

# Language Contact Phenomena in Togo: A Case Study of Kabiye-Ewe Code-switching

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## 1. Introduction

This study shows that today many Kabiye speakers increasingly use Ewe, or Kabiye-Ewe code-switching, especially in urban areas. My investigation, a sociolinguistic analysis of contact between Kabiye and Ewe, seeks to determine the social and linguistic factors (e.g. prestige, pressure, wider communication) that constrain language usage in the Kabiye community. I argue that the speakers' switching from Kabiye to Ewe in everyday communication is a reflection of the historical and present socioeconomic status of Ewe in the "market place" (Calvet 1992), not only in Togo, but in the neighboring countries as well. The population of Togo is now estimated at 4.7 million, with 40 ethnic languages.

## 2. Historical background of Ewe and Kabiye

### 2.1. Ewe

Ewe is a Kwa language spoken by 862,000 people in the southern part of Togo and by 1,616,000 people in Ghana.<sup>1</sup> Mina, also known as Gen or Gengbe, is a dialect of Ewe (Capo 1991; Kozelka 1984). Togo's coastal population spoke Ewe and was the first to be in contact with Europeans. The early contact between Ewe speakers and the English, as well as the contact between Ewe speakers in Togo and Ghana, has affected Ewe as it is spoken today. Many Ewe words are borrowed from English and assimilated to Ewe; for example: *lɔrɪ*<sup>2</sup> from 'lorry' (car), *sukulu* from 'school', *fáda* (priest) from 'father'. The influence of the English language has spread via Ewe to other languages, such as Kabiye, that have never been in contact with the English (Lafage 1985). Because Ewe was the first Togolese language to be in contact with the Europeans, it became the main language of communication in the church, school, and trade. Ewe consequently became a symbol of modernity and 'evolution'. Under the first President Olympio, Ewe served as an official language in Togo, along with French (Laitin 1992: 93).

The sociolinguistic role of Ewe in Togolese life has expanded in the post-independence period, and it has become a *lingua franca* among all ethnic groups and people of all backgrounds. Today, Ewe is the language of the capital city and particularly the commercial centers of Togo (Duthie 1996:1). As one informant observes:<sup>3</sup>

ŋ-níu	ahoná	yɔ,	ŋ-láki	tádyɪ	páalé,
You-understand	Ewe	EP	you-do	business	everywhere

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<sup>1</sup> Statistics reported in Gordon (2005).

<sup>2</sup> I use acute accent for High tones. Low tones are not marked.

<sup>3</sup> The abbreviations in this paper are as follows: PRES present, C noun class (e.g. C1 = noun class 1), EP emphatic particle, PL plural, HAB habitual, NEG negative, Npref noun prefix, IMPERF imperfective, INF infinitive, QP question particle.

Kozikozɔ loma-tá, *parce que* ŋgú kena kakutá tóm.  
 Especially Lome-in because it is market language  
 ‘If you speak Ewe, you can do business everywhere, especially in Lome, because it is the language of the market.’

According to Kozelka (1984: 53), “either Ewe or Mina is understood, and can be used as a market language by approximately 60% of the population [of Togo].”<sup>4</sup> Lafage reports that more than 75% of the people in Togo speak Ewe. She states that “L’Ewe est vraisemblablement la langue seconde de la quasi-totalité des ethnies locales non-éwéphones” (1985: 62). Stewart (1968: 531) refers to Ewe as the “socially preferred norm of usage.”

## 2.2. Kabiye

Kabiye is a Gur language spoken by more than 800,000 people (Roberts 2002). It is spoken in the northern part of Togo, mainly in the prefectures of Kozah (Kara) and Binah, as well as in the neighboring countries Benin and Ghana.

Kao (1999) reports that many Kabiye people were forced out of their land due to what was known as *la politique de la colonisation des terres*. This consisted of creating coffee, cocoa and teak plantations for exports. Thus, today, many Kabiye speakers are settled in the southern part of the country due to migration. In this mainly Ewe-speaking area, Kabiye people had to adapt themselves not only socially but linguistically as well. Parents and particularly children born in Ewe areas became Ewe-dominant bilinguals.

