim communities in Ghana and in the media by national media houses (Anyidoho & Dakubu, 2008; M. K. Dakubu, 2015; Obeng, 1997). The second, English, a remnant of colonialism, is the official language used in education and every official business (Anyidoho & Dakubu, 2008). Recent studies indicate that several developed Ghanaian languages, including Twi, Ga, and Ewe, are gradually being replaced by English in urban communities (Afrifa et al., 2019; Agyekum, 2010; Appiah & Ardila, 2020). This shift is largely attributed to the elevated status of English in Ghana's educational system and its dominant role in sociocultural activities. As English increasingly becomes the preferred medium of communication in these urban areas, the use of indigenous languages is diminishing (Nyamekye & Baffour-Koduah, 2021), highlighting a significant trend toward linguistic displacement driven by the perceived prestige and utility of English in formal and informal settings (Afrifa et al., 2019; Owu-Ewie, 2017). Bradley (2019) cautions that the pursuit of aligning with prestigious languages diminishes the speaker populations of native languages, leading to a gradual erosion of linguistic vitality. Over time, this process results in the affected languages either losing their linguistic richness or

eventually facing extinction. This is the case for several Ghanaian languages as Ghana's language policy prioritises the use of the English language. As a result, many Ghanaians prioritise learning English over their native languages in order to participate more effectively in economic and sociocultural activities.

1.5 Sociolinguistic Background of Mampulli

Mampulli is the name of the language spoken by the Mamprusi ethnic group known as the Mamprugu Kingdom in the northeastern part of Ghana. Different sources present varied spellings for the language such as *Mamprule*, *Mampulusi*, *Mampruli* or *Mampoursi* (Binger, 1892) and *Mampulugu* in early writings on the history of the Mamprusi ethnic group. The literature is, however, silent on what accounts for these variations. This may be because of the language barrier the early European researchers faced with informants without formal education. However, this study adopts the name Mampulli in line with the pronunciation of the language by its native speakers. There are also conflicting reports about the name Mamprugu as they used to refer to the Kingdom. For the most part, the oral history of events in the northern part of Ghana poses a problem of inconsistencies about events and what necessitated them, which is natural for any information passed on orally. One such is the word used to refer to the ethnic group, Mamprusi.

History has it that prior to the arrival of the British to the northern territories, Mamprugu was the largest sovereign state in present day northern Ghana. Its territorial boundaries extended as far as the eastern and western parts of the northern territories, parts of Burkina Faso and Togo with the Nayiri (king) as the sole authority (Davis, 1987, 1992). According to oral history, the Mamprugu Kingdom is one of several related empires established by the descendants of Naa Gbewa, who migrated into the region from the northeast while fleeing a pursuing army (Davis, 1979; Davis, 1992). Oral history remains a key source of historical

knowledge among the people of northern Ghana. Mamprusi tales date this period to shortly after the creation of the world, identifying the people who offered refuge to Naa Gbewa as the original inhabitants of the area in the fourteenth century. This time frame aligns with the collapse of the Fulani emirates in what is now northern Nigeria, which led to the dispersal of princes and their followers from the region (Falola, 2022; Low, 1967). Mamprusi traditions are inconsistent as to the birthplace of Na Gbewa but emphatic about the location of his burial site at Pusiga, northeast of the present capital, Nalerigu. This is said to be where Na Gbewa first stopped and founded the original capital.

A contest between his two sons to succeed him degenerated into a conflict. As a result, the kingdom was divided; the elder Tohasia succeeded their father as king of Mamprugu while the younger Sitogu moved away further north of the east and founded the Dagbon kingdom whose people are the Dagomba and speak Dagbani. Mossi kings in Burkina Faso are believed to be descendants of the latter Mamprusi king's daughter who eloped from her father's village at a time when the capital had been moved from Pusiga to Gambaga.

Presently, the Mampulli language is spoken in across six administrative districts in the Northeast and parts of the Upper East Regions of Ghana. Its usage spans five territorial divisions that were once part segments of the former kingdom.



Figure 1. Map of Ghana

Source: Ghana Statistical Service, 2021

Each of these is regarded as the inherited domain of a distinct patrilineal lineage founded by the son of a Mamprusi king. It should be emphasised that the notion of domain does not, in this context, imply exclusive rights to use or dispose of land, but rather political authority with respect to the population. The central area includes the king's town at Nalerigu and other settlements where members of the king's patrilineage hold chiefly office. To the west, from north to south, are the Kpasinkpe, Wungu, and Janga traditional areas. To the east, the traditional area of Yunyo separates Nalerigu from the Ghana-Togo border. The paramount

chief of each of these provinces is the political head of a corresponding patrilineage, which provides royal chiefs in that province.

The title of the Mamprugu king, *Nayiri*, is linguistically and culturally significant within the context of Mamprusi society. The term is derived from two elements in the Mampulli language: *naam*, which means ‘royalty’ or ‘kingship’, and *yiri*, which means ‘house’ or ‘home’ (Davis, 1992; Naden, 1980). Together, *Nayiri* can be interpreted as ‘the house’ of ‘royalty’ or ‘royal household’. This construction is unique among royal titles in Ghana and beyond, as it does not merely denote political authority or individual leadership.

Instead, *Nayiri* embodies both the status of the king *Naam* and the physical and symbolic space associated with royal power, the royal household or palace *yiri*. The title therefore reflects a deeper cultural philosophy in which leadership is inseparable from place, lineage, and communal identity. It emphasises the Mamprusis understanding of kingship as rooted not only in political control but also in custodianship of tradition, history, and social cohesion (Drucker-Brown, 1995; Lentz, 2006).

According to (Tonah, 2005), by integrating the concept of royalty with that of the royal house, the title *Nayiri* illustrates how Mamprusi political structure is deeply embedded in social and familial networks. It symbolises a form of leadership that is relational and embedded within the broader community, rather than isolated or purely hierarchical. This linguistic construction offers valuable understanding into the cultural values and worldview of the Mamprusi people. It suggests that authority in Mamprusi society is not based solely on individual power or political control. Instead, it is rooted in shared history, enduring social relationships, and the preservation of tradition. The title therefore reflects a system in which leadership is viewed as a communal responsibility, shaped by collective memory and the continuous transmission of cultural heritage across generations.

The Mamprusis differ from some other people of northern Ghana in their traditional organisation as a centralised state with several subdivisions and a king. They, like all the people of northern Ghana, believe in a supreme being. The earth is viewed in both its practical and spiritual aspects, and the 'earth cult' maintains shrines at sacred places. The importance of ancestors for the Mamprusi is manifested in shrines and rituals devoted to them. Many Mamprusis have now adopted Christianity or Islam, but traditional religious practices persist.

They are among the fastest growing ethnic groups in Ghana. Given frequent interethnic marriages many Mamprusi speak several Mole-Dagbani languages. Those who have travelled south of the country learn to speak Twi. Many Mamprusi traders speak Hausa while their familiarity with French and Arabic is increasing. Mamprusi school children learn some English and Dagbani. This has raised concern about the future of Mampulli, given the increasing multilingual nature of Mamprusi societies and the language not being studied at school.

1.5.1 Population Size, Structure and Composition

The population of West Mamprusi Municipality, according to the 2021 Population and Housing Census, is 175,755 and accounts for 27 percent of Northeast Region's total population. Males constitute 49 percent and females represent 51 percent. More than six in every ten (63.2%) of the population of the district live in rural areas, while the remaining 36.8 percent live in the urban areas (Ghana Statistical Service, 2021).

The population of East Mamprusi Municipality is 188,006, representing 29 percent of the region's total population. Males constitute 48 percent and females represent 52 percent. It has a large rural population of 107, 218, representing 57 percent (Ghana Statistical Service, 2021).

1.5.2 Literacy and Education

The literacy rate within the Mamprusi population remains markedly low, particularly in the Mampulli language, underscoring broader implications for the preservation and promotion of Ghanaian languages. Recent statistics reveal that around 50% of individuals aged six and older have never attended school, with 40% of those aged 11 and older lacking basic literacy skills (Ghana Statistical Service, 2021). Although literacy rates have improved compared to previous reports, with male literacy reaching 14% and female literacy at 11%, a significant gender gap persists. This represents a reduction from the 2010 figures which were 39% for males and 27.5% for females. Literacy trends among those aged 11 and older further indicate that 20% are literate only in English, 4% in both English and a Ghanaian language (likely Dagbani, which is frequently taught as a mother tongue in the area), and a mere 0.2% are literate solely in a Ghanaian language.

These figures reflect a broader national pattern, where English dominates as the primary language of literacy, often at the expense of local languages. This trend suggests that despite Ghana's rich linguistic diversity, there is a diminishing emphasis on Ghanaian languages within formal education and literacy initiatives. The significant gap in literacy in Mampulli, along with the low rates of literacy in other indigenous languages, indicates challenges in maintaining these languages across generations. Such disparities highlight the need for policies that prioritise Ghanaian languages in literacy programmes and educational curricula, to support linguistic diversity and cultural heritage while bridging the literacy gap in marginalised communities.

Although literacy rates in the Mamprusi community remain relatively low compared to other regions in Ghana, the nation has nonetheless gained significantly from the intellectual contributions of individuals from this ethnic group. Despite the challenges in access to formal education and the high rates of illiteracy, particularly among women and rural residents,

members of the Mamprusi community have made impactful advancements across various fields, including academia, economics, and politics. These achievements underscore a complex dynamic within the Mamprusi population: while formal educational attainment and literacy rates lag, the community's intellectuals have still achieved notable success, often overcoming substantial educational and structural barriers.

The persistence of low literacy rates in the region, however, highlights the critical need for targeted educational policies that prioritise access to literacy in both Ghanaian languages and English. Strengthening literacy programmes tailored to the Mamprusi population could amplify the contributions of future generations, particularly by fostering bilingual proficiency that includes indigenous languages alongside English. This bilingual approach may further support the preservation of Mampulli and other Ghanaian languages, while also expanding opportunities for community members within the broader national context.

The accomplishments of Mamprusi intellectuals, considering these literacy challenges, emphasise the potential of literacy as a transformative tool for communities, one that could enhance individual and community capacity. Recognising and addressing the unique educational needs of the Mamprusi population is essential not only for equity but also for harnessing the full potential of this region in contributing to Ghana's socioeconomic and intellectual progress.

1.6 An overview of Ghana's language policy

An education policy is a written document that identifies and assigns language(s) of instruction for educational purposes of a nation. In Ghana, the Ministry of Education, the Ghana Education Service, and the nation's Parliament are responsible for drafting and implementing such policies. Several governments and international organisations have adopted different strategies to encourage the development and use of indigenous Ghanaian

languages especially in education (Rosekrans et al., 2012). Ghana's language in education policy transits three phases from pre-colonial to post-colonial eras. Western formal education in Ghana, started in the coastal areas in the 15th Century with the establishment of the castle schools (Anyidoho, 2018). These included Elmina Castle in Elmina, Cape Coast Castle in Cape Coast and the Christiansburg Castle in Accra, all established by Europeans as a means of educating their children but were later extended to the children of affluent Ghanaian merchants. The language of instruction in these schools was that of the European occupants of the castles at a given time. The arrival of missionary groups to the Gold Coast introduced a different language policy. The different missions, Wesleyan, Berman and Basel, adopted language policies to include native languages in order to facilitate their mission work according to their location. For example, the Basel and Breman Missionary schools used the Ghanaian languages as media of instruction in their schools (Agbedor, 1994; Agbozo, 2015). The pre-colonial times present varied policies between missionary schools for Ghanaian languages and those of the merchants for different European languages in line with their unique objectives. This was not unique to the Gold Coast but the norm for colonised states at the time. Gwanfogbe (2018) in his assessment of Cameroonian language policy for the same period summarises the German colonial education in Cameroon as one that only promoted German among natives to the detriment of Cameroonian indigenous languages. In contrast to the pre-colonial era, the colonial period (1919-1956) started off with an English-only policy (1919-1926) and later 1927 to a bilingual language policy which combined English and indigenous languages for implementation in both mission and public schools across the country. That is, the use of indigenous languages as languages of instruction for lower primary classes (1-3) and English taught as a subject while from primary four, English becomes the language of instruction, and the mother-tongue is taught

as a subject. This way, Ghanaian children were expected to be literate and functional in both languages (Agbedor, 1994; Bamgboṣe, 2000).

The implementation of policies usually is not without challenges. The Ghanaian elite accused the government of seeking to give the Ghanaian child low quality education with the introduction of native languages to formal education. Hence, they agitated against the use of Ghanaian languages in schools (Ansah, 2014; Klu & Ansre, 2018). From an ideological point of view, Boampong disagrees with this assertion by the elite describing it as “simplistic” (Boampong, 2013 p.155). She argues that the introduction of that policy is a significant milestone in the development of Ghanaian and African languages in general. In 1951, the Guggisberg-led administration, as part of its ‘Accelerated Development Plan’ replaced the three-year mother tongue policy with a one-year mother tongue policy to be used in the first year of school (primary 1). From then on, English became the medium of instruction throughout the educational system. In preparation for independence in 1957, The Bernard Committee was tasked to explore a return to an all-English medium of instruction policy in 1956. One would have thought that a Ghanaian-led administration which understood the country’s linguistic landscape, the role Ghanaian languages play in consolidating the identity of their speakers would have produced a more sustainable language policy. Contrarily, the post-colonial period has seen the most inconsistent language policies in the history of Ghana.

The first Ghanaian led government in 1957, instead of implementing the recommendation of the committee to continue with or revert to Guggisberg’s 1925 policy, implemented an individual member of The Bernard Committee’s opinion to have all English medium of instruction. Consequently, a monolingual all English for instruction was adopted in 1957 (Ansah, 2014; Atintono & Nsoh, 2018; Owu-Ewie, 2006). Perhaps this move was to consolidate the call against ‘sub- quality’ formal education earlier. This anomaly is likely

the antecedent to the slow development of indigenous languages in a country with such densely populated languages as Ghana. However, a military government took over governance and restored the use of indigenous languages in primary school up to primary three and then switch to English as a medium of instruction in 1967. But this was short lived because two years into its implementation in 1969, the governance of the country was returned to a civilian government. The language of education underwent another reform to improve on the teaching and learning of native languages. In 1970, the 1925 British Government's three-year mother-tongue policy was again adopted with two additions. First was the inclusion of the teaching of French as a "regional language" (Ansah, 2014 p.6) given the fact that Ghana is surrounded by French-speaking countries. The second initiative involved the inclusion of four indigenous Ghanaian languages, Ewe, Nzema, Akan, and Ga, both as subjects of study and as mediums of instruction for learners' mother tongues. At this point Ghana's multilingual status and the need to develop its languages began to catch the attention of policy makers (Owu-Ewie, 2006). Although reasons for the choice of these languages were not given, the assumption was that they at the time were already reduced to writing. The four languages fell short of the capacity to achieve the national language agenda as they are indigenous to only southern Ghana. Therefore, they were not suitable for a national context (Agbedor, 2018; Agbedor, 1994). This could be one of Ghana's major challenges to effectively manage its many languages (Dartey, 2025). No one indigenous language is spoken across the country although some languages may be more widely spoken than others. Besides, many Ghanaian languages are distinct and primarily have strong cultural ties with their speakers, making language related decisions complex.

This difficulty notwithstanding, a review conducted in 1974 redefined the interpretation of 'mother-tongue' to mean a language used in a learner's immediate environment and not necessarily one's native language. Based on this new meaning, four

additional languages: Dagbani, Gonja, Kasem and Dagaare from northern Ghana, two varieties of Akan (Twi and Fante) and Ga-Adangbe, a variety of Ga were added to the list of Ghanaian languages to be studied and to serve as mediums of instruction in schools (Owu-Ewie, 2006). A careful observation of the selected languages reveals that the criterion for the selection was skewed to serve the administrative regions without recourse to the sociolinguistic and cultural backgrounds or language regions of the learners (Agbozo & ResCue, 2021; Owu-Ewie, 2017). For example, the choices of Ga and Ga-Adangbe for the Greater Accra Region, Ewe for the Volta Region and Dagbani and Gonja for the Northern Region were not mother tongue languages to all learners in those regional jurisdictions. According to Daly et al. (2023) and Ansah (2014), such practices underpin Africa's unsuccessful implementation of policies aimed at managing its multilingual challenges. They therefore recommend the conduct of scientific study into the dynamics in order to understand their nuances for effective implementation of national language policies.

The 1974 language policy has become Ghana's longest language in education policy to have been implemented. In 1987, Ghanaian languages were made mandatory subjects to be studied from upper primary to senior secondary school while they remained languages of instruction at the lower levels (Anyidoho, 2018).

It is assumed that this shift in policy stimulated public interest in Ghanaian language education among Ghanaians and set the tone for scholarly research by Ghanaian linguists as the notion of native languages' delivering less quality education faded. The implementation of this policy was not without difficulty at its early stages as there were inadequate textbooks and complementary materials for teaching and learning. This challenge was overcome when textbooks began appearing in Ghanaian languages.

Another elected government reverted the language policy to an all-English medium of instruction while maintaining Ghanaian languages as subjects to be taught in senior high school. Ghana's government at the time cited students' inability to speak and write grammatically correct English as the basis for the change in 2002 (Ansah, 2014). The focus on English proficiency and not Ghanaian language proficiency as a reason to warrant policy change was a set back to the development of Ghanaian languages and African languages in general. The question to contemplate is how someone who is unable to read and write in their L1 could have developed a literacy knowledge base good enough to acquire a second language. Indeed, some Ghanaians and linguists understand the socioeconomic and cultural benefits of literacy in indigenous languages. Civil society organisations, higher education institutions, language research institutions and some Ghanaians petitioned the Government to rescind its decision of making English the sole language of instruction in Ghanaian schools. In 2007, the language policy in place from 1974 to 2002 was reviewed, resulting in a revised version that remains in effect today. Key changes to the policy include the use of Ghanaian languages as the medium of instruction from preschool through primary three, while English becomes the language of instruction from primary four through to tertiary education. This way, all languages, indigenous and English have equal opportunity of use and development. But this is far from solving the language in education question, and by extension management of the multilingual situation, in Ghana. Ansah (2014) maintains that the number of selected Ghanaian languages is not representative enough. Moreover, the sociolinguistic environment of Ghanaian pupils is not factored into making the decision of languages and so for many children, what is meant to be a familiar language may just be a second or third language for them. This means the criterion for deciding which language is a mother-tongue is fundamental to managing multilingualism through formal education. For example, the choice of Dagbani as a mother-tongue for Mampulli-speaking communities in

the Northern Region was a misfit. In this case, Mampulli-speaking children are taught English as an official language, instructed in Dagbani as a regional or ‘familiar’ language. In fact, children who have never travelled to Dagbani-speaking communities only encounter it in school. Yet Mampulli is regarded by them as their mother-tongue. Furthermore, the sociocultural underpinnings of the two languages differ, to the extent that Mamprusi do not identify themselves with Dagbani as a mother or familiar language.

The language in education policy took a more complex twist when in 2018, the Government of Ghana created six more political administrative regions in Ghana, bringing the total to sixteen from ten (Van Gyampo, 2018). The six newly created regions were basically carved out of existing ones without remedy for the implications for language in education. One of these newly created regions is the Northeast Region. The Northeast Region was carved out of the then Northern Region whose regional language is Dagbani. The familiar or mother-tongue language with a large speaker population in the Northeast Region is Mampulli and, therefore, it should become the new regional language expected to be used as medium of instruction from kindergarten to lower primary and as a subject to senior high school in the Region. Certainly, Ghanaians who receive formal education also become bilingual or multilingual depending on where one attends school. This language situation has been the primary drive for language research in general and multilingualism in Ghana. For instance, some studies continue to focus on Ghana’s bilingual language policy and its implications for Ghanaian languages and education in general while others investigate linguistic phenomena related to language contact such as multilingualism, pidgins, creoles, bilingualism, interference, and codeswitching.

1.7 Definition of Codeswitching

Codeswitching refers to the practice of alternating between two or more languages or language varieties within a single conversation, sentence, or phrase (Ansar, 2017; Gardner-Chloros, 2020; Mabule, 2015; Myers-Scotton, 1993a, 1997). This phenomenon is widely observed in bilingual and multilingual communities and is often used strategically by speakers to achieve various social conversational or identity-related goals (Ben Nafa, 2018; Gardner-Chloros, 2020; Haseeb & Ali, 2025). CS is not random; it is governed by constraints and contexts. Some functions of CS include signaling group membership, managing interpersonal relationships, shifting between formal and informal contexts, or filling lexical gaps when a word is unavailable in one language (Ekoç & Etuş, 2017).

Scholars have examined both the cognitive and social dimensions of codeswitching. For example, studies have shown that CS can enhance cognitive flexibility and executive control in bilingual speakers (Green & Abutalebi, 2013). From a sociolinguistic point of view, CS reflects power dynamics, social identities, and cultural affiliations (Gardner-Chloros, 2009b). Auer (2013), for example, offers a useful framework that categorises codeswitching into two types: situational switching, which changes with the setting, and metaphorical switching, which reflects deeper meanings or attitudes.

In educational contexts, scholars have explored how teachers and students use codeswitching as a pedagogical tool to support learning and comprehension, particularly in multilingual classrooms (Creese & Blackledge, 2015). Codeswitching is used to explain difficult ideas, clarify instructions, or connect with students' cultural backgrounds. These findings challenge earlier views that saw codeswitching as a sign of linguistic deficiency. Instead, it shows that switching between languages is a skilled act, rule-governed, and context-sensitive form of communication.

1.8 Significance of Study

This thesis makes a significant scholarly contribution to the understanding of Mampulli language dynamics and the broader sociolinguistic landscape of the Northeast Region. By addressing critical gaps in existing research, it not only expands the current body of knowledge but also interrogates established theoretical frameworks regarding the language's usage and sociolinguistic status. For instance, the study explores the hierarchical relationship between Mampulli and English within bilingual speech, arguing that the classification of a language as either the matrix or embedded language is largely reliant upon speakers' proficiency in both languages. This nuanced analysis challenges traditional categorisations and emphasises the complexity of bilingual interactions. Moreover, the study aims to foster further academic inquiry into Mampulli linguistics while advocating for the preservation and revitalisation of indigenous languages, in alignment with international mandates and frameworks that promote the protection of cultural and linguistic diversity.

1.9 Definition of Terminologies

- i. Codeswitching: Codeswitching as defined by Myers-Scotton (1997), refers to the practice of incorporating two or more discrete linguistic forms within a single sentence.
- ii. Mamprugu: A territorial entity for Mamprusi situated in the northern part of Ghana, with its geographical reach extending into areas of Togo and Burkina Faso, as documented by Davis in 1979.
- iii. Mamprusi: A demographic unit residing in the northeastern sector of Ghana within the confines of the Mamprugu Kingdom.
- iv. Mampulli: The language of Mamprusi people.

1.10 Structure of the Thesis

This thesis is organised into seven chapters. Chapter 1 presents the background to the study. It discusses the research problem, significance of the study and definition of some terminologies used in the study. Chapter 2 presents an overview of Mampulli linguistics focusing on the key branches of the field essential for understanding the analyses presented in the following chapters. Chapter 3 presents a review of relevant previous literature and its importance to the present study. Chapter 4 focuses on the methodology for data collection, theoretical frameworks for data analyses, challenges of fieldwork and limitations of the study. In chapter 5, English linguistic structures are identified and discussed based on the Matrix Language Frame model. Chapter 6 adopts the Ethnography of Communication theory to explore data emphasising the sociocultural influences on codeswitching. Lastly, chapter 7 presents the conclusion and recommendations for future research.

CHAPTER 2

A Short Description of Mampulli Sound System and Grammar

2.1 Introduction

This chapter provides an essential introduction to the linguistic context necessary for analysing codeswitching in the Mampulli language. A comprehensive understanding of the language alternation patterns examined in this study requires familiarity with the linguistic structures of Mampulli. Earlier research, such as that of Plissart (1977), has provided systematic analyses of Mampulli's phonology, morphology, and syntax, drawing upon his study on Mampulli proverbs. Additionally, works by Mieke (2012), Mieke and Winkelmann (2012) and Mieke et al. (2007) as well as Ameka and Amha (2022) and Naden (1997, 2008, 1980, 1981) have explored specific aspects of the language in further depth. However, certain linguistic phenomena observed in the present data remain insufficiently addressed in the existing literature.

Building on Plissart's (1977) foundational work, this chapter aims to outline the phonological, morphological, and syntactic features of Mampulli as reported in prior studies. While this chapter does not aim to provide an exhaustive account, it is intended to equip readers with the foundational knowledge necessary to engage with the discussions in the subsequent chapters. In doing so, it addresses gaps in the existing literature and provides a contextual framework for the analysis of codeswitching patterns.

2.2 Phonology of Mampulli

Mampulli does not yet have a standardised writing system. As a result, researchers who have studied the language often use their own linguistic knowledge and personal experience with Mampulli to create written forms. This has led to differences in how the language is represented in the literature. Therefore, examining the phonology of Mampulli is important not

only to support the current analysis but also to help with efforts aimed at developing a consistent and standard orthography for the language.

2.2.1 Mampulli Phonemic Inventory

This section describes the structure of the vowel and consonant systems in Mampulli. It examines how these two sound systems function individually and in combination. Particular attention is given to how vowels and consonants interact in the formation of words. Their phonological features contribute directly to morphological processes such as affixation, inflection, and derivation. By analysing their patterns and distribution, this section shows the important role that segmental phonology plays in shaping the grammatical structure of the language.

2.2.1.1 Vowel Inventory

In Mampulli, short vowels are phonemically distinct and play an important role in the language's morphophonological system, particularly in processes involving vowel harmony, which involves affixation and word formation. Vowel harmony refers to the systematic agreement of vowels within a word, often based on features such as vowel height, backness, roundness, or tongue root position (Akanlig-Pare & Asante, 2016; Van der Hulst, 2016). This process is essential for understanding how morphemes interact in Mampulli, especially in inflectional and derivational processes. The Mampulli vowel inventory includes sounds see figure 1. below, each of which appears in clearly defined lexical environments and contributes to phonemic distinctions relevant to phonological processes.

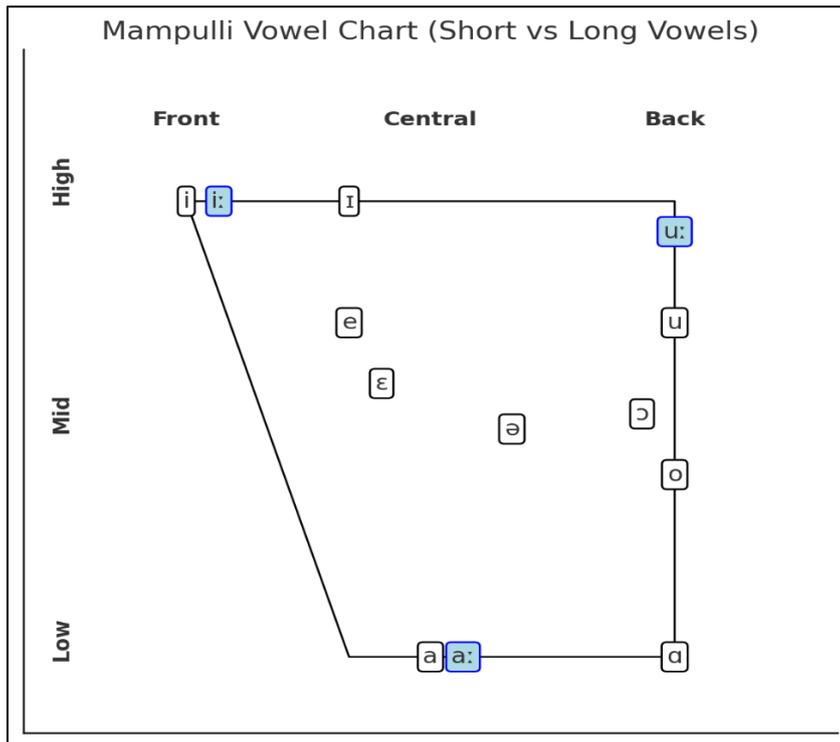


Figure 2. Mampulli Vowel Chart

As described by Plissart (1977) and Naden (1997), the vowel system of Mampulli exhibits contrasts in both vowel length and diphthongisation. It comprises short and long monophthongs as well as diphthongs, which are distributed across the front, central, and back regions of the vowel space, and span high, mid, and low articulatory positions. This phonological structure not only facilitates phonemic distinctions but also underpins morphophonological processes that are essential to the grammatical system of the language. The following section presents a detailed account of the vowels in Mampulli.

2.2.1.1.1 Short Monophthongs

The high front unrounded vowel /ɪ/ occurs in words such as:

karim /karɪm/ 'read'
tigi /tɪɡɪ/ 'satisfy'
dindɔŋu /dɪndɔŋu/ 'courtyard'
dzinni /dʒɪnnɪ/ 'sit'
kafinni /kafɪnnɪ/ 'fan'

The mid front unrounded vowel /e/ is found in forms such as:

yelli /yelli/ ‘winnow’
dzelinsi /zɛlɪnsi/ ‘fatigue’
loore /lo:re/ ‘lorry’
saafe /sa:fe/ ‘key’
twaape /twa:pe/ ‘nim’

The low central vowel /a/ appears in:

da /da/ ‘buy’
fa /fa/ ‘snatch’
ta /ta/ ‘smear’
ba /ba/ ‘father’
zua /zua/ ‘friend’

The mid back rounded vowel /o/ is seen in words such as:

pio /pio/ ‘sheep’
tambio /tambio/ ‘anthill’
betsitsio /betʃitʃio/ ‘dawn’
gbio /gbio/ ‘forehead’
tio /tio/ ‘nest’
tsibo /tʃibo/ ‘soap’

whereas the high back rounded vowel /u/ occurs in words such as:

sufu /sufu/ ‘heart’
zuna /zuna/ ‘today’
tuya /tuya/ ‘beans’
zum /zum/ ‘flour’
Buŋa /buŋa/ ‘donkey’
kugri /kugri/ ‘stone’
tuma /tuma/ ‘work’

The mid central vowel /ə/ appears in unstressed syllables, as in the following words showing its typical neutral positions.

adaka /adəka/ ‘box’
kukka /kukə/ ‘stool’
ma /mə/ ‘mother’

Additionally, Mampulli distinguishes /ɛ/ and /ɔ/ as separate mid vowels, with /ɛ/ in words such as:

Yelli /yelli/ ‘tell’
Yenli /yenli/ ‘problem’

penni /penni/ ‘vagina’

yeda /yeda/ ‘faith’

while /ɔ/ occurs in words such as:

wɔbgu /wɔbgu/ ‘elephant’

bɔbgu /bɔbgu/ ‘a group of people’

lɔŋŋu /lɔŋŋu/ ‘throat’

kɔŋŋa /kɔŋŋa/ ‘leper’

Finally, the lower back vowel /a/ is evidenced in the words below.

kɔp /kɔp/ ‘cup’

pɔa /pɔa/ ‘woman’

duayi /dai/ ‘to give birth’

buayi /bai/ ‘crawl’

kwoayi /kwai/ ‘to brew’

The presence of these distinct vowel qualities suggests a system of vowel harmony likely governed by features such as ATR, rounded, or high of the root. For instance, roots and affixes within the same word typically harmonise in vowel quality, a pattern that reflects deeper grammatical and phonological regularities. This harmony facilitates morphological predictability and aids both in lexical storage and processing (Van der Hulst, 2016). The conditioning of affixes by vowel harmony points to the interplay between phonology and morphology in Mampulli, and reflects broader typological patterns in many Niger-Congo languages. The presence of such a system underlines the importance of accurate vowel classification in linguistic analysis.

2.2.1.1.2 Long Monophthongs

In Mampulli, five of the seven basic vowels /a/, /i/, and /u/ each has a corresponding long form, marked by the length diacritic /:/ as in /i:/, /a:/, and /u:/. However, the vowel quality does not change between the short and long forms. These long vowels are phonemically distinct and play an important role in distinguishing lexical meaning. For example, the word /ba/ means ‘father’, whereas /ba:/ means ‘dog’, demonstrating that vowel length is contrastive and meaningful in the language.

Long vowels occur in various lexical items including:

/i:/ found in words such as:

piini /pi:ni/ 'gift'
piiya /pi:ya/ 'ten'
diisi /di:si/ 'press'
tampiiya/tampi:ya/ 'rock'
biiya /bi:ya/ 'child'
tiim /ti:m/ 'medicine'

/e:/ Examples include:

teesi /te:si/ 'think'
dzeem /ʒe:m/ 'belittle'
beem /be:m/ 'greed'
beeri /be:ri/ 'older sibling'
veela /ve:la/ 'beautiful'
deeli /de:li/ 'to dry'

/a:/ Examples include:

naafu /na:fu/ 'cow'
daa /da:/ 'market'
laa /la:/ 'bowl'
kpa /kpa:/ 'nail'
saana /sa:na/ 'visitor'
saam /sa:m/ 'mash'

/o:/ Examples include:

boom /bo:m/ 'belch'
koom /ko:m/ 'water'
loore /lo:re/ 'lorry'
goom /go:m/ 'sleep'
zoom /zo:m/ 'blind'
soo /so:/ 'witchcraft'
soonja /so:ŋa/ 'rabbit'
doo /do:/ 'man'
poori /po:ri/ 'hernia'
goori /go:ri/ 'cola'
soori /so:ri/ 'road'

/u:/ Examples include:

puu /pu:/ ‘farm’
vuuri /vu:ri/ ‘noise’
suuri /su:ri/ ‘anger’
suuwa /su:wa/ ‘knife’
nintuuwa /nintu:wa/ ‘ring’
buuwa /bu:wa/ ‘goat’

These long forms follow the patterns of vowel harmony that structure the phonological system of Mampulli, whereby vowels within a word typically belong to the same harmonic set based on features of tongue root position or height. Although vowel harmony in Mampulli requires further study to detail its full range and phonological conditioning, it seems that long vowels obey the same vowel harmony rules. As Clements (2011) and Hyman et al. (2019) note in their analyses of African languages, vowel length often coexists with harmony patterns without necessarily altering them, rather, it adds another layer of contrast. Consequently, Mampulli vowel length contributes to lexical and grammatical distinctions while remaining consistent with harmonic groupings. This suggests a layered but systematic vowel inventory. This supports the typological observations by Maddieson (2018) and Maddieson and Sands (2019), who noted that many languages of West Africa use vowel length in combination with vowel harmony to increase the phonological contrasts within a limited vowel system.

Long vowels serve a crucial function in distinguishing lexical meaning within Mampulli. This phonemic contrast enables listeners to accurately interpret the intended message, even when the surrounding linguistic context remains constant. A particularly illustrative example of this phenomenon is found in minimal pairs; pairs of words that differ by only a single phoneme and often serve to demonstrate the functional load of specific sounds in a language.

In Mampulli, the words *yam* /yam/ ‘wisdom’ and *yaam* /ya:m/ ‘yawn’ exemplify such a minimal pair, differing solely in the length and quality of the vowel sound. The short vowel

/a/ in *yam* contrasts with the long vowel /a:/ in *yaam*, thereby altering the meaning of the word entirely. This distinction highlights the importance of vowel duration and quality in Mampulli phonology. Vowel length differences are not merely phonetic details but carry phonemic weight, meaning they contribute directly to differences in word meaning. Ericsson Nordgren (2019) and Jepson and Puggard-Rode (2024) similarly emphasise that such contrasts are fundamental to the phonological systems of many languages, including Mampulli.

Thus, understanding the role of long vowels and their contribution to minimal pair distinctions is essential in the study of Mampulli phonetics and phonology. Below are examples of minimal pair distinctions.

/a:/

<i>sa</i> /sa/ 'to run diarrhoea'	<i>saa</i> /sa:/ 'rain'
<i>ba</i> /ba/ father	<i>baa</i> /ba:/ 'dog'
<i>yam</i> /yam/ 'wisdom'	<i>yaam</i> /ya:m/ 'yawn'
<i>dam</i> /dam/ shake	<i>daam</i> /da:m/ alcohol
<i>la</i> /la/ 'to laugh'	<i>laa</i> /la:/ 'bowl'
<i>kasi</i> /kasi/ 'very clean'	<i>kaasi</i> /ka:si/ 'scream'
<i>pam</i> /pam/ plenty, many	<i>paam</i> /pa:m/ 'braid'

/i:/

<i>ti</i> /ti/ 'vomit'	<i>tii</i> /ti:/ 'to pick up an object against a something'
<i>pi</i> /pi/ 'to bury something in the ground'	<i>pii</i> /pi:/ 'to sweep'
<i>tsisi</i> /tʃisi/ 'to cut a rope'	<i>tʃiisi</i> /tʃi:si/ 'to deny'

/u:/

<i>kusi</i> /kusi/ 'prick'	<i>kuusi</i> /ku:si/ 'to pile up'
<i>tusi</i> /tusi/ 'spit'	<i>tuusi</i> /tu:si/ 'meet'
<i>du</i> /du/ 'climb'	<i>duu</i> /du:/ 'room'
<i>tum</i> /tum/ 'send on errand'	<i>tuum</i> /tu:m/ 'to not recognise'

2. 2.1.1.3 Diphthong

Diphthongs in Mampulli, such as /aɪ/, involve a glide from one vowel to another within the same syllable. The most common diphthong, /aɪ/, is used extensively in morphophonological processes and in the formation of noun or verb stems, as documented by Plissart (1977). Examples include:

twai /twai/ ‘tear’

kpai /kpai/ ‘to empty’

suai /suai/ ‘scratch’

The vowels in Mampulli are subject to distributional constraints influenced by syllable structure and morphological processes. Short vowels frequently occur in unstressed syllables, while long vowels often appear in stressed or prosodically prominent positions. Furthermore, vowel harmony, a feature common in Niger-Congo languages, is observed in Mampulli, whereby the quality of vowels in adjacent syllables tends to harmonise based on height or backness (Hyman et al., 2019). The vowel system is essential to the structure and grammar of Mampulli. For example: changes in vowels indicate grammatical tense, as seen in *u dzini* she is sitting compared to *u dzina* she has brought (it).

In conclusion, the Mampulli vowel system is crucial in both word meaning and grammar. Vowel quality, length, and harmony work together in consistent ways throughout the language. Both short and long vowels are contrastive and appear in regular patterns across different parts of words. The inclusion of long vowels and diphthongs, alongside a full set of short vowels in distinct phonetic positions, makes it possible to form minimal pairs. These pairs emphasise how even small differences in vowel sounds can lead to changes in meaning.

Vowel harmony in Mampulli, likely based on features such as tongue root position (ATR), vowel height, and backness, is key to how roots and affixes combine. This pattern is similar to what is seen in other Niger-Congo languages and adds structure and predictability to the language's word-formation system. Vowel length and harmony seem to work together smoothly, with length introducing another layer of contrast rather than interfering with harmony (Clements, 2011; Hyman et al., 2019).

Furthermore, vowel changes are often used to mark grammatical information, such as tense or aspect. This shows that vowel structure is closely tied to grammar in Mampulli. The clear contrast between long and short vowels in minimal pairs, for example, /ba/ 'father' versus /ba:/ 'dog', or /pi/ 'to bury' versus /pi:/ 'to sweep', supports the idea that vowel length is phonemically important.

Overall, Mampulli's vowel system is a strong example of how features such as length and harmony shape a language's sound and grammar. These vocalic features help speakers tell words apart, mark grammatical categories, and maintain phonological consistency. The system also reflects wider patterns found in West African languages (Casali, 2008). Understanding how vowels function in Mampulli is therefore essential for both descriptive and theoretical studies of its phonology.

2. 2.1.2 Consonant Inventory

The Mampulli consonant inventory is a complex and structured system, classified based on both place and manner of articulation. Consonants are grouped into four places of articulation: labial, alveolar, palatal, and velar, as well as three manners of articulation: plosive, nasal, and fricative. In addition to these primary categories, the language features three consonant clusters, combining velars and labials, and distinguishes between voiced and voiceless sounds (Plissart, 1977).

The following table, adapted from Plissart (1977), illustrates the consonant system of the Mampulli language. It displays the consonant chart, systematically organised by place, manner of articulation and voicing. The consonants are categorised into plosives, nasals, trills, flap, fricatives, and lateral approximants. The places of articulation include bilabial, labiodental, alveolar, postalveolar, retroflex, palatal, velar, glottal and consonantal clusters. The consonants are also classified according to voicing, sound to the left are voiceless sounds while those to the right are voiced.

Table 1: Mampulli Consonant Chart

	Bilabial	Labiodental	Alveolar	Postalveolar	Retroflex	Palatal	Velar	Glottal	Palate-alveolar
Plosive	p b		t d				k g		kp gb
Nasal	m mm		n nn			ɲ	ŋ		ɲm
Trill									
Flap						r			
Fricative		f v	s z	ʃ ʒ				h	kw
Lateral approximant					ɭ ll				
Affricates				dʒ					tʃ
Other Clusters							kp gb ɲm		

(Plissart, 1977 p. 153)

The consonant chart (Plissart 1977, p. 153) elaborates this system by including categories such as trills and lateral approximants, further highlighting unique phonemes like /ʃ/, /ʒ/, and clusters such as /ɲm/. Notably, some consonants exhibit doubling. The inventory is enriched by the addition of distinctive phonemes such as /f/ and /z/, along with clusters like /ɲm/, presented in the data reflecting the phonetic complexity and linguistic richness of Mampulli.

In this study, the palatal sounds /c/ and /j/, as used by Plissart (1977) in his classification, are instead represented using the affricate symbols /ts/ and /dz/, in line with the International Phonetic Alphabet (IPA). According to Gafni (2025) and Berns (2016), affricates

are sounds that begin as plosives, where the airflow is completely blocked, and then release into fricatives, where the airflow is only partially blocked, creating friction. The affricates /ts/ and /dz/ start with a plosive articulation and end with a fricative, which results in a sound that is acoustically similar to the original palatals. The choice of symbols is based on practical considerations, as /ts/ and /dz/ are generally easier for non-native speakers to recognise and pronounce. They are also more commonly and less phonetically complex than the palatal sounds. By using these affricate symbols, the study seeks to create a more consistent and accessible Mampulli sound system.

The velar [g] demonstrates variable realisations, depending on phonetic context and surrounding vowels. For example, it becomes more glottal after close vowels *bugum* ‘fire’ but maintains a clear velar articulation in initial positions, as in *gamini* (door). The alveolar fricatives [s] and [z] as well as the postalveolar fricatives [ʃ] and [ʒ] are consistent with English sounds. Nasals like [ŋ] and its cluster form /ŋm/ are uniquely integrated into the Mampulli system, with specific orthographic strategies proposed to accommodate these phonemes.

Principally, the Mampulli consonant inventory is made up of 29 consonants, seven of which are nasals, as well as nine vowels and one diphthong. The nasal sounds, aside from clusters, exhibit context-dependent variability, particularly in word-final positions. Semi-vowels [y] and [w] are classified as consonants due to their articulatory and phonological characteristics. This wide-ranging system underscores the linguistic richness and phonetic sophistication of the Mampulli language.

2.3 Morphology of Mampulli

This section delves into the morphological structures of Mampulli, particularly its noun classes and word formation processes, with a focus on how these structures influence Mampulli-English codeswitching. The analysis of nominal classes and derivational patterns

sheds light on the linguistic features that shape bilingual interactions, including the selection or avoidance of certain elements during codeswitching.

2.3.1 Noun Classes in Mampulli

Plissart (1977) categorised Mampulli nouns into seven classes, distinguishing them primarily by suffix patterns for singular and plural forms. For instance,

Class 1: Refers to persons, with nouns ending in *-a* singular and *-ba* plural, for example, *nira* ‘person’/*niriba* ‘people’.

Class 2: Includes titles and foreign-origin nouns, marked by suffixes *-ba* singular and *-dima* plural, demonstrated in *ba-* ‘father’/*badima* ‘fathers’. This class also encompasses non-count and collective nouns.

Class 3: Contains animate and inanimate nouns with endings like *-a*, *-aa*, *-o*, and *-si*, examples include: *tiiya* ‘tree’/*tiisi* ‘trees’.

Class 4: Comprises nouns ending in *-u*, *-o*, and *-i*, with plurals formed by *-ri* or *-si*, illustrated by *sufu* ‘heart’/*suhuri* ‘hearts’.

Class 5 and Class 6: Highlight verbo-nominal derivation. Nouns in these classes often retain traces of their verbal roots, demonstrating a structural relationship, for example, *buni* ‘thing’/*buna* ‘things’.

Class 7: Differentiates between collective and specific instances through suffixes *-m* and *-ma*, as in *daam* ‘pito’/*daama* ‘bottles of pito’.

Mieche (2012) reclassified the noun classes using a combined semantic and morphological approach, creating a more thematic categorisation:

Human Relationships: Nouns referring to kinship, marked by *-a/-ba* and *-ra/-dima*, for example, *shira* ‘husband’/*shirdima* ‘husbands’. Phonological processes such as vowel insertion simplify consonant clusters.

Spirituality: Includes nouns denoting spiritual entities, such as animals and natural features, often marked by *-ya*, *-vg*, *-v*, or *-si*, for example, *tiiya* ‘tree’/*tiisi* ‘trees’.

Protection: Encompasses terms related to shelter, worship, and clothing, with plurals formed through vowel shifts, examples include: *zɔbgu* ‘hair’/*zɔbri* ‘hairs’.

Shapes: Includes round or form-related nouns marked by suffixes like *-ri/-ni* and *-a*. Phonological adjustments, such as glide insertion, facilitate pronunciation, as in *mɲani* ‘calabash’/*mɲana* ‘calabashes’.

Non-count Nouns: Covers abstract, liquid, and solid concepts, often marked by bilabial nasal *-m*, for example, *bisim* ‘milk’.

Both systems highlight the structural and semantic distinctions within Mampulli morphology. However, they encounter difficulties in explaining the variability of plural suffixes, such as *-pa* and *-ti*. For instance, *tinzua* ‘younger sibling’ becomes *tinzuapa* ‘younger’ siblings, indicating a degree of arbitrariness in the language’s nominal suffixes.

By analysing Mampulli’s noun classes and morphological patterns, this section provides insights into how its linguistic features influence codeswitching and bilingual language use. These findings form the foundation for subsequent chapters, which further explore the interaction of Mampulli morphology with bilingual speech.

2.3.2 Mampulli Word Formation Processes

The study of nominal structures in Mampulli reveals the influence of various word-formation processes on the language's lexicon. The following are the major processes employed in Mampulli:

2.3.2.1 Compounding

Compounding is the formation of new words by combining two or more independent words (Carstairs-McCarthy, 2017). This process is common across languages and is a creative mechanism for expanding vocabulary (Carstairs-McCarthy, 2017; Kwame, 2018; Liu & Liu, 2014). Examples in Mampulli include:

daa 'market' + *biiya* 'child' = *daabiiya* 'trader'

dumsi 'mosquitoes' + *tiim* 'medicine' = *dumsitiim* 'mosquito spray/coil'

yiri 'house' + *biiya* 'child' = *yiribiiya* 'family relation'

2.3.2.2 Blending

Blending combines fragments of separate words to create new descriptive nouns (Liu & Liu, 2014). Examples include:

suuwa 'knife' + *beella* 'small' = *subilla* 'kitchen knife'

naaba 'chief' + *zua* 'friend' = *naazua* 'chief's linguist'

2.3.2.3 Affixation

Affixation involves attaching bound morphemes: prefixes, suffixes, or infixes to root words to create new words (Plag, 2018). Mampulli employs prefixation, suffixation, and derivation:

2.3.2.3.1 Prefixation

In Mampulli, prefixes differ from those found in English. They act as independent, unbound morphemes that appear before the root of a word. Unlike in English, these prefixes do not attach directly to the root but exist as distinct units within the word's structure. These prefixes perform a range of grammatical and semantic roles, contributing to the language's structural and expressive complexity. The examples presented in Table 2 demonstrate how these prefixes function in the Mampulli language.

Table 2: Mampulli Prefixes

Prefix	Meaning	Example
<i>yɛn-</i>	intentionality	U yɛn gbihini 3SG PRS.PROG sleep 'He is going to sleep.'
<i>laan-</i>	repetition	Ba laan tsa-na 3PL again come-PERF 'They have come again.'
<i>ti-</i>	uncertainty fut.	U ti kpi 3SG FUT dies 'If he dies.'
<i>nin-</i>	possibility fut.	U nin di 3SG FUT eat 'He will eat.'
<i>ku-</i>	improbable fut.	I ku zinni 2SG NEG sit.down 'You will not sit down.'
<i>bu-</i>	impossible	Di bu kpai 3SG NEG pour 'It did not pour.'
<i>di-</i>	prohibition	Ba di daai 3PL NEG push 'They should not push.'
<i>ku-</i>	minimiser	U ku kpini 3SG just dead 'He is only dead.'
<i>pun-</i>	intensifier	Ba pun da 3PL INTS.PST bought 'They have already bought.'
<i>na-</i>	immediate	U na yini 3SG IM.PST gone.out 'He has just gone out.'
<i>da-</i>	recent past	I da tsanja 2SG REC.PST went.out 'You went.'

<i>daa-</i>	historical	<i>U daa ba la buna</i> 3SG HIST.PST ride DET donkey 'He rode a donkey.'
<i>sa-</i>	a day after, past and future	<i>U sa di-ya</i> 3SG PST (yesterday) eat.PRF 'He ate yesterday.'
		<i>U sa nin di</i> 3SG FUT AUX eat 'He will eat tomorrow.'
<i>yi-</i>	eventuality normality	<i>Ba yi tiaai</i> 3PL IMN remember 'When they remember...'
		<i>Ba yi tiaai-ni</i> 3PL HAB remember-PRS 'They always remember.'
<i>nin</i>	actuality	<i>U nin yi</i> 3SG AUX go.out 'He will go out.'

(Plissart, 1977 p.160)

2.3.2.3.2 Suffixation

Suffixes modify verb forms, mark plurality in nouns, or indicate grammatical functions (Plissart, 1977). Table 3., below illustrates Mampulli suffixes and their functions in word formation. It provides an overview of the suffixes in the Mampulli language, detailing their meanings and illustrating their application through examples. It emphasises the significance of suffixes in conveying tense, aspect, and mood, showcasing their integral role in the language's grammatical structure.

Table 3: Mampulli Suffixes

Suffix	Meaning	Example
-o	active	U ts-i-o 3SG tsa-PART-ACT 'He left (him)'. U mŋ-e-o ni 3SG mŋa-PART-ACT (him) PRS 'He hit (him).'
-r -l + i, a -n	imperfect	U boor-i layafu 3SG boora-PROG money 'He is wanting money.'
-ri -li + la, ni -ni	continuous	U duu-ri la tiiya 3SG du-PROG PRS.DET tree 'She is climbing a tree.' U gbihi-ri-ni 3SG gbihi-PROG-PRS 'He is sleeping.'
-ya	perfect	U dem-ya 3SG dem-PST 'He had played.' Ti pii-ya 1PL pii-PST 'We have picked (it).'
-m + o, a	imperative	Tsama! Go! Doonim beni! Doonima there! '(You) lie (down) there!'
-dima	borrowed nouns	Loore-dima Loore-PL 'lorries'

(Plissart, 1977 p. 161)

2.3.2.3.3 Derivation

Derivation is a process in morphology through which new words are formed by altering the word class or meaning of an existing base form (Plag, 2018). It is an important way in which a language develops and expands its vocabulary. This process often involves adding affixes, most commonly prefixes or suffixes, to a root word. The result is usually a change in

grammatical category, such as turning a noun into an adjective or a verb into a noun. The following are examples that illustrate how derivation works.

Adjective → Noun: *veela* ‘beautiful’ + *-im* = *veelim* ‘beauty’

Verb → Noun: *vuusi* ‘rest’ + *-im* = *vuusim* ‘restfulness’

Noun → Noun: *zua* ‘friend’ + *-ri* = *zoori* ‘friendship’

2.3.2.4 Reduplication

Reduplication is a widely observed morphological strategy in many languages, including Mampulli, where it involves repeating a whole word or part of it to achieve specific grammatical or semantic effects (Inkelas & Zoll, 2005). In Mampulli, one of its main uses is the creation of adverbs that describe the way an action is performed or to increase the intensity of an expression. It may also enhance the meaning of verbs and adjectives by indicating repetition, duration, or emphasis. For instance, repeating a word can show that an action happens continuously or with greater force. This technique enriches the expressive power of the language and allows for more precise and vivid communication. Examples of reduplication in Mampulli include:

yoomyoma ‘quickly’ from *yomma* ‘fast’

beela-beela ‘little by little’ from *beela* ‘small’

2.3.2.5 Borrowing

Borrowing significantly contributes to the development of the Mampulli vocabulary. It refers to the process of taking words from other languages, particularly English and Hausa, and using them in regular communication. This allows Mampulli speakers to describe modern concepts, items, or experiences that might not have traditional terms. According to Bayogle (2015), these borrowed words show evidence of cultural contact and the multilingual setting in which Mampulli exists. The following are examples of such borrowed terms in Mampulli:

fon ‘phone’ from English

shinkafa ‘rice’ from Hausa

nes ‘nurse’ from English

2.3.2.6 Nativisation

Loanwords often undergo phonological changes to align with the sound system of Mampulli (Tasson, 2022). This means that when words are borrowed from other languages, their original pronunciation is modified to suit the phonological patterns of Mampulli. These adjustments make it easier for native speakers to pronounce and integrate the borrowed words naturally into everyday speech. The result is that the loanwords sound more like native Mampulli terms. Examples of these adapted forms include:

English ‘lorry’ → Mampulli *loore*

English ‘school’ → Mampulli *sukuru*

English ‘assembly’ → Mampulli *asamble*

In conclusion, these word-formation processes illustrate the structural complexity and expressive depth of the Mampulli language. They show how the language can create new meanings and respond to evolving communicative demands. Additionally, these processes reveal the impact of contact with other languages and cultures on the development of Mampulli vocabulary. Through mechanisms like reduplication, borrowing, and phonological adaptation, the language continues to expand and change, reflecting both its internal linguistic characteristics and external sociolinguistic influences.

