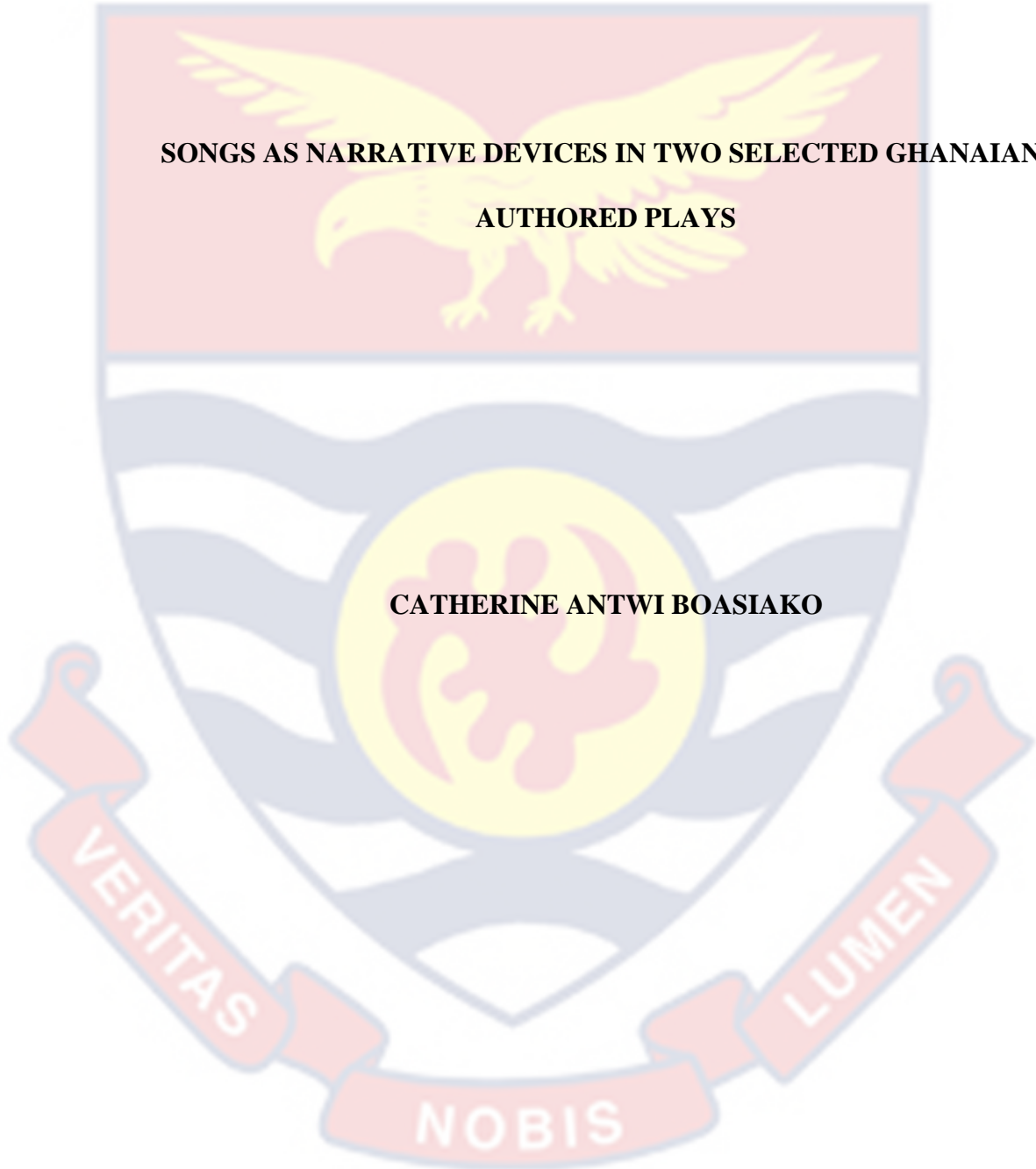


UNIVERSITY OF CAPE COAST

**SONGS AS NARRATIVE DEVICES IN TWO SELECTED GHANAIAN-  
AUTHORED PLAYS**

**CATHERINE ANTWI BOASIAKO**



2023

UNIVERSITY OF CAPE COAST



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AUTHORED PLAYS

CATHERINE ANTWI BOASIAKO

Thesis submitted to the Centre for African and International Studies of the Faculty of Arts, College of Humanities and Legal Studies, University of Cape Coast, in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the award of Master of Philosophy Degree in African Studies.

AUGUST, 2023

## DECLARATION

### Candidate's Declaration

I hereby declare that this thesis is the result of my own original work and that no part of it has been presented for another degree in this university or elsewhere.

Candidate's Signature: ..... Date: .....

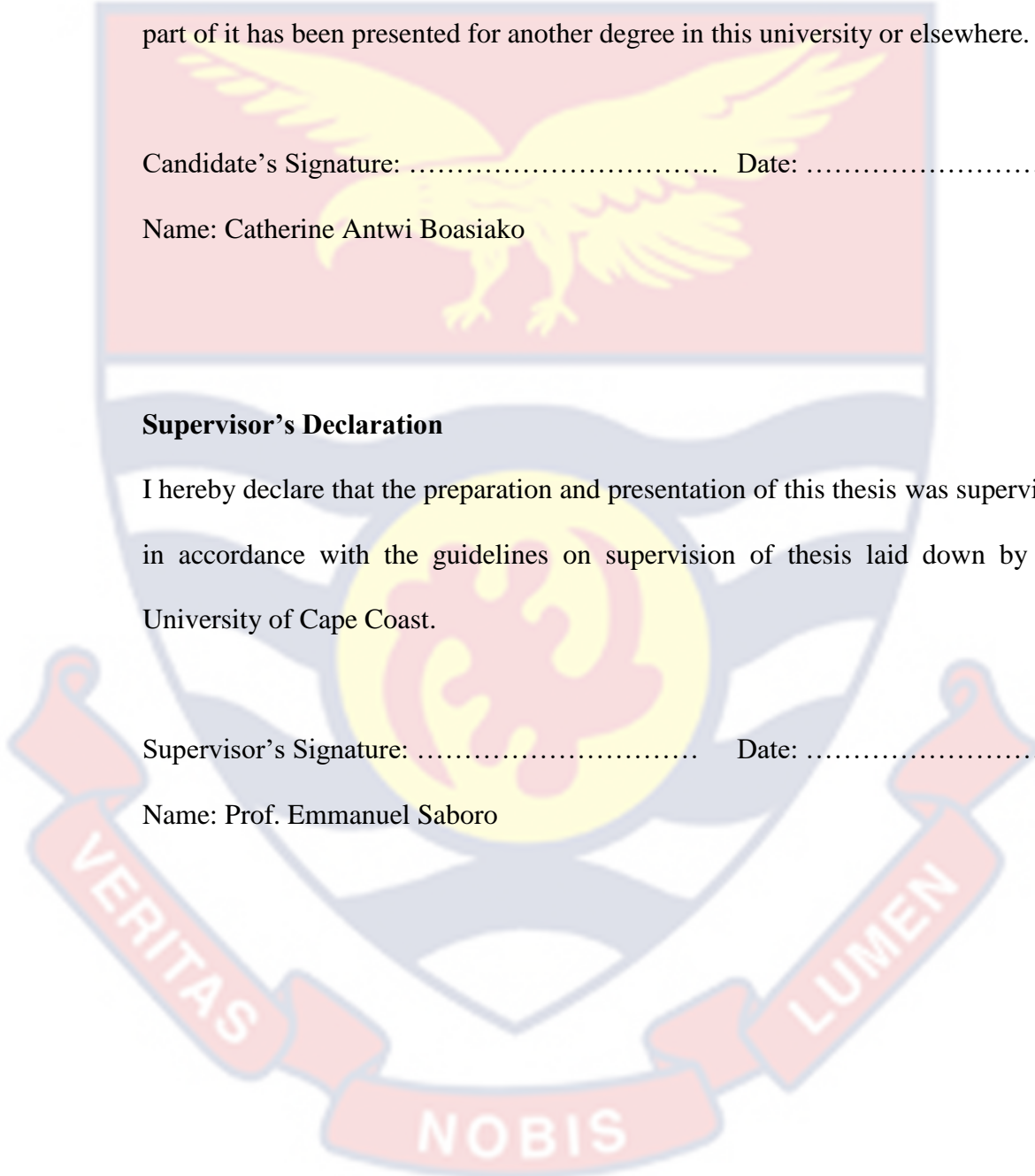
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### Supervisor's Declaration

I hereby declare that the preparation and presentation of this thesis was supervised in accordance with the guidelines on supervision of thesis laid down by the University of Cape Coast.

Supervisor's Signature: ..... Date: .....

Name: Prof. Emmanuel Saboro



## ABSTRACT

This thesis examines the use of songs as narrative devices in Efua Sutherland's *Edufa* (1967) and *The Marriage of Anansewa* (1975). This study comes at the backdrop of the fact that reading and interpretation of literary texts generally places emphasis on the conventional elements that make up a typical drama and often disregards the narrative importance of the oral genres such as songs contained in the texts. The study is based on a qualitative research design and uses a text-analytical approach to analyse the songs as sub-texts contained in the plays selected for the study. It is argued that songs are an integral part of the narrative structure of the selected plays. The main findings of this study revealed that songs in both plays serve five main functions as narrative devices: foreshadowing, flashback facilitation, exposition, interior monologue, and didactic tools. In addition, the study highlights how the songs serve to establish the mood of the plays, convey and reinforce the underlying themes of the narratives and provide context. They also serve to highlight character development, express the thoughts and feelings of the characters and immerse the audience in the cultural contexts of the plays.

## KEYWORDS

Conventional Approaches

Function

Narrative Devices

Oral Genres

Significance

Songs



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## DEDICATION

To my mother, Aba Tetele, who has no record of a formal education and yet never stopped cheering me on in all my academic endeavours, and to my father, Kwaku Antwi, whose academic career and life was completely altered by the gunshot he sustained at the age of fourteen.



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## CHAPTER ONE

### INTRODUCTION

Conventional approaches to the analysis of literary texts have focused more generally on the study of characters, plot structure, setting, thematic considerations, and language use. However, a careful reading of some of these literary texts suggests that playwrights consciously weave songs into their plays as part of, and “to enhance the narrative structure” (Bogar, 2020, p. 1). And yet this aspect of their work has hardly been explored. The works of African literary writers, such as Ama Ata Aidoo’s (1965) *The Dilemma of a Ghost*, Athol Fugard’s (1972) *Sizwe Bansi is Dead*, Chinua Achebe’s (1958) *Things Fall Apart*, Efua Sutherland’s (1967) *Edufa* and (1975) *The Marriage of Anansewa*, Ngũgĩ wa Thiong’o and Ngũgĩ wa Mirii’s (1982) *I Will Marry When I Want*, among others, reveal a deliberate and effective use of songs in their plays to advance the narrative. It is for this reason that this thesis seeks to add to our store of knowledge on the unique ways in which Ghanaian playwrights use songs in their creative works.

Using *Edufa* (1967) and *The Marriage of Anansewa* (1975) by Ghanaian playwright Efua Sutherland as exemplary texts, this study sets out to examine the use of songs as narrative devices in Ghanaian plays of the post-independence era. It is argued that songs in the selected texts serve a crucial purpose beyond their entertainment and performative value. As this study will demonstrate, the songs as employed in these texts serve as central narrative devices to set the mood of the plays, highlight character development, provide context and convey essential

background information to the audience, reveal characters' thoughts and emotions, foreshadow events, convey and reinforce central themes in the plays, heighten dramatic tension, provide social commentary, advance the plot, and highlight important facets of indigenous African life.

### **Background to the Study**

African societies have long maintained a rich oral tradition that spans a wide range of genres, including songs, folktales, myths, legends, proverbs, and riddles (Akporherhe & Oghenerioborue, 2021). The oral tradition of the African continent, as noted by Akporherhe and Oghenerioborue (2023), is deeply rooted in the culture and traditions of the people and has been passed on from generation to generation through oral forms of expression such as storytelling, singing, and drumming. One would think that the proliferation of written traditions in our world today would have the oral traditions relegated to the background, but this is not the case. The oral traditions are still highly valued today despite the large presence of written traditions in modern society. This is because, aside from its performative and recreational uses, the oral tradition also serves as an encyclopaedia of the cultural and historical experiences of the people (Kizza, 2010). This is well supported by Saboro (2022), whose study explores the slave experience in two selected communities in Northern Ghana through the song lyrics of the people. Saboro argues that songs, as oral poetic, constitute significant archives for preserving community memories of the past (Saboro, 2022, p. 54). The song in this case is a living memory of a community. In this respect, one can extract the vivid experiences of a community through its songs. Accordingly,

songs as oral poetic play a crucial role in helping communities remember and honour their past, while also transmitting essential cultural and historical knowledge to future generations.

According to Oikelome (2019), the oral tradition of the African continent is an important source of cultural knowledge and understanding. It served and continues to serve as a window into the consciousness of the people, thereby providing insights into the cultural beliefs, values and practices of African societies, as well as their perspectives on the natural world, the supernatural and the relationship between the two (Bonsu, 2022). It is therefore not surprising that the oral genres are still held in high esteem today. Their importance in preserving and disseminating people's histories, cultural experiences, traditions, values and responses to nature and the paranormal cannot be overstated. In this regard, the oral genres are treated as an integral part of the cultural fabric of African societies that help to know a people's past, understand their way of life, and even envision their future.

Many African literary writers have drawn inspiration from the rich oral traditions of the continent to create some of the best works of African written literature (Affiah & Osuagwu, 2013; Asante & Edu, 2018). In Ghana for instance, the literary scene of the post-independence period is marked by bold attempts by literary writers to create authentic African inspired works (Asiedu, 2014; Yirenkyi & Amponsah, 2012). The period marked the emergence of playwrights who believed that the arts had been used to colonise, therefore, they advocated for the equal use of the same arts to liberate the people and assert the African identity in

post-independence Ghana (Yirenkyi & Amponsah, 2012). Hence, the quest for a total African theatre gained momentum in this period.

At the forefront of this movement is the Ghanaian playwright, Efua Theodora Sutherland. As Yirenkyi and Amponsah (2012, p. 100) articulate, Sutherland was interested in discovering a genre of theatre that will promote the African contribution on the world theatre stage. This vision paved way for her concept of *Anansegoro*, which is based on the story-telling art of the Akan-speaking people of Ghana (Sutherland, 1975). Other Ghanaian playwrights whose works reflect an indebtedness to the rich oral tradition of the continent are Ama Ata Aidoo, Martin Owusu, Mohammed ben-Abdallah and Yaw Asare.

Warner-Lewis (2004, p. 131) argues that African literary writers' resort to these oral genres or tropes in their works for two reasons: first, "out of cultural nationalism," and second, "to project and mine the resources of inherited poetics." In the first instance, the incorporation of oral genres into the works of these writers is seen as a clear attempt by them to immerse themselves in their cultures and to use those traditions to create a sense of identity and belonging, and as a way of connecting with their roots and preserving their cultural heritage. In the second case, these writers consciously integrate into their writings the oral genres that are part of their cultures in order to create works distinctly different from the works of Western writers, in an effort to assert their literary voice and to create a distinct literary tradition that is different from the Western literary tradition. This is consistent with the post-colonial spirit of African resistance to imperialist

influence and dominance, in favour of a reconstruction of the core principles of African identity (Tsukada, 2004; Yirenkyi & Amponsah, 2012).

Sotimirin (2020) shares a similar view with Warner-Lewis regarding the reasons why African literary writers, particularly playwrights, incorporate oral traditions into their creative works, but further argues that the use of oral traditions in African written literature does not merely serve to preserve and celebrate the cultural heritage of Africa, but also as a way to convey deeper meanings and themes. Angmor (1996) maintains that songs, as an oral poetic form, have been one of the most reliable means for African playwrights to convey their stories and showcase the worldviews of their people. While this holds true for many of the experiments undertaken in the Ghanaian literary scene in the post-independence era as part of the post-colonial search for nationalist theatrical forms across the African continent, the crucial role that songs play in the plays produced during this period seems to have received little attention.

When reading and interpreting many of these plays, the emphasis tends to be on the conventional elements that make up a typical drama. As a result, the intricate use of these oral genres, such as songs and other traditional storytelling elements, designed to advance the narrative, often goes unnoticed or underappreciated. These narrative devices, with their inherent ability and significance, offer unique avenues for enhancing the storytelling experience. However, their narrative significance has often been overshadowed by the more commonly recognised aspects of the play, causing them to be overlooked in the overall analysis and understanding of these works. This oversight suggests a

potential gap in literary analysis that could enrich our knowledge of the narrative importance of songs in African literary works. This study is therefore premised on this existing gap in the reading and interpretation of post-independence Ghanaian literary texts in general, and on the narrative importance of songs in particular.

### **Synopsis of the Selected Plays**

Owing to the selection of Sutherland's two plays *Edufa* and *The Marriage of Anansewa* for this study, it is prudent to provide a brief synopsis of the plays. *Edufa* revolves around the eponymous character Edufa, a wealthy man who enjoys the adoration and respect of virtually everyone in his community. Edufa consults a diviner about his health but only to be told that death looms over him and that he would soon pass away. Edufa asks the diviner for help in order not to die and lose everything he has worked for. The diviner informs Edufa that the only way to escape the death that looms over his life is to find a relative of his willing to publicly swear to die in his place, while Edufa conceals a charm on his body to that effect.

Edufa agrees to this arrangement, and the diviner prepares a charm for Edufa, who hopes that his father Kankam will agree to take his place in death. Now, Edufa comes home and asks the question. Kankam points out to Edufa that every man has his death to die and therefore he cannot die in his place. Edufa's wife, Ampoma, accepts to die in his place when she is unaware of the charm on Edufa. The charm begins to take effect on Ampoma immediately she makes the public announcement to die in Edufa's place. Ampoma becomes very ill and her condition worsens year by year until she is on the verge of death. Edufa tries



various spiritual and traditional means to salvage Ampoma's situation but to no avail.

After discovering Ampoma's illness and its cause through his diviner, Kankam confronts Edufa and asks him to confess his actions in order to get help. Kankam leaves a disappointed father after all of his attempts to get Edufa to confess have failed. Fearing for Ampoma's situation, Edufa tries to convince Ampoma to break the vow, but the more he tries, the more Ampoma holds onto it. Edufa eventually informs Ampoma of the risk she is taking by swearing away her life. Despite Edufa's efforts to convince Ampoma to break her vow, she remains steadfast in her declaration. Tragically, Ampoma eventually dies despite Edufa's best efforts to protect her from the potency of the charm. Edufa, therefore, earns the reputation of the man and husband whose obsession with maintaining his position of privilege exchanges his death for his wife's life.

*The Marriage of Anansewa*, on the other hand, is about Ananse, a poor man and father who has made it his mission to free himself from the shackles of poverty while ensuring a good marriage for Anansewa, his only daughter. In the scheme of things, Ananse betroths Anansewa to four chiefs, Chief of Sapaase, Chief of Mines, Torgbe Klu IV, and Chief-Who-Is-Chief. Ananse then receives gifts from the four chiefs, who are unaware of their rivals. At the climax of the play, misfortune seems to befall Ananse and his daughter Anansewa as all the chiefs send messengers to inform Ananse of their plans to seal their marriage to Anansewa by bringing the head drink of Anansewa on the same day.

To escape this web and find out the true intentions of each suitor, Ananse convinces Anansewa to fake her death and announces her sudden death to all the chiefs. For the funeral ritual of Anansewa, each of the four chiefs sends a message and a gift to Ananse. The true intentions of each suitor are revealed as their respective messengers deliver each one's message. Chief-Who-Is-Chief turns out to be the most suitable applicant. Ananse skilfully summons the spirits of the ancestors to restore Anansewa's life. Anansewa wakes up on hearing the name of Chief-Who-Is-Chief.

#### **Justification for Choosing *Edufa* and *The Marriage of Anansewa***

A noticeable commonality that is present in Sutherland's *Edufa* and *The Marriage of Anansewa* is the consistent use of songs in the two plays. The incorporation of songs in these plays exemplify a remarkable utilisation of songs that transcend mere entertainment. The consistent incorporation of songs into these two plays offers a compelling narrative purpose worth exploring. The selection of these texts for the study is justified by this observation. The selected texts provide sufficient material for the quality and nature of the research. In addition, these plays are of particular importance as they emerged during Ghana's post-independence era- a time of profound cultural and artistic resurgence. Playwrights sought to assert their literary voices and celebrate African culture by using songs and other oral African poetics as vehicles for cultural preservation and resistance against dominant Western literary traditions. It is worth noting that Efu Sutherland, the playwright behind these works, is a highly regarded figure in this endeavour. Her works have attracted widespread recognition and scholarly

attention in the context of African literature. The selection of these plays for this study not only addresses the specific use of songs as narrative devices in Sutherland's works, but also enriches our understanding of her artistic legacy and the broader landscape of Ghanaian theatre and drama.

### **Statement of the Problem**

Efua Sutherland has established herself as a dramatic icon in the literary circles of Ghana and Africa at large (Gibbs, 2009). She is recognised in the literary community of Ghana as having paved the way for a protracted process of incorporating Ghana's oral traditions into literary works just to advance Ghanaian culture (Asiedu, 2014). Her well-known plays *Edufa* and *The Marriage of Anansewa* which serve as the study's main sources of data, provide evidence to support this claim.

While there exists a rich body of scholarship on Sutherland's *Edufa* and *The Marriage of Anansewa*, these studies have predominantly focused on the thematic issues that the texts generate. These include the intersection between literature and culture, the subject of adaptation and how this is reflected in the plays, the theme of deceit, the importance of mythology and its enduring influence on modern African drama and theatre, as well as the issue of gender representation.

Scholars such as Osei and Addei, (2011), Say (2014), Nyamekye *et al.* (2015), and Abakah and Marfo (2020) have given a great deal of scholarly attention to *The Marriage of Anansewa* and *Edufa* as vehicles for disseminating cultural values, bringing to light the potential of drama for cultural dissemination,

transformation, and development in a given society. Nugah (2013), in turn, analysed *Edufa* from a gender perspective.

Despite the breadth of existing study on *Edufa* and *The Marriage of Anansewa*, Sutherland's intentional inclusion of songs as an integral part of the narrative structure has received limited scholarly investigation. This lack of focus on the conscious use of songs in Sutherland's plays stems from the prevailing emphasis on conventional approaches to analysing literary texts. As a result, there is a significant knowledge gap regarding the function and significance of the songs in *Edufa* and *The Marriage of Anansewa*. This study aims to fill this knowledge gap by focusing on the function and significance of the songs within the narrative structure of Sutherland's plays.

### **Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of this study is to examine the narrative significance of songs in post-independence Ghanaian plays, particularly in the context of *Edufa* and *The Marriage of Anansewa* by Efu Sutherland. The study aims to challenge critics and readers to go beyond the conventional elements commonly examined in literary analysis, particularly when interpreting African literary texts. In this way, the study enriches our appreciation for the use of African oral poetics in African literary works.

### **Objectives of the Study**

Specific objectives for the study are as follows:

1. To examine how songs function as narrative devices in *Edufa* and *The Marriage of Anansewa*.

2. To evaluate the significance of the songs to the development of the plays.

### Research Questions

Given the above objectives, the following investigations would be carried

out:

1. How do songs function as narrative devices in *Edufa* and *The Marriage of Anansewa*?
2. What are the significance of the songs to the development of the plays?

### Significance of the Study

The significance of this study can be assessed in three ways. First, the study provides readers with a different perspective from which to perceive and appreciate the use of oral genres, particularly songs in African literary works. The distinctive contribution this thesis make to scholarship therefore, is seen in the attention it draws to the centrality of songs as a narrative device other than its performance or entertainment value. In addition, this study makes a notable contribution to the broader field of literary analysis by encouraging scholars to expand their analytical approach beyond the conventional elements typically examined in literature, such as character, plot, setting, thematic concerns, and language use in making meaning out of African literary works. Instead, it embraces the study of songs and other oral tropes as an essential element of narrative structure, offering a critical alternative perspective on reading and interpreting these literary texts. The study also adds to the existing body of knowledge on *Edufa* and *The Marriage of Anansewa*.

### Delimitation

The scope of this study is limited to two main texts: Efua Sutherland's *Edufa* and *The Marriage of Anansewa*. The study aims to unravel how the plays are framed around songs and how they contribute to the development of the narrative. Although other literary devices are present in these plays, the present study focuses primarily on the use of songs as a tool for narrative advancement.

### Methods

The study is based on a qualitative research design and aims to investigate and analyse the use of songs as central narrative devices in two selected Ghanaian-authored plays. Specifically, a text-analytical approach is used to examine the plays *Edufa* and *The Marriage of Anansewa*. As Smith (2017) points out, textual analysis is proving to be a useful approach to the study of written texts, as it allows researchers to identify and analyse the features of a text and draw conclusions about its meaning or interpretation. Therefore, textual analysis as an approach aims to assign meaning to the text, to understand the influence of external variables and to critique or evaluate the text.

Frey *et al.* (1999) have outlined four main approaches to textual analysis: content analysis, rhetorical criticism, interaction analysis, and performance studies. Content analysis was chosen for this study because it broadly deals with the evaluation of material (i.e., songs) within a given text (i.e., *Edufa* and *The Marriage of Anansewa*). Content analysis proves to be particularly relevant to this study, as it allows for the assessment of the content of the main texts, including songs, and their narrative meaning within the main texts.

According to Smith (2017), content analysis constitutes both quantitative and qualitative components. In this study, qualitative content analysis is used, as it involves the interpretation of selected parts of the text. This approach allows for the identification of patterns, themes, and meanings within the data, which is essential for the examining the songs in the plays, their narrative relevance, and the impact they have on the story.

The primary data sources for this study are Efua Sutherland's *Edufa* and *The Marriage of Anansewa*. These primary texts are carefully examined to identify occurrences of songs and their narrative meaning. The researcher conducts a close reading of the plays, taking into account the context, lyrics, placement, and thematic relevance of the songs within the overall narrative. In addition to the primary texts, secondary sources are also consulted. These secondary sources include scholarly articles and books on the use of songs in literary works.

The data analysis process involves a systematic examination of the primary and secondary sources. The researcher identifies and extracts relevant song excerpts from the plays and analyse their narrative significance, such as providing exposition, disclosing the emotions and motivations of the characters, advancing the plot, exploring themes, and providing context. The analysis also considers the cultural significance of the songs in the context of Ghanaian societies.

### Definition of Terms

The term “post-independence” in this study refers specifically to the period following Ghana’s independence in 1957 and not to any other era. This is because the focus of this study is on Ghanaian playwrights whose works emphasise the revitalisation of the dying out of African culture, especially Ghana. As the thesis focuses on Ghanaian playwrights, it is only appropriate to restrict the notion of “post-independence” to the period following Ghana’s independence when folkloric literary writers emerged after the establishment of the Institute of African Studies and School of Music and Drama (now the School of Performing Arts) in the late 1950s at the University of Ghana and the development of the National Theatre Movement of the early 1960s (Yirenkyi & Amponsah, 2012). This appropriately separates playwrights who came to prominence after Ghana’s independence from those who already existed before Ghana’s independence. This fits well with the discussion of Efuwa Sutherland as a Ghanaian playwright who emerged during the post-independence period.

The use of the term “Ghanaian-authored plays” in this study implies that the study focuses on plays written by Ghanaians as opposed to plays set in Ghana but written by non-Ghanaians. A Ghanaian is defined in the 1992 Constitution as a person who is a citizen of Ghana either by birth or by naturalisation. A person who is a Ghanaian citizen by birth is a person who is a descendant of a Ghanaian parent. On the other hand, a person who is a Ghanaian citizen by naturalisation is defined as a person lawfully admitted as a permanent resident of Ghana and who meets the requirements for citizenship. In this study, I use the term Ghanaian to



denote a person recognised as a Ghanaian citizen by birth or by naturalisation. Therefore, the use of the term “Ghanaian-authored plays” means that the focus is on plays written by a person who is recognised as a Ghanaian citizen either by birth or by naturalisation.

### **Organisation of the Study**

This study is divided into five chapters. The opening chapter, the introduction, provides the background to the study. It provides a detailed introduction to the research work, providing clarity and a contextual framework for the study. The focus of the study, the identified problem, objectives, research questions, significance of the study, scope of the study, and the methods and data sources for the study are presented in this preliminary chapter. Furthermore, in this opening chapter, the synopsis of the selected plays is presented in detail. Chapter two constitutes the literature review. It discusses among other sub-topics, songs as a cultural and artistic expression, songs as a narrative instrument in drama and theatre, critical receptions of the selected plays and the theoretical underpinning of the study. The third chapter is dedicated to the analysis and discussion of *Edufa* and *The Marriage of Anansewa* in accordance with the first research question. The fourth chapter responds to the second research question. The last chapter presents the summary and key findings of the study and gives some recommendations for further studies. The chapter also discusses the implications of the study for the field of Ghanaian drama and theatre.

## Conclusion

This introductory chapter provides the necessary background and context for the study. It establishes the basis and rationale for conducting this research while also explaining the key variables relevant to this study. The next chapter presents a review of the literature relevant to this study and bears significance to the topic.



## CHAPTER TWO

### LITERATURE REVIEW

#### Introduction

The preceding chapter of this study lays the ground work for the study and explains the scope and purpose of the study, research objectives, delimitation, significance, and organisational structure of the study. The focus of this chapter is to review previous studies relevant to this study. The literature review is divided into five main sections. The first section focuses on exploring the meanings attached to the concept of narrative devices and the points at which songs take on the role of narrative devices in literary works. The second section focuses on the cultural and artistic significance of songs. The third section concentrates on the use of songs in the Ghanaian literary scene. The fourth section is devoted to reviewing existing literature on *Edufa* and *The Marriage of Anansewa*. This section focuses specifically on the different dimensions from which these two plays have been analysed. This is crucial to identify gaps and limitations in the existing literature and to highlight the need for the present study. The final section of the literature review focuses on explaining the theoretical framework underlying the study.

#### Songs as Narrative Devices in Literary Works

As Lacy (1968) maintains, literary writing requires the skilful use of various techniques to effectively structure and present the story. These essential elements are commonly referred to as narrative devices (Denning, 2005; Owusu, 2016). A narrative device, according to Denning (2005), is anything that is used in

storytelling to communicate and shape the story. He also points out that narrative devices include various storytelling structures, visual and auditory signals, and literary strategies. This means that the question of narrative devices revolves largely around the way the story is constructed, organised, and presented to the audience. Building on this, Owusu (2016) argues that a narrative device can be understood as the way or method used by a writer to tell a story. Similarly, Prince (2003) describes it as a means by which a narrative is constructed and presented. Following the definitions put forth by these scholars, a narrative device in this study can be understood as the techniques and tools the playwright uses to tell her story. For that matter, Denning (2005) is of the view that they help develop and flesh out characters, drive the plot, set mood and atmosphere, create tension and suspense, and enhance the overall storytelling experience.

This study identifies songs as a key technique that Efua Sutherland uses to convey her story. Songs serve as an engaging medium through which individuals can express and share their stories in unique and engaging ways. They offer the bereaved a means to express their feelings and tell their story (Roberts, 2006). Songs therefore have the ability to connect people on a deep emotional level and provide a platform for personal expression and communal bonding (Rosselson, 2021).

Agawu (2016) defines songs as an organised sound with a silent choreographic supplement. From the definition of Agawu, we can infer that songs contain both auditory and visual elements. This implies that songs go beyond being purely auditory experiences. They encompass intentional arrangements of

sounds while also incorporating a visual or physical component. The inclusion of a silent choreographic complement suggests that songs are accompanied by movements, gestures or dance that enhance the overall experience. This perspective views songs as a synthesis of both auditory and visual elements that create a multidimensional and holistic form of expression. This definition assumes that all songs involve a silent choreographic complement, which may not be the case for every song.

Michelo (2016, p. 8) in his explication defines songs as “a unique form of expressive medium that encompasses the use of language to convey human feelings, thoughts and ideas.” This definition recognises the importance of songs as a viable option and medium for communication and self-expression. The same understanding of songs is hinted at in Green (2017), where she examines among other things, some of the important elements of African music and dance. For his part, Mulaudzi (2014) defines songs as artistic expressions that reflect the culture of a community. In this sense, songs can be viewed as cultural artefacts that embody and transmit the values, beliefs, traditions, and stories of a particular community or society.

Songs span a wide range of genres, each with its own character and purpose. These genres span a wide spectrum, from lullabies that soothe toddlers, to religious songs that inspire devotion, to reflective songs that invite deep contemplation, to poignant ballads that narrate historical events. The diversity of songs allows for an expansive spectrum of expressions that respond to different moods, themes and contexts.

Barwell (2009) highlights the ubiquitous nature of storytelling. He notes that while the art of storytelling may not be universally present in all cultures and eras, its prevalence is widespread across human societies. Stories manifest themselves in various forms, permeating conversations, myths, dances, movies, criminal trials, local and international news programs, sports commentaries, sermons, and academic lectures spanning fields such as philosophy, anthropology, and biology. These narratives take on diverse formats, ranging from anecdotes and jokes to evidence, histories, biographies, and autobiographies. This underscores the profound significance of storytelling as a fundamental means of communicating, preserving, and exploring human experiences and knowledge across the different domains of life. Songs provide another opportunity for storytelling (Mulaudzi, 2014). They embody a unique avenue through which narratives are revealed and expressed. In this regard, songs can be aptly viewed as narrative devices, harnessing their essence to convey intricate stories.

In the context of using songs as narrative devices, a number of techniques come into play. These techniques include the artful use of songs in various capacities, such as a means of foreboding, exposition, flashback, interior monologue and as didactic tools to convey important values and teachings (Bonsu, 2022; Nayak, 2019; Scirea *et al.*, 2014). In their use as foreboding devices, songs serve as instruments for foreshadowing and enables the creation of an atmosphere of anticipation and suspense (Lacy, 1968; Scirea *et al.*, 2014). The use of songs for foreshadowing has been extensively researched and studied in the context of films.

As Scirea *et al.* (2014) highlight in their study, the technique of using songs to foreshadow or anticipate future events is a well-established practice, particularly in the horror film genre. In film, the soundtrack plays a crucial role in drawing the viewer into the story. In the horror movie genre specifically, songs are often employed to predict or hint at the upcoming events, thereby heightening the audience's sense of fear and anticipation (Scirea *et al.*, 2014).

A study conducted by Boltz *et al.* (1991) found that when false foreshadowing is used, events preceded by such a foreshadowing not only have an immediate emotional impact, but also have a lasting effect on the audience's memory and recall of the story. This shows the remarkable adaptability of foreshadowing, which can be used in two different ways. Firstly, there is true foreshadowing, where subtle hints or clues are presented about forthcoming events that ultimately unfold as predicted. Secondly, there is false foreshadowing, in which intentionally misleading or deceptive allusions are woven into the narrative to foster suspense and direct the audience's expectations. In the specific case of Sutherland's *Edufa* and *The Marriage of Anansewa*, the use of songs as a means of foreshadowing exemplifies true foreshadowing. Through the strategic inclusion of songs, Sutherland provides subtle clues to future events that come to fruition as the play progresses, thereby increasing the dramatic impact and audience anticipation.

Nayak (2019) reveals that the musical scores introduced intermittently in the novel serve as companions for the reader, offering guidance and understanding during moments in which unusual or perplexing details of the text

may confuse the reader. While in some cases the musical scores are not directly related to the plot, they act as a reassuring presence that helps the reader understand what is happening (Nayak, 2019). The songs become a kind of signal, confirming that the reader actually understands the underlying meaning or intent behind the narrative. In other words, Nayak argues that Murakami uses song as the central element that ties his work together. When the sequence of events in the novel does not provide clear answers or resolutions, the songs playing in the background act as an explanation or key that allows for a better understanding. It serves as an emotional and thematic anchor, enhancing the reader's experience and interpretation of the novel. This perspective emphasises how the thoughtful integration of songs into a story provides crucial background information about characters, locales, or historical situations. In this case, songs serve as a medium to convey essential exposition by including pertinent details and memories into the lyrics, drawing the audience into the world of the story and helping them better understand the characters and their motivations.

In turn, according to Nayak (2019), songs have the potential to facilitate flashback exploration in a story. In this case, the songs presented in the novel serve as a channel for exploring the character's memories, emotions, and significant moments from the past. This way, the reader can delve deeper into the backstory and gain a more comprehensive understanding of the characters and their motivations. Nayak's observation emphasises the role of songs as a narrative tool in managing flashbacks. Songs transport listeners to another time and place, allowing them to see important events or understand pivotal moments in a



character's life, by using words that evoke past experiences along with music that captures the essence of a specific era or moment. This narrative technique allows for a non-linear approach, which gives the overall narrative structure richness and depth.

Interior monologue is an additional technique that comes into play when utilising songs as a narrative device. This technique gives the reader privileged access to characters unspoken thoughts, motivations, and perspectives, granting them direct access to the internal conflicts and dilemmas these individuals face (Sellew, 1992). The term "interior monologue," succinctly defined by Tumanov (1997), refers to the internal speech of a fictional character. This technique can be classified into two forms: direct interior monologue and indirect interior monologue (Raoufzadeh *et al.*, 2020). Direct interior monologue is about presenting the inner thoughts and perceptions of characters from the first-person perspective, without any commentary or guidance from a third-person narrator (Raoufzadeh *et al.*, 2020). In using this technique, the author gives the reader direct access to the thoughts that a character is experiencing in their mind. On the other hand, the indirect interior monologue presents a character's thoughts through the voice of an omniscient third-person narrator. The narrator assumes the role of a presenter, selector, guide, and commentator of the thoughts of a character. The narrator provides a filtered or interpreted version of the inner workings of the character rather than directly stating their thoughts.

Building on these ideas, Asdasd (2016) highlights three specific scenarios in which interior monologue can be employed: (1) when the narrator is reacting to

actions that are taking place at the precise moment— the monologue tells the story of what is going on, (2) when the narrator presents their thoughts as flashbacks— the monologue draws parallels between past events and present ones; and (3) when the narrator’s thoughts are neither a record of the present nor a recollection of the past— the monologue is purely a reflection and the story itself.

In addition to serving as narrative devices, songs can act as didactic tools, teaching important values and lessons to audiences. Bonsu (2022) argues that songs can convey moral lessons, social commentary, or cultural knowledge, thus effectively conveying messages that resonate with the audience on an emotional level. In this context, songs have the potential to educate, inspire, and encourage introspection, making them a convenient tool for instilling values and promoting personal growth. Additionally, songs possess a unique ability to harness imagery, metaphor, and symbolism to evoke strong emotions and convey complex ideas. In this way, songs can explore abstract concepts, address societal issues, and challenge conventional thinking, inviting listeners to think deeply about the messages embedded in the lyrics. We can infer that songs have a remarkable ability to convey characters’ emotions, provide cultural and historical context, reveal the motivation of characters, emphasise key themes or messages in a narrative, enhance the atmosphere of a particular scene, and act as a means of foreshadowing and also serve to protect fundamental cultural realities.

The review underscores the profound importance of songs as narrative devices in literary writing. It shows how songs serve as a versatile medium for foreshadowing, guiding reader understanding, tools for exploring flashbacks, and

serve as a means for conveying characters' the thoughts and motivations. In addition, the review emphasises the didactic role of songs, as they are used in literary works to convey essential societal values and lessons.

### **Songs as Cultural and Artistic Expression**

Songs are not merely a form of entertainment or an aesthetic experience, but an integral and inseparable part of human social life (DeNora, 2000; Mithen, 2006) They offer various opportunities for communication, participation in religious and spiritual worship, expression of creativity, and celebration with the community. The expression of culture and sense of identity are strongly influenced by songs (Cross & Morley, 2010). According to Hallam and MacDonald (2013), although musical experience uses the same processing mechanism in the brain as speech, research has shown that active participation in musical performances can improve human cognitive abilities, language, and literacy skills. They are a way to visualise life and evoke deep memories.

In a cultural context, songs are an integral part of gatherings, festivals, and belief systems. They serve as a vehicle for celebration, expression and connection, bringing communities together and preserving cultural heritage. Whether in joyful celebrations or sacred rituals, songs enrich cultural experiences, create a sense of unity, and reinforce a society's collective identity (Mulaudzi, 2014; Mulaudzi, 2020). Cultural diversity is acknowledged throughout nations, with regional differences in values and virtues. Given this inevitable barrier, songs are of enormous relevance as they offer us a creative way to put ourselves in other people's situations (Hallam, 2015). Hodges (2019) points out that listening to

songs about other people's experiences and emotions helps bridge understanding gaps between individuals, groups, and nations. Songs are a gift that enriches our lives, strengthens our interpersonal and cross-cultural connections, and serve as a conduit to the hearts and minds of others. Artists can use songs to convey different emotions including happiness, sadness, anger, love, and more (Pilgrim *et al.*, 2017). The connection between songs and emotions is intricate and multifaceted (Larsen & Stastny, 2011).

Songs are an integral part of African societies and permeate all human activities. According to Agawu (2016), songs begin their work in African societies from the moment of a person's birth until their death. This shows that songs are present in all facets of African life, from conception to death, and are not limited to any particular event or occasion. Mbaegbu (2015) argues that songs are deeply ingrained in various aspects of African life, including work, leisure, celebrations and religious worship. The author highlights the reputation of Africans for their cheerfulness, emotionality and sensitivity to songs, as reflected in Efua Sutherland's *Edufa*, where the chorus, made up entirely of women, sings dirges throughout the play.

Mbaegbu (2015) further categorises African songs into different types including religious songs, war songs and praise songs. The author notes that the role of song in African society varies depending on the type of song. The point is that there are specific types of songs for specific occasions, just as there are different types of songs for different moods and situations. The discussion of religious songs emphasises that African religious hymns serve multiple functions,

including reparation, thanksgiving, supplication, and moral teaching. The author acknowledges that songs are also used in times of war to solicit supernatural help and boost soldiers' morale. The role of songs in African political life is also highlighted. In the African political arena, praise songs are sung to flatter leaders and people of high status. The author also recognises that songs in Africa also serve a range of functions, including social control, social integration, signalling, rendering apologies, and expressing gratitude and appreciation.

The intricate relationship between songs and emotions has attracted much attention in psychological research, particularly in understanding emotional responses to songs. This understanding has become increasingly important for marketers due to the widespread use of songs in advertising and the growing significance of arts marketing in a highly competitive music business (North & Hargreaves, 2010). It is noteworthy that religious ceremonies often revolve around songs, with Beethoven claiming that songs enable spiritual transcendence. Live music, similar to a religious ceremony, evokes feelings of excitement, pleasurable emotions, and social connectedness (Wood & Moss, 2015). What songs do in this sense is to tap into the profound aspects of human experience, and instil a sense of awe and wonder that resonates deeply with individuals and communities alike. Therefore, the connection between songs and emotions transcends cultural boundaries and finds relevance in both the spiritual and marketing realms.

Gargiulo (2007) argues that our experiences are stored in the containers of stories. Remembering a story enables us to assemble parts of ourselves for greater

introspection (Gargiulo, 2007). They are vehicles for experiential learning because they allow us to tap into the wealth and variety of personal experiences and share them collectively with a group. Artists use songs to draw attention on social and political issues. They address injustice, conflict, prejudice, human rights and environmental concerns. Musicians can influence change, encourage critical thinking, and raise audience awareness by fusing art with a message (Smiers, 2003).

Ghana has a long history of musical expressions that provide musicians with a platform to express their opinions, challenge social norms and promote change (Salm & Falola, 2002). In this context, songs take on the role of social commentary and critique. Songs were a crucial part of the movement to liberate Ghana from colonial control, energising the populace and igniting resistance (Madison, 2010). A notable figure in this movement was E.T. Mensah, a renowned musician and bandleader, whose group, the Tempos, used their musical performances to inspire the public and raise awareness of the struggle for freedom (Bewiadzi, 2016). Through their performances, the Tempos conveyed a strong sense of solidarity, empowerment, and a yearning for emancipation. These protest songs gradually turned into anthems of resistance, reflecting the spirit and determination of the Ghanaian people (Redmond, 2014).

Saboro (2022) also emphasises the importance of songs as cultural and historical archives in the context of the slave experience in Africa, particularly in Ghana. The point is that the songs sung by the people provide insights into how individuals dealt with and responded to the traumatic events of the slave raids in

Ghana's hinterland. Saboro's argument underscores the importance of songs and other oral African poetics in preserving historical narratives, allowing us to connect with and learn from the past while recognising the resilience and agency of individuals in the face of adversity.

From the discussion it becomes clear that songs go beyond their role as mere entertainment and acquire a broader significance as a means of cultural and historical expression and artistic communication. This observation is consistent with the central argument of this study that songs serve important functions beyond their entertainment and performance value.

### **Song Use in the Ghanaian Literary Scene**

In the world of theatre and storytelling, where engaging and involving the audience is paramount, playwrights and directors employ various techniques to achieve their goal. One of these techniques is the use of songs as a narrative device. Songs as narrative devices are incorporated into stories to narrate actions and scenes that are not merely stated but form an important part of the whole action of the tale, evoking feelings, and communicating ideas (Plau, 2019). They may enthrall listeners by telling stories through skilfully written lyrics and melodies. Songs may take listeners through a logical narrative arc, whether a traditional ballad retelling a historical event or a modern pop song conveying personal experiences (Sloan & Harding, 2019). Characters are often introduced in songs through the lyrics (Wingstedt *et al.*, 2010). These individuals act as protagonists, villains, or even narrators.

The descriptive use of language, dialogue, and narrative tactics allows listeners to empathise with the experiences, goals, and challenges of the characters. Songs tell individual stories and convey the cultural setting in which they were written (Burnard, 2012). In tackling contemporary social, political, and cultural concerns, they act as a reflection of society. Songs may shed light on the ideas, values, and goals of a community or an era by analysing the topics, musical style, and lyrics as they have a unique ability to comment on society (Burnard, 2012). They can raise pertinent concerns, raise awareness, and stimulate the mind. Songs also represent memories and individual identities (Nayak, 2019). They can arouse intense nostalgia and become entangled in specific events in the lives of a people.

Songs are an art form widely recognised for their mood-altering properties and ability to influence behaviour (Smiers, 2003). Songs have been an integral part of theatre since ancient Greece (Rocconi, 2015). They establish the tone, foster ambience, and offer respite from spoken speech and may occasionally be applied to advance the storyline or shape the characters. In certain cases, its sole purpose is to entertain (Gargiulo, 2007). Lipscomb and Torchinsky (2005) contend that songs get closest to communicating the inexpressible when meaningfully constructed.

Ghanaian drama is characterised by vibrant cultural expressions and diverse forms of performance. Central to this rich theatrical legacy is a heavy reliance on the use of song. In the foreword to her play, *The Marriage of Anansewa*, Sutherland discusses, among other concerns, the functional



importance of songs in Ghanaian dramatic texts. Sutherland argues that many of the songs incorporated into the narrative are an integral part of the stories themselves and are performed in context. In this case, they serve as an effective narrative tool, playing a crucial role in reflecting the mood of the narrative, developing action and characterisation, acquainting the audience with shifts of time and place, and keeping the audience engaged (Sutherland, 1975).

Alvarado (2022, p. 2) avers that using a song can be seen as “a hook in the construction of a narrative.” In this respect, the song captures the audience’s attention and provides additional layers of context that enhance their experience and understanding of the material surrounding the hook. Using a song as a hook serves as a point of entry for the audience, capturing their attention and drawing them into the world of the narrative. Just as a catchy melody can captivate the listener, a carefully chosen song in literature can intrigue and arouse the audience’s curiosity. This initial engagement sets the stage for an even more immersive reading experience. Additionally, the song acts as a contextualising device, lending additional layers of meaning and understanding to the material surrounding it.

Similarly, as this study will demonstrate, in some instances Sutherland uses songs in *Edufa* and *The Marriage of Anansewa* as contextualising devices to enhance the audience understanding of the characters’ situations. Alvarado (2022) also notes that incorporating songs into a narrative has the power to shape the identities of characters and propel them on an introspective journey to reflect on their past lives, present transformations, and personal experiences. This point of

view is consistent with Nayak's (2019) contention that the incorporation of songs into a literary work serves as a channel to delve into the memories, emotions, and significant moments of the character's past.

Ndubisi and Kanu (2022) posit that songs are a powerful means of expression for people, allowing them to express their innermost feelings when words alone may be insufficient. Ndubisi and Kanu's reasoning implies that African songs are not just forms of entertainment or artistic expression, but also serve as an important means for people to express their deepest emotions and feelings. When words are not enough to express their innermost thoughts, songs offer a way to express themselves. This underscores the emotional and personal importance of African songs and how they serve as vehicles for communication, connection and emotional expression within African cultures. This holds true for Ghanaian playwrights as well.

The use of songs as a narrative vehicle in Ghanaian drama allows playwrights to delve deep into the inner lives of characters, thereby contributing to their development and motivation. Songs provide a unique and impactful medium for characters to express their thoughts, emotions, desires, conflicts, and transformations, as highlighted by Ndubisi and Kanu (2022). The lyrics serve as windows into the complexities of the characters, allowing the audience to connect with their experiences on a deeper level. By exploring characters' motivations and internal struggles, songs enrich the narratology of Ghanaian-authored plays, adding depth and richness to the overall theatrical experience.

Additionally, songs in Ghanaian drama serve as effective tools to advance the plot and heighten dramatic tension. Sutherland (1975), in the foreword to *The Marriage of Anansewa*, observed that songs are employed in dramatic texts to mark important transitions, highlight pivotal moments, or propel the story forward. In so doing, songs convey crucial events, conflicts and resolutions and amplify the emotional impact on the audience. The strategic placement of the songs within the narrative structure acts as a catalyst for plot development, adding momentum and ensuring a cohesive flow throughout the play.

Songs in Ghanaian drama not only propel the plot but also explore and reinforce underlying themes and provide social and political commentary. As Mokwunyei (2019) articulates, songs in dramatic pieces convey overarching messages, moral dilemmas, and societal observations. The lyrics amplify the thematic content of the play and invite the audience to reflect and contemplate. With songs, Ghanaian playwrights engage in critical dialogue about cultural, social and political issues, thus contributing to a broader discourse within society. Furthermore, songs in Ghanaian drama often celebrate and preserve cultural traditions and heritage. According to Ojediran (2019), songs are an essential component of African tradition, which automatically transfers into African art. He also adds that such songs help to understand one's society as they present the cultural heritage and societal norms embedded in them. By incorporating songs with cultural significance, Ghanaian playwrights help preserve and promote Ghana's rich artistic and musical traditions.

In summary, the review shows that songs in Ghanaian drama play a diverse role in the art form. They contribute significantly to the narratology of the plays by introducing the story, developing characters, and driving the plot forward. Songs are also used to make social commentary, externalise character's emotions, and project cultural traditions.

### **Critical Receptions on *Edufa* and *The Marriage of Anansewa***

In this section of the literature review, I undertake an evaluation of selected previous studies on *Edufa* and *The Marriage of Anansewa*. I begin with a review of the existing literature on *Edufa*, followed by an examination of previous studies on *The Marriage of Anansewa*.

Conradie's (1997) analysis of *Edufa* shows how Sutherland effectively adapted the Greek myth of Alcestis into an African context, while retaining the essential elements of the myth and adding her own twist to it. In examining the points of convergence and divergence between Sutherland's retelling of the myth of Alcestis in the Ghanaian context, Conradie identifies similarities and differences in setting, plot, and the use of an all-female chorus in *Edufa* as opposed to the all-male chorus in Alcestis. It is well known that both plays deal with the themes of love, sacrifice and death. He further reveals that *Edufa* lends itself to tragedy, while Euripides' *Alcestis* is tragicomedy. *Alcestis* tells the story of a woman who agrees to die in her husband's place but is eventually brought back to life, hence the tragi-comedy label. On the other hand, Sutherland's *Edufa* is considered a tragedy because it features a woman who sacrifices her own life to save that of her spouse. The all-female chorus in *Edufa* serves to emphasise an

African setting, as public expressions of sentiment are seen as feminine characteristics in African and Ghanaian cultures. Sutherland deliberately chooses an all-female chorus to emphasise this and to create the emotional depth required for the sung dirges.

Conradie's claim that the play has an African flavour due to the use of an all-female chorus is therefore appropriate within Akan societies and does not represent African nations as a whole. Conradie's analysis supports the idea that African literary writers do not discount the idea of infusing African indigenous ideals, values and elements into their works while adapting works from outside the African continent. Although Conradie briefly alludes to song and dance as integral aspects of the play, he does not elaborate on this aspect. This provides an opportunity for further engagement on why he makes such a claim and what that means for the narrative itself.

Likewise, Nugah (2013) examines the portrayal of men and women in two Ghanaian plays, Efua Sutherland's *Edufa* and Efo Kodjo Mawugbe's *In the Chest of a Woman*. Nugah argues that both plays deal with issues of male dominance and female marginalisation prevalent in Ghanaian society and many African societies. Nugah specifically examines how Sutherland approaches these issues in *Edufa*, highlighting its treatment of themes such as the pursuit of wealth, the power of love, the consequences of secrecy, and the morality of taking another's life. Nugah's research in this case emphasises the various ways *Edufa* can be refracted through a gendered lens.

The author also notes that Mawugbe uses *In the Chest of a Woman* to critique masculine chauvinism and to argue for the importance of women empowerment and rejection of harmful traditional practices. In the play, Mawugbe makes a number of arguments, including that men predominate in positions of leadership and decision-making, strength and bravery are virtues that transcend gender, and harmful traditions must give way to reform. Nugah's research provides valuable insight into the themes and representations of gender in *Edufa* and *In the Chest of a Woman* and sheds light on the nuanced exploration of gender dynamics in these plays.

Similarly, Say (2014) examines how theatre can be used as a tool for cultural transformation and development. Say's study focuses on examining how two African female playwrights', Sutherland and Sofola, engaged with and influenced cultural traditions and beliefs of their respective countries. The study provides a detailed analysis of each play and how they have contributed to cultural development. For example, in Sutherland's *Edufa*, Say emphasises traditional practices such as divination, herbal remedies and purification rites, while in Sofola's *Wedlock of the Gods*, Say exemplifies customs and beliefs such as widowhood rites, taboos and beliefs, and the power of magic and witchcraft in Nigeria.

The study argues that *Wedlock of the Gods* serves as an example of how theatre can be used to challenge ingrained cultural conventions that can be harmful, while *Edufa* exemplifies how theatre can promote cultural development. The study suggests that these playwrights look heavily to their cultural

backgrounds for artistic inspiration, and that the same case is true of many other African literary works. The study concludes that theatre can be a powerful tool for cultural development and transformation and that the works of these playwrights are an important example of this.

In Nyamekye *et al.* (2015), the authors use the plays *Anowa* and *Edufa* as points of reference to explore the relationship between literature and culture. The study begins by discussing the various definitions of culture, including those proposed by Raymond Williams, Mathew Arnold, and Stephen Greenblatt, and finally settles on Raymond Williams' definition, which emphasises culture as the way of life of a particular people. Nyamekye *et al.* (2015) also examine the concept of literature and come to the conclusion that both culture and literature deal with a people's way of life. Literature examines the way of life of a particular people, while culture deals with that way of life from the perspective of that particular people.

Nyamekye *et al.* (2015) then provide a detailed analysis of both plays and discuss their synopsis, themes, and connections to Akan cultural practices and concepts. They argue that both Aidoo and Sutherland are accomplished writers who have a keen understanding of Akan cultural norms and values, and the importance of cultural practices such as childbirth, marriage, libations, ancestor reverence, witchcraft, and respect for the elderly. Nyamekye *et al.* (2015), however, does not provide a direct analysis of the use of songs in the plays, but rather offer valuable insight into the cultural backgrounds of the playwrights and their use of literature as an effective tool in the projection and preservation of the

cultural and social perceptions of their people. Given the discussion thus far, it is fair to say that Efua Sutherland and Ama Ata Aidoo, like many other African literary writers, have effectively used their writing (literature) as a means to connect with the projection and preservation of the cultural and social perceptions of their people.

Eke and Obika (2015), on the other hand, examine how African dramatists use myth as a dramatic technique in their works to represent their people's worldview. The study argues that myths, often viewed as fictional narratives, are in fact cultural realities that reflect a community's core beliefs and ideals. *Edufa* serves as a key example in this regard, illustrating how African traditions such as myth, folklore and other oral cultural elements are incorporated into modern African drama. Eke and Obika posit that *Edufa* is deeply rooted in Akan social and cultural fabric. The reasons given for this claim are the use of the all-female chorus, the funeral chant performance, direct translation of Akan words into English, and the significance of the owl.

Eke and Obika's study is consistent with the arguments of Nyamekye *et al.* (2015). For example, both studies focus on the relationship between the written literature and the oral genres in African plays, most notably Ama Ata Aidoo's *Anowa* and Efua Sutherland's *Edufa*. They agree that these plays deal with the social and cultural structure of the Akan. Eke and Obika also provide an in-depth analysis of the play, highlighting its symbolic allusions and cultural concepts, such as the idea that one can trade the life of a loved one for wealth, influence, or longevity. In addition, they emphasise the integral role of songs and



dance in the play. They argue that musical pieces in African societies go beyond mere accompaniment and serve as narrative devices in their own right. This underscores the need for a deeper understanding of the functionality of the songs as presented in the play.

The preceding discussion has shown the diverse critical perspectives from which *Edufa* has been examined. These insightful earlier studies add significantly to our understanding of the play's adaptation of the Alcestis myth, its engagement with issues such as gender dynamics and cultural practices, and the integral role of songs and dance within its narrative structure. Despite these valuable contributions, there remains a pressing need for further analysis of the functionality of the songs in *Edufa* and their overall contribution to the play. With this in mind, let us now turn our attention to reviewing selected previous studies on *The Marriage of Anansewa*.

Osei and Addei (2012) critically examine how the two Ghanaian plays *The Dilemma of a Ghost* and *The Marriage of Anansewa* reflect the culture of the Ghanaian people. Osei and Addei argue that Sutherland's most important contribution to Ghanaian drama and theatre is *The Marriage of Anansewa*. This is followed by how Sutherland adapted the antiquated Akan spider tales, *Anansem*, into a new theatrical style which she refers to as *Anansegoro*, Ananse play. These authors argue that both plays offer valuable insight into the Ghanaian experience, particularly in relation to marriage and gender roles. Osei and Addei's study highlights how Sutherland examines the issue of marriage in light of Akan cultural norms, such as the importance of paying for a head drink, the puberty

ceremony for girls, and the custom of buying a coffin after the death of a wife. It is established that a prospective husband is not required to perform such a rite as he has not yet paid the bride price. Accordingly, three of the chiefs' present gifts to Ananse without violating this custom. Chief-Who-Is-Chief is the only one who goes beyond simply presenting gifts for Anansewa's funeral ceremony and takes full responsibility for everything that has to do with her funeral rites.