In recent years, economic, educational and professional opportunities have led many Kabiye speakers to settle in the capital city, Lome, a majority-Ewe speaking city on the coast. Inter marriages between Kabiye and Ewe individuals have become very common in many Ewe areas. The most common scenario is a marriage between a Kabiye man and an Ewe woman. Children from these families are often monolingual in Ewe, not simply because of input from their mother but also because of their upbringing in an Ewe speaking community. Today, most Kabiye speakers in Kabiye villages and particularly in the capital and other cities are Kabiye/Ewe bilinguals.

Since 1975, Ewe and Kabiye have both become national languages by the decree of the *Conseil Supérieur de l’Education Nationale du Togo* (Lafage 1985: 553).

## 3. Basic grammar in Kabiye and Ewe

Basically, Kabiye and Ewe have the same word order (SVO), as shown in (1) for Kabiye, and (2) for Ewe.

- |        |   |    |   |
|--------|---|----|---|
| (1) a. | Kofi wók-i sukúli.<br>Kofi go-PRES school<br>‘Kofi is going to school.’ | b. | Kofi wób-á sukúli.<br>Kofi go-PAST school<br>‘Kofi went to school.’ |
| (2) a. | Kofi le yi sukúlu.<br>Kofi be go school<br>‘Kofi is going to school.’   | b. | Kofi yi sukúlu.<br>Kofi go school<br>‘Kofi went to school.’         |

In Kabiye (1), tense is overtly and morphologically marked on verbs, but not in Ewe. However, even though Ewe does not have a past tense marker, it has past tense interpretations (2b). According to Duthie (1996: 40) “the verbal phrase is unmarked for tense and aspect” (see also Kagni (1989) for a similar viewpoint).

One main difference between Kabiye and Ewe concerns noun class systems. Kabiye has a noun class system, whereas Ewe does not. Hence, Ewe does not have noun class agreement; plurality is

<sup>4</sup> See also Afeli and Lébikaza (1992) for a similar view point.

marked on nouns (e.g. *koklo-wo* hen-PL) or on modifying adjectives (e.g. *koklo dzẽ-wo* hen red-PL). In other words, in Ewe, plurality is marked on the final element of the NP. In Kabiye, nouns are morphologically marked according to the class to which they belong. Similarly, adjectives are always suffixed according to the class of the noun they modify. There are six noun classes in Kabiye.<sup>5</sup> Agreement of adjectives with nouns in Kabiye is illustrated in (3).

- (3) Kabiye: a. Eyú kɪsem  
 person.C1.SG red.C1.SG ‘a red person’ (i.e., a light-skinned person)
- Ewe: ame dzẽ  
 person red ‘a light-skinned person’
- Kabiye: b. kelimi-yé kɪsemi-yɛ  
 hen-C3.SG red-C3.SG ‘a red hen’
- c. kelém-é kɪsemi-ɛ  
 hen-C3.PL red-C3.PL ‘red hens’
- Ewe: d. koklo dzẽ  
 hen.SG red ‘a red hen’
- e. koklo dzẽ-wo  
 hen.SG red-PL ‘red hens’

The noun *eyú* ‘person’ in (3a) belongs to noun-class one and *kelimiyé* ‘hen’ in (3b) to noun-class three. Thus, the adjective *kɪsem* ‘red’ agrees with each noun according to its class: *kɪsem* agrees with *eyú* for class one and *kɪsemi-yɛ* with *kelimiyé* for class three. However, the Ewe nouns ame ‘person’ or koklo ‘hen’ and the adjective dzẽ ‘red’ do not show any noun class agreement because Ewe does not have noun class.<sup>6</sup>

#### 4. Subjects and data collection

The data for this study were collected through individual and group-conversation interviews. Fifty Kabiye speakers took part in the interviews at three locations: 16 from Pude, a small Kabiye village; 16 from Kara, the major Kabiye city in Togo; and 18 from Lome, the Ewe-majority capital city of Togo. There are 26 males and 24 females, aged between 15 and 70. I supplemented the interviews with participant observations. In all, 31 hours of spontaneous conversations were transcribed for analysis.