2.4 Mampulli Grammar

This section discusses the grammatical principles that govern how words combine in Mampulli to create meaningful units of speech. The analysis is structured around three distinct

levels: the phrase level, the clause level, and the sentence level. Each level is examined in detail to provide a comprehensive understanding of the language's syntactic organisation and how smaller units build up to larger, coherent expressions.

2.4.1 Phrases

This section provides a detailed examination of three types of phrases as outlined by Plissart (1977). It explores how these types of phrases conform to the grammatical rules of Mampulli. The analysis aims to demonstrate the ways in which Mampulli structures its phrases within the framework proposed by Plissart, highlighting specific grammatical features and patterns unique to the language.

Noun Phrases: Combine nouns with postpositions and modifiers, for example,

Example 1

Ti	taari	la
Tiiya	big	DET

'the big tree'.

Adverbial Phrases: Formed by pairing nouns with prepositions for example,

Example 2

<i>U</i>	<i>ma</i>	<i>zugu</i>
POSS	mother	because

'because of her mother'.

Verb Phrases: Include main verbs and auxiliaries as in

Example 3

U nin tsaji
3SG AUX go

‘He will go’.

2.4.2 Clauses

According to Plissart (1977, p. 166), the syntactic structure of Mampulli typically follows the order: “subject-verb-indirect object-direct object-adverbial phrase” structure. This sequence reflects the typical arrangement of sentence constituents in the language. Such a structure provides a clear framework for understanding how different elements within a sentence relate to one another in Mampulli grammar. For example,

Example 4

Nasara ti Wunvela piini zuna.
SUBJ gave IOBJ gift today

‘Nasara gave Wunvela a gift today.’

Clauses may be reordered for semantic focus using the morpheme *ka*. It is realised as *ki* when the subject is a first-person pronoun, *ki* when it is second person and *ku* third person pronouns.

Example 5

Piini ka Tiara ti Wunzuama
Gift DEM Tiara gave Wunzuma
‘(It is) a gift that Tiara gave Wunzuama’.

Example 6

Piini ku Tiara ti Wunzuama
Gift DEM.3SG Tiara has.given Wunzuma
‘(It is) a gift that he has given Wunzuama’.

Example 7

Piini ki Tiara ti Wunzuama
 Gift DEM.2SG Tiara have.given Wunzuma

‘(It is) a gift that you have given Wunzuama’.

Relative clauses use specific pronouns depending on the noun’s function: For instance,

Subject/possessor:

Example 8

Bii ηwan di la
 child who ate DET

‘The child who ate.’

Object:

Example 9

kum kan ma-ri ma la tsañ-ya
 3SG DEM mara-PROG 1SG DET go-PST

‘The hunger that is having me is gone’.

2.4.3 Sentences

A simple sentence in Mampulli, like in English, consists of a subject and a predicate (Naden, 1997). The subject is typically the nominal element. However, in Mampulli, the predicate can take two forms. The first type relates to transitive verbs, where the sentence focuses on the action and its performer. For this type, the suffix *-ni* is added to the verb to indicate the present tense, while *-ya* mark the past tense (Naden, 1997). For example,

Simple sentences: Use suffixes on verbs to indicate tense.

10. *U di-ri-ni*
 SUBJ eat-PROG-PRS

‘She is eating.’

11. *U di-ya.*
 SUBJ EAT-PST
 He ate.

Compound sentences: Actions are linked using conjunctions like *ka*. For example,

12. *U da-ya ka yua*
 3SG buy-PST and paid

‘He bought and paid’.

Conditional sentences: Expressed with *yi* and *nin* demonstrated in:

13. *U yi tsanna u nin nya*
 3SG COND comes 3SG AUX see

‘If he comes, he will see.’

2.4.3.1 Postpositions

Mampulli has three postpositions: **la**, **wa**, and **maa**, which serve distinct grammatical functions:

La acts as a reflexive article or a complement marker in the present tense. For instance,

14. *U di-ri la diibu.*
 3SG eat-PROG PRS food.

‘She is eating the food’.

Table 4: Pronouns in Mampulli

	subject		object		
	short	emphatic	short	emphatic	reflexive
1 st per. sg.	<i>n</i>	<i>mani</i>	<i>ma</i>	<i>mani</i>	<i>ma-maṇa</i>
2 nd per. sg.	<i>i</i>	<i>nyini</i>	<i>i</i>	<i>nyini</i>	<i>i-maṇa</i>
3 rd per. sg.	<i>u</i>	<i>ḡṇa</i>	<i>u</i>	<i>ḡṇa</i>	<i>u-maṇa</i>
1 st per. pl.	<i>ti</i>	<i>tirima</i>	<i>ti</i>	<i>tirima</i>	<i>ti-mansi</i>
2 nd per. pl.	<i>ya</i>	<i>yarima</i>	<i>ya</i>	<i>yarima</i>	<i>ya-mansi</i>
3 rd per. pl.	<i>ba</i>	<i>bana</i>	<i>ba</i>	<i>bana</i>	<i>ba-mansi</i>
non-per. sg	<i>ka</i>	<i>kana</i>	<i>ka</i>	<i>kana</i>	<i>ka-maṇa</i>
non-per. pl.	<i>a</i>	<i>ana</i>	<i>a</i>	<i>ana</i>	<i>a-mansi</i>
indefinite	<i>di</i>	<i>dina</i>	<i>di</i>	<i>dina</i>	<i>di-maṇa</i>
mass (class 7)	<i>bu</i>	<i>buna</i>	<i>bu</i>	<i>buna</i>	<i>bu-maṇa</i>

(Plissart 1977 p. 159).

The indefinite pronoun *di* references non-specific entities, while non-personal pronouns can shift to personal pronouns when the referent is personalised.

2.4.3.3 Modifiers

In Mampulli, most modifiers come from are derived mainly from verbal or nominal roots (Plissart 1977). For example, the verb *kpi*, which means ‘to die’, changes to *bakpiiṇu* when used as a modifier.

Verbal-derived modifiers:

kpi ‘to die’ → *bakpiiṇu*

Example 16

ba-kpiiṇu
baa-MOD

‘dead dog’.

Nominal-derived modifiers are formed by shortening the original noun. For example, the noun *baa* which means ‘dog’, is modified to becomes *babilla*. This process involves removing part of the noun’s ending and adding a new suffix to create a attributive form.

Example 17

ba-billa

baa-MOD

‘small dog’.

Also, adjectival modifiers in this language show a distinction between singular and plural forms. For example, the noun *tiiya* means ‘tree’ in the singular. When modified by the adjective *titaari* ‘big’, the form becomes *tititaari*, which means ‘big tree’. This shows how the adjective changes to agree with the singular noun.

In contrast, the plural form of ‘trees’ is *tiisi*. When this plural noun is modified by the adjective for ‘big’, the result is *tititaya*, meaning ‘big trees’. This demonstrates that adjectival modifiers in the language change form depending on whether the noun is singular or plural.

2.4.3.4 Numerals

Numerals modify nouns as postpositions. Both cardinal and ordinal numbers are used to modify nouns depending on the meaning of the noun they modify. The ordinal numbers usually modify verbs. Some examples of Mampulli numerals are as follows:

Example 18. Cardinal: Bii *yinni* ‘one child’.

Example 19. Ordinal: Dim *yumu* ‘eat once’.

This detailed structure reflects Mampulli’s grammatical system and its blend of verbal, nominal, and syntactic features. I must emphasise that this is not exhaustive but provides fundamental knowledge for understanding the following chapters.

CHAPTER 3

Literature Review and Theoretical Framework

3.1 Introduction

This section examines key studies and current discussions on the topic of codeswitching. It provides the foundation for defining the scope of the research. By engaging with this chapter, the researcher gains an understanding of the existing body of work on the topic. This understanding helps to identify gaps in the research and determine how these gaps can be addressed.

The review includes a discussion of scholarly work related to Mampulli. It also examines literature on multilingualism and how it is practiced in Ghana. Furthermore, the review explores research on codeswitching, focusing on its use in Africa, particularly among Ghanaian bilinguals, Mampulli bilinguals, and within radio discussions. Finally, the chapter reviews literature on two key theoretical frameworks: the Matrix Language Framework and the Ethnography of Communication. This structured approach ensures a comprehensive understanding of the topic.

3.2 Previous Work on Mampulli

Some anthropologists and historians have done substantial work to preserve some history and sociocultural practices of the Mamprusi people (Davis, 1984; Davis, 1987; Drucker-Brown, 1986, 1989, 1993; Naden & Naden, 1991; Schlottner, 2000). On the contrary, the Mampulli language has not received as much scholarly attention. A review of literature on Mampulli only presents preliminary studies and surveys conducted on the language. Naden (1993) and Swadesh and Arana (1967) compiled a Mampulli wordlist which later was

expanded and turned into a dictionary. Additionally, Ghana Institute of Linguistics, Literacy and Bible Translation (GILLBT) has published a Mampulli translation of the New Testament Bible. It is however observed that the Mampulli Bible is not in circulation and used by Mamprusi as much as the Dagbani and English versions possibly because of the inability of Mamprusis to read the Mampulli language.

One of the earliest and most significant studies on the Mampulli language was conducted by Xavier Plissart, who collected and translated approximately 4,000 Mampulli proverbs as part of his doctoral research (Plissart 1977). The primary aim of his study was to explore Mamprusi cultural values by analysing the use of proverbs, with a particular focus on how these traditional expressions reflect and communicate social norms and belief systems. Although, Plissart's (1977) research did not fully succeed in offering a comprehensive and systematic account of Mamprusi values based solely on proverbial language, it made a valuable contribution to the understanding of how proverbs function within the Mampulli cultural context. His work highlighted the role of proverbs as a means of reinforcing communal values, transmitting moral lessons, and guiding social behaviour.

Plissart (1977) supported his analysis with extensive commentary, providing detailed explanations of each proverb and situating them within specific social and cultural settings. By doing so, he was able to demonstrate how these linguistic forms are not simply decorative or rhetorical but rather play an active role in everyday communication and in the maintenance of cultural identity. His research underscored the significance of oral tradition in shaping and preserving the worldview of the Mamprusi people.

Despite these challenges, Plissart's anthology remains an invaluable resource for preserving Mamprusi cultural heritage, as proverbs across African societies, and particularly within Mamprugu, are critical conveyors of culture and tradition. This study of Mampulli

proverbs underlines the importance of language as a vessel of cultural identity, an aspect that is directly relevant to the present study on Mampulli-English CS. Understanding the cultural and situational flexibility in proverb use within Mampulli can provide important insights into how speakers navigate cultural identity and social values through CS practices between Mampulli and English.

Plissart's research also holds significant relevance for the present study on Mampulli-English CS, as it provides foundational insights into the structural elements of Mampulli, including its morphology, phonology, and syntax. By systematically documenting and analysing these linguistic features, Plissart's (1977) work establishes a basis for understanding the rules and patterns that govern Mampulli grammar and sound systems. This foundational knowledge is crucial for examining how Mampulli speakers navigate between Mampulli and English, as CS often involves shifts not only in vocabulary but also in grammatical and phonological structures. Particularly, understanding Mampulli's unique linguistic features allows for a more nuanced analysis of how speakers switch between languages in ways that respect or modify the structural rules of each language. Plissart's descriptions of Mampulli morphology and syntax provide essential tools for identifying patterns in language choice and structure within codeswitched speech. His phonological analysis, moreover, enables the study of how phonetic shifts may occur when speakers alternate between Mampulli and English. Consequently, Plissart's research serves as a critical linguistic foundation for exploring the complex interaction between Mampulli and English in bilingual contexts amidst modifications where necessary.

Another anthropological analysis of two hundred and sixty-four Mamprusi folktales (Drucker-Brown & Nayler, 1992) identifies three types of Mamprusi folktales based on their structure and performance. These include the usual folktales which are characterised to teach

moral lessons as there are in other Ghanaian cultures. The second category ‘praise name’ comes in implicit lexicons or phrases meant for an individual or a family and sometimes a clan. The third, are called ‘kingship names’ like the former in structure, performed for chiefs and royals at social events. They explain that whereas the folktales in the first group are employed as an informal educative tool for teaching the younger generation their cultural values at home, the specialised language in “praise names” and “kingship names” usually present the prestige of an individual or family. In some instances, the same is employed to retell the historical background of the royal to whom it is performed (Drucker-Brown & Nayler, 1992 pp.64, 66). Unlike Plissart (1977) which studied Mampulli proverbs in isolation, Drucker-Brown and Nayler’s (1992) investigation of Mampulli folktales as used in Mamprusi cultural settings finds that the folktales reflect the exclusivity of the authority reposed on the chieftaincy institution.

More recent research on Mampulli, conducted during the current decade, discusses different aspects of the language. Amidu and Adam (2019) focus on language distribution among settlers in the Afram planes in Ghana. Their paper reports that Mampulli is a major language spoken by migrants who are non-native speakers and predicts that it will join the native language of the host community, Twi as the most preferred code for social interactions. While the above concentrated on the status of Mampulli, Amenorvi and Grumah (2020) tackle its grammar. They suggest that native speakers of Mampulli select Mampulli verbs with sexual connotations based on culturally acceptable norms and practices. This implies speakers of the language express in speech what society deems right to say and vice versa. According to Amenorvi and Grumah (2020), the Mampulli verb *nnyabi* ‘to copulate’ is gender sensitive and as such accepts only a masculine subject and a feminine object. The behaviour of this verb is attributable to the patriarchal nature of the Mamprusi culture coupled with the gender stereotyping roles it assigns.

3.3 Multilingualism

Multilingualism is a complex and long-standing global linguistic phenomenon (Heller, 2013; Myers-Scotton, 2006b). Defining it precisely remains challenging due to its multifaceted nature and contextual variability. The term is often used interchangeably with plurilingualism, although distinctions exist depending on disciplinary perspectives, such as sociolinguistics, applied linguistics, and language acquisition (Bhatia, 2012; Thomason, 2001). From a sociolinguistic perspective, Bokamba (2014) broadly describes multilingualism as the ability to acquire and use two or more languages. In contrast, Butler (2012), working within applied linguistics, restricts the definition to individuals proficient in at least three languages, typically including a mother tongue and other learned languages.

Such definitional variability highlights the importance of when, how, and why languages are acquired, yet it often fails to account for diverse proficiency levels among speakers. In multilingual societies such as Ghana, individuals navigate a range of languages due to ethnic diversity and cross-community interaction. This contrasts with more individual-centred definitions found in Western scholarship, pointing to the need for contextual specificity in multilingualism research.

Cenoz (2013) usefully outlines three principal areas of multilingualism research: individual versus societal multilingualism, language proficiency and function, and the intersection of bilingualism and multilingualism. At the individual level, the motivations for acquiring languages, their social functions, and the influence of environment on language use are core concerns. For example, in northern Ghana, an individual may grow up speaking Mampulli at home, learn English at school, use Asante-Twi with peers, and acquire other regional languages such as Hausa, Frafra, or Kasem for work purposes. This case underscores how multilingualism often emerges not from deliberate choice but from practical social and

communicative necessity. Here, multilingualism is deeply human: shaped by lived experience, social positioning, and mobility.

Proficiency remains contested in multilingualism literature. Edwards (2012) and De Bruin (2019) argue for a broad understanding that includes literacy: reading, writing, and speaking. Others, such as Dewaele (2015), contend that oral proficiency alone may suffice, especially in contexts where formal education in indigenous languages is limited or absent (Owu-Ewie, 2017). In African settings, where multilingualism is often oral and functional rather than academic, imposing literacy-based definitions risks marginalising everyday speakers and distorting the picture of linguistic reality.

Cenoz (2013) also categorises individual multilinguals into those who speak exclusively indigenous languages and those who combine indigenous with global or colonial languages. While both are multilingual, their linguistic repertoires function differently across social domains. For example, a speaker of only local languages may operate within informal, rural spaces, whereas someone fluent in both local and global languages can navigate formal education, administration, and international networks. This distinction is critical for understanding small-scale multilingualism, where individuals, often in peripheral or rural areas, manage multiple languages for different social roles without necessarily having institutional or written proficiency.

At the societal level, multilingualism is often defined in straightforward terms: the presence and use of two or more languages within a given community or country. This definition suggests a clear and observable linguistic reality. However, such apparent simplicity masks significant complexities. In many contexts, especially across Africa and parts of Asia, the languages spoken daily by local populations often differ from those recognised or supported by national language policies (Bamgbose, 2011; Djité, 2020). This usually creates tension

between individual multilingual practices, shaped by family, community, and region, and the broader societal frameworks that regulate language use in education, governance, and media (Stroud & Kerfoot, 2021).

As a result, multilingualism research at the societal level is often complicated by policy mismatches and ideological assumptions about what languages “belong” in the public sphere (Heugh, 2022). For instance, while many countries promote official bilingualism or multilingualism on paper, in practice they may marginalise indigenous or minority languages, favouring former colonial or dominant regional languages (Lüpke, 2021). This disconnect makes it difficult to align everyday linguistic realities with institutional expectations, and often leads to inequities in access to education, services, and political participation.

The functionality of multilingualism is often shaped by necessity. In African contexts, multilingualism is usually born of necessity rather than choice. Bokamba (2014) and Bah and Barasa (2022) emphasise that most Africans grow up in multilingual communities, acquiring multiple languages informally. Kenya, for instance, has over 60 indigenous languages (Bore, 2019), reflecting immense linguistic diversity. In contrast, the creation of standard-language communities in Europe is strongly linked to the rise of nation-states in the 19th-century (Woolard, 2020). As new national borders emerged, language became a key symbol of national identity. Governments promoted one standard language, often chosen from several regional varieties, to serve as the language of education, administration, and public life. This helped establish the idea that each nation should have a single, unified language. According to Gal (2023) and Irvine and Gal (2000), standard languages were shaped through ideological processes such as iconisation, fractal recursivity, and erasure. These processes gave the standard language a sense of naturalness and superiority, while other language varieties were

made to seem inferior or even invisible. The standardisation of language was closely tied to broader ideals of unity, modernity, and citizenship (Anderson, 2006; Blommaert, 2006).

These ideologies of monolingualism did not remain confined to Europe. They were later exported to Africa through colonial rule. European colonial powers, including Britain, France, and Portugal, imposed their languages as the official mediums of government, schooling, and commerce (Mufwene, 2025; Mufwene & Vigouroux, 2008; Wolff, 2017). These policies often ignored or actively undermined the multilingual realities of African societies, reinforcing the idea that one language should dominate (Makoni & Pennycook, 2006). Irvine and Gal (2000) argue that such colonial language policies reproduced European language ideologies, presenting monolingualism as both normal and desirable. This legacy continues to shape language hierarchies and education systems in many postcolonial African states today, where local languages are frequently undervalued (Stroud, 2023). As a result, the colonial history of monolingualism still influences how language and power are structured in these contexts.

Furthermore, political and educational institutions play a decisive role in structuring multilingualism (Cenoz & Gorter, 2015; Farr & Song, 2011), particularly through policies that influence language exposure, use, and status. In Ghana, for instance, the linguistic repertoire of the citizenry is shaped not only by cultural and social interaction but also by institutional mechanisms such as educational zoning and administrative boundary demarcation (Awedoba, 2006; Owu-Ewie, 2017). These structural forces generate a multilingual environment in which individuals must navigate and adopt different languages for education, governance, and intergroup communication. Crucially, this environment is not neutral. State-led language policies often privilege dominant or official languages, such as English, while marginalising indigenous languages, thereby entrenching linguistic hierarchies and affecting access to

resources, mobility, and social inclusion. Thus, multilingualism in such contexts is as much a product of top-down state interventions than it is of grassroots cultural diversity, revealing how language practices are institutionally regulated and politically charged.

While bilingualism and multilingualism are often examined in tandem within linguistic scholarship, it is important to recognise that they are not necessarily hierarchically related. Myers-Scotton (2000) describes bilingualism as the regular use of two or more languages in everyday interaction, a definition that reflects the functional nature of language use rather than any sequential acquisition. However, the assumption that bilingualism is a developmental stage that precedes multilingualism is overly simplistic and not universally applicable.

Recent studies challenge this linear progression model. Reports by (Sivakumar et al., 2020) and Gonzalez-Barrero and Byers-Heinlein (2022) illustrate that many individuals, particularly those in linguistically rich environments, acquire several languages simultaneously from birth rather than sequentially. These early multilinguals defy traditional typologies that separate bilingual and multilingual speakers based on stages of acquisition. Such findings suggest that multilingualism should not be perceived as a mere extension of bilingualism but as a distinct phenomenon shaped by sociocultural context, exposure, and necessity. This complexity calls for a more nuanced conceptual framework that accommodates simultaneous language acquisition and recognises the variability in individual linguistic trajectories. Rather than viewing bilingualism and multilingualism as levels on a scale, scholars must consider them as overlapping yet distinct constructs informed by context, function, and individual experience.

Since the 1960s, multilingualism research has undergone significant development, marked by increasing interdisciplinarity and theoretical innovation. The field has drawn insights from psychology, language acquisition, education, and sociology, reflecting the

complex nature of multilingual practices across diverse contexts (Satraki, 2019). This cross-disciplinary engagement has not only broadened the empirical base of multilingualism studies but also diversified its theoretical frameworks. Aronin and Singleton (2008) refer to the intensified scholarly interest in the 1990s as a “new linguistic dispensation,” signifying a departure from earlier, more rigid models of language competence and use.

One of the most transformative shifts in recent decades has been the emergence of translanguaging as a critical theoretical and pedagogical paradigm. Originating in Welsh educational contexts and later expanded by Makoni and Pennycook (2006), translanguaging critiques the traditional view of languages as bounded, autonomous systems. Instead, it conceptualises language as a socially constructed and ideologically facilitated resource, shaped by historical, political, and cultural forces. According to this view, individuals do not simply switch between distinct language codes; rather, they draw fluidly and strategically from an integrated linguistic repertoire to make meaning, navigate social relationships, and assert identities.

Translanguaging theory fundamentally challenges the assumptions underpinning conventional definitions of bilingualism and multilingualism, which tend to treat languages as discrete, countable entities (Cummins, 2021; Wei, 2018). By foregrounding the speaker’s lived linguistic practices, translanguaging reframes multilingualism as dynamic and situated, resisting categorisations based solely on national or standardised languages (MacSwan, 2022). This approach is particularly relevant in postcolonial and superdiverse contexts, where speakers routinely engage in complex, hybrid forms of communication that defy standard language boundaries.

Moreover, translanguaging has significant implications for education, language policy, and linguistic justice (Elizabeth et al., 2018; Poza, 2017; Sah & Li, 2024; Wei, 2022; Yilmaz,

2021). In multilingual classrooms, for example, it legitimises the use of students' full linguistic repertoires rather than enforcing monolingual norms aligned with dominant or colonial languages (Agbozo & ResCue, 2021). In doing so, it challenges language hierarchies and promotes more inclusive pedagogies that recognise the sociolinguistic realities of learners.

While the theoretical contributions of translanguaging are significant, prompting what some describe as an epistemological shift in the field (Flores & Rosa, 2015), this study does not adopt translanguaging as its guiding framework. Rather, it focuses on more conventional, albeit critically informed, understandings of multilingualism that retain the analytical distinction between named languages as socially recognisable categories. This decision reflects both the specific empirical focus of the study and a methodological commitment to tracing how individuals navigate multilingual contexts where language boundaries, though contested, remain institutionally and ideologically salient.

In addition to major theoretical developments, recent multilingualism research has seen an emergence of more specialised subfields that examine the diverse multilingual practices across different sociocultural and institutional contexts. Two particularly noteworthy areas are small-scale multilingualism and elite multilingualism, each providing unique conceptual frameworks for understanding how multilingualism functions in distinct social environments. These themes are further elaborated in Sections 3.3.1 and 3.3.2, respectively.

Colonial legacies have had a profound impact on language management in Africa. Most African nations continue to use colonial languages for education and governance, marginalising indigenous tongues. This creates a dual linguistic economy, where access to power and opportunity is restricted to those proficient in former colonial languages (Makoni & Mashiri, 2005). Heller (2010) frames language as an economic resource, linking linguistic

access to material development. Indeed, countries that promote indigenous literacy tend to see stronger development outcomes (Eriksson, 2014; Laitin & Ramachandran, 2016).

Ngũgĩ wa Thiong'o (1986) argues that linguistic self-determination is crucial for Africa's social transformation. Continued reliance on foreign languages alienates most citizens from participating meaningfully in national discourse. Scholars such as Yevudey (2018) advocate for codification and standardisation of African languages as a route to enhanced literacy, economic inclusion, and cultural continuity. Non-formal education initiatives, grounded in indigenous languages, are seen as potential catalysts for human capital development.

Nevertheless, critical counterarguments remain. Paul et al. (2021) caution that linguistic diversity, while often celebrated as a cultural asset, can also reinforce systems of political patronage and deepen ethnic divisions. Drawing on the Nigerian context, they highlight how language frequently plays a determining role in elite political appointments, thereby institutionalising ethnolinguistic affiliations within governance structures. This presents a significant challenge to language planning and policy, raising valid concerns that the promotion of indigenous languages, if implemented without equitable and context-sensitive frameworks, may inadvertently intensify social and political inequalities rather than mitigate them.

Despite ongoing tensions and contested perspectives, the prevailing consensus within the literature affirms that multilingualism, when approached through inclusive, contextually grounded, and strategically designed frameworks, holds significant potential to enhance national cohesion and drive socio-economic development (Laitin & Ramachandran, 2016). At the heart of this view is an appreciation for the human dimensions of multilingual practice: the everyday linguistic negotiations individuals engage in, the symbolic and affective meanings attached to language use, and the broader social, cultural, and political investments embedded

in multilingual repertoires. Recognising these lived experiences is essential for crafting language policies that not only reflect linguistic diversity but also promote equity, participation, and social integration.

3.3.1 Small-Scale Multilingualism in African and Global Contexts

The concept of small-scale multilingualism, an emerging field under multilingualism has gained increasing scholarly attention as researchers (Chechuro et al., 2021; Di Carlo, 2023; Dobrushina et al., 2021; Lüpke, 2016; Singer & Harris, 2016) move beyond state-centric, monolingual ideologies to explore how language is used organically in everyday life. Small-scale multilingualism is defined using multiple languages within small communities, families, or individuals, where individuals are fluent in several languages used for different social and communicative purposes (Lüpke, 2016; Pakendorf et al., 2021). It refers to the widespread, everyday use of multiple languages within close-knit communities, typically found in rural areas or among smaller population groups. Unlike large-scale multilingualism, associated with nation-states (Tishkov, 2016; Trudell et al., 2015) schools (Chimbutane, 2018) or mass media (Salawu, 2015), small-scale multilingualism operates informally, often without official recognition or standardised linguistic norms. Lüpke (2021) defines it as context-driven, socially embedded, and highly adaptive. Individuals in such communities develop and maintain repertoires that enable them to communicate across social domains such as home, market, or ritual, through flexible language use including codeswitching and translanguaging (Lüpke, 2021; Singer, 2023). Recent studies, (Lüpke & Watson, 2020; Watson, 2015) challenge traditional language ideologies that treat languages as fixed, separate systems. Instead, they suggest that in many multilingual communities, languages are seen as shared communicative resources. This perspective provokes a shift in language documentation and revitalisation efforts, moving away from a focus on single, bounded languages and towards understanding language use as situated and relational.

A significant body of research, (Cobbinah, 2020; Lüpke, 2016, 2021) has focused on the Lower Casamance region in Senegal, particularly through the Crossroads Project (2014 - 2018), which provides rich insights into the dynamics of small-scale multilingualism. Findings of the project reveal how multilingualism functions in the absence of formal institutional support, showing that local language practices are shaped by social relationships, cultural norms, and patterns of mobility rather than by state policies or educational systems. Scholars such as Lüpke (2016, 2017) and Watson (2015) describe this region as a global flashpoint of multilingualism, where no single language holds dominance and individuals often speak multiple languages fluently. The political organisation of many communities in the region is acephalous, meaning there is no central authority. This egalitarian structure is mirrored in linguistic practices, where speakers choose languages based on social relationships and context rather than fixed rules or hierarchical status. Cultural practices such as male initiation ceremonies, for example, “*bukut*” (Cobbinah, 2020 p. 85) play a key role in reinforcing multilingualism, as they bring together speakers of diverse languages and facilitate intergenerational transmission. These practices are not just communicative but also symbolic, shaping identity and social cohesion within the community.

Furthermore, language acquisition in these communities is not reliant on formal education but occurs through meaningful social interaction. Lüpke (2018) illustrates this with the case of Suzanne, who regained her confidence in speaking her heritage language through communal cooking activities linked to ritual events. The research underlines how multilingualism is maintained through cultural participation and community integration rather than institutional support. This finding emphasises the importance of recognising language as a resource embedded in social life. In such contexts, multilingualism is part of identity negotiation and supports resilience by enabling communities to maintain cultural links and navigate wider political or economic pressures. These observations challenge dominant

ideologies that favour monolingualism or promote only official, state-recognised languages. Instead, they call for language policies and documentation strategies that are ethnographically informed and sensitive to local realities (Lüpke & Cissé, 2023).

A notable innovation in recent literature is the shift toward ethnographically grounded, participatory approaches that treat language use as socially situated and relational rather than as fixed, code-based systems. The practice is explored further in Lüpke (2021), who introduces “patterns and perspectives” (Lüpke, 2021 p. 896) as methodological tools. Rather than viewing language use through fixed categories, the study examines how linguistic knowledge is shaped by historical, spatial, and social relationships. For example, the “landlord stranger” (Lüpke, 2021 p.883) social model found in Agnack Grand and other villages influences how people categorise and interpret speech. This approach resists essentialist ideas about ethnicity and language purity, arguing instead for a relational understanding of linguistic repertoires. The study suggests that adopting such a multi layered description to show how multilingual practices are shaped by lived experience and sociohistorical context. This challenges traditional approaches to language documentation and supports a more inclusive and reflexive model that accounts for the complexities of small-scale multilingualism.

Similar themes are found in Lüpke (2017), which critiques static models of language endangerment. The paper follows Mufwene’s (2017) argument for a focus on communicative practices within language ecologies rather than on individual languages. Lüpke (2017), shows that many small languages are thriving, not as isolated entities, but as parts of larger, adaptive repertoires. This view disrupts assumptions about what it means for a language to be “alive” or “endangered” and suggests that language vitality should be assessed in terms of use and social meaning rather than formal recognition or written presence. It also raises important

questions about the role of researchers and institutions in shaping what is documented and valued in multilingual communities.

Still on theory, Di Carlo (2023) reviews the use of surveys in sociolinguistic fieldwork, particularly in settings where small-scale multilingualism is found, such as Lower Fungom in rural Cameroon. He reports that while surveys are a useful way to gather non-speech data quickly, most current models are based on diglossia theory, which assumes a hierarchical relationship between languages. However, in the context of small-scale multilingualism, such hierarchies do not exist; local languages tend to have equal status, and people's language choices are often shaped by personal and social relationships rather than formal domains. Consequently, applying diglossia-based surveys in these contexts may produce misleading results. Di Carlo (2023) therefore argues for a new approach, which includes fewer questions about language use and more focus on biographical and social data, such as kinship ties and group affiliations. This method aims to give a better understanding of language ideologies and use patterns in small-scale multilingual communities. The suggested approach is not meant to support statistical generalisations but to serve as a qualitative tool for creating sociolinguistic profiles. These profiles can help in analysing speech data more accurately and allow for meaningful comparisons across similar multilingual settings.

Outside of Africa, small-scale multilingualism has also been studied in contexts like the United Kingdom. For example, Filippi et al. (2025) found that bilingual children, especially those from lower-income families, performed better in school when exposed to multiple languages early in life. However, challenges remain. Kolancali et al. (2024) highlight the difficulties faced by Bangladeshi families in London who wish to maintain their home languages but struggle due to limited resources and institutional support. These findings underline the need for inclusive educational policies that recognise and value home languages.

In this regard, Costley and Leung (2020) recommend practices such as translanguaging in schools to promote participation and understanding. Despite these recommendations, many schools still enforce monolingual norms, which fail to reflect the linguistic diversity of their students.

Comparative work by Lüpke et al. (2020) has also helped broaden our understanding of small-scale multilingualism. They compare multilingual practices in West Africa and Lowland South America, showing that in both regions, multilingualism is often fluid, adaptive, and resistant to external language norms. These communities challenge the idea that languages are discrete systems, offering instead a model of language use based on interaction, social practice, and identity. While the paper provides strong theoretical insights, it could have included more on the practical implications for language education or policy. Nonetheless, it contributes to the growing call for documentation and analysis that reflect the lived realities of multilingual communities, rather than imposing external frameworks.

In contrast, Sagna and Hantgan (2021), provide a more nuanced picture by showing that monolingualism can also exist within otherwise multilingual settings. Using tools like the “blindfold test,” they discovered that some children in remote areas of Casamance grow up with only one language and acquire others later in life through migration or schooling. This finding complicates generalisations about rural multilingualism and highlights the need for detailed, community-specific research. It also questions assumptions that intermarriage or social mobility automatically leads to multilingualism, offering a more cautious and evidence-based perspective.

Finally, research by Lüpke (2016) focuses on how language contact and relatedness affect linguistic structures in multilingual areas. It examines how closely related languages can influence one another in terms of vocabulary and grammar, sometimes making it difficult to

distinguish between effects of contact and shared ancestry. The research addresses “Trudgill’s conundrum” (Trudgill, 2010), which notes that similar social environments can produce very different linguistic outcomes. This supports the argument for studying small, intimate communities to understand language change and development. These settings often remain underrepresented in global research but offer valuable insights into the dynamics of human communication and social life.

In summary, the literature reviewed provides evidence that small-scale multilingualism is a complex, adaptive, and socially embedded phenomenon. It challenges dominant language ideologies that prioritise monolingualism and fixed language categories, advocating instead for flexible, context-sensitive approaches to research, policy, and education. The work from Africa, particularly Lower Casamance, offers a powerful model for understanding how languages function as parts of broader social and cultural systems. This research calls for greater attention to ethnographic methods, local epistemologies, and the voices of multilingual speakers themselves, if we are to develop more accurate and respectful accounts of linguistic diversity.

3.3.2 Elite Multilingualism

Elite multilingualism is broadly understood as the use of multiple languages by individuals who come from socially, culturally and economically privileged backgrounds (De Costa, 2019; Selleck & Barakos, 2019). These individuals typically have access to formal education, international networks, and high-status professions. Selleck and Barakos (2019a p. 362) describes elite multilingualism as a “phenomenon that brings social and/or material capital, a sense of belonging, prestige, excellence, privilege, and access” through the strategic use of language. This form of multilingualism is not just about speaking more than one language, but about the value that certain languages bring in global and institutional settings

(Sunyol, 2020). Compared to grassroots multilingualism, commonly found in working-class or rural communities, elite multilingualism is closely tied to globalisation, education, and cultural prestige (Block, 2018; Piller, 2016).

A significant characteristic of elite multilingualism is the use of widely recognised global languages such as English, French, Spanish, or Mandarin (Blackledge, 2005; Codó & Sunyol, 2019; Piller, 2016). These languages are often associated with international diplomacy, business, and academic success (Bae & Park, 2016; De Costa et al., 2021; Park, 2016; Shin & Park, 2016). Because of this, being multilingual in such languages is frequently framed as a personal achievement and a valuable skill in global markets. Piller and Cho (2013) argue that this form of multilingualism is promoted by institutions like international schools and universities, where language education is designed to prepare students for global careers. In contrast, multilingual practices based on migration, community life, or indigenous heritage are often not given the same value (Truan, 2025). This creates a hierarchy in which certain languages and speakers are privileged, while others are ignored or stigmatised (Duchêne & Heller, 2012).

From a sociolinguistic perspective, the idea of elite multilingualism can also be understood through Bourdieu's (1991) concept of linguistic capital. In this view, the languages spoken by elite groups carry not only communicative value but also social and economic power (Lovrits, 2024). For instance, fluency in English and French is often seen as a marker of elite education, worldliness, and modernity. Such language practices can signal social class, professionalism, and global identity. Jaspers and Madsen (2019) support this by arguing that elite multilingualism is more than language knowledge; it also reflects social positioning and access to mobility. However, Wei (2020b) criticises the literature for romanticising elite multilingualism and ignoring the broader inequalities that shape who get to be multilingual and

why. Duchêne and Heller (2012) argue that while multilingualism is praised in policy documents, only certain forms, usually those tied to elites, are promoted and rewarded.

This unequal valuation is reinforced by institutions. Education systems play a key role in shaping elite multilingualism. International schools and universities often offer advanced language programmes, study abroad opportunities, and access to global networks (Hayden & Thompson, 2008; Junnier, 2024; Mufwene & Escobar, 2022; Reilly et al., 2023). In contrast, students from working-class or rural backgrounds may have little exposure to prestigious languages. Tollefson and Tsui (2018) points out how global language education policies often prioritise elite goals, marginalising those who speak local or indigenous languages. As a result, elite multilingualism contributes to reproducing social inequality, even while it is celebrated as a form of excellence.

Nonetheless, recent research has focused on how elite multilingualism is not just a skill, but a way of performing identity and power. In postcolonial contexts, global languages are often embraced by elite groups as symbols of modernity, global citizenship and progress (Block, 2018; Phillipson, 2013; Rosa & Flores, 2017). However, this can create tensions with efforts to maintain local languages and promote linguistic rights. This tension is especially visible in education systems, where international schools promote multilingualism through elite languages, while state schools serving poorer populations may not even support local bilingual education (Flores, 2016; Flores & Chaparro, 2018; Tollefson & Tsui, 2018). Phillipson (2013) notes that elites in such contexts often adopt global languages to project modern identities, even if it means distancing themselves from local linguistic heritage.

However, while the embrace of elite multilingualism can create tensions, on one hand, it allows for access to global institutions and mobility. On the other, it can contribute to the erosion of minority languages and cultures. Skutnabb-Kangas and Heugh (2013) and Skutnabb-

Kangas (2017) warn that this process undermines linguistic diversity and justice. While elites gain from multilingualism, less powerful groups may face language loss or exclusion. This shows that elite multilingualism is not neutral or purely beneficial, it is shaped by politics, class, and history.

Closely connected to elite multilingualism is the practice of CS. This refers to alternating between two or more languages or dialects within a conversation. Among elite speakers, codeswitching is often seen as a sign of flexibility, competence, and cultural awareness (Fäcke et al., 2024; Omar & Ilyas, 2018; Stavans & Porat, 2019). In professional settings such as diplomacy or international business, it can enhance communication and show that the speaker is at ease in multiple cultural contexts. In such cases, codeswitching is celebrated and viewed as a strategic asset.

However, the literature shows a sharp contrast in how codeswitching is perceived in non-elite settings. For speakers from racialised or working-class backgrounds, code-switching is sometimes stigmatised or seen as a lack of proper language skills (Erker & Otheguy, 2021; Otheguy & Zentella, 2012). This double standard reveals how power shapes language ideology. While the same linguistic behaviour is praised among elites, it may be criticised among marginalised groups. Canagarajah (2016) calls for more critical research that challenges these biases and recognises the linguistic competence of all multilingual speakers, regardless of social status.

There is growing academic interest in the ideological and structural dimensions of elite multilingualism. Researchers increasingly highlight how it intersects with global inequality, cultural hegemony, and educational privilege. Jaspers and Madsen (2019) emphasise that elite multilingualism is not only about language ability but also about how language reflects social class and mobility. Wei (2020b) further criticises the literature for its limited focus on the

broader power structures that exclude many speakers from linguistic recognition. These voices push for a more inclusive approach that values all multilingual practices and challenges the narrow celebration of elite repertoires.

At the same time, there is a shift in focus towards the role of institutions in promoting certain forms of multilingualism. International organisations, universities, and corporations shape language policies and practices, often in ways that benefit the elite. Wee (2010) argues that these institutions help construct and maintain ideologies that frame elite multilingualism as natural, desirable, and necessary. Yet these same systems often neglect or suppress other forms of language use.

In conclusion, elite multilingualism is a powerful and complex phenomenon. It involves not just the ability to speak multiple languages, but also the social, political, and economic value attached to those languages. While it opens doors for some, it also reinforces existing inequalities and marginalises other multilingual practices. The literature shows clear contrasts between how elite and grassroots multilingualism are valued, especially when it comes to education, employment, and cultural identity. Similarly, codeswitching is celebrated in elite contexts but stigmatised elsewhere, revealing deep ideological divides. Future research should continue to question these biases and promote a more equitable understanding of multilingualism in all its forms.

3.3.3 Multilingualism in Ghana

Multilingualism is a well-established feature of the Ghanaian society, with recent studies estimating that around 60% of its population are proficient in more than one language (Boahene-Agbo, 1985; Edu-Buandoh, 2016; Guerini, 2006). This widespread multilingualism can be attributed to the country's sociolinguistic landscape, which is shaped by sustained language contact, internal migration, urbanisation and historical factors such as colonialism

(Capstick, 2020; Coulmas, 2018; Gogolin et al., 2013; Mensah, 2023; Yankson, 2018). The imposition of English as the official language of education and administration during colonial rule has further reinforced the need for linguistic versatility (Makoni et al., 2023; Owoo, 2022). In modern Ghana, English continues to hold institutional prestige, while local languages such as Akan, Ewe, Ga, and Dagbani remain dominant in informal settings (Eberhard, 2021; Guerini, 2018).

In practice, multilingual Ghanaians often shift between languages depending on context, audience, and communicative intent (Abdullah, 2021; Bisilki, 2025; Brobbey, 2015). For example, speakers of Akan frequently include English expressions in conversations, especially when talking to people who also understand English and another local language, such as Twi (Flamenbaum, 2014). This flexible use of language shows how people in Ghana adapt to multilingual settings. It also reveals how language choices are tied to deeper broader sociocultural negotiation of identity and social belonging.

One of the key communicative strategies observed in these multilingual settings is codeswitching, the alternating use of two or more languages within a single conversation (Adomah, 2020; Ahlijah, 2017; Nyavor, 2017; Oppong-Adjei & Yaw-kan, 2023). Codeswitching in Ghanaian multilingual communities is not merely a linguistic convenience; it serves important sociolinguistic functions such as clarifying meaning, expressing solidarity, or navigating power dynamics (Aronoff & Rees-Miller, 2020). In second language or foreign language classrooms, teachers and students alike frequently codeswitch to facilitate comprehension and reinforce learning. Beyond the classroom, spontaneous codeswitching also occurs in everyday interactions, often taking the form of extrasentential codeswitching, where speakers shift between languages across sentences or discourse segments (Eberhard, 2021; Guerini, 2018).

However, the literature on codeswitching has often approached it as a practical and neutral strategy for communication, without sufficiently addressing the ideological dimensions of language use in postcolonial settings such as Ghana. Although codeswitching can serve as a means of empowerment, it may also signal underlying linguistic hierarchies, especially in contexts where English is privileged over indigenous languages. This dynamic is particularly evident in formal domains like education and the workplace, where the preference for English can reinforce social and institutional inequalities. Therefore, future research should critically examine the power relations inherent in multilingual practices, with particular attention to how language choices may perpetuate or challenge existing structures of dominance (Soler Camús, 2021).

In sum, multilingualism in Ghana is an active and central part of everyday life. It has been shaped by the country's historical, political, and social developments, and is sustained through strategies like codeswitching. However, it is important for scholars to keep examining how these language practices are influenced by underlying ideologies. This includes exploring what they reveal about the status of different languages, how people express their identities, and how language use may reflect or reinforce social inequalities in present-day Ghana.

3.4 Codeswitching

Scholarly interest in codeswitching has been extensive, with foundational studies dating back to the 1960s, notably Gumperz (1964). Codeswitching refers to the practice of alternating between two or more languages within a same conversation or stretch of discourse (Auer, 2011; Mabule, 2015). Stavans and Porat (2019 p. 123) describe it as a “trademark” of multilingual communities and serves as both a demonstration of linguistic skill and a tool for social interaction (Myers-Scotton & Ury, 1977). This linguistic behaviour allows speakers to manage diverse communicative demands in complex social environments. Over the years, scholars

have studied codeswitching across various contexts, ranging from informal conversations to institutional settings such as schools and workplaces. Earlier studies often approached codeswitching from a purely structural and grammatical perspective (Gardner-Chloros & Edwards, 2004; Myers-Scotton, 1997; Poplack, 1980), aiming to identify the rules governing the shifts. However, more recent research has placed greater emphasis on its social, cultural, and ideological dimensions (Kerswill & Mahama, 2019; McKinney, 2016; Reichmuth, 2024; Sah & Fang, 2023; Shirahata, 2024). These newer approaches consider how language choices are linked to identity, power, and social inequality in postcolonial societies.

This section examines key scholarly work on CS, with a particular focus on its theoretical paradigms, methodological approaches, communicative functions, its role in expressing and negotiating sociocultural roles, and the ideological implications. Special attention is given to multilingual and postcolonial contexts, such as Ghana, where language use is shaped by historical and political factors. The review outlines key themes and debates in the field and identifies areas for future research.

3.4.1 Types of Codeswitching

Studies have identified several types of codeswitching, each serving distinct communicative functions, this research focuses on three main types (Harya, 2018; Muysken, 2000; Poplack, 2000; Skiba, 1997; Wati, 2023). These include intersentential, intrasentential, and tag switching (Kasim et al., 2019; Muysken, 2000). Each type is defined by where the switch occurs and the purpose it serves, reflecting linguistic, social, and cognitive dimensions. This section reviews the main types, drawing on both classical theories and recent empirical studies.

3.4.1.1 Intersentential Codeswitching

Intersentential codeswitching occurs between sentences or major syntactic boundaries, such as clauses (Mohamad Khalil & Mohd Shahril Firda, 2018; Muysken, 2000). In this form, one sentence is in one language, and the following sentence is in another. According to Musyken (2011), intersentential switching refers to the type of codeswitching that occurs between two separate sentences or between two related clauses within the same utterance. Poplack (2000) defined intersentential codeswitching as the type of switching that occurs at the boundaries of sentences or speech segments. A study by Hadei et al. (2016) found that intersentential codeswitching occurs for several reasons. These include addressing different audiences, a lack of ability to use the appropriate register, pragmatic considerations, the need to emphasise a particular point, and the speaker's emotional state. In support of their assertion, Mabule (2015) explains that intersentential codeswitching occurs regularly in everyday conversations, whether people are aware of it or not especially when there is no suitable word or phrase in one language, to gain social approval, to seek confirmation, to improve understanding, to exclude others from the conversation, or to demonstrate bilingual ability. In Ghana, Yevudey (2013) found that teachers often used intersentential codeswitching in classrooms, switching between English and Ewe to explain difficult scientific concepts. For example:

“Evaporation means the change of water into vapour. *Nɔviwo, eye when water disappears into the air.*”

Similarly, Amuzu (2012) observed that Akan-English bilinguals frequently switched languages at sentence level to clarify meaning or reinforce ideas, bridging the gap between formal instruction in English and everyday communication in local languages

Poplack (1980) described this as a structurally stable form of codeswitching, since it does not interrupt grammatical constructions. It usually requires high bilingual proficiency, as the speaker must manage two separate grammatical systems (Skiba, 1997).

3.4.1.2 Intrasentential Codeswitching

Intrasentential codeswitching occurs within the same sentence or clause. Yule (2014) in Hadei et al (2016) defined this type of switching as a change that occurs within a sentence, where a word is replaced by a word from the speaker's other or secondary language. Rasdi (2016) further identified two main patterns of intrasentential CS in the Facebook interactions of Malay users as insertional and alternational codeswitching. Intrasentential CS is more grammatically complex, as it requires syntactic compatibility between the languages used. A study by Quarcoo (2012), of Twi-English bilinguals, showed that such switches are not random. They often follow consistent grammatical rules. In many cases, the main sentence structure is provided by one language, the ML, while words or phrases from another language, the EL, are inserted. This approach is central to Myers-Scotton's (1993) MLF model.

“M’adi breakfast already.”

‘I have already eaten breakfast.’ - Akan-English mix

Here, the Akan structure *M’adi* ‘I have eaten’ frames the sentence, while *breakfast already* comes from English. This shows how the grammatical rules of one language can dominate the sentence even when elements from another language are used.

3.4.1.3 Tag Switching

Tag switching, as described by Poplack (1980, 2000) and referred to as emblematic codeswitching by Muysken (2000), refers to the insertion of short, fixed phrases or interjections from one language into an utterance in another. These elements often include discourse markers, question tags, or exclamations. According to Wati (2023), such switches do not

require complex grammatical integration. They usually occur at the boundaries of clauses or sentences and do not breach syntactic rules. Because of their fixed nature, these expressions can be easily inserted without disrupting the grammatical structure of the main language. Thus, more likely to be used by non-fluent bilinguals.

Tag switching is often used for emphasis, to signal social identity, or to engage the listener. In Ghanaian classrooms, Yevudey (2013) observed that teachers used English tags like “okay?”, “you know?”, and “right?” in Ewe or Akan discourse.

“Eʏe me dea, you know?”
‘It’s mine, you know?’ -Akan-English

Amuzu (2014) explains that tag switching often occurs in informal conversations, especially among speakers who share the same cultural and linguistic background. In these settings, people use short phrases or expressions from another language to connect with others, express familiarity, or create a sense of belonging.

In sum, CS is a complex and structured linguistic behaviour that takes many forms. Intersentential, intrasentential, and tag switching all serve specific purposes. Each type is shaped by grammar, social context, and the speaker’s communicative goals. Research in Ghana and other multilingual settings show that codeswitching is a natural part of bilingual communication. It plays an important role in education, identity formation, and everyday discourse. Understanding these types helps researchers and educators support language use in diverse and multilingual societies.

3.4.2 Paradigms and Theories of Codeswitching

Codeswitching has been widely studied across various linguistic disciplines such as sociolinguistics (Gardner-Chloros, 2009a; Harya, 2018; Nguyen, 2014), psycholinguistics

(Dussias, 2001; Kootstra et al., 2015; Zhong & Fan, 2023), and applied linguistics (Lin, 2013; Üstünel & Seedhouse, 2005). Early studies tended to describe codeswitching as spontaneous or purely conversationally driven. However, over the past few decades, scholars have developed more structured theoretical models to better explain its grammatical patterns, communicative purposes, and social meanings.

One of the foundational approaches to CS is the grammatical or structural paradigm, which focuses on the syntactic constraints that govern when and how speakers switch between languages. A major contribution to this field is the MLF model introduced by Myers-Scotton (1997, 2002). According to this model, in any given codeswitched utterance, one language ‘the matrix language’ provides the morphosyntactic frame of the sentence, while elements from another language ‘the embedded language’ are inserted into that structure. The model has become particularly influential in studying codeswitching in African multilingual settings, where speakers often blend local languages with colonial languages (Myers-Scotton & Jake, 2017) such as English (Ihemere, 2016a; Quarcoo & Adjei, 2024) or French (Mwamba, 2011).

The motivation for using the MLF model in such research lies in its ability to systematically account for these syntactic patterns. It allows researchers to identify which language maintains grammatical control in mixed utterances and to distinguish function words such as pronouns or tense markers from content words such as nouns or verbs, which are often the elements that shift between languages. This is particularly important in contexts such as Ghana’s, where linguistic boundaries are not always stable, and speakers alternate languages fluidly. The MLF model brings clarity to this complexity by offering testable hypotheses about word order, morpheme placement, and grammatical congruence (Archibald, 2025; Balam et al., 2020; Bellamy & Couto, 2022; Myers-Scotton & Jake, 2000; Parafita Couto & Gullberg, 2019).

In addition to its structural focus, the MLF model complements broader sociolinguistic theories that consider codeswitching as a socially meaningful act (Jake et al., 2002; Myers-Scotton, 1993a, 2012). For instance, Gumperz (1982), highlights how language alternation is often used to negotiate social roles, signal group membership, or shift conversational tone. Myers-Scotton (1998a) further extended this idea in her Markedness Model, which suggests that speakers choose language codes based on what is considered socially expected (unmarked) or contextually distinct (marked). When applied alongside the MLF model, these theories help explain not only ‘how’ speakers codeswitch but ‘why’ they do so in particular social situations.

Recently, scholars have adopted critical and poststructuralist paradigms that explore the ideological dimensions of codeswitching. These approaches argue that language choices are not only shaped by grammar or context, but also by broader structures of power and identity (García & Wei, 2015a; Heller, 2007; Mateus, 2014). In postcolonial contexts such as Ghana, Nigeria, or Kenya, the use of English alongside indigenous languages is often tied to histories of colonisation, language hierarchies, and social mobility. Ansah (2014), and Soler Camús (2021) point out that while codeswitching can be empowering and expressive, it can also reinforce existing inequalities, particularly when one language (often English) is seen as more prestigious or appropriate in formal domains such as education, governance, and employment.

While more recent theoretical developments, such as translanguaging (see Section 3.3), have offered alternative perspectives, emphasising the holistic and flexible use of a speaker’s full linguistic repertoire (Mateus, 2014; Wei, 2018) without strict boundaries between named languages, the MLF model remains valuable for researchers aiming to understand the grammatical constraints of language mixing. Translanguaging challenges traditional views that treat languages as separate systems (MacSwan, 2019; Otheguy et al., 2019; Wei, 2018). Instead, it highlights how multilingual speakers draw on all their language resources to make

meaning. This perspective has been particularly useful in education research, as it offers a more inclusive approach to language use in classrooms where learners speak multiple languages (Canagarajah, 2012; Creese & Blackledge, 2015). However, in cases like Mampulli-English speech, where specific patterns of insertion and matrix dominance can be observed, the Matrix Language Framework model offers empirical precision that can complement these broader ideological frameworks.

Moreover, adopting the MLF model in studies of Mampulli-English codeswitching aligns with calls for more detailed, context-sensitive research in African multilingual settings. Scholars such as Ansah (2014) and Bisilki (2025) argue that postcolonial language practices must be analysed not only through the lens of grammar or discourse, but also with attention to historical and political forces. In this sense, the MLF model can serve as a starting point for more layered analyses, especially when combined with ethnographic or critical approaches that examine how language use reflects identity, power, and social inequality.

In sum, the MLF model provides a robust grammatical framework for analysing Mampulli-English CS. It is particularly useful in identifying structural patterns and distinguishing between matrix and embedded language roles. Although more recent models such as translanguaging offer broader views of multilingualism, the MLF model remains a valuable tool for linguistic analysis in contexts where grammatical integration and syntactic roles are clearly observed. Its adoption is motivated by both its theoretical thoroughness and its applicability to real-world data from postcolonial, multilingual societies like Ghana.

3.4.3 Methodological Approaches to Codeswitching

Over the past few decades, scholars have developed various methodological frameworks to study this linguistic phenomenon, moving from early structural analyses to considering socially embedded approaches. This section of review looks at the main

methodological approaches used to examine CS. It discusses their advantages, weaknesses, and considers how useful they are for understanding language use in today's multilingual societies.

3.4.3.1 Structural Approaches

Initial studies of codeswitching were largely informed by structural linguistic approaches, focusing on identifying the grammatical rules that constrain language switching. One key theory from this period is the MLF model, developed by Myers-Scotton (1993a, 1997, 2017). This model proposes that in bilingual speech, there is usually a primary or “matrix” language that determines the grammatical structure of the sentence, while a secondary or “embedded” language contributes lexical items. For instance, in a sentence where English acts as the matrix language and Swahili is the embedded language, the sentence would follow English grammar while including Swahili words. According to Jake and Myers-Scotton (2000), in any instance of CS, one language usually dominates. However, the dominance of the matrix language is not fixed and may vary depending on the context, the speakers' background, or the purpose of the interaction. Its identity may shift between conversations, influenced by factors like topic, setting, and the speaker's goals (Eppler & Ozon, 2020). Thus, the model does not provide full account of these context-specific influences, limiting its explanatory power in some situations (Muysken, 2020).

The model has also been critiqued for maintaining a rigid division between the matrix and embedded languages. Scholars such as Wasserscheidt (2016, 2020) argue that treating language as a fixed system ignores the internal variation found within dialects and non-standard forms. He, along with MacSwan (2005) and Sankoff and Poplack (1981) criticise the assumption that one can apply language-specific syntactic structures universally. Each language has its own rules, and these may not always align neatly in a bilingual setting. As

such, applying a standard syntactic model across all languages may overlook the diversity and flexibility present in real-world language use.

Furthermore, Wasserscheidt (2016, 2020) notes that the MLF model tends to focus only on insertional codeswitching, that is, when individual words or phrases from one language are inserted into another. This focus narrows its relevance and reduces its theoretical scope when compared to other models that address a wider range of switching types.

On the other hand, psycholinguistic studies support some aspects of Myers-Scotton's theory. For example, Wei et al. (2020) suggest that bilingual speakers activate both language systems during speech. The more dominant code the 'matrix language' typically controls the grammatical structure and provides the main content. This supports the idea that the matrix language functions at a structural level and is not merely a reflection of a static or rigid linguistic system.

Research also shows that the MLF model can account for fine grammatical details, such as case marking in Latin-English bilingual contexts (Ter Horst, 2020). While such findings may not support sweeping generalisations, they offer useful typological perspectives into specific codeswitching behaviours.

Another early grammatical model developed to understand codeswitching is the Equivalence Constraint, proposed by Poplack (1980). This approach suggests that speakers are more likely to switch languages at points in a sentence where the grammatical structures of both languages match. According to the Equivalence Constraint, codeswitching tends to occur at points in a sentence where the surface structures of both languages involved are grammatically compatible. In other words, language alternation is more likely to happen where

the syntactic rules of both languages align, particularly in terms of word order, phrase structure, and constituent boundaries.

Her research with Spanish-English bilinguals in the United States and Canada provided empirical support for the Equivalence Constraint, demonstrating that code-switching tends to occur where the structures of the two languages involved are congruent (Poplack, 1980). For example, consider a bilingual speaker of English and Spanish. Both languages generally follow a Subject-Verb-Object (SVO) word order. If a sentence begins in English with “I saw”, it is grammatically possible to continue the sentence in Spanish with “un pájaro” ‘a bird’, resulting in the mixed utterance: “I saw un pájaro.” Since both languages agree on the structure of the sentence up to that point, this switch would not violate grammatical rules in either language.

This model provides a neat explanation for many instances of codeswitching observed in bilingual communities, particularly those involving closely related languages or languages with similar word order patterns. It also offers a clear rule-based framework that appealed to researchers from a structuralist linguistic background. Consequently, in the 1980s and 1990s, the Equivalence Constraint model became influential tool for investigating codeswitching practices, English-Spanish (Mahecha, 1990; Poplack, 1988; Sankoff & Poplack, 1981), Spanish-Hebrew (Berk-Seligson, 1986), French-Arabic (Dabène & Billiez, 1986).

However, with time, scholars questioned the universal applicability of the Equivalence Constraint, especially in contexts involving typologically distant languages (Muysken, 2000, 2020). For example, many African and Asian languages (Creissels et al., 2008; Subbārão, 2012; Welmers, 2024) have syntactic structures that differ significantly from those of European languages such as English or French (Lyovin, 1997). These differences include word order, sentence structure, and the role of inflection and agreement.

Indeed, Muysken (2020) points out that the Equivalence Constraint cannot easily account for the types of codeswitching seen in multilingual contexts where the languages involved do not share common syntactic features. In many African contexts, for example, speakers frequently alternate between indigenous languages and colonial languages like English or French. These languages often differ substantially in terms of syntax, morphology, and lexical categories. Despite these differences, codeswitching still occurs in fluent and meaningful ways. This observation suggests that the Equivalence Constraint is too narrow to explain the complexity of real-life bilingual speech.

In response to these shortcomings, newer models of codeswitching have emerged that aim to offer more flexible explanations. Muysken (2000, 2020) have proposed typologies of codeswitching that recognise multiple patterns, including insertion, alternation, and congruent lexicalisation. These models are better suited to account for the diversity of bilingual interactions, especially in settings where the linguistic systems involved are not structurally aligned.

Furthermore, recent research highlights the importance of social and psychological factors in codeswitching. Instead of focusing only on grammatical rules, newer approaches consider the speaker's intent, the social meaning of the switch, and the conversational context. These perspectives challenge the idea that codeswitching is purely constrained by syntax (Aabi et al., 2020), instead reveal that it can also shaped by social norms, identity, and communicative goals (Bahri, 2025; Jan-Petter & Gumperz, 2020; Rojas, 2025; Tseng & Cashman, 2015).

3.4.3.2 Interactional and Discourse-Based Approaches

Since the 1990s, research into codeswitching has broadened beyond its initial structural focus. Earlier studies were mainly concerned with defining grammatical boundaries for language alternation. However, newer approaches have shifted attention towards

understanding how and why speakers use codeswitching as a communicative strategy. The change reflects a more interactional and socially grounded understanding of bilingualism. Two key methodologies illustrating this development are Conversation Analysis (CA) (Clift, 2016; Rousan & Merghmi, 2019) and Discourse Analysis (DA) (Hall & Nilep, 2015; He, 2017; Johnstone & Andrus, 2024).

Conversation Analysis, grounded in ethnomethodology, examines how language is used in everyday spoken interactions (Clayman & Maynard, 1995; Licoppe, 2020; Lynch, 2000; Wei, 2013). In codeswitching research, CA focuses on the real-time organisation of language choices within conversational turns (Golato & Golato, 2018; Wei, 2013). Auer (2013), a leading figure in this field, developed a sequential model for analysing when and why speakers switch languages during conversation. His approach avoids predefining rules, instead showing how the meaning of a switch depends on its position and function within the interaction. For example, switching from one language to another may signal a change in topic, express emotion, or mark a speaker's stance. These shifts are not random but shaped by social relationships and conversational goals.

Auer (2013) argues that codeswitching is context-sensitive and reflects how speakers manage social meaning. In multilingual communities, moving between languages can show shifts in formality, social distance, or group affiliation. For example, switching to English may convey authority or formality, while reverting to a local language might indicate solidarity or informality. These choices are interpreted collaboratively by participants as the conversation unfolds.

Similarly, DA explores how language, including codeswitching, constructs identities, relationships, and power structures in broader social contexts (McCarthy et al., 2013). DA looks beyond individual sentences to examine extended speech such as interviews, stories, or

everyday interactions. It reveals how bilinguals use language choices to include or exclude audiences, show cultural competence, or align with social groups. Through such analysis, codeswitching is shown to be not only a linguistic act but also a social one.

These socially grounded methods focus on the flexibility and strategic use of language by bilingual speakers. As Tai and Wei (2021) note, codeswitching serves multiple purposes, emphasis, humour, emotion, or clarification. For instance, a speaker might switch languages to express anger more forcefully or make a culturally resonant joke. Ahmad (2024) reports that Pashto-English bilinguals switch to English to avoid taboo expressions among peers as strategy to conform to social norms. These actions are shaped by context and shared understanding among participants.

A key advantage of CA and DA is their ability to capture the subtle and situated aspects of bilingual interaction. They reveal how codeswitching contributes to meaning-making in real-life conversations, especially in culturally complex or multilingual environments. However, these methods require detailed, context-rich data, such as recordings and transcriptions, and often demand close familiarity with local languages and social norms. In rural or under-researched settings, these requirements can present challenges for researchers.

Despite these difficulties, CA and DA have significantly advanced our understanding of codeswitching as a socially meaningful practice. They demonstrate that bilingualism involves more than structural competence, it also entails navigating identity, authority, and group belonging. Overall, the shift from structural to social approaches has enriched the field, with CA and DA offering crucial insights into the lived experience of multilingual speakers in today's increasingly diverse linguistic landscapes.

3.4.2.3 Ethnographic and Sociolinguistic Approaches

Within sociolinguistic research, scholars adopt several approaches to analyse codeswitching, including psycholinguistic, structural, and ethnographic perspectives. Each of these frameworks focuses on different aspects of language use. Psycholinguistic models explore the cognitive processes that allow speakers to activate and manage multiple languages in real-time communication (Green & Wei, 2014; Kroff & Dussias, 2023; Liu, 2020). Structural theories, on the other hand, focus on the grammatical constraints and rules that govern how elements from different languages can be combined in a single sentence (Gardner-Chloros & Edwards, 2004; Panhwar & Buriro, 2020). These might include syntactic alignment or morphological compatibility between languages. In contrast, sociolinguistic and ethnographic perspectives prioritise the social meanings and motivations behind language choice, such as speaker identity, power relations, or group affiliation (Gardner-Chloros, 2009a; Hall & Nilep, 2015). One such ethnographic models adopted as a complement to the Matrix Language framework is the Ethnography of Communication (D. H. Hymes, 1964) which is discussed in detail later in section 3.5.

Researchers who adopt ethnographic methods typically engage in participant observation, in-depth interviews, and extended fieldwork. These techniques allow them to gather rich, contextualised data about how speakers use language in naturally occurring situations. For example, García-Sánchez (2019) used ethnographic research to study bilingual Moroccan youth in Spain. Her study showed that codeswitching was not simply a practical communication tool but a resource used by young people to negotiate cultural identities, resist marginalisation, and align themselves with peer groups. In these contexts, language choice served as a powerful symbol of belonging, exclusion, and aspiration.

Similar patterns are evident in some African contexts, where ethnographic research has highlighted how codeswitching reflects broader social and cultural dynamics. For instance, Nassenstein and Hollington (2016) and Pütz (2011) examined codeswitching among urban youth in Sierra Leone and found that it was closely tied to notions of modernity, education, and cosmopolitan identity. In another study, (Kerswill and Mahama (2019) investigated the language practices of bilingual speakers in Northern Ghana. He observed that speakers often switched between indigenous languages and English to navigate power hierarchies, express respect or authority, and signal educational status. In both cases, codeswitching emerged as more than a linguistic act; it became a symbolic performance embedded in the socio-political fabric of everyday life.

These findings affirm that ethnographic research provides important perspectives into the ideological dimensions of codeswitching. Language choice is deeply intertwined with beliefs about what different languages represent, such as tradition, modernity, prestige, or solidarity. In multilingual societies, speakers often use codeswitching to express alignment with particular values or communities, to challenge existing power structures, or to resist dominant ideologies. In this way, ethnographic methods contribute to a fuller understanding of the social functions and symbolic meanings of codeswitching.

Despite their contributions, ethnographic methods are not without limitations. One key challenge is the time-intensive nature of fieldwork, which often requires researchers to spend months or even years immersed in the community they are studying. This can make ethnographic studies less feasible in rapidly changing or hard-to-access contexts. Moreover, such methods may be subject to researcher bias, especially when the researcher's interpretations are influenced by personal assumptions or limited linguistic proficiency.

Additionally, because ethnographic findings are often based on small, context-specific samples, their generalisability to other settings can be limited (Hornberger & Johnson, 2007).

In summary, ethnographic approaches have enriched our understanding of codeswitching by situating it within the everyday realities of multilingual speakers. Through detailed observation and contextual analysis, ethnographic research uncovers how language alternation reflects and shapes social identities, cultural values, and power relations. While these methods are not without challenges, their ability to capture the lived experiences of bilingual speakers makes them an invaluable part of sociolinguistic inquiry.

3.4.2.4 Corpus-Based and Computational Approaches

In recent years, researchers (Carter et al., 2010; Chi & Bell, 2024; Gonzales, 2025; Lee et al., 2021; Lee et al., 2017; Lee & Li, 2020; Lee et al., 2019; Lee & Wang, 2015; Vilares et al., 2016; Wang et al., 2016) have increasingly adopted corpus-based and computational approaches to study codeswitching. These methods involve collecting large datasets from a range of sources, including social media posts, radio broadcasts, and naturally occurring conversations. The goal is to analyse language alternation on a wider scale, often across different speakers, regions, or social groups. Tools such as ELAN (Petukhova & Sokur, 2021), Praat (Elias et al., 2017; Muldner et al., 2019) and CLAN (Haq, 2017) computerised programmes allow researchers to transcribe and annotate audio or video recordings, while machine learning techniques help detect and quantify instances of codeswitching over time and in different contexts (Carter et al., 2010; Kannadaguli, 2021; Nusrat et al., 2025; Winata et al., 2022).

Corpus-based approaches are applauded for their usability (Bowker, 2018) and their ability to identify consistent patterns of codeswitching across large samples (Church & Mercer, 1993; Lee & Mouritsen, 2021) as well as their effectiveness in identifying and analysing

language patterns (Adamou, 2019). For example, Carter et al. (2010) employs the Computerised Language Analysis programme to investigate codeswitching patterns in three bilingual communities: Miami, Patagonia, and Wales. These findings help uncover trends in language use that may not be visible in smaller-scale studies. Additionally, these methods are especially useful for comparing how different language pairs behave in similar settings, or how the same bilingual group uses language in different domains such as education, media, or informal talk.

Despite their benefits, corpus and computational methods also have been criticised for some shortcomings (Hovy & Lavid, 2010; Levshina, 2022). One major concern is that large datasets often lack the detailed social context needed to understand the speaker's intent. For example, if a speaker switches from Hindi to English in a Facebook post, it may be unclear whether they are doing so to show humour, express emotion, or appeal to a wider audience. Without information about the speaker's background, audience, or communicative goals, the social meaning of the switch may remain ambiguous.

Another challenge lies in the use of automated tagging systems. While they are efficient for processing high volumes of data, they often perform poorly with under-resourced languages. In multilingual contexts like Ghana or India, where many local languages lack sufficient digital resources, machine learning models may fail to accurately identify or categorise language alternations (Winata et al., 2022). For instance, a code switch involving a minor regional language might be misclassified or missed entirely because the system lacks training data for that language.

Finally, O'keeffe and McCarthy (2022) argue that a significant challenge in corpus and computational linguistics concerns the maintenance and protection of essential principles such as sampling, corpus design, and representativeness. These principles are fundamental for

maintaining the validity and reliability of linguistic data, as they determine how accurately a corpus reflects the language or variety under investigation. Safeguarding these standards requires careful consideration during every stage of corpus construction, from data selection and collection to annotation and analysis. Without such measures, the results derived from computational or corpus-based analyses risk being biased, ultimately weakening the validity of research outcomes in both theoretical and applied linguistic studies.

In summary, corpus-based and computational methods offer powerful tools for tracking and analysing codeswitching on a large scale. They are especially valuable for identifying grammatical patterns and comparing language use across populations. However, they must be used alongside methods that provide richer contextual and interpretive insights. Combining computational tools with qualitative approaches such as ethnography or discourse analysis can help researchers better understand the social meanings and functions behind bilingual language practices.

3.4.2.5 Summary

Research on codeswitching has progressed significantly, moving beyond early structural models such as the Equivalence Constraint and the MLF. While these frameworks provided important foundations by identifying grammatical patterns in bilingual speech, their limitations, particularly in relation to structurally diverse language pairs and the neglect of social context, have become increasingly apparent (Muysken, 2020). Nevertheless, the MLF model remains a useful analytical tool, especially in contexts where speakers negotiate language boundaries and grammatical structures simultaneously. More recent approaches highlight the need for a broader perspective that incorporates sociolinguistic, cognitive, and ideological dimensions of language use. This shift towards holistic and interdisciplinary methodologies reflects a growing recognition of the complex social meanings embedded in

codeswitching. Current research trends favour mixed-methods approaches that combine quantitative corpus analysis with ethnographic and critical discourse methods. Such integration enables a deeper understanding of both the form and function of codeswitching in dynamic multilingual societies. As language practices continue to evolve, particularly through digital communication researchers must adopt flexible, reflexive strategies to capture the full range of linguistic behaviour in diverse sociocultural settings.

3.4.4 Functions of Codeswitching

The use of codeswitching in bilingual and multilingual contexts has received increasing scholarly attention over the past decades, not only as a linguistic phenomenon but also as a rich communicative strategy. This review synthesises key studies that explore the functions of codeswitching across diverse contexts including classrooms, digital communication, formal academic settings, and cultural interactions. The evidence reveals that codeswitching serves both practical and sociolinguistic purposes, enabling speakers to clarify meaning, manage discourse, express identity, and navigate social relationships.

In classroom settings, several studies highlight how codeswitching supports learning and comprehension, particularly in contexts where English is taught as a foreign language. Dykhanoya (2015), examining English-medium instruction in Kazakhstan, finds that despite institutional policies discouraging codeswitching, both teachers and students rely on it to translate terms and clarify difficult content. Teachers use codeswitching for metalinguistic purposes, often despite their negative attitudes toward its use. Similarly, Bhatti et al. (2018) explore codeswitching in Pakistani classrooms, where teachers switch between English and Urdu to support classroom management, explain new vocabulary, and create a more inclusive and supportive learning environment. These studies underscore codeswitching as a practical tool in EFL contexts, especially for bridging linguistic gaps and enhancing learner engagement.

Fachriyah (2017) further develops this classroom perspective through ethnographic observations of a lecturer in Indonesia. codeswitching in this setting serves multiple pedagogical functions such as clarifying ideas, repeating key information, managing class discussions, and checking comprehension. Rather than being an unplanned linguistic feature, codeswitching emerges as a deliberate teaching strategy that enhances both understanding and student participation. Similarly, Kasim et al. (2019) examine codeswitching in a thesis defence setting and reveal its role in maintaining formality, clarifying complex content, and managing interaction. The frequent use of intra-sentential switching reflects the participants' high bilingual proficiency, and the strategic nature of CS in managing institutional discourse.

Beyond physical classrooms, several studies shift focus to digital communication and asynchronous written exchanges. Halim and Maros (2014) and Eldin (2014) both analyse Facebook posts by bilingual users, showing that CS in online writing is multifunctional. Users codeswitch to quote others, express emotions, address specific individuals, clarify content, and add stylistic emphasis. These uses align closely with Gumperz's (1982) interactional model, which sees CS as a contextualisation cue. In digital spaces, CS serves as a resource for identity expression, emotion sharing, and meaning negotiation, demonstrating its adaptability across modes of communication.

The role of CS in reflecting and constructing identity is explored further by Shin (2010) in a Korean Sunday school. Here, Korean is used for directives and emotionally sensitive topics, reinforcing social norms and group solidarity. This aligns with Myers-Scotton's (1993b) social motivations model, which explains how language choice is influenced by macro-level cultural expectations and micro-level interactional goals. Similarly, Nishimura (1995) shows how second-generation Japanese Canadians use CS to affirm identity and manage interaction, with language choice varying according to audience and context. These studies show that CS

is not merely about convenience but carries symbolic weight, helping speakers express heritage, group belonging, and respect for social hierarchy.

Recent studies have also linked CS to creativity and cognitive flexibility (Kharkhurin, 2025; Sandoval-Guzman, 2022; Shavkatovna, 2024). Kharkhurin and Wei (2015) explore whether habitual CS among multilingual students supports innovative thinking. They find that frequent code switchers show higher creative capacity, although this is not directly related to better selective attention. Interestingly, CS driven by emotional states or vocabulary gaps appears to enhance creative output. These findings suggest that CS is not just socially strategic, but may also have cognitive benefits, supporting divergent thinking and adaptive language use.

The complexity of CS is further highlighted in comprehensive reviews by Nazri and Kasim (2023). They apply PRISMA guidelines to map key functions of CS across media, education, and pop culture. They identify referential, expressive, directive, poetic, and metalinguistic functions, showing how CS serves both interpersonal and aesthetic purposes. In advertising and entertainment, for example, CS adds persuasive flair and cultural relevance, helping audiences connect with content at an emotional and identity-based level.

Theoretical frameworks from Poplack (1980), Gumperz (1982), and Holmes (2013) continue to shape current understanding of CS. Poplack's classification into inter-sentential, intra-sentential, and tag-switching provides a structural basis for analysis, while Gumperz and Holmes offer insights into its pragmatic and social dimensions. These foundational models, in more recent investigations have been expanded to explore how audience design, social positioning, and performativity influence CS practices (Azman & Abdullah, 2023; Mefareh, 2020; Rojas, 2025; Tagg & Seargeant, 2014). For example, speakers may switch to English to show education or authority and revert to indigenous languages to express closeness or shared cultural values.

Other studies focus the role of CS in managing inclusion and exclusion (Garlington et al., 2023; Grier, 2021; Stavans & Porat, 2019). Anchimbe (2015) reports on how Cameroonians use CS in online communication to subtly mark group boundaries, switching to Cameroonian Pidgin English to exclude non-fluent participants and assert local identity. Similarly, CS can promote in-group solidarity. Abubakr et al. (2019), Ahlijah (2017), Mäkilähde (2017), Muhammad Malek (2015), and Dahl et al (2010) note that shared language choices reinforce bonds and affirm collective identity, especially in diasporic or multicultural communities.

In conclusion, this body of literature presents CS as a highly functional and context-sensitive strategy. It facilitates communication in educational settings, enhances digital interaction, supports emotional expression, and enables cultural and identity negotiation. CS is neither random nor disruptive; rather, it follows social and grammatical rules and reflects the speaker's awareness of audience, context, and purpose. Whether employed to clarify a lesson, craft an online persona, or express solidarity, CS is a dynamic linguistic resource that enriches bilingual and multilingual communication.

3.5 The Matrix Language Framework (MLF)

The MLF model, proposed by Myers-Scotton (1993a, 2002), is widely recognised as one of the most important grammatical theories in the study of codeswitching. The model introduces two central ideas: the ML and the EL. In this framework, the ML provides the main grammatical and morphosyntactic structure of a clause. In contrast, the EL contributes content words or phrases, usually with lexical meaning, that are inserted into this structure.

The theory further distinguishes between two types of morphemes. These are content morphemes, such as nouns and verbs, and system morphemes, such as tense markers, plural markers, or determiners. According to Myers-Scotton and Jake (2000), the MLF model, the ML contributes the system morphemes and determines the word order. The EL, on the other

hand, generally contributes content morphemes. This structural asymmetry enables researchers to analyse intra-sentential and intersentential codeswitching with clarity and consistency (Hadei & Ramakrishna, 2017).

The MLF model offers a flexible and evidence-based way of analysing codeswitching. It accounts for both intrasentential codeswitching, where the switch happens within a sentence, and inter-sentential codeswitching, where the switch occurs between sentences. Myers-Scotton (2002) also describes the concept of ML Islands. These are units within a sentence that continue to follow the grammar of the ML, even though they contain elements from the EL.

The MLF model is particularly well suited for analysing Mampulli-English codeswitching data. The following reasons support its use in this research:

i. Structural Hierarchy

Codeswitching between Mampulli and English is expected to follow an unequal pattern, with one language, likely Mampulli, serving as the main source of grammatical structure. The MLF model is well equipped to identify which language acts as the grammatical base and which one contributes individual words or phrases. This is important for understanding the grammatical direction of the switching and how the two languages interact in practice.

ii. Identifying English Structures

This study's research question 1. focuses on identifying which English grammatical structures appear in Mampulli-English codeswitching. The MLF model helps the researcher to locate and examine EL items (Hadei & Ramakrishna, 2017; Khan & Khalid, 2018), which in this case are expected to be from English. It becomes possible to detect specific English elements such as verbs, noun, phrases, or even full clauses, and to see how they are inserted into Mampulli-based sentences.

iii. Morphosyntactic Compatibility

A key assumption of the MLF model is that system morphemes, like tense and agreement markers, come from the ML, while content morphemes can be drawn from either language. This is essential for identifying how morphemes behave within the bilingual clause, particularly when examining morphosyntactic adaptation such as tense and agreement markers (Al-Bataineh & Abdelhady, 2019; Rahimi & Dabaghi, 2013).

iv. Empirical Foundation

Many studies across a range of language pairs, such as Yoruba-English (Ezekiel et al., 2014), Pashto-English (Khan & Khalid, 2018), Twi-English (Adomah, 2020; Quarcoo, 2012) and Igbo-English (Ihemere, 2016a; Orji & Chidebelu, 2017), Efik-English (Mensah, 2019) have confirmed the model's core principles, especially the Morpheme Order and System Morpheme Principles. However, notably criticisms by Nguyen (2025) and Wasserscheidt (2020), argue that the MLF model may not fully account for language contact phenomena in more fluid or under-studied bilingual environments, citing the case of Vietnamese-English. Nonetheless, since Mampulli-English interactions has not yet been studied extensively in this way, applying a model remains a well-established and empirically grounded approach, offering both reliability and relevance of the analysis.

v. Cross-linguistic Comparative

Using the MLF model also enables the researcher to compare findings from Mampulli-English codeswitching with data from other bilingual groups. This wider perspective can help determine whether the patterns found in Mampulli-English codeswitching are consistent with global codeswitching trends, or whether they show unique features.

Considering these factors, the MLF model is not only theoretically sound but also methodologically effective for the detailed analysis of Mampulli-English codeswitching. It is

more adaptable and provides a clear and reliable method for analysing codeswitching. It is especially effective for identifying English grammatical elements within Mampulli-English bilingual speech, and for explaining how they are integrated into the sentence structure. For these reasons, the MLF model is highly suitable for addressing the main research question in this study.

3.6. Ethnography of Communication: A Sociolinguistic Framework

The Ethnography of Communication, developed by Dell Hymes (1964, 1974), serves as a complementary analytical framework in this study. It emerged as a critique of traditional linguistic approaches that viewed language as independent from its social context. Hymes argued that understanding language in real-life situations requires more than knowledge of grammar or phonetics. He introduced the concept of communicative competence (Hymes, 2012; Kroskrity, 2023), which describes a speaker's ability not only to produce grammatically correct sentences but also to use language appropriately according to context, audience, and cultural norms.

Originally termed the Ethnography of Speaking, Hymes' framework came from the field of linguistic anthropology and continues to influence sociolinguistic research today (Hymes, 1962, 2013). The aim was to study speech as part of broader social and cultural systems. Hymes (2009) argued that communication includes not only language but also cultural expectations, social roles, and community norms. He outlined two key objectives: first, to observe patterns of speech in real-life situations, and second, to study communities as whole systems of communication. Hymes also introduced the concept of the means of speech, which refers to the different styles and forms people use when speaking. He also discussed speech economy, which explains how individuals use language within their social networks (Johnstone & Marcellino, 2010; Reyaz & Tripathi, 2016).

To support his perspective, Hymes developed the SPEAKING model (Elzaghal, 2021; Katsara, 2023), an acronym that stands for Setting, Participants, Ends, Act Sequence, Key, Instrumentalities, Norms, and Genre. This model offers a structured way to analyse communicative events by considering both linguistic and non-linguistic elements (Saville-Troike, 2008). Through this framework, the EoC shifts focus from viewing language as a fixed system to understanding it as a socially situated, dynamic practice.

According to Cameron et al. (2019), the EoC is not only a theoretical model but also a practical guide for research. However, she advises against using it too rigidly, as this could narrow the scope of inquiry. Instead, researchers are encouraged to adapt the framework to explore not just how people communicate, but why they do so in specific ways, depending on context and social meaning.

Hymes himself applied ethnographic techniques to study Native American storytelling traditions. His analysis showed how narratives reflected both linguistic patterns and cultural values (Hymes, 1974). This work demonstrates how ethnography can reveal the deeper connections between language use and cultural practice.

Many scholars have since expanded and adapted the EoC framework for various settings. For example, Bauman and Sherzer (1975), adopted it to investigate oral traditions and performance, showing the artistic features of speech. Duranti (2011) built on this by examining how power, ideology, and identity influence communication. Other researchers have used the EoC in various fields, including education (Heath, 1983; Hepburn, 2016; Kaplan-Weinger & Ullman, 2014), online communication (Herring, 2007; Hjorth et al., 2017; Varis, 2015), and multilingual communities (Gardner & Martin-Jones, 2012; Garrett, 2011). These studies demonstrate the flexibility and wide applicability of the framework. However, some scholars, such as Blommaert (2008), have cautioned that EoC may simplify complex speech

communities or overlook broader social inequalities. Even so, it continues to serve as an important approach in sociolinguistics, linguistic anthropology, and discourse analysis, helping researchers explore how social norms influence language use.

According to Jones (2023), EoC is an essential analytical framework for examining codeswitching across diverse social contexts. This approach enables researchers to explore how language use is shaped by interactional norms and cultural expectations. Similarly, Buell (2003) adds that the framework is particularly appealing to sociolinguists because shifts in language choices often serve as indicators of underlying social identities, interpersonal relationships, and communicative intentions. Through these lenses, codeswitching is understood not merely as a linguistic phenomenon but as a socially meaningful practice.

Several other studies (Jones & Smith, 2017; Nixon & Odoyo, 2020; Watson, 2011; Zhu & Bargiela-Chiappini, 2013) demonstrate how the EoC model can be applied to real-world research settings. An example is Fachriyah's (2017) qualitative study of an English language classroom setting where she applied the EoC framework to analysing lecturers and students codeswitching utterances. Her findings showed that they switched between the languages to clarify meaning, maintain positive relationships, and manage the flow of classroom interaction.

In another study, De Socarraz Novoa (2015) examined the use of Spanish and English among bilingual speakers at a multicultural university. Using interviews and participant observation, she found that speakers used codeswitching to navigate between their professional and personal roles. The switches helped them express different aspects of their identities depending on the context.

Likewise, Flamenbaum (2014) examined Twi-English codeswitching in Ghanaian radio talk shows. By analysing conversations between radio hosts and callers, he showed that

codeswitching was used to organise information, engage listeners, and reflect underlying language beliefs and ideologies.

Furthermore, Wei (1995) conducted a study of Chinese-English bilingual families living in Britain. He found that codeswitching was used by speakers to carry out important social functions. These included expressing humour, managing relationships, and constructing personal and group identities. The study showed that switching between languages was not random but served clear social purposes within everyday conversation. Similarly, Amuzu (2012) examined codeswitching among bilingual speakers in Ghana. His research revealed that language choices which appeared neutral on the surface often held deeper social meanings. By using an ethnographic approach, Amuzu (2012) was able to show how these choices reflected cultural values, social relationships, and the speakers' awareness of context. This demonstrated that even routine shifts between languages could carry significant social messages.

In educational and classroom settings, EoC is often used to investigate how and why codeswitching occurs. A meta-analysis by Mefareh (2020) found that researchers commonly use sociolinguistic frameworks, including EoC, to study language attitudes and switching functions. Jones (2023) supports this, emphasising that ethnographic and qualitative methods are especially effective in examining codeswitching utterances. These methods include participant observation, interviews, and conversational analysis (Didi-Ogren, 2020; Wynn & Borrie, 2020).

In summary, the EoC model is constructive for studying bilingual and multilingual communication, particularly, where language choices often reflect identity, social relationships, and cultural roles. In codeswitching studies, the model helps to explain not only when and how people switch between languages, but also why they do so. This reveals the social meaning behind their language use (Gumperz, 1982; Heller, 2007).

In the present study, EoC complements the structural model, the MLF proposed by Myers-Scotton (1993). While the MLF model identifies the grammatical patterns involved in intrasentential codeswitching, such as which language is dominant and how it combines with another, it does not explore the social or cultural reasons for switching. By combining EoC with the MLF model, researchers gain a fuller understanding: the MLF explains the structure of the switches, while EoC provides insight into the speakers' motivations and the social context in which switching occurs (Blom & Gumperz, 2000; Myers-Scotton, 2002).

3.6.1.1 Applying the Ethnography of Communication (EoC) to Mampulli-English Codeswitching

This study adopts the EoC model (Bauman & Sherzer, 1989; Hymes, 1974; Saviile-Troike, 2008) as a complementary framework to examine the sociocultural factors that influence Mampulli-English codeswitching. Rather than focus only on grammar, this approach looks at why speakers use language within specific social and cultural contexts.

The primary unit of analysis will be communicative events, real-life instances of language use such as interactions at the bases (young male groups), interactive radio programmes, and religious discourse. Each event will be analysed in terms of who is speaking, to whom, in what setting, and for what purpose (Hymes, 1972; Duranti, 2009). These events will provide insight into the cultural values and norms guiding language use.

To apply this framework, the study will use Hymes' SPEAKING model (Hymes, 1972; Qalyubi, 2017):

Setting and Scene: This refers to the time and place where the interaction happens. In the context of Mampulli-English codeswitching, the setting and scene influence when and where speakers switch between the two languages. For example, speakers may use more Mampulli in informal settings, such as at home or with friends, while English may be preferred

in formal or educational environments. The physical location, social situation, and time of interaction all help shape the choice of language and the style of speech.

Participants: The speakers and their roles. In this study, the participants are speakers who use both Mampulli and English in their communication. Each speaker has a specific role in the conversation, which influences how and when they switch between the two languages. Their roles may include leading the discussion, responding to questions, or sharing personal experiences. The way they use Mampulli and English reflects their social relationships, level of education, familiarity with both languages affect their language choices, and the purpose of the interaction. Understanding these roles helps explain why certain patterns of codeswitching occur during communication.

Ends: Goals and outcomes of the interaction. In this dataset, the *ends* refer to the goals and outcomes that speakers aim to achieve through their use of two languages side by side. Speakers may switch between Mampulli and English to express politeness, emphasise a point, or build social relationships within a community. The choice of language often reflects the speaker's intention to include or exclude certain participants, to create solidarity, or to show respect. For instance, switching to English might signal formality or education, while returning to Mampulli could express intimacy or cultural identity. These linguistic choices reveal that codeswitching is not random, but guided by specific communicative purposes. Therefore, the *ends* of Mampulli-English codeswitching will focus how speakers use language strategically to achieve both social and conversational goals.

Act Sequence: This refers to the structure and flow of communication within a conversation. In the context of Mampulli-English codeswitching, it describes how speakers organise their speech, shift between languages, and maintain the progression of dialogue. The

sequence reveals when and why a speaker changes from Mampulli to English, reflecting the social or functional purpose of each language choice.

Key: This refers to the emotional or attitudinal quality expressed in Mampulli-English codeswitching. It may manifest as serious, humorous, respectful, or informal, depending on the speaker's communicative purpose and the social context of interaction. These play a significant role in shaping meaning, expressing emotion, and reflecting interpersonal relationships between speakers who alternate between languages.

Instrumentalities: This refers to the languages used in an interaction. In this study, languages used in Mampulli-English codeswitching refer to the alternation between Mampulli and English in communication. Speakers choose either language depending on context, purpose, and audience. This linguistic choice reflects social relationships, identity, and communicative intent within multilingual settings.

Norms: Norms refer to the rules and expectations that guide how people interact within a community. In the context of Mampulli-English codeswitching, norms shape when and how speakers choose to switch between the two languages. These norms are often influenced by social factors such as respect, familiarity, and setting. Understanding these norms is essential for interpreting why speakers choose one language over another in different situations.

Genre: The genre refers to the type of communicative event where interaction takes place. In this case, the communicative event in which Mampulli-English codeswitching occurs. Examples include informal conversations at the bases, discussions during young ladies' meetings, and exchanges on radio programmes.

Applying the EoC model to the Mampulli-English dataset ensures a comprehensive analysis of both spoken content and the cultural meaning of the interaction to allow the

researcher to go beyond surface-level analysis and explore why speakers choose to switch languages in particular moments (Blommaert & Jie, 2020).

The analysis will consider how factors such as age, education, social identity, setting and religion influence language choice. For example, younger speakers might use English to show modernity, while elders may use Mampulli to assert tradition or solidarity. Such patterns reveal how switching is not random, but reflects cultural beliefs and social structures (García & Wei, 2015b; Gumperz, 1982; Mateus, 2014).

The goal is not just to describe codeswitching, but to explain what it reveals about power, identity, and community norms. This aligns with recent ethnographic research on multilingualism (Copland & Creese, 2015; Creese & Blackledge, 2015). The framework allows for a deeper understanding of how language use reflects broader cultural patterns among Mampulli-English speakers.

In conclusion, this study adopts the EoC alongside the MLF model to examine Mampulli-English codeswitching. The EoC framework allows for a rich, contextualised analysis of language use, revealing how switching reflects social identity, relationships, and cultural meaning. By combining structural and sociocultural approaches, the study offers a more complete understanding of bilingual communication in the Mampulli context.

3.7 Codeswitching in Ghana

Early foundational work on codeswitching in Ghana was carried out by Bokamba (1989), Forson (1968, 1979), Forson (1988), and Nartey, (1982). These works played a significant role in shaping the academic understanding of CS by identifying and categorising its two primary forms: intra-sentential CS, which occurs within a single sentence, and inter-sentential CS, which takes place between separate sentences.

Forson's studies, particularly his work on Akan-English bilingualism, were instrumental in illustrating how bilingual speakers navigate between languages. Similarly, Bokamba (1989) focused on codeswitching practices among educated Ghanaians, providing detailed descriptions of how these speakers switch between English and local languages in various social contexts.

Together, their findings challenged earlier negative views that associated CS with linguistic incompetence or confusion. Instead, they argued that CS is a deliberate and strategic linguistic practice. According to their research, bilingual speakers use CS to achieve specific communicative goals, such as clarifying their message, emphasising important information, or creating a sense of shared identity and group belonging. These early contributions established CS as a legitimate and meaningful aspect of bilingual discourse in Ghana.

Building on the interactional sociolinguistic framework by Gumperz (1982) and Amuzu (2012) showed how unmarked CS, those blending into casual speech, can subtly index social closeness. He also highlighted "marked" CS, where deliberate language switching conveys specific discourse intentions and social stances. Thus, Ghanaian CS is not only a matter of convenience but also a nuanced sociolinguistic tool.

Educational contexts in Ghana have been widely researched (Abban et al., 2024; Acquah, 2022; Afful, 2017; Kwaffo, 2023). Yevudey (2013) studied primary schools in the Volta Region through recordings, interviews, and surveys. His findings showed that teachers employed both intrasentential and intersentential CS to clarify complex concepts, enhance understanding, and encourage pupil participation within the bilingual NALAP framework.

Recently, Ansah (2014) and Afrifa et al. (2019) have explored the pragmatic functions of CS in educational and social settings. Ansah (2014) for example, examined Akan-English

codeswitching in university classrooms and found that CS was used not only for pedagogical clarity but also to negotiate identities and manage power relations between teachers and students. Students perceived CS as a form of linguistic accommodation that made learning more accessible and less intimidating. Afrifa and colleagues expanded this by looking at CS among urban youth, showing how it served as a tool for identity performance, peer bonding, and alignment with both global and local cultures.

On a broader level, CS in Ghana also intersects with issues of language policy and education. Despite official promotion of English as the medium of instruction, scholars, Yevudey (2017), Owusu (2017) and Owoo (2024) argue that ignoring local languages undermines educational equity and comprehension. They advocate for additive bilingualism, in which codeswitching is embraced as a legitimate pedagogical tool. This reflects international trends in language-in-education policy, particularly in multilingual African settings where monolingual instruction in a second language like English often hampers student achievement.

More recently, Lomotey and Rathert (2024) compared teacher and student attitudes in Ghana and Turkey using quantitative methods, including chi-square and Mann, Whitney U tests. Their study confirmed that participants viewed CS positively, especially for comprehension and engagement. However, they also emphasised the need for “judicious” CS, carefully timed and proportioned to support learning, rather than detract from it.

Furthermore, ethnographic work has deepened our understanding of CS as performative and context-sensitive. Abdullah (2021), for example, studied codeswitching practices among traders in Tamale and observed how speakers switched between Dagbani, Hausa, and English to negotiate prices, assert authority, or indicate in-group status. Such findings support Bell’s (1984) audience design theory, where speakers adjust language choice based on their perception of the listener’s identity, expectations, or status. In Ghana, this may mean switching

to English with a stranger or authority figure, and switching to a local language with peers or kin.

In music, Quarcoo et al. (2014) and Amuah & Wuaku (2021) explore how Ghanaian musicians strategically employ codeswitching, moving Ghanaian languages to English and vice versa in their lyrics. According to Quarcoo et al.'s (2014) analysis of three hiplife songs, “Angelina” by Praye, “Medo Mmaa” by Okyeame Kwame, and “Yenko Nkooa” by Eduwoji, CS is used not merely to reflect spontaneous bilingualism, but as a deliberate artistic and communicative strategy. The artists integrate CS to enhance rhythmic and aesthetic appeal and convey messages of love, unity, and cultural identity. For instance, in “Medo Mmaa”, Okyeame Kwame uses English and Twi to signal emotional authenticity and connect with both local and diasporic audiences.

Amuah & Wuaku (2021) further reveal that composers use CS to appeal to Ghana's multi-ethnic society and to promote national and regional integration. Through symbolic use of languages, such as in the musical piece *Na aden?*, CS is employed to challenge ethnocentrism and promote inclusivity. Furthermore, some composers blend languages to generate new musical textures, reflecting linguistic practices among Ghana's urban youth. The use of CS by these composers highlights the intersection of sociocultural representation and artistic innovation in music, differing from earlier generations who composed mainly in a single language for more limited audiences.

In political discourse, CS has acquired considerable scholarly interest, particularly regarding its strategic use by politicians to further personal or political agendas. According to Agyekum (2010), Ghanaian politicians often switched to local languages during rallies to establish rapport with grassroots audiences. Similarly, Antwi (2022) in his study of the practice in the context of the 2016 Ghanaian elections, analysed ten campaign speech videos by Nana

Addo Dankwa Akufo-Addo sourced from YouTube and Facebook. Employing a hybrid analytical framework based on Myers-Scotton's (1993) Markedness Model and Gumperz's (1982) Conversational Analysis, the research identified four types of codeswitching: inter-sentential, intra-sentential, tag switching, and intra-word switching, with intra-sentential switching being the most prevalent, often compensating for lexical gaps. He revealed that marked code choices served multiple communicative functions, including enhancing rhetorical appeal, asserting authority, expressing emotion, signaling group identity, and demonstrating linguistic competence. These findings emphasise the multifunctional role of codeswitching in political discourse, emphasising its significance in political communication and in understanding language use in multilingual settings. These examples reinforce Gumperz's notion of CS as a powerful rhetorical and relational device, capable of signalling alignment, authority, or empathy depending on the context.

Drawing from the literature, CS research in Ghana has profoundly focused on majority southern languages such as Akan/Twi (Amuzu, 2012; Arthur-Shoba & Quarcoo, 2012; Darko, 2016; Guerini, 2012; Nyavor, 2017; Opuku, 1976; Quarcoo & Shoba, 2011; Quarcoo, 2014; Quarcoo & Adjei, 2024), Ewe (Ahlijah, 2017; Amenorvi, 2019a, 2019b, 2021; Amuzu, 2005, 2012, 2013; Evershed Kwasi Amuzu, 2014; Evershed K Amuzu, 2014; Amuzu, 2016; Essizewa, 2014), and Ga (Lartey, 2015; Nuworsu et al., 2019) while minority ones such as Anufɔ and Mampulli remain understudied. OppongAdjei & -Yaw-kan (2023) investigated Anufɔ-English CS in informal contexts using a combination of Markedness Model (Myers-Scotton, 1998b, 2012) and ethnographic methods (Jones, 2023) and report an emerging practice of Anufɔ-English CS practice. Their findings further reveal that factors including a lack of appropriate vocabulary in Anufɔ, limited language competence, a preference for English, the need for clarity and repetition, and unconscious language habits account for switched utterances. An indication that the phenomena does not only occur with known or major

languages but with less known ones as well. It is therefore important to expand the scope of bilingual situations studied to broaden understanding of codeswitching in Ghana. Without this, we risk overlooking important dynamics in Ghana's multilingual ecology.

Although English holds a dominant position in Ghanaian schools and legislative processes, several scholars have argued for a more inclusive linguistic approach in education. Aboagye Da-Costa and Adade-Yeboah (2019) and Amuzu (2005, 2012) advocate for additive bilingualism, which supports the integration of local languages alongside English rather than replacing them. These scholars contend that codeswitching should be recognised and legitimised as a valuable educational resource, rather than being viewed as a barrier to learning. They argue that the exclusion of indigenous languages from formal education undermines both educational equity and students' comprehension. Drawing on international examples, they highlight the positive outcomes of multilingual education systems, where learners perform better academically and maintain stronger cultural and linguistic identities. Their work suggests that embracing bilingualism and CS in Ghanaian classrooms could enhance learning experiences and promote more inclusive and effective education.

Despite its advantages, codeswitching also presents certain challenges. Nyarko (2020) observes that frequent or excessive switching, particularly when the speaker, such as a teacher, lacks strong proficiency in both languages, can negatively affect learners' understanding. In such cases, CS may lead to confusion rather than clarity. To address this issue, Nyarko (2020) emphasises the need for targeted training that promotes effective bilingual teaching strategies. This includes helping educators develop strong competence in both languages and the ability to apply CS appropriately, depending on the communicative context. Such training can ensure that CS supports rather than hinders comprehension.

In summary, codeswitching in Ghana is a multifaceted sociolinguistic phenomenon. Methodologically rich, ranging from structural and grammatical analyses to ethnography and quantitative surveys, studies demonstrate CS serves instrumental functions in classroom teaching, social identity, solidarity, and rhetorical effect. The use of frameworks like MLF and interactional sociolinguistics has been effective in capturing both literal and social meanings of switching. While the current literature values CS as a sign of bilingual competence, future research could expand into under-represented languages.

Codeswitching in Ghana is a dynamic, multifaceted phenomenon. It performs communicative, educational, sociocultural and identity-linked roles in classrooms, media, public discourse, music and marketplaces. Structural studies reveal grammatical constraints and complex code-changing patterns, while pragmatic research emphasises the intentionality behind switching. Educational studies highlight benefits and the need for balanced implementation. Studies on minority languages remain gaps for research which this study aims to fill.

3.7.1 Codeswitching on Ghanaian Radio Stations

The liberalisation of Ghana's media landscape over the past two decades has significantly increased the number of private radio stations in the country, supplementing state-owned ones (Essuman, 2025; Flamenbaum, 2014). Currently, every regional capital in Ghana hosts at least two radio stations, while most district capitals have at least one (Essel & Govender, 2024; Heath, 2001). This expansion has widened access to both local and international news, especially for rural populations. The enactment of Ghana's press freedom law further transformed radio broadcasting, shifting it from passive programme delivery to interactive formats. These formats allow listeners to engage directly with radio content, often through call-ins, where they may ask questions, offer opinions, or give feedback.

To serve a linguistically diverse audience and increase local engagement, many radio stations in Ghana employ a bilingual language policy (Boateng, 2009). Programmes are typically presented in English, the country's official language, and one or more local languages, depending on the context and target audience. A common feature of such bilingual environments is the practice of codeswitching.

The phenomenon of codeswitching on Ghanaian radio has received substantial scholarly attention (Flamenbaum, 2014; Nyavor, 2017). Studies show that codeswitching occurs across various formats, including advertisements, interviews, panel discussions, and call-in segments. It also spans diverse topics. Research suggests that intersentential codeswitching, where languages are alternated between complete sentences, is the most common form. This contrasts with intrasentential switching, which occurs within a single grammatical structure. However, a clear relationship between the function of codeswitching and the form it takes is yet to be established. This question forms part of the current study's inquiry.

Regarding theoretical approaches, most studies in the Ghanaian context have used Conventional Analysis to examine the motivations behind CS in radio broadcasting (Brobbeey, 2015; Flamenbaum, 2014; Nyavor, 2017). Other frameworks employed include Myers-Scotton's Markedness Model (Bocanegra, 2012) and EoC (Nuworsu et al., 2019). Bakuuro (2020), in a study of Dagaare-English codeswitching in Upper West Region radio talk shows, used the MLF model to determine which language controlled the grammatical structure of mixed utterances. The study concluded that Dagaare functioned as the matrix language. However, this structural focus differs from other studies that primarily examine the communicative purposes of CS. More comparative research is needed to fully understand both the constraints and functions of CS on Ghanaian radio.

There is a growing body of literature on codeswitching between English and major Ghanaian languages such as Ewe, Akan, and Ga (Amuzu, 2010, 2013; Amenorvi, 2019a, 2019b, 2021; Nuworsu et al., 2019; Yevudey, 2013; Oppong-Adjei & Yaw-Kan, 2023). However, fewer studies have explored CS involving lesser-known languages, particularly those spoken in northern Ghana. Many of these languages are not used in formal education and remain under-researched. As a result, there is limited understanding of how CS operates in these linguistic communities. The current study seeks to address this gap by examining the structural constraints on Mampulli-English codeswitching.

According to Ahlijah (2017), CS in radio interactions links with identity and political discourse. The study focused on radio interviews involving politicians and traditional leaders in the Volta Region. Using Myers-Scotton's and Gumperz's frameworks, the analysis revealed that CS served both conversational and social purposes. Politicians were more likely to switch into English, while traditional rulers predominantly used Ewe. Functions of CS included quoting, clarification, repetition, expressing emotions, and asserting social identity or authority.

Brobbey (2015) investigated CS on Akan-language political and sports talk shows in Accra and Kumasi. Data included recordings, interviews with programme managers, and listener surveys. The findings, analysed using the Markedness Model and Conversational Analysis, showed that CS was a strategic tool used to bridge linguistic gaps, simplify messages, engage audiences, and affirm bilingual identity. Three forms of CS were identified: intersentential, intrasentential, and extrasentential. Importantly, CS was not random; it followed Akan grammatical and phonological rules, especially in intrasentential cases. Regional variations were also observed, with Kumasi-based shows exhibiting stronger Akan dominance, reflecting local linguistic preferences.

Amuzu (2012) provided a socio-pragmatic account of CS among Ewe-English and Akan-English bilinguals. The paper distinguished between unmarked switching, where language alternation occurs naturally in casual settings, and marked switching, used deliberately to achieve social or stylistic effects. The example below illustrates codeswitching as unmarked choices:

A Nukae dzɔ hafi?	What happened?
B Oo, nyemegblɔe na wɔa? Wova dam ɔe keke nu yi sixth December ɔe.	Oh, didn't I tell you? They've put me as far away as this thing, sixth December.
A Sixth December (laughter).	Sixth December (laughter).
B Eẽ, seventh ko wo vote ge. Yes,	seventh December and we will vote.
A That's seventh, uũ.	That's seventh, yes."

(Amuzu, 2012 p.6)

The study argued that CS in Ghana is not merely a reflection of language mixing but a sign of speakers' linguistic competence and stylistic awareness. Rather than threatening local languages, deliberate codeswitching can serve to reinforce them, especially when it involves selective, purposeful language use.

Essuman (2025) focused on how CS and code mixing affect the Ahanta language in radio discourse. The study used Hoffman's classification alongside the Markedness Model to analyse data from a radio show. The findings revealed that speakers used CS to manage lexical gaps, ease communication, and adapt to mixed audiences. Although all types of switching were identified, except congruent lexicalisation, the study raised concerns that the increasing use of English could endanger Ahanta, which remains under-documented and marginalised in formal domains.

Overall, the literature reviewed in this section demonstrates that codeswitching is a widespread and multifunctional phenomenon in Ghanaian radio. It serves both structural and social purposes and reflects the country's complex multilingual environment. While there has been considerable research on CS involving major languages, there remains a significant gap in studies focusing on minor and northern Ghanaian languages. The present study addresses this gap by examining Mampulli-English codeswitching, contributing to a more inclusive understanding of language use in Ghana's media space.

3. 8 Linguistic Constraints on Codeswitching

In linguistic theory, constraints are the rules or principles that guide how language is structured and used (Blache et al., 2014; Labov, 1972; Saumjan, 2017; Schmid, 2012). These rules may be universal, meaning they apply across many languages, or they may be specific to a single language. As Blache (2000) explains, constraints help us know which language structures are allowed and which are not. In doing so, they help shape the forms that spoken or written sentences can take. Within various subfields of linguistics, constraints are conceptualised differently. In syntax, for instance, constraints are often rules that prohibit ungrammatical constructions (Bresnan, 2020; Kuno & Takami, 2004; Müller, 2023). For example, in standard British English, the sentence:

* *They eats food.*

is considered ungrammatical due to a violation of the subject-verb agreement rule. Here, the verb form *eats* does not agree in number with the plural subject *they*, and the grammatical constraint prevents this mismatch (Muysken, 2020).

However, in the field of bilingualism and language contact, the notion of constraints is understood more broadly (Matras, 2020; Thomason & Kaufman, 2023). In codeswitching, they

refer to the rules that determine where it is acceptable to codeswitch, that is, to change from one language to another in a sentence or conversation. According to Talang-Rao (2017, p. 218), these are “rules that predict what is permissible and not permissible” in codeswitching. For instance, it may be acceptable to switch languages between two clauses, but not within a noun phrase, such as between a determiner and a noun. Whether this is allowed depends on the structure of the two languages involved.

Two prominent models have attempted to explain how constraints work in bilingual speech. The first is the MLF model by Myers-Scotton (1993a). This model says that, in a bilingual sentence, one language, the ML, provides the grammatical structure, while the other language, the EL, provides content words like nouns or verbs. According to this model, switching is only allowed where the ML’s grammar is not disrupted. A typical example is observed in Swahili-English codeswitching, where the Swahili verb morphology frames the clause, and English nouns are embedded:

Example 20.

Nina-drive *gari.*
 ‘I am driving a car’

Here, Swahili provides the grammatical frame, *nina-* as a subject-verb agreement prefix, and the English verb *drive* is inserted.

The second influential model is the Functional Head Constraint (FHC), proposed by Belazi, Rubin, and Toribio in the 1990s (Belazi et al., 1994). This model states that codeswitching is not allowed between a functional head, such as a determiner or complementiser, and its complement (Al-Thunibat & Singh, 2020; Malik & Khurshid, 2017). Therefore, a sentence like:

Example 21. *The niño is playing.*

would be disallowed under this rule, because *the*, an English determiner, and *niño*, a Spanish noun, belong to separate languages and are closely connected in the sentence structure.

However, there is an ongoing debate regarding the universality of such constraints. Earlier studies such as Poplack (1980) suggested that codeswitching followed general rules that apply to all bilingual speakers. But recent work challenges this. Muysken (2020) argues that the wide variety of codeswitching styles across languages makes it hard to claim any one set of universal rules. Similarly, Hofweber et al., (2023, p. 5), in a comprehensive review of contemporary theories, state that “the only universality in codeswitching is the diversity of patterns” observed across bilingual communities. This view suggests that codeswitching is shaped not just by grammar, but also by cognitive and sociocultural factors.

In fact, social and cultural pressures could also act as constraints (Lipski, 2019; Myers-Scotton, 1993a; Rojas, 2025; Scheu, 2000). In many multilingual societies, only certain languages are seen as acceptable in public. In Ghana, for example, Bonney and Campbell (2022) notes that Akan and English are dominant, while minority languages like Mampulli are often pushed aside. Because of this, speakers may feel pressure to codeswitch in a way that matches public norms, or avoid switching entirely in formal situations. These constraints are not grammatical, but ideological.

There are also individual and psychological reasons for codeswitching. According to De Bruin et al. (2018), speakers might switch languages when they cannot quickly find a word in one language. This can happen when they are tired, emotional, or not equally fluent in both languages. These are called functional constraints and are based on communicative needs rather than grammatical rules.

Furthermore, codeswitching can serve interpersonal functions such as signalling solidarity, group identity, or emotional alignment. Olabisi (2020) observes that in Nigerian multilingual contexts, movie characters codeswitch to build rapport or align themselves with the linguistic identity of their audience. However, this may become problematic when either participant lacks sufficient competence in the language being used, thus constraining the communicative effectiveness of the switch.

Many researchers have studied the rules of codeswitching using grammar-based models. Some of the most well-known are Poplack's Free Morpheme and Equivalence Constraints, and Myers-Scotton's MLF model. In a study of Twi-English bilinguals in Ghana, Quarcoo (2012) found that English verbs in codeswitched sentences still followed Twi's tense and pronunciation rules. This supports the idea that Twi is the matrix language, giving the sentence its grammatical shape. Other studies in Ghana support the FHC model, which blocks switches between function words and their complements. These studies show that bilingual sentences follow proper grammar in both languages. They also prove that codeswitching is not random, but rule-based.

Research in Ghana has also shown that codeswitching is used for pragmatic purposes. Amuzu (2012) looked at Akan-English and Ewe-English conversations. He found that speakers switch languages to mark social roles, build relationships, or emphasise points. Often, the switches are carefully chosen and include hints in the conversation. Yevudey (2013) studied classrooms in Ghana's Volta Region. He found that teachers used both inter-sentential and intra-sentential codeswitching to help students understand better. This follows the Markedness Model by Myers-Scotton: common switches help with routine teaching, while more noticeable switches highlight key ideas. Together, these findings show that codeswitching in Ghana is both structurally organised and socially meaningful.

Despite the large amount of research on codeswitching, some bilingual groups are still not well studied. One such group is the Mamprusi community in northern Ghana. Many people in Nalerigu speak both Mampulli and English, but their switching patterns have not been analysed in detail. This study identifies a gap: we do not yet fully understand the syntactic and sociocultural aspects of Mampulli-English codeswitching in this area.

A useful way to study this would be to combine two approaches, in this case, the MLF and the EoC. The latter, proposed by Hymes (1964; 1972), focuses on how context, such as the setting, people involved, and purpose of communication, influences how language is used. When used alongside a structural model like MLF, it allows for a complete understanding of both how and why speakers codeswitch in real-life situations.

The literature reviewed in this chapter highlights a significant research gap: the language practices of Mamprusi bilinguals, specifically their switching from Mampulli between English, have not yet been thoroughly investigated. Furthermore, the combined use of the Matrix Language Framework and the Ethnography of Communication models for examining Mampulli-English codeswitching remains unexplored. This thesis aims to address these gaps. To achieve this, the study will seek to answer the following research questions:

1. What English structures are present in Mampulli-English codeswitching?
2. What sociocultural factors influence codeswitching among Mampulli-English bilinguals in Nalerigu?

3.9 Conclusion

This chapter has critically reviewed a wide body of literature on CS, multilingualism, and language use in Ghana, with a particular focus on the bilingual practices of the Mamprusi people. Through synthesising studies across multiple methodological and theoretical traditions,

the chapter has established a strong foundation for the present research. The literature confirms that CS is not a random or purely grammatical phenomenon, but rather a highly functional, strategic, and context-sensitive practice. It enables speakers to navigate complex social roles, express identity, build solidarity, and manage communicative intent across various domains, including education, media, and everyday interaction.

The review has drawn particular attention to the evolving theoretical landscape, moving from early structural models such as the Equivalence Constraint and the MLF, to more socially grounded frameworks like the EoC. While the MLF remains valuable for identifying grammatical patterns and distinguishing matrix and embedded languages in bilingual utterances, especially in structurally distinct language pairs, it does not account for the social and cultural motivations behind switching. In contrast, EoC provides insight into the situational and interactional meanings of language choice. The combined use of these two frameworks has been identified as a productive strategy for capturing both the structural integrity and the social complexity of CS in real-life contexts.

This review has also addressed broader discussions around multilingualism in Ghana. Research highlights the everyday nature of multilingual practice and its links to identity, inclusion, and access to socio-economic opportunities. However, a recurring theme is the ideological divide between elite and grassroots multilingualism. While language alternation is celebrated in elite educational and political domains, it remains marginalised or stigmatised in other contexts. CS is often framed as either a sign of competence or deficiency, depending on the speaker's social positioning. These tensions reflect deep-seated language ideologies that continue to shape perceptions of linguistic value and legitimacy.

Importantly, the review identified several gaps in the current literature. While significant attention has been given to CS involving dominant languages such as Akan and

English, far less research has explored codeswitching involving minority or northern Ghanaian languages. The Mamprusi community in Nalerigu, despite being a bilingual group where both Mampulli and English are widely spoken, remains under-represented in existing academic work. Their patterns of CS, both syntactic and sociocultural, have not been analysed in depth. This study, therefore, responds directly to this gap.

In methodological terms, the chapter has shown that integrating structural approaches such as the MLF model with ethnographic and discourse-based methods provides a more comprehensive understanding of bilingual communication. This is particularly important in settings like Ghana, where multilingualism is deeply embedded in social life and influenced by historical, political, and cultural factors. The growing use of mixed methods, including corpus analysis, participant observation, and discourse analysis, reflects a broader shift in the field towards capturing the richness and variability of language use in context.

Finally, the literature strongly supports the view that CS is a legitimate and dynamic feature of multilingual societies, including Ghana. It offers both communicative efficiency and social meaning, shaped by the speaker's linguistic resources, audience, and communicative goals. The review demonstrates the relevance and adaptability of frameworks like MLF and EoC for analysing CS in the Ghanaian context. By focusing on Mampulli-English codeswitching in the Mamprusi community, the present study aims to contribute new perspectives to the literature and promote a more inclusive understanding of Ghana's linguistic diversity.

CHAPTER 4

Research Methodology

4.1 Introduction

This chapter provides a detailed overview of the methodological frameworks applied in the current study. It includes discussions on essential elements of the research process, such as the selection of the research site, the design of the study, and the defining characteristics of the target population. In addition, the chapter outlines the sampling methods employed, providing justification for the chosen sample size. It further examines the data collection instruments used, the procedures followed during data gathering, and the analytical techniques utilised to interpret the data. This comprehensive review aims to clarify the structured approach adopted in the study and the reasoning behind each methodological choice.

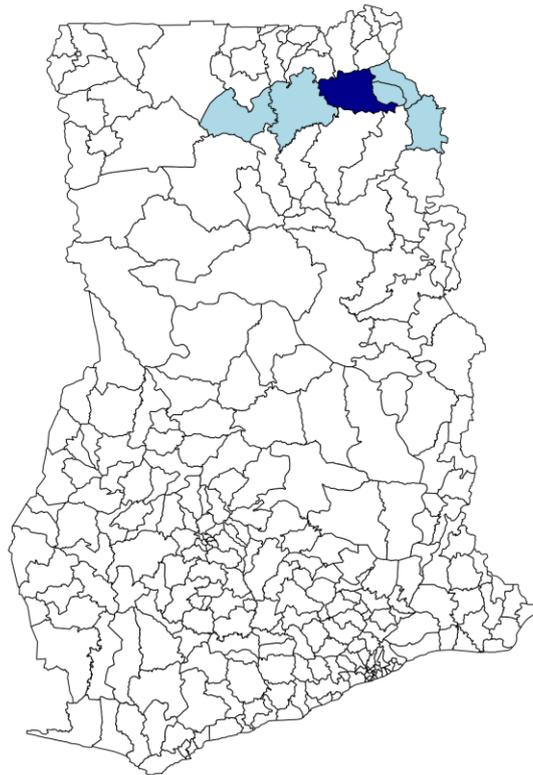
4.2 Research Site

As shown in figure 3, this research was conducted in Nalerigu, the capital town of the Mamprugu kingdom. It also doubles as the administrative capital of the Northeast Region of Ghana. Nalerigu has many private and public educational institutions from preschool to tertiary. Regarding healthcare delivery, the Baptist Medical Centre in Nalerigu serves as a referral hospital for the region as well as neighbouring Togo and Burkina Faso. Furthermore, as the regional capital, Nalerigu houses several state institutions and agencies. Additionally, Nalerigu is recognised as a commercial hub because notable trade activities go on. Due to its multipurpose nature, people from different ethnic groups and nationalities have moved to settle in Nalerigu for one reason or the other. As regards language use in Nalerigu, the English language is used to conduct government business and as the language of instruction in schools in consonance with the national language policy. The native language, Mampulli, is used for all other purposes. However, it is common to hear other languages such as Kusaal and Mole

spoken among their natives. This social environment has made many speakers of Mampulli bilinguals who sometimes alternate between two languages. It is for this reason that Nalerigu was sampled for this research with a focus on Mampulli-English codeswitching.

The map in figure 3. presents the administrative divisions in the Northeast a region of Ghana, showing specifically East Mamprusi Municipality where Nalerigu is located.

East Mamprusi District in the Northern East Region



Source: Ghana Statistical Service

Figure 3. Map of East Mamprusi District (Northeast Region)

Source: Ghana Statistical Service, 2021

4.3 Community Entry

The researcher, a native of Nalerigu, benefited from her familiarity with the culture and norms of the people under investigation. I drew from existing relationships, networks and those of my family to initiate the fieldwork. To reach prospective participants who were not in my

network, I depended on those of my family which was mostly successful. While this familiarity allowed for a smooth integration into the community, it also presented a challenge in recruiting certain family members and friends who were eligible for the study, as they did not take me seriously.

This experience supports the argument that close relationships between the researcher and participants can lead to lack of seriousness, which may affect the quality of data (Hoffman, 2013; Maier & Monahan, 2009; Sperling, 2022). To avoid this, when some individuals did not engage seriously, they directed me to suitable participants within their networks. In one case involving a close family who took part in the study, the interview was arranged in a neutral location, away from the home environment.

4.4 Research Design

This research adopts a case study design. Case studies are commonly used to investigate language related phenomena (Duff, 2018; Duff & Anderson, 2015; Hancock et al., 2021; Loewen et al., 2019). A case study research design is well suited for projects where the researcher seeks to collect detailed and contextual information about an individual, political, or social phenomenon (Harrison et al., 2017; Robert, 2018; Wallen & Fraenkel, 2013). Since the study seeks to identify the English structures used in codeswitching and the sociocultural factors that influence this practice among Mamprusi bilinguals, within the framework of the MLF model, the use of a descriptive research design is suitable. The study adopts a qualitative approach to analyse the data. This involves the interpretation of instances of the phenomenon through observing, speaking to participants, and focusing on explanations and their experiences about how they speak Mampulli and English interchangeably in a conversation.

A qualitative method is adopted for this research. According to Maxwell (2021) and Hamilton and Finley (2019), case study as a form of qualitative research allows detailed investigations of individuals, groups, institutions or other social units and focuses on understanding the case in its complexity. Thus, to investigate the case of Mampulli-English codeswitching, the researcher chose a qualitative method. The use of in-depth interviews, featuring open-ended questions, was intended to provide respondents with the opportunity to engage in open and unrestricted discussion of the study's subject matter. This approach aimed to encourage participants to express their thoughts, perspectives, and personal experiences in a detailed and comprehensive manner, allowing for a deeper exploration of their viewpoints in relation to the research topic.

4.5 Sampling Procedure

This section describes how participants were selected for the study. A combination of purposive and convenience sampling methods was used, following guidance from qualitative research literature (Campbell et al., 2020; Etikan et al., 2016; Palinkas et al., 2015; Stratton, 2023; Thomas, 2022). These methods were chosen to ensure that participants were both suitable for the research aims and available within the local context.

Purposive sampling was applied to identify a radio network and individuals who could offer detailed and meaningful instances of the use of Mampulli and English across different social settings. Although criticised for its likely influence on researcher choices (Sharma, 2017), this approach allowed the researcher to target groups, including older speakers, radio panellists, and community members such as the bases. These participants were selected because of their familiarity with the language and their active involvement in relevant social spaces. Additionally, convenience sampling was used to include participants who were readily

available and agreed to take part in the research. These were mainly community members who were present during data collection and expressed willingness to participate.

The sample consisted of a variety of sources and participants, including:

- i. A local radio network and specific radio programmes.
- ii. Radio panellists and callers engaged in discussions.
- iii. Older Mampulli-English speakers.
- iv. Youth community bases where the language is commonly spoken.
- v. A Christian Young Ladies' group.
- vi. A family that regularly uses Mampulli-English in daily communication.

These groups were selected to represent a broad mix of age, gender, and social role; in order to explore the different ways bilingual language is used within the community.

4.5.1 Selection of Radio Network

This study employed purposive sampling, a non-probability sampling technique (Etikan et al., 2016) to select a suitable radio network for data collection. The selected radio station was Nobya FM, located in Nalerigu. The selection was informed by two main considerations. First, Nobya FM has wide listenership and coverage across the Mamprugu traditional area and neighbouring communities. Second, at the time of data collection, it was the only operational radio station in the town. Although another station, Tizaa Radio, exists, it was not functioning due to technical difficulties, and therefore could not be included in the study.

Noby FM was also selected for its strategic relevance to the research aims. The station operates a clear language policy, primarily broadcasting in Mampulli, which is the dominant local language in Nalerigu and the surrounding Mamprugu region. This linguistic context is important, as it reflects the community's everyday language use and allows for the observation

of codeswitching practices. In addition, Nobya FM features a wide range of talk-based programmes covering topics such as politics, health, education, agriculture, development, and public services. These programmes typically involve community interaction, debates, and discussions, thereby providing a rich context for collecting naturalistic spoken data for examining patterns of CS.

The data collected from Nobya FM aimed to provide instances of Mampulli-English CS, with a focus on the English linguistic elements used within these switches. The data also allowed for an exploration of the sociocultural factors that influence codeswitching during public discourse on radio. Since Nalerigu serves as both the traditional capital of Mamprugu and the administrative capital of Ghana's Northeast Region, it was an appropriate site for this study. The majority of the community's residents speak Mampulli. It was therefore assumed that English usage would be limited or used in specific contexts, making it an ideal setting for investigating codeswitching.

4.5.1.1 Selection of Radio Programmes

This study further used purposive sampling to select radio programmes (Etikan et al., 2016; Palinkas et al., 2015; Tajik et al., 2024). This approach was suitable because the aim was to examine specific speech events where CS occurred between English and Mampulli. The goal was not to make generalisations about all radio content, but to focus on cases directly relevant to the research aims. The programmes were carefully selected for their relevance to the study's objectives and their potential to offer valuable instances of CS.

The selected broadcasts included a diverse range of speakers, such as professionals, government representatives, and members of the local community who phoned in to contribute to the discussions. These individuals discussed topics that were both socially and politically important, often leading to bilingual exchanges. Such topics created natural contexts for

codeswitching, making them valuable for linguistic analysis. A total of twelve programme recordings were collected from December 2022 to January 2023. Seven radio programmes were selected for the study. For anonymity and ease of reference, they were labelled Radio 1 to Radio 7. The topics covered were Water tariffs, Electricity provision and tariffs, Family planning awareness, Land use and spatial planning, Newspaper review and politics, Senior high school education and best agricultural practices

These programmes were selected because they showed regular and patterned switching between English and Mampulli, which was central to the research focus. The purposeful nature of the selection ensured that the data collected would be rich in relevant linguistic features, thereby supporting in-depth qualitative analysis (Silverman, 2021).

4.5.1.2 Sociolinguistic Profiles of Radio Participants

Participants were purposively selected because they actively used of both English and Mampulli during radio broadcasts. The aim was not to produce a statistical representation of the wider bilingual population, but to focus on speakers whose language use could provide examples of codeswitching in public discourse. This method follows a qualitative sociolinguistic research approach, in which participants are selected for their observable linguistic practices (Heller et al., 2024; Milroy & Gordon, 2008; Tagliamonte, 2006).

Key social variables were used to describe participants, including age, gender, education level, English proficiency, employment, and communicative role. These factors are known to influence language use and switching patterns in bilingual settings (Holmes & Wilson, 2022; Wardhaugh & Fuller, 2021). All participants were native speakers of Mampulli from Nalerigu or nearby areas in the Mamprugu traditional region. Mampulli was their main language for daily and cultural communication, while English, Ghana's official language, was used in formal settings such as school, government, and the media.

Participants ranged in age from around 25 to 55 years, and both genders were included, although male voices were more frequent. Bilingual ability varied: those with higher education were generally more fluent in English, but those with less formal education also used both languages confidently, especially in informal contexts. The group included individuals working in both the public and private sectors. Occupations included journalism, teaching, healthcare, civil service, politics, and trading. Most roles required communication in both languages, making codeswitching a common and functional practice.

Several of the panellists and presenters had prior experience in radio and were already familiar with broadcasting practices. This background likely influenced the way they used their language, as speakers often adjust their codeswitching according to the level of formality and the nature of their audience (Bell, 2013; Ben Said, 2023; Myers-Scotton, 2006a).

Finally, individual profiles were developed for each participant. These were based on observation, interviews, and the speakers' own comments during broadcasts. These profiles helped to contextualise the language choices and switch patterns in the data. The following keys are used to represent the participants: Host (H), referring to the moderator, Respondent, referring to the panallists (R) and Caller (C).

Table 5 presents a profile of participants featured on Radio Programme 1. This broadcast focused on the topic of Water Tariffs and involved staff members from the Community Water and Sanitation Agency.

Table 5. A profile of participants in Radio Programme 1.

Participant (P)	Age	Gender	Education	Level of English	Employment	Role
H	35-40	Male	Tertiary	advanced	Journalist	moderator
R1	35-40	Male	Tertiary	advanced	manager	panellist
R2	30-35	female	Tertiary	advanced	Communication officer	panellist
R3	35-40	male	tertiary	advanced	Accounts officer	panellist
R4	35-40	male	tertiary	advanced	Engineer	panellist

This programme involved staff from the Community Water and Sanitation Agency. The host was a male journalist aged between 35 and 40 with tertiary education and advanced English proficiency. He acted as the moderator. The panellists included four professionals, all aged between 30 and 40, with tertiary education and advanced English skills. They included a manager, a communications officer (female), an accounts officer, and an engineer. All panellists actively engaged in the discussion using both Mampulli and English.

Table 6 gives demographic and background information of participants involved in the study during Radio Programme 2. This programme focused on educating the public about the supply of electricity and the associated costs. It involved staff members from the Volta River Authority (VRA), which is the organisation responsible for electricity generation and distribution in Ghana and members of the community who called-in to contribute to the discussion. The table includes details such as age, gender, educational background, English proficiency, employment status and role in the programme.

Table 6. Demographic profile of participants in Radio Programme 2.

Participant	Age	Gender	Education	Level of English	Employment	Role
H	35-40	male	tertiary	advanced	journalist	host
R5	35-40	male	tertiary	advanced	Customer relationship officer	panellist
R6	40-45	male	tertiary	advanced	staff	panellist
R7	35-40	male	tertiary	advanced	staff	panellist
C1	35-40	male	Senior high school	intermediate	student	service user
C2	45-50	male	Primary	basic	landlord	service user
C3	40-45	female	Senior High School	intermediate	trader	service user
C4	35-40	male	tertiary	advanced	unknown	caller

There was a total of eight participants, made up of seven males and one female. Their ages ranged from 35 to 50 years. Most participants, six out of eight, had attained tertiary education, while two had completed Senior High School. One participant had primary formal education.

Participants' English proficiency levels varied. Five were classified as having an advanced level of English, two had intermediate proficiency, and one had only basic skills. These different levels reflect the participants' ability to communicate in English and their likelihood of switching between Mampulli and English during the radio programme.

The participants were also engaged in a range of occupations. These included a journalist, (host), a customer relationship officer, VRA staff members, a student, a landlord, and a trader. The employment status of one participant was not known. Their involvement in the radio programme was equally varied, including hosts, panellists and service users who participated as callers during the discussions.

This diversity in age, educational background, English proficiency, and social roles offers a valuable sample for examining how and why CS occurs in public discourse. It is especially relevant in contexts where institutional information is shared, and community participation is encouraged.

Table 7. presents the profile of participants involved in Radio Programme 3, which focused on raising awareness about Family Planning. The programme was held in the morning in January 2023 and featured health professionals from the Total Family Health Organisation, a health programme supported by USAID. The participants included a moderator, two panallists, and four callers from the community, bringing different perspectives to the discussion. Their background information is summarised below, covering key demographic and linguistic variables relevant to the study of CS.

Table 7. A profile of participants in Radio Programme 3.

Participant	Age	Gender	Education	Level of English	Employment	Role
H	35-40	male	tertiary	advanced	journalist	moderator
R8	35-40	Female	tertiary	advanced	mid-wife	panellist
R9	40-45	male	tertiary	advanced	nurse	panellist
C1	45-50	male	Junior High School	basic	trader	caller
C2	35-40	male	Senior high school	intermidate	famer	caller
C3	40-45	female	tertiary	advanced	teacher	caller
C4	40-45	female	none	basic	trader	caller

The moderator, labelled H, was a male journalist aged between 35 and 40 years. He had tertiary education and an advanced level of English proficiency.

There were two health professionals who served as panellists: R8, a female midwife aged 35-40, and R9, a male nurse aged 40- 45. Both had tertiary education and spoke advanced English.

Four callers from the public also contributed to the programme. C1, a male trader, aged 45-50, with Junior High School education and basic English proficiency. C2, a male farmer aged 35-40, completed Senior High School and had intermediate English skills. C3, a female teacher, aged 40-45, with tertiary education and advanced English proficiency. Lastly, C4 is a female trader aged 40-45, who had no formal education and spoke basic English.

The extent of educational and professional backgrounds, as well as varying levels of English proficiency, make this group suitable for analysing patterns of codeswitching between Mampulli and English in a public health communication context. Their roles in the programme: moderator, panellists, and callers also reflect different communicative responsibilities and social dynamics during the broadcast.

Table 8. presents the profile of participants of Radio Programme 4. This programme focused on discussions with Land Use and Spatial Planning Authority. The conversation involved members of staff from the Northeast Regional Coordinating Council about the work of the Authority. The table outlines key demographic and professional information about the participants which is useful for understanding the background of the individuals involved in the radio discussion, especially in relation to language use and codeswitching.

Table 8. A profile of participants who participated in Radio Programme 4.

Participant	Age	Gender	Education	Level of English	Employment	Role
H	35-40	male	tertiary	advanced	journalist	moderator
R10	40-45	male	tertiary	advanced	director	panellist
R11	35-40	male	tertiary	advanced	staff	panellist

The table lists three participants, identified as H, R10, and R11. All participants are male and fell within the age range of 35 to 45 years. Each participant had attained tertiary-level education and was described as having an advanced level of English proficiency. This is important in the context of codeswitching, as it suggests a strong command of English alongside their native language.

For employment, participant H was a journalist who served as the moderator of the programme. Participant R10 holds a directorial position and took part in the discussion as a panellist. Similarly, Participant R11 is a staff member who also acted as a panellist during the programme.

This detailed background information allowed researchers to analyse the participants' language choices and switching patterns during the radio broadcast.

Table 9. presents the profile of Participants in Radio Programme 5, which took place in January 2023. The programme involved a review of the day's major national newspaper headlines accompanied by political discussion. The table provides demographic and professional information relevant to the study of Mampulli-English codeswitching.

Table 9. A profile of participants who participated in Radio Programme 5.

Participant	Age	Gender	Education	Level of English	Employment	Role
H	30-35	male	Tertiary	Advanced	Journalist	moderator
R12	40-45	male	Tertiary	Advanced	Former political party communicator	Panellist
R13	35-40	male	tertiary	advanced	Political party communicator	panellist

The fifth programme was a political media segment. The host was a male journalist aged 30 to 35 with tertiary education and advanced English proficiency. The panellists were two political party communicators, both male and aged between 35 and 45. They held tertiary education and had advanced English skills.

The combination of their professional backgrounds and language proficiency makes them suitable subjects for examining language choices, particularly in relation to codeswitching between Mampulli and English during political discussions in media contexts.

Table 10. provides the profile of participants involved in Radio Programme 6. This episode focused on encouraging senior high school education. It featured two staff members of a private senior high school. The table includes information about four key aspects of each participant: age range, gender, level of education, proficiency in English, employment status, and their role in the programme.

Table 10. A profile of participants who participated in Radio Programme 6.

Participant	Age Range	Gender	Education	Level of English	Employment	Role
H	40-45	male	tertiary	advanced	Journalist	Moderator
R14	25-30	male	Tertiary	advanced	Administrative assistant	panellist
R15	25-30	Female	Senior High School	intermediate	student	panellist

This programme included the promotion of a private educational institution. The male host was aged 40 to 45, with tertiary education and advanced English. The panellists were younger, two individuals aged 25 to 30. One was a male administrative assistant with advanced English skills, and the other was a female student with intermediate English skills. The discussion included a mix of English and Mampulli, depending on the complexity of the topic.

This profile offers important background information for analysing language choices and patterns of codeswitching during the discussion.

Table 11. presents the profile of participants involved in Radio programme 7, which focused on a discussion about good Agricultural Practices in February 2023. The programme hosted a member of staff from Municipal Department of Agriculture. The table includes details such as age range, gender, level of education, English language proficiency, employment, and the role each participant played in the programme.

Table 11. A profile of participants who participated in Radio Programme 7.

Participant	Age Range	Gender	Education	Level of English	Employment	Role
H	40-45	male	tertiary	advanced	Journalist	Moderator
R16	30-35	male	tertiary	advanced	Agric officer	panellist
C5	40-45	male	Junior High Certificate	Intermediate	farmer	caller
C6	30-35	Male	Primary	basic	farmer	caller
C7	50-55	Male	Primary	basic	farmer	caller

The participants in Radio Programme 7 included a moderator, a panellist, and three callers. The moderator, Participant H, is a male journalist aged 40 to 45, with tertiary education and advanced English skills. The panellist, Participant R16, is a male agricultural officer aged 30 to 35, also with tertiary education and advanced English proficiency.

The three callers were all male farmers with varied backgrounds. Participant C5, aged 40 to 45, has a Junior High School Certificate and an intermediate level of English. Participants C6, and C7 aged 30 to 35 and 50 to 55 respectively, had basic formal education and spoke basic English. This range of participants offers a valuable sample for studying how speakers switch between Mampulli and English, influenced by their education, job roles, and language skills.

In summary, across all seven radio programmes, participants were mainly professionals with tertiary education and advanced English proficiency. Journalists consistently served as moderators. Gender representation was male-dominated, although female participants were present in health-related and educational discussions. Callers from the public often had lower educational backgrounds and used Mampulli more frequently, reflecting local linguistic practices and allowing for the observation of natural codeswitching behaviour during public engagement.

4.5.2 Older Generation Mampulli Speakers

Following the approaches of Campbell et al. (2020) and Stratton (2023), five older Mampulli-English bilinguals were purposively and conveniently selected for this research. The participants were asked a set of open-ended questions, as outlined in the interview protocol in Appendix 2. These questions allowed participants to share their experiences and views freely, without restriction (Rowley, 2012). In this study, the perspectives of older Mampulli speakers are especially important for understanding the historical development of language use, as well as current patterns of bilingualism. Their responses also provide valuable revelations about the sociocultural context of Mampulli-English bilingualism. Below are short descriptions of the participant's social backgrounds using pseudonyms to protect their identities.

Table 12. provides a profile of five participants who belong to the older generation.

Table 12. A profile of older generation participants interviewed.

Pseudo nym	Age Range	Place of birth	Gender	Education	Level of English	Employment	Role in Community
Chief 1	60-65	Nalerigu	Male	tertiary	advanced	retired teacher	traditional leader
Chief 2	65-70	Nalerigu	male	Tertiary	advanced	retired nurse	traditional leader/farmer
Tiara	60-65	Nalerigu	female	Tertiary	advanced	retired teacher	opinion leader
Bugri	60-65	Nalerigu	male	tertiary	advanced	retired public servant	contractor
Sadow	60-65	Nalerigu	male	Tertiary	advanced	retired teacher	opinion leader

Chief 1: Chief 1 is a retired educator with over 30 years of teaching experience. In addition to his work in formal education, he served as the Cultural Coordinator for the Ghana Education Service in the East Mamprusi District. In this role, he was responsible for overseeing the organisation of cultural events, particularly durbars, at the Nayiri's palace, where he frequently acted as the Master of Ceremonies. He is one of the pioneering teachers in Nalerigu and is well-respected for his efforts in promoting local language and culture. He was born and raised in Nalerigu.

Chief 2: Chief 2 holds the title of paramount chief in Nalerigu. He is also a retired nurse who played a key role in regional development, having served as the Chairman of the Committee responsible for advocating the creation of the Northeast Region. He is among the earliest members of the community to receive formal education. He was born and raised in Nalerigu and is recognised both for his leadership and his bilingual communication abilities.

Tiara: Tiara is the only female participant from the older generation in this study. She is a retired educator who previously worked as a Circuit Supervisor and Guidance and Counselling Coordinator within the Ghana Education Service. In retirement, she remains active in women's advocacy and community development initiatives. Tiara has lived her entire life in Nalerigu and is highly regarded for her commitment to education and social empowerment.

Bugri: Bugri is a retired professional teacher who formerly held the position of District Director for Non-Formal Education in the East Mamprusi District. Although he describes himself as a native Mampulli speaker, his parents resettled in Nalerigu where he was born and raised. In addition to Mampulli and English, he also speaks his native language, Kasem. Throughout his career, he was involved in adult literacy programmes and the promotion of local language use in non-formal education contexts. Like the other participants, he was born and raised in Nalerigu and possesses strong bilingual proficiency.

Sandow: Sandow is a retired teacher who spent his career in the formal education sector. He has lived in Nalerigu all his life and is known in the community for his service in education. As a bilingual speaker of Mampulli and English, his experience contributed meaningfully to the understanding of language policy and use across generations.

These participants were selected not only for their bilingual ability in English and Mampulli, but also for their social roles and lived experiences within the community. Their backgrounds provide valuable interpretation to patterns of language use, transmission, and the relationship between language and cultural identity in Nalerigu. Their contributions help to show how language functions both as a tool for communication and as a marker of belonging and social connection within the local context.

4.5.3 Christian Young Ladies' Group (CYL)

Table 13. presents demographics and sociolinguistic background of a Christian Young Ladies' Group who on the day of observation, discussed the topic "Being in a relationship as a Christian lady".

Table 13. A profile of YCL participants.

Participant Pseudonym	Age	Gender	Education	Level of English	Employment	Role
Azum	18-25	female	Senior High School	intermediate	student	member
Lydia	25-30	female	Senior High School	intermediate	student	member
Rose	25-30	Female	Senior High Certificate	intermediate	student	member
Misi	25-30	female	tertiary	advanced	nurse	member
Ange	25-30	female	tertiary	advanced	teacher	leader
TT	18-25	female	Senior High School	intermediate	student	member
Sallo	25-30	female	tertiary	advanced	nurse	member
Kazia	18-25	female	Senior High School	intermediate	teacher	member

The individuals in this group were all members of a Christian group made up of young women. The group consisted of eight participants, all of whom were female and native speakers

of Mampulli. Their ages ranged between 18 and 30 years. Five of them were between 25 and 30 years, while three were in the 18 to 25 age group. This age distribution suggests that the participants were predominantly young adults, many of whom were either continuing their education or had recently entered the workforce (Arnett, 2000).

In terms of education, five of the participants completed Senior High School. The remaining three participants had progressed to tertiary education and obtained higher qualifications. These three individuals were employed as professionals: two were nurses, and one was a teacher. Notably, they reported advanced English language proficiency. This observation is consistent with findings of Edu-Buandoh and Otchere (2012) that tertiary institutions in Ghana promote the use and development of English due to its function as the main language of instruction.

The group's employment status also reflected these educational differences. Four participants were enrolled as full-time students, either in senior high school or at the tertiary level. The other four participants were employed, working in the fields of healthcare and education. These sectors often involve the regular use of English in both spoken communication and written documentation (Adika, 2012). Furthermore, one of the employed participants also served as a group leader within the fellowship. According to Mey (2002), this leadership role may have an impact on her linguistics practices, especially with respect to language selection and tendency to engage in codeswitching during their interactions.

In summary, the participants form a group of educated young women with varied backgrounds in schooling, employment and responsibilities within the group. The sociolinguistic factors of age, education, occupation, and social role within the group are all relevant. These variables are widely recognised as influencing both language competence and

the ways in which individuals switch between languages in multilingual environments (Blom & Gumperz, 1972; Myers-Scotton, 1993).

4.5.4 Base 1

The study further employed purposive sampling to select participants at the base who were all native speakers of Mampulli and active members of the community under investigation. To protect their identities, each participant was assigned a pseudonym.

Table 14. A profile of participants in Base 1 who demonstrated instances of codeswitching.

Participant Pseudonym	Age Range	Gender	Education	Level of English	Employment	Role
Issah	30-35	male	tertiary	advanced	Nurse	member
Tanko	35-40	male	tertiary	advanced	teacher	member
Ibrahim	40-45	male	tertiary	advanced	Accounts officer	member
BA	25-30	male	Senior High School	intermediate	trader	member
Zack	35-40	male	tertiary	advanced	Administrative assistant	member
Zuama	30-35	male	Junior High School	basic	unemployed	member
Sule	35-40	male	Senior High School	intermediate	Self-employed	member
Charles	20-25	male	tertiary	advanced	Laboratory technician	member
Musah	40-45	male	tertiary	tertiary	teacher	member
Bona	30-35	male	tertiary	tertiary	teacher	member

A total of ten male participants were included in the research from Base 1. Their ages ranged from 20 to 45 years, providing a sample that reflected a relatively broad cross-section of the younger speaker population.

In terms of educational background, many of the participants, eight out of ten had completed tertiary-level education. Two participants had completed Senior High School, while one had only completed Junior High School. This distribution indicates that the group, generally, was well-educated, with a significant proportion having attained higher education qualifications.

English language proficiency among the participants varied. Seven individuals demonstrated advanced proficiency, suggesting that they were highly capable of using English for both comprehension and communication. Two participants were assessed at an intermediate level, while one had only basic proficiency. This variation in language skills provided a useful basis for exploring differences in CS behaviour.

The participants also represented a range of employment statuses and occupations. Several were engaged in professional roles, including positions such as a nurse, teacher, accounts officer, administrative assistant, and laboratory technician. One participant was self-employed, another worked as a trader, and one was unemployed at the time of data collection. This occupational diversity reflected a mix of socio-economic backgrounds and contributed to the richness of the data.

All participants were actively involved in this group that formed part of the context of the study. Their shared linguistic background in Mampulli, combined with differences in education, English proficiency, and occupation, enabled a nuanced examination of Mampulli-English CS practices.

4.5.5 Base 2

Again, participants in this group were deliberately selected using purposive sampling, a common approach in qualitative research to ensure relevance and richness of data (Etikan et al., 2016; Sharma, 2017). All ten participants were male native speakers of Mampulli and active members of the social group in which the study was conducted. To ensure confidentiality, Pseudonyms were assigned to each participant, in line with ethical research standards.

Table 15. A profile of participants in Base 2 whose utterances are sampled.

Participant Pseudonym	Age Range	Gender	Education	Level of English	Employment	Role
Taali	30-35	male	tertiary	advanced	teacher	member
Nash	40-45	male	tertiary	advanced	nurse	member
Adam	20-25	male	student	advanced	student	member
Philip	30-35	male	tertiary	advanced	Agric officer	member
Salley	30-35	male	tertiary	advanced	Head teacher	member
Luke	20-25	male	Senior High School	advanced	unemployed	member
Fataw	35-40	male	tertiary	advanced	student	member
Sugri	35-45	male	Senior High School	intermediate	Auto-mechanic	member
Vella	40-45	male	Primary	basic	Shop attendant	member
Maasim	20-25	male	tertiary	advanced	teacher	member

Participants were between 20 and 45 years old, providing a broad age range of both young and middle-aged adult speakers.

In terms of education, most participants attained higher levels of formal learning. Seven held tertiary qualifications, two had completed Senior High School, and one had no formal education. This generally high level of educational is important, as it may influence how participants engagement with and use English (Baker, 2011).

For English language proficiency, eight participants were described as advanced, demonstrating strong ability in both spoken and written forms. One participant, who had no formal education, did not report on their proficiency, which may suggest limited or no active use of the language. Language proficiency is recognised as an important factor influencing codeswitching behaviour (Myers-Scotton, 1993a; Prosper, 2025; Sert, 2023).

The employment status of participants varied, reflecting a range of socio-economic conditions. Their occupations included teacher, nurse, head teacher, agricultural officer, shop attendant, and auto-mechanic. Two participants were students, while one was unemployed. This occupational diversity provided valuable details about different everyday communication environments, which, Lang (2025) and Rymes (2014) explain, are necessary in understanding patterns of CS patterns.

All participants were part of the social group under observation, offering a natural and consistent context for data collection. Their varied backgrounds in education, employment, and language proficiency enriched the study's understanding of Mampulli-English codeswitching practices in the Nalerigu context.

4.5.6 A Family

The study employed a purposive sampling strategy (Sharma, 2017) to select participants who were likely to demonstrate relevant patterns of Mampulli-English codeswitching within a household setting. One nuclear family of three, a father, a mother, and their teenage daughter, was chosen based on their availability and language background. At the time of data collection, the middle-aged father was working as a nurse and the middle-aged mother as a teacher. Their daughter, a teenager, was enrolled in a Junior High School in a private institution in Nalerigu. All members of the family spoke Mampulli as their first language.

The choice to involve this family was based on the expectation that their daily interactions would naturally involve frequent codeswitching, given the bilingual abilities of the parents and the child's exposure to English through formal education. The professional roles of the parents, which required communication in both English and Mampulli, made them suitable participants for examining how and when codeswitching occurs in conversations. The inclusion of their daughter further enriches the sample, as her school environment and age suggest active engagement in bilingual practices common among adolescents in similar sociolinguistic settings (Dako & Quarcoo, 2017).

This sampling method is in line with established approaches in sociolinguistic research, which emphasise the importance of gathering natural language data within family settings to better understand how language choice and switching take place (Heller et al., 2024; Holmes & Wilson, 2022; Schilling, 2013). By selecting a family that was both accessible and linguistically relevant, the study aimed to document authentic instances of intra-family codeswitching that reflect wider sociolinguistic patterns.

4.6 Data Collection Methods

This section provides a detailed explanation of the three tools used to collect data in this research: recordings of selected radio programmes, interviews, and observation. It describes each method and explains how they were applied during the data collection process.

4.6.1 Recording of Radio Programmes

The data analysed in this study were drawn from spontaneous speech produced by radio hosts and their invited guests during live broadcasts. All participants, including hosts and panellists, are officially bilingual in Mampulli and English, and possibly speak other languages as well. This multilingual competence is evident in their speech, especially through frequent instances of codeswitching between Mampulli and English.

The radio recordings serve as a valuable source of naturally occurring, unscripted conversation. As Labov (1966, cited in Schilling 2013, p. 172) observed, “the most valuable type of speech for linguistic study is unselfconscious speech.” In line with this view, the current study uses such speech to explore language behaviour in a real-life context.

The conversations were recorded in Nalerigu, Ghana, between December 2022 and February 2023. Each recording lasted between thirty (30) minutes and one-hour (1) and thirty (30) minutes. The recordings were collected during various programme segments, including newspaper reviews, maternal health discussions, agricultural and agro-related topics, education, and public utility issues. These discussions were extracted from the radio station’s internal recording system using a USB flash drive.

However, recordings from structured programmes such as news broadcasts were not included in the dataset, as codeswitching rarely occurred in those segments. These broadcasts

are typically scripted entirely in Mampulli before airing. In contrast, the selected interactive programmes offered spontaneous exchanges that are more suitable for the analysis of CS.

The data collection was conducted throughout the week, at various times of day, to capture a wide range of speaking styles and topics. Audio recordings were gathered weekly for six consecutive weeks, ending in late February 2023. The selected programmes typically featured at least two participants who discussed a specific topic. Although the conversations were moderated by a host who asked guiding questions, the panellists' responses were unscripted and natural. Therefore, they provided the spontaneous speech data required for analysing CS, as emphasised by scholars such as Ihemere (2017), Myers-Scotton (2006), and Myers-Scotton and Jake (2014).

A staff member of the radio station assisted in the collection process. In total, twelve pre-recorded, unedited audio files were obtained using a USB flash drive. All recordings were orthographically transcribed, and meaningful English translations were provided to ensure accessibility for non-Mampulli speakers.

The transcribed conversations were thematically analysed according to the research questions, glossed using Leipzig Glossing rules (Haspelmath, 2014; Mortensen et al., 2023) and compared with other published studies. The research methodology followed an ad hoc approach because codeswitching behaviour irregular and unpredictable. Consequently, not every minute of the recorded material was examined.

4.6.2 Semi-Structured Interviews

A formal interview was conducted with a regular host of the radio programmes at the station, following a scheduled appointment. The interview began with a general introduction to the research topic. This introductory phase provided relevant context and helped establish

the foundation for the conversation. The interview was carried out in a semi-structured, conversational style, using direct elicitation questions designed to encourage natural and reflective responses. The format of the interview followed a simple question-and-answer structure and lasted no more than thirty (30) minutes. All quotations from this interview presented in the study are direct transcriptions of the recorded conversation. The interview took place in the office of the radio station and was recorded using a mobile phone. The main objective was to obtain a deeper understanding of the station's language policy and to explore the host's views and attitudes towards the practice of codeswitching during live broadcasts.

Like the interview with the host, further semi-structured interviews were conducted with three individuals: invited panellists and regular phone-in participants. These interviews were carried out via telephone, with assistance from the radio station, which provided contact details of the participants. The aim was to gather their perspectives on the codeswitched language structures they had used during the radio discussions, as well as their overall attitudes towards codeswitching. The interviews were guided by a set of questions outlined in the interview protocol (see Appendix 3), and follow-up questions were posed based on responses given. Each session lasted up to twenty (20) minutes and was recorded using a mobile phone. All interview recordings were transcribed orthographically and translated into clear, accessible English to aid analysis. These interviews were pre-arranged and conducted at times convenient for the participants.

In addition, to data collected from radio recordings, sociolinguistic interviews were used as a key method to gather further information. These interviews are a valuable tool in sociolinguistic research because they help to reveal how language is used and what social factors influence this use (Adhabi & Anozie, 2017). To follow this approach, the researcher conducted interviews with selected local chiefs and education professionals to better understand how language functions in both formal and informal settings. These interviews were

especially helpful in examining codeswitching and its wider social and institutional roles (Hoffman, 2013). To explore generational attitudes toward codeswitching, five older Mampulli-English bilinguals, four men and one woman, were also interviewed. These sessions were arranged in advance and took place mostly in the participants' homes, with one exception where the discussion was held in a guesthouse reception area at the request of the participant, who felt their home was unsuitable. The participants answered semi-structured interview questions (see appendix 2), and most of the interviews were conducted in Mampulli. However, one participant chose to speak in English, as they believed it suited the academic nature of the study. Each interview lasted about 40 minutes and focused on understanding the views of older speakers on codeswitching and their attitudes towards mixing languages in daily speech. The interviews were recorded using a Samsung Galaxy tablet, and all quotations used in the study were transcribed directly from these recordings.

4.6.3 Observation

The third method used for data collection was observation, which was important as it allowed me to record natural behaviour and socio-cultural details that might not be captured through the other methods (Ciesielska et al., 2017; Kumar & Sharma, 2023). The researcher undertook field visits to observe two different bases, a Christian young ladies' group and a family in Nalerigu. In this context, a 'base' refers to a loosely structured yet informally organised group of males, typically between the ages of 17 and 50, who gather daily at a specific location from around 3:00 pm to 9:00 pm. These gatherings serve as spaces for social interaction and conversation. Despite their informal nature, the bases demonstrated a strong sense of group identity, cohesion, and belonging.

Membership in these groups was open to all interested males, regardless of educational background or social status. While some groups could have up to 50 members, the average

attendance at any given time was between 15 and 20 individuals. Attendance was flexible, and members were not required to remain for the entire duration of the session. Each base had informal leadership structures, with certain individuals responsible for maintaining order and guiding discussions.

The topics discussed within the bases were wide-ranging and included politics, football, community development, economic issues, and current affairs relevant to Nalerigu, Ghana, and the wider world. Members usually began arriving from 2:30 pm. Upon arrival, they exchanged casual greetings, often with handshakes, and took seats in no fixed arrangement but generally formed a circular pattern that allowed for face-to-face interaction.

Observing language use within these spaces presented methodological challenges. William Labov's (1972) concept of "unobserved observation" recommends that researchers remain unobtrusive so as not to influence participants' natural behaviour. However, this approach was not feasible in the given cultural and social setting. The structure of the base and its cultural norms, particularly those influenced by Mamprusi traditions, required the researcher to be visibly present and interact with the group. This was necessary, especially since the base was a male-exclusive environment, governed by unwritten rules that reflect the gender norms of the local community. As recent ethnographic literature affirms, gaining trust and cultural acceptance in gendered spaces often requires visible participation and acknowledgment of local norms (Fernandez, 2023; Hanson & Richards, 2019; Musante & DeWalt, 2010; Williams & Drew, 2020).

4.6.3.1 Base 1

This group sits under a shade of a mango tree by the one of the main roads in the town. Road users see them and people passing by who see familiar faces or their friends in the group may stop briefly to exchange pleasantries and leave. The social and economic backgrounds of

the members of the group are diverse. Some are highly educated with diploma, undergraduate and master's degrees. Others are Junior High School and Senior High school graduates while others have no formal education. This makes majority of them Mampulli-English bilinguals and is evident in their interactions at the bases. Hence, a source for gathering naturally occurring CS data. Some of them are employed as teachers, nurses and other government agencies. Others have completed tertiary institutions but are not yet employed. The bases function as social groups where the young people go to spend their leisure time interacting with friends. As a social group, members solidarise with one another when they have social events such as marriage, naming ceremonies and funerals.

On the day of observation, February 7, 2023, I arrived at Base 1 at about 3:30 pm when the day's session had already started with about fifteen members. I was introduced to the group by my contact person, himself a member of the group as a native of the town and a student researcher. I sat in and the conversations continued. Several topics were discussed at that session. While conversation on some topics such as politics and national security, education and football remained for discussion for a long time, others were brief. Topics discussed were introduced spontaneously just as anyone introduced them. During the interactions, social backgrounds were hinted by the way other members addressed them, specific questions about specialised topics posed to them or references they made of themselves. While observing the group's interactions, occasionally, I contributed with questions or comments on the topic under discussion. The observation which lasted two hours was recorded using a mobile phone. The recording was transcribed with meaningful English translations.

4.6.3.2 Base 2

This group meets under a wooden shade roofed with aluminum sheets off a main road at another suburb of the town. It shares similar features with base 1 regarding membership,

structure and organisation. On February 8, 2023, I arrived at the group at about 4 pm. I was introduced to the group as a researcher from Nalerigu and studying abroad. The purpose of observing this group was to compare it with observations I had made in base 1. I joined the group and occasionally asked questions for clarity. Topics that were discussed included a married ceremony of their member that took place over the weekend, health, politics, and education. The observation lasted one hour twenty minutes (1hr 20minutes) and recorded. The recording was transcribed orthographically and meaningful translations provided. Notes made during observation were thematised using thematic analysis to carve out social perspective to codeswitching. In this study, some examples are drawn from this data for structural analysis in chapter 5. Also, themes such as education, age and gender which are drawn from these data sets contribute to the discussions on sociocultural factors in chapter 6.

4.6.3.3 Young Christian Ladies Group (YCL)

The researcher further observed a group of Christian ladies at their regular monthly meetings at a church in the evening between from 7 to 8:30 pm. The group of ten ladies aged between sixteen (16) and twenty-five (25) had a minimum of senior high school education. According to the group they discuss various topics bothering on spirituality to social monthly to foster their Christian maturity. On the evening of observation, they discussed ‘Engaging in healthy boyfriend relationships. At meeting, a leader who was appointed ahead of time to prepare to lead the group in discussing the topic and how it impacts on their spiritual and social development. They all responded to a question or scenario posed by the leader, making it conversational. In their submissions, both Mampulli and English were used simultaneously. This passing it as a speech event for gathering primary CS data. Unlike, at base 1 and 2, where the researcher participated in the conversations, the researcher only observed and made notes throughout the session. However, after their discussions, I conducted interview with two members using an interview protocol (see appendix 3) to elicit their views on instances of CS

in their speeches during their discussion and their attitude towards it. The interviews were recorded with a mobile phone and transcribed with meaningful English translations.

4.6.3.4 Family

A three-member bilingual family was also observed for how they navigate their linguistic repertoires at home. While introducing myself and the project to them, I discovered that the man is a middle-aged practicing degree nurse at the Baptist Medical Centre and his wife, a teacher at one of the public schools with a diploma certificate. Their daughter is a teenager attending one of the private schools in Nalerigu. The observation which lasted one-hour (1) thirty (30) minutes took place on the afternoon of January 27, 2023, at their residence. I made notes on my observation of interactions that ensued among the three participants. Also, their conversations were recorded using a mobile phone and transcribed with English translations.

Finally, field notes were also taken throughout the research process and later analysed thematically. This method allowed for the identification of key themes such as education, age, and gender, which helped to explore the social dimensions of codeswitching. Thematic analysis supported the ethnographic approach by highlighting patterns in participants' language use that reflect broader social structures and cultural norms (Braun & Clarke, 2022; Copland & Creese, 2015).

4.7 Observer's Paradox

In examining language practices at the bases, it was not feasible to fully implement William Labov's (1972) concept of unidentifiable observation, which is designed to minimise the researcher's impact on natural speech patterns. Labov proposed that for researchers to collect authentic, everyday language data, they should remain unobtrusive and avoid revealing

the true purpose of their presence. This idea forms the basis of what is known as the observer's paradox.

The observer's paradox highlights the difficulty researchers face when trying to study natural behaviour, while their presence simultaneously alters that behaviour. As Labov (1972, p. 209) famously noted, "The aim of linguistic research in the community must be to find out how people talk when they are not being systematically observed; yet we can only obtain this data by systematic observation." In essence, observing people often changes how they behave, which undermines the goal of capturing genuine language use.

In this study, the specific cultural and social conditions of the research setting made it impossible to remain unnoticed or passive. The research took place in a male-dominated environment, commonly referred to as a base, where access is shaped by local customs strongly influenced by Mamprusi cultural values. These customs typically exclude women from such spaces. Therefore, as a female researcher, my presence was not only highly visible but also unusual within that context, making concealment unrealistic.

This visible presence had both positive and negative consequences. On the one hand, being consistently present over time helped to build rapport with participants. As they grew accustomed to my presence, their behaviour became more relaxed and natural. This supports findings in existing literature suggesting that long-term engagement in the field can reduce the disruptive effects of the observer's paradox (Bucerius, 2013; Ribeiro & Foemmel, 2012). In such cases, the researcher becomes a known stranger, whose presence is no longer perceived as intrusive or disruptive.

On the other hand, initial interactions may have been shaped by my visibility. Participants might have adjusted their speech, become more self-aware, or avoided certain topics during the early stages of observation. This type of reaction is a well-known issue in

ethnographic and sociolinguistic research, where the awareness of being observed often causes individuals to modify their language to align with what they believe is socially acceptable or expected (Cukor-Avila, 2000; Dale & Vinson, 2013; Milroy & Milroy, 1997).

Furthermore, my presence as a woman in an all-male space may have influenced the way some participants communicated. It is possible that certain forms of language were softened, specific expressions were avoided, or everyday communicative routines were altered due to feelings of respect, discomfort, or uncertainty. Although this influence could not be fully avoided, recognising and reflecting on it was essential for conducting ethical and transparent research.

In conclusion, while the observer's paradox posed practical and methodological challenges, it also allowed for valuable insights through sustained interaction and reflexive observation. Although complete invisibility as a researcher was not achievable in this cultural setting, adopting a sensitive, reflective approach allowed for the collection of meaningful and contextually rich linguistic data.

4.8 Data Processing and Analysis

This section outlines the procedures and methods used to analyse the data collected for the study. It describes the steps taken to select, process, and transcribe the audio recordings, as well as the approach used to identify and classify instances of codeswitching. In addition, it explains how thematic analysis was applied to explore the sociocultural factors that influence codeswitching among Mampulli-English speakers. The fundamental aim of the analysis was to uncover both the linguistic patterns and the social meanings attached to codeswitching in the selected data.

4.8.1 Selection and Preparation of Audio Data

Following the data cleaning phase, seven audio recordings of radio programmes, out of twelve were selected for detailed analysis in this study. This selection was based on a systematic evaluation of each recording's quality and relevance, particularly focusing on the presence of codeswitched structures that were essential for addressing the study's research questions. The data cleaning process included the removal of background noise, incomplete recordings, and other inconsistencies, ensuring that the final dataset met the required standards for linguistic analysis (Ilyas & Chu, 2019; Panayiotou & Bon, 2023). The remaining five recordings were excluded from the dataset. These were either of poor audio quality or did not contain the codeswitched features necessary for the study.

4.8.2 Data Transcription

The next stage of data processing involved transcription of the recordings. All audio recordings, including radio programmes, interviews, social and religious groups as well as the nuclear family were carefully and manually transcribed using orthographic conventions (see Appendix 4). This process was carried out with close attention to detail to ensure that every instance of CS was represented accurately. A dedicated team of trained research assistants was recruited specifically for the transcription work, and they received guidance throughout the process to maintain consistency and reliability.

Instances of CS that were relevant for structural analysis were identified during transcription. These instances were then selected and glossed according to the Leipzig Glossing Rules (Comrie et al., 2015). These rules provide a systematic framework for interlinear morpheme-by-morpheme glossing, which is especially useful when analysing multilingual data. The morpheme-by-morpheme glossing convention separates each word or segmentable morphemes with a hyphen, in both the original example and its corresponding gloss (Rules,

2015). Each example of CS was followed by a clear and meaningful English translation to support interpretation and ensure accessibility for a broader academic audience. This method is important because it allows precise comparison between linguistic forms and their meaning.

The following are some of the Leipzig Glossing guidelines:

- i. Original example is in italics with segmentable segments by a hyphen.
- ii. English insertions in the example are in **bold**
- iii. A corresponding interlinear gloss (morpheme by morpheme) is beneath the original example in a smaller font.
- iv. Meaningful English translation given beneath the gloss in single quotation

The following example illustrates a morpheme-by-morpheme glossing.

Example 22

<i>I</i>	<i>yi</i>	<i>wum</i>	<i>ni</i>	<i>pastor</i>	<i>be</i>	<i>yayashea</i>	<i>ka</i>	<i>ti</i>
2SG	COND	hear	that	pastor	is	some.where	then	1PL

‘When you hera about a pastor anywhere, then we run there.’

(H, Radio Programme 3, 5th January 2023)

Furthermore, data extracts relevant to Research Question Two, which focused on exploring speakers’ motivations for using CS, were also transcribed using the same orthographic method. As with the structurally relevant data, each of these extracts was followed by a meaningful English translation. This ensured that the excerpts could be fully understood in context and used effectively during thematic analysis.

All identifying personal information, such as participant names, was removed to maintain ethical standards and ensure a primary focus on the linguistic and sociocultural dimensions of the data.

4.8.3 Data Selection Process

Considering Mampulli is the participants' first language, the analysis focused mainly on CS instances where speakers switched into English, their second language. This focus reflects the aims of the study, which uses the MLF to understand the structure of codeswitching. In this framework, Mampulli acts as the matrix language, providing the grammatical foundation, while English appears as the embedded language inserted within that structure.

Instances were selected where English insertions occurred within predominantly Mampulli utterances, as these are key to identifying matrix-embedded language relationships. Particular attention was given to examples that clearly illustrate the morphosyntactic roles of each language in the codeswitched discourse.

Additionally, the selection process was informed by principles from EoC, ensuring that CS instances were examined within their broader social and cultural contexts. Only examples that occurred in meaningful speech events and reflected speakers' communicative intentions were included. This approach allowed the study to explore both the grammatical structure of codeswitching and the social motivations behind language choices in real-life interactions.

Finally, the selection of data was informed by the EoC framework (Hymes, 1974; Saville-Troike, 2008), which highlights the importance of studying language within its social and cultural context. Consistent with this perspective, the data were not chosen solely for their linguistic features, but also for their ability to reflect the sociocultural aspects of communication. Focus was placed on CS instances that revealed details about the interactional setting, the participants, their social backgrounds, and the purpose of their communication. For example, in radio programme interactions, speakers often shared background information about participants, such as their educational level, professional role, or political experience, which provided valuable context for understanding their communicative choices. This can be

seen in Examples 23 and 24 below, taken from a political radio talk show (Radio Programme 5) and Community Water and Sanitation Agency programme (Radio Programme 1) respectively.

Example 23

H: *Zuna, ti mari saan gahamni ti duuwa. U nya la ninvugsua ηcan mari baamsim pam zaη tsaηi paati paati yatoani. U nya Mr. ... NPP dim former Communications Director nti Nalerigu-Gambaga constituency.*

‘Today, we have a very special guest in this room. He is very knowledgeable in political discourse. He is Mr. ... a former Director of Communications for the NPP in the Nalerigu-Gambaga constituency.’

Example 24

H: *Asuba wa, man koomduuyiri dima, Community Water and Sanitation Agency, mmari azama. Zuna muna, pa dap kɔkwa ntsana, ba dzi la awuraba pɔa mpasina. I gba yi wum u Sulmintiri maa, pa mani n laan ya yeli ni u karim ya. Madam, bee wulla? ηcan nya ba Communications officer. Madam ... i jaari.*

‘This morning, I’m going to have a conversation with staff of Community Water and Sanitation Agency. Today, the men didn’t come alone, they have come with a learned woman, if you hear her speak English, I will not need to tell you she is well educated. Isn’t it, madam? She is their Communications Officer. Madam... you’re welcome.’

In Example 23, the host introduces a guest by stating his political expertise and role as a former communications director for a political party, using both Mampulli and English:

Zuna, ti mari saan gahamni ti duuwa... Mr. ... NPP dim former Communications Director nti Nalerigu-Gambaga constituency.

‘Today, we have a very special guest... He is Mr. ... a former Director of Communications for the NPP in the Nalerigu-Gambaga constituency.’

In Example 24, another guest is introduced with reference to her education and professional identity as a communications officer:

‘Today, the men didn’t come alone, they have come with a learned woman... if you hear her speak English, I will not need to tell you she is well educated... Madam, you’re welcome’.

This example highlights how language use is tied to perceptions of education, gender roles, and professional authority.

The data selection process prioritised parts of the discourse where speakers used both Mampulli and English in ways that reflected their social identities, relationships, and cultural values. Instances where switching patterns occurred repeatedly, or where language use differed from expected norms, were considered especially important. These cases were likely to provide additional information about how speakers use language to express identity and respond to social expectations.

The material analysed included transcripts from natural conversations, semi-structured interviews, and field notes gathered during participant observation. These various sources were examined using thematic analysis (Babel et al., 2025; Braun & Clarke, 2022; Elmahdi et al., 2024; Hekanaho, 2022) to categorise English language structures codeswitched as well as identify patterns related to education, gender, age, language status, and religion. These social categories are all key elements within the EoC SPEAKING model (Fitch & Philipsen, 2022; Kiesling, 2012) and provide valuable context for understanding language choice.

By selecting data that reflected wider social and cultural influences, the analysis went beyond surface-level explanations of codeswitching. This approach made it possible to gain deeper understanding of how speakers use language to manage social roles, show a sense of belonging, and engage in culturally meaningful communication.

4.8.4 Results

This section reports the key findings of the research on Mampulli-English codeswitching. The results are drawn from the analysis of all audio recordings and field notes collected through participant observation with educated Mampulli speakers. The data

were explored to uncover both the linguistic forms and the sociocultural patterns associated with codeswitching. The section is divided into two main parts. The first part describes the different types of codeswitched structures found in the data, while the second part examines the main social factors that influence codeswitching in the community. These two areas are discussed in Chapters Five and Six, respectively. Overall, the findings help explain when and why speakers switch between Mampulli and English in particular communicative situations.

4.9 Fieldwork Challenges

During the data collection process, two significant challenges emerged that warrant discussion. The first challenge was the difficulty in recruiting female participants. Despite providing detailed explanations of the study's purpose through the participant information sheet and participant consent form, many women declined to participate. Furthermore, some individuals who initially consented later withdrew, failing to make themselves available for the study. The second challenge arose midway through the data collection period due to a chieftaincy dispute within the town. This disturbance led to a slowdown in social events and heightened apprehension among residents, particularly the youth, who became suspicious of unfamiliar individuals. This distrust was rooted in fears that outsiders might be government or security informants. Consequently, the number of speech events available for ethnographic observation was limited during this time. Despite these obstacles, the challenges did not compromise the quality of the data collected, which remained robust and sufficient for the study's objectives.

4.10 Ethical Considerations

Ethical considerations are central to the integrity of this study and have been carefully addressed throughout the research process. To this end, ethical approval for this thesis was obtained from the University's Ethics Committee. Informed consent was obtained from all participants through a comprehensive participant information sheet and consent form which participants signed. In cases where those who could not read or were not contacted in-person, the consent and information statements were read to them ensuring that they fully understood the study's purpose, procedures and their rights, including the right to withdraw at any stage. Confidentiality and anonymity were upheld by securely storing data and using pseudonyms to protect participants' identities. The researcher also remained mindful of power dynamics and potential biases, particularly when interpreting data, to ensure that participants' voices were represented faithfully. Additionally, cultural sensitivity was prioritised, with respect given to local customs and practices during data collection.

4.11 Limitation of Study

This study recognises some limitations that may have influenced the research process and outcomes. A primary limitation concerns the researcher's involvement in the data collection process, particularly during the interviews. At times, the researcher guided certain aspects of the discussions conducted at the data collection sites. This involvement may have unintentionally shaped the participants' responses. Although only selected portions of the interview data were used for analysis, the possibility of researcher influence cannot be entirely ruled out. This is especially relevant given that the researcher is a native speaker of Mampulli and holds personal perspectives on the subject matter. These factors may have subtly influenced both the interaction with participants and the interpretation of the data.

A second limitation lies in the choice of the research site. The study was conducted solely in Nalerigu, even though Mampulli is spoken in several other communities across the region. As a result, the findings may not be fully generalisable to the wider Mampulli-speaking population. To address this issue, future research should consider a multi-site approach that includes other Mampulli-speaking areas. This would allow for a more comprehensive and representative understanding of codeswitching practices across different settings and speaker groups.

Another notable limitation is the observer's paradox, the awareness among participants that they were being observed and recorded. This may have influenced the way they spoke, potentially reducing the naturalness of their codeswitching behaviour during recorded sessions.

Despite these limitations, the quality and integrity of the research remain intact. The findings presented in this study offer a meaningful contribution to the understanding of Mampulli-English codeswitching and provide a valuable foundation for further inquiry. Future studies can build upon this work by addressing the limitations identified and exploring codeswitching across more diverse contexts.

4.12 Chapter Conclusion

In summary, this chapter has outlined the methodological procedures used to guide the study in a clear and structured manner. A qualitative research design was adopted to support in-depth data collection and analysis, drawing on both the MLF and the EoC as complementary theoretical foundations. The selection of participants, research instruments, and analytical methods was carefully planned to ensure that they aligned with the study's aims. This alignment helped to support the validity, reliability, and contextual relevance of the research process.

The methodology presented in this chapter provides a strong basis for the analysis and interpretation of the data. It sets the stage for the detailed examination of codeswitched English linguistic structures and the sociocultural factors influencing codeswitching behaviour. These findings are discussed in Chapters Five and Six, respectively.

CHAPTER 5

Research Findings: Linguistic Structures of Mampulli-English Codeswitching

5.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the finding from the analysis of English linguistic structures found in the speech of participants who are proficient in both Mampulli and English. It focuses on instances where speakers shift from using Mampulli structures to incorporating elements of English. The analysis reveals that the practice occurs in various linguistic areas, including key word classes such as nouns, verbs, adjectives and adverbs. It also includes the use of prepositional phrases, and occasional use of complete English clauses. By analysing these patterns of language alternation, the findings provide a clearer understanding of the dynamic relationship between bilingualism and linguistic structure. They also shed light on the complex mechanisms that govern language use in multilingual contexts. The following sections present the results in detail.

5.2 Nouns

The data shows that participants often switch nouns they use. According to Muysken's (2000) cognitive perspective on bilingual speech, speakers frequently substitute nouns because they represent a more cohesive category within the combined vocabulary of the two languages. Myers-Scotton and Jake (2017) attribute the high frequency of noun switches to multiple reasons such as speakers' inability to recall matching words in the target language and inability of correspondent words to provide desired meaning, arguing that the essence of code switching is to fill the vocabulary gap in the conversation. Furthermore, since nouns are classified as content morphemes, they are subject to fewer restrictions compared to system morphemes and can therefore seamlessly address lexical gaps in the other language (Sahib et al., 2021).

Examples in the following section illustrate how English nouns appear as single words within Mampulli frames.

5.2.1 Single lexical nouns in a Mampulli frame

Examples 25-41 demonstrate the use of single bare nouns within Mampulli clauses. The grammatical structure of Mampulli is preserved without alteration. The inserted English nouns provide specialised meanings related to health, electricity, and political discourse. This pattern represents a common type of lexical insertion, as described by Muysken (2021).

Example 25

R8: *Ti* **theme** *ɲua* *nya* *sheim* *nla*.
Our **theme** DEM is like EMPH

‘This is our theme.’ (Radio Programme 3, 9th January 2023)

In this example, the only English lexical item present in the utterance is the noun *theme*. All other elements, including word order and morphological markers, are supplied by the Mampulli language. The system morphemes *ti* (our), *ɲua* (demonstrative), *nya* (copula), and *nla* (emphatic particle) originate from Mampulli and are applied according to its grammatical rules.

Within the framework of the MLF model (Gardner-Chloros, 2020; Myers-Scotton, 2002), nouns are classified as content morphemes. They provide semantic meaning but rely on the matrix language for morphosyntactic integration. In this construction, the English noun *theme* is inserted into a Mampulli noun phrase, which is introduced by the Mampulli determiner *ti* (our). Importantly, the English noun appears in its bare stem form, without English plural or possessive morphology. Instead, possession is marked through Mampulli grammar, consistent with the MLF prediction that the matrix language exerts structural dominance (Bullock et al., 2018; Bullock & Toribio, 2009; Jake et al., 2002; Myers-Scotton, 2001).

Analysis shows that the English noun functions as the content morpheme, while Mampulli provides the accompanying system morphemes. Thus, *theme* is embedded without inflectional modification, whereas the possessive, demonstrative, copular, and emphatic functions are realised exclusively by Mampulli forms. This reflects a broader pattern noted in recent accounts of morpheme distribution in mixed languages, whereby content morphemes from an embedded language may be incorporated without alteration, while system morphemes remain specific to the matrix language (Burkholder, 2018; Matras, 2020; Myers-Scotton, 1997, 2002; Razzaq & Amin, 2025; Wei, 2024).

Consequently, Mampulli clearly operates as the ML, supplying the grammatical framework, while English serves as the EL, contributing isolated lexical items. This division of labour corresponds directly with the principles of the MLF model, in which the ML determines morphosyntactic structure and the EL provides content insertions (Myers-Scotton, 2002). Recent work further supports this view, showing that in bilingual discourse the ML consistently governs grammatical organisation and system morphemes, while the EL contributes lexical items such as nouns (Adamou et al., 2023; Khan et al., 2019).

Example 26

H: *N-yeli niri-ba ka ba bayji ni i mari experience.*
 1SG person- CONJ 3PL know DEM 2SG have **experience.**
 PRON- PL
 told

‘I have told people and they are aware that you have experience.’

(H, Radio Programme 5, 16th January 2023)

In this construction, the English lexical item *experience* appears as a bare noun, inserted into the object position of a Mampulli clause. The noun does not carry any English morphological markers, such as plural or possessive forms. Its uninflected state is compatible with Mampulli grammar, which allows bare noun insertion in this syntactic position.

According to the MLF model (Myers-Scotton, 2002), the ML determines the structural framework of the clause, while the EL supplies isolated content morphemes. Here, Mampulli provides subject-verb-object word order, agreement morphology, and all system morphemes, while English contributes the noun *experience*. The lack of morphological adaptation aligns with findings that embedded nouns can occur in bare form where ML grammar permits (Ihemere, 2016b; Keizer, 2017; Poplack & Dion, 2012).

Example 27

R12: *Tin daa mari nia ni ti niŋ history secondary*
 1 PL TIME.DEATH have plan DEM 1PL PRON do history secondary
 PRON

school zaa, ti daa goahi-ri la Professor.
 school all 1PL PRON TIME.DEATH look-PROG ARTL Professor.

‘When we had plans of studying history while in secondary school, we looked up to Professor.’

(Respondent 12, Radio 5, 16th January 2023)

This example contains the English nouns *history*, *school*, and *Professor*. Each noun fulfils distinct syntactic roles: *history* and *school* function within a complex object phrase denoting the field of study, while *Professor* refers to a socially significant individual. The nouns are inserted into a Mampulli morphosyntactic frame, which provides subject pronouns, temporal markers, aspectual morphology, and determiners.

Notably, the determiner *la* precedes *Professor*, demonstrating that system morphemes originate exclusively from Mampulli. The English nouns are bare, without plural or possessive morphology, supporting the MLF principle that functional morphology is drawn from the ML, while lexical content derives from the EL (Muysken, 2022).

Example 28

R7:	<i>U</i>	<i>yi</i>	<i>ku</i>	<i>m̄yea</i>	<i>niŋ</i>	<i>computer</i>	<i>Ni</i>	<i>ka</i>	<i>pressi,</i>	<i>bunsheela,</i>
	3SG	when	just	hit	in	computer	in.side	CONJ	press	something,
 	<i>credit</i>	<i>maa</i>	<i>units</i>	<i>maa</i>	<i>ya</i>	<i>tsanŋ</i>	<i>nti</i>	<i>kpea</i>	<i>la</i>	<i>meter</i>
	credit	MOD	units	MOD	will	go	and	enter	ART	meter
 	<i>maa</i>	<i>ni</i>	<i>straight.</i>							
	mod	in.side	straight							

‘If he just enters (card number) into the computer and presses a button, that worth of units will straight away be credited to your card.’

(R7, Radio Programme 2, 5th January 2023)

This utterance illustrates the insertion of several English nouns: *computer*, *credit*, *units*, and *meter*. These nouns denote the technological and transactional elements of the process described. The surrounding grammatical structure, including conjunctions, articles, and modality markers, is entirely supplied by Mampulli.

The integration pattern aligns with the System Morpheme, and Morpheme Order Principles (Jake et al., 2002). Mampulli governs syntax and functional morphology, while English contributes nouns in their bare form. This reflects the MLF model, in which the ML maintains structural dominance and the EL provides semantic content (Myers-Scotton, 2002).

Example 29

R7:	<i>I</i>	<i>yi</i>	<i>ya</i>	<i>yua</i>	<i>i</i>	<i>bill,</i>	<i>di</i>	<i>sum</i>	<i>ka</i>	<i>i</i>	<i>banyi</i>	<i>ni</i>	<i>i</i>
	2SG	if	going.to	pay	2SG	bill,	it	important	that	2SG	know	that	your
 	<i>bill</i>	<i>nya</i>	<i>la</i>	<i>15</i>	<i>cedis</i>	<i>ka</i>	<i>i</i>	<i>nnai</i>	<i>enter</i>	<i>lala</i>			
	bill	is	PART	15	cedis	PART	you	before	enter	that			
 	<i>amount</i>	<i>maa</i>		<i>ka</i>	<i>yua</i>								
	amount	MOD		then	pay.								

‘When you are going to pay your (electricity) bill, it is important to know the amount, for example, 15 cedis, before you enter that amount to pay.’

(R7, Radio Programme 2, 5th January 2023)

From the dataset, three lexical items are notable for their frequency. Firstly, the term *bill* appears twice in the opening line of Example 10, suggesting possible thematic or transactional emphasis (see Meyerhoff, 2019). Secondly, *cedis*, a currency term originating from Akan but integrated into English discourse, operates as a borrowed noun within a bilingual context. This reflects processes of lexical borrowing and semantic integration, as documented in recent studies of Ghanaian English (Bosomprah, 2023). Finally, *amount* co-occurs with *bill* in the same extract, indicating repetition that may serve pragmatic functions such as emphasis, clarification, or reinforcement of numerical information (Biber et al., 2021).

In the data, the English nouns identified belong primarily to the semantic domain of finance, transactions, and quantitative measurement. This lexical field is often associated with formal, bureaucratic, and institutional communication, particularly in contexts such as utility billing and service provision (see Biber et al., 2021). The integration of these items into Mampulli discourse appears to be motivated by their perceived salience, technical specificity, and the degree to which they are standardised within English-speaking administrative frameworks. Such lexical borrowing is consistent with patterns observed in contact linguistics, where terms of institutional authority are retained in their source language for precision and prestige (Myers-Scotton, 2006). Notably, these borrowed nouns undergo no morphological inflection from English in Mampulli. Number marking and determiner usage are provided by the grammatical system of Mampulli itself; hence, an English singular form such as *bill* may convey plural meaning within the appropriate morphosyntactic frame, rendering the English plural *bills* unnecessary.

The present example provides substantive support for the core predictions of the MLF model (Myers-Scotton, 2002), particularly in relation to the MOP and the SMP. Three aspects of the data illustrate this alignment.

First, the grammatical skeleton of Mampulli is maintained throughout the utterance, even when English lexical items are introduced. All functional morphemes, including inflectional markers, agreement morphemes, and determiners, originate from Mampulli. This reflects the SMP, which states that all system morphemes (those providing grammatical structure rather than semantic content) are drawn from the matrix language. In this respect, the Mampulli frame remains structurally unaltered, affirming its role as the controlling grammatical system in bilingual production (Gardner-Chloros, 2020; Myers-Scotton & Jake, 2017).

Second, English nouns are inserted in positions that correspond exactly to Mampulli noun phrase slots, demonstrating content-morpheme insertion codeswitching. These content morphemes supply referential meaning but are fully integrated into the morphosyntactic constraints of the matrix language. This conforms to the MOP, which predicts that morpheme order is dictated by the matrix language regardless of the origin of the content items (Hadei & Ramakrishna, 2017; Poplack, 2017; Wei, 2020a) The insertion is neither structurally disruptive nor anomalous, indicating a high degree of bilingual competence in aligning the morphosyntactic requirements of both languages.

Finally, the English insertions are drawn from semantically specialised domains, such as public utilities and monetary systems. These lexical fields are particularly susceptible to switching in contact situations where institutional, bureaucratic, or technological discourses are dominated by a global or prestige language (Otheguy & Zentella, 2019; Wei, 2020).

In this case, this example reinforces the predictive power of the MLF model in explaining structural constraints on bilingual utterances. The consistent application of Mampulli grammatical structure, the principled integration of English content morphemes, and the sociolinguistically patterned domain-specific borrowing together provide compelling evidence for the model's explanatory adequacy in contemporary codeswitching contexts.

In all, Mampulli functions as the primary linguistic framework, determining the overall grammatical structure of the sentence. Within this framework, English lexical items, such as *bill*, *cedis*, and *amount*, are inserted. The syntactic arrangement follows Mampulli grammatical rules, with the English nouns integrated as isolated elements rather than as structural components. This suggests that these English terms operate as guest words embedded within a Mampulli morphosyntactic environment, a phenomenon consistent with patterns CS observed in multilingual speech contexts.

Example 30

<i>I</i> 2SG	<i>yi</i> if	<i>da</i> buy	<i>form</i> form	<i>maa</i> mod	<i>n-nnai</i> CONJ-finish	<i>ka</i> then	<i>i</i> 2SG	<i>fiili</i> fiili	<i>form</i> form
<i>maa</i> MOD	<i>correct</i> correct	<i>ni</i> with	<i>i</i> your	<i>phone</i> phone	<i>number</i> number				

‘If you finish buying the form, then you fill it out correctly, your phone number’

(R5 Radio Programme 2, 5th January 2023)

Here, the English lexical items *form*, *correct*, and *phone number* are incorporated into Mampulli. The item *form* is borrowed as a bureaucratic term, while *correct* appears in a non-standard syntactic position, demonstrating flexibility in category assignment within Mampulli grammar. The compound *phone number* is integrated as a bare noun phrase.

These items retain their English form without inflection, while Mampulli supplies functional morphology. This supports the MLF claim that the ML governs structure, while the EL provides content words (Myers-Scotton & Jake, 2017).

Example 31

<i>...n</i>	<i>sɔbi</i>	<i>estimates</i>	<i>din</i>	<i>beni</i>	<i>ka</i>
...and	write	estimates	that	there	and

<i>labna</i>	<i>office</i>	<i>ni</i>
return.to	office	in.side

‘(A staff will come) and write the estimates and return to the office.’

(R5, Radio Programme 2, 5th January 2023)

This utterance contains the English nouns *estimates* and *office*. Both are inserted without English articles, indicating that determiners are supplied by Mampulli. The Mampulli verb forms (*sɔbi*, *labna*) and postposition *ni* demonstrate that Mampulli dictates syntax.

This case illustrates how EL nouns are morphologically unaltered but integrated into ML syntactic positions. Such integration supports principles of the MLF, reinforcing that Mampulli functions as the matrix language.

Example 32

<i>Ka</i>	<i>yi</i>	<i>tsaŋ-i</i>	<i>n</i>	<i>naai</i>	<i>i</i>	<i>nin</i>	<i>nya</i>	<i>ka</i>	<i>options</i>
SG-NON-PER	if	IPFV	and	finish	2SG	AUX	see	that	options

<i>maa</i>	<i>yina</i>	<i>ka</i>	<i>i</i>	<i>choosi</i>
DET	come.out	then	2SG	choosi.

‘If it goes through, the options will come up for you to choose.’

(R7 Radio Programme 2 5th January 2023)

Here, the English noun *options* appears as a plural form, retaining its English suffix *-s*. While the plural marker is preserved, the surrounding syntax and functional markers are

provided by Mampulli. The example demonstrates that embedded nouns may preserve morphological features from their source language without disrupting ML grammar.

This finding refines the MLF by showing that content morphemes may retain some morphological autonomy, provided they remain compatible with ML structure (Bullock & Toribio, 2023).

Example 33.

<i>Ti</i>	<i>District</i>	<i>office</i>	<i>shiaa</i>	<i>ti</i>	<i>DCE</i>	<i>ɲɔn</i>	<i>daa</i>	<i>maa</i>	<i>zaa</i>
1PL	District	office	MOD	our	DCE	where	PST	MOD	all
	<i>beni</i>	<i>yumbɔgu</i>	<i>Katayua</i>	<i>dima</i>	<i>ni</i>	<i>ba</i>	<i>naam</i>	<i>zaa</i>	
	inside	year.many	umbrella	PL	with	their	power	all	
<i>ba</i>	<i>bu</i>	<i>tooi</i>	<i>nbua</i>	<i>nti</i>	<i>daadia</i>	<i>ka</i>			
they	NEG	can	to.find	and.give	place	it			

‘Our District office where our DCE (District Chief Executive) was for many years, even though the Umbrella (Political party symbol) was in power, couldn’t find a new place for it.’

(R12, Radio 5, 16th January 2023)

The English nouns *District office* and *DCE* are inserted into a clause otherwise governed by Mampulli grammar. The nouns designate administrative institutions and official roles, highlighting how specialised terms are embedded in discourse. Functional morphology and word order remain Mampulli-driven, confirming the MLF prediction of matrix dominance.

Example 34.

<i>Ti</i>	<i>laan</i>	<i>puusiri</i>	<i>ti</i>	<i>customers</i>	<i>ni</i>	<i>sua</i>	<i>kamzaa</i> .
1PL	again	greet-PROG	our	customers	and	someone	every

‘Again, we are greeting our customers and everyone.’

(R1 Radio Programme 15th December 2023)

In the example, *Ti laan puusi-ri ti customers ni sua kamzaa*, Mampulli operates as the matrix language, while English functions as the embedded language. The noun *customers*

originates from English and is inserted into the Mampulli clause. According to the MLF model (Myers-Scotton, 2002), the ML determines the overall syntactic structure, including word order and grammatical inflection. In this instance, the English noun is integrated within a Mampulli grammatical frame, maintaining the sentence's native morphosyntactic order.

The plural form *customers* aligns seamlessly with Mampulli morphosyntax, requiring no alteration to existing grammatical rules. This demonstrates that English nouns, as embedded content words, can be naturally accommodated within Mampulli syntax. Such insertions may enhance semantic specificity, especially when the English term is more widely recognised or conveys a more precise meaning than its Mampulli equivalent (Bullock & Toribio, 2023).

The verbal morphology in the sentence, exemplified by *puusi-ri* (greet-PROG), remains governed entirely by Mampulli, underscoring the matrix language's control over verbal inflection and tense marking. Consistent with MLF predictions, embedded-language contributions are typically limited to content words such as nouns, verbs, and adjectives, while function words and grammatical markers are supplied by the matrix language (Myers-Scotton & Jake, 2017).

This example therefore supports the MLF claim that bilingual codeswitched utterance often involves the insertion of embedded-language content words into the morphosyntactic framework of the matrix language. In this case, Mampulli retains structural dominance while English contributes lexical precision, reflecting a key principle of the model.

Example 35.

<i>I</i>	<i>yi</i>	<i>mari</i>	<i>ligiri</i>	<i>i</i>	<i>nintoai</i>	<i>n</i>	<i>da</i>	<i>credit</i>	<i>n</i>
2SG	COND	have	money	2SG	can	CONJ	buy	credit	CONJ
<i>niŋi</i>	<i>lala</i>	<i>metre</i>	<i>maa</i>	<i>ni</i>	<i>ka</i>	<i>bu</i>	<i>tsana</i>	<i>office</i>	
put.in	DET	metre	CONJ	in	CONJ	NEG	come	office	

‘If you have money, you can buy power on that metre without coming to the office.’

(**R6** Radio Programme 2, 5th January 2023)

The English noun *hormones* functions as the direct object of a Mampulli verb phrase. The grammatical framework is entirely Mampulli, while the English noun contributes semantic content. This supports the view that content nouns are especially prone to embedding due to their referential function (Kawaletz, 2023; Poplack, 1980).

Example 36.

I mi ni a produce-iri la hormones.
 2SG know that they produce-PROG PRS hormones.

‘You know that they are producing the hormones.’ (**R8**, Radio Programme 3, 9th January 2023)

The English noun *hormones* functions as the direct object of a Mampulli verb phrase. The grammatical framework is entirely Mampulli, while the English noun contributes semantic content. This supports the view that content nouns are especially prone to embedding due to their referential function (Poplack, 1980; Kawaletz, 2023).

Example 37.

H: ... *i yi ti ya nya ka u piili n*
 ...2SG cond by PART see then 3SG begin CONJ

yeeri la maternity
 wearing DET maternity

‘By the time you know it, she will be wearing a maternity (dress).’

(**H**, Radio 3, 9th January 2023)

The noun *maternity* is inserted as a bare form into a noun phrase headed by the Mampulli determiner *la*. Word order and agreement patterns follow Mampulli rules, reinforcing the MLF prediction that the ML governs system morphemes and syntax, while the EL supplies lexical nouns.

Example 38.

H: *Ti'* *vɔnim* *maa* *nya* *la* *pills?*
 Medicine swallowing MOD are PRS pills?

‘Are the oral medicine pills?’

(H, Radio 3, 9th January 2023)

The noun *pills* retains its English plural marker *-s*. Its syntactic position, however, is determined by Mampulli grammar. This example demonstrates partial morphological autonomy of EL nouns within ML structures, extending the explanatory scope of the MLF model (Eppler et al., 2017; Janurik, 2017; Wakwoya & Deuchar, 2025).

Example 39.

Seesi *beni* *npa* *reversible,* *amaa* *kan* *nya* *la* *vasectomy.*
 Some there NEG reversible, but that.one is PRS vasectomy.

‘There are some which are not reversible, but that is vasectomy.’

(R8 Radio 3 9th January 2023)

The noun *vasectomy* is inserted as an uninflected EL item within a Mampulli syntactic frame. Mampulli supplies the determiner *kan* (that one) and tense marker *nya*. The case illustrates the asymmetry central to the MLF: Mampulli governs structure, while English contributes content morphemes.

Example 40.

I *yi* *yani* *I* *bu* *bori* *u* *dinyɔna*
 2SG COND say 2SG NEG like 3SG PRON then

mistake *ka* *I* *nij*
 mistake that SG made.

‘If you say you don’t like her then you have made a mistake.’

(R13 Radio Programme 5, 16th January 2023)

The English noun *mistake* functions as a content morpheme, inserted into a Mampulli clause that supplies determiners and relative clause markers (*ka I nij*). The absence of an

English article highlights the dominance of the ML. This pattern is consistent with the MLF's predictions of system morpheme blocking (Fuller, 2000; Jake et al., 2002).

Example 41.

<i>Yumni</i>	<i>ηua</i>	<i>acre</i>	<i>pīiya</i>	<i>ka</i>	<i>n</i>	<i>ya</i>	<i>kwa.</i>
Year	DEM	acre	ten	and	1SG		farm

This year, I will plough on a ten-acre land. (R16 Radio Programme 7 19th January 2023)

The noun *acre* refers to a measurement unit absent in Mampulli, hence inserted from English. The surrounding numerals and demonstratives are supplied by Mampulli, demonstrating that codeswitching occurs at the lexical level while the grammatical frame remains Mampulli.

The analysis of Examples 25 to 41 demonstrates a consistent pattern of language interaction between Mampulli and English. In every case, Mampulli provides the grammatical framework of the sentence, while English contributes individual lexical items, most often nouns. This pattern reflects the central claim of the MLF model: that the matrix language supplies the morphosyntactic structure, whereas the embedded language introduces content morphemes.

Through the dataset, Mampulli remains structurally dominant. It provides word order, agreement, tense and aspect marking, conjunctions, determiners, and other functional elements. Even when English nouns are inserted, they appear within Mampulli noun phrase positions and are governed by Mampulli grammatical rules. For example, Mampulli determiners such as *la* and possessive markers such as *ti* occur before English nouns like *Professor* or *theme*, showing that system morphemes are drawn entirely from the matrix language.

The English contribution is restricted mainly to content nouns. These nouns are often associated with specialised semantic domains, such as education (*school, Professor*), governance (*District office, DCE*), finance (*bill, amount, cedis*), technology (*computer, meter*), and medicine (*hormones, vasectomy, pills*).

A further finding concerns morphological behaviour. Many English nouns appear in their bare, uninflected form, as seen with *theme, experience*, and *mistake*. In other cases, the original English morphology is retained, such as the plural marker in *options, pills*, or *customers*. However, English system morphemes, such as articles (*a, the*), possessives, or plural markers beyond the bare stem suffix, are absent. Instead, these grammatical functions are supplied by Mampulli. This confirms the asymmetry predicted by the MLF model: system morphemes belong to the matrix language, while content morphemes may be supplied by the embedded language.

The examples also suggest a degree of flexibility in how English nouns are integrated. In some cases, the insertion is minimal, with the noun appearing unaltered in its English form. In other instances, the noun interacts more closely with Mampulli morphology, as when determiners or postpositions attach to an English noun. This shows that integration is not a simple binary process, but one that takes place along a continuum. The level of integration depends on factors such as the frequency of the word, its semantic field, and its pragmatic role in the discourse.

Largely, the findings provide strong empirical support for the MLF model in bilingual speech. Mampulli consistently functions as the matrix language, maintaining grammatical cohesion and supplying all structural elements. English, by contrast, operates as the embedded language, adding lexical precision and semantic depth without altering the grammatical system

of Mampulli. This division of labour ensures that the integrity of the matrix language is preserved, even while accommodating foreign lexical items.

In conclusion, the evidence from the Mampulli-English data illustrates the stability of the matrix language in codeswitching contexts. It shows how bilingual speakers can incorporate English words naturally and effectively into Mampulli discourse. The data also reveal that the integration of English nouns performs a structural function. Thus, the nouns are adjusted to fit the grammatical rules of Mampulli. The section therefore reinforces the explanatory power of the MLF model and contributes to understanding how grammatical integrity and lexical flexibility are balanced in bilingual communication.

5.2.2 Noun Phrases

This section discusses how English noun phrases enter Mampulli clauses. The data come from Examples 42-50. Each example shows English material inside a Mampulli grammatical frame. It adopts the MLF model. In this model, the ML supplies grammar and word order. The EL supplies open-class lexical items. In all cases here, Mampulli is the ML. English is the EL.

Example 42.

<i>Di</i>	<i>nya</i>	<i>poa-</i>	<i>ni</i>	<i>bii-</i>	<i>yetoa</i>	<i>zaa</i>	<i>n</i>	<i>zaj</i>	<i>family</i>	<i>planning.</i>
		<i>ba</i>		<i>si</i>						
INDF	is	woman-	conj	biiya-	talk	all	CONJ	take	family	planning
		PL		PL						

‘It is all about matters concerning women and children in addition to family planning.’
(R9 Radio Programme 3 9th January 2023)

The sentence *Di nya poa-ba ni bii-si yetoa zaa n zaj family planning* represents an instance of codeswitching between Mampulli and English. The matrix language of the utterance is Mampulli, which supplies the syntactic frame and grammatical structure. Within this frame, the English noun phrase *family planning* is embedded. This example illustrates

phrase-level codeswitching, in which an English lexical item is inserted into an indigenous grammatical structure without disrupting morphosyntactic integrity.

Such patterns are common in bilingual discourse. Speakers draw on English lexical resources, particularly in domains such as health and education, while retaining the morphosyntactic rules of their indigenous language. Gotti (2015) and Laoire (2016) note that bilinguals often employ English terms in technical or specialised domains, while Forker (2019) emphasises that the matrix language continues to govern clause structure in mixed utterances. In example 42, Mampulli provides the grammatical skeleton, while English contributes a semantically loaded phrase.

The MLF model provides a theoretical explanation for this phenomenon. According to the MLF, one language ML provides the morphosyntactic frame, while the other the EL contributes lexical content. In this sentence, Mampulli functions as the matrix language, and English operates as the embedded language. The English phrase *family planning* is inserted into the Mampulli clause as a noun phrase, demonstrating that bilingual speakers can combine elements from two languages in a systematic and rule-governed manner.

This analysis confirms that codeswitching is not random but is shaped by predictable linguistic principles. It reflects bilingual competence and demonstrates how English vocabulary can be integrated into indigenous grammatical systems without compromising their structural integrity.

Example 42.

<i>Hoo</i>	<i>barbering</i>	<i>shop</i>	<i>ka</i>	<i>nya</i>	<i>la</i>	<i>non-residential.</i>
For.example	barbering	shop	3SG	Is	PRS	non-residential.

'For example, a barbering shop is non-residential.' (R7 Radio Programme 2 5th January 2023)

In this example, the salient English element is the compound noun phrase *barbering shop*. It enters the Mampulli clause as a bare noun phrase, with no morphological adaptation to Mampulli. The expression lacks an English indefinite article (*a*) and shows no plural marking or classifiers. Instead, the grammatical frame is provided by Mampulli, as seen in *ka nya la* (3SG is PRS).

From the perspective of the MLF model, *barbering shop* is an embedded-language island. It is a fully formed English compound noun, consisting of the head noun *shop* and the nominal modifier *barbering*. Despite its internal English order, the determiner slot is filled according to Mampulli grammar. The absence of the article *a* reflects Mampulli rules, which permit bare nouns to encode generic reference. Thus, while the lexical material is English, the morphosyntactic framing is Mampulli.

This example shows the division of labour between languages in codeswitching. The matrix language, Mampulli, supplies functional morphemes and syntactic organisation, while the embedded language, English, provides open-class lexical items. This behaviour confirms the MLF prediction that system morphemes, such as determiners and agreement markers, originate from the matrix language (Myers-Scotton & Jake, 2017).

The portability of English compounds facilitates their integration into Mampulli discourse. Because compounds are morphologically simple and semantically compact, they can be transferred across languages with minimal structural conflict. Nevertheless, their use is constrained by Mampulli grammar, which regulates determiners and number marking.

Example 44.

<i>N</i>	<i>daa</i>	<i>bela</i>	<i>eeer...energy commission.</i>
1SG	TIME.DEATH	was	eeer...energy commission.

‘I was at eeer...energy commission.’

(R6, Radio Programme 2, 5th January 2023)

The phrase *energy commission* appears in its bare English form and is integrated into a Mampulli sentence without morphological modification. It functions as a location noun phrase, fulfilling a grammatical role within the Mampulli clause.

The MLF model predicts that nouns are the most frequently embedded elements in bilingual discourse. This is because nouns carry high semantic load and can be integrated with minimal disruption to the matrix language's syntax. Research consistently shows that nouns are the most common class of switched items (Muysken, 2022).

Institutional names such as *Energy Commission* are particularly resistant to translation, as they carry formal recognition and precision. Retaining them in English preserves clarity and avoids ambiguity. This choice also reflects pragmatic considerations, as such institutions are widely known by their English titles. In this utterance, Mampulli operates as the matrix language, providing the grammatical frame, while English functions as the embedded language, contributing the institutional noun phrase.

Example 45.

Zack: *Amaa mansaani corruption be la Youth and Sportsooo...*
 But to.me corruption is at Youth and Sportsooo
 'But for me, corruption is at the Youth and Sports (Ministry).'

(Base 1, 8th February 2023)

The clause consists largely of Mampulli elements, including *amaa* (but), *mansaani* (to me), and *be la* (is at). The embedded item is the English proper noun *Youth and Sports (Ministry)*, which is phonologically adapted through elongation (*Sportsooo*).

This example demonstrates how English is strategically inserted to designate institutions, particularly those with official titles. In Ghanaian multilingual settings, such titles typically remain in English (Akoto & Ansah, 2021; Boateng, 2023).

The MLF model explains this as a case where the matrix language (Mampulli) provides the syntactic structure, while English contributes a proper noun phrase. The absence of determiners reflects the dominance of Mampulli morphosyntax.

This supports three observations: (1) English nouns are the most frequently inserted content morphemes in codeswitching; (2) prosodic adaptation allows embedded items to match the rhythm of Mampulli; and (3) all system morphemes continue to originate from Mampulli.

Example 46.

R6:	<i>I</i>	<i>yi</i>	<i>gɔsi</i>	<i>first</i>	<i>maa,</i>	<i>service</i>	<i>charge</i>	<i>maa</i>	<i>daa</i>	<i>nyela</i>	
	2SG	if	look	first	MOD	service	charge	MOD	PST	was	
<i>for</i>	residential	<i>i</i>	<i>yi</i>	<i>daa</i>	<i>mari</i>	<i>la</i>	<i>bunsheela</i>	<i>ka</i>	<i>ti</i>	<i>booni</i>	<i>ka</i>
for	residential	2SG	COND	PST	had	ART	something	that	1PL	calling	it
<i>eer...</i>	lifeline	consumers									
eer...	lifeline	consumers									

‘If you observe, at first, the service charge was for residential (consumers) we (also) had something we call lifeline consumers.’

(R6 Radio Programme 2, 5th January 2023)

This utterance contains two English noun phrases: *service charge* and *lifeline consumers*. Both appear as semantically specialised expressions in English and are embedded without morphological adaptation into the Mampulli structure.

The phrase *service charge* functions as a compound noun, designating a specific kind of payment. Its form is transferred directly from English, indicating the absence of a precise Mampulli equivalent. The phrase *lifeline consumers* represents a fixed collocation often used in policy and socio-economic discourse. It describes a targeted group of individuals eligible for subsidised services. Both examples highlight the role of English in supplying technical or institutional vocabulary.

According to the MLF model, Mampulli acts as the matrix language, providing tense (*daa* PST), modality (*maa* MOD), personal pronouns (*I, ti*), and other functional elements. The English components are integrated as content morphemes. Importantly, their internal structure is preserved. For instance, *lifeline consumers* retains the English adjective + plural noun sequence, with no Mampulli inflection applied inside the phrase.

This supports the Embedded Language Island hypothesis (Myers-Scotton, 2002), which argues that multi-word constituents from the embedded language can enter the matrix clause intact, provided they are semantically cohesive. The fact that Mampulli determiners and tense-aspect morphology still frame the clause demonstrates that the matrix language retains control over grammatical organisation.

Thus, Example 46 illustrates how multi-word English noun phrases, especially those linked to technical or policy contexts, are integrated into Mampulli discourse. They preserve their English internal structure but function grammatically within a Mampulli frame, supporting the MLF claim that the matrix language supplies morphosyntactic organisation, while the embedded language contributes specialised lexical content. This is no different from what is found in example 47 below.

Example 47.

<i>Yinni</i>	<i>nyela</i>	<i>la</i>	<i>national</i>	<i>electrification</i>	<i>levy,</i>	<i>ni</i>
One	is	PRS	national	electrification	levy	CONJ
<i>public</i>	<i>lighting</i>	<i>levy</i>				
public	lighting	levy				

‘One is national electrification levy and the other is public lighting levy.’

(R7, Radio Programme 2, January 2023)

This example contains two English noun phrases: *national electrification levy* and *public lighting levy*. Both consist of a head noun *levy* preceded by modifiers. In each case,

the modifiers include an adjective (*national, public*) and a nominal adjunct *electrification, lighting*. The pattern [adjective + noun modifier + head noun] is a standard configuration in English noun phrase formation.

The matrix language, Mampulli, provides the grammatical frame of the clause. This is evident in the functional elements *yinni* (one) and *ni* (and). These terms establish the clause structure and conjunction. The embedded language, English, contributes the technical noun phrases.

These noun phrases are integrated intact, with no morphological modification. They function as cohesive units inside the Mampulli frame. This confirms the MLF prediction that embedded language noun phrases can be inserted without internal restructuring, while the matrix language continues to provide grammatical organisation.

The use of terms such as *levy* reflects their institutional specificity. Such technical expressions often resist translation, as their English form carries both precision and official recognition. This example demonstrates that bilingual speakers strategically insert English technical terms into Mampulli, especially in policy or economic discourse, where accuracy is essential.

Example 48.

I yi kyana n goahi commercial farmers la yaan nintoai n sung ba?
 2SG COND come CONJ look.at commercial farmers DEF 2PL MOD CONJ help PRON

‘How can you help the commercial farmers?’ (R16 Radio Programme 7, 19th January 2023)

Here, the embedded item is the English noun phrase *commercial farmers*. It exhibits the internal order of English, with an adjective, *commercial* modifying a plural noun, *farmers*. The phrase is inserted as an intact unit, without Mampulli inflection.

The MLF model accounts for this by treating *commercial farmers* as an Embedded Language Island. It preserves its English morphology and word order, but it is positioned within the Mampulli clause according to Mampulli syntax. This is shown by the determiner *la*, which marks definiteness. Although *commercial farmers* is English, the determiner system comes from Mampulli.

This example illustrates two points of theoretical significance. First, it shows that EL islands can be modified at their edges by ML system morphemes, as in the addition of *la*. Second, it reinforces the principle that content morphemes (nouns, adjectives) may come from the embedded language, while system morphemes (determiners, tense, aspect) are supplied by the matrix language.

Thus, while *commercial farmers* remains structurally English internally, it is grammatically governed by Mampulli. This balance demonstrates the interaction between the two languages and supports the MLF claim that the matrix language regulates the morphosyntactic frame.

Example 49.

C4:	<i>Ti</i> 1SG	<i>daa</i> TIME.DEATH	<i>ti</i> ever	<i>mari</i> had	<i>la</i> ART	<i>pole</i> pole	<i>problem...</i> problem	<i>ka</i> CONJ	
	<i>later</i> later	<i>electrician</i> electrician	<i>maa</i> MOD	<i>calli</i> called	<i>ka</i> CONJ	<i>ba</i> 3PL	<i>yani</i> said	<i>ba</i> 3PL	<i>yim</i> ignore
	<i>ti</i> our	<i>yala</i> matter	<i>ni.</i> inside,	<i>so</i> So	<i>ti</i> PL	<i>toasi</i> spoke	<i>nti</i> and.give	<i>yiya</i> house-PL	<i>ata</i> three
	<i>ka</i> CONJ	<i>ti</i> 1PL	<i>toosi</i> contribute	<i>dan</i> and.bought	<i>electricity</i> electricity	<i>pole</i> pole			

‘We ever had a problem with an (electricity) pole, and when the electrician called (VRA office), they said they should ignore us. So, three houses agreed to contribute and bought an electricity pole.’

(C4 Radio Programme 2, 5th January 2023)

This utterance contains several English lexical items: *pole problem*, *electrician*, and *electric pole*. These are inserted as bare nouns or compounds without determiners or English plural inflections.

The definite marker *la* and the plural suffix *-ya* are supplied by Mampulli. For example, *mari la pole problem* shows that definiteness is expressed through Mampulli morphology, not through the English article *the*. Similarly, *yi-ya* ('house-PL') demonstrates that plural marking is carried by the Mampulli system, not by the English plural suffix *-s*.

Internally, however, the compounds reflect English word order. In *pole problem*, the right-hand noun *problem* functions as the head, following English compounding rules. In *electric pole*, the adjective *electric* precedes the noun, consistent with English syntax. These embedded language islands are morphologically enclosed within Mampulli, but internally retain English ordering.

This illustrates the division of labour predicted by the MLF: English provides lexical heads, while Mampulli supplies system morphemes. System morphemes such as determiners, definiteness markers, and plural suffixes consistently come from Mampulli. English morphology is systematically excluded.

Thus, Example 49 provides evidence for the SMP: even when English words serve as lexical heads, the surrounding morphology is controlled by Mampulli.

Example 50.

<i>Nhɔn</i>	<i>nya</i>	<i>ti</i>	<i>regional</i>	<i>director</i>	<i>for</i>	<i>land</i>	<i>use</i>	<i>and</i>
3SG-PRON	is	POSS	regional	director	for	land	use	and
<i>special</i>	<i>planning</i>	<i>authority</i>	<i>maa.</i>					
special	planning	authority	INT.					

‘He is the regional director for land use and special planning authority.’
(H, Radio Programme 15th December 2023)

This example contains the complex English noun phrase *regional director for land use and special planning authority*. It is inserted in full, with no morphological adaptation, into a Mampulli clause.

The matrix language frame is established by Mampulli. The subject pronoun *Nhɔn* (he), the copula *nya* (is), and the particle *maa* are all Mampulli system morphemes. The embedded language, English, contributes the technical noun phrase, which retains its internal structure.

The example demonstrates the two core principles of the MLF model. First, the Morpheme Order Principle: the sentence follows Mampulli word order, with subject + copula + complement. Second, the System Morpheme Principle: all grammatical morphemes, including pronoun, copula, and final particle, are sourced from Mampulli. English contributes only content morphemes.

This case shows that codeswitching is systematic. The matrix language provides grammatical order and functional markers, while English contributes specialised terminology. This reflects bilingual speakers’ ability to integrate complex English expressions into Mampulli discourse without disturbing the matrix grammar.

5.2.3 Embedded Nativised Nouns

This section presents and discusses the findings related to embedded nativised English nouns in the present data. The analysis focuses on how English nouns have been integrated into Mampulli structures while undergoing varying degrees of phonological and morphological adaptations. The results demonstrate how these embedded forms reflect both linguistic creativity and the dynamic interaction between the two languages. By examining patterns of integration, this section deal with how speakers negotiate meaning, identity, and grammatical compatibility within bilingual discourse.

Example 51.

<i>I</i>	<i>yi</i>	<i>tsanji</i>	<i>international</i>	<i>market</i>	<i>ni</i>	<i>ti</i>	<i>da</i>	<i>metredima</i>	<i>an</i>
2sg	cond	go	international	market	ni	ti	da	metredima	an
<i>daa</i>	<i>nya</i>	<i>sheem</i>	<i>a</i>	<i>laan</i>	<i>pa</i>	<i>lala.</i>			
PST	is	how	2PRON-non.person	again	NEG	same			

‘If you go to the international market to buy meters, their prices are not the same as we knew.’

(R5 Radio Programme 2 5th January 2023)

In this example, the identifiable English lexical item is *metre*, realised in the pluralised form *metres* within the compound *metredima* (metre-PL). Here, the lexical root is supplied by English, while the plural suffix *-dima* is provided by Mampulli.

This represents a typical case of embedded-language noun integration within a matrix-language frame, as predicted by the MLF (Bullock & Toribio, 2019; Mugo & Ongo’nda, 2017; Myers-Scotton, 2002). The English noun retains its phonological form but fully participates in Mampulli morphosyntax. The plural marking follows Mampulli rules, supporting the MLF’s claim that inflectional morphology is determined by the matrix language.

At the syntactic level, the sentence structure is clearly Mampulli. This is visible in the verb forms *tsanji* (go), pronominal elements *ti* (we), *an* (they), and aspectual particles *daa*

(past). These system morphemes establish the morphosyntactic frame into which the English noun *metres* is inserted.

Thus, Mampulli operates as the ML, determining clause structure and supplying grammatical morphemes. English functions as the EL, contributing the lexical noun *metre*. The derived form *metredima* demonstrates how the ML attaches its morphological affixes to an EL stem, a process also documented in other African multilingual settings (Emam & Mekonnen, 2022; Ihemere, 2016a; Mugo & Ongo'nda, 2017; Myers-Scotton, 1997).

In summary, Example 51 shows that English nouns can be nativised into Mampulli through suffixation, while the ML continues to regulate syntax, agreement, and discourse organisation.

Example 52.

<i>Ti</i>	<i>bori</i>	<i>ligri</i>	<i>ni</i>	<i>ti</i>	<i>da</i>	<i>transformerdima</i> .
1PL	want	money	to	1PL	buy	transformerdima .

'We want money to buy transformers.' (R7 Radio Programme 2, 5th January 2023)

The noun *transformerdima* exemplifies the integration of an English-derived noun into a Mampulli sentence. The lexical root *transformer* originates in English, while the plural marker *-dima* is supplied by Mampulli.

Following the MLF (Myers-Scotton, 1993, 2002), Mampulli serves as the ML, providing the grammatical structure through pronouns *ti* (we), verb forms *bori* (want), and particles *ni* (to). English provides the EL content noun, which is adapted morphologically by Mampulli pluralisation. This example demonstrates how the clause conforms to the structural conventions of Mampulli, which, typically follows a subject *ti*, (we), verb *bori*, (want), object *ligri*, (money), followed by the complement *transformerdima*, (transformers). The embedded noun integrates seamlessly into the Mampulli noun phrase position without disrupting the

overall clause pattern. This observation supports the predictions of both the SMP and the MOP as outlined by Myers-Scotton (1993). Specifically, while the EL noun contributes the required lexical meaning, all system morphemes, such as agreement markers and clause-level connectors, are supplied by the matrix language, Mampulli. Such patterns have also been confirmed in more recent analyses of codeswitching, where the host language maintains control over grammatical structure, and the inserted elements provide only semantic load without altering morphosyntactic rules (Farid, 2019; Marjie, 2022). However, while such findings affirm the effectiveness of the MLF model, they also raise questions about its explanatory limits, particularly in cases of more fluid bilingual practices where boundaries between matrix and embedded languages are less rigid. Therefore, the present data not only confirm established principles but also point towards the need for refining theoretical models to better account for dynamic multilingual interactions.

The affixation of *-dima* further illustrates cross-linguistic adaptation: English nouns are assimilated into the Mampulli morphological system in the same way as native nouns. Comparable processes are reported in Turkish-English (Kemaloglu-Er, 2018) and Spanish-English bilingual speech (Stefanich & Cabrelli, 2018; Stefanich et al., 2019). Therefore, Example 52 confirms the asymmetry predicted by the MLF: the ML supplies grammar and structure, while the EL supplies lexical items that are integrated through morphological nativisation.

Example 53.

R6: *Ti meterdim maa nya la balibu balibu nnya a.*
 1PL meter-PL MOD are ART different different are 3PL-INANIMATE

‘Our meters are of different kinds.’ (R6 Radio Programme 2, 5th January 2023)

Here, the noun *metre* is again borrowed from English, but the pluralisation is not English (*metres*). Instead, Mampulli plural suffix *-dim* is attached, producing *meterdim*. This illustrates a key MLF principle: the EL contributes the lexical stem, while the ML contributes the inflectional morphology (Myers-Scotton, 2002).

The NP shows further ML dominance: the definite article *la* and the reduplicated modifier *balibu balibu* (different different) are both Mampulli forms. Their placement and reduplication reflect Mampulli NP structure, not English NP order. Thus, the noun is framed entirely by ML system morphemes. The use of reduplication (*balibu balibu*) is a productive Mampulli strategy for emphasis, which does not exist in English morphology. Its co-occurrence with the English-derived noun reinforces the claim that the ML governs both morphological and discourse-level structuring.

From a theoretical perspective, this evidence supports the MLF while also suggesting refinements. The model assumes that EL content morphemes can host ML affixes. To explain this systematically, we may propose an Affixal-Host Constraint: EL stems can receive ML affixes if the ML regularly employs affixation in its own inflectional paradigm. Since Mampulli plural marking is suffixal, English stems like *metre* can serve as hosts for *-dim*. This refinement explains the nativisation of English nouns in Mampulli and predicts variation across languages. For instance, in MLs that mark plural with clitics rather than affixes, EL nouns would more likely bear clitics or remain unmarked. Thus, Example 53 demonstrates morphological integration under MLF principles, while also motivating a refined model that captures structural conditions for cross-linguistic affixation.

Example 54.

<i>Yalmanɲni</i>	<i>ti</i>	<i>youthdim</i>	<i>maa</i>	<i>paasim</i>	<i>suguru.</i>
Truth	POSSADJ	youth-PL	maa	add	patience.

‘Truthfully, our youth should be patient.’ (R12 Radio Programme 5, 16th January 2023)

The noun phrase *ti youthdim* (our youths) provides a clear case of EL noun integration within an ML grammatical frame. Its internal structure is [Possessive Adjective *ti* (our) + Noun (*youth*) + Plural Marker (*-dim*)].

Here, *youth* originates from English, but its plural is not the English zero-plural *youth*. Instead, the Mampulli plural suffix *-dim* is applied, creating *youthdim*. This demonstrates that the EL noun has been fully assimilated into the Mampulli morphological system, in line with the predictions of the MLF (Myers-Scotton, 2002).

The possessive *ti* and the modal particle *maa* are Mampulli forms. They anchor the phrase structurally within Mampulli grammar. The EL noun therefore appears only as a lexical root, while all grammatical markers come from the ML.

In summary, Examples 51-54 show how English nouns can be nativised through Mampulli morphology and integrated seamlessly into Mampulli noun phrases. The evidence reinforces the MLF claim that the ML governs grammar, while EL nouns function as content words shaped by ML morphosyntactic rules. This pattern shows morphological congruence: English nouns can be inserted only if they align with Mampulli morphological processes. Such congruence ensures that codeswitched utterances remain grammatical, with the ML dictating agreement and structure. The asymmetry is again evident: Mampulli provides the grammar, while English supplies content vocabulary. This supports the MLF's distinction between system morphemes, ML and content morphemes, EL.

5. 2. 3 Discussion

Throughout the examples, Mampulli sets the clause structure. It provides subject marking, tense-aspect-mood, copulas, conjunctions, and determiners. For instance, *ka nya la* '3SG is PRS' and *daa* 'PST' come from Mampulli. So do coordinators like *ni* (and). English

items appear mainly as nouns or noun phrases. They fill lexical slots. They do not bring English system morphology. This supports the System Morpheme Principle and the Morpheme Order Principle in the MLF (Myers-Scotton, 1993; Myers-Scotton & Jake, 2017). The embedded English noun structures include single lexical noun, noun phrases, proper names, institutional titles and technical and policy collocations.

In Example 43, *barbering shop* is a compound with English internal order. It lacks the English article *a*. The Mampulli frame controls determination and copular structure. The compound functions as an EL island. Its internal structure is English, but its integration is ruled by Mampulli (Backus & Demirçay, 2021; Myers-Scotton, 2002). Similarly, in Example 49, the phrases see *pole problem*, *electrician*, and *electric pole* maintain English compounding and modifier order. However, definiteness and number are marked according to Mampulli. The definite article *la* and plural *-ya* appear where required by Mampulli grammar, while the English *the* and the plural *-s* are absent. This pattern supports the claim that late system morphemes come from the ML (Myers-Scotton, 1993, 2002).

Furthermore, proper names and institutional titles often appear as embedded elements in the Mampulli-English codeswitching data. In Example, the phrase, *energy commission* is inserted while, Example 45 features *Youth and Sports (Ministry)*, with a prosodic stretch in *Sportsooo* for emphasis. Example 50 contains a more complex institutional title: *regional director for land use and special planning authority*. Such names are generally maintained in English in Ghanaian public discourse. Speakers tend to retain official forms for the sake of precision and social recognition, avoiding translations that may compromise clarity or authenticity (Poplack, 2017).

Additionally, the examples studied show English technical and policy-related expressions are embedded within Mampulli discourse, emphasising the structural and functional dynamics of

such codeswitching patterns. The analysis demonstrates that English expressions such as *service charge*, *lifeline consumers*, *national electrification levy*, and *public lighting levy* operate as fixed or semi-fixed units within policy and bureaucratic registers. These expressions are inserted into Mampulli clauses as intact multi-word sequences, retaining their internal English noun phrase structure while receiving grammatical marking for tense, aspect, mood, and person from Mampulli. This distribution of linguistic labour confirms the dominance of the Mampulli grammatical framework and supports the Embedded Language Island Hypothesis, which proposes that multi-word nominal expressions can be incorporated as cohesive lexical units from another language (Gardani, 2022).

The preservation of English noun phrase structure within Mampulli sentences demonstrates the stability of technical and institutional terms in multilingual contexts. In policy communication, especially within radio and public education discourse, English expressions related to governance, taxation, and public administration are often maintained in their original forms. This is because such terms carry institutional authority and are widely recognised across linguistic communities (Ansah & Orfson-Offei, 2022). However, these English elements are framed by Mampulli grammatical and connective structures, ensuring that the discourse remains accessible and meaningful to local audiences. This hybrid strategy allows complex policy information, such as levies or tariffs, to be transmitted accurately while remaining culturally and linguistically resonant.

The data also indicate a systematic division of labour within mixed noun phrases. English supplies the lexical core, often in the form of compounds or fixed collocations, while Mampulli contributes morphological features at the boundaries, including definiteness markers (*la*), plural suffixes (*-ya*), and case-like particles. English articles and plural *-s* are consistently omitted, and double marking is avoided. This pattern follows the Blocking Hypothesis, which

posits that the matrix language constrains the morphological contribution of the embedded language at phrase boundaries (Myers-Scotton & Jake, 2017). The data therefore suggest that Mampulli maintains control of determiner and agreement systems, preserving grammatical cohesion within the clause.

Across examples, nouns emerge as the most frequent embedded elements, reflecting their semantic weight and relative independence from grammatical restrictions. Compared with verbs and function words, nouns are more readily integrated across clause types, supporting existing findings that they are the most inserted lexical items in contact situations (Blokzijl et al., 2017; Gardner-Chloros, 2020; Muysken, 2022). The frequent embedding of proper names and specialised technical terms further illustrates their adaptability and communicative salience.

Comparable patterns have been observed in other multilingual domains such as radio, healthcare, and professional communication, where codeswitching serves deliberate communicative and social purposes. Studies of bilingual radio advertising, for instance, show that English-Spanish alternation can index bilingual identity and enhance audience engagement (Derrick, 2024). Similarly, research on doctor-patient communication in multilingual healthcare settings demonstrates that codeswitching facilitates understanding and reduces epistemic distance between participants (Belaskri & Drew, 2023; Chen, 2025; Wood, 2019). These parallels suggest that Mampulli-English codeswitching operates as a purposeful and strategic practice, balancing institutional precision with identity, clarity and social alignment.

In summary, the integration of English technical and policy collocations within Mampulli discourse illustrates a patterned, rule-governed process. The Mampulli matrix language maintains syntactic and morphological control, while English contributes lexical specificity. This interaction exemplifies broader bilingual strategies observed across African

and global multilingual contexts (Bullock & Toribio, 2009; Muysken, 2022), demonstrating that codeswitching is not a random alternation but a structured communicative resource that sustains both linguistic and social coherence.

5.2.4 Implications for the MLF model

The analysis of the corpus lends strong support to the central predictions of the MLF model. Firstly, the MOP is consistently upheld, as the positioning of subjects, copulas, and predicates follows the syntactic rules of Mampulli, with no deviations observed (cf. Myers-Scotton, 2002; Wei, 2020). Secondly, the SMP is evident in the fact that all system morphemes, including determiners, definiteness markers, pluralisation, tense-aspect-modality (TAM) markers, and conjunctions, are drawn exclusively from Mampulli. Thirdly, the Content Morpheme Hypothesis is supported by the prominent role of English in supplying lexical content, most frequently in the form of nouns and compounds, which appear both as single lexical items and as multi-word units. Importantly, the data extend these observations by highlighting the widespread use of multi-word English islands, such as compounds (e.g., *barbering shop*), collocations (*service charge*, *lifeline consumers*), policy-related noun phrases (*national electrification levy*), and professional or bureaucratic titles (*regional director for land use and special planning authority*). While the MLF framework already allows for such islands, the present findings underline not only their frequency in spontaneous public discourse but also their seamless integration with Mampulli morphosyntactic boundaries. This suggests that English islands are not merely peripheral insertions but constitute a robust and recurrent structural feature of bilingual speech (Bullock et al., 2018; Gardner-Chloros, 2025; Treffers-Daller, 2025).

5.2.5 Conclusion

The analysis of embedded English noun structures in the data shows a stable pattern. Mampulli provides the grammatical frame. English supplies the lexical core of many noun phrases. English items are often compounds, collocations, or proper names. They enter as EL islands with English internal order. Mampulli attaches system morphology at the edges. English articles and plural markers are absent. Determination and number follow Mampulli rules.

These findings confirm the MLF model in this speech community. They also emphasise the portability of English NPs in technical and institutional domains. The data suggest that analyses of codeswitching must pay close attention to NP edges. This is where matrix-language morphology anchors mixed phrases. The result is coherent, economical, and precise bilingual speech. It is not random mixture. It is a structured grammar with clear roles for each language.

5.3 Verbs

Verbs play a vital role in assigning subject complements within clauses across most language systems. In mixed constituents, verbs are significant due to their function in assigning thematic roles. As outlined in the MLF (Myers-Scotton, 2005; Ron Simango, 2011), verbs serve as key indicators of language dominance within bilingual constructions. In the data from recorded radio programmes and the bases examined, verb structures appear in three distinct forms: lexical verbs in their bare form, nativised verbs and verb phrases.

5.3.1 Lexical Verbs

This section presents bare English verbs integrated into Mampulli frames.

Example 55.

Tin ku yali sheem nya-la ban connect koom nniɲni yiya ni la
 3PRON just said DEM is-PRS DEM connect water into houses PAT PAT
koom maa ligri paasi-ya ni.
 water MOD money increase-PST PRS

‘What we just said is that the bill for those who connect water for household use has increased.’ (R3 Radio Programme 1, 5th January 2023)

In this example, the pronoun *tin* (we) functions as the subject, signalling person and number according to Mampulli grammar. The particle *ku* (just) operates as an aspectual marker, while *yeli* (said) is a native verb inflected according to Mampulli conventions. The demonstrative *sheem nya-la* (that is) introduces the complement clause, and *ban* (those) marks the referent group. The inserted English verb *connect* appears in its bare, uninflected form. Crucially, it does not carry English tense or aspect morphology (e.g., *connected* or *connecting*), and it does not require English auxiliaries. Instead, it is accommodated within a Mampulli predicate slot, showing that the morphosyntactic frame remains governed by Mampulli. The following elements, *koom nniɲni yiya ni la* (water into houses), illustrate noun phrase structure and postpositional marking typical of Mampulli syntax. In the second clause, *koom maa ligri paasi-ya ni*, the verb *paasi-ya* (increased) is a fully inflected Mampulli verb, marked for past tense. This contrast highlights the asymmetry: while English contributes unmarked content verbs, Mampulli supplies the system morphemes and inflectional material. From the perspective of the MLF model (Myers-Scotton, 1993, 2002), this sentence represents an EL Island: the English verb is inserted as a lexical item, but the morphosyntactic organisation is strictly controlled by Mampulli.

Example 56.

Ban ya niŋ sheim n restructure ti debt.
 They AUX do how CONJ restructure POSS debt.

‘How they will restructure our debt.’ (R12 Radio Programme 5, 16th January 2023)

Here, the subject pronoun *ban* (they) establishes agreement according to Mampulli. The auxiliary marker *ya* provides future aspect, and the light verb *niŋ* (do) contributes functional verbal support. The WH-element *sheim n* (how) introduces interrogative structure. Within this tightly Mampulli-governed frame, the English verb *restructure* appears uninflected, without English morphological marking. Its placement confirms that the predicate structure is still guided by Mampulli grammar. Finally, *ti* (our) is a possessive pronoun of Mampulli origin, and *debt* is an English noun borrowed as a content item. The key point is that the auxiliary, possessive, and structural connectors all come from Mampulli, while English provides the semantic load. This reflects Myers-Scotton’s (2002) prediction that open-class elements (verbs, nouns) may come from the EL, while closed-class items and morphosyntactic patterning remain controlled by the ML.

Example 57

I yi yua n-naai, ti yi create la account n-niŋ i ligri
 2SG if pay and.finish 1PL HAB create ART account and.put your money

maa n-niŋ ka zugu.
 MOD and.put it head.

‘If you finish payment, we create an account and credit your money on it’.

(R3, Radio Programme 1, 15 December 2022)

In this utterance, *yi* (if) functions as a conditional marker, while *n-naai* (finish) provides aspectual meaning. The subject pronoun *ti* (we) anchors the clause in Mampulli grammar. The English verb *create* appears uninflected, demonstrating that it has not been assimilated into English morphological rules. It occurs within a serial verb construction: *create la account n-niŋ i ligri*, literally (create the account and put your money). Such verb-chaining is characteristic of Mampulli and other West African languages (Aïkhenval’d, 2018; Lovstrand, 2021). The second verb *n-niŋ* (put) is Mampulli, showing that the EL verb coexists within an

ML-structured sequence. The modal marker *maa* and connective *ka* are additional system morphemes drawn from Mampulli. This supports the MLF model: Mampulli provides the syntactic frame, while English supplies semantic content (Jake et al., 2002).

Example 58.

C1: *Di yi niḡ lala shee ka i explain ni i baḡsim zaa, n-ti*
 3SG if do that must PART 2SG explain with your knowledge all and-give

customer maa.
 customer MOD.

‘If it happens that (way) you must explain with all your knowledge to the customers.’
 (C1 Radio Programme 2, January 2023)

Here, *di* (it) marks the subject, and *yi* (if) again functions as a conditional. The light verb *niḡ* (do) contributes functional scaffolding, while *lala shee ka* (that must) provides modal and aspectual information. Within this Mampulli frame, the English verb *explain* is inserted in bare form. It lacks any inflection such as (explains) or (explained). The surrounding Mampulli elements, auxiliary *i*, connective *ni*, possessive markers, and modal particle *shee*, provide the grammatical control. Thus, the English verb serves as a semantic insertion rather than a grammatical operator. This is consistent with the MLF model’s distinction between content morphemes from the EL and system morphemes from the ML (Muysken, 2000; Myers-Scotton, 1993).

Example 59.

U yi tsana n wire n naai, u ya tsanḡni n bua ḡḡan
 3sg COND come CONJ wire CONJ finish, 3SG AUX go CONJ find a.person.who

stampiri ka u tsana n niḡ inspection.
 stamps CONJ 3SG come CONJ do inspection.

‘If he finishes wiring, he will go and find the person who stamps to come and conduct inspection.’ (R5 Radio Programme 2, 5th January 2023)

In this case, *u* (he) is the subject, *yi* marks conditionality, and *tsana* (come) and *tsanḡni* (go) are native Mampulli verbs marking motion and aspect. The English verb *wire* appears in

base form, with no tense or agreement marking, integrated within the sequence. The verb *buu* (find) is Mampulli, showing the ML control of predicate structure. More interestingly, *stampiri* appears to be a hybrid form: it originates from the English noun *stamp* but is suffixed with a Mampulli verbal marker *-ri*, suggesting partial morphological adaptation. This illustrates how English elements may sometimes undergo modification when embedded in Mampulli, unlike the bare forms of *wire* or *create*. The construction exemplifies serial verb sequencing, typical of Mampulli grammar. Again, Mampulli contributes the system morphemes and verb chaining structure, while English provides lexical verbs.

The data analysed in this section demonstrate that Mampulli consistently functions as the ML in the bilingual utterances, providing the grammatical framework within which English lexical items are embedded. Across all examples, the morphosyntactic structure of the clauses, including word order, functional morphemes, and inflectional material, originates from Mampulli. Subject pronouns such as *tin* (we) and *ban* (they), auxiliaries like *ya* (future marker), light verbs such as *nij* (do), and aspectual or modal markers including *ku* (just), *shee* ('must'), and *maa* (modal) collectively shape the clause structure. These items reflect the core grammatical resources of Mampulli, ensuring that the overall syntactic frame remains intact even when English verbs are introduced.

The English lexical verbs, *connect*, *restructure*, *create*, *explain*, and *wire*, all appear in their bare, uninflected forms. They do not take tense or aspect markers, nor do they participate in English subject-verb agreement. Instead, these grammatical categories are realised through Mampulli elements. For instance, in *Tin ku yali ... ban connect koom nniñni yiya ni la koom maa ligri paasi-ya ni* (What we just said is that the bill for those who connect water for household use has increased), *connect* is an English insertion that occupies a verb slot in a predicate framed entirely by Mampulli grammar, while *paasi-ya* (increased) bears the native

past-tense suffix. Similarly, in *Ban ya niŋ ... restructure ti debt* (How they will restructure our debt), the English verb *restructure* is semantically central, but its integration relies on Mampulli's auxiliary, light verb, and possessive marking. This pattern exemplifies the MOP and the SMP (Myers-Scotton, 1993), confirming that system morphemes and morphosyntactic structure derive exclusively from the ML.

Notably, the presence of English verbs within serial verb constructions, a characteristic of Mampulli syntax, reinforces this argument. In ... *ti yi create la account n-niŋ i ligri maa n-niŋ ka zugu* (we create an account and credit your money on it), *create* occurs as the first verb in a sequence followed by *n-niŋ* (put), forming a verb chain typical of Mampulli and other West African languages (Aïkhenval'd, 2018; Lovestrand, 2021). Here, English contributes the lexical meaning of the initial action, but the grammatical structure, including verb ordering and clause linkage, remains under Mampulli control. Similarly, *wire* in *U yi tsana n wire n naai ...* (If he finishes wiring...) appears as a bare EL verb within a chain of Mampulli verbs *tsana* (come), *tsaŋni* (go), *bua* (find), underscoring the ML's dominance over predicate structure.

5.3.2 Embedded Nativised English Verbs

This section examines the use of embedded nativised English verbs in the selected data. These verbs represent English lexical items that have been adapted to fit the morphological and syntactic patterns Mampulli. The process of nativisation involves phonological, and morphological modifications, allowing English verbs to function naturally within indigenous grammatical systems. Analysing the following examples reveals how language contact influences verb formation, codeswitching, and linguistic creativity in bilingual contexts.

Example 60.

I mi ni a produce-ri la hormones.
 2SG know that they produce-PROG PRS hormones.

‘You know that they are producing the hormones.’
 (R8 Radio Programme 3, 9th January 2023)

This sentence exemplifies the integration of an English lexical verb into a Mampulli morphosyntactic frame. Each element performs a distinct grammatical function that reflects Mampulli’s structural dominance. The initial token *I* (you, second person singular) marks the subject of the main clause. It is followed by *mi* (know), the main predicate, which carries the epistemic stance of the speaker. The complementiser *ni a* (that they) introduces the subordinate clause and identifies its subject as a third-person plural entity.

Within the embedded clause, the English lexical verb *produce* appears in its bare stem form. Significantly, this stem lacks any English morphological marking for tense, aspect, or subject-verb agreement. Instead, these grammatical features are provided by Mampulli morphology. The progressive aspect is indicated by the suffix *-ri*, which attaches directly to the English root to yield *produce-ri*, signalling an ongoing action. The present tense is marked separately by the Mampulli particle *la*, which functions as a tense/aspect operator within the clause. The final token *hormones* serves as the direct object and completes the predicate.

This morphological configuration shows that the English verb is fully integrated into the Mampulli verbal system. According to the MLF model (Myers-Scotton, 1993, 2002), verbs from an EL enter bilingual clauses as bare lexical stems, while the ML supplies all system morphemes, including inflectional markers for tense and aspect. The form *produce-ri*

exemplifies this prediction precisely. Mampulli provides the morphosyntactic frame and all functional morphology, while English contributes only the semantic content of the verb.

The syntactic positioning of *produce-ri* within the complement clause further reinforces Mampulli's structural control. The verb follows the complementiser *ni a* ('that they'), as is typical of Mampulli clausal order, and occupies the slot reserved for main verbs in subordinate clauses. This placement, combined with the use of Mampulli inflection, demonstrates that the verb behaves like a native Mampulli verb despite its English origin.

This pattern supports the SMP and the MOP of the MLF model. All system morphemes, such as *-ri* (progressive), *la* (present), and the complementiser *ni a*, are provided by Mampulli. The English root *produce* functions exclusively as a content morpheme. Such findings indicate that code-switching in this context is not random or unstructured. Rather, it is governed by the grammatical rules of the ML, as seen in similar findings across other bilingual settings (Doğruöz et al., 2023; Winata et al., 2022; Panhwar & Buriro, 2020).

Furthermore, this integration illustrates how bilingual speakers manage grammatical organisation efficiently. By embedding English lexical material into a Mampulli frame, speakers maintain the coherence and predictability of the utterance. The resulting clause is fully grammatical in Mampulli and does not exhibit any syntactic disruption. This supports the argument that codeswitching is a systematic linguistic phenomenon that relies on the dominance of one language's grammatical framework (Muntendam & Parafita Couto, 2024; Myers-Scotton & Jake, 2017). In summary, Example 60 provides strong empirical evidence for the MLF model. It demonstrates that the ML governs morphosyntactic structure, while the EL supplies lexical items that are morphologically adapted to the ML's requirements. This case also highlights how the MLF framework can account for both morphological integration and syntactic consistency in bilingual speech.

Example 61.

Ti mi ni pampayua ti zaa useri la momo.
 1PL know DEM now 1PL all use- PROG PRS momo.

‘We all know that now everyone uses momo.’

(R5 Radio Programme 2, 5th January 2023)

This sentence illustrates how an English verb is integrated within a Mampulli clause and subjected to Mampulli grammatical rules. The subject *ti* (we, first person singular/plural) introduces the speaker. The predicate *mi* (know) marks the speaker’s epistemic stance, followed by the demonstrative *ni pampayua* (that now), which introduces the temporal frame and signals the beginning of the complement clause.

Within the complement clause, *ti zaa* (we all) specifies the subject of the embedded proposition. The verb phrase *useri la momo* is particularly significant: it combines the English lexical root *use* with the Mampulli progressive suffix *-ri*, yielding *useri*, indicating ongoing habitual action. The tense/aspect particle *la* marks present tense, while *momo* is the object of the verb.

The morphosyntactic configuration of *useri* mirrors that of *produce-ri* in Example 41: the English stem appears without English inflection and receives all its grammatical marking from Mampulli. This conforms to the predictions of the MLF model (Myers-Scotton, 1993, 2002), where the ML, Mampulli provides both the clause-level syntax and the inflectional morphology, while the EL, English contributes only the lexical content.

Phonologically, the adapted form *useri* also illustrates how embedded verbs undergo local modification to fit Mampulli’s syllable structure, supporting Muysken’s (2011) observation that phonotactic adaptation often accompanies morphological integration in bilingual speech. The placement of the verb phrase at the end of the clause reflects Mampulli’s

word order preferences, further demonstrating that the clause maintains full syntactic conformity with the ML.

This example, therefore, reinforces the claim that codeswitching in this context involves structural embedding rather than free alternation. It also provides evidence that the MLF framework's distinction between content morphemes from the EL and system morphemes from the ML holds true for verbal integration in Mampulli-English bilingual discourse (Akinremi, 2016; Myers-Scotton & Jake, 2017; Myers-Scotton, 2017).

Example 62.

Diniŋ tsa ka ti vote-ri NDC maa.
 That why is 1PL vote-PROG NDC DET.
 'That is why we vote the NDC.' (R12 Radio 5, 16th January 2023)

This sentence illustrates another instance of a hybrid verb form where the English root *vote* is fully integrated into a Mampulli grammatical environment. The sentence begins with *diniŋ* (that), a Mampulli demonstrative functioning as a discourse connector. The token *tsa* is a Mampulli copular verb equivalent to English *is*, establishing a predicative relation between the topic and the comment. The particle *ka* (why) links the reason to the statement.

The subject *ti* (we), (first person plural) is followed by *vote-ri*, a hybrid verb form consisting of the English root *vote* and the Mampulli progressive aspect marker *-ri*, signalling the act of voting as an ongoing or repeated activity. The direct object *NDC* (a political party) and the determiner *maa* complete the clause.

The form *vote-ri* exemplifies deep morphological integration, as the English root has been incorporated into Mampulli's verbal system, adopting its inflectional morphology. This reflects the SMP of the MLF model: all system morphemes, including tense, aspect, determiners, and copulas, come from the ML. English contributes only the semantic core of the verb.

This integration supports the argument that codeswitching here is not simply juxtaposition of two languages but a structurally organised process in which the ML retains grammatical authority (Myers-Scotton, 2002; Muysken, 2000). It further illustrates that even semantically significant verbs from English (e.g., *vote* in a political context) are fully subordinated to Mampulli grammar, confirming that Mampulli is the structural ‘host’ of the utterance.

Example 63.

Ti teacher-dim maa teach-iri la suṇa.
 Our teacher-PL MOD teach-PROG PAT well.

‘Our teachers are teaching well.’ (R14 Radio Programme 6, 18th January 2023)

This sentence demonstrates the full morphosyntactic embedding of English nouns and verbs into a Mampulli grammatical structure. The possessive pronoun *ti* (our) introduces the subject noun phrase. The head noun *teacher* is from English but takes the Mampulli plural suffix *-dim*, yielding *teacher-dim*, a clear example of morphological adaptation. The modal particle *maa* follows, marking necessity or modality.

The predicate *teach-iri* combines the English verb root *teach* with the Mampulli progressive aspect suffix *-iri*, denoting an ongoing teaching activity. The particle *la* marks the patient role of the following adverb *suṇa* (well).

This construction exemplifies the asymmetrical relationship predicted by the MLF model: all system morphemes, plural marking, modality, aspect, and argument structure, are provided by Mampulli, while English contributes only lexical content. The English items are not merely inserted; they are morphologically integrated into the ML’s inflectional paradigm, supporting the SMP and demonstrating the dominance of Mampulli grammar. Such integration underscores the adaptability of Mampulli as a matrix language and illustrates that frequent English insertions do not threaten its structural integrity. Instead, they enhance lexical

expressiveness while maintaining morphosyntactic consistency (Myers-Scotton, 2002; Muysken, 2000).

The analysis of Examples 60-63 provides compelling evidence for the applicability of the MLF model to Mampulli-English bilingual speech. Throughout these examples, English lexical items, predominantly verbs, are systematically integrated into Mampulli clauses through morphological and syntactic adaptation. In each case, the English verb appears as a bare stem, devoid of English inflection, and receives all tense, aspect, and agreement markers from Mampulli (*produceri, useri, voteri, teachiri*). This pattern is consistent with the SMP and the MOP of the MLF model (Myers-Scotton, 1993, 2002), which predict that system morphemes must originate from the ML and that its word order determines clause structure.

Significantly, the syntactic frame remains entirely Mampulli in all examples. Clause-level features, such as complementisers, *ni, a*, conditional markers, *yi*, modifiers, *maa*, and patient markers *la*, originate from Mampulli, while English contributions are limited to content morphemes. This asymmetry demonstrates that bilingual speakers are not blending two grammatical systems; rather, they are embedding foreign lexical items into a single, dominant grammatical frame.

These findings substantiate the MLF model's central claim: codeswitching is not random but follows predictable, rule-governed patterns governed by the ML. They also contribute to ongoing debates by showing that MLF can account for complex integration phenomena, including morphological and phonological adaptation, in typologically distinct contact settings (Doğruöz et al., 2023; Winata et al., 2022). The Mampulli data thus support the robustness of the MLF framework and illustrate how matrix language dominance extends across multiple linguistic levels, syntax, morphology, and phonology, while allowing the flexible incorporation of embedded-language material.

The third pattern identified in the data involves the phonological and morphological adaptation of English verbs when embedded within Mampulli discourse, particularly in constructions expressing conditional or perfect aspects. In Example 64, the verb *read* appears in the form *readi*, with the addition of a high front vowel /i/. This modification does not occur in English but reflects a process of integration into Mampulli's verbal system. The suffix *-i* may serve two functions. First, it could operate as a Mampulli verbal marker, signalling that the form functions as a verb within the host language's grammatical framework. Second, it may act as a phonological strategy, adjusting the English root to conform to Mampulli's morphophonological constraints, where open syllables are common (Myers-Scotton, 1993; Muysken, 2000).

Example 64.

<i>Metre</i>	<i>readers</i>	<i>yi</i>	<i>readi</i>	<i>n</i>	<i>naai</i>	<i>ka</i>	<i>ti</i>	<i>labgi</i>	<i>reading</i>	<i>maa</i>	<i>ka</i>
Metre	readers	if	readi	CONJ	finish	then	1PL	convert	reading	DET	PAT
<i>alabgi</i>	<i>ligri</i>										
turn.to	money										

'If the metre readers finish reading, we convert the readings into bills.'

(R5 Radio Programme 2, 5th January 2023)

The sentence further demonstrates clear functional differentiation between content and system morphemes. All grammatical markers, including *yi* (if), *n* (and/then), *ka* (then), *ti* (we), and *maa* (the), derive from Mampulli. These items constitute the system morphemes that encode conditionality, coordination, definiteness, and subject agreement. By contrast, English contributes only lexical material, such as *readi* and *reading*. Notably, *reading*, which in English is a gerund often carrying verbal features, functions here as a pure noun, uninflected for aspect or tense and occupying a nominal slot in accordance with Mampulli syntax. This categorical shift reveals how embedded elements are reanalysed within the grammatical frame of the matrix language (Myers-Scotton, 2002; Jake et al., 2002).

Example 65.

Sisters maa n trusti ba, I trust them. u yi sua jeans diɲuana yɛtoa
 Sisters MOD I trusti them, I trust them. 3SG if wear jeans then talk

sheili beni
 something there.is

‘I trust the sisters, when she wears a pair of jeans then there is a problem.’
 (R8 Radio Programme 3, 9th January 2023)

Example 65 further supports this analysis. The verb *trust* surfaces as *trusti*, incorporating the Mampulli suffix *-i*, which encodes verbal morphology, while the pronoun *ba* (them) and the subject marker *n* (I) also originate from Mampulli. This morphologically integrated form contrasts with the subsequent English phrase *I trust them*, which appears as an unmodified, stand-alone clause outside the Mampulli frame. This juxtaposition suggests that the integrated form serves the grammatical needs of the bilingual clause, while the unmodified English clause likely fulfils a pragmatic function, such as emphasis or audience accommodation (Auer, 2013; Gumperz, 1982).

Example 66.

R6 Bana n train-i ba
 3PL-PERSON have train-PST them.

‘They have trained them.’ (R6 Radio Programme 2, 5th January 2023)

Example 66 provides additional evidence of morphological integration, with the verb *train* appearing as *train-i* to mark past tense, supplied by Mampulli rather than by English morphology. The phonological adaptation of the final vowel reflects a systematic accommodation to Mampulli’s sound structure, ensuring compatibility with its morphophonological rules. Similarly, Example 67 shows *influenzi*, where the final vowel creates a permissible syllable shape in Mampulli, while tense is marked by the Mampulli auxiliary *daa*. In both cases, English verbs lack independent inflection, confirming that the

matrix language governs all grammatical operations, including tense, agreement, and constituent order (Myers-Scotton, 1993, 2002).

These examples provide robust support for the MLF model. They demonstrate that English verbs are not inserted wholesale but undergo systematic morphological and phonological modification to conform to the host language's grammatical requirements. This integration underscores the central claim of the MLF: that the matrix language, in this case, Mampulli, supplies the structural skeleton of mixed clauses, while the embedded language contributes content morphemes only. Moreover, the data suggest that phonological repair is integral to this process, reinforcing the view that matrix control extends beyond syntax and morphology to encompass phonology (Amuzu, 2012; Keller, 2020; Myers-Scotton & Jake, 2017). This evidence demonstrates that bilingual clause formation is a rule-governed process rather than a random mixing of forms, with implications for refining models of codeswitching to fully capture the multi-layered nature of language integration.

The present study provides compelling evidence of how English verbs are systematically adapted when embedded within Mampulli discourse, illustrating the dominance of the matrix language in mixed clauses. In constructions expressing conditional or perfect aspects, English verbs frequently undergo both phonological and morphological modification, as seen in Example 64, *readi*, where the English root *read* acquires the high front vowel /i/. This suffix aligns with Mampulli's preference for open syllables and may function as a verbal marker within the host grammar. Such adaptation demonstrates that embedded items do not retain their original phonological or morphological form but are reshaped to meet the grammatical requirements of the matrix language (Muysken, 2000; Myers-Scotton, 1993). This supports the MLF model's claim that the matrix language provides all system morphemes, including conditional markers (*yi*), coordinators (*n*), determiners (*maa*), and subject agreement

markers (*ti*), while the embedded language supplies only content morphemes (Jake et al., 2002; Myers-Scotton & Jake, 2017).

However, these data do more than simply confirm the MLF model; they highlight areas where the theory may need refinement. For instance, the consistent addition of final vowels (*readi*, *trusti*, *traini*, *influenzi*) suggests that integration extends beyond morphology into phonological domains. While MLF acknowledges that embedded items must conform to the morphosyntactic frame of the matrix language, it pays limited attention to phonological adaptation as a systematic process rather than an incidental repair strategy. Recent work on bilingual morphophonology argues that such adaptations are integral to the embedding process, reflecting deep structural convergence rather than surface-level adjustments (Amuzu, 2012; Keller, 2020). Moreover, the presence of unmodified English repetitions, such as *I trust them* following *n trusti ba*, Example 65, suggests that codeswitching also serves discourse-level functions like emphasis, identity marking, or audience accommodation (Gumperz, 1982; Auer, 2013). These pragmatic dimensions operate alongside structural constraints, complicating any model that treats grammar as the sole driver of language alternation.

In sum, the integration of English verbs into Mampulli speech supports the core tenets of the MLF model, particularly the System Morpheme and Morpheme Order Principles, but also indicates that bilingual clause formation is a multi-layered phenomenon involving phonological, morphological, and pragmatic processes. The evidence challenges strictly syntactic accounts of codeswitching by demonstrating that language alternation is shaped by a combination of grammatical structure and communicative strategy. Future models of bilingual speech must therefore incorporate not only the structural dominance of the matrix language but also the dynamic interplay between phonological adaptation and discourse functions in

maintaining grammatical cohesion and pragmatic effectiveness in mixed-language utterances (Deuchar, 2020; Muysken, 2000; Myers-Scotton & Jake, 2017).

5.3.3 Verb Phrases

Example 67.

Ti borila ti ya niŋ sheim n create physical space nti economy maa.
 1PLwant 3SG AUX do how CONJ create physical space for economy MOD.

‘We want to create a physical space for the economy.’
 (R12, Radio Programme 5, 16th January 2023)

The data demonstrate how English verb phrases are incorporated into Mampulli sentence structures while maintaining the grammatical integrity of the matrix language. In Example 48, the sentence *Ti borila ti ya niŋ sheim n create physical space nti economy maa* (‘We want to create a physical space for the economy’) illustrates this process. Each token contributes to a syntactically coherent construction: *ti* (we) marks the first-person plural subject; *borila* (want) functions as the main verb; *ti* (it) as the third-person singular object; *ya* (AUX) and *niŋ sheim* (do how) combine as an auxiliary sequence introducing the upcoming action; *n* operates as a conjunction linking to the English verb phrase *create physical space*, where *create* is a base-form English verb and *physical space* serves as its direct object; *nti* (for) introduces the benefactive phrase; and *maa* (MOD) closes the clause with a modal nuance. The English verb phrase, though fully English in its internal structure, integrates into the Mampulli syntactic frame without inflectional marking. This reflects morphological adaptation, whereby the EL provides semantic content while the ML supplies system morphemes such as auxiliaries and modals (Deuchar, 2020; Jake et al., 2002; Myers-Scotton, 1993).

Example 68.

Zuna, yan diai mics maa ndi azama sheisi maa is very interesting.
 Today, 2PL collect mics MOD and.eat conversation types MOD is very interesting.

Today, the issues you have discussed are very interesting.

(H, Radio Programme 4, 10th January 2023)

Example 68 further illustrates this pattern with *Zuna, yan diai mics maa ndi azama sheisi maa is very interesting* (Today, the issues you have discussed are very interesting). Here, the core Mampulli elements, *Zuna* (Today), *yan* (2PL), *diai* (collect), *maa* (MOD), *ndi* (and.eat), *azama sheisi* (conversation types), and *maa* (MOD) construct a complete clause. The English predicate *is very interesting* functions as an evaluative copular clause appended to the sentence-final slot. This phrase retains its full English morphology and does not undergo adaptation, demonstrating what Myers-Scotton (2002) terms an EL Island: a structurally coherent foreign-language unit inserted at a discourse-relevant position without disrupting the host language's syntax. Its placement at the evaluative sentence-final position underscores its pragmatic role as an emphatic or commentative device, reflecting the speaker's communicative intent (Wei, 2018).

Example 69.

... theme maa nya la breaking myths and misconceptions on
 ...theme DET is PRS breaking myths and misconceptions on

family planning.
 family planning.

'... the theme is breaking myths and misconceptions on family planning.'

(R8 Radio 3, 9th January 2023)

Example 50 above, *...theme maa nya la breaking myths and misconceptions on family planning* (...the theme is breaking myths and misconceptions on family planning), shows a more integrated structure. The English verb phrase *breaking myths and misconceptions on family planning* operates as a predicate nominal in a copular construction governed by

Mampulli. *maa* (DET) and *nya la* (is) establish the copular framework, and the English gerund *breaking* fits within this Mampulli tense-aspect system. Although *breaking* would require an auxiliary (*is breaking*) in monolingual English, here the tense and aspect are provided by Mampulli, confirming that the ML controls all inflectional features. Semantically, the English insertion conveys a socially significant message, aligning with findings that EL elements in codeswitching often serve ideological or evaluative purposes beyond their syntactic role (Deuchar, 2020; Gardner-Chloros, 2009; Myers-Scotton, 2002).

5.3.3.1 Discussion

Collectively, data reveal how English verb phrases are integrated into Mampulli grammatical structures without compromising the morphosyntactic integrity of the matrix language. In Example 67, *Ti borila ti ya niŋ sheim n create physical space nti economy maa* (We want to create a physical space for the economy), each element reflects the dominance of Mampulli in governing the sentence structure. The subject marker *ti* (we) and main verb *borila* (want) establish the clause frame, while the auxiliary sequence *ya niŋ sheim* introduces the action. The English verb phrase *create physical space* is inserted as a content-bearing element but remains uninflected, relying on Mampulli auxiliaries and modals such as *maa* to mark tense and modality. This illustrates the MLF model's distinction between system morphemes, supplied exclusively by the matrix language, and content morphemes, contributed by the embedded language (Deuchar, 2020; Jake et al., 2002; Khan & Khalid, 2018; Myers-Scotton, 1997). The example demonstrates morphological integration, where the embedded English element adapts to the morphosyntactic requirements of Mampulli rather than imposing its own.

A similar pattern is evident in Example 68, *Zuna, yan diai mics maa ndi azama sheisi maa is very interesting* (Today, the issues you have discussed are very interesting). Here, the Mampulli components form a complete and grammatically well-structured clause, with the

English phrase *is very interesting* functioning as an evaluative addition in the sentence-final position. This phrase retains its full English form and operates as what Myers-Scotton (2002) terms an Embedded Language Island: a coherent, self-contained unit that is permissible within the matrix language frame because it does not violate morphosyntactic constraints. Its discourse role, adding emphasis and evaluation, underscores that codeswitching is not merely a structural phenomenon but also a pragmatic resource (Wei, 2018). Example 69 further confirms this asymmetry. In *...theme maa nya la breaking myths and misconceptions on family planning* (...the theme is breaking myths and misconceptions on family planning), the English verb phrase occupies the predicate nominal position of a copular construction supplied entirely by Mampulli. Although *breaking* would require an auxiliary in monolingual English, the tense and aspect here are provided by *nya la*, illustrating that the Mampulli framework determines all grammatical features, while the English element contributes semantic content.

In conclusion, these examples provide strong evidence for the predictions of the MLF model in a multilingual context of Nalerigu. They show that the matrix language maintains syntactic control, supplying all system morphemes such as auxiliaries, modals, and determiners, while the embedded language contributes lexical items that serve both propositional and discourse functions. This distribution supports the argument that codeswitching is systematic and rule-governed, rather than arbitrary (Deuchar, 2020; Gardner-Chloros, 2009; Myers-Scotton, 2002). Moreover, the strategic placement of English elements for emphasis or evaluation highlights the importance of communicative intent in shaping bilingual discourse, indicating that grammatical constraints operate in tandem with pragmatic motivations. Consequently, while the MLF model provides a powerful framework for analysing structural asymmetry, these findings suggest that a comprehensive account of codeswitching must also incorporate the sociolinguistic and interactional factors that drive speakers' language choices.

5.4 Adjectives

This section examines English adjectives in Mampulli-English codeswitching, focusing on their syntactic positioning, morphological behaviour, and integration within the MLF model (Myers-Scotton, 1993; 2002). The analysis demonstrates that English adjectives operate as content morphemes inserted into Mampulli morphosyntactic frames, illustrating the asymmetrical relationship between the ML and the EL.

5.4.1 Single Adjectives

Example 70.

Mostly ka problem ku nyala daadaari dama suakam zaa ku
 Mostly 3PRON- problem just is market.day because everyone all just
 POSS

niŋ-ni- busy pam
la
 do-PROG- busy plenty
 PRS

‘Mostly, its problem is just on market day because everyone gets very busy.’

(R13, Radio Programme 5, 16th January 2023)

The key lexical item here is *busy*, an English adjective functioning predicatively. It occupies the complement position of a Mampulli light verb marked for tense and aspect (*do-PROG-PRS*). The adjective itself remains morphologically bare, while inflection is realised exclusively on the Mampulli verb. Semantically, *busy* conveys a progressive stative meaning, denoting a habitual state rather than a momentary action (Biber et al., 2021; Huddleston et al., 2021; Pullum & Huddleston, 2002). This supports the observation that English stative adjectives can participate in progressive constructions within a host language framework.

Within this bilingual clause, Mampulli supplies the syntactic frame: subject possession, TAM marking, and overall word order. English contributes the lexical predicate *busy*, which is then modified by the Mampulli intensifier *pam* (plenty). This structure exemplifies the

division of labour predicted by the MLF: system morphemes, including TAM and functional structure, are provided by the ML, while the EL contributes open-class lexical items (Myers-Scotton, 2002; Backus).

Example 71.

Ministry kam nyela important.
 Ministry every is important.

Every ministry is important. (R12 Radio Programme 5, 16th January 2023)

In this sentence, *important* functions as an English adjective within a Mampulli copular clause. The quantifier *kam* (every) and copula *nyela* (is) are drawn from Mampulli, which provides the syntactic framework: Noun + Quantifier + Copula + Adjective. English supplies the lexical content of the predicate (*important*), while Mampulli governs word order and functional morphology. The integration of *important* without any inflection confirms that English adjectives enter Mampulli clauses as morphologically bare forms, aligning with the System Morpheme Principle (Myers-Scotton, 2002).

Example 72.

Adam: *U goal maa daa ku nyela classic gba.*
 3SG- goal EMPHATIC PST just was classic also.
 POSS

‘His goal was also just classic.’ (Base 2 8th February 2023)

Here, the English adjective *classic* is inserted into a past-tense Mampulli clause. Mampulli provides tense marking *daa* (past) and focus particles *maa* (*nyela*), while *classic* supplies evaluative content. The adjective occupies a predicate position governed by Mampulli word order, appearing between the copula and the discourse particle *gba* (also). This example illustrates how the ML controls aspect and event interpretation: although *classic* is stative in English, its placement within a Mampulli TAM-marked clause allows for contextually enriched readings (Auer, 2020a; Poplack, 2017).

Example 73.

Ya yi niŋ family planning maa, ya biisi ku ya zuai la strong.
 2PL COND do family planning DET POSS children just AUX grow PART strong.

‘If you do the family planning, your children will just grow strong.’

(R7 Radio Programme 2, 9th January 2023)

The English adjective *strong* appears in a post-verbal predicative position, following the Mampulli verb *zuai* (grow). Functionally, *strong* denotes the resultant state of the subject (*children*) after the action of growing. The grammatical frame, conditional marking (*ya*), auxiliary, *ku*, and aspect marker *la*, is provided by Mampulli, while English supplies the content word *strong*. This structure demonstrates how English adjectives can integrate into Mampulli verbal predicates without violating syntactic constraints (Muysken, 2022).

Example 74.

BA	<i>Ba</i>	<i>loore</i>	<i>maa</i>	<i>nya</i>	<i>la</i>	<i>blue.</i>
	POSS	lorry	MOD	is	PRS	<i>blue.</i>

‘Their lorry is blue.’ (Base 1, 7th February 2023)

In this clause, the English adjective *blue* functions as the predicate complement of the Mampulli copula *la* (is). The subject *ba loore*, (their lorry) is marked for possession in Mampulli, while *blue* contributes descriptive content. The lack of any English inflection demonstrates that adjectives integrate as morphologically bare items. Additionally, the collocation *rough pam* (very rough) in related data shows that English adjectives can combine with Mampulli intensifiers, further evidencing their structural accommodation within the ML framework (Matras, 2020; Myers-Scotton, 2006b).

Example 75.

Ti yi meri yiya ka bu tsari soya maa di niŋ dangerous.
 1PL COND building houses CONJ NEG leaving roads MOD it do dangerous.

‘If we are building houses and not leaving access roads, it is dangerous.’ Town and country planning programme.

(R11, Radio Programme 4, 10th January 2023)

The English adjective *dangerous* appears clause-finally, following a fully Mampulli-constructed conditional-conjunctive clause. Mampulli supplies subject marking *ti*, negation, *bu*, modality, *maa*, and copular structure, *di niŋ*. *Dangerous* occupies the final predicate slot, contributing the core semantic evaluation. This insertion exemplifies the asymmetrical relationship between ML and EL: Mampulli governs syntax and morphology, while English supplies lexical meaning (Sankoff et al., 1990; Stelmakova & Zabrodskaja, 2024).

5.4.1.1 Discussion

The analysis across these examples supports several key observations. First, English adjectives integrate smoothly into Mampulli predicate positions because they lack inflectional requirements, making them structurally compatible with the ML’s morphosyntactic framework (Bullock & Toribio, 2020). Second, functional elements, such as TAM markers, copulas, and intensifiers, are consistently supplied by Mampulli, confirming the System Morpheme and Morpheme Order Principles of the MLF. Third, while structural integration is primarily determined by the ML, the choice of specific English adjectives often reflects pragmatic and cultural considerations, highlighting the role of speaker agency in CS (Auer, 2020b; Zhong et al., 2024).

In conclusion, the MLF model provides a robust framework for analysing Mampulli-English codeswitching. It captures both the structural asymmetry of bilingual utterances and the expressive motivations underlying lexical insertions. The data demonstrate that while Mampulli maintains grammatical control, English contributes semantic richness, resulting in hybrid constructions that are both syntactically coherent and communicatively effective.

5.4.2 Adjective phrases

This section examines the integration of English adjective phrases within Mampulli clause structures, focusing on how bilingual speakers combine elements from both languages. The data provide evidence for the interaction between the ML, here Mampulli, and the EL, English, within codeswitched utterances. Each example illustrates distinct patterns of lexical and phrasal integration, supporting theoretical perspectives from the MLF model (Muysken, 2013; Myers-Scotton, 2002).

Example 76.

DJ, i best topic n la.
DJ, 2SG **best topic** is DEM.
 ‘DJ (Host), that is your favourite topic.’

(R9, Radio 3, January 2023)

In this utterance, the speaker directly addresses the radio host using the vocative *DJ*, thereby establishing an interactional frame. Vocatives serve to personalise discourse and engage listeners, a feature common in contemporary radio communication (Asprey & Tagg, 2019; Prys, 2016). The clause itself illustrates a hybrid structure. The subject marker *i* indexes the second-person singular and aligns the utterance with the addressee’s perspective. The English adjective *best* modifies the noun *topic*, preserving the English adjective-noun order. This contrasts with Mampulli’s native modifier-noun order, reflecting selective syntactic borrowing. The demonstrative *n* functions deictically, directing attention to the referent, while the particle *la* adds a pragmatic nuance, softening the assertion and contributing to a conversational tone. This combination exemplifies how Mampulli provides the grammatical frame-subject marking, copula, and discourse particles-while English contributes lexical content. Such bilingual strategies highlight the adaptability of speakers in embedding English content words within Mampulli grammatical structures, consistent with findings on CS in contact settings (Hamed et al., 2019; Jake & Myers-Scotton, 2020; Muysken, 2013).

Example 77.

Shee ka ba kyana n gɔsi nya last pole ηɔan bε sheela.
 Must have.to 3PL-PRON come and look to.see **last pole** where is it.is.

‘They have to come and see where the last pole is.’

(R7, Radio Programme 2, 5th January 2023)

Here, the English phrase *last pole* operates as a fully formed EL unit embedded within the Mampulli sentence. Its internal structure, comprising an adjective-noun sequence, remains intact. The absence of morphological adaptation indicates that the phrase retains its syntactic autonomy, a phenomenon predicted by the MLF model. Noun phrases often serve as primary sites of insertion because they can be inserted as self-contained units without disrupting ML grammar (Myers-Scotton, 2002). This example further illustrates that the ML, Mampulli, supplies the morphosyntactic scaffolding-including subject marking, modality, and clause structure-while accommodating EL word order within the noun phrase. Such selective permeability of the ML supports previous research suggesting that bilingual grammars maintain stability while permitting flexibility in lexically rich domains (Gardner-Chloros, 2020; Muysken, 2013).

Example 59 illustrates phrasal insertion at the object position of a Mampulli verb-object clause:

Example 78.

Ba bu laan ya zany hard copy maa n kyanj Bolga.
 3PL-PRON NEG again will take **hard copy** DET n kyanj Bolga.

‘They will not take the hard copy to Bolga again.’ (R6, Radio 2, 5th January 2023)

This utterance integrates the English phrase *hard copy* as a multi-word object. While Mampulli contributes functional elements such as the subject pronoun (*ba*), negation (*bu*), future marker (*laan ya*), and determiner (*maa*), English supplies the lexical content of the object. The MLF model’s distinction between lexical and phrasal insertion is clearly illustrated here: *hard copy* is not merely a single lexical item but a phrasal unit that retains its internal EL

syntax. The surrounding Mampulli morphology accommodates this phrase seamlessly, underscoring the ML's control over clause structure while enabling EL contribution in content-heavy domains (Muysken, 2013; Myers-Scotton, 2002).

Example 79 demonstrates the use of an English noun phrase in a predicative position within a Mampulli clause:

Example 79.

<i>Di</i>	<i>yi</i>	<i>nyala</i>	<i>one</i>	<i>pole</i>	<i>a</i>		<i>bela</i>	<i>office</i>	<i>ni.</i>
It	if	is	one	pole	3PL-PRON-NON-ANIMATE		are.in	office	in.

‘If it is one pole, they are in the office.’ (R6 Radio Programme 2, 5th January 2023)

In this example, *one pole* serves as the predicate following the Mampulli copula *nyala* (is). The numeral *one* quantifies the noun *pole*, forming an English noun phrase that remains morphologically unadapted. The clause adheres to Mampulli predicate placement rules, with subject agreement (*a bela*) and locative marking (*office ni*) supplied by the ML. This example challenges earlier claims that EL material must conform to ML morphology (Myers-Scotton, 2002), showing instead that predicative positions are especially receptive to EL insertions. Their semantic salience and structural flexibility make them ideal sites for integrating foreign lexical material (Muysken, 2013; Poplack, 2013).

5.4.3 Discussion

This section discusses the integration of English adjective and noun phrases into Mampulli clause structures, drawing on the empirical data presented in Sections 5.4.1 and 5.4.2. The analysis employs the MLF model (Myers-Scotton, 2002) as a theoretical lens to understand the grammatical organisation of codeswitched discourse. The examples demonstrate that Mampulli operates as the ML, providing morphosyntactic structure, while English serves as the EL, supplying lexical and phrasal material. This interaction illustrates

how bilingual speakers navigate two linguistic systems, maintaining grammatical integrity while incorporating foreign elements to enhance expressiveness.

Beyond single lexical insertions, the data reveal the incorporation of multi-word English phrases into Mampulli sentences. For example, Example 58 demonstrates the strategic use of vocatives and English adjectives within Mampulli clauses.

The vocative *DJ* establishes direct engagement with the addressee, signalling interactional intimacy characteristic of live radio discourse (Asprey & Tagg, 2019; Prys, 2016). Within the clause, Mampulli provides the grammatical frame through subject marking (*i*), copular construction, and the pragmatic particle *la*, while English contributes the lexical items *best* and *topic*. Notably, the adjective precedes the noun in accordance with English syntax, diverging from Mampulli's modifier-noun order. This reflects what Basirat and Tang (2018) describes as “morphosyntactic embedding,” where the ML accommodates EL material without restructuring its core grammatical framework. Such insertions demonstrate that codeswitching is not random but governed by constraints ensuring discourse cohesion and social relevance (Gardner-Chloros, 2020).

Similarly, the integration of English noun phrases within Mampulli clauses further illustrates the autonomy of EL units. In this instance, the phrase *last pole* is fully English in structure and meaning, embedded within a Mampulli syntactic frame. The ML supplies modality (*ka*), subject agreement (*ba*), and clausal order, yet allows the EL noun phrase to retain its internal adjective-noun structure. The MLF model predicts that noun phrases often act as insertion sites due to their syntactic independence (Myers-Scotton, 2002). The present data confirm this, illustrating how EL units can function autonomously while integrating seamlessly into ML-governed clauses. Such patterns suggest a “selective permeability” of the

ML (Muysken, 2013), where content-heavy domains like noun phrases are open to foreign insertions without undermining grammatical stability.

Furthermore, the English noun phrase *hard copy* in Example 79 occupies the object position within a Mampulli verb-object structure. Mampulli provides functional morphology, subject (*ba*), negation (*bu*), future marking (*laan ya*), and determination (*maa*), while the EL phrase retains its internal English syntax. This supports with MLF predictions that the ML supplies grammatical “slots” into which EL elements are inserted (Myers-Scotton, 2002). It also supports the view that codeswitching involves structural accommodation rather than structural disruption, with bilingual speakers exploiting syntactic flexibility to incorporate EL elements in discourse-relevant positions.

A further significant finding concerns the use of EL noun phrases in predicative positions in Example 79.

In this example, *one pole* functions as a predicate following the Mampulli copula *nyala* (is). The English phrase remains uninflected, indicating that predicative slots can host EL material without morphological adaptation. This challenges earlier assumptions that EL elements must conform to ML morphology (Myers-Scotton, 2002). Recent studies have shown that predicates, due to their semantic salience and syntactic flexibility, are particularly receptive to EL insertions (Muysken, 2013; Poplack, 2018). The present data support this, demonstrating that bilingual speakers exploit these positions to integrate English content while maintaining Mampulli’s structural core.

5. 4. 4 Implications for the MLF Model

Largely, the findings strongly support the relevance of the MLF model in explaining Mampulli-English codeswitching. Mampulli, as the ML, consistently governs the organisation

of clauses, the use of function words, and the application of inflectional morphology. In contrast, English, as the EL, primarily supplies content words and larger phrasal units. This interaction of roles allows the language system to remain both stable and adaptable. It demonstrates that bilingual grammar is not random blends of languages, but structured systems shaped by grammatical rules and the practical demands of communication (Gardner-Chloros, 2020).

5.4.5 Conclusion

This data has shown that Mampulli-English codeswitching is characterised by a stable morphosyntactic base provided by Mampulli, enriched by strategic lexical and phrasal insertions from English. Adjective and noun phrases serve as key loci of integration, illustrating both the grammatical and functional dimensions of bilingual speech. By distinguishing between lexical and phrasal insertion, the analysis contributes to a more nuanced understanding of the MLF model, demonstrating its capacity to account for structural regularities and pragmatic motivations in real-world bilingual interactions.

5.5 Adverbs

This section analyses the integration of adverbs and adverb-like elements in Mampulli-English codeswitching. It first presents a token-by-token exposition with interlinear glosses for each example and then moves to a discussion with similar bilingual contexts. The analysis is framed within the MLF model (Myers-Scotton, 1993, 2002; Myers-Scotton & Jake, 2017), which posits that in bilingual clauses, the ML supplies the grammatical frame, while the EL contributes content morphemes that adapt to the ML structure.

Example 80

<i>Doo</i>	<i>bee</i>	<i>poa</i>	.	<i>Mostly</i>	<i>poa.</i>
man	either	woman	.	Mostly	woman.

‘It is either a man or a woman. Mostly it is a woman.’ (R9 Radio Programme 3, 2023)

The English token *mostly* operates as a sentential adverb modifying the predicate of the second clause. Its semantic function is to convey probabilistic force, signaling that the proposition is true usually rather than in all cases (Myslín & Levy, 2015). This usage aligns with epistemic and quantificational adverbs in English, which qualify the truth value of a statement. Syntactically, *mostly* occupies a preverbal position, typical of adverbs of frequency and degree in English. Importantly, its presence does not alter the Mampulli morphosyntactic structure of the clause. Instead, it contributes additional meaning while remaining structurally independent, exemplifying an EL insertion into a ML frame (Myers-Scotton, 2002).

Example 81.

<i>Alright</i>	<i>ti</i>	<i>pusiya</i>	<i>pam.</i>
Alright	1PL	thank-2PL	very.much.

‘We thank you very much.’ (R9 Radio Programme 3, 2023)

Alright functions as an English discourse marker placed at the initial boundary of a Mampulli clause. Its pragmatic role is to signal readiness, transition, or politeness at the start of an interaction (Auer, 2020a). While semantically light, it is interactionally rich, marking a shift in conversational stance and preparing the listener for the main propositional content. Within the MLF framework, *alright* is an EL element fulfilling a pragmatic rather than grammatical function. It does not influence verb morphology, word order, or argument structure in Mampulli. Such use of English discourse markers at clause boundaries is common in multilingual communities, where they often serve to manage turn-taking and interpersonal relations (Bullock & Toribio, 2019; Gardner-Chloros, 2009).

Example 82.

<i>Now,</i>	<i>ti</i>	<i>labinna</i>	<i>n</i>	<i>zaj</i>	<i>n</i>	<i>tsanji</i>	<i>sua</i>	<i>daa</i>	<i>tɔasi</i>	<i>ni</i>
Now,	1PL	come.back	CONJ	take	CONJ	go	someone	time.death	talk	DEM

<i>form</i>	<i>n</i>	<i>tsana</i>
form	CONJ	come

‘Now, let’s talk about what someone said about their form.’

(R5 Radio Programme 2, 5th January 2023)

The English token *now* appears in sentence-initial position, where it functions as a temporal adverb and a discourse-framing device. Semantically, it situates the subsequent action in the immediate present, providing temporal anchoring (Mišić Ilić, 2020). Pragmatically, it signals a transition to a new topic or phase in the discourse, aligning with research showing that temporal adverbs in initial position can demarcate segment boundaries in conversation (Wiltschko, 2021). Like *mostly* and *alright*, *now* does not interfere with the underlying Mampulli grammatical organisation. It is inserted as an EL element into a syntactic slot permissible in both languages, demonstrating cross-linguistic compatibility.

Example 83.

<i>Yes!</i>	<i>Dama</i>	<i>n</i>	<i>borila</i>	<i>n-yali</i>	<i>zuna</i>	<i>ka</i>	<i>ηɔn</i>	<i>wumni</i>
Yes!	because	1PRON	want	1PRON-	today	for	anyone	listening
				to.say				

<i>FM</i>	<i>wa</i>	<i>zaa</i>
FM	DEM	all

‘‘Yes! Because I want all those listening to this radio today to know.’’

(R12, Radio Programme 5, 16th January 2023)

The token *Yes* serves as an English affirmation marker, expressing agreement or emphatic approval. Positioned at the beginning of the utterance, it performs an interactional function by validating the speaker’s intention and engaging the audience (Heritage, 2015). As with the other English tokens, *Yes* does not alter the morphosyntactic structure of the Mampulli sentence. Instead, it operates as a pragmatic insertion that sets the tone of the utterance. Such use of affirmation markers from an EL is common in bilingual speech as a means of signaling alignment or emphasis.

5.5.1 Discussion

The analysis of Mampulli-English codeswitching highlights the distinctive role of adverbs and discourse markers in shaping bilingual interaction. English adverbs such as *mostly*, *alright*, *now*, and *yes* are typically inserted at clause-peripheral or preverbal positions, where they enhance meaning and manage discourse without disrupting Mampulli's morphosyntactic framework. Their functions extend beyond propositional modification to include pragmatic and interactional work *mostly* adjusts truth conditions, *alright* and *now* segment discourse, and *yes* conveys speaker stance. These multifunctional uses align with arguments that adverbs in bilingual speech operate at the intersection of grammar and discourse, linking structural integrity with communicative intent (Backus & Demirçay, 2021; Myers-Scotton, 2017).

This pattern accords with the MLF model, which predicts that the matrix language supplies grammatical structure while the embedded language contributes semantic and pragmatic material. In all cases, Mampulli provides word order, verb morphology, and clause linkage, while English adds nuanced meaning without triggering syntactic restructuring. Such integration underscores the ordered and adaptive nature of bilingual grammar, contradicting views of codeswitching as disorderly mixing.

Moreover, the use of English adverbs carries sociolinguistic value. These items often signal modernity, politeness, or emphasis, enabling speakers to navigate social positioning and interactional demands. The adverbs are usually structurally peripheral but pragmatically central (Favaro, 2021). Together, these findings demonstrate that adverbial codeswitching is a systematic, multifunctional phenomenon shaped by grammatical constraints and social motivations. They provide compelling evidence that bilingual grammar is stable yet flexible systems, and they affirm the MLF model's applicability to the integration of adverbial elements in multilingual speech.

5.5.2 Theoretical Implications

The integration of *mostly*, *alright*, *now*, *yes*, and *FM* into Mampulli clauses reveals several significant features of Mampulli-English CS. First, the data demonstrate the morphosyntactic dominance of the ML, Mampulli. It consistently determines clause structure, verb morphology, and the realisation of arguments. The EL, English, provides adverbs and nouns that are incorporated into this grammatical framework without requiring structural reanalysis or altering the underlying syntactic patterns. This confirms that Mampulli maintains control over the formal properties of the clause, ensuring the stability of the bilingual system.

Second, the English adverbs fulfil a wide range of functions within this framework. *Mostly* contributes semantic nuance, *now* introduces temporal framing, *alright* performs pragmatic organisation, and *yes* signals interactional alignment. This functional diversity illustrates how elements from the EL can enrich the ML not only semantically but also at the levels of discourse management and speaker stance. Such multifunctionality reflects the complex ways in which bilingual speakers exploit linguistic resources to achieve communicative precision and effectiveness.

Third, these English tokens hold sociolinguistic significance. Their use often indexes values such as modernity (*FM*), politeness (*alright*), or emphasis (*yes*), linking individual utterances to broader cultural and social dynamics in multilingual Ghanaian contexts. This highlights the role of codeswitching as a socially meaningful practice, where linguistic choices are shaped by, and contribute to, identity construction and social positioning.

Finally, these findings lend support to an expanded interpretation of the MLF model. While the model accounts for the structural integration of EL elements within the ML, the Mampulli-English data demonstrate the importance of incorporating discourse-pragmatic dimensions into its explanatory scope. By capturing how English adverbs operate at the

intersection of grammar, discourse, and social meaning, the analysis underscores the systematic and rule-governed nature of codeswitching in African multilingual settings.

5.5.3 Conclusion

In conclusion, adverbs in Mampulli-English codeswitching exemplify the dynamic interplay between structure, meaning, and society in bilingual communication. They illustrate how an embedded language can contribute semantic depth and sociocultural resonance while leaving the structural dominance of the matrix language intact. This provides robust evidence that bilingual grammars are organised systems shaped by both linguistic constraints and the communicative needs of their speakers.

5.6 Prepositions

This section examines the role of prepositions in Mampulli-English codeswitching, focusing on how these functional elements are incorporated into the ML frame. The analysis is situated within the MLF model (Myers-Scotton, 1993, 2002), which posits that in bilingual clauses one language, the ML, supplies the morphosyntactic structure, while the EL contributes lexical or phrasal material that conforms to the ML's constraints.

Prepositions are generally classified as function words, occupying the head of prepositional phrases and contributing to grammatical organisation rather than conceptual meaning (Stoian, 2024). In the MLF framework, function words are typically expected to originate from the ML due to their close integration with the host language's grammar (Myers-Scotton, 2002). Nevertheless, the present data reveal multiple instances in which English prepositions appear within Mampulli clauses. These occurrences demonstrate the flexibility of functional items in bilingual speech and raise questions regarding the strict division between ML-supplied system morphemes and EL-supplied content morphemes.

Example 84

Ti diari la from Senior High School one nti paai three
 3PL collect PAT from senior high school one to reach three

‘We admit students into senior high school years one to three.’

(R14 Radio Programme 4, 18th January 2023)

In this example, the Mampulli verb *diari* (collect, admit) serves as the main predicate, governed by the subject pronoun *ti* (they). The clause is inflected for aspect by *la*. The English preposition *from* precedes the noun phrase *Senior High School one*, marking the lower boundary of a range expressed as *one ... three*.

The use of *from* here illustrates a case of EL insertion. otherwise, lacks a dedicated preposition to indicate a bounded range, and thus the English form fulfils a semantic function otherwise unavailable in the ML (Matras, 2020). Structurally, however, the clause remains Mampulli in its argument structure: *diari* continues to govern its object, and the English preposition integrates seamlessly into the expected prepositional slot. This supports the MLF prediction that EL items can be incorporated provided they align with the morphosyntactic pattern of the ML.

Example 85.

Ya anninwula before ka ti piili ...
 2PL good.evening before PRS 3PL start ...

‘Good evening to you, before we start...’ (H, Radio Programme 4 2023)

Here, the greeting *Ya anninwula* (good evening to you) and the verb phrase *ka ti piili* (we start) are in Mampulli, confirming its role as the ML. The English preposition *before* introduces a temporal relationship, linking the salutation to the subsequent event. Notably, *before* occupies a syntactic position consistent with Mampulli word order: it precedes the clause it modifies, mirroring the placement of native temporal markers.

This integration shows that single-word English prepositions can function as discourse linkers within a Mampulli syntactic frame without altering its core structure (Backus, 2020; Cacoullos & Travis, 2018). Such insertions support the MLF model’s claim of ML dominance, while also illustrating the adaptability of functional EL elements when they fulfil specific relational roles.

Example 86.

<i>Ti</i>	<i>toasi</i>	<i>la</i>	<i>about</i>	<i>reversible</i>	<i>contraceptives</i>	<i>zuna</i>
1PL	toasi	PRS	about	reversible	contraceptives	today.

‘We talked about reversible contraceptives today.’ (R9 Radio Programme 3, 9th January 2023)

This clause displays a more complex interaction. The Mampulli elements include the subject pronoun *ti* (we), the verb *toasi* (talked), the aspect marker *la* (present), and the final adverbial *zuna* (today). The English preposition *about* introduces the complement noun phrase *reversible contraceptives*, which itself is English. Together, *about* + *NP* forms a cohesive unit that functions as a pre-formed English constituent, an EL island.

Within the MLF framework, *about* is a system morpheme from the EL. Its presence challenges the expectation that such morphemes originate exclusively from the ML (Myers-Scotton, 2002). The data suggest that when an EL preposition introduces a self-contained EL phrase, it can bypass the usual ML constraint, as the entire sequence is inserted intact. This pattern aligns with findings in other bilingual contexts where prepositions initiate EL islands (Chan, 2025; Koronkiewicz, 2022; Myers-Scotton, 2012).

5.6.1 Discussion

The behaviour of prepositions in Mampulli-English codeswitching provides significant insights into the interaction of functional categories in bilingual speech. Within the MLF model (Myers-Scotton, 1993, 2002), the expectation is that prepositions, as functional items, originate

from the ML because they are system morphemes essential to clause structure. The present analysis, however, demonstrates that English prepositions can occur in Mampulli-framed clauses without disrupting morphosyntactic integrity. This observation contributes to ongoing debates about the permeability of functional categories in contact situations (Hasan, 2016; Wei, 2020b).

The examples illustrate different degrees of integration. In Example 85, the English preposition *from* fills a semantic gap in Mampulli. It occupies a syntactic slot governed by Mampulli morphosyntax and is fully integrated into the ML frame. This supports Matras' (2020b) argument that lexical borrowing often begins with items that serve essential discourse or semantic functions absent in the recipient language. Crucially, while *from* originates in the EL, it adheres to the ML's structural expectations, maintaining the dominance of Mampulli grammar. This reflects the adaptability predicted by the MLF model: EL elements can be inserted so long as they do not violate the ML's morphosyntactic constraints (Myers-Scotton, 2002).

Example 86 demonstrates a similar process in the use of *before*, which introduces a temporal relation. Although *before* is a functional element, it operates as a discourse connector in a position compatible with native Mampulli markers. This confirms observations by Cacoullos and Travis (2018) that bilinguals often insert function words from a second language when these serve pragmatic roles, especially in interactional contexts. The presence of *before* thus exemplifies how EL prepositions can serve communicative needs while preserving ML control over clause structure. It also highlights the pragmatic motivations behind codeswitching, suggesting that discourse organisation can override structural expectations of system morpheme origin.

Example 86 presents a more complex case: the preposition *about* introduces an entirely English noun phrase *about reversible contraceptives*, forming an EL Island. Within the MLF framework, this configuration challenges the claim that system morphemes must come from the ML. As Myers-Scotton (2012) notes, EL Islands can contain both content and system morphemes when they constitute complete, syntactically autonomous units. The current data show that this process applies to prepositions, indicating that EL functional items may enter the clause not as isolated morphemes but as part of cohesive phrasal chunks (Koronkiewicz, 2022; Chan, 2025). This suggests that bilinguals exploit the structural autonomy of EL constituents to avoid ML constraints, offering a nuanced understanding of morphosyntactic integration in CS.

Theoretically, these findings contribute to refining the MLF model by demonstrating that the boundary between ML-supplied system morphemes and EL-supplied content morphemes is more fluid than originally proposed. While the ML retains overarching grammatical control, the incorporation of EL prepositions, both as individual items and as components of EL islands, illustrates a gradient rather than categorical division. This supports recent calls to view bilingual morphosyntax as dynamic and adaptive, rather than strictly rule-governed (Backus, 2020; Koronkiewicz, 2022). It also underscores the role of functional morphemes as sites of innovation in contact languages, expanding our understanding of how bilingual speakers manage grammatical and communicative demands.

5.7 Conjunctions

This section examines the use of conjunctions in Mampulli-English codeswitching, focusing on their integration into a Mampulli grammatical framework. Conjunctions are traditionally considered system morphemes, forming the spine of clause linking and discourse organisation (Chi & Bell, 2024; Green & Wei, 2014). Within the MLF model, such morphemes

are predicted to originate from the ML, as they are essential to maintaining structural integrity (Myers-Scotton, 2002). However, the data presented here reveal frequent instances of English conjunctions, such as *because* and *but*, in Mampulli clauses. This challenges assumptions regarding the impermeability of system morphemes and highlights the influence of pragmatic and communicative factors in bilingual interaction.

Example 87

U ka lala suhuyubu because ba niŋla buna maa nniŋ computer ni.
 3SG have.NEG that freedom **because** 3PL do-PST things DET put computer inside

‘He doesn’t have that access because they have put the information on a computer.
 (R6 Radio Programme 2)

In this utterance, Mampulli functions as the *ML*, providing the grammatical framework. It governs word order, the marking of negation, tense, and aspect, and the formation of noun phrases. The EL, English, contributes the conjunction *because*. Importantly, the insertion of *because* does not alter the morphosyntactic rules of Mampulli. Instead, the English item is accommodated within the Mampulli frame, consistent with the predictions of the *MLF model* (Myers-Scotton, 2002; Wei, 2018).

Here, *because* introduces the subordinate clause *ba niŋla buna maa nniŋ computer ni* (they have put the information on a computer). The internal syntax of this clause follows the expected Mampulli structure: subject + verb + object + locative marker. This confirms that Mampulli maintains overall grammatical control, even where an English conjunction is employed. Such integration illustrates selective borrowing of English discourse organisers into the Mampulli matrix, projecting both the pragmatic salience of causal connectors and the hierarchical dominance of the ML (Auer, 2020).

Conjunctions such as *because* are typically classified as system morphemes. System morphemes usually display high resistance to borrowing, as they are structurally central to

clause organisation (Poplack, 2017; Muysken, 2021). Their presence in codeswitched discourse therefore suggests motivation beyond structural necessity, pointing instead to pragmatic preferences in communication.

This example demonstrates that English conjunctions can function as discourse organisers in MLF contexts. It also raises questions for the MLF model, which generally assumes that system morphemes originate in the ML. The insertion of *because* indicates that certain high-frequency discourse markers may cross linguistic boundaries more readily than other grammatical morphemes. Their ease of integration may be due to their high communicative load, as they structure discourse and convey logical relations between propositions.

This finding challenges the strict content vs. system morpheme distinction central to the MLF model. Conjunctions like *because* occupy an intermediate space: they are functional operators that can be embedded within the ML without destabilising its morphosyntactic system. Recent research supports this flexibility, showing that discourse markers are often borrowed in bilingual contexts because of their pragmatic function, which transcends rigid grammatical categorisation (Nguyen, 2025).

In summary, the use of *because* in this Mampulli-English sentence illustrates both the predictive power and the limitations of the MLF. While the ML retains control of grammatical structure, the borrowing of high-frequency discourse markers such as *because* suggests that the model's binary classification of morphemes requires refinement.

Example 88

<i>Ban</i>	<i>tsaka</i>	<i>i</i>	<i>karim</i>	<i>because</i>	<i>ban</i>	<i>yan</i>	<i>treati</i>	<i>sheem</i>	<i>maa</i>	<i>kariju</i>
3PL	will	you	read	because	they	how	treat	sheem	EMPH	learning

saha *yi* *paai* *zaa* *n* *kpea* *class* *ni*.
time COND reach all CONJ enter class ni.

‘They will make you study because of the system they have put in place.
(R15, Radio Programme 6, 18th January 2023)

This utterance is structurally dominated by Mampulli, with verbs (*tsaka*, *karim*, *kpea*), conditionals (*saha yi*), and the class marker (*ni*) all originating from Mampulli. These elements confirm Mampulli as the ML. The clause order and agreement markers also reflect Mampulli’s syntactic patterns.

According to the MLF model (Myers-Scotton, 1993; Suurmeijer et al., 2020), the ML supplies the grammatical framework, while the EL contributes content morphemes. This asymmetry is evident here. Although the conjunction *because* is English, the subordinate clause it introduces follows Mampulli syntax. Both clauses. *Ban tsaka i karim* (they will make you read) and *Ban yan treati sheem maa kariṅu* (because of the system they have put in place), adhere to Mampulli structures. Thus, *because* is inserted without altering the ML framework.

This structural fit illustrates how English discourse markers can integrate into Mampulli without disrupting cohesion. As in Example 86, the conjunction functions as a pragmatic connector, linking two clauses and organising the discourse. It is noteworthy that the English item is inserted where a native Mampulli equivalent could have been used. This points to speaker preference and discourse salience as key motivators for such borrowing.

The case highlights a challenge to the MLF’s System Morpheme Principle, which predicts that system morphemes must come from the ML (Myers-Scotton, 2001). The borrowing of *because* suggests greater flexibility: high-frequency connectors may function as discourse-pragmatic system morphemes, capable of traversing ML-EL boundaries. Their use reflects not only grammatical integration but also communicative efficiency in bilingual interaction (Bullock & Toribio, 2018; Mugo & Ongo’nda, 2017).

Example 89.

<i>Gbintiri</i>	<i>problem</i>	<i>ɲuan</i>	<i>nya</i>	<i>sheem</i>	<i>nla</i>	but	<i>Naawuni</i>	<i>yi</i>	<i>saaki</i>
Gbintiri	problem	what	is	like	that	but	God	COND	agree
<i>ti</i>	<i>bɛ</i>	<i>ka</i>	<i>zugu</i>						
2PL	in	3SG	head						

‘That is Gbintiri’s problem, but God willing, we will work on it.’

(R12 Radio Programme 5, 16th January 2023)

Here, Mampulli again functions as the ML, supplying verbs, agreement markers, and overall clause structure. The English conjunction *but* serves as a discourse connector. According to the MLF model, system morphemes such as conjunctions should normally be provided by the ML. The presence of *but* therefore departs from model predictions.

The strategic use of *but* reflects its pragmatic role. Positioned at a clause boundary, it signals contrast or concession, consistent with its function in English discourse. Its presence suggests that bilingual speakers may be treating *but* not as a spontaneous switch but as a borrowed discourse marker integrated into Mampulli usage. Such naturalisation indicates a shift in discourse strategies within the bilingual community, where English conjunctions gain salience due to their frequency and pragmatic force.

This finding suggests that certain English system morphemes, particularly *but*, *so*, and *because*, function as discourse-pragmatic markers that can cross language boundaries. Their adoption challenges the rigidity of the MLF’s classification system, pointing towards the need for an intermediate category of discourse-pragmatic system morphemes.

By demonstrating the incorporation of *but* into Mampulli discourse, this example provides further evidence of the adaptability of bilingual speakers. It highlights the importance of recognising both grammatical and pragmatic motivations in codeswitching research.

5. 6. 1 Discussion

The examples show that English conjunctions can be seamlessly accommodated within the Mampulli frame. In Example 84, *because* introduces a subordinate clause without altering Mampulli word order, tense marking, or clause structure. This supports the MLF prediction that the ML retains grammatical control. At the same time, the choice of an English connector where a Mampulli equivalent exists points to speaker preference and the pragmatic salience of *because* as a causal marker (Auer, 2022). Example 85 reinforces this observation: *because* functions as a discourse organiser linking two Mampulli-structured clauses, again demonstrating that communicative efficiency can motivate the adoption of EL system morphemes.

Example 86 further illustrates the pragmatic strength of English conjunctions, with *but* marking contrast at a clause boundary. Its use appears to be more than a momentary switch; rather, it suggests lexicalisation of *but* as a borrowed discourse marker within the community. Such patterns resonate with recent findings that discourse-pragmatic elements frequently cross linguistic boundaries due to their high communicative load (Bullock et al., 2018; Nguyen, 2025).

Critically, these examples expose both the explanatory power and the limitations of the MLF model. While the model successfully accounts for the dominance of Mampulli in providing grammatical structure, it underestimates the role of pragmatic discourse needs in driving the incorporation of EL system morphemes. The repeated insertion of *because* and *but* indicates that certain high-frequency conjunctions occupy a special status: they are structurally functional but pragmatically motivated, existing at the intersection of grammar and discourse. This suggests the need for a more nuanced approach to system morphemes in codeswitching, one that recognises the permeability of discourse organisers across languages.

In all, the integration of English conjunctions into Mampulli grammar demonstrates the adaptability of bilingual speakers and challenges strict binary classifications in current models. It supports a shift towards theories that consider not only structural constraints but also the pragmatic dimensions of bilingual communication.

5.7 Clauses

The following section examines selected examples of Mampulli-English bilingual discourse, with a focus on how ML and EL interact at the clause and discourse levels. Each case is analysed through the lens of the MLF model (Myers-Scotton, 1993, 2002; Myers-Scotton & Jake, 2017).

Example 90.

MR *Hoo* *ɲɔn* *yaliwa,* *yɛtoa* *shea* *ku* *nij* *tooi* *nkpeana* *bee*
 Like 3SG said unforeseen something just happen can come.in or

ti' *shea* *nij* *nkpeana* *it* *changes* *everything.*
 medicine something will come.in it changes everything.

‘Like she said, something unforeseen can happen or another medicine can react and it can change everything.’

(R9, Radio Programme 3, 9th January 2023)

In this example, the discourse begins in Mampulli and follows the expected morphosyntactic pattern. The isolated English lexical item *ti'* appears within the gloss line, but it is more likely a translation prompt than a full borrowing. The overall syntactic frame remains Mampulli. The final clause, however, is a complete English sequence: *it changes everything*.

This shift marks a transition from a Mampulli-based structure to a fully English clause. Such a change occurs at the clause boundary rather than through single lexical insertion. According to the MLF model, this constitutes an EL Island, as the clause is grammatically self-contained in English and requires no system morphemes from Mampulli. The internal structure

confirms this: the clause includes an English subject pronoun (*it*), a finite verb inflected for third person singular (*changes*), and an object noun phrase (*everything*). No Mampulli morphology is present.

From a discourse perspective, the English clause functions as an evaluative or resultative statement. Formulaic evaluative sequences of this kind are well attested in bilingual speech and often surface as prefabricated discourse units (Backus, 2020; Cacoullos & Travis, 2018). They are stored and retrieved holistically, which explains their grammatical integrity and their independence from the ML frame.

Two explanations account for the switch. First, speakers avoid structural conflict by producing a self-contained English clause. Were the clause integrated into Mampulli, the tense-aspect and agreement requirements of both languages might clash. Second, the evaluative nature of *it changes everything* suggests a formulaic unit, pragmatically positioned as a coda or stance marker. Both explanations align with MLF predictions and with broader observations about pragmatic islands in bilingual discourse (Wiese, 2020; Backus et al., 2019).

In summary, this utterance demonstrates how bilingual speakers can insert a fully finite English clause into a Mampulli discourse frame. The case illustrates the autonomy of EL Islands and highlights the pragmatic motivation for their use, particularly in contexts where evaluation or stance must be foregrounded.

Example 92.

*Ba nya la non-governmental organisation and they are into
 PRON are PRS non-governmental organisation and they are Into
 social marketing strategy.
 social marketing strategy.*

‘They are a non-governmental organisation working in social marketing strategy.’
 (R8 Radio Programme 3, 2023)

The first segment, *Ba nya la non-governmental organisation*, exemplifies a classic insertional pattern. Mampulli provides the subject pronoun and copula, while the noun phrase *non-governmental organisation* is inserted from English. This supports the System Morpheme Principle of the MLF: system morphemes such as tense and copula are drawn from the ML, while the EL contributes content morphemes (Myers-Scotton & Jake, 2017).

The second segment, *and they are into social marketing strategy*, represents a more extensive switch. Although this part approaches a full English clause, it remains embedded within a discourse frame dominated by Mampulli. This reflects clausal embedding, in which the EL contributes multi-word units while the ML still provides the overarching grammatical organisation (Çetinoğlu & Çöltekin, 2023; Elliott, 2020).

The identification of Mampulli as the ML is supported by the presence of the copula construction *ba nya la*. English, by contrast, provides technical and institutional terminology such as *non-governmental organisation* and *social marketing strategy*, in line with observations that English often supplies specialist vocabulary in African multilingual contexts (Olaoye, 2020).

This example also demonstrates that insertion and alternation are not always discrete categories. The presence of the English copula *are* alongside Mampulli copular structure suggests partial frame sharing. This supports accounts that view codeswitching as gradient rather than categorical (Kroff & Dussias, 2023).

In summary, Example 71 illustrates a mixed pattern: Mampulli provides the grammatical scaffolding, while English contributes specialist terminology and, in the latter

part, begins to shape clausal organisation. The data show that matrix language control may shift dynamically within the same utterance.

Example 92.

Issah: *Ya sa goahi match la? It was very interesting.*
 3PL PST watch match DET? It was very interesting.

‘Did you watch the (football) match? It was very interesting.’

(Base 1, 7th February 2023)

The first clause, *Ya sa goahi match la?*, is framed in Mampulli. It contains subject prefix, tense marking, verb, and determiner. The noun *match* is an English insertion. The second clause, *It was very interesting*, is entirely in English, with full subject, copula, and predicate adjective.

This example demonstrates two levels of codeswitching: intra-clausal insertion (English noun within Mampulli clause) and intersentential switching (English clause following a Mampulli clause). The ML therefore shifts across clauses, showing that matrix assignment is not static but dynamic at discourse level (Myers-Scotton, 2002).

The switch also reflects functional differentiation. Mampulli is used for propositional content (describing the event), while English is recruited for evaluative commentary. Such distribution is consistent with findings that English insertions often carry evaluative or stance-related functions in African bilingual contexts (Fuller, 2000; Kheir, 2019).

Example 93.

Taali: *Zuna daa-daari, yaani. The roads are too busy.*
 Today market.day as.usual. The roads are too busy.

‘As usual, today is a market day. The roads are too busy.’

(Base 2, 8th February 2023)

The codeswitched utterance in Example 74 exhibits a clear two-part structure. First, the Mampulli component, *Zuna daa-daari, yaani*, functions as the discourse frame and provides the grammatical and syntactic scaffolding for the sentence. Second, the English segment, *The roads are too busy*, is inserted as a complete EL clause. This pattern goes beyond simple lexical borrowing or single-word insertion; rather, it represents a clause-level alternation in which the embedded English clause is fully incorporated within the Mampulli ML frame.

This structural pattern agrees with the MLF (Myers-Scotton 1993, 2002), which predicts that the matrix language controls the morphosyntactic frame while the embedded language contributes content morphemes or entire syntactic units. Recent studies on African bilingual discourse confirm that such insertion of full EL clauses is common in contexts where speakers maintain local grammatical structures but exploit English for informational density or technical specificity (Aboh, 2018; Auer, 2020a; Auer et al., 2014).

Thus, the example illustrates a systematic, rule-governed alternation rather than arbitrary switching. It demonstrates how bilingual speakers strategically integrate English clauses to convey precise meaning, while the Mampulli frame ensures syntactic and grammatical coherence.

This example illustrates how clause-level switching is accommodated within the MLF, provided that the ML, Mampulli retains control over discourse organisation. In the data, Mampulli frames the propositional core of the interaction, such as setting information (e.g. *Zuna daa-daari, yaani (today is a market day)*). By contrast, English appears in evaluative sequences, for instance expressing commentary like *the roads are too busy*.

This pattern points to a functional division of labour between the two languages. Mampulli provides culturally shared, routine, and socially anchored information. English, on

the other hand, is recruited for evaluative, emphatic, or affective commentary, functioning as a means of stance-taking. In this respect, English insertions do not merely serve as structural fillers or lexical borrowings. Instead, they constitute pragmatic islands (Gimode & Barnes, 2015; Khan et al., 2024), which overlay the Mampulli discourse frame with an additional evaluative layer.

The speaker constructs the discourse through Mampulli, which serves as the primary linguistic framework, while English appears as a bounded insertion in the form of a full sentence. This pattern is consistent with the MLF, in which Mampulli functions as the matrix language and English is embedded within it. The insertion of English is not arbitrary; it performs a specific evaluative function. This demonstrates how bilingual speakers strategically allocate different languages to fulfil distinct discourse roles.

Such usage is consistent with recent findings in codeswitching studies which show that the EL frequently carries discourse-pragmatic functions. Specifically, it has been argued that codeswitching often indexes stance, evaluation, or speaker alignment, rather than simply providing lexical resources (Auer 2020; Gardner-Chloros 2009). The Mampulli-English data therefore reinforces the view that EL material can serve as a resource for pragmatic commentary, demonstrating the interplay between grammar, discourse structure, and social meaning in bilingual speech.

Example 94.

I banjiya those moabu produces those oestrogens and progesterone.
 2SG know those sucking produces those oestrogens and progesterone.

‘You know sucking (breast) produces oestrogens and progesterone.’

(R8 Radio Programme 3, 9th January 2023)

The main predicate *banjiya* (know) confirms Mampulli as the ML. However, the complement clause contains English elements: the determiner *those*, the verb *produces*, and

biomedical terms *oestrogens* and *progesterone*. A Mampulli noun *moabu* (sucking) appears within an English noun phrase.

This represents hybridisation, with Mampulli framing the main clause and an English island embedded within the complement. The pattern supports the EL Island Hypothesis (Myers-Scotton & Jake, 2017), showing that embedded clauses may assert temporary syntactic autonomy. Functionally, Mampulli structures the interactional frame (*you know*), while English encodes scientific content, reflecting domain-specific specialisation.

Example 95.

Issah: *Ya sa goahi match la? It was very interesting.*
 3PL PST watch match DET? It was very interesting.

‘Did you watch the (football) match? It was very interesting.’

(Base 1, February 2023)

This extract, similar to Example 92 demonstrates intersentential codeswitching. The speaker begins with an utterance in *Mampulli*: *Ya sa goahi match la?* and subsequently follows this with the English clause *It was very interesting*. The construction demonstrates a clear instance of intersentential codeswitching, as the transition between languages takes place at a clause boundary. The initial clause is fully formed in Mampulli, functioning as a self-contained interrogative, while the following evaluative remark is presented in English. This linguistic choice highlights the speaker’s ability to alternate between two distinct grammatical systems without structural interference (Poplack, 1980; Muysken, 2022). The evaluative function of the English clause suggests that the switch is pragmatically motivated, signalling emphasis, stance-taking, and possibly appealing to a wider audience or shared bilingual competence (Gardner-Chloros, 2020; Sert, 2005). Such patterns reflect the dynamic nature of bilingual discourse, where intersentential switching frequently occurs in contexts that require contrastive framing, evaluation, or clarification (Bullock & Toribio, 2009).

The first clause appears in Mampulli: *Ya sa goahi match la?* Here, *ya* functions as the subject marker, indicating the third person plural, though in this case it is pragmatically employed as a form of address. The morpheme *sa* marks past tense, while *goahi* serves as the lexical verb meaning ‘watch’. The element *match* represents an embedded English lexical item within the Mampulli structure, and the final particle *la* operates as a determiner or interrogative marker. Taken together, this clause functions as an interrogative, which in English may be glossed as *Did you watch the match?*

The second clause, by contrast, is in English: *It was very interesting.* This clause is syntactically independent, declarative in force, and evaluative in stance. It follows standard English word order and morphology, with no observable structural interference from Mampulli.

When considered together, the alternation exemplifies intersentential codeswitching, where a complete clause in English follows a complete clause in Mampulli. This pattern demonstrates the speaker’s ability to shift across linguistic systems at the boundary of the sentence, a phenomenon well-documented in bilingual discourse (Bullock & Toribio, 2009; McEntee-Atalianis et al., 2023; Muysken, 2000; Poplack, 1980). Such alternation not only reflects linguistic competence but also indexes identity and communicative intent in multilingual interaction.

The shift into English takes place specifically at the evaluative remark. In multilingual interaction, speakers frequently employ English to express judgements, attitudes, or emotional responses (Gardner-Chloros, 2009; Wei, 2018). This pattern indicates that English carries associations of evaluative commentary, modernity, and linguistic prestige in such contexts.

The example further demonstrates that clause boundaries provide stable points for switching between languages. In this case, the interrogative element appears in Mampulli, while the subsequent evaluative phrase is rendered in English. Both remain structurally and prosodically complete, which reinforces the observation that codeswitching is least disruptive when it occurs at sites of syntactic and prosodic closure (Bullock & Toribio, 2009; Myers-Scotton, 1993).

The data also reveal that the speaker is not engaging in arbitrary alternation but in a deliberate distribution of functions across the two codes. Mampulli is consistently reserved for the propositional content, the description of the event of watching the match, whereas English is strategically chosen for evaluative emphasis. This suggests a functional specialisation of codes rather than random linguistic mixing, in line with current accounts of bilingual discourse organisation (Auer, 2020a; Gardner-Chloros & Weston, 2015).

The analysis of this example deepens our understanding of codeswitching by showing how different types of switching fulfil distinct communicative and cognitive functions. At the discourse level, intersentential switching, that is, switching languages between sentences, appears closely aligned with pragmatic functions, particularly evaluation. Such shifts are rarely random. Instead, they often serve as a resource for speakers to highlight an evaluative stance, emphasise an opinion, or create contrastive framing in conversation. Recent studies confirm that bilinguals strategically deploy intersentential codeswitching to mark attitude or stance within interactional contexts (Gafaranga, 2021; Torres Cacoullos, 2020). This supports the argument that language alternation across sentence boundaries is a discourse-pragmatic choice that contributes to meaning-making rather than an arbitrary outcome of bilingual competence.

At the structural level, clause-level switching provides strong evidence for the psychological reality of clause boundaries as natural switch points in bilingual speech.

Bilingual speakers tend to alternate languages at points that coincide with syntactic or prosodic boundaries, rather than within them. This pattern suggests that clause boundaries are cognitively salient units that structure speech planning and production. Recent corpus-based studies demonstrate that language alternation occurs more frequently across intonation-unit or clause boundaries than within clauses, indicating that these points function as cognitively privileged sites for switching (Schendl, 2011; Torres Cacoullos & LaCasse, 2025). Such findings support psycholinguistic models which argue that bilingual speech is constrained not only by grammatical compatibility but also by the mental segmentation of clauses and discourse units.

These observations show that codeswitching is both pragmatically meaningful and cognitively structured. Intersentential alternation reflects discourse-pragmatic functions such as evaluation, while clause-level alternation points to the cognitive salience of boundaries as preferred loci for switching. Rather than treating codeswitching as a peripheral or irregular phenomenon, these insights emphasise its systematic role in bilingual communication. They demonstrate that bilinguals actively use structural and pragmatic resources in both languages to organise discourse, signal stance, and manage interaction (Bullock & Toribio, 2009; Torres Cacoullos, 2020).

In conclusion, the clause observed in the Mampulli-English data demonstrates intersentential switching, exemplified by the sentence *It was very interesting*. This analysis provides support for the MLF model, confirming its applicability to the data. Furthermore, the findings illustrate the pragmatic role of English within the discourse, particularly its function in providing evaluative commentary.

Example 96.

Taali: *Zuna daa-daari, yaani. The roads are too busy.*
 Today market.day as.usual. **The roads are too busy.**

‘As usual, today is a market day. The roads are too busy.’

(Base 2, 8th February 2023)

This example confirms the pattern noted in Example 93. The first clause, *Zuna daa-daari, yaani*, is entirely in Mampulli, featuring a clear subject and predicate that conform to the language’s morphosyntactic structure. Such instances exemplify intersentential codeswitching, where distinct clauses from different languages are juxtaposed within a single conversational turn (Muysken, 2000). The second clause, *The roads are too busy*, is a complete, independent English sentence, devoid of Mampulli morphological or syntactic elements. It functions as a monolingual utterance within a bilingual context, illustrating how speakers alternate between languages without blending them within a single sentence (Gumperz, 1982).

The juxtaposition of these monolingual clauses within a single conversational turn is significant. It reflects a deliberate choice by the speaker to switch languages at the clause boundary, a phenomenon observed in various multilingual settings. For instance, in South Africa, codeswitching between English and indigenous languages has been found to enhance comprehension and engagement among learners (Zondi & Mncube, 2024). This pattern of language use challenges the notion of codeswitching as mere linguistic interference. It is a deliberate discourse strategy rather than random alternation, consistent with accounts of functional differentiation in codeswitching (Auer, 2020; Gardner-Chloros, 2020).

In conclusion, throughout these examples, Mampulli consistently provides the morphosyntactic frame for propositions and interactional scaffolding, while English appears in two principal forms: as inserted lexical items (often technical or institutional) and as full clauses functioning as pragmatic or evaluative islands. The data confirm the explanatory power of the MLF model but also indicate its limits. In particular, the evidence of hybrid clauses and clausal embedding suggests that matrix control is best conceived as a continuum rather than a

categorical assignment. These findings illustrate that codeswitching in Mampulli-English bilingual speech is both systematic and purposeful. Structural constraints shape where switches occur, but pragmatic and functional considerations determine why they occur. English insertions are frequently adopted to signal evaluation, stance, or technical precision, while Mampulli grounds discourse in shared cultural and grammatical structures.

CHAPTER 6

Sociocultural Factors in Mampulli-English Codeswitching

6.1 Introduction

This chapter explores the sociocultural elements influencing the phenomenon of Mampulli-English CS within the EoC framework, through thematic analysis, focusing on the context of Nalerigu. It examines how these most recurrent factors: education, gender, age, modernisation, prestige, and religion influence codeswitching practices. By situating these elements within the Ethnography of Communication model, the chapter underlines their roles in reflecting and constructing communicative norms and cultural meanings. Each factor is examined in detail, with a comprehensive analysis of its role in shaping and maintaining codeswitching behaviours.

6.2 Education

Within Dell Hymes' (1972) SPEAKING model, the setting refers not only to the physical and temporal context of communication but also to the broader institutional and sociocultural frameworks that influence speech. In the case of Mampulli-English CS in Nalerigu, education forms a central component of this setting. Ghanaian schools, particularly at the basic education level (twelve years of compulsory education), provide a structured environment in which English is either the medium of instruction or a core subject (Akyeampong et al., 2022). This institutional privileging of English fosters conditions for bilingual competence, thereby shaping the norms and practices of CS among pupils.

The educational setting thus operates as both a physical space (schools, classrooms) and an ideological space where linguistic hierarchies are reproduced. Gal's (1979) foundational work demonstrates how educational systems can entrench linguistic inequalities. More recently, Gal and Irvine (2019) describe the process of ideological erasure, whereby certain linguistic forms are rendered socially invisible or academically irrelevant. In Nalerigu, this process marginalises Mampulli, not through direct prohibition, but through a lack of recognition in formal education. While Ghana's language-in-education policy makes provision for some indigenous languages as mediums of instruction (Ansah, 2014; Owu-Ewie & Eshun, 2019), Mampulli has not been granted such privilege. Consequently, pupils use English more consistently in school, while Mampulli is reserved largely for home and community interaction.

This divergence between home and school language use has produced a generational shift. Older speakers recall a time when fewer people had access to education, and English proficiency was limited. As two community leaders explain:

Example 97.

Chief 2: *Nijvuyshaba ban karim be nna karimni sukuru ka wumni Sulmintiri yi zuaya ni Nalerigu wa. Man saani di ni n tsaka di nya lala maa.*

‘People who are educated or being educated and understand English in my opinion are now many in Nalerigu. That is why it is like that.’ (Chief 2, 17/2/2023)

Example 98.

Chief 1: *Daa maa ban daa tsan sukuru daa bu zoai, din.zuṅu daa bu wumni ka niriba toasiri Mampulli ni Sulmintiri n jeta. Ti pampamjua ban tsang sukuya ka wumni Sulmintiri zuaya pam.*

‘In the past, those who went to school were not many, so we did not hear people mixing Mampulli and English. But now, there are many educated people who understand English, and we hear much mixing.’ (Chief 1, 7/2/2023).

These testimonies illustrate how the educational setting enables communicative behaviour. For the older generation, CS was rare, as fewer speakers had the linguistic resources to move fluidly between Mampulli and English. For younger generations, however, increased access to education has normalised Mampulli-English CS. The practice has become a shared linguistic repertoire that signals not only educational attainment but also membership in a community where bilingualism is the communicative norm (Blommaert, 2010; García & Wei, 2015b).

Thus, the educational setting in Nalerigu demonstrates the close link between institutional language policies, generational experiences of schooling, and the communicative practices of bilingual speakers. It reveals how formal education serves as both a site of linguistic opportunity and a mechanism of linguistic inequality, where English is legitimised while Mampulli is symbolically excluded.

However, presently, the number of schools as well the number of people who have received formal education has increased tremendously. It means is that the number of people proficient in both Mampulli and English has increased significantly. Indeed, all the participants sampled for this study have a minimum of primary school education and are to an extent

proficient in both languages (see Section 4.5.1.2). The linguistic environment in Nalerigu, therefore makes it conducive for Mampulli-English bilinguals to switch between the two languages.

Furthermore, the data reveals the central role of Ghana's language-in-education policy in shaping CS practices in Nalerigu. Both younger and older speakers report that the introduction of Dagbani and English as the principal languages of instruction, particularly the use of English from the early stages of education, has contributed to the declining visibility of Mampulli. This has directly fostered increased CS behaviour among Mampulli speakers.

An elderly participant, who served as a teacher throughout his career in Nalerigu and later became a chief, reflects on this shift. He explains that between the 1950s and 1970s, pupils were taught in Mampulli, but later policy changes compelled schools to adopt Dagbani and English instead:

Example 99.

Chief 1: *Ti daa yi tsang sukuru bad aa yi wulsiri ti la Mampulli ni 50s nti paai 70s amaa pampamɲua gomnanti muki ti ni ba wulsim ba Dagbani ni Sulmintiri ni. (7/2/2023)*

'In the past, when we attended school between the 1950s and 1970s, we were taught in Mampulli. Now, however, the government has compelled us to teach them (pupils) Dagbani and English.'

From the perspective of ends in the model, the participant stresses that the earlier policy goal of using Mampulli as a medium of instruction promoted local language development and supported children's proficiency in their first language. The subsequent policy change, however, altered the educational focus. By placing greater emphasis on English, the objectives came to include not only bilingual competence but also, more implicitly, the positioning of English as the main pathway to social and economic advancement. This shift pushed Mampulli to the margins, lowering its visibility and limiting its functional role in schooling. The

participant implies that if Mampulli had continued as a medium of instruction, learners might have achieved stronger competence in it, which could have lessened the reliance on codeswitching. This interpretation is consistent with Owu-Ewie's (2006) argument that Ghana's revised language policy of the 1980s introduced a structural tension between supporting indigenous languages and reinforcing the dominance of English.

Similarly, the Key in the participant's narrative conveys a sense of regret and loss. His tone suggests that the decline of Mampulli in education was neither inevitable nor natural, but rather the result of deliberate policy decisions. The choice of the word *muki* (compelled) reflects a perception of external imposition by government structures. His attitude resonates with Heugh's (2011) argument that language policy is not a neutral exercise but a site where ideologies of power and identity are negotiated. In this context, the emotional framing reveals the disempowering effect of replacing a community's language with regional and global ones.

Moreover, Ghana's revised education policy stipulates that a Ghanaian language should be used from Primary 1 to 3, with English becoming the dominant medium from Primary Four onwards (Owu-Ewie, 2006). However, in practice, the chosen Ghanaian language is often a regional lingua franca, such as Dagbani, rather than the actual mother tongue of pupils. In Nalerigu, this creates a three-tiered situation: Mampulli as the home language, Dagbani as the regional school language, and English as the national school language. Interestingly, the data shows no strong evidence of trilingual CS among pupils, raising questions about how language hierarchies are internalised and simplified in practice.

Another observation concerns differences between public and private schools in relation to codeswitching practices in Nalerigu, as described by older generations. Public schools, which are established and managed by the Government of Ghana through the Ghana Education Service (GES), are generally expected to follow the official bilingual policy. Private

schools, by contrast, are often described in the literature as promoting English-only instruction (Ansah & Agyeman, 2015; Bronteng et al., 2019). In Nalerigu, some accounts suggest that private schools may discourage the use of Ghanaian languages, including Mampulli, sometimes through the introduction of penalties for pupils.

Example 100.

Charles: *Din lan taasiri di na nya ti tiɲua private sukuya wa. Ba bu bori nib a biisi taasiri Mampulli din nin tsaka niribi zi ba biisi na ba sukuya.* (Base 1, 7/2/2023)

‘Another cause is the private schools. They do not want their pupils to speak the Mampulli to attract prospective parents to their schools.’

Example 101.

Salley: *Private schools maa n ku taasiri dina.*

‘The private schools are just the cause of this.’ (Base 2, 8/2/2023)

It has been suggested that such practices may influence how parents use language at home, as some appear to adjust their speech to support their children’s school experience and to help them avoid possible sanctions. This, in turn, may contribute to greater use of English in family settings.

This reflects not only a structural enforcement of English but also an ideological positioning of English as a marker of prestige and modernity. At the same time, as Dartey (2025) shows, such schools are not always monolithically monolingual. Teachers and pupils may engage in pragmatic CS to clarify meaning and foster inclusion, reflecting Heugh’s (2011) and Erling et al. (2022) view that multilingual practices persist even within English-dominant environments.

The researcher, drawing on over three decades of personal observation as a Mampulli speaker in Nalerigu, notes that many parents CS not simply out of preference but as a strategy to support their children’s education. For them, English proficiency is crucial for academic advancement, while Mampulli is gradually being sidelined. Thus, codeswitching emerges as

both a practical tool for communication and a symbolic act negotiating the tension between cultural identity and educational success.

In summary, using Hymes' concepts of ends and key, the case of Nalerigu demonstrates how educational language policies have changed patterns of communication, especially CS. The ends of language use have moved away from supporting literacy in indigenous languages and now emphasise English as the main route to social and economic opportunity. The key reveals the mixed feelings of local speakers, who are concerned about the declining role of Mampulli in everyday life. Recent research (Dartey, 2025; Wei, 2020) confirms that although English is the dominant language in schools, multilingual practices still appear in classrooms, on the radio, and in community settings. These practices reveal both resistance to English-only policies and adaptation to changing conditions.

6.3 Language Prestige

The use and perception of language in bilingual contexts cannot be understood purely in terms of communication. Instead, it is deeply shaped by social ideologies of prestige, identity, and legitimacy (Amjad & Tayyab, 2025; Becker, 2023). As Gal's (1979) work on Hungarian-German bilingualism in Austria showed, language shift reflects social alignment with aspirations of modernity, gender roles, and class mobility. In a similar way, bilingual speakers in Nalerigu orient towards English not only for communicative efficiency but as a symbolic act of positioning themselves within hierarchies of education and authority.

The concept of linguistic capital remains central in explaining this phenomenon (Abrar-ul-Hassan, 2021; Bourdieu, 1991; Xu et al., 2023). English functions as a resource that holds greater value in institutional and professional domains, while Mampulli is confined to local and informal spaces. Gal's (2023) notion of erasure helps explain how indigenous languages such as Mampulli are ideologically rendered less relevant in education and governance. This

unequal distribution of linguistic value reflects what Woolard (2020) describes as competing language ideologies, in which speakers must constantly negotiate authenticity (affiliation with the local) and legitimacy (alignment with the global or institutional).

In this study, Dell Hymes' EoC framework provides a useful lens for situating these patterns. His SPEAKING model illustrates how communicative behaviour is shaped by multiple components, each of which helps to explain the dynamics of language choice in Nalerigu.

The first component, setting, shows the importance of context in shaping linguistic behaviour. In Nalerigu, the choice between Mampulli and English depends on the domain of interaction. Within the household, in radio broadcasts, and during informal social occasions, Mampulli is the dominant language. By contrast, English tends to be the preferred medium in schools, government institutions, and research interviews. These distinctions reinforce the perception of English as a "language of modernity" (Heller, 2006), while Mampulli continues to function as an emblem of local cultural identity.

The second component, participants, shows how social roles and relationships influence linguistic choices. Health professionals, utility providers and government officials frequently introduce English expressions into Mampulli to fill lexical gaps, signal authority, competence, and prestige. Younger speakers, particularly at the bases, adopt English insertions more consistently. Their choices are often motivated by the desire to associate with educated peer groups and to display an identity linked to schooling and progress.

The third element, *Ends*, draws attention to the purpose behind speech acts. Communication is not merely about transferring information, but also about constructing and displaying social meaning. In this context, CS serves to project an image of education, to mark

elite membership, and to express aspirations for upward mobility. Two participants in explained:

Example 102.

Chief 1: *Soakam bori la ba yeli ni u nya la karatsi bee awuraba.* (7/2/2023)

‘Everyone wants to be identified as an educated person.’

Example 103.

Issah: *Din nya shiem maa yaa, i laym I taaba ni bu ya wurini ka sulimintiri jeri.*

‘What it is, is that when you’re among your peers, you’ll mix English unconsciously.’ (Base 2, 8/2/2023)

Thus, the desire to be recognised as educated is a powerful motivation for these linguistic choices.

The act sequence refers to the structure of communicative exchanges. In Nalerigu, CS follows observable patterns that correspond to educational background. Individuals with higher levels of formal education frequently switch entire clauses into English, whereas speakers with less education are more likely to insert isolated English words. This is demonstrated in speeches of Bona and Zuama from Base 1. Bona, who has attained tertiary education and a teacher, consistently integrate complex English clausal structures while Zuama, with Junior High education and unemployed continue to insert single English lexical structures.

Extract 1

Sule: *Bɔndaari ka MP wana la?*

When is MP coming?

Charles: *MP wɔnani?*

Which MP?

BA: *Ti MP*

Our MP.

Bona: *MP? Next week. U ya and tsaana n commission the new school block sheea ban mea la.*

MP? Next week. He is coming to commission the new school block that they have built.

Zuama: *Dirin daari ku nij easy. Tijua daani dam.*

That day won’t be easy. This town will shake.

Extract 2

Zack: *Zuna Alzummah, n ya tsanla Jijni.*

Today is Friday, I am going to the mosque.

- Zuama:** *Man gba wani, n zua, time nya la ala?* I'm also going, my friend what is the time?
- Bona:** *Yim di yala ni. You're already late. 7:30 nla.* Forget about it. You're already late. It's 7:30.
- Zuama:** *Nnij tsanji. Time na beni.* I'll go. There's still time.

Extract 3

- Musah:** *Ba admit u ni.* They have admitted her.
- Zack:** *Iyani boaa?* What have you said?
- Bona:** *I gba wum di. Ni u nijla down with typhoid fever ka ba dolu goro it's been three days now.* Have you also heard about it? That she is down with typhoid fever and they have admitted her to the hospital. It's been three days now.
- Zack:** *Duani yala ka ya toasiri maa?* Who are you talking about?
- Zuama:** *Osman mother.* Osman's mother.

Extract 4

- Issah:** *M mari la kwana botaata nkoosira ka ba bu daari a.* I have three bags of corn for sale but they are not buying them.
- Zuama:** *Ala nya booto?(laughing)* How much is a bag?
- Sule:** *I booli daabiisi wa?* Have you called the traders?
- Issah:** *Ghc 400* Ghc 400
- Bona:** *That's very expensive. Ba koosiri a la Ghc 300 ka sheeba koosiri Ghc 350.* That's very expensive. They sell them at Ghc 300 and others sell at Ghc 350.
- Issah:** *(chuckling) Din nuana fasee ka n nya daabiisi maa n boosiba nya n reduce ma bee.* Then, I have to see the traders and ask them if I have to reduce the prices.
- Zuama:** *I ku nij reduce ni ka ba da.* You just have to reduce for them to buy.

This variation demonstrates that CS operates not only as a linguistic practice but also as a marker of educational attainment and ambition.

The Instrumentalities of communication further illustrate the role of English. The language is strongly associated with literacy, education, and formal institutions. Its presence in schools, radio broadcast, interviews, and official transactions demonstrates how communicative tools intersect with broader ideologies of modernity and social advancement.

In terms of Norms, local expectations dictate that educated individuals should demonstrate their competence in English through speech. To speak only in Mampulli may be judged as a sign of lacking education. As one schoolteacher explained:

Example 104.

Musah: *I gba yi toasiri ka bu jeta Sulmintiri maa di nyoo yini nazin tsang sukuru.*

‘If one speaks without mixing with English, it feels like you have never been educated.’

(Base 1, 7/2/2023)

This norm creates pressure for bilinguals to insert English expressions, even when speaking in private or family contexts. Such norms reinforce the social value of English and its connection to educational achievement.

Finally, the Genre of interaction also affects language use. In school lessons, radio discussions, professional communication, and even family conversations, English often takes a dominant role. For example, parents in bilingual households frequently switch to English when addressing their children in the extract below.

Extract 5.

Mother: Ruth!

Daughter: Yes, maa

Mother: *When ka i yi school na?*
‘When did you come from school?’

Daughter: I came with daddy.

Mother: *Alaa daddy? nyini n pick u zuna?*
‘Is it true, daddy? Did you pick her up from school, today?’

Father: *Yes! N da gatini ka nya ka ba close I decided*
‘Yes! I was passing by her school and saw that they had closed and I picked her up.’

Father: *Nij yoma and come and do your homework ka ba*
ti nij light off.

‘Hurry up and come and do your homework else they may switch the light off.’

Daughter: Ok

This switch is often used to mark seriousness, to emphasise authority, or to reinforce the association between English and formal education (Bodomo et al., 2010).

Page and Tabouret-Keller's (1985) acts of identity theory helps explain how Mampulli-English bilinguals consciously perform identities through language. CS becomes a strategy for signalling educational attainment, intelligence, and elite status. English is associated with bureaucratic and technical domains, where terms such as *district office* or *special planning authority* as seen in Chapter 5, carry institutional legitimacy. Meanwhile, Mampulli provides the grammatical frame of interaction. This asymmetry reflects what Blommaert (2015) calls sociolinguistic scaling, where English is scaled upwards as a language of global access, while Mampulli is scaled downwards as a local code.

The younger generation in particular treat CS as a creative act. For them, the fluid integration of English and Mampulli not only demonstrates competence but also enhances the beauty and fluency of interaction. This follows Gardner-Chloros' (2020) observations of CS as a socially meaningful practice that signals both linguistic creativity and identity negotiation.

National policies also reinforce these ideologies. English is the official medium of instruction from upper primary onwards, and despite attempts at bilingual education through programmes such as Ghana's NaLAP, parents often demand English-only schooling (Owusu, 2017). This positions English as the language of opportunity and prestige, while local languages are framed as inadequate for serious domains such as education or research.

In line with Hymes' EoC, these institutional policies reshape not only the instrumentalities of communication but also the norms and expectations around language use. For example, the observation that interviewees resisted being interviewed in Mampulli reflects an ideological norm that English is the legitimate language of research and authority.

Example 105.

Bugri: Ti ya toasi la Mampulli? Di yi nya research ḡoana, Sulmintiri n nin la.

‘Are we going to speak Mampulli? If it is research, then it is English.’
(9/2/2023)

The ethnographic evidence from Nalerigu demonstrates that CS between Mampulli and English is not a random act but a patterned communicative practice embedded in social ideologies of prestige, modernity, and education. Analysed through Hymes’ SPEAKING model (Hymes, 1972; Katsara, 2023), these practices show how settings, participants, goals, and norms all converge to position English as a language of legitimacy and power. Mampulli, though still dominant in informal life, is subordinated in institutional and educational domains. The result is a sociolinguistic hierarchy where CS functions as an index of identity, status, and belonging.

In this context, English is not simply a language but a symbol: a marker of global access, competence, and aspiration. Meanwhile, the marginalisation of Mampulli illustrates ongoing tensions between local identity and institutional legitimacy. Such dynamics confirm that bilingual speech is never only about communication it is also about prestige, power, and the negotiation of social hierarchies.

6.4 Gender

In the SPEAKING model (Hymes, 1974), the participants component refers to the interlocutors involved in communicative events, including their social roles, identities, and relationships. In communities where men and women do not enjoy equal opportunities of participation, assessing their language use through identical criteria presents methodological and interpretive challenges. Gender differences in access, authority, and expectations often shape who speaks, when they speak, and the kinds of linguistic resources they draw upon (Coates, 2015; Eckert & McConnell-Ginet, 2013; Talbot, 2019). Within the bilingual data from

Nalerigu, this study investigates how Mampulli-English bilingual men and women make distinct language choices, thereby revealing the sociolinguistic dynamics of gendered communication.

Research in bilingualism consistently show the role of gender in CS (Alsamhan & Almutrafi, 2022; Kane, 2020; Labov, 2008). Gender influences both language preference and the situational contexts in which switching occurs. For instance, Alsamhan and Almutrafi (2022), studying Arabic-English codeswitching on Twitter, found that women predominantly used Arabic, while men alternated more freely between Arabic and English. Similarly, Deklu (2014) showed that among Ewe-English bilinguals in Ghana, women were more likely than men to revert to Ewe in intimate family settings. These studies illustrate how gendered roles and identities condition communicative participation.

The present study shows that in radio interactions in Nalerigu, men engaged in codeswitching to English across a wider range of contexts, while women used English primarily for professional or technical terms. For example, women discussing nutrition or family planning relied on Mampulli for general discourse but switched to English for specific technical terms (see Examples 87-89). This suggests that women's participation is shaped by professional knowledge and the need for precision, while men display broader linguistic flexibility.

Example 106.

R8: *Nutrition nya la ti bundira ni an tumni sheen ti ningbina ni.*

‘Nutrition refers to the foods we eat and how they work in our bodies.’

(Radio Programme 3, 9/1/2023)

Example 107.

R8: *Bleeding maa sheeba beni, ba yi nij gɔya ata maa ba nyari la bleeding irregularities.*

‘There are some people, when they do the three months (birth control) they experience irregular menstrual bleeding.’ (Radio Programme 3, 9/1/2023)

Example 109.

R8: *Sheeba beni nniŋ, ka ba lɔŋŋu maara ka sheeba niŋ ka nya decreased sexual desire.*

‘There are some people, when they do it, they feel nauseated and for others they experience decreased sexual desire.’

(Radio Programme 3, 9/1/2023)

Interestingly, these findings contrast with Alphonse and Lusekelo (2025) argument that speakers tend to switch towards the more prestigious language. English, often associated with prestige, education, and mobility in Ghana, did not dominate women’s speech. Instead, women’s language choices were influenced by language acquisition and cultural norms, as one male interviewee observed:

Example 110

Bugri: *Women are close to perfect when it comes to learning and speaking languages... they learn Mampulli so well from the community and are conscious about not making mistakes (9/2/2023).*

Thus, for women, communicative participation appears more closely tied to cultural expectations of accuracy and linguistic competence than to prestige-driven motivations (Eckert & McConnell-Ginet, 2013).

The patriarchal structure of Mamprusi society further shapes participation. Women are socially constrained from expressing opinions in male-dominated contexts. This was reflected in the limited number of female participants in the study (17 women versus 53 men). Some women even declined participation when recording was involved, deferring instead to male family members. This reflects cultural restrictions where men and women do not engage in casual public conversation together:

Example 111.

Tanko: *I mi ni ti culture maa poaba ni dappa ba bu laymna nzintiri n suahara. Poab' be la dindɔɲni ka dapp' bea samanni*

'You know in our culture, men and women do not sit together for casual conversation. The women are in the house while the men are outside.' (Base 1, 7/2/2023)

Example 112.

Tiara: *Maan ni yenni dapa. Di pa la poab' maa bu wumni Sulmintiri. Ti poab' maa pam zɔri la vi dama, nyin poa yi toasiri ka wuri I jeti Sulmintiri ba yi yeni u mari la woakiri. (21/2/2023)*

'I will say men, not because the women do not understand English but because most women are shy. This is because as a woman when you're talking and mix with English, they say you are too knowing.'

Here, participants' gendered roles and societal perceptions directly determine the extent of communicative involvement.

Generational differences also influence participation. Older men and women in Nalerigu often view CS negatively, interpreting it as evidence of inadequate fluency in Mampulli. They discourage younger speakers from switching, seeing it as disruptive to communication. Older women reportedly avoid CS to preserve the integrity of their speech and align with socially approved norms (Cheshire & Gardner-Chloros, 1998, 2008). This suggests that female participants often take on the role of maintaining linguistic standards within the community, reinforcing their social identities through adherence to correctness.

Educational differences further contribute to unequal communicative participation. Among the female participants, only five of the seventeen had attained a diploma or higher qualification, compared with twenty-seven of the sixty-four men. Higher levels of education afford greater

proficiency in English, which in turn facilitates codeswitching. Thus, men's higher frequency of switching is closely tied to their educational advantage. This underscores education as a crucial factor shaping bilingual participation, in line with broader sociolinguistic findings on language and opportunity (Kane, 2020).

From the perspective of Hymes' EoC framework (Hymes, 1974,1967), the patterns observed reveal how participants' roles are structured by gender and culture. Gender acts as a key social construct that dictates communicative expectations, shaping how men and women use language in public and private contexts (Eckert & McConnell-Ginet, 2013; Gal & Irvine, 2019). Women's preference for Mampulli in family and community settings reflects their orientation towards maintaining cultural norms, while men's broader use of English aligns with their greater involvement in public and professional domains. The observed codeswitching practices, therefore, illustrate how participants' identities, roles, and social positions intersect with language use in a bilingual community.

In summary, gendered participation in Nalerigu demonstrates that language choice is not merely a matter of prestige or proficiency but is shaped by a combination of cultural expectations, educational attainment, and social norms. Through the lens of Hymes' SPEAKING model, the Participants component examines how men and women occupy unequal but socially meaningful positions in communicative practices. Their language behaviours reveal the interplay between gender, social structure, and bilingualism, contributing to a deeper understanding of how linguistic diversity reflects wider patterns of inequality and cultural continuity.

6.5 Age

In Dell Hymes' (1972) EoC, the component of *Participants* draws attention to how the characteristics of the interlocutors in a speech event shape language practices. In the Mampulli-

English bilingual setting of Nalerigu, age appears as an especially significant factor, with older and younger generations demonstrating different orientations to language use.

For the older generation, switching between Mampulli and English within the same utterance disrupts communication.

Example 113

Tiara: *Ti daa yi mi sheem nya la, I daa yi toasiri Mampulli, I ya toasi ka kɔkoa nti yi. Amaa pampamɲua, poasara ni naytsim wa yi toasiri Mampulli, ba mari la Sulmintiri wa n jeta. Saha shea ba yi toasi gba, man yi bu banɲni di gbini. (21/2/2023)*

‘In the past, what we knew was that, if one was speaking Mampulli, you spoke it throughout. But now, with the youth women and men, when they are speaking Mampulli, they mix it with English and sometimes other languages. At times, when they speak, I don’t understand what they mean.’

They argued that each language is embedded within its own cultural and social framework, and that combining them risks undermining this grounding. One retired educationist in her sixties, for instance, noted that her twenty-three-year-old son’s Mampulli is difficult for her to follow because it contains so many English insertions. She also reported her dissatisfaction when listening to local radio presenters whose alternation between codes made her unsure whether the broadcast was in Mampulli or in English. Such views resonate with Gal’s (1979) observation that language use indexes social identity and with Bourdieu’s (1991) notion of linguistic capital. For these older participants, Mampulli is closely associated with authority and cultural continuity, while English is treated as peripheral and secondary.

By contrast, younger speakers routinely employ CS as part of their everyday speech. Two male participants in their thirties explained, only half-jokingly, that

Example 114.

Ibrahim: Di miili ti ni. Ti ku toai n toasi Mampulli ka Sulmintiri bu jeri.

‘We are used to it. We cannot speak Mampulli without adding English.’

(Base 1, 7/2/2023)

Example 115.

Taali: *Di ku niŋ ka ti baham abayi maa n zuana maa, I toasiri ka ya waligi a, din toa.*

‘(Base 2, 8/2/2023)

Once we learned the two (languages) growing up, when you’re speaking, it becomes difficult to separate them.’

This illustrates how many younger adults perceive switching as a normal and unremarkable part of their communicative repertoire rather than as a deficiency which is demonstrated in these extracts of their interactions from Base 2 below:

Extract 6

Sule: *Bɔndaari ka MP wana la?*

Charles: *MP wɔɔani?*

BA: *Ti MP*

Bona: *MP? Next week. U ya and tsaana n commission the new school block sheea ban mea la.*

Zuama: *Dirin daari ku niŋ easy. Tiŋua daani dam.*

When is MP coming?

Which MP?

Our MP.

MP? Next week. He is coming to commission the new school block that they have built.

That day won’t be easy. This town will shake.

Extract 7

Zack: *Zuna Alzummah, n ya tsaŋla Jiŋni.*

Zuama: *Man gba wani, n zua, time nya la ala?*

Bona: *Yim di yala ni. You’re already late. 7:30 nla.*

Zuama: *Nniŋ tsaŋji. Time na beni.*

Today is Friday, I am going to the mosque.

I’m also going, my friend what is the time?

Forget about it. You’re already late. It’s 7:30.

I’ll go. There’s still time.

Extract 8

Musah: *Ba admit u ni.*

Zack: *I yani boaa?*

Bona: *I gba wum di. Ni u niŋla down with typhoid fever ka ba dolu goro it’s been three days now.*

Zack: *Ɔuani yala ka ya toasiri maa?*

Zuama: *Osman mother.*

They have admitted her.

What have you said?

Have you also heard about it? That she is down with typhoid fever and they have admitted her to the hospital. It’s been three days now.

Who are you talking about?

Osman’s mother.

Similarly, at a young ladies' religious gathering, discussions about premarital relationships were characterised by a fluid alternation between Mampulli and English.

Extract 9.

Ange: *Zuna ti ya discuss la pre-marital relationships. As a Christian lady din sum ni I niṅ sheem I mari boyfriend. So, ti zaa ya toasi ni.*

Azum: *Ka n yi ka boyfriend n ya niṅ la wu la?*

Ange: *Di nya la discussion. Suakam ya share la nua mi sheela.*

Today, we are going to discuss pre-marital relationships. What you should do if you have a boyfriend as a Christian young lady, So, we're all going to speak.

If I don't have a boyfriend, what do I do?

It is a discussion. Everyone will share she knows.

YCL Group, 24/2/2023

Young women in this group explained that switching occurred because they could assume peers would understand either code. One participant added that English terms often allowed her to express ideas with greater clarity, particularly when she felt Mampulli lacked the necessary vocabulary. The younger generation's orientation towards English is not limited to peer contexts. In contrast with Sitaram et al. (2019) claim that CS is primarily peer-focused, younger bilinguals in Nalerigu also reported switching when conversing with parents or older relatives. For these speakers, English offered a way of extending their expressive range beyond what they considered Mampulli could accommodate. In male youth groups, educated younger participants noted that English terms were also used when discussing abstract or technical issues, as they felt this avoided the risk of distortion in translation. In such cases, CS appeared not only as a practical solution but also as a way of aligning with educational and cosmopolitan

identities, like findings in other African contexts (see Blommaert, 2010; Dako & Quarcoo, 2017).

From the perspective of elders, however, these practices were interpreted quite differently. Many older participants voiced concerns that younger people no longer invest effort in deepening their Mampulli competence, since switching to English provides an easier alternative. For them, this was seen as evidence of weakening cultural ties and a decline in linguistic discipline. This indorses Irvine and Gal's (2000) concept of fractal recursivity, where generational language practices reproduce wider ideological oppositions such as tradition versus modernity and local versus global.

At the same time, it would be overly reductive to view youth CS simply as a symptom of language loss. Research in different sociolinguistic contexts has shown that switching can serve creative, stylistic, and persuasive purposes. Mensah (2017), for example, demonstrated how Twi-English CS in Ghanaian advertising attracts audience attention, while Alegado et al. (2021) reported similar findings in Tagalog-English popular music. In Nalerigu, younger bilinguals likewise described their practice as a way of enhancing humour, creating solidarity, and ensuring clarity.

Example 116

Nash: ...time shea Sulmintiri maa yi tsaka azama maa nyaysi ni, saha shea muna, ka di flowra eheeh (at times the English makes the conversation interesting and sometimes, it makes it flow (Base 2, 8/2/2023))

Such accounts suggest that for younger speakers, CS is not merely compensatory but also performative and socially meaningful, echoing more recent studies of youth bilingualism (Gardner-Chloros, 2020; Wei, 2018).

It is important to note that older speakers should not be assumed to represent fixed or “authentic” models of linguistic practice. As Pichler et al. (2018) caution, resistance to codeswitching is itself an active stance that reflects a desire to protect language integrity. In this sense, elders’ preference for separation is as dynamic as youths’ embrace of hybridity. While younger bilinguals use CS to express creativity and affiliation, elders draw on linguistic boundaries to affirm continuity and safeguard cultural identity.

6.6 Modernisation

This study further reveals modernisation as a social variable that shapes CS among Mampulli-English bilinguals in Nalerigu. Modernity introduces new dimensions to language contact situations globally (Blommaert & Rampton, 2015). Increased mobility and technological advancement create more opportunities for speakers of different languages to interact in educational, occupational, commercial, and recreational settings. In such encounters, interlocutors adapt their linguistic choices to ensure mutual intelligibility and accessibility (Chan, 2021; Gooskens & Van Heuven, 2021).

In Hymes’ framework, the participants (speakers, hearers, and audiences) play a central role in determining code choice. The upgrading of Nalerigu from a traditional town to the regional capital of Northeast Ghana in 2018 has intensified its image as a modern community (Penu, 2022). This political and administrative shift has attracted government institutions, schools, radio stations, and a growing non-Mampulli population. The changing participant structure of communicative events has therefore become more heterogeneous, prompting a higher degree of multilingual interaction. Hence, creating the setting for this language phenomenon according to model’s idea of norms (Ray et al., 2011).

Observation from radio programmes shows that panellists and presenters often switch to English to reach wider audiences beyond Mampulli speakers. When asked why English is permitted in broadcasts intended for Mampulli listeners, a host explained that Nalerigu's new regional status attracts many visitors and residents who do not understand Mampulli. Thus, switching to English enables inclusivity:

Example 116.

H: I gba mi ni pampamɲua Nalerigu wa nya la regional capital ka saamm' pam kpeana so sheei ka ti toasi Sulmintiri mpaasi ka suakam wum. (Radio programme 2, 5/2/2023)

'You also know that Nalerigu is now a regional capital and many non-natives have come into the town, so we have to be switching to English for everyone to understand.'

This response illustrates how participants, particularly media audiences, shape communicative choices. The practice is not simply a reflection of individual linguistic ability, but a strategic adaptation to the needs of a wider and more diverse listenership. The host acknowledged the linguistic limitations of some panellists but emphasised that, from the perspective of the media house, is valued as a tool for engaging and bridging the communication gap with non-Mampulli audiences. This perspective, thus frames CS as a strategic choice rather than solely a reflection of the panellists' linguistic abilities, the primary goal of Hymes' concept of ends (Ray et al., 2011).

Modernisation also affects how Mampulli speakers perceive themselves as members of a larger speech community where English has high communicative value. In this sense, participants are conscious of their role in wider social networks and deliberately improve their

English competence to expand their repertoires. CS thus becomes a resource that reflects both identity and participation in modern social life (Canagarajah, 2020).

Furthermore, everyday practices reveal that participants across age and educational backgrounds incorporate English terms into their Mampulli speech. Words linked to modern consumption and technology, such as *tea*, *TV*, *phone*, *fridge*, *radio*, and *fried rice*, are used without translation or explanation. Their integration into daily speech indicates that English is being normalised in domains where Mampulli lacks equivalent vocabulary. The result is a patterned CS that is socially accepted by the speech community, as these lexical borrowings carry no stigma.

The English contribution is concentrated in content nouns related to education (*school*, *professor*), governance (*district office*, *DCE*), finance (*bill*, *cedis*), technology (*computer*, *meter*), and medicine (*hormones*, *vasectomy*, *pills*). This reflects how participants draw upon English to access technical and institutional registers that embody modernity. The choice to switch is therefore shaped by communicative needs and sociolinguistic factors rather than random alternation (Blommaert, 2019).

In summary, modernisation in Nalerigu has expanded opportunities for multilingual encounters and reshaped the norms of communication. CS emerges as a strategic response to new social realities, supporting inclusivity and signalling membership in a wider speech community where English is dominant. This finding supports recent scholarship that positions CS as a socially motivated practice influenced by modern lifestyles and institutional change (Heller, 2020; Morton, 2014; Myers-Scotton, 2012).

6.7 Religion

The introduction of Christianity to Nalerigu in northern Ghana can be traced to the arrival of American Baptist missionaries and medical personnel at the Baptist Medical Centre in the late 1940s (Azantilow, 2023). Their mission was both evangelical and medical, providing healthcare alongside religious instruction (Willis, 2005). Although English was the missionaries' first language, their efforts to learn Mampulli and their reliance on interpreters meant that English did not become the dominant medium of religious practice in the community. Instead, Christianity was integrated into local culture through bilingual practices, where English and Mampulli co-existed in the linguistic repertoires of local Christians.

The ethnographic data on Mampulli-English bilinguals reveals that religion plays a central role in shaping patterns of language use. In Christian contexts, speakers regularly alternate between Mampulli and English, particularly when quoting or paraphrasing passages from the Bible. This finding reflects a broader pattern of code choice in religious discourse, where sacred texts often dictate the language of reference (Albakry & Ofori, 2011; Boamah-Boateng & Anderson, 2024; Mensah, 2015). Notably, Muslim speakers in the same region exhibited Mampulli-Arabic CS, especially during religious activities, reflecting their connection to the original language of Islamic practice (Abdullah, 2021; Eid, 2019). This phenomenon supports the wider sociolinguistic argument that religious affiliation often anchors speakers to the linguistic origin of their faith traditions.

These practices resonate with broader patterns observed in other contexts. For instance, Bassiouney (2013) documents CS between Standard Arabic and Egyptian Colloquial Arabic in mosque sermons in Egypt. Similarly, Eid (2019) describes Friday sermons in Jordan where preachers switch between high and low varieties of Arabic to clarify religious messages and provide directives. In Accra, Abdullah (2021) found that imams intentionally switched between

Arabic and Ghanaian languages to increase solidarity with congregants and lend authority to their sermons. These examples demonstrate that codeswitching in religious settings is a cross-cultural strategy of accessibility, solidarity, and legitimacy.

The ethnographic observations in a Christian young ladies' fellowship group in Nalerigu further highlight the dynamics of religion and language. The participants, aged between sixteen and twenty-five, all possessed at least basic education, with some holding university degrees, which suggests competence in English. However, Mampulli was the primary language of discussion during the meeting. When asked why they did not use English, one member explained:

Example 117

Sallo: *Ti nya la Christians bu wulsi ni ti nya la Sulminsi, lala zugu ka ti toasiri Mampulli.* (YCL Group, 24/2/2024)

‘We are Christians, but that does not mean we are white people. That is why we speak Mampulli.

This utterance reflects a powerful stance on language, identity, and religion. Despite their education and competence in English, the group associated Mampulli with authenticity and cultural belonging. Ironically, however, English emerged frequently during their discussions, especially when quoting Bible passages. For example,

Example 118

TT: *Di kpa ni ti mari ti mansi suna damma, Bible yani our bodies are the temple of God. Dinqua wulsiri ti ni ti yi tum alahatsi, Naawuni siyakasi ku bea ti ni.*

(YCL Group, 24/2/2023)

It is important that we take good care of ourselves because, Bible says our bodies are the temple of God. This is teaching us that if we sin, the Holy Spirit will not be with us.’

The participants explained that although a Mampulli Bible exists, most of them could not read it due to a lack of literacy training in Mampulli. Thus, English remained the language of scriptural authority, while Mampulli was the language of social and cultural solidarity.

According to Hymes (1972), the setting of the interaction was a church auditorium during a Christian youth fellowship meeting. This location framed the communicative event within both a religious and communal environment. As scholars such as Janowitz (2022) and Bhatt (2023) have argued, religious settings strongly shape the semiotic resources available to speakers, since faith communities often establish distinct norms for language use. In this case, the church auditorium not only provided a physical context but also a symbolic one, where language was employed to reinforce both spirituality and group belonging.

The participants in the interaction were young women who were bilingual in Mampulli and English. They were linked not only by their shared linguistic repertoires but also by a common Christian faith. While the immediate audience consisted of members of the fellowship group, their utterances carried broader implications for the wider Christian community, particularly using English, which signalled engagement with a global religious discourse. This positioning reflects how bilingual speakers often orient their speech simultaneously to local peers and to imagined wider audiences (Durán, 2017).

The ends of communication were both social and religious. On the one hand, the discussion fostered social solidarity and strengthened group identity. On the other, it centred on the articulation of Christian beliefs and practices. The use of English during biblical references served a clear functional purpose, aligning the group with what was perceived as the authoritative language of scripture. This reflects broader observations that English, as the language of widely circulated translations of the Bible, often carries symbolic power in African Christian communities (Pennycook & Makoni, 2005).

The act sequence followed a patterned form. The main activity consisted of discussion in Mampulli, while switches to English occurred specifically during the quotation of biblical verses. Such sequencing reflects a deliberate symbolic distribution of linguistic functions, where Mampulli maintained the role of everyday interaction while English indexed sacred authority. This mirrors findings in CS research that highlight how particular linguistic choices are reserved for specific ritualised purposes (Auer & Wei, 2008; Makoni & Pennycook, 2023).

The key of the event was intimate and reflective. The statement that being Christian does not mean being white” carried a serious and resistant tone, pushing back against the historical associations between Christianity, colonialism, and whiteness. Indeed, research show that African Christianity continues to negotiate its independence from colonial legacies, and language choice forms a central site of this negotiation (Bongmba, 2020; Sanneh, 2015). Thus, the tone of the utterance reveals an attempt to claim Christianity as authentically African rather than a foreign import.

The Instrumentalities of communication involved two primary codes: Mampulli and English. Mampulli served as the language of social cohesion and local identity, providing comfort and familiarity within the group. English, by contrast, was invoked as the code of scriptural authority, used to deliver biblical quotations and reference religious texts. This dual use illustrates the complementary distribution of codes in religious contexts, as documented by Gardner-Chloros (2020).

The Norms governing language behaviour were shaped by religious practice. In this context, the recitation of scripture was expected to occur in English, while discussion and commentary were conducted in Mampulli. Such norms reflect broader sociolinguistic patterns in African churches, where English and other colonial languages maintain privileged roles in

ritual and scriptural domains, even as local languages sustain everyday fellowship and solidarity (Obeng, 2020).

Finally, the Genre of this communicative event can be identified as religious fellowship talk. This genre blends informal group discussion with the intertextual authority of scripture. It is both spontaneous and structured, allowing members to share reflections while recognising the privileged status of biblical language. As noted by Bafford (2022), fellowship meetings often create hybrid genres where conversational language and religious texts interact dynamically. In this way, the genre reflects the dual orientation of the group: local, intimate discussion expressed in Mampulli, and transcendent, scripturally anchored discourse conveyed through English.

From this perspective, the group's linguistic behaviour embodies broader postcolonial dynamics. The utterance *we are Christians but not white people* explicitly challenges the colonial association of Christianity with Western cultural supremacy. Historically, missionaries linked Christianity with Western modernity, making indigenous converts negotiate between faith and cultural authenticity (Sanneh, 2015). By asserting their right to practise Christianity in Mampulli, the speakers reclaim their cultural and linguistic agency, resisting the dominance of colonial languages in religious domains (Makoni & Pennycook, 2012; Niedźwiedź, 2022).

The use of Mampulli in this setting therefore becomes a symbolic act of decolonisation. It affirms the legitimacy of indigenous languages as vehicles for religious expression while resisting the conflation of Christianity with whiteness. This stance repositions Christianity as a universal faith that can be articulated authentically within local cultural frameworks, rather than as an imported Western identity (Brubaker, 2013; Pennycook, 2002). At the same time,

the reliance on English for biblical quotations demonstrates the persistence of colonial linguistic hierarchies, underscoring the ambivalence of postcolonial language practices.

In sum, religion emerges as a key social factor shaping bilingual practices in Nalerigu. Through the lens of Hymes' SPEAKING model, the patterns of Mampulli-English codeswitching demonstrate how language choice mediates identity, solidarity, authority, and resistance within a postcolonial Christian community.

CHAPTER 7

Conclusion

This thesis has examined the phenomenon of Mampulli-English CS in Nalerigu, focusing on both its structural features and its sociocultural underpinnings. The analysis demonstrates that CS in this multilingual community is neither random nor compensatory; rather, it is a systematic and socially meaningful practice shaped by the interaction of grammatical constraints and communicative goals. By employing Myers-Scotton's MLF model alongside Hymes' SPEAKING framework, the study has shown how bilingual speech reflects both structural asymmetry and social motivation.

At the structural level, the findings confirm the central predictions of the MLF model. Mampulli consistently provides the morphosyntactic frame, supplying system morphemes such as determiners, TAM markers, and pluralisation devices. English, by contrast, contributes

content morphemes, most notably nouns, compounds, and larger phrasal units. English lexical insertions frequently occur as “Islands,” which maintain internal English order but are integrated at the edges by Mampulli morphology. This structural division produces a stable yet flexible bilingual grammar. The evidence supports the Morpheme Order and System Morpheme Principles while also highlighting the gradient nature of bilingual clause formation. The incorporation of English conjunctions and adverbs, for example, illustrates that functional morphemes can cross linguistic boundaries when motivated by discourse needs. This suggests that CS should be conceptualised not as a strict binary system but as a continuum of structural and pragmatic integration (Backus, 2021; Koronkiewicz, 2022).

From a sociocultural perspective, the study demonstrates that CS in Nalerigu is deeply embedded in ideologies of modernity, prestige, and identity. English functions as the language of education, governance, and global connectivity, while Mampulli indexes local identity and cultural continuity. In informal settings, Mampulli provides solidarity and intimacy, whereas English insertions signal competence, authority, or aspiration. Younger speakers employ English creatively as a marker of style and affiliation, while older speakers often resist mixing in order to preserve linguistic integrity. Such generational contrasts confirm that codeswitching is not merely a reflection of linguistic competence but a practice shaped by social positioning, identity negotiation, and intergenerational dynamics (Gardner-Chloros, 2020; Li Wei, 2018).

Religion also emerges as a crucial factor. Within church contexts, Mampulli fosters communal bonding, but English is employed when quoting scripture, aligning biblical authority with colonial and global legacies. This reflects broader tensions in African Christianity, where English symbolises legitimacy but also raises questions about cultural ownership of religious practice (Bediako, 2019; Sanneh, 2021). The religious domain thus illustrates how

codeswitching mediates both solidarity and resistance, simultaneously affirming group identity and negotiating external authority.

Critically, the evidence underscores the explanatory power of the MLF model while also revealing its limits. While the model accounts well for structural asymmetry, it underrepresents the pragmatic and interactional dimensions of codeswitching. The Nalerigu data suggest that pragmatic motivations, such as emphasis, stance-taking, or signalling modernity, are as central as morphosyntactic constraints. A comprehensive account of bilingual speech must therefore integrate both grammatical and sociolinguistic perspectives, recognising that CS is a communicative strategy as much as a structural phenomenon (Muysken, 2020; Deuchar, 2020; Gardner-Chloros, 2022).

In sum, Mampulli-English codeswitching in Nalerigu exemplifies the dynamic interplay between structure and society. It demonstrates how the stability of a matrix language can coexist with the flexibility of embedded lexical insertions, producing hybrid utterances that are grammatically coherent and socially meaningful. It further shows how language alternation reflects broader sociopolitical hierarchies, where English symbolises education, modernity, and authority, while Mampulli anchors identity, solidarity, and continuity. The findings therefore contribute to current debates on bilingualism by illustrating that CS is not simply a linguistic mechanism but a patterned social practice that indexes power, belonging, and resistance in a postcolonial context.

Implications and Avenues for Future Research

This study underscores the importance of critically examining Mampulli-English codeswitching to enhance our understanding of language contact phenomena, particularly in Ghana and, more specially, in Nalerigu. Such research has the potential to inform strategies for preserving linguistic diversity and promoting the vitality of indigenous languages.

Future studies should delve deeper into the linguistic constraints and sociocultural implications of CS, exploring its influence on communication dynamics and identity construction within multilingual societies. This approach can offer a more nuanced understanding of how codeswitching shapes interactions and reflects cultural identities. The investigation into Mampulli-English codeswitching also highlights the complexities of language dynamics in multilingual contexts. Addressing these complexities can guide Ghana towards the development of inclusive language policies that uphold linguistic rights, celebrate cultural diversity, and promote social cohesion. Such efforts are crucial for fostering a harmonious and inclusive society for future generations.

Building on the findings of this study, future research should aim to broaden its geographical scope to capture diverse linguistic contexts. Further exploration of linguistic constraints, including the phonological, morphological, and sociolinguistic aspects of Mampulli is essential. This continued inquiry will deepen our understanding of codeswitching among Mampulli speakers and contribute to the preservation and appreciation of this unique language.

Appendix 1: Ethical Approval



25/05/2

Mrs Gertrude

Language and

University of

Dear

Ethics Committee

Application: ETH2122-

I am pleased to inform you that the research proposal entitled "A Sociolinguistic Study of English Codeswitching: A case of Selected Radio Programmes in Nalerigu" has been reviewed behalf of the Ethics Sub Committee 3, and, based on the information provided, it has been awarded favourable

The application was awarded a favourable opinion subject to the following

Extensions and

If you propose to introduce an amendment to the research after approval or extend the duration the study, an amendment should be submitted in ERAMS for further approval in advance of expiry date listed in the ethics application form. Please note that it is not possible to make amendments, including extending the duration of the study, once the expiry date has

Covid

Please note that the current Government guidelines in relation to Covid-19 must be adhered to are subject to change and it is your responsibility to keep yourself informed and bear in mind possibility of change when planning your research. You will be kept informed if there are changes in the University

Yours

Billy



Department of Languages and Linguistics

CO4 3SQ, Colchester, England

Interview Guide for Older Generation Speakers

1. Opinion Leaders/ Chiefs

- i. What are your observations regarding the way Mampulli is spoken?
- ii. What do you think account for your observation (s) above?
- iii. Christians, Traditionalists and Muslims which of these speak Mampulli and English in a conversation? Why?
- iv. Between men and women which of them use Mampulli and English in a conversation? Why?
- v. From your observation, between the young and older speakers of Mampulli, which of these groups use English words or expressions when they are speaking Mampulli in a conversation?
- vi. What do you think is/are the reason(s) why speakers use English words and expressions when they are speaking Mampulli?
- vii. What are the possible implications for the future of Mampulli?

Appendix 3: Interview Guide 2



Department of Languages and Linguistics

CO4 3SQ, Colchester, England

Interview Guide for Radio Panellists/callers/Base Panelists/Callers

- i. What is your highest education qualification?
- ii. Which school did you receive basic education at?
- iii. Which Ghanaian language did you learn?
- iv. Are you aware you use English words and expressions when you speak Mampulli?
- v. Are you able to hold a conversation speaking only Mampulli to people who speak Mampulli and English?
- vi. Why do you speak Mampulli with Mampulli-English bilinguals in the same conversation?
- vii. Why do you include English phrases or expressions when you are speaking to issues in Mampulli on radio/at the base?
- viii. What factors make you use English words and expressions when you are speaking Mampulli?

Appendix 4: Sample transcribed Radio Data

MAMCOD 3 ^{9/1/25} Family Planning
 ni | meali nti | beligu, | meali |
 beligu ni bee i dundug ni.
 Community me gbe, daa praban
 bee ni bihi gon i sarigi alaafaa ka
 yidana sukumassa, di gona tin ununi
 gonyama ni kyag ^{cls} Development
and all those important things.

Ini nya ice a sungai.

/
 B, di ti dae see ti dae tin dae

pili, ti dae trasi a yelto a bisi bisi

dama on nya masca~~ta~~ tim meli

tim zera hali para gba. | masi

zugy yaeri ice voli paraq ice zugy

mas masi ice masi bakina bela

I niggbungu i deei lu nyaka ni

Ti, an nya suminga tim maq a matq

banina sheeli n-g? ka a bebeniri

nina'niri ni' ka so'am di lu bi zela

de de de ni' i luyag n-nin' ka' lele

banina wa maq ni' pa'igi.

sheeba beni shee' shee sheeli' bi nigni

ba. Sheela beni an na ~~na~~ ke
 nyala yinni abayi so mun beni
 an zwi. A sheeli beai, an sangi
 A-walisi a i niggungu ni bi la lpa.
 ni ~~ni~~ laan lani ashiki maa ni
 an bali a boni. A sheeli mungba
 beai, a yi sangi, n-walisi n di Sheela

i ningbunni ni steeshi ki ~~na~~ ran a

tabi n-ti yali awuabe dina maq ban

daa sunyi ki niq a maq, a zaq malla

Hosti hwa ran kyay ziim wa yihiya

yan daa yan bleeding la-

FR: ~~Bleeding~~ ~~men~~, ~~bleeding~~ irregularities

steeba bani ba gi niq wa gogaa to

~~beela beela~~ ^{ba} ~~n nig~~ ^{ka} ~~gaya~~ +2), Ssa semi
 A nig ^{ka} ~~gaya~~ ~~ate~~ ~~wa~~, ~~ke~~ ~~pieeri~~ ^{gaya}
~~ate~~ ~~ate~~ ~~wa~~ ^{ka} ~~me~~ ~~immemoria~~ ~~mea~~ ^{pieeri}
 gmasi, ~~immemoria~~. ~~soni~~ * U ~~ba~~ ~~ya~~
 nyeni ~~pieeri~~ ~~na~~ ~~di~~ ~~ka~~ ~~wahalla~~.
 Amasa I nig ^{ka} ^{ka} ~~pieeri~~ ~~mea~~
 kyama beela-beela biokam, nyini I

Shin' zaar nyan da paa nig' ka

daliri shea' zugu maa ka bi' ya

nyanyi n-sungi ya.

Hosi: Mmm

Fa. 15, 1 nyala afa n-pulun' jigni' ka

Zim' Igeani 1 biokam jin lam 1 lam

lan nyanyi n-pulun' jigni' n-la

Wasi: Alwatta Salam ya n-la

Wasi: Alwatta Salam ya to a go zaa

ya nya yelba mugisi ki idi tu

lafi n-kyagji nya amnaba dim

maa ka man' gungim lca ba zaa

nti ki i sungji i magga.

To zaa yaani gba mi n-beni

Total family health USAID Programme
on Family Planning R. Final

Sheeba beni n-miy a ke se zugu

yaana an ku tumni zim mae ni

mae. Zugu yaani mae gona ni ras

ku ni ni | zugu ka si kale dono

ti taani ki nya paasa n-1012

di basi Sheeba beni n-miy gaa n-kanigira

n-pasahi ti ee-

Host: Tibisim

FR: Tibisim.

Host: Mmm

FR: Ika tibisim wa masa bi yiga tim

Maani di Ika nyaler sukumachi shea

Ika bea i ni, ni aai nyini I shiri

wa ya ku bea bea'sheea Iki masi

bi'bi' wa maa, puu ku igena n-paa

n-paasi' iku nugu. Bee nyan nyangji'

kyaka i shu' sulu maani iku gba kyaka

i sulu maani' maa, ki nyangji' n-diri

nyaga lala maa too kyaka kibisi

nyeeina. Saamu beni n-ny iku n-

kyasira. Kwaligu maa ti iku too'.

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