'HELLO SWEETIE PIE': A SOCIOLINGUISTIC ANALYSIS OF TERMS OF ENDEARMENT IN A GHANAIAN UNIVERSITY

[1.] **Joseph Benjamin Archibald Afful (PhD),** [2.]**Mark Nartey (Mphil.)**
[1.]Department of English, University of Cape Coast
[2.]Department of Language and Literature, Norwegian University of Science and Technology
Email: [1.]jbaafful@gmail.com, [2.]narteynartey60@gmail.com

Abstract

Following Brown and Gilman's (1960) study, sociolinguists have shown an increasing interest in the use of address forms in various social milieus such as religion, politics, media and academia. Using a two-pronged conceptual framework derived from interactional sociolinguistics and an ethnographic research paradigm, this study explores how students in a Ghanaian public university address one another, strategically deploying varied terms of endearment. Three key findings emerged from the study. The first finding is that university students use epithets, flora terms, royal terms and coinage from personal names as key terms of endearment. Second, these terms of endearment serve socio-pragmatic purposes; and third, the use of endearment terms among Ghanaian university students, as Afful (2006, 2007) intimates, suggests the innovativeness, playfulness and creativity of the students as well as the warmth and conviviality and/or vivacity of African culture, even in an educational provenance. These findings have implications for inter/cross-cultural communication, language use at an educational institution, and further sociolinguistic research on terms of endearment.
Key words: *address forms, endearment term, ethnographic-style, students, university*

1. Introduction

Studies on address forms continue to engage the attention of many scholars in sociolinguistics, discourse studies, ethnography of communication and pragmatics. This is not surprising, given that address forms constitute an important part of verbal behavior through which the behavior, norms and practices of a society can be identified. Further, issues such as gender, sexuality, age, ethnicity, race and religion can also be reflected through the use of address forms (Dakubu, 1981; Fang &Heng, 1983; Fitch, 1991; Oyetade, 1995; Afful, 2006). Address forms represent very useful and fundamental means of forging human interaction, thus performing an inter-personal role.

Given the above ramifications of address forms, burgeoning sociolinguistic studies have in the past often been undertaken in domestic and/or familial settings. With the passage of time, however, studies on address forms (sometimes aided by discourse analysis) have made forays into other social processes, institutions and practices such as politics (Jaworski&Galasinki, 2000), religion (Sequeira, 1993; Dzameshie, 1997), media (Edu-Buandoh, 1999), and academia (Afful, 2006, 2007).

The present study attempts to explore one category of address forms (that is, terms of endearment) least identified and explored in sociolinguistic studies. At the outset, we use 'endearment term' or 'terms of endearment' in this work to refer to words or expressions used in an interactive, dyadic and face-to-face situation by a speaker to address or describe a person for which the speaker feels love or affection for. It must also be noted that terms of endearment are coterminous with forms such as *endearments*, *sweet words*, *sweet talk*, *affectionate talk*, *soft words* and *terms of affection*. With this definition in mind, we attempt to describe and explain the linguistic resources and

socio-pragmatic meanings of terms of endearment from an ethnographic viewpoint.

In what follows, we introduce the conceptual framework of the paper, focusing on key notions and the relevant literature. We then describe the methodological procedure adopted for the data collection and follow it with the analysis and discussion of the data. The conclusion and implications are finally highlighted to show the significance of the present study within the extant literature on address term, in general, and endearment terms, in particular.

2. Conceptual Thrust
2.1 *Key Notions*

Conceptually, we draw mainly on a two-pronged framework rooted in interactional sociolinguistics: social constructionism and community of practice. Basically, social constructionism debunks the notion of the inner dynamics of the individual psyche (romanticism and subjectivism), or the already determined characteristics of the external world (modernism and objectivism). Instead, it foregrounds the continuous interaction between human beings – this is what is referred to by Shotter (1993:10) as 'self-other dimension' of interaction. From within this flow of relational activities and practice, constructionists maintain that all other socially significant dimensions of interpersonal interaction among all persons together with their associated modes of being (either subjective or objective) originate and are formed. Thus, through various interactions, students make and remake their own social worlds, utilizing various verbal behaviors, including endearment terms. Conversely, they (the students) are also made and remade by these verbal behaviors in the course of the process, thus evidencing a sort of dialectal emphasis upon both the contingency and the creativity of humans.