#### 5. Hypothesis

My hypothesis is that use and proficiency of speakers in Kabiye and Ewe depend on the degree to which speakers have exposure to each language. Ewe is spreading in the Kabiye community and the use of Kabiye-Ewe code-switching is likely to become a mode of speaking within the Kabiye community.

<sup>5</sup> For more information on noun class system in Kabiye, see Lévikaza (1999).

<sup>6</sup> Throughout the paper, Kabiye words are shown in normal print or italics, and Ewe words (or Ewe borrowings into Kabiye via Ewe like kɔ̃sɛtɪ ‘concert’) are underlined.

## 6. Definitions of borrowing and code-switching

Although borrowing and code-switching (C-S) as general phenomena have been very popular topics of research for almost fifty years, their identification and analysis have remained the focus of much controversy. Some linguists (e.g. Poplack and Sankoff 1988, Muysken 1984) argue that these language contact phenomena should be distinguished. Others (Myers-Scotton 1993a, Heller 1988, and Bentahila and Davies 1991) contend that borrowing and code-switching are not differentiated by the bilingual speaker and therefore should not be considered as two distinct entities.

One of the main distinctions made by linguists on borrowing and C-S is that borrowing is used both by monolinguals and bilinguals, whereas C-S is used only by bilinguals (Myers-Scotton 1988, 1992; Kachru 1982). Among the most influential scholars in the field of C-S in language contact phenomena in Africa are Bokamba (1988) and Myers-Scotton (1988, 1993a). According to Myers-Scotton (1988), C-S is “the use of two or more linguistic varieties within the same conversation, without prominent phonological assimilation of one variety to the other” (1988: 157). While the first part of the definition is applicable to my study, the second part (i.e., “without prominent phonological assimilation”) is not. I observed that when Kabiye-Ewe bilinguals speak Kabiye, they often use Ewe items which are often morphologically, phonologically, and sometimes syntactically integrated into Kabiye. In the case of this study, I consider all of the items that are not used by monolingual Kabiye speakers as switches.

In later work, Myers-Scotton (1993a:4) defines C-S as the selection by bilinguals of forms from an embedded language (or languages) in utterances of a matrix language during the same conversation. Following Joshi (1984), Myers-Scotton (1993a) asserts that there is a language that dominates the switched utterance during a conversation, which she terms the *matrix language* (ML) (contra, for example, Poplack (1980), and Sankoff and Poplack (1980), among others). Hence, in a C-S utterance, the matrix language is generally the language of more grammatical morphemes and it contributes the grammar and structure, whereas the embedded language (EL) contributes the lexicon (Myers-Scotton 1993b).

Sobin (1976; cited in Romaine 1995: 144), in her study of Texas Spanish, considers that some phonologically and morphologically adapted items are code-switches rather than borrowings for speakers of Spanish in Texas. My data on Kabiye-Ewe C-S corroborates Sobin’s study of Texas Spanish since nearly all Ewe inserted elements in Kabiye take Kabiye affixes and are often phonologically adapted as well. I propose to use Sobin’s (1976) and Myers-Scotton’s (1993a, 1993b) frameworks for this study because they relate well to the phenomena observed among Kabiye speakers with regards to the use of Ewe insertions. In particular, in order to account for Ewe insertions into Kabiye, I use Myers-Scotton’s (1993b) Matrix Language approach for the analysis of my data. I will focus on intra-sentential C-S, i.e. switches that occur within sentences. As Poplack (1980) claims, intra-sentential C-S requires fluency in both languages (here, Kabiye and Ewe), because the switch entails greater syntactic risk than the inter-sentential C-S (cf. Nortier 1990).

The most common phenomena of C-S in everyday conversation in the Kabiye community are insertions of Ewe single words into Kabiye sentences, as in (4) and (5) below. However, for comparison, I also considered Kabiye insertions into Ewe sentences, often used by fluent Ewe speakers. In this study, I refer to insertion as “all instances where a simple constituent from one language is inserted into a structure of another language” (Angermeyer 2005:324).