Additionally, the authors discuss how, in *The Dilemma of a Ghost*, Aidoo emphasises Ghanaian culture, particularly the importance given to customary marriage and how the characters deal with the issues of childbirth and the role of family background in marriage acceptance. Aidoo contrasts "traditional" marriage with Western marriage to illustrate the idea of marriage in Ghanaian cultures as opposed to marriage in Western conceptions. When the Odumna clan found out that Ato Yawson had married someone without their permission, they were incredulous. The characters in the play reckon they would be involved in such a life-changing decision. They are even more shocked when they learn that the woman Ato married is descended from a slave. This indicates that in the context of Ghana, a person's family background has a significant impact on whether marriage will be accepted. Childbirth is another aspect of Ghanaian society that Aidoo represents in her work. Every woman who marries is expected to have children. When Eulalie is unable to have children, we see how the Odumna clan try to resolve the situation. To "liberate Eulalie's womb" as they put it, they make various concoctions and cleansing baths for her. What the members of the Odumna clan do not know is the fact that Eulalie and Ato have decided not to

have children, and not that Eulalie is barren as they think. The discussion reveals the importance of Ghanaian culture in *The Marriage of Anansewa* and *The Dilemma of a Ghost*. Osei and Addei's (2012) study is relevant to the current research topic as it discusses the use of indigenous elements such as folklore and other oral poetics in modern African drama, particularly in *The Marriage of Anansewa* and *The Dilemma of a Ghost*. The review highlights the playwrights' reliance on their cultural backgrounds for artistic inspiration.

Affiah and Osuagwu (2013) also examine how oral tradition has been adapted in Sutherland's *The Marriage of Anansewa* and Osofisan's *Morountodun*. They posit that African literary works have drawn and continue to draw on African oral genres in a variety of ways, including exploitation and adaptation. We see how both Sutherland and Osofisan adapt and use the indigenous African arts in their works. The subject matter of *The Marriage of Anansewa* derives directly from the trickster tales of the *Anansesem* tradition, with the main character, Ananse, portrayed as a cunning man.

Efua Sutherland additionally demonstrates the use of oral tradition through the use of characters such as Ananse, the Storyteller, Aya, and Ekuwa. We also see, as Sutherland emphasises, that in most African traditions, no amount of gifts, either in kind or cash, can make any relationship customarily acceptable until the head drink is paid to the bride's family. In keeping with the *Anansesem* tradition, Sutherland also incorporates active audience participation. The audience is cordially invited to express their opinions, ask questions and join in the musical interlude whenever and wherever necessary.

The Yoruba myth of Moremi, on the other hand, serves as the background for Osofisan's *Morountodun*. The Moremi myth tells the story of Moremi, a Yoruba woman who risked her life to protect the future of the people of Ile-Ife. In *Morountodun*, Osofisan mixes myth and history by fusing the myth of Moremi with the 1969 Agbekoya uprising. Osofisan emphasises the need for self-sacrifice in *Morountodun* as seen in the Yoruba myth of Moremi. Oral tradition is an important part of African literary works, serving both as a source of material and as an inspiration for creative experimentation within the African literary landscape, as seen in *The Marriage of Anansewa* and *Morountodun*. While Affiah and Osuagwu's (2013) study offers some insight into the use of oral tradition in African literature, it does not specifically address the use of songs in these plays.

Mireku-Gyimah's (2014) analysis of *The Marriage of Anansewa* shows how the play serves as a reflection of Ghanaian society, particularly in terms of poverty, gullibility and materialism. From the very beginning of the play, we realise that life is difficult and painful. Using the character Ananse, Sutherland critiques the lengths people can go to escape poverty and the role of consumerism in the Christian church. Ananse is presented as a father figure, unable to pay the tuition for his only child, Anansewa. Therefore, he forges a plan to liberate himself of this dire financial situation. He visits four chiefs (Chief of Sapaase, the Chief of Mines, Torgbe Klu IV, and Chief-Who-Is-Chief) and tells them that he will give Anansewa as a wife. All four chiefs fall for this plan and thus demonstrates their gullibility.

In addition, the question of consumerism and its role in the Christian church is addressed. Ananse points out that the church has become a money-making institution, making it difficult for people like him who are impoverished to live without guilt. As part of his plans for a good life, Ananse hopes to earn enough money to fund a wardrobe change. He also hopes to give offertory as often as the preacher asks church members to do. This is the reality for many Christian churches as it appears that the message of salvation has been suspended because of solicitations from church members. Mireku-Gyimah argues that the play is an appropriate lens to look at these issues prevalent in Ghanaian society today.

Asante and Edu (2018) analyse the process of adapting Akan folktales into literature with a particular focus on Efua Sutherland's experimentations. Asante and Edu argue that the incorporation of indigenous traditions and practices into African literature is a result of African peoples' response to colonisation and its impact on the colonies' cultural practices. Wole Soyinka, Ngugi wa Thiong'o, and Efua Sutherland are the three authors who are at the centre of the response to colonisation. Asante and Edu highlight that as a playwright, Sutherland not only incorporates the customs of her people into her works, but creates her concept of *Anansegoro*, which is based on the *Anansesem* tradition of the Akan-speaking people. This concept of *Anansegoro*, which emphasises the use of storytellers, song, dance, and active audience participation, has served as an inspiration to other African literary writers and playwrights.

African literary writers and playwrights inspired by the *Anansegoro* concept include Mohammed ben-Abdallah, Yaw Asare, Martin Owusu, and Ama Ata Aidoo. Asante and Edu also point out that by translating the Akan folktales literally, Sutherland helped preserve the stories and made them accessible to new audiences. The authors also mention that Sutherland adds a property manager who is always available and answerable to Ananse. Asante and Edu conclude that Sutherland's works have developed into a repertoire for the depiction and preservation of Akan ideals in both literature and performance. This study provides valuable insight into the ways in which Akan folktale conventions have been adopted into African written literature.

In addition to what Asante and Edu have explored, Aguessy, Chabi, and Ayedon's (2019) study also offer an in-depth exploration of the theme of deception in *The Marriage of Anansewa*. Aguessy *et al.* focus on the factors that contribute to fraudulent behaviour, how social psychology is used to influence people's consciousness, and the impact of fraudulence on interpersonal relationships. The authors identify poverty as the main cause of deceitful behaviour in the play, and examine how the character Ananse employs antics such as subterfuge, lies, and dishonesty to escape his poverty-ridden state. The study also sheds light on the negative consequences of deception such as psychological stress, the risk of criminal prosecution, loss of self-esteem and loss of trust in society. As a good example of such a thematic analysis, the study by Aguessy *et al.* support the claim that conventional literary analysis often focuses on thematic considerations.

The study by Abakah and Marfo (2020) provide a deeper understanding of the cultural values of Ghanaian societies through the analysis of two plays, *Anowa* and *The Marriage of Anansewa*. Abakah and Marfo argue that drama can be an effective vehicle for expressing culture, and playwrights Aidoo and Sutherland both use their works to project their people's cultural ideals and worldviews. The study shows how the two plays incorporate elements of Akan culture such as puberty rites, the importance of the head drink in the context of Akan marriages, and belief in supernatural and ancestral spirits. This shows the connection between literature and culture and how Akan culture serves as the basis and inspiration for these two playwrights. The results from Abakah and Marfo's (2020) study support the claims of Eke and Obika (2015) and Nyamekye *et al.* (2015) that literature and culture are closely related and that African plays are a reflection of the cultural values of African societies.

The findings from this review suggests that previous studies on *The Marriage of Anansewa* have only focused on various aspects of the play, such as the play's role in the development of Ghanaian theatre, its cultural and historical significance, its engagement with social and cultural issues, thematic analysis and its artistic value.

### **Theoretical Framework**

This study is anchored on the theory of narratology. As noted by Bal and Van Boheemen (2009), the theory of narratology emerged in the 1960s and 1970s and was espoused by structuralist critics such as Gerard Genette, Gerard Prince, Mieke Bal, Roland Barthes, Tzvetan Todorov, and Vladimir Propp.

Etymologically, the term “narratology” is derived from the Latin word “narrare,” meaning “to narrate,” and the Greek suffix “-logy,” which denotes “the study of.” In this respect, narratology can be understood as the scientific examination of narratives.

Bal and Van Boheemen assert that the development of narratology as a theory was prompted by the need for a systematic and scholarly approach to narrative research. These scholars aimed to understand the fundamental structures and conventions that underlie narratives across diverse media. The underlying assumption of this theory is that narratives can be found in a multitude of media. It suggests that narratives can manifest in various forms of media beyond texts, and this includes but not limited to spoken and visual forms. Additionally, narratology recognises the existence of narratives within static images, such as those found in picture stories. The theory of narratology advances the idea that the conventions of storytelling are not restricted to specific means of expression. In this way, narratology acknowledges that narratives can be identified and examined in diverse artistic and communicative forms.

In essence, the theory of narratology offers a structured framework for evaluating and understanding the varied and heterogeneous ways stories are conveyed and received from audiences. This enables a systematic and scholarly approach to the study of narratives that is adaptable to various situations and forms, making it a useful framework for studying stories in all of their varied forms. Consequently, scholars are empowered to discern the diverse techniques employed by storytellers to convey their messages. When applying the theory of



narratology, a key inquiry revolves around how narrative components synergise to generate significance and mould the narrative encounter. This question is central to the study of narratology as it aims to comprehend the underlying structures, elements, and conventions of narratives and how these are harnessed to convey meaning and shape the story.

Tzvetan Todorov was one of the first individuals to use the term “narratology” and to develop it into a methodical theory. His notable contribution lies in his book *Structural Analysis of Narratives*, which not only represents one of the first investigations into the systematic analysis of the narrative structure of different narrative forms, but also proposes a structural model for such an analysis. Todorov is among the leading scholars who emphasises the importance of understanding the intricate interplay between narrative content and its representation in textual discourse. His scholarly endeavours laid the foundation for the establishment and advancement of narratology as an academic discipline.

Ryan (2002) defines narratology as the study of narratives and their structural components. She elucidates that narratology encompasses a wide range of narrative forms such as literature, film and oral storytelling forms. Narratology, according to Ryan, is interested in how narratives are organised both internally and externally. Narratology seeks to understand how these structures give meaning to and form a narrative. This is accomplished through identifying the underlying structures and conventions of a narrative.

According to the narratological theoretical perspective, narratives are essential part of human experience and have a significant role in shaping how we

perceive the outside world. In addition, it contends that narratives function as a vehicle for assigning meaning to human experiences. The theory of narratology examines how the elements and structures of stories combine to provide meaning that impacts the story. This implies that the theory of narratology looks into the many parts of a narrative and how they interact to create a coherent story. In addition, narratology examines how stories are applied in various circumstances and how they influence and mirror society.

Essentially, narratology looks at the ways in which stories are conveyed through a range of other forms of media in addition to the more conventional parts of a story. It is also crucial to keep in mind that narratology also operates under the premise that narratives serve both as a kind of entertainment and a vital tool for intercultural understanding and communication. This substantiates the assertion that songs, functioning as components within Ghanaian literary texts of the post-independence era, serve a purpose that goes beyond superficial embellishment and that they instead play an essential role and contribute significantly to the overall meaning and interpretation of the narratives. Therefore, the theory reflects this study in that the songs can create narratives of the texts.

It is also important to note that narratology as a theory has received a great deal of criticism. Academics including Louise Rosenblatt, Stanley Fish, Wolfgang Iser, and others have criticised the use of narratology as a framework for literary analysis. It is argued that narratology has a narrow focus and as such does not take into account media types such as film, television, and video games. This argument is refuted with reference to the intermedial narratology approach, which takes into

account these media types. Therefore, the notion that narratology has a limited focus falls short. As a sub-discipline of narratology, intermedial narratology acknowledges that narratological ideas can be applied to various media forms.

Narratology is also criticised for adopting a deterministic perspective and presuming that stories follow a predetermined framework. According to critics, this approach ignores the reader's experience and interpretation of the story and does not allow for differing viewpoints. One might counter that narratology is a tool to help readers (audiences) understand how narratives are formed and how they can be interpreted rather than being intended to be prescriptive. Additionally, the introduction of the reader-response approach to narratology allows for the consideration of the reader's experiences and interpretations. Some critics have also argued that narratology ignores the cultural context in which a story is created and received. It is vital to note that cultural narratology, a branch of narratology, takes this into account. Thus, the assertion that narratology ignores the cultural setting in which a story is created is erroneous.

### **Conclusion**

This chapter has established that playwrights use a variety of techniques to tell and form their stories. These techniques are collectively referred to as narrative devices. Among these techniques, songs have been identified as a central technique used by Efua Sutherland in her plays *Edufa* and *The Marriage of Anansewa*. The use of song as a narrative device in the two plays includes techniques such as foreshadowing, flashback exploration, exposition, interior monologue, and their potential as didactic tools for impacting values and lessons.

In addition, I conducted a review of previous studies of *Edufa* and *The Marriage of Anansewa* to highlight the different perspectives from which these plays have been examined. Finally, I concluded with an examination of narratology as the underlying theoretical framework for this study.



## CHAPTER THREE

## PROBING THE FUNCTIONS OF SONGS AS NARRATIVE DEVICES IN

*EDUFA AND THE MARRIAGE OF ANANSEWA***Introduction**

This chapter focuses on the analysis and discussion of *Edufa* and *The Marriage of Anansewa* in accordance with the first research question: How do songs function as narrative devices in *Edufa* and *The Marriage of Anansewa*? As pointed out by Denning (2005), playwrights, filmmakers, and other storytellers use various techniques and approaches to engage audiences in their creative works, flesh out their characters, drive the plot, and provide their audience with an immersive storytelling experience. In this context, songs stand out as a central technique employed in both *Edufa* and *The Marriage of Anansewa*. Studies by Bonsu (2022), Nayak (2019), Raoufzadeh *et al.* (2020), Scirea *et al.* (2014) and Sellew (1992) have highlighted different functions of the use of songs within the frame of narrative devices. These functions include their artful use as foreshadowing tools, their role in facilitating flashbacks, exposition, their ability to function as interior monologues, and their use as didactic tools. In the following paragraphs I will elaborate on how songs fulfil these narrative functions in the plays under study.

**(a) Function as Instruments for Foreshadowing**

Foreshadowing in a narrative concern itself with directing the audience's attention to future developments in the story (Sharpe, 2013). It serves as a literary technique that provides hints or clues as to what might happen later in a story

(Scirea *et al.*, 2014). According to Lacy (1968), foreshadowing consists of two elements: anticipation and foreboding. Anticipation is characterised by its prophetic character, which usually provides an accurate description of the events that will follow. On the other hand, foreboding is more indirect and suggestive in nature. It dispenses with overt statements and instead alludes subtly to future events. Its main purpose is to create an appropriate tragic atmosphere that leads the audience to expect and accept the tragic outcome (Lacy, 1968).

Building on the ideas of Lacy, Boltz *et al.* (1991) also distinguish between two types of foreshadowing used in narratives: true foreshadowing and false foreshadowing. True foreshadowing provides the audience with accurate cues and hints as to how the story unfolds (Genette, 1983). It gives them real insight into what might be happening and helps them make connections as the plot unfolds. On the other hand, false shadowing intentionally misleads the audience with misleading knowledge or clues. It creates a sense of uncertainty and surprise, where the actual events deviate from what was initially suggested (Genette, 1983).

To set the analysis rolling, we must first determine which of the two types of foreshadowing is used in the plays and how it manifests itself throughout the narrative. Sutherland's use of songs for the purpose of foreshadowing is consistent with the true form of foreshadowing (true foreshadowing). I make this argument based on the fact that the songs in Sutherland's *Edufa* and *The Marriage of Anansewa* serve as accurate hints and pointers to future developments of the play. A case in point is the funeral chant of the chorus in Act

1, Scene 1, and page 4 of *Edufa*. Here we see a clear example of how songs are used to predict the turn of events in the truest sense. In this case, a chorus of women from the town sings funeral chants to mourn the loss of a mother and to express the grief of the orphans left behind. This is consistent with Roberts (2006) argument that songs provide an opportunity for the bereaved to express their feelings and tell their stories. The haunting performance by the chorus foreshadows the impending doom and tragedy that will befall the characters. The themes of grief, loss and mourning that are at the heart of the play are poignantly highlighted in this song. The funeral chant by the chorus is recorded in the play as follows:

CHORUS:  
[Chanting to the rhythm of wooden clappers.]  
Our mother's dead,  
Ei! Ei – Ei!  
We the orphans cry,  
Our mother's dead,  
O! O – O!  
We the orphans cry  
(Act 1, Scene 1, p. 4).

As can be seen from the excerpt above, the song is about the death of a mother and the subsequent grief of the orphaned children. The tragedy that subsequently unfolds in the play is expertly hinted at by this performance. The pain that Ampoma's children will inevitably experience when she dies is paralleled by the orphans' grief at the loss of their mother.

Ampoma herself acknowledges this grim fate in her dialogue in Act 1, Scene 1, pages 7 and 8. She compares herself and her children to two little goats struggling on a distant hill, highlighting their vulnerability and isolation. Her

reflections on her children's future, including their weddings, reinforces the foreshadowing of her impending death and the challenges her children will face without her guidance. This is captured in the play as follows:

AMPOMA:

Like two little goats. I'm leaving them. I? Two little goats struggling on the far-away hillside. I see their eyes glowing in the dark; lonely. Oh, my little boy! And you, my girl with breasts just budding! What hands will prepare you for your wedding? [She sobs quietly.]

(Act 1, Scene 1, pp. 7-8)

It is worth mentioning that this particular song is repeated in most of the scenes. The repetition of this funeral chant throughout the scenes heightens the sense of impending tragedy and loss. The audience is left with a deep sense of impending catastrophe, anticipating the moment when the children will someday experience the same suffering and loss that the chorus sings about. The performance of the chorus in this scene is consistent with Lacy's concept of foreboding. The song creates a melancholy and sad atmosphere that subtly alludes to the tragic events that will unfold in the play. The repetition of this performance throughout the scenes increases the anticipation of an impending tragedy and loss.

The themes of the play are further accentuated by the use of foreshadowing in the chorus' funeral chant. The funeral chants by the chorus call attention to the idea of motherhood and the loss of a mother figure, which is crucial to the play. The singing of the funeral chant "Our mother's dead" also introduces the idea of orphans who are left behind when their mother dies. This later plays a key role in the development of the plot. Furthermore, the chorus depiction of shared grief adds a level of collective grief that transcends individual families and emphasises the inevitability of loss and grief.



The true form of foreshadowing, as suggested by Boltz *et al.* (1991) provide the audience with accurate cues and insights so that they can make connections as the plot unfolds. In this case, the funeral chant effectively serves that purpose by giving the audience real insight into the emotional and thematic flow of the story. It increases their engagement and anticipation for the events to come (Scirea *et al.*, 2014)

Also, in *The Marriage of Anansewa*, songs are used as a means for foreshadowing. In Act 3, page 44 of *The Marriage of Anansewa*, the scene begins with preparations for an outdoor ceremony for Anansewa, which Aya, Ananse's mother questions because of Anansewa's age. As the Act progresses, a group of girls in the distance captures our attention, and their presence and role are heralded by the song:

Aba\*e,  
We've come to perform.  
Aba\*e,  
We've come to perform.  
Let it be perfect,

A gift from God.

We've come to perform.  
Let it be perfect,

A child from God.

We've come to perform.  
Let it be perfect,

Aba e,  
We've come to perform.  
Aba e,  
We've come to perform.  
Aba e,  
We've come to perform.

Let it be perfect,

Blessing from God.

We've come to perform.

Let it be perfect,

Aba e,

We've come to perform.

Aba e,

We've come to perform.

Let it be perfect,

(Act 3, pp. 46-47).

The song serves to announce the presence of the girls, who happen to be Anansewa's friends, and their role in the upcoming ceremony. They sing as they approach Ananse's house, expressing their intention to perform and strive for perfection. The repetition of phrases like "Let it be perfect" and "We've come to perform" creates a sense of anticipation and sets the stage for future events surrounding Anansewa's initiation into womanhood. The song hints at the importance of the ceremony and emphasises its importance as a blessing from God.

The emphasis on perfection suggests that the initiation rites are expected to be impeccable and carry great weight in the eyes of the characters. This is a forestate of the events to come and the impact the ceremony will have on Anansewa's life. According to Lacy's distinction, this song demonstrates the anticipatory element of foreshadowing. It serves as a prophetic statement, giving a clear indication of the events that are to take place. The girls' desire for perfection and their reference to being a child of God portend a significant event or outcome related to their performance. It becomes clear that in both *Edufa* and *The*

*Marriage of Anansewa*, songs fulfil the narrative function of predicting events in the truest sense of the word.

### **(b) Facilitators of Flashbacks**

According to Cuddon (2012), flashback is a term commonly used to describe a scene or episode in a play, novel, story, or poem that is inserted to present events that took place at an earlier point in time. Literary writers often use flashbacks to provide the reader with background information about characters and events (Mafela, 1997). This technique allows the reader to gain additional information about a character's past, including their secrets, internal or external conflicts, and significant past events that have influenced their life.

Gebeyehu (2019, p. 1) states that literary writers use flashbacks to convey necessary background information to the audience or to create tension or contrast. In the first instance, flashbacks are primarily used by literary writers to delve into the past and depict important details or events that occurred before the main events of the story. In this way, they provide the audience with some context and understanding of the characters' motivations, past experiences, or relationships, as suggested by Alvarado (2022). This allows the audience to make connections and fully grasp the significance of current events. In the second case, flashbacks are strategically inserted at key points in the narrative to reveal crucial information or a significant event from the past. This adds to the complexity of the plot and captivates the audience, who are eager to see how the flashback ties into the current narrative. Finally, flashbacks can be used to contrast past and present situations and to highlight changes in characters, attitudes, or circumstances. By

juxtaposing different periods of time, playwrights can highlight the growth, development, or consequences of past actions.

Nayak (2019) suggests that when songs are employed as flashbacks in literary works, they serve as channels for exploring a character's memories, emotions, and significant moments from the past. This is evident in *The Marriage of Anansewa*, where Sutherland uses a song to reveal Ananse's improved economic situation through flashback. The song takes the audience back to a time when Ananse was facing financial difficulties, highlighting his past struggles and sets the stage for an understanding of his present circumstances. Reference may be made to Act 2, pages 37 and 38 of the play. The song in question, as recorded in the play, is as follows:

Oh, some time ago  
It was bad at home  
But maybe now it's getting better.

Oh, some time ago  
It was bad at home  
But maybe now it's getting better.

Oh, friends, do look at Kweku Ananse's amazing ways.  
It's with craftiness solely that he manages his life.

Oh, some time ago  
It was bad at home  
But maybe now it's getting better.

Oh, some time ago  
It was bad at home  
But maybe now it's getting better.

Oh, some time ago  
It was bad at home  
But maybe now it's getting better.

Oh, some time ago

It was bad at home  
But maybe now it's getting better.

Oh, friends, do look at Kweku Ananse's amazing ways.  
It's with craftiness solely that he manages his life.

Oh, some time ago  
It was bad at home  
But maybe now it's getting better.

Oh, some time ago  
It was bad at home  
But maybe now it's getting better.  
(Act 2, pp. 37-38)

In the excerpt provided, Sutherland uses the song as a flashback to convey the improved economic situation of the character Ananse. The song takes the reader back to an earlier time when things were difficult for Ananse. It informs the reader about Ananse's past struggles and sets the stage for understanding his current situation. By comparing past hardships with the possibility of improvement in the present, the flashback creates a sense of tension and anticipation. The repetition of the lines emphasises the shift from a negative past to a potentially positive present and heightens the audience's interest. This is consistent with Gebeyehu's (2019) concept of using flashbacks to contrast and highlight changes in past and present circumstances. There is no doubt that things have changed for the better for Ananse. Before the song ends, Ananse intercepts with the statement, "If only things would stay as they are a little longer" (Act 2, p. 38). This is Ananse himself acknowledging the improvement in his situation. Ananse wishes his new status would not be disrupted anytime soon once he has managed to secure the good life he has always wanted for himself and his only daughter, Anansewa.

As Nayak (2019) noted, songs used as flashbacks transport audiences to a different time and place in a character's life, allowing them to see important events or understand pivotal moments in a character's life. In this case, the song takes the audience back to a time when Ananse was in financial difficulties. This period was marked by Ananse's inability to pay his only daughter Anansewa's secretarial fees. Additionally, Ananse was unable to make offerings at church, leading to his decision to boycott church attendance. Additionally, the flashback gives the audience a glimpse of Ananse's character. The fact that he managed to overcome past difficulties through his craftiness suggests resilience, resourcefulness, and perhaps even a hint of cunningness. The song is thus a throwback of Ananse's old life and current status. In the old life he was a poor man looking for a way out of poverty, as becomes clear in Act 1, page 9 of the play. The song also shows how Ananse adeptly emerged from his difficult circumstances.

### **(c) Serve as Exposition**

The term "exposition", derived from the Latin word "expositionem," which directly translates to "showing forth," serves as a means to present, explain, and provide essential information. According to Nasridinov and Usmonova (2022), it is the introductory part of a literary work, where important background information, setting, and details about characters are revealed. It serves as the foundation upon which the narrative is built, providing crucial elements such as the setting, time period, characters' backgrounds, and other contextual details (Nayak, 2019). Exposition can be done through various techniques such as direct

statements, descriptions, dialogues or indirect hints (Nasridinov & Usmonova, 2022).

In the case of *The Marriage of Anansewa*, the opening song serves as an exposition to the play text by providing essential information about the economic situation of the character Ananse. The song reflects the current hardships and struggles Ananse is facing. Additionally, the opening song introduces and emphasises the central theme of hardship and challenges in life, setting the stage for the narrative. The song, as captured in the opening act of the play, is as follows:

Oh life is a struggle,  
Oh life is a pain;  
Oh life is a struggle,  
Oh life is a pain  
In this world.

Life is a struggle,  
Citizens,  
Life is a pain  
In this world.

Life is a struggle,  
Friends,  
Life is a pain  
In this world.  
(Act 1, p.9).

As Owusu (2016) states, exposition aims to provide the reader with essential background information and context. Through the opening song, the reader gains an insight of the underlying challenges and obstacles faced by character Ananse. The song highlights the difficulties and struggles that the character Ananse faces in the present moment. As the song progresses, Ananse himself joins in and takes

over the solo parts, emphasising the personal connection to his own situation. This is well captured in Act 1, page 9 of the play as follows:

[Halfway through the song, ANANSE enters hastily, escaping from the rain outside. He is wearing a shabby raincoat. At the entrance, he receives an old umbrella from PROPERTY MAN, and as he opens it up shakes off the rain. He shakes his head like a troubled man. Then taking over the solo parts of the song, he walks round with umbrella aloft, clearly indicating that the song he is singing recounts his own story to the PLAYERS and the audience.]

The above stage direction further supports the argument that the song reflects Ananse's current circumstances. With Ananse coming in and taking over the solo parts of the song, the play underscores even more that the song is personally tailored to his own situation, making it a significant piece of exposition. This depiction gives the audience important background information and context on the economic situation of Ananse, which serves as the basis for the narrative. The opening song effectively serves the purpose of exposition by introducing the main character and setting the tone for the story. It allows the audience to understand the challenges Ananse faces and inspires anticipation of the conflicts and obstacles he will encounter as the play progresses.

As soon as the song is over, Ananse makes the statement "While life is whipping you, rain also pours down to whip you some more" (Act 1, p. 9). This statement accentuates the unpleasantness of Ananse's current economic situation and further cements the connection between the song and his personal struggles.

#### **(d) Function as Interior Monologue**

Interior monologue, as described by Sellev (1992), pertains to a narrative technique that is employed in a literary work to reveal a character's thoughts, feelings, and perceptions. This technique as articulated by Raoufzadeh *et al.*



(2020), gives the reader direct access to characters inner world, thereby providing insight into their motivations, desires and psychological state. This is consistent with the statement made by Ndubisi and Kanu (2022) that songs are a means of expression for people, allowing them to express their innermost feelings, when words alone may be insufficient.

According to Asdasd (2016), there are three different scenarios in which interior monologues can function. The first scenario involves the narrator reacting to actions in the present moment, effectively narrating the ongoing events. In the first scenario, the monologue tells the story of what is going on. The second scenario presents the narrator's thoughts as flashbacks, drawing parallels between past and present experiences. Finally, in the third scenario, the narrator's thoughts are presented neither as a record of the present nor as a memory of the past, but rather as a reflective part of the story itself (Asdasd, 2016, p. 2). In this third scenario, the monologue is purely a reflection and the story itself. The question then is, in which of these scenarios do songs fulfil the function of interior monologues in *Edufa* and *The Marriage of Anansewa*? This will become clear as the analysis unfolds.

The prologue to the play text *Edufa* introduces Abena, Edufa's sister, who collects dew water at night. This scene establishes the relationship between Abena and Edufa and also reveals that the gates of Edufa have been closed to visitors. The prologue features the song "O, Child of Ama" sung by Abena, which serves as an interior monologue. The song depicted in the prologue is as follows:

O, child of Ama,  
Child of Ama in the night

Is Wandering,  
 Crying, 'Mm-m-m-m,  
 How my mother is pondering.'  
 O, child of Ama,  
 Why is she wandering,  
 Why wandering,  
 Why wand'ring in the night  
 Like the dying?  
 Mewuo!  
 (Prologue, p. 2)

This song sums up Abena's current emotions and sets the emotional tone for the play. In this song, Abena laments about a wandering child of Ama, conveying a sense of unease and desolation. The lyrics of the song are reminiscent of a mother searching for her aimless child at night, creating suspense and foretelling the complex events to come. These images set the stage for the play and point to the significant issue of mother-child separation. Later, in Act 1, Scene 1, pages 5 and 7, it is revealed that Ampoma's children have been sent to their grandmother's house due to Ampoma's illness, adding to the theme of mother-child separation.

The following conversation between Edufa and Seguwa makes this clear:

SEGUWA:

You can trust my secrecy; that I have sworn; though what I have sworn to keep secret, now frets against the closed walls of my skull. I haven't sworn to have faith against all reason. No, not in the face of your wife's condition in that bedroom there. Let's call for help.

EDUFA:

[With indications of despair] From whom? We are doing everything we can. Also, it is Ampoma's wish that no one should be allowed to see her.

SEGUWA

And is she dead that we should be bound to honour her wishes? She is not herself. In her present state, we can expect her to say childish things. The sick are like children. Let me call for help. It is most unnatural that even the mother who bore her should be kept ignorant of her sickness, serious as it now is. Ah, poor mother; if we could but see her now. She is probably pampering the children you've sent to her, keeping them happy, thinking she is relieving her daughter for rest and fun with you, her husband. [Bitterly] How you are deceived, mother

(Act 1, Scene 1, pp. 5-7).

The aforementioned revelation reinforces the theme of mother-child separation and suggests that it will be explored in more detail as the plot progresses. The song also reflects Abena's emotional state, detailing her anxiety and lack of sleep due to recent events in the household, and this includes Ampoma's illness and Edufa restricting visitors. The song "O, child of Ama" in the prologue of *Edufa* effectively uses interior monologue to give the audience a direct glimpse into Abena's inner world. The song serves as a window into her thoughts, feelings and perceptions, revealing her concern for Ampoma, her emotional state and the issue of mother-child separation.

Examining the song in light of Asdasd's scenarios, it becomes clear that it satisfies both the first and third scenarios of the interior monologue. First, the song narrates the ongoing events, effectively revealing Abena's concern for Ampoma and the unsettling atmosphere in Edufa's household. Second, the reflective nature of the song allows the audience to gain insight into Abena's emotional turmoil, thus gaining a deeper understanding of her thoughts and feelings. While the second scenario, presenting thoughts as flashbacks, may not be explicitly present in this particular song, the song focuses on the current emotions and reflections, supporting the first and third scenarios.

Another instance of songs serving as interior monologue in *Edufa* is in Act 3, Scene 2, pages 41 and 42. The song is sung by Senchi, a close family friend of Edufa and Ampoma. Senchi's emotional connection to Ampoma, Edufa's wife, becomes the focus of the interior monologue. In this song, the playwright skilfully

uses interior monologue as a narrative technique, allowing the audience direct access to Senchi's inner world, providing insights into his motivations, desires and psychological state. The song begins with an intense repetition of "Nne," which immediately sets the emotional tone of the interior monologue. Senchi's use of repetition not only amplifies the intensity of his feelings, but also symbolises the deep emotional bond he shares with Ampoma. The repetitive nature of the song allows Senchi to express his innermost thoughts and feelings, giving the audience a glimpse into his deep emotional state. The song as evident in the play is as follows:

Nne  
Nne Nne  
Nne  
Nne Nne  
O, Mother  
Nne  
Nne Nne

If I find you  
Nne  
Nne Nne  
I'll have to worship you  
Nne  
Nne Nne

I must adore you  
Nne  
Nne Nne  
O, Mother  
Nne  
Nne Nne

She's wonderful  
She's wonderful  
O, Mother  
She's wonderful

Yes, if I find you

Nne  
 Nne Nne  
 I'll have to worship you  
 Nne  
 Nne Nne

I must adore you  
 Nne  
 Nne Nne  
 O Mother  
 Nne  
 Nne Nne.  
 (Act 3, Scene 2, pp. 41-42)

As the song progresses, Senchi's admiration and love for Ampoma becomes evident in lines like "O, Mother" and "She's wonderful." The act of praising Ampoma and expressing adoration toward her highlights the significant role she plays in his life. Senchi regards Ampoma as a source of strength, guidance, and wisdom, and attributes to her a sense of wonder and awe.

Yet alongside, amidst the expressions of worship, the song also conveys a sense of yearning and longing for a deeper connection with Ampoma. Lines like "If I find you / I'll have to worship you / I must adore you" suggest that Senchi's relationship with Ampoma could be elusive or unfulfilled. The act of "finding" Ampoma implies that Senchi's emotional bond with her might be uncertain or suppressed, leading to a profound sense of longing. In this sense, the song serves as a medium for Senchi to explore his emotional vulnerability and the complexities of his relationship with Ampoma.

The reflective aspect of the song comes through in lines like "She's wonderful / Yes, if I find you." Senchi reflects the impact of Ampoma's presence and absence on his life. Through this song, Senchi engages in a process of

introspection, examining the profound role Ampoma has played and continues to play in his emotions and thoughts. The song becomes a poignant exploration of Senchi's emotional landscape, giving the audience a deeper understanding of his inner struggles and desires.

In the broader context of the play, the song sung by Senchi takes on a deeper meaning as it speaks to the connection between Ampoma and her own children. While the song primarily focuses on Senchi's emotional bond with Ampoma, it also indirectly sheds light on the relationship she shares with her children and how this connection impacts other characters in the play, particularly Senchi and Edufa. As a mother, Ampoma represents a source of love, strength, and guidance not only for Senchi but also for her children. The repeated use of "Nne" (Mother) in the song signifies the central role Ampoma plays as a maternal figure in the play. This motherly connection is crucial to understanding the dynamics of the characters and their relationships. The lines "She's wonderful / Yes, if I find you" imply that Ampoma is a remarkable and valued figure in the lives of those around her, especially her children. The admiration and wonder expressed in these lines suggest that Ampoma's children hold her in high esteem and treat her with deep affection. The fact that the song highlights Ampoma's wonderful qualities underscores her importance not only to Senchi but to her family as well.

Given Ampoma's separation from her children for health reasons, the song gains even more emotional depth and poignancy. The repetition of "Nne" (Mother) in the song takes on a bittersweet tone as it becomes an expression of

longing and nostalgia for the absent mother figure. Senchi's emotional connection to Ampoma, previously explored, now gains an additional layer of complexity and heartache from the separation.

The lines "If I find you / I'll have to worship you / I must adore you" now carry even more weight and meaning. Longing to find Ampoma suggests that Senchi, like the children, misses her dearly and wishes to be reunited with her. The act of worship and adoration can be interpreted not only as an expression of Senchi's deep affection for Ampoma but also as a reflection of the children's longing to be back in their mother's care and receive her love and attention again. The song's portrayal of Ampoma as "wonderful" becomes even more poignant in the context of her illness and separation from her children. It underscores the deep bond she shares with them and how her absence affects those around her. The children's grandmother may be doing her best to take care of them, but their mother's emotional absence leaves a void that cannot easily be filled.

Senchi's song fulfils the first scenario of interior monologues by narrating sustained emotions in the present moment. The repetition of "Nne" underscores his deep affection and connection with Ampoma and conveys his emotional state. While the song does not explicitly present thoughts as flashbacks, it indirectly alludes to Senchi's past experiences and feelings towards Ampoma. The lines "If I find you / I'll have to worship you / I must adore you" suggest that Senchi's emotional bond with Ampoma has been established over time, and he longs for a deeper connection with her. The song illustrates the third scenario of interior monologues by reflecting Senchi's emotions and desires. As he sings about

Ampoma's wonderful qualities and the longing to find her, he delves into introspection, contemplating the impact of her presence and absence in his life.

Additionally, Senchi's interior monologue in the song allows the audience to understand the profound effects of Ampoma's illness and separation have on him and the other characters. It shows the pain and emotional struggle they all experience in dealing with the situation. The song becomes a way to explore the themes of loss, longing and the emotional complexities that arise when a mother is separated from her children and loved ones. In this way, the song not only serves as a poignant expression of Senchi's feelings but also offers valuable insight into the broader themes of motherly love, family bonds, and the challenges that separation and illness bring. It underscores the play's exploration of love, loss and family dynamics, making it a pivotal moment that resonates with the audience and enriches the narrative as a whole.

Moreover, the use of "Nne" as a term with significant cultural and emotional value, adds depth to the narrative and highlights the broader themes of motherly love and cultural heritage. Senchi's emotional connection to Ampoma is not only a personal matter, but also reflects broader cultural themes of respect and admiration for maternal figures. The song also emphasises the themes of love, loss and longing for a loved one that is present in the play. The song perfectly expresses the sense of loss and helplessness that Edufa and his friend Senchi will experience as they struggle to make sense of Ampoma's death that will occur at the end of the play and to deal with the complicated emotions that follow.



Songs as interior monologues also play an important role in *The Marriage of Anansewa*. An example of this is found in Act 1, pages 19 and 20, where Anansewa sings a song expressing her shock and disapproval upon learning of Ananse's plans. The song, sung by Anansewa, serves as a poignant portrayal of her immediate emotional response to the life-changing revelation of her father's plan to "sell" her in marriage. As the song unfolds, the audience is drawn into Anansewa's inner world and experiences the raw intensity of her emotions in real time. The lyrics of the song reads as follows:

My father is selling me,  
Alas, Alas!  
Whoever thought he would?  
Alas! Alas!  
But let me tell you bluntly,  
I'll never comply.  
I will not let you sell me  
Like some parcel to a customer.  
Not ever!  
Not ever!  
Not ever!  
Not ever!

The line "My father is selling me" expresses a deep sense of shock and disbelief. The use of the possessive pronoun "my" underscores the deeply personal nature of this betrayal. Anansewa's father, whom she should trust and count on for protection and care, has become the orchestrator of her commercialisation. This realisation cuts deeply into her sense of security and belonging, leaving her feeling vulnerable and exposed. The word "sell" further underscores the objectification of women in certain societies, reducing her to a transaction rather than an individual with her agency.

The repetition of “Alas, Alas!” increases Anansewa’s emotional distress. These interjections serve as a desperate cry for help, an expression of fear that arouses the audience’s sympathy. The repetition reinforces the seriousness of the situation and expresses the weight of societal expectations that weigh on her shoulders. It also points to the societal norms that perpetuate such arrangements and make her feel trapped and burdened by the traditions to which she is expected to conform. As Anansewa sings, the audience witnesses her helplessness and despair. The prospect of being treated like a commodity is deeply disturbing for her. This feeling not only reflects her individual predicament, but also reflects the broader theme of the devaluation and objectification of women in certain cultural practices. The song exposes Anansewa’s vulnerability. The audience gets a direct and intimate access to her emotional state and build a strong connection to her character. They can empathise with her struggle to assert her own agency. This emotional connection makes her defiance and determination all the more compelling and inspiring.

Another example of the use of song as an interior monologue in *The Marriage of Anansewa* is found in Act 1, page 24 where the players sing about the limping Ama. The song introduces a character named Ama, who is described as “limping” or “K-legged.” This physical trait immediately sets her apart and adds depth to her portrayal. It suggests that Ama might face some challenges or uncertainties due to her condition, especially in finding a suitable mate. The central question in the song, “How shall I find a mate?”, underscores Ama’s longing for companionship and love. It conveys her desire to experience the

emotional and social fulfilment that companionship brings. The repetition of “K-legged Ama, Limping Ama” accentuates Ama’s perceived flaw and reinforces her sense of insecurity. This depiction illustrates the emotional burden she carries because of her physical difference and how this might affect her self-esteem. The lyrics of the song are recorded in the play as follows:

She says, mmm mother;

She says, mmm father;

She says, how shall I find a mate?

K-legged Ama,

How shall I find a mate?

Limping Ama,

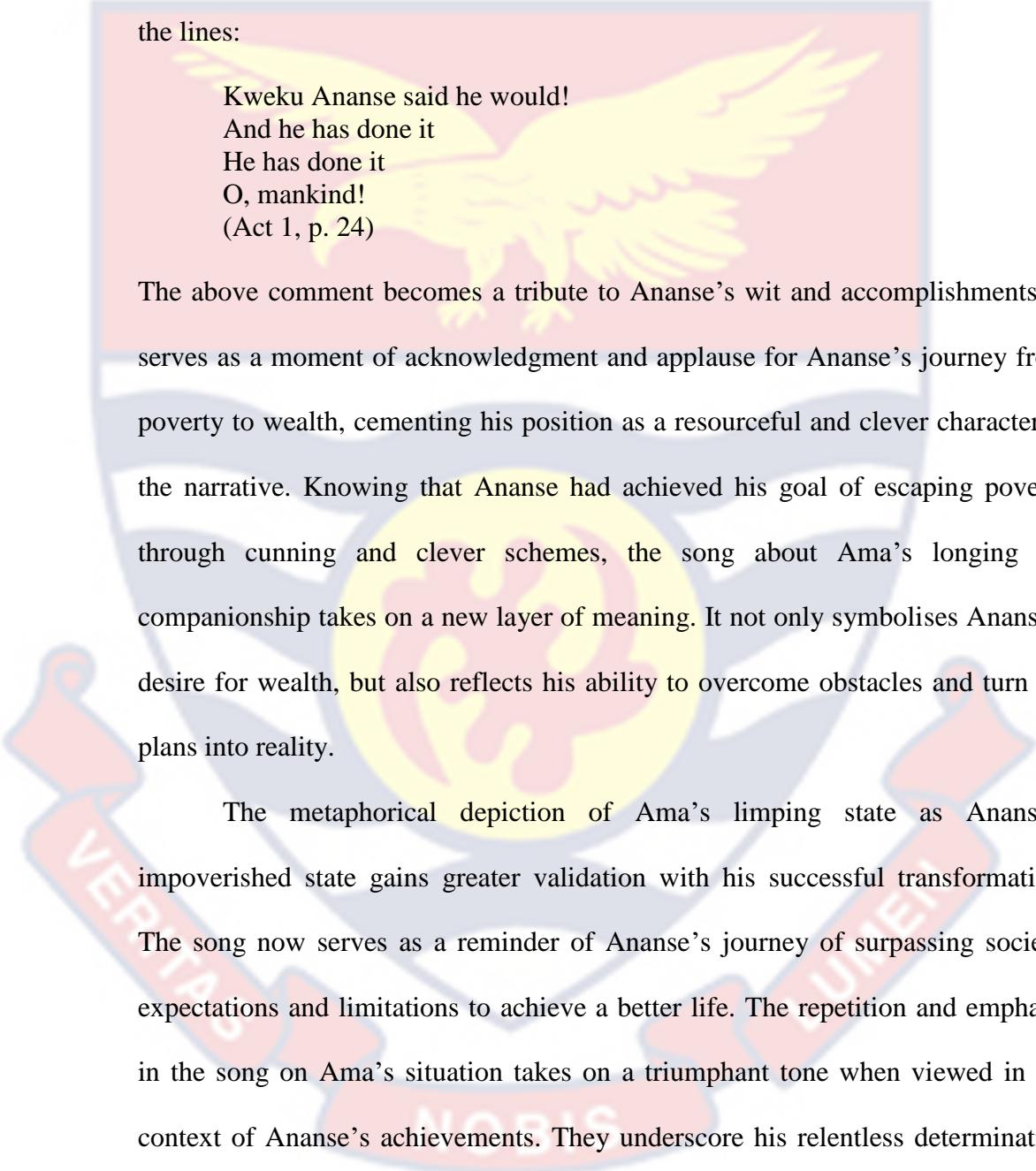
How shall I find a mate?

(Act 1, p. 24)

In some literary works, characters may symbolise broader concepts or themes. Here, Ama’s limping state could metaphorically represent Ananse’s impoverished state or his perceived limitations. Ananse, like Ama, struggles due to his financial circumstances. The central question in the song “How shall I find a mate?” can be viewed as Ananse’s wish for a better life, free from poverty. Just as Ama longs for companionship and a partner, Ananse longs for prosperity and relief from his hardships. The lines “She says, mmm mother; She says, mmm father” symbolise the societal pressure and expectations that Ananse faces, similar to how Ama might experience parental expectations regarding finding a mate. Ananse’s desire to liberate himself from poverty is influenced by societal norms and the wish to prove himself worthy in the eyes of his family and community. By interpreting the song as a reflection of Ananse’s aspirations, it aligns with themes of ambition,

perseverance and the struggle to overcome obstacles. It portrays Ananse as a complex character with his own dreams and motivations, making him more relatable and multidimensional. Once the song ends, the storyteller comes up with

the lines:



Kweku Ananse said he would!  
And he has done it  
He has done it  
O, mankind!  
(Act 1, p. 24)

The above comment becomes a tribute to Ananse's wit and accomplishments. It serves as a moment of acknowledgment and applause for Ananse's journey from poverty to wealth, cementing his position as a resourceful and clever character in the narrative. Knowing that Ananse had achieved his goal of escaping poverty through cunning and clever schemes, the song about Ama's longing for companionship takes on a new layer of meaning. It not only symbolises Ananse's desire for wealth, but also reflects his ability to overcome obstacles and turn his plans into reality.

The metaphorical depiction of Ama's limping state as Ananse's impoverished state gains greater validation with his successful transformation. The song now serves as a reminder of Ananse's journey of surpassing societal expectations and limitations to achieve a better life. The repetition and emphasis in the song on Ama's situation takes on a triumphant tone when viewed in the context of Ananse's achievements. They underscore his relentless determination and resourcefulness, which ultimately led him to pull himself out of poverty and find success.

Similarly, the song about Odum's child in Act 2, pages 30 and 31 of *The Marriage of Anansewa* further illustrates the use of songs as interior monologue.

The song deals with the emotional depth of Abena, the central figure in the song,

and allows the audience access to her inner turmoil and desires.

Am I not Odum's child?  
Am I not Odum's child?  
Oh I hate the sun?

Abena e,  
I'd rather be dead.  
Oh delicate one,

Abena e,  
Abena e,  
I'd rather be dead.

I never did toil,

Abena e,  
Abena e,  
I'd rather be dead.

Unseasoned one,

Abena e,  
Abena e,  
I'd rather be dead.

Oh pitiful one,

Abena e,  
Abena e,  
I'd rather be dead.  
(Act 2, pp. 30-31)

The repetition of the lines "Am I not Odum's child?" at the beginning of the song serves to emphasise the character's need for validation and recognition of their identity and belonging. As Efua Sutherland states in this part of the play, Abena happens to be the daughter of Odum, who got married and was unprepared for the

difficulties she faces. It is worth noting that Odum is a rich and powerful man. Despite her privileged background, Abena may feel trapped and suffocated by societal expectations, leading her to long for an escape, even if it means risking everything.

Alongside this, the song also offers subtle allusions to Ananse's intricate web of schemes to lift himself out of poverty. The earlier events in the play show his cunning and manipulative nature as he persuades four chiefs to send him gifts and promise marriage to Anansewa, showing his determination to improve his circumstances. In this context, the repetition of the lines, "Am I not Odum's child?" takes on new meaning, suggesting that Ananse too craves recognition and acceptance in a world where poverty can lead to marginalisation. For Ananse, settling for a life of poverty is not an option, and he uses his antics to extricate himself from it. Although he is aware of the possible consequences of his actions, he continues anyway, as he would rather be dead than settle for a life of mediocrity.

#### (e) Use as Didactic Tools

One of the outstanding functions of the songs in *The Marriage of Anansewa* is their ability to convey moral lessons. This is consistent with the longstanding tradition in many African societies where storytelling through songs is an essential part of passing on wisdom, values and historical knowledge from one generation to the next (Barwell, 2009). Bonsu (2022) further reinforces this notion by emphasising the similarity to Ghanaian oral traditions and African cultural practices, in which songs are used as didactic tools to convey essential

values and lessons. The term ‘Didactic’ is derived from the Greek word ‘Didakitikos’ which means ‘teaching’. In this context, literary writers use songs to educate, inspire and encourage introspection (Bonsu, 2022). An exemplary case is found in Act 1, page 17 of *The Marriage of Anansewa*, where Ananse advises Anansewa on the value of time and uses a song to reinforce the message:

Please hurry,  
For time is nobody’s friend.  
Hurry,  
For time will not wait for you.  
(Act 1, p. 17)

This song effectively encapsulates the lesson about time management and the importance of making the most of one’s time. It serves as a memorable and engaging way to reinforce the message to the audience so that they are more likely to retain the moral lesson. The song’s emphasis on time underscores the importance of this topic and ensures that the audience grasps its relevance. This didactic function of the song is consistent with the broader cultural purpose of preserving and transmitting moral values and societal norms, as highlighted by Ojediran (2019). The use of song as a medium of instruction reflects an inherent belief in the power of art to positively influence behaviour. The deliberate placement of didactic songs throughout the play enriches the didactic nature of the narrative and reflects the traditional African practice of imparting wisdom through song, as noted by Barwell (2009), Bonsu (2022), and Ojediran (2019).

Similarly, Sutherland conveys the power of love in Act 4, pages 91 and 92 through the song:

Oh, oh.  
Is love’s power so strong?

Is love's power so strong?

So strong?

Is love's power so strong?

Let's relate in love  
That we may thrive—

True love is rare.

Let's relate in love  
That we may thrive—

True giver is rare.

Let's relate in love  
That we may thrive—

True helper is rare.

Let's relate in love  
That we may thrive—

Thank you, chief so rare.

Let's relate in love  
That we may thrive—

Thank you, husband rare.

Let's relate in love  
That we may thrive.

The above excerpt (i.e., the song discussed here) conveys the idea that love has immense power and significance in fostering positive relationships and thriving in life. Sutherland draws attention to the concept of love's potency and invites the audience to reflect on its strength. It serves as a directive, urging both the characters and the audience to adopt a loving and compassionate approach to their relationships. The use of the word "thrive" suggests that love not only has the



power to build harmonious relationships, but also contributes to personal growth and prosperity. It means that love is not just a fleeting emotion, but an essential factor in human well-being and success. Additionally, the expressions of gratitude to the “chief” and “husband” underscore the importance of appreciation and recognition in relationships, as gratitude is another aspect of love that strengthens bonds and fosters a positive environment.

The song takes on special meaning as it is performed just as Anansewa awakens from the staged fake death to ensure that the right person is chosen for her as a husband. This joyful gesture highlights the stupendous capacity of love to overcome challenges and symbolises the love between Anansewa and Chief-Who-is-Chief. The instantaneous response of Anansewa to the mention of Chief-Who-is-Chief’s name provides proof of the sincerity of their love. In this way, the song not only highlights the power of love in human relationships, but also serves as a pivotal moment in which the characters and audience recognise its central role in the unfolding events. It challenges the audience to reflect on the importance of love in their own lives and in their relationships, and emphasises the positive impact it can have on individuals and society as a whole, consistent with the themes Sutherland explores in Act 4, pages 91 and 92 of *The Marriage of Anansewa*.

While the song emphasises the positive aspects of love, it is important to acknowledge that love can also be a driving force behind deception and manipulation. The staged fake death orchestrated by Ananse highlights the lengths to which individuals are willing to go in the pursuits of their desires, even

if it means resorting to deception. This challenges the idealised notion of love presented in the song.

### Conclusion

The aim of this chapter was to analyse and discuss *Edufa* and *The Marriage of Anansewa* in relation to the first research question of this study. The discussion revealed that songs in these plays serve five main functions as narrative devices: foreshadowing, flashback facilitation, exposition, interior monologue, and didactic tools. As to their role as foreshadowing tools, the songs in both plays displayed a remarkable ability to accurately predict events and exemplify true foreshadowing. In *Edufa*, the chorus' haunting dirge in Act 1, Scene 1, page 2 foreshadows the tragic events that befall the characters, evoking melancholy and foreboding. Similarly, in Act 3, page 47 of *The Marriage of Anansewa*, the song hints at the importance of Anansewa's introduction to womanhood and the potential implications for her life, preparing the audience for pivotal moments in the story. These songs effectively provided the audience with clues and hints of upcoming events within the plays.

Additionally, the use of songs for flashback purposes was evident, particularly to draw a contrast between Ananse's past life and the changes he is experiencing in the present. In *The Marriage of Anansewa*, the flashback song takes the audience back to a time when Ananse was facing financial difficulties and provides crucial context to understand his character and previous struggles. Using songs in this way effectively conveyed the development of Ananse's character and story. Songs have also been studied as devices for exposition that

efficiently convey background information and set the stage for the unfolding plot. The opening song in *The Marriage of Anansewa* introduces key details about Ananse's economic situation, presents the challenges he faces, and immediately draws the audience into the story. Furthermore, both *Edufa* and *The Marriage of Anansewa* use songs effectively as interior monologues, offering the audience direct insights into the thoughts, feelings and motivations of the characters. In *Edufa*, the song "O, Child of Ama" in the prologue serves as an interior monologue for Abena, expressing her feelings and concerns and foreshadowing the theme of the mother-child separation. Similarly, in Act 3, Scene 1, page 41, Senchi's song reveals his emotional connection to Ampoma, showing his longing and admiration for her, while reflecting on the theme of maternal love and family dynamics. Anansewa's song in Act 1, page 19 expresses her shock and disapproval upon learning of her father's decision to sell her in marriage, revealing her emotional turmoil and determination to assert her agency. Furthermore, the didactic nature of some of the songs in *The Marriage of Anansewa* serve to convey moral teachings and cultural values, in keeping with traditional African practices of using songs as a means of instruction and inspiration for introspection.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### UNRAVELING THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE SONGS TO THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE PLAYS

#### Introduction

This chapter is a response to the second research question: What are the significance of the songs to the development of the plays? In response to this question, this chapter focuses specifically on elucidating the importance of the songs to the overall development and thematic elements of the plays.

#### Analysis and Discussion

In the foreword to her play *The Marriage of Anansewa*, Efua Sutherland emphasises the significance of incorporating songs into a narrative to reflect the mood. According to Sutherland (1975), the integration of songs into the story can effectively reflect and convey the desired mood for a scene or the narrative as a whole. Similarly, Denning (2005) points out that the inclusion of songs in literary works helps to set the mood and atmosphere of the story. This raises the question of whether Sutherland's own plays, including *Edufa* and *The Marriage of Anansewa*, follow and exemplify this principle. Mood, as defined by Jago (2003), represents the overall atmosphere or feeling that a work conveys to the audience. An author's skilful manipulation of mood, as discussed by Rajah and Cheong (2022), can elicit a wide range of emotional responses from audiences, such as anger, fear, or joy.

The funeral chant performed by the chorus in Act 1, Scene 1, page 4 of *Edufa* is a prime example of Efua Sutherland's use of song to set the mood of the

play. The lyrics of the song explicitly express sorrow and loss as the orphans mourn the death of their mother:

Our mother's dead,  
Ei! Ei – Ei! We the orphans cry,  
Our mother's dead,  
O! O – O!  
We the orphans cry  
(Act 1, Scene 1, p. 4).

The central occupation of the song rests in the loss of a mother and the collective grief of the orphans left behind. This creates an emotional background for the play and indicates that a tragic event has taken place, the death of a significant person - the mother. This helps to emotionally engage the audience from the start. As the chorus performs this song, the audience is immediately aware of the emotional turmoil faced by the characters. The song elicits a sense of pity and compassion in the audience for the characters as they are drawn into the world and experiences of the characters through the raw display of grief. This emotional engagement is critical to the success of the play, as it lays a solid emotional foundation for how the rest of the story develops. The power of the song lies in its ability to set the mood and atmosphere of the play. The song's grave tone instils a constant feeling of melancholy and loss that grows stronger as the plot develops. This mood becomes the backdrop against which subsequent events unfold and affects the emotional tone of other scenes and interactions. Audiences are likely to feel heightened anticipation, wondering how the characters will deal with their grief and what challenges this atmosphere of grief might pose for them. Sutherland's inclusion of songs, as exemplified in the chorus' performance, is consistent with

her belief in the importance of using song to reflect moods and set the emotional tone of a narrative. It is clear that the song plays a crucial role in setting the mood of the play. It efficiently captures the emotional state of the characters and engrosses the audience right away.

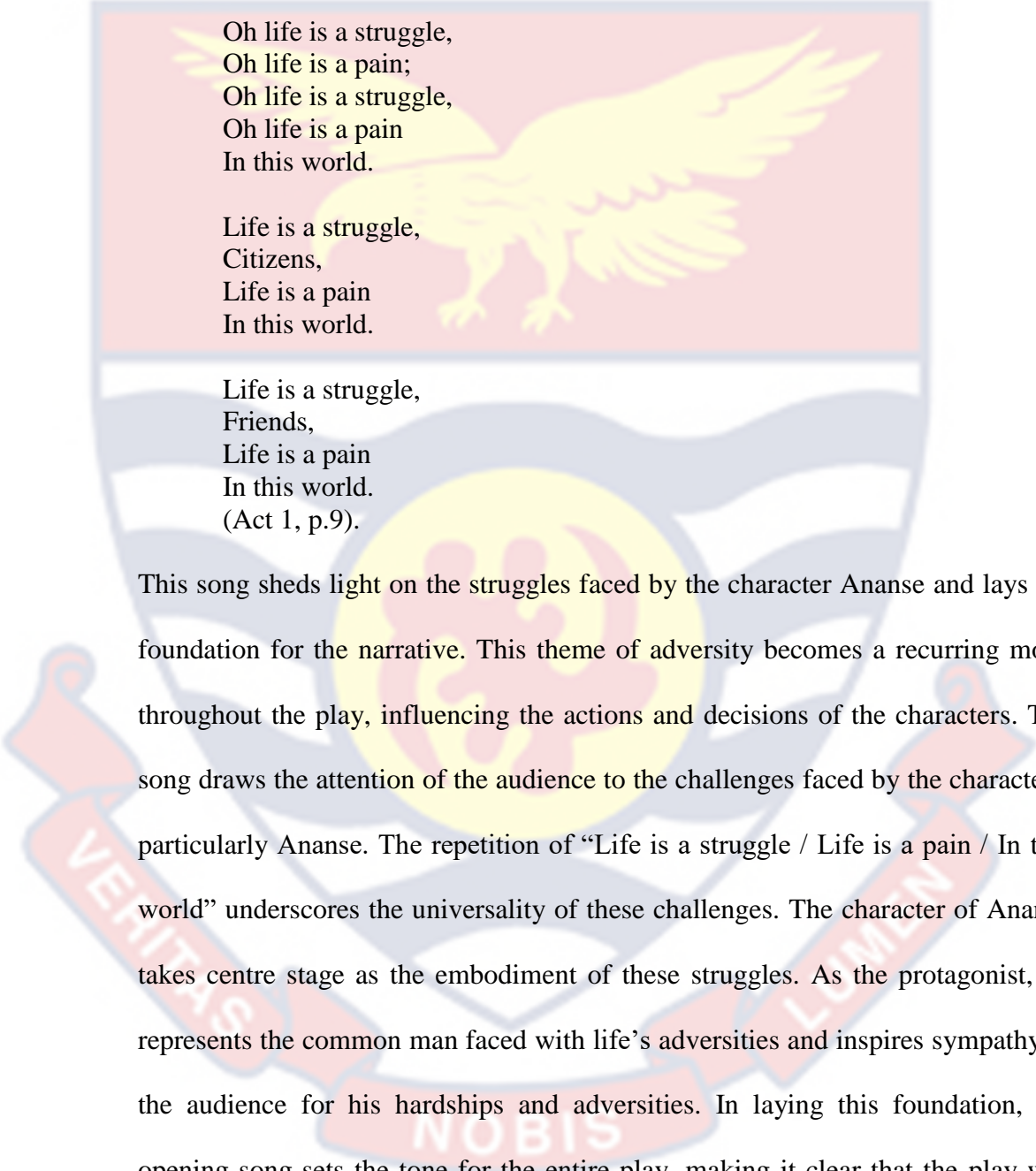
The song not only provides the emotional backdrop for the play, but also helps to immerse the audience in the cultural context of the play. As Mulaudzi (2014) noted, songs are cultural artefacts that embody and convey the values, beliefs, traditions, and stories of a particular community or society. Efua Sutherland, a prominent advocate for promoting and preserving Ghanaian cultural heritage through her works (Gibbs, 2009), adeptly uses songs as a means to achieve this goal.

The funeral chant performed by the chorus in Act 1, Scene 1, page 4 of *Edufa* depicts a traditional Ghanaian mourning ritual and allows the audience to first-hand experience and understand the cultural practices surrounding death and mourning in the context of the narrative. This poignant song underscores the paramount importance of community and collective mourning in Ghanaian culture. The fact that the orphans sing the dirge together not only enhances the emotional impact of the scene, but also underscores the deep sense of unity in times of grief. Such a collective expression of grief not only reinforces the emotional impact, but also underscores the interdependence and support within the community that is vital in the face of tragedy. We can conclude that in this case the song case serves as a cultural artefact that immerses the audience in the Ghanaian cultural context. It depicts a traditional mourning ritual and allows the

audience to experience and understand the cultural practices surrounding death and mourning in Ghana. The funeral chant reflects the importance of collective grief and community support in Ghanaian culture, underscoring the interdependence and unity that emerges in times of sorrow.

In addition, the song plays a crucial role in emphasising the overarching themes of loss and orphan hood that lie at the heart of the play. It underscores the profound significance of family bonds and the emotional devastation that the loss of a loved one brings— themes to be further explored and developed as the narrative progresses. The orphans' heart-breaking cries after their mother's death herald a story that delves into the themes of loss, family bonds, and the daunting challenges of coping with grief. The collective wailing of "we the orphans cry" serves as a poignant reminder of the unbreakable family bonds and shared grief that binds them together in this journey to healing. By incorporating songs in this way, the musical elements of the play not only convey the immediate emotions of the characters, but also become a vehicle for conveying the broader cultural ethos of the community. This brings to light Sotimirin's (2020) point that the use of oral poetics in African written literature serves not only to preserve and celebrate Africa's cultural heritage, but also to convey deeper messages and themes. Here the song reinforces the central themes of loss and orphan hood, essential to the play's narrative. By depicting the emotional devastation that comes with the loss of a loved one, particularly a mother, the song deepens the audience's understanding of the challenges the characters face. It serves as an effective introduction to the themes explored and developed throughout the play.

Similarly, the opening song in *The Marriage of Anansewa* immediately introduces the central theme of hardships and challenges in life. This is captured as follows:



Oh life is a struggle,  
Oh life is a pain;  
Oh life is a struggle,  
Oh life is a pain  
In this world.

Life is a struggle,  
Citizens,  
Life is a pain  
In this world.

Life is a struggle,  
Friends,  
Life is a pain  
In this world.  
(Act 1, p.9).

This song sheds light on the struggles faced by the character Ananse and lays the foundation for the narrative. This theme of adversity becomes a recurring motif throughout the play, influencing the actions and decisions of the characters. The song draws the attention of the audience to the challenges faced by the characters, particularly Ananse. The repetition of “Life is a struggle / Life is a pain / In this world” underscores the universality of these challenges. The character of Ananse takes centre stage as the embodiment of these struggles. As the protagonist, he represents the common man faced with life’s adversities and inspires sympathy in the audience for his hardships and adversities. In laying this foundation, the opening song sets the tone for the entire play, making it clear that the play will explore the complexities of human existence and how individuals deal with adversity. As the play progresses, the theme of hardship remains a prominent and



recurring motif. Ananse's struggles become increasingly apparent as he navigates through various obstacles and challenges. The impact of the song on the other characters is also noteworthy. We realise throughout the play that the characters are faced with dilemmas that test their resilience and determination to overcome adversity. This theme is reinforced in the song:

Am I not Odum's child?  
Am I not Odum's child?  
Oh I hate the sun?

Abena e,  
I'd rather be dead.  
Oh delicate one,

Abena e,  
Abena e,  
I'd rather be dead.

I never did toil,

Abena e,  
Abena e,  
I'd rather be dead.

Unseasoned one,

Abena e,  
Abena e,  
I'd rather dead.

Oh pitiful one,

Abena e,  
Abena e,  
I'd rather be dead.  
(Act 2, pp. 30-31)

The song alludes to the plight of Odum's daughter, a wealthy and powerful man in a folktale (Sutherland, 1975, p. 30) which foregrounds the themes of hardship

and difficulties. The expression of her strong emotions in the song, such as “I hate the sun” and “I’d rather be dead,” shows the intensity of her distress and the sense of imprisonment she feels in her circumstances. This demonstrates that even individuals in privileged positions can still encounter their own troubles and trials. This further reinforces the central theme of adversity and challenges in the play. Despite being the daughter of a rich and powerful man, she expresses her hatred for the sun, a symbol of the outside world and the challenges it brings. This juxtaposition of her privileged position and her dissatisfaction underscores that hardships and difficulties can arise even in seemingly advantaged circumstances.

The repeated lines “I’d rather be dead” throughout the song further emphasise the emotional intensity of Abena’s feelings, reflecting the depth of her struggles. The theme of hardship is reinforced once again by Abena’s song, showing that hardship is not confined to a particular social class or background. The struggles faced by Ananse, Abena, and other characters in the play serve to create a universal experience of life’s challenges and inspire empathy and understanding in the audience. These songs play an important role in conveying the theme of life’s hardships and challenges. In addition to introducing and reiterating the central motif in the play, they foster empathy for the characters and emphasises the universality of the struggles faced by people from various social backgrounds.

Furthermore, the song which appears in the third act on pages 46-47 of *The Marriage of Anansewa* has a profound cultural and ritualistic significance

when associated with the outdoor ceremony for Anansewa. The lyrics of the song are as follows:

Aba\*e,  
We've come to perform.  
Aba\*e,  
We've come to perform.  
Let it be perfect,  
  
A gift from God.  
  
We've come to perform.  
Let it be perfect,  
  
A child from God.

We've come to perform.  
Let it be perfect,

Aba e,  
We've come to perform.  
Aba e,  
We've come to perform.  
Aba e,  
We've come to perform.  
Let it be perfect,

Blessing from God.

We've come to perform.  
Let it be perfect,

Aba e,  
We've come to perform.  
Aba e,  
We've come to perform.  
Let it be perfect.

As Adinku (2016) postulates, in many cultures, including certain Ghanaian traditions, puberty rites are performed to mark the transition from childhood to adulthood and specifically to indicate a girl's entry into womanhood. These rites are essential cultural events that celebrate and recognise the girl's growth and

readiness to take on responsibilities as adults. Hence, the song “Aba\*e, we’ve come to perform” takes on even more meaning when associated with the puberty rite that welcomes Anansewa into womanhood. This rite of passage has enormous cultural significance in numerous societies and symbolises a significant transition from childhood to adulthood.

In the context of the play, the ceremony celebrates and honours Anansewa’s maturity and readiness for womanhood. The repetition of the phrase “Aba e, we’ve come to perform” in the song reflects the solemnity and purpose of the occasion, underscoring the importance of the rite of puberty and the girls’ (i.e., Anansewa’s friends) commitment to perform the ceremony with perfectly. As the girls sing the song, their emotions may vary from excitement and joy to a sense of responsibility and honour, knowing they are participating in this significant cultural event. Its inclusion at this point in the play marks a pivotal moment in the narrative, as the rite of puberty marks a turning point in Anansewa’s life and celebrates her transition to womanhood. The song and the associated rite of puberty underscore the play’s exploration of cultural traditions, rites of passage, and the importance of such ceremonies in shaping an individual’s identity and place in society. During the ceremony, the girls break into the song:

Sensemise\* e  
 We welcome you this day.  
 Sensemise e  
 We welcome you this day.  
 Sensemise e  
 Welcome to you.

Anansewa,  
 We welcome you this day.  
 Anansewa,

We welcome you this day.

Anansewa,  
Oh, welcome you,  
Anansewa,  
We welcome you this day.  
Anansewa,  
Oh, welcome to you,  
(Act 3, p. 50).

The additional song “Sensemise e / We welcome you this day” further underlines the welcoming nature of the ceremony and emphasises the celebration of Anansewa’s transition into womanhood. The use of her name in the song increases the focus on her individual journey and makes her the central figure of the ceremony. It is obvious that the song “Aba\*e, we’ve come to perform” holds a significant place in the play. The connection with the rite of puberty emphasises the cultural and ritual aspects of the narrative and showcases the importance of cultural traditions, rites of passage and their impact on individual identity and social belonging. The inclusion of the song enriches the play’s exploration of issues related to culture, tradition and the transition from childhood to adulthood. The introduction to the song “Sensemise e / We welcome you this day” in this scene further underscores the cultural and emotional significance of the rite of puberty. It emphasises the welcoming and solemn nature of the ceremony, with a focus on Anansewa’s individual journey into womanhood. Both songs, “Aba\*e, we’ve come to perform” and “Sensemise e / We welcome you this day,” complement each other by conveying the importance of cultural traditions and rites of passage, and the sense of community support and belonging during significant life transitions. The combined effect of the songs enriches the play’s

exploration of cultural issues and their impact on shaping individual identity within society. We also see that songs are an integral part of social gatherings in African societies, as Mulaudzi (2014) points out.

In addition, the use of songs in *The Marriage of Anansewa* also contributes to character development. Character development pertains to the process of constructing and presenting characters in a literary work in a way that enables them to experience change, growth, and transformation over the course of the narrative. Alvarado (2022) points out that incorporating songs into a narrative has the power to shape characters' identities and propel them on an introspective journey to reflect on their past selves, present changes, and personal experiences. As Wingstedt *et al.* (2010) highlights, songs provide an avenue through which characters are introduced. In this case, reference is made to the song:

Oh, some time ago  
It was bad at home  
But maybe now it's getting better.

Oh, some time ago  
It was bad at home  
But maybe now it's getting better.  
Oh, friends, do look at Kweku Ananse's amazing ways.  
It's with craftiness solely that he manages his life.

Oh, some time ago  
It was bad at home  
But maybe now it's getting better.

Oh, some time ago  
It was bad at home  
But maybe now it's getting better.

Oh, some time ago  
It was bad at home  
But maybe now it's getting better.

Oh, some time ago  
It was bad at home  
But maybe now it's getting better.

Oh, friends, do look at Kweku Ananse's amazing ways.  
It's with craftiness solely that he manages his life.

Oh, some time ago  
It was bad at home  
But maybe now it's getting better.

Oh, some time ago  
It was bad at home  
But maybe now it's getting better.  
(Act 2, pp. 37-38).

The song first deals with a time in the past, represented by the lines “Oh, some time ago / It was bad at home.” This indicates that Ananse faced difficulties and challenges during this period. The song does not dwell on the past, however, but quickly shifts the focus to the present and possible future with the line “But maybe now it's getting better.” This transition from the past to the present sets the stage for Ananse's character development. It indicates that there has been a change in his life that may lead to a more favourable situation. Ananse himself confirms this change in his life with the lines:

If only things would stay as they are a little longer. But the time is running short on my daughter's affair. [He sits in the garden chair, blowing his cheeks from the heat.] Fellow, don't you realize how hot it is in the garden today? Bring me some ice-cream from the 'fridge. [PROPERTY MAN serves him.] Go on, you! Can't you sympathise with a man when you can see him getting hot under the collar? Fetch the electric fan out here to blow more breeze around me. [PROPERTY MAN rushes to oblige.] I must not permit events to take me by surprise.  
(Act 2, pp. 38-39).

We can deduce from the above excerpt that the main character, Ananse, is undergoing tremendous transition in his life. The lyrics of the song implies that he

has overcome challenges and that there is a possibility of improvement in his current situation. Ananse's confirmation of the changes in his life further reinforces this idea. His desire for things to stay the way they are a little longer indicates a degree of comfort and contentment with the current state. The audience becomes curious as to what caused this transition and how Ananse's life unfolds.

The next part of the song draws attention to Ananse himself, using the words "friends, do look at Kweku Ananse's amazing ways." The audience is called upon to observe and appreciate his unique qualities. The line "It's with craftiness solely that he manages his life" introduces us to his cunning side. Ananse's craftiness becomes a central theme and a defining aspect of his character. The song "Oh, some time ago / It was bad at home / But maybe now it's getting better" in *The Marriage of Anansewa* is significant for character development, especially in terms of Ananse's transformation, identity, relationships and possible harbingers of future events. As Ananse's dexterity becomes a central theme, the song serves as a tool to shape and guide the audience's understanding and engagement with the character and the narrative.

Thematically, the song reinforces themes of resilience, hope, and the triumph of the human spirit over adversity. Mentioning past difficulties and hope for a brighter future reflect resilience and hope. Ananse's ability to overcome adversity and strive for improvement highlights the triumph of the human spirit, making him a relatable and inspirational character for audiences. Through Ananse, the song beautifully portrays the indomitable spirit of people who face



numerous obstacles and yet are undefeated. His relentless pursuit of improvement symbolises the resilience inherent in human experience. As the audience follows Ananse's journey, they are presented with a relatable and inspiring figure, someone who embodies the struggles and yearnings many people face and hope for in their own lives.

The song's emphasis on resilience encourages audiences to reflect on their own challenges and difficulties and reminds them that setbacks are a natural part of life's journey. By showcasing Ananse's determination and unwavering spirit, the song fosters hope and optimism, affirming that even in the darkest of times, there is a chance for a brighter future. It celebrates the human ability to dream and strive for a better life. The images of a hopeful future and a desire to overcome past difficulties offer comfort and encouragement to those who are going through difficult times of their own. The emotional connection audiences form with Ananse cultivates a deep sense of empathy and reinforces the idea that no matter how daunting the struggles, the human spirit can triumph and emerge stronger.

This song is of great importance thematically as it reinforces themes of resilience, hope and the triumph of the human spirit over harsh conditions. Through Ananse's character, the song inspires audiences to reflect on their own struggles and find strength in their ability to overcome challenges. It becomes a source of comfort, encouragement and empowerment, and celebrates the human capacity to dream and strive for a better life. Beyond the themes of resilience and transformation, the song also conveys an aspect of Ananse's character. He is crafty as illustrated in the lines "It's with craftiness solely that he manages his

life.” This serves as a universal theme developed later in the play. A life founded solely on craftiness is always precarious and short-lived.

As Ndubisi and Kanu (2022) noted, songs offer insights into the emotions, beliefs and desires of people. Sutherland (1975, p. 5) notes in the foreword to her play *The Marriage of Anansewa* that songs, when used in storytelling sessions, develop plot and characterisation. In this case the opening song to *Edufa* provides insight into the collective mindset and shared experiences of the characters. The lyrics of the song are as follows:

O, child of Ama,  
Child of Ama in the night  
Is Wandering,  
Crying, ‘Mm-m-m-m,  
How my mother is pondering.’  
O, child of Ama,  
Why is she wandering,  
Why wandering,  
Why wand’ring in the night  
Like the dying?  
Mewuo!  
(Prologue, p. 2)

The song points to the challenges they face and highlights the interconnectedness of their lives in the larger social context. Abena’s song in the prologue is a prime example of how songs reveal and develop a character’s traits and thoughts. The song allows audiences to witness Abena’s deep emotional bond with her family and her genuine concern for Ampoma’s well-being. As she passionately performs the song, her feelings of love and care for her family members are revealed. The audience witnesses her devotion and emotional weight in caring for Ampoma’s well-being, symbolised by the wandering child in the night. The song not only

reveals Abena's character traits but also highlights her role as a caring sister, thus enriching her characterisation.

The themes of motherhood, family ties and emotions such as wandering and crying are evident in the song. These themes are central to the plot of the play. The very essence of the song lies in the relationship between Ama and her child. The line "O, child of Ama" immediately draws attention to the concept of motherhood. Mother-child relationships are deeply rooted in human emotions and experiences, symbolising love, care, and protection. The presence of Ama as a mother figure suggests that family ties play an important role in the plot. In fact, we see Ampoma's health affecting everyone else in Edufa's household, including Edufa himself, Abena, Seguwa, and even Kankam. The recurring mention of "crying" in the song portrays the character's emotional turmoil. Crying is a potent expression of distress and longing and indicates that Ama and her child are going through challenging emotional experiences. The line "Crying, 'Mm-m-m-m, how my mother is pondering,'" underscores the depth of Ama's emotional struggle. This emotional intensity is a key aspect of the character. The song sheds light on Abena's concerns about the events at Edufa's house and offers insights into her own emotional journey. The theme of wandering adds a layer of symbolism to the song. Wandering often represents a search for purpose, meaning or identity. Ama's wandering shows her quest for understanding or solution in the face of difficult circumstances. Additionally, wandering around can evoke feelings of being lost or disoriented, which could signify Ama's inner conflict and insecurity. The choice to set this wandering "in the night" reinforces the sense of loneliness

and introspection, enhancing the emotional weight of the song. We realise that Abena herself is lost in the grand scheme of things in Edufa's house as she recites the lines:

My brother Edufa, your orders are done, though I obey without understanding... [Walking about] Here in this house, where there was always someone laughing, suddenly no one feels like smiling. I've never known such silence in my brother's house. Mm? It is unnatural. From rising until sleep claimed us again at night, people came through our gate; for who doesn't know my brother Edufa in this town? Benevolent one, who doesn't love him? Old and young, they came. They brought laughter. Those who brought sadness returned with smiles, comforted. Why then does brother shut our gate to stop such flow of friends? Mm? True that Ampoma, his wife, is unwell, but if she is unwell, should we not open our gate? She is not mortally ill; but even so, just let it be known and sympathy and comforting gifts would flow in from every home. So much does this whole town hold her dear. [Yawning] Oh well... I don't even know what it is that ails her. Their door is barred, and my brother says nothing to me. [Yawning again] Ha! Tired. [She picks up the red pot also, carrying the two pressed against her body.] Well... I place these at his door... [She places them at the top of the steps.] ... and make my way... to... [Yawning] sleep. I don't even know why I should be so sad. [She crosses, humming her song, and goes out through the kitchen door.] (Prologue, p. 2-4)

This song, "O, child of Ama," is of great importance as it provides insight into the character's emotions, beliefs and desires. It develops action and character, and enriches the depth of the character's experiences. The song's themes of motherhood, family ties, emotions such as wandering and crying, and its emotional intensity set the tone for the play, paving the way for the audience to empathise with the character.

For a similar case, reference can be made to *The Marriage of Anansewa*.

A case in point is the song in Act 3, page 47:

My Anansewa,  
Oho!

Pure gold gracing her,  
Oho!

Sandals gracing her,  
Oho!

Honour gracing her!  
Oho!

Courting her, they rail at me,  
Courting her they rail at me.  
When I bear a child with her  
They must nurse it on their backs.

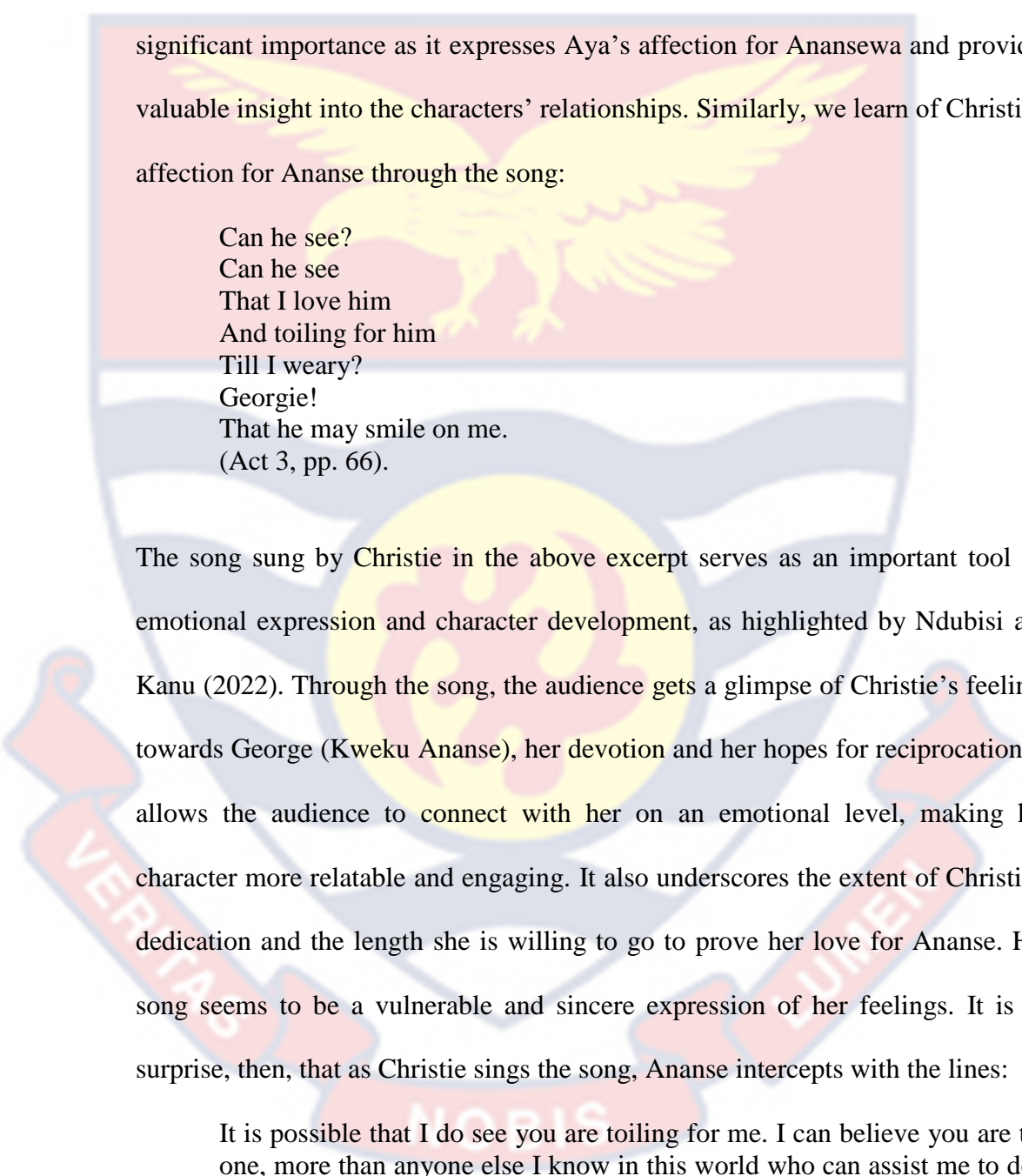
In this song, Aya expresses her deep affection for Anansewa and it becomes clear that Anansewa holds a special place in Aya's heart. The mention of "pure gold gracing her" and "honour gracing her" suggests that Anansewa is held in high esteem. We can see this in Aya's own words in Act 3, page 44:

AYA:

...Whatever it may be, I'm very happy to see my Anansewa conducting herself in the manner that graces a woman. You don't know what feelings are breaking and ebbing like waves inside me because of this ceremony we are performing. This wave brings happiness, and that one brings pride, and another sadness. Yes, it is true that you and I are here doing all we can, and yet when I remember that the person who should be here as well, bustling around Anansewa, is her own mother, then, my sister Ekuwa, a wave of sorrow crests up inside me, mangling y innards. [She starts to dirge.] And it isn't as though she is where we could send her a telegram to say, 'come.' [She is about to wail seriously.] Truly, death has done some wickedness.

This suggests that Anansewa is an important character and plays a central role in the play. The admiration Anansewa receives from others indicates her exceptional qualities, beauty, or virtues and makes her a central character in the plot. In addition, the song reveals the strong bond between Aya and Anansewa. The intense emotions that Aya expresses suggest that they share a close and healthy

relationship. This adds another layer of complexity to the character dynamics and enriches understanding of the connections between characters beyond the superficial level. This song in Act 3, page 47 of *The Marriage of Anansewa* is of significant importance as it expresses Aya's affection for Anansewa and provides valuable insight into the characters' relationships. Similarly, we learn of Christie's affection for Ananse through the song:

The background of the page features a large, semi-transparent watermark of the University of Cape Coast crest. The crest is a shield-shaped emblem with a yellow eagle with outstretched wings at the top. Below the eagle is a white banner with a blue wavy pattern. The central part of the shield is yellow with a red and white circular design. At the bottom, there is a red banner with white text. The crest is surrounded by a blue border.

Can he see?  
Can he see  
That I love him  
And toiling for him  
Till I weary?  
Georgie!  
That he may smile on me.  
(Act 3, pp. 66).

The song sung by Christie in the above excerpt serves as an important tool for emotional expression and character development, as highlighted by Ndubisi and Kanu (2022). Through the song, the audience gets a glimpse of Christie's feelings towards George (Kweku Ananse), her devotion and her hopes for reciprocation. It allows the audience to connect with her on an emotional level, making her character more relatable and engaging. It also underscores the extent of Christie's dedication and the length she is willing to go to prove her love for Ananse. Her song seems to be a vulnerable and sincere expression of her feelings. It is no surprise, then, that as Christie sings the song, Ananse intercepts with the lines:

It is possible that I do see you are toiling for me. I can believe you are the one, more than anyone else I know in this world who can assist me to do a deed of mine, which I'm forced to do in this house. Christie.  
(Act 3, p. 66)

Ananse's reaction to Christie's song is a pivotal moment in the narrative. By acknowledging her efforts for him and expressing belief in her ability to help him in an important matter, Ananse shows that he has noticed her affection and the effort she has made for him. This exchange serves to further develop both characters and their relationship. Ananse's recognition of Christie's devotion shows that her feelings have not gone unnoticed or unappreciated, which deepens their connection. His reaction also suggests that he recognises her unique role in his life and trusts that she will help him with important tasks. This mutual recognition and understanding between the characters create a sense of intimacy and closeness. Through this exchange, the audience witnesses the growth of their relationship and gains deeper insights into the two characters and their mutual feelings. Ananse's reaction to Christie's song not drives the plot forward, but also reveals more about his own feelings and thoughts, adding additional complexity to his character. The audience is provided with a more intimate understanding of the two characters and their relationship. This example illustrates how literary devices, particularly songs can effectively convey feelings and develop the plot. The song serves as a catalyst for emotional revelations, character development, and relationships in the play. It demonstrates the power of literary devices such as songs to effectively convey emotion and add depth to the plot and characters.

### **Conclusion**

This chapter dealt with the significance of songs in the development of *Edufa* and *The Marriage of Anansewa*. Firstly, I examined how songs are used to create and convey mood. The funeral chant in *Edufa* sets a sombre tone,

emotionally captivating the audience from the onset and setting the backdrop against which the story unfolds. This emotional engagement becomes the crucial basis for the flow of the play. Similarly, the opening song in *The Marriage of Anansewa* introduces the theme of hardships and challenges in life, emphasising the universality of the struggles faced by people of diverse backgrounds. Secondly, songs become a medium to immerse the audience in the cultural context of the plays. Traditional Ghanaian mourning rituals, expressed in the funeral chant in *Edufa*, offer a glimpse into the significance of collective mourning and community support in Ghanaian culture. In *The Marriage of Anansewa*, the song “Aba\*e, we’ve come to perform” has profound cultural and ritual significance as it marks Anansewa’s transition into womanhood and highlights the celebration of cultural traditions.

Thirdly, the songs reinforce the overarching themes of the plays. The funeral chant in *Edufa* deepens the audience’s understanding of the themes of loss, family ties and dealing with grief that remain central to the narrative. In *The Marriage of Anansewa*, the song about Ananse’s cunning ways serves to develop his character and present themes of resilience and hope that reflect the audience’s own experiences and struggles. Moreover, the songs provide insight into characters’ emotions, beliefs, and desires, thus contributing to character development. In *Edufa*, Abena’s song reveals her deep emotional bond with Edufa and Ampoma, while in *The Marriage of Anansewa*, Aya and Christie’s songs express their affection and devotion to Anansewa and Ananse, respectively.



## CHAPTER FIVE

### CONCLUSION

#### Introduction

The preceding chapter presented an examination of the importance and impact of the songs in *Edufa* and *The Marriage of Anansewa* on the overall development and thematic elements of the plays. This final chapter concludes the study with a summary of the study, its key findings and suggestions for further studies.

#### Summary of the Study

The purpose of this study was to examine the narrative significance of songs in the narrative structure of post-independence Ghanaian plays, particularly in the context of Efu Sutherland's *Edufa* and *The Marriage of Anansewa*. These two plays were chosen because they illustrate a remarkable use of songs that transcend mere entertainment, as this study has shown. These plays were also relevant to this study as they embodied the spirit of the post-independence era, a period of profound cultural and artistic revival.

The study is divided into five chapters. The first chapter serves as an introduction to the study. It includes the background of the study, a summary and justification of the plays selected for the study, the purpose and scope of the study, the problem statement, research objectives and questions, the significance of the study, methods, definitions of key terms, and the organisational structure of the study.

The second chapter provides a review of the literature relevant to this study. The literature review is divided into five parts. The first part examines the meanings associated the concept of narrative devices, where songs take on the role of narrative devices, and how this is reflected in literary works. The section concludes that songs serve as a versatile medium of foreshadowing, guide the reader's understanding, serve as tools for flashback exploration, and serve as a means of conveying characters' thoughts and motivations. It also sheds light on the didactic role of songs as they are used in literary works to convey essential societal values and lessons. The second part of the literature review focuses on the cultural and artistic importance of songs. It explores how songs are an integral part of various cultures, serving as a means of expressing emotion, preserving traditions, and conveying every day stories and histories. In the third part of the review, the focus shifts to the use of songs in the Ghanaian literary scene.

The fourth part reviews earlier studies conducted on the plays *Edufa* and *The Marriage of Anansewa*. The aim is to find out from which perspectives these plays were analysed in the past. This part concludes that while there have been numerous critical studies of the two plays, none have focused specifically on the narrative aspect of the songs they contain. The final part of the literature review explains the theoretical framework underlying the current study. The study is based on the theory of narratology. This means that the research uses narratological concepts and approaches to analyse how songs function as narrative devices in the selected plays.

The third and fourth chapters deal with addressing the research questions that guide the study. Since the study is guided by two questions, a chapter is devoted to each question. Therefore, both chapters three and four of the study are analytical chapters. Chapter three is dedicated to answering the first research question, which borders on how songs function as narrative devices in *Edufa* and *The Marriage of Anansewa*. Chapter four, in turn, is devoted to the second research question, which revolves around the significance of the songs to the development of the plays.

The final chapter, which is this chapter, concludes the entire study. Thus, it provides a summary of the entire work, identifies the main findings, and makes suggestions for further study.

### **Key Findings**

The study posed two questions. The first question sought to examine how songs function as narrative devices in *Edufa* and *The Marriage of Anansewa*. The analysis shows that in both *Edufa* and *The Marriage of Anansewa*, songs serve as instruments for foreshadowing future developments in the plays. The songs in *Edufa*, particularly the funeral chant by the chorus, accurately predicts the impending tragedy and loss that the characters will experience. The repetition of this song throughout the play reinforces the sense of impending doom. In *The Marriage of Anansewa*, a song is used to predict the events surrounding Anansewa's outdoor ceremony. Both plays use true foreshadowing, thereby giving the audience accurate clues and hints, increasing engagement and anticipation of future events. In addition, both plays to make use of songs to

transport the audience to past events and provide important background information about the characters and their past experiences. In *The Marriage of Anansewa*, a song describes Ananse's past financial difficulties and his resourcefulness in overcoming them. It offers insight into his character and sets the stage for understanding his current circumstances. The song is used in this case to draw a contrast between Ananse's improved economic situation and his previous financial difficulties. Songs are also used as a form of exposition to provide the audience with essential background information and context. For example, in *The Marriage of Anansewa*, the opening song introduces and emphasises the theme of hardships and challenges in life, setting the tone of the narrative and helping the audience understand the underlying difficulties faced by the character Ananse. The song forms a basis for the play, introducing the main character and his current economic situation and creating anticipation of the conflicts and obstacles to come.

Additionally, both *Edufa* and *The Marriage of Anansewa* use songs as interior monologues to give the audience direct access to the characters' thoughts, emotions, and reflections. In *Edufa*, the song "O, Child of Ama" sung by Abena in the prologue serves as an interior monologue. It conveys Abena's current emotions and sets the emotional tone for the play, foreshadowing the theme of mother-child separation. In *The Marriage of Anansewa*, songs also function as interior monologues, such as the song sung by Senchi in Act 3, Scene 2, pages 41 and 42. The song reveals Senchi's deep emotional connection to Ampoma and expresses his admiration, love and yearning for her. It indirectly sheds light on

Ampoma's relationship with her children and how her absence affects those around her. We learn that Ampoma is someone dearly loved by the members of her household and even by the members of the town in general. The use of songs as interior monologues in both plays fulfils the first scenario of the use of interior monologues in literary works as explained by Asdasd (2016), thus narrating ongoing reactions in the present moment, and the third scenario, which embodies purely a reflection and the story itself.

In *The Marriage of Anansewa*, songs are used as didactic tools to convey moral lessons and values to the audience. An example of this is Ananse's song about the value of time in Act 1, page 17. The song effectively underscores the message about time management and the importance of making the most of one's time. Another example is the song in Act 4, pages 91 and 92, which conveys the idea that love possesses immense power and importance in fostering positive relationships and personal growth. It challenges both the characters and the audience to embrace a loving and compassionate approach to their relationships. The use of didactic songs in the play is consistent with traditional African practices of imparting wisdom through songs.

With regard to the second research objective, I sought to evaluate the significance of the songs to the development of the plays. The funeral chant by the chorus in Act 1, Scene 1, page 4 of *Edufa* shows Efua Sutherland incorporating songs to set the mood of the play. The lyrics of the song explicitly convey grief and loss, creating an emotional backdrop and captivating the audience from the start. The sombre tone of the song creates an ever-present sense

of sadness and loss that affects the emotional tone of the subsequent events in the play.

Additionally, the song serves to immerse the audience in the cultural context of the play by introducing a traditional Ghanaian mourning ritual and emphasises the importance of collective mourning and community support in Ghanaian culture. This deepens the audience's understanding of cultural practices surrounding death and grief in the narrative. The song also plays a crucial role in emphasising the overarching themes of loss and orphanhood that form a core of the play. The raw emotional expression in the song foreshadows the exploration of these themes as the plot unfolds.

Songs also play a crucial role in character development in *The Marriage of Anansewa*. The songs offer insights into the characters' emotions, beliefs, desires, and relationships. They help shape the characters' identities and reveal their growth and transformation throughout the play. The songs in *The Marriage of Anansewa* also make a thematic contribution, reinforcing themes of resilience, hope and the triumph of the human spirit over adversity. They inspire empathy and understanding in the audience and celebrate the human ability to overcome challenges and strive for a better life.

In addition, the songs in *The Marriage of Anansewa* also have cultural and ritual significance, particularly in the context of the outdoor ceremony for Anansewa that marks her transition from childhood to adulthood. They underline the importance of cultural traditions and rites of passage for shaping individual identity and social belonging.

### Implications of the Study

The findings of this study have three main implications. The findings of the study offer valuable insights into the literary techniques and devices employed by Ghanaian playwrights, particularly with regard to the use of songs as a narrative device. This enriches the understanding of how Ghanaian playwrights use oral poetics to advance their narratives. As a result, playwrights and scholars can draw inspiration from these techniques to create more engaging and culturally resonate literary works.

By examining the narrative significance of songs in Efua Sutherland's plays, the study underscores the importance of oral African poetics in African drama and culture. This understanding helps preserve and revitalize traditional oral storytelling practices in a literary context. It underscores the importance of incorporating and celebrating oral traditions as a means of conveying and preserving cultural and historical information, and promoting a deeper connection to African cultural identity.

The study's focus on songs and oral poetics as essential elements of narrative structure attempts to expand the scope of inquiry into the broader field of literary analysis. By going beyond the conventional examination of character, plot, setting, themes, and usage of language, the study offers a critical alternative perspective on reading and interpreting African literary texts. This broader perspective encourages scholars to expand their analytical approach beyond conventional elements typically examined in literature, leading to a broader and more inclusive understanding of literary works of diverse cultural backgrounds.

### Suggestions for Further Studies

This study focused only on Efua Sutherland's plays *Edufa* and *The Marriage of Anansewa*. It is therefore recommended that further research considers a comparative analysis of songs in other post-independence Ghanaian plays beyond *Edufa* and *The Marriage of Anansewa*. By looking at other plays, one can explore how different playwrights use songs as narrative devices.

### Conclusion

This chapter serves as the concluding chapter to the study. It highlighted the organisational framework for the study, key findings, and recommendations for further studies. At the end, the study affirms that the use of songs in Sutherland's *Edufa* and *The Marriage of Anansewa* operate in a way that unquestionably transcends the realm of mere embellishment. The songs add meaning and substance to the narratives.



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