In the second key concept central to the present study 'community of practice', interaction finds a more spatio-temporal dimension (Lave & Wenger, 1991). This term seems to have overtaken

two other terms, namely 'discourse community' and 'speech community', albeit they (the three terms) may not be extremely polarized or markedly different from one another (Afful, 2007); hence, their inter-relatedness. It is most likely that the popularity of the term 'community of practice' stems from the much cited research on language and gender by Eckert & McConnell-Ginet (1998, 1999). In their work, Eckert and McConnell-Ginet argue that a community of practice is:

> *an aggregate of people who come together around a mutual engagement in some common endeavor. Ways of doings, ways of talking, beliefs, values, power relations – in short, practices emerge in the course of their joint activity around that endeavor*.

In fact, there is no gainsaying the view that university students constitute a homogenous group in terms of their objective in desiring to be members of the university – to learn, thus assuming peripheral participation in academia – they are likely to be involved in a "joint negotiated enterprise, and a shared repertoire of negotiable resources over time" (Wenger, 1998:76). This presupposes that students are likely to develop linguistic resources (here, a lexicon of terms of endearment) which will distinguish them from other members of the university community such as faculty and other supporting staff.

In sum, the two notions above (that is, socio constructionism and communities of practice) that underpin the present study make it demonstrably clear how university students are likely to deploy diverse endearment terms among themselves by drawing on existing linguistic rules within their community of practice, their imagination and personal linguistic repertoire in different interactive or dyadic encounters.

2.2 *Previous Studies on Address Forms*

In the last three decades, the verbal behavior of various groups, including forms of address has

garnered much attention in sociolinguistic studies, with lively and insightful discussions erupting on both academic and other public fronts. From more domestic or familial settings (Evans-Pritchard, 1948), studies on address forms have ventured into other interaction-oriented domains, social and practices such as politics (Jaworski &Galasinki, 2000; Fetzer & Bull, 2004), religion (Wharry, 2003) and media (Edu-Buandoh, 1999), following Brown & Gilman's (1960) influential work. Altogether, these studies, ranging from the Anglo-American to the African context, have highlighted the power and solidarity postulates as well as the situatedness of address forms.

Not surprisingly, for some time now, there has been an increasing scholarly interest shown in the use of address forms in educational settings (Afful, 2006), with particular attention paid to students' use of address forms. In this regard, it would appear that the most pertinent studies pivotal to the present study are Dickey (1997), Li (1997), Kiesling (1998), Afful (1998, 2006, 2007) and Wong & Leung (2004), and Dornyo (2010).

Wong & Leung (2004) investigated address forms among undergraduate students in Hong Kong. Using detailed interviews and questionnaires administered to the students, Wong & Leung found that although addressing each other in Chinese is more common compared to the past, the student's choice of English forms reflect an identity predicated on the field of study, nature of secondary school and peer group pressure. Given this finding, Wong & Leung conclude that the use of address forms among Hong Kong undergraduates is conditioned by various sociolinguistic indices and/or factors.

Unlike Wong & Leung's (2004) study, Kiesling's (1998) work focused attention on only one particular address form, 'dude', reported to be common among American male students in a fraternity within a college. Evidence from Kiesling's study pointed to the fact that 'dude' was used as a solidarity term and as an identity marker of an in-group. Like Wong & Leung (2004), Li (1997) explored the use of address forms among HongKonger

university students, and established a bicultural identity of HongKongers, in their use of address forms. Dickey's (1997) study on address forms and terms of reference is, particularly, cardinal to the present study, owing to the fact that among other things, it discussed terms of endearment as an appellative. Interestingly, Dickey (ibid), like McConnel-Ginet (1978) and Wolfson & Manes (1980), found that students' use of endearment terms extends into domains other than private, thus belying its apparent face-value.

Further illuminating and insightful studies such as Crozier &Dimmock (1999) and De Klerk & Bosch (1997, 1999) that deal with students' utterances such as address forms have tended to focus on nicknames. De Klerk & Bosch (1999), for instance, associate nickname formation with linguistic creativity and verbal playfulness and explain the pervasiveness of nicknames among students, especially adolescents, as typical of peer group membership and peer group cohesion. Dornyo's (2010) unpublished studies is useful here because it highlights nicknames as a kind of address terms commonly used among university students.

The issue of nicknames leads us to the studies on endearment terms, especially in Africa. Indeed, Afful's studies introduce Africa, in general, and sub-Saharan Africa, in particular, into the scholarship on address forms in an educational provenance by highlighting the socio-pragmatic factors that underpin the use of address forms by university students. In a sequel to an earlier study in 1998, Afful's (2006) study among students in an English-medium Ghanaian university identified four address forms preponderantly used – personal names, titles, descriptive phrases and catch phrases. In a 2007 study on a specific address form (that is, descriptive phrase), Afful found that four different groups of descriptive phrases were used by the university students, while in a 2008 paper, he argued that certain address forms allow Ghanaian students to construct their multiple identities, or resist identities that position them in undesirable ways, and in the process produce new identities. In all these studies,

Afful (ibid) suggests that the linguistic resources used as address forms by university students reflect a warm and vivacious culture.

Despite the burgeoning literature on students' use of address forms, in general, as far as we know, there seems to be no systematic study on the use of varied terms of endearment in Africa, in particular. The present study, thus, is intended to fill this lacuna in the literature.

3. The Current Research
3.1 *Objective of the Study*

Against the terrain of previous studies on address forms briefly sketched, we examine, *ipso facto*, terms of endearment as a verbal expression which uses social rules and other socio-pragmatic features to evince emotional attachment among members of a distinct group in an academic community (that is, students). We focus on the use of such address form among students in a Ghanaian university, University of Cape Coast (UCC), given their potential in revealing interesting findings. Specifically, the study has two main objectives: first, we seek to identify the different endearment terms typically used by UCC students to address one another. The second, and more important, objective is to explore the socio-pragmatic factors that underpin the use of these terms.

3.2 Educational Setting

The study took place within an English-medium public university in Ghana, University of Cape Coast (UCC), one of the seven public universities in Ghana, and one of the few post-colonial settings where English remains the only official language. Established in October, 1962 as a college of education affiliated to the University of Ghana (Ghana's premier university), UCC now shares that role with University of Education, Winneba (UEW). Currently, the university has ten schools and/or faculties with a total population of approximately 47,000 students, including undergraduates, postgraduate students, sandwich students and distant education students (University of Cape Coast, 2012).

As a social entity, UCC is made up of three identifiable groups of people – students, faculty and supporting staff. In this paper, however, our interest, as already noted, lies with the most dominant group, students, whose social interaction occurs within both academic and non-academic domains. Students interact for academic purposes during lectures, seminars, tutorials and group discussions. They also undertake non-academic activities mainly at halls of residence, taxi and car parks, shops and cafeterias. Further, the students used for the study come from different ethno-linguistic backgrounds in Ghana. We focus exclusively on Ghanaian students, leaving out the few international students who may have some 'alien' verbal practices. The *raison d'être* of selecting UCC as the research site was because of our familiarity with its members, given our alumni status.

3.3 Data Collection and Analysis

We utilized an ethnographic approach, thus making it possible to combine data from observation of both spontaneous and deliberative spoken discourse as well as interviews of university students.

The former was obtained from both participant and non-participant observation of actual usage of endearment terms in 75 dyadic situations at a given period on the university campus: March – August, 2012. Observation took place at various sites on the campus of UCC such as lecture theatres, cafeteria, taxi stations, residential halls and departmental offices. At every opportunity, field and observation notes were used to unobtrusively record the endearment terms. In doing this, we were guided by background information such as the identity of the interlocutors, the situational context of speech and the purpose of interaction. The interviews that constituted the interview data were conducted in English, semi-structured, audio-taped,

lasted a maximum of 30 minutes, and were administered to 30 Ghanaian students at convenient places acceptable to both researchers and participants.

Following the data collection, the analysis involved the following procedures: a) coding the observation which had been recorded in field notes, and noting emerging patterns and b) transcribing interviews and coding the observation and interview data for themes and patterns. It is noteworthy, here, that although we had collected data from the observation and interview all by ourselves, we had help from a research assistant as far as the coding of the data and discussion on emerging trends were concerned. The motivation for using the ethnographic research design emanates from the need to collect reliable data in natural, every day interactive situations as well as the need to study social reality (in this case, endearment terms as a verbal behavior) from the point of view of the informants. Additionally, the data obtained were supplemented by the researchers' own intuition and introspection, aided by our previous and current membership of the university community.

4. Results and Discussion

From the data, it became evident that four key categories constituted the linguistic repertoire used by students in various communicative encounters on the university campus: epithets, flora terms, royal terms and coinages from personal names. Subsequently, drawing on examples and communicative encounters from the data, each group of the terms of endearment is briefly discussed. Our experiences as 'insiders' of the educational setting also play a significant role in the analysis.

4.1 *Epithets*

The available evidence in this research suggests that epithets represent the most prolific endearment term used by students. Mainly

adjectives and/or descriptive words (although some nouns were identified), epithets were used as attention getters, identifiers and exaggerative markers. It was a common phenomenon to observe students in both academic and non-academic settings exchanging pleasantries and referring to one another as *dear/dearie*, *sweet/sweetie*, *cuttie*, *honey/hon*, *pretty*, *tweety*, tweeny, *exotic*, *ahuofe* (*beautiful*), *odo* (*love*), among others. These expressions seem to be fashionable or in vogue as far as the students were concerned; therefore, it would neither be misplaced nor far-fetched to refer to these forms as 'buzz' words.

Interestingly, although not surprisingly, it was also observed that the epithets were reciprocally used among female students, unlike the male students. Indeed, there was no single instance where a male student addressed another male student with an endearment term. This finding corroborates Afful's (2006) study which indicates that whilst female students largely use endearment terms to demonstrate solidarity, their male counterparts normally seek solidarity through their use of various terms of solidarity. It was also realized that the epithet was either used alone (in that case, as a substitute for the 'real' or actual name of the addressee) or used in addition to the name of the addressee (for example, *dashing Dela*, *Setor dear*, *exotic Emerald*, *precious Judy* and *medofo Teresa*, meaning *Teresa, my love*). It must be noted, however, that the epithet was not considered a nickname because of its overriding emotional import. The illustrative encounter below further explains the use of epithets as an endearment term:

1. A: Hello *beautiful*; how was your
   weekend?
   B: Not bad *handsome*; I can't complain
   at all.

In the exchange above involving a male and a female student (who happen to be course mates) at a lecture theatre, one notices that the forms *beautiful* and *handsome* are used reciprocally as

substitutes for the actual names of the interlocutors, and basically, to reinforce the solidarity and cordiality of the relationship that exists between them.

More importantly, the data on epithets showed that exchanges involving the use of epithets were, invariably, accompanied by appropriate paralinguistic and extra linguistic features such as a smile, a wink, a touch or the shaking of hands and snapping of fingers. Additionally, in articulating these epithets, the tone, intonation and voice modulation of the speakers depicted some form of 'sweetness' and/or 'softness'. In playful ways, coupled with the creativity of the students, epithets were sometimes marked by the determiner *my* or by the lexicon *hey/hei* (for example, *hey sweet*, *hei lovely* and *my dear*). The use of *my* and *hei/hey*, it can be argued, is a way of intensifying the effect and/or personalizing the use of the epithet. Thus, the use of epithets was observed as a reflection of closeness, affinity, and collegiality.

A further interesting point is that some epithets were not commonly used among students. These "special epithets", as revealed by the interviews, were used mainly by lovers or by individuals who had some special kind of relationship (conjugal, perhaps) going on. Examples of such epithets include the following: *medoh* (in an indigenous Ghanaian language meaning '*my love*'), *pretty pretty wow*, *sugar babe*, *apple pie*, *sweetie pie*, *strawberry ginger*, *honey juice cake*, *honey coochicoochi*, *boo boo* (or *boo*) and notable non-English forms that were identified include *medofo pa* (meaning *my beloved*), *odolastik* (meaning *elastic love*), *makoma mu toffee* (meaning *the toffee of my heart* or *my sweet heart*), *me dofo* (meaning *my lover*), *medowiase* (meaning *my world*), and *odo ye wu* (meaning *everlasting love*).

Even more interesting some weird epithets were identified, given that they had sexual connotations. They include fauna terms such as *dinosaur*, *tiger* and *kitten* – these forms were used by females for their male counterparts to tacitly acknowledge how aggressive they (their male partners) were during sexual intercourse. This group of rather uncommon epithets discussed above was used both reciprocally and non-reciprocally, depending on the context of situation.

4.2 *Flora Terms*

The second interesting set of endearment terms was flora terms. By flora terms, we refer to names and forms that belong to the plant, flower or gardening family. These forms which were, usually, used by male students to address their female counterparts revealed covertly the attitudes of the male students towards their female counterparts, since it was apparent that the male students considered their female counterparts (most of whom were their girlfriends) as dear, sweet and beautiful; hence, the use of these flora terms which, certainly, are denotative of pulchritude or symbols of love. These flora terms were used non-reciprocally by the male students to shower praises and appellations on the female students, especially regarding the beauty of the female student. In this regard, Dickey (1997) considers endearment terms as appellatives. The exchange below provides further proof of the use of flora terms among university students:

2. A: *Ahuofedua* (translated as 'tree of beauty'), where are u heading?
   B: Thanks for the compliment. I'm heading for the hostel.

In the communicative encounter which took place at the taxi station, the non-reciprocal use of the endearment term highlights an attempt on the part of the male student to simply shower praises on the female student. It must be mentioned, however, that in some instances, the praise offered by the use of the flora term, although true, may not necessarily be meant by the addresser (mainly, the male student). Thus, the flora term was sometimes used as a decorative tag to address the addressee. Still, there were few cases where the use of the flora

term was marked; in this wise, the flora term was simply used to flatter and/or humor some female students.

Unlike epithets, flora terms were, largely, restricted to non-academic settings on campus such as halls of residence, hostels, taxi stations, Junior Common Rooms (JCRCs) and recreational spots. Typical flora forms that were identified include *lily*, *petal* and *rose*/*rosy*. Another revealing finding was that on some occasions, the flora forms were combined with a superlative or an equivalent term, thereby intensifying the degree of affection that is being offered as seen in the following examples: *dearest hibiscus*, *sweetest bougainvillea* and *daisy dear*. These forms were uncommon, and were mostly used to exaggerate a quality (in this case, normally beauty). This notwithstanding, it can still be surmised that the use of flora terms among students, in general, is characterized by an exaggerative tone.

4.3 *Terms Denoting Royalty*

Admittedly, in many societies and speech communities, titles and other expressions that denote royalty do not form part of everyday conversation. Surprisingly, university students seem to utilize such terms quite frequently. It was not unusual to find male students, especially, addressing female students with forms such as *mannye* (in a Ghanaian language meaning 'queen'), *princess*, *empress*, *my lady*, *my queen* and *ahombraseaa hemaa* (translated as 'my humble queen'). Usually, these forms were accompanied by a tone of solicitation; therefore, they were, primarily, deployed to express positive politeness and to make requests, as established in the interaction below:

3.   A: *Empress*, could you pass me the salt?

B: My pleasure

The interaction above was observed at a cafeteria on campus between a male and a female student. As can be seen from the interaction, owing to the fact that he did not know the second speaker

(a female student), the first speaker (a male student) used the royal term, arguably, in order to mitigate the actual impact of the face-threatening act of request. Like the flora terms, terms denoting royalty were also restricted to non-academic settings; they were occasionally used at lecture theatres, departmental offices, and other academic settings on campus. As expected, like the flora terms, the royal terms were basically, if not exclusively, employed non-reciprocally, with female students almost always being the addressees. Indeed, no male royal term was found as all the examples were reflective of the feminine gender

As can be seen from the examples, some of the royal terms, like the epithets, were marked by the possessive pronoun *my* and, thus, personalized. Although royal terms were mostly used alone, one instance of adjective/intensifier together with a royal term (*sexy empress*) perceived by some interviewees as incongruous was identified. Such a combination was intended to make a request, petition or solicitation more forceful. Also royal terms were often employed when the speaker neither knew the actual name of the addressee nor want to employ a zero address term. Additionally, such forms were sometimes used to acknowledge the attractiveness and resplendence of a female student (much like a flora term), although minimally/rarely.

4.4 *Coinage from Personal Names*

A coinage term for naming is produced by manipulating or drawing on the linguistic resources or grammatical rules of a language to perform a naming function. This kind of endearment terms was the least (in terms of frequency) used among the students. These forms were coined from the personal or real names of the students. The analysis showed that some personal names had undergone some phonological processes like vowel insertion or deletion to become, what is referred to as, hypocoristic names, while others had undergone reduplication. Examples of such endearment terms include Lam-Lam (derived from *Lamar*), *Georgie-*

Pogie (derived from *George*), *Markiiiii* (derived from *Mark*), *Queeny* (derived from *Queen*), *Kaki* (derived from *Kakra*), *Fatai* (derived from *Fati*), and *Narty* (derived from *Nartey*).

The enunciation of the coined forms was accompanied by soft tones and appropriate intonation. They were also used both reciprocally and non-reciprocally, and primarily to show genuine affection or to solicit a favor. Occasionally too, the coinages were used together with an epithet as in *Kaki dear* and *handsome Georgie-Pogie*. Deliberate twisting of personal names such as *Geele* for *Abigail*, *Tilly* for *Matilda*, *Dilly* for *Lydia*, *Dolly* for *Dorothy* and *Rebekita* for *Rebecca*, although considered nicknames by Afful (2006), represented another source of coined endearment terms in the present study, against the backdrop that depending on the context of situation, these coined names were accompanied by non-verbal features – such as winks, beams and sometimes touches – that are suggestive of affection, fondness and a sense of liking or likeness. In sum, we argue that this set of endearment terms (coinages), though minimally used, is interesting to note because of the comic effect they achieve and their playfulness.

In general, all four forms of endearment terms enhance social interaction, even when the interlocutors did not know each other and were mere acquaintances. It could, therefore, be opined that like Afful's (2007) paper on descriptive phrases, endearment terms offer interactants, here students, in UCC a creative, commonsensical, and pragmatic way of not only initiating, but also establishing an emotional relationship, as well as a sense of identity and belonging.

5. Conclusion

In this paper, we have focused on one key category of address forms (that is, endearment terms) used among university students in Ghana, and secondly the socio-pragmatic factors that condition their use among a distinct group of people in an academic setting.

Findings from the analysis indicate, first, that students at UCC, generally, utilized four forms of endearment terms on campus. Second, although the students in the present research use English as a major means of communication, for socio-pragmatic purposes, the use of endearment terms suggested the use of other languages, lending credence to the view of UCC as a multi-lingual community and the use of endearment terms as not limited to a particular language. Third, students at UCC develop their own verbal practices; in this way, we see their innovation and/or inventiveness as well as their creativity in their use of endearment terms. The final finding that emerges from the discussion is that the use of endearment terms among Ghanaian University students depicts a culture of warm-hearted, intelligent people who love playing creatively with the language in their repertoire.

The knowledge about the forms of endearment terms used by Ghanaian University students obtained from this ethnographic study is very useful on account of the implications it has for inter/cross cultural communication, language use at an educational institution, and further sociolinguistic research on address forms, in general, and endearment terms, in particular. These findings notwithstanding, there is need for further research. The extent to which the use of endearment terms as address forms reported here corresponds with other forms of address by Ghanaian speakers of English in the other public universities can be ascertained in a future study. Further, endearment terms used in other English-medium universities outside Ghana could be investigated to identify the points of convergence and divergence. Additionally, a comparative study of address forms in academic and non-academic institutions should be possible.

References

1. Afful, J. B .A. (1998).*The relationship between language and culture in Ghana: A comparative study of address terms in three speech communities in Cape Coast*.

Unpublished MPhil Thesis, University of Cape Coast, Cape Coast.

2. Afful, J. B. A. (2006). Address terms among university students in Ghana: A case study. *Language and Intercultural Communication*, 6 (1): 76-91.

3. Afful, J. B. A. (2007). Address terms among university students in Ghana: The case of descriptive phrases. *The International Journal of Language Society and Culture*, 20 (5): 1-6.

4. Afful, J. B. A. (2008). Address forms and variation among university students in Ghana. *Nordic Journal of African Studies*, 16 (2): 179-196.

5. Brown, R. & Gilman, A. (1960). The pronouns of power and solidarity. In T.A Sebeoki (ed.), *Style in Language* (pp. 253-276). Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.

6. Crozier, W. R. & Dimmock, P. S. (1999). Name-calling and nicknames in a sample of primary school children. *British Journal of Educational Psychology*, 69 (2): 505-516.

7. Dakubu, K. M. E. (1981). *One voice*: *The linguistic culture of an Accra lineage*. Leiden: African Studies Centre.

8. De Klerk, V. & Bosch, B. (1997). Nicknames as sex-role stereotypes.*Sex Roles*, 35 (9/10): 524-541.

9. De Klerk, V. & Bosch, B. (1999).Nicknames as evidence of verbal playfulness.*Muiltilingual*,18 (1): 1-16.

10. Dickey, E. (1997). Forms of address and terms of reference. *Journal of Linguistics*, 33 (1): 255-274.

11. Dornyo, P. (2010). *Nicknaming practices among university students: A case study of the University of Cape Coast.* Unpublished BA Dissertation, University of Cape Coast, Cape Coast.

12. Dzameshie, A. K. (1997). The use of in-group linguistic choices as an identificational strategy of persuasion in Christian sermonic discourse. *Legon Journal of the Humanities*, 10 (1): 127-148.

13. Eckert, P. & Mc Connell-Ginet, P. (1998). Communities of practice: Where language, gender and power all live. In *Language and gender: A reader* (ed.) J. Coates (pp. 484-494). Oxford: Blackwell.

14. Eckert, P. & Mc Connell-Ginet (1999). New generalizations and explanations in language and gender research. *Language in Society*, 28: 185-201.

15. Edu-Buandoh, D. F. (1999).*Politeness forms used in Ghanaian English verbal interaction: A `sociolinguistic analysis of spoken data in media panel discussions.* Unpublished MPhil Thesis, University of Cape Coast, Cape Coast.

16. Fang, H. & Heng, J. H. (1983).Social changes and changing address norms in China. *Language in Society*, 12 (4): 495-507.

17. Fetzer, A. & Bull, P. (2004*). Who are we and who are you? The strategic use of forms of address in political interviews*. Paper presented at Sociolinguistic Symposium, 1st– 4th April, 2004, Newcastle upon Tyne.

18. Fitch, K.L. (1991). The interplay of linguistic universals and cultural knowledge in personal address: Columbian Madre terms. *Communication Monographs* 58:254-272.

19. Jaworski, A. & Galasinki, D. (2000).Vocative address forms and ideological legitimization in public debates. *Discourse Studies*, 2 (1): 35-53.

20. Kiesling, S. F. (1998). Variation and men's identity in a fraternity. *Journal of Sociolinguistics*, 2 (1): 69 -100.

21. Lave, J. & Wenger, E. (1991). *Situated learning*: *Legitimate peripheral participation*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

22. Li, D. C. S. (1997). Borrowed identity: Signaling involvement with a Western name. *Journal of Pragmatics*, 28 (2): 489-513.

23. Oyetade, S. O. (1995). A sociolinguistic analysis of address forms in Yoruba. *Language in Society*, 24 (1): 515-535.

24. Sequeira, D. L. (1993).Personal address as negotiated meaning in an American church community. *Research on Language and Social Interaction*, 26 (2): 259-285.

25. Shotter, J. (1993).Becoming someone: Identity and belonging. In N. Coupland & J. F.Nussbaum (eds.), *Discourse and Lifespan Identity* (pp. 5-27). Newbury Park: Sage.

26. University of Cape Coast (2012). *Basic statistics*. Ghana, Data Processing Unit.

27. Wharry, C (2003). Amen and Hallelujah preaching: Discourse functions in African-American sermons. *Language in Society*, 32 (3): 203-225.

28. Wenger, E. (1998). *Communities of practice*. Cambridge, Cambridge University Press.

29. Wolfson, N. & Manes, J. (1980). 'Don't dear me!' In: S. McConnell-Ginet, R. Baker, & N. Furman (eds.), *Women and Language and Society* (pp. 79-92). New York: Praeger.

30. Wong, Y. & Leung, C. (2004).*What's in a name? A study of the adoption of foreign names among university students in Hong Kong*. Sociolinguistic Symposium 15.