As shown in the examples below and will be seen later, my data indicate that while most switched elements in Kabiye-Ewe C-S are Ewe, Kabiye contributes all affixes of the words. Consider examples (4) and (5):

- (4) Hal-áa            yab-á            máŋgi-ŋ            ñe tɔká-si            pá-dú            lɔd-áa-ta.  
 woman.C1-PL buy-PAST mango.C2-PL and bucket.C1-PL they-put car.C3-PL-in  
 ‘The women bought mangoes and buckets and put them in a car.’

- (5) Lɛɪyɔ́, nýɔnu-wáa ne dɛkadze-wáa po-wók-i kɔ́nseti-náa yém.  
 now woman-PL and young.boy-PL they-go-PRES concert-PL free  
 ‘Nowadays, teenagers go to concerts without problem (from their parents).’

In (4), the Ewe words nýɔnu ‘woman’, and dɛkadze ‘young boy’ are marked with Kabiye plural noun class suffixes. In (5), however, the words are marked by *-wáa* and *-náa*, the Kabiye default plural suffixes. Today, terms like those underlined in (4) have become part of the Kabiye repertoire and are used daily by both monolinguals and bilinguals. They take Kabiye noun class affixes.

As stated above, in Kabiye, nouns are morphologically marked according to the class to which they belong; and adjectives also agree according to the class of the noun they modify. The Kabiye noun class plays a crucial role in distinguishing borrowed items from switched or inserted items, particularly nouns. Thus, if a noun comes from Ewe, and the suffix in the plural of the noun is not *-wáa* or *-náa* (default plural suffixes in Kabiye), then that noun is a borrowing, not an insertion. That is, in Kabiye, no Ewe-inserted noun can take the Kabiye plural noun class suffix (e.g. *-áa*, *-sí*, *-ŋ*, etc.); only well-assimilated borrowings do. Furthermore, no noun class markers are permitted on Ewe nouns or adjectives when they are inserted into Kabiye.<sup>7</sup> Some English words came into Kabiye via Ewe (see section 2.1); for example, *ɔdɔ́yɛ* (plural *ɔdɔ́áa*), from Ewe lori ‘lorry/car’, *pɔ́ɔdɛ* (plural *pɔ́ɔláa*), from English via Ewe pɔ́ɔda ‘powder’. Today, many Ewe words have become part of the Kabiye community’s language repertoire such that they are no longer easy to recognize as borrowed. The borrowed items are treated as Kabiye stems and they take the usual affixes for the appropriate stem-class (cf. Thomason and Kaufman 1988). They are used by both monolinguals and bilinguals in everyday interactions.

## 7. Ewe insertions in Kabiye sentences

### 7.1. Insertions of nouns

The most common intra-sentential switches from Kabiye into Ewe are nouns.

- (6) Gaze-náa fɛɪ mite tʃɪn-ɔɔ?  
 bathroom-PL be.NEG your here-QP  
 ‘Are there no bathrooms in your house here?’
- (7) Me-sée, abosám-wáa pɛ-kew-á, má-ne-we pi-tem-á.  
 I-say satan-person they-be-PAST I-and-them it-end-PAST  
 ‘I say they are very bad people, I am done with them.’
- (8) Min-dza wená pankani-ná ne abladzó-ná hayim.  
 my-father has cocoyam-PL and plantain-PL farm  
 ‘My father has cocoyam and plantain farms.’

Examples (6) to (8) show that Ewe inserted nouns are marked by Kabiye default plural affixes, an indication that they are insertions rather than well-assimilated borrowings (see section 6).

### 7.2. Insertions of verbs

The second largest group of switched elements in the data is verbs.

- (9) Me-héyi-i se ε-taa-dɛfuná-ŋ mbo.  
 I-told-him that he-NEG-bother-you that  
 ‘I told him not to bother you like that.’

<sup>7</sup> I refer to this as ‘the constraint against inflecting Ewe adjectives and nouns’ in Kabiye.

- (10) Tási héyi-m se e-tfi-u bée sɔnó.  
 sister.in.law tell-me that she-stay-IMPERF there today  
 ‘Sister in law told me that she will stay there today.’

In (9), the subject pronoun *-ε*, the negation particle *taa-*, and the object pronoun *-ŋ* ‘you’ are all affixed to the Ewe verb *defu* ‘bother’ in accordance to Kabiye morpheme order. Similarly, in (10) the Kabiye subject pronoun and tense marker are affixed to the Ewe verb *tfi* ‘stay’.

Now, consider (11) and (12), where (11b) and (12b) represent Ewe sentences.

- (11) a. εle miŋ-de-mi kuku i-taa-lá mbu la.  
 but I-remove-2PL hat 2PL-NEG-do that EP  
 ‘But, please, don’t do that.’ (lit. ‘I remove (my) hat for you’)
- b. Gaké me-de kuku (ná wo) me-ga-wɔ nené-má o la.  
 but I-remove hat (for you) you-NEG-do like-that NEG EP
- (12) a. ε-dze-bá agbagbá εte dáj tɔm-tá yo.  
 s/he-try-PAST hard his/her house problem-in EP  
 ‘He tried hard concerning his house’s problem’
- b. E-dze agbagba le éfé xɔ ɲuti ɲuto la.  
 s/he-try hard on his/her house concern very EP

The Ewe expressions *de kuku* ‘remove hat’ and *dze agbagba* ‘try hard’ each form collocations. The words constitute idiomatic expressions that go together as such to give the verb’s intended meaning in Ewe. Kabiye monolinguals, particularly those in the interior, cannot understand what has been uttered by bilinguals in (11a) and (12a) because they are not used these words.<sup>8</sup> Comparing the Kabiye bilingual utterance (11a) to the Ewe monolingual utterance (11b), we find that (11a) is morphosyntactically integrated into Kabiye. For example, unlike Ewe which uses two negative particles, Kabiye employs one negative particle to convey negation. In Kabiye, the direct object, if a pronoun (as *-mi* ‘you.PL’, here), has to be suffixed to the verb; whereas in Ewe, it is separated by the object (*kuku* ‘hat’), or is optional, if the speakers are face to face (as is the case here). Also, the Kabiye structure does not require the dative preposition *ná* ‘for’ before the pronoun, as is the case in Ewe. Furthermore, unlike the Ewe sentence (12b), the Ewe inserted verb in (12a) is suffixed with the Kabiye past tense morpheme *-bá*. In Kabiye, tense is expressed by an affix, whereas in Ewe it is not. The examples above show that Kabiye affixes are attached to Ewe lexemes according to Kabiye syntactic restrictions, as opposed to those of Ewe. This supports the hypothesis that Kabiye is the source of morpheme order, hence the matrix language. As Myers-Scotton observes, “In ML+EL constituents consisting of singly-occurring EL lexemes and any number of ML morphemes, surface morpheme order (reflecting surface syntactic relations) will be that of the ML” (1993b: 83).<sup>9</sup>

### 7.3. Insertion of adjectives

Ewe adjectives are the elements least inserted into Kabiye. As mentioned above, although broadly speaking Kabiye and Ewe have similar syntactic systems, they are different in key core grammar areas, particularly when it comes to agreement of adjectives with nouns. While the Kabiye adjective must agree with the noun according to its class, Ewe adjectives do not since Ewe nouns do not have a noun class system. The monolingual Kabiye sentences in (13b) and (14b) show that nouns and adjectives

<sup>8</sup> Today, the use of *miŋ-kulán holo* ‘I remove my hat’ to mean ‘I beg you’ (a calque from Ewe) is employed by some urban monolinguals.

<sup>9</sup> Myers-Scotton (1993b:83) refers to this as Morpheme Order Principle.



nouns (i.e. no noun class markers are permitted on Ewe adjectives or nouns when inserted into Kabiye) indicates that this phenomenon goes beyond Poplack's Equivalence Constraint hypothesis, which states that speakers code-switch only at points around which the surface structures of L1 and L2 map onto each other (cf. Poplack 1980). In the case under study here, violation of the Equivalence Constraint concerns differences in grammatical agreement between their lexical categories, because Kabiye has noun class agreement, while Ewe does not even have a noun class system. The implication is that research on language contact phenomena, particularly regarding constraints on C-S, has to go beyond the classical syntactic equivalence of the language pairs, and take into account all the different morphosyntactic aspects, including grammatical agreement between the lexical categories of the languages of interaction.

#### 7.4. Insertion of numerals

Insertion of Ewe numerals is often found in Kabiye time expressions.

- (17) a. εσίinyo      ga ewe tem      mábu      yo.  
 this.time      iron two finish      ring      EP  
 'It might already be two o'clock.'
- b. εσίinyo      ñíi-tu      na-tú-le      tem      mábu      yo.  
 this.time      iron-C5 Npref-C5-two      finish      ring      EP

As with adjectives, a numeral must agree with the class of the noun it modifies. For example, the Kabiye sentence in (17b) shows that *na-tú-le* 'two' agrees with the class five noun *ñíitu* 'iron'. Note that the word *ñíitu* referring to time is a calque from the Ewe word ga 'iron'.

My arguments for the infrequent insertion of Ewe adjectives may also apply to the insertion of numerals. That is, unlike Kabiye, Ewe does not mark class agreement on numerals because the Ewe nouns they modify do not have noun class agreement. Hence, Ewe numerals cannot be inserted without inflecting them according to their appropriate noun class.

#### 7.5. Insertion of conjunctions and adverbs

Ewe conjunctions and adverbs can also be inserted into Kabiye sentences, as in the following examples.

- (18) Naná      t**í**bá      káakudá gake      ε-ti-ya      péedu      ngu.  
 mother went      market but      she-NEG-buy      pot      that  
 'Mother went to the market but did not buy the pot.'
- (19) η-góη      t**í**é      yáa alo      miη-go      ñε-de.  
 you-come      tomorrow      or or I-come      your-house  
 'Will you come tomorrow or I should come to your house.'
- (20) Kou      péε      kaba      ni      d**í**-d**ε**,      miη-ti-s**o**l-ι      t**o**m.  
 stand.up      there      quickly and we-go      I-NEG-like-PRES      word  
 'Stand up quickly from there so that we can go, I don't want any quarrel.'
- (21) Mo-wóni-i      d**o**kóto      kakaka      pí-ni-m.  
 I-take.PAST-him/her      hospital      several.times it-tired-me  
 'I took him to the hospital so many times that I'm tired.'

The most frequent Ewe conjunctions found in the data are gake 'but' and alo 'or'. In (19), doubled Kabiye and Ewe conjunctions of the same meaning have been used. This phenomenon has been

observed in many conversations, particularly among Kabiye speakers who are not proficient in Ewe. My observation seems to indicate that Kabiye speakers who have lower proficiency in Ewe may well have picked up conjunctions and adverbs and use them (perhaps idiosyncratically). In neither Kabiye nor Ewe do conjunctions and adverbs require any agreement, and I have observed that one can use an Ewe conjunction or adverb even when one has no control of Ewe syntax. Some speakers report that the use of the Ewe conjunction alo ‘or’ in (19) serves to emphasize the second part of the sentence (i.e. the main message), which the Kabiye conjunction *yáa* ‘or’ could not do. As a native speaker of Kabiye and the addressee of the sentence, I would agree with this report since the use of alo did draw my attention closer to the speaker when he uttered it.

## 8. Kabiye insertions in Ewe sentences

Even though the examples in the previous sections indicate that Kabiye is the usual matrix language, it is observed that sometimes Ewe plays the role of the matrix language as well. The use of Ewe as the matrix language is often observed among Kabiye speakers who have Ewe as their first language, or those who are fluent in both Ewe and Kabiye. Such speakers are found mainly in Lome.

- (22) Gaǎéwo mea, é-wo-na abé, hǒvi, kimeleŋ susú ɲuto ené.  
 sometimes in he-do-HAB like stupid stupid big true like  
 ‘Sometimes, he behaves like a true very stupid person.’
- (23) Ke é-le po nu na mi-a, wískáŋ-ta, gake e-tǒte ɖe ɲɔ kusugbe.  
 when he-be say word to us-DEF sun very-in but he-stand in sun very  
 ‘When he was speaking to us, it was very sunny, but he was in it.’
- (24) Tukáráɖe le funu, má-na, nye má-yi afima kura o.  
 suffering is there me-DEF I NEG-go there never NEG  
 ‘There is a lot of suffering there, me, I will never go there.’

As we have seen, Ewe elements in Kabiye sentences often receive Kabiye affixes, whereas Kabiye elements in Ewe sentences do not receive any Ewe affixes, as seen in (22) to (24). This confirms the findings of other linguists who contend that while EL stems are possible, all the inflectional morphology comes from the ML, a reflection of the socioeconomic dominant position of Ewe (cf. Myers-Scotton 1993b, Backus 1992, Nortier 1990, Forson 1979). The examples indicate that in Kabiye-Ewe C-S, Kabiye is the speaker’s dominant language, because it is used more than Ewe, it provides all affixes, and the sentences follow Kabiye morphosyntactic integration. This reflects Kabiye’s status as the usual matrix language with the affixes of the inserted elements obeying Kabiye noun class principles. The fact that Ewe bound morphemes are not used with Kabiye stems indicates the power asymmetry of the language pairs interacting (see Myers-Scotton 1993b, Backus 1992, and Joshi 1984 for similar observations).

Furthermore, in contrast to Ewe insertions into Kabiye, most Kabiye insertions into Ewe are mainly multi-word phrases like *kimeleŋ susú* ‘very stupid person’. This can be explained by the facts that (1) Kabiye uses agglutinative inflection far more than Ewe to express grammatical functions, and again, (2) Kabiye has a noun class system with a strong noun class agreement requirement, while Ewe does not. Thus, I contend that Kabiye-Ewe bilinguals’ use of larger Kabiye constituents when modification is desired is a reflection of their interacting strategies for inserting Kabiye content words together with the requirement for class agreement in the language.

## 9. Quantitative data on insertions

The distribution of the main word class insertions is presented in Table 1. Although most insertions are of single lexical items, following Muysken (2000) and Angermeyer (2005), I counted a

multi-word verb-plus-noun collocation as a single instance of a verb insertion. For example, in Ewe, *ɔe kuku* ‘remove hat’ (11) and *dze agbagbá* ‘try hard’ (12) constitute verb collocations, hence, single syntactic units. Thus, *ɔe kuku* and *dze agbagbá* were identified as single units and the part of speech is assigned to the head which is the verb. Hence, I calculate the percentages disregarding the fact that some insertions literally consist of multiple words. In the case of noun-adjective sequences, however, I counted each part of speech separately because they do not constitute a single unit either in Ewe or in Kabiye.

All Ewe parts of speech in Kabiye sentences are presented in Table 1 as: E in sK. Similarly, Kabiye parts of speech in Ewe sentences are presented as: K in sE. An individual word counts once in the ‘type’ (Typ) column and all actual occurrences of that word are taken into consideration in the ‘token’ (Tok) column.

	Nouns		Verbs		Conjunct.		Adverbs		Numerals		Adjective		Total	
	Typ	Tok	Typ	Tok	Typ	Tok	Typ	Tok	Typ	Tok	Typ	Tok	Typ	Tok
<b>Lome</b>														
E in sK	127	143	78	88	47	53	23	29	11	13	5	9	291	335
K in sE	18	25	13	18	8	11	5	11	8	14	7	12	59	91
	145	168	91	106	55	64	28	40	19	27	12	21	350	426
<b>Kara</b>														
E in sK	76	93	54	65	36	41	21	28	5	8	3	7	195	242
K in sE	21	27	18	24	14	19	13	21	22	26	14	21	102	138
	97	120	72	89	50	60	34	49	27	34	17	28	297	380
<b>Pude</b>														
E in sK	26	39	15	21	11	17	13	15	1	2	0	0	66	94
K in sE	23	32	21	27	18	21	11	13	23	27	21	25	117	145
	49	71	36	48	29	38	24	28	24	29	21	25	183	239
<b>Total</b>														
E in sK	229	275	147	174	94	111	57	72	17	23	8	16	552	671
K in sE	62	84	52	69	40	51	29	46	53	67	42	58	278	374

**Table 1.** Insertions of Ewe/Kabiye parts of speech in Kabiye/Ewe sentences

The table shows that the total Ewe insertions in Kabiye sentences far outnumber the total Kabiye insertions in Ewe sentences, 671 tokens to 374. Across the board the percentage of Ewe parts of speech in Kabiye sentence is highest in Lome, and lowest in Pude. The frequency is particularly more noticeable in Lome, where Ewe insertions are favored in Kabiye sentences, making up 335 of the total 671 insertions from all three sites. By contrast, in Pude, Kabiye insertions are favored most, with 145 of the total 374 Kabiye-to-Ewe tokens from all sites.

For open classes within each site, the relative frequency is Noun > Verb > Adverb > Adjective (except in Pude, where Adverbs have a higher percentage (15/28, 54%) of Ewe elements in Kabiye sentences than do verbs (21/48, 44%)). The least frequently inserted Ewe part of speech in Kabiye sentences is adjectives (43%). This supports the hypothesis that, as Kabiye has a robust adjective and noun class system that Ewe does not have, Ewe adjectives could not be inserted without inflecting them with Kabiye affixes, but this is avoided. Furthermore, as Kagni (quoting Westermann 1930) points out, “il n’y a pas en Ewe des mots, qui sont exclusivement des adjectifs et que les expressions

qui font fonction d'adjectif sont soit des substantifs, soit des verbes et même des adverbes" (1989: 15).<sup>11</sup>

I observe that Kabiye speakers (particularly those in Lome) prefer switching into Ewe when speaking Kabiye than the other way round. This reflects a cross-linguistic observation in other language studies, namely, bilingual speakers often switch from their L1, usually their matrix language, to the embedded language (cf. Bokamba 1988, Nortier 1990, Myers-Scotton 1993b, Kamwangamalu 2000, Angermeyer 2005).

In order to give a more accurate comparison of matrix languages at each site, I relate the number of insertions to the total number of words uttered by the speakers (cf. Angermeyer 2005). The rate of EL insertions per ML words is shown in Table 2.

ML	Types	Tokens	Words in ML	Token/ ML words
<b>Lome</b>				
E in sK	291	335	12,053 (33%)	2.8%
K in sE	59	91	24,764 (67%)	0.3%
<b>Kara</b>				
E in sK	195	242	16,932 (58%)	1.4%
K in sE	102	138	12,241 (42%)	1.1%
<b>Pode</b>				
E in sK	66	94	19,972 (69%)	0.4%
K in sE	117	145	9,011 (31%)	1.6%

**Table 2.** Insertions of Ewe/Kabiye lexical items, per Matrix Language

This table shows that two main patterns are consistent. First, use of Ewe is favored in Lome, that is, 67% Ewe words for 33% Kabiye words. Second, use of Kabiye is favored in Pode, that is, 69% Kabiye words for 31% Ewe words. In Kara however, the use of the two languages seems more the same. One possible explanation is that Kara is the main commercial city of the Kara region, hence, not only are there many Ewe speakers, but more importantly, Ewe is usually the lingua franca, particularly in nearly all the main markets (see also Kozelka 1984 for a similar observation). Hence, unlike Lome where almost all Kabiye speakers speak Ewe, and Pode where the majority are Kabiye monolinguals, in Kara, use of Kabiye and Ewe is almost equal among the speakers.

The general direction of the switches in Lome and Kara is from Kabiye to Ewe. In Pode however, the direction of the speech is from Ewe to Kabiye. Interestingly, at the three sites, the morphosyntax of the sentences is always Kabiye, not Ewe, an indication that Kabiye is the ML (cf. Myers-Scotton 1993b, Nortier 1990). These results well corroborate my observations regarding the use of insertions by the speakers in general, and can be explained by the fact that most speakers in Pode are Kabiye monolinguals, while in Lome and Kara, most of them are fluent bilinguals.

In Kara and particularly in Lome, I observed that in everyday conversations Kabiye-Ewe bilinguals often insert many Ewe words into their Kabiye sentences. Hence, I would expect far more Ewe insertions than the data seem to show in Lome and Kara. A possible explanation for the apparent overall lower rate of Ewe insertions than expected is that speakers were told that the interview concerns the study of Kabiye. As a result, it is possible that speakers wanted to show that they were proficient in Kabiye, thereby constraining their usual frequency of inserting Ewe elements in their conversations (cf. Barnes and McDuling 1995).

<sup>11</sup> I would, however, point out that color terms like *yibo* 'black', *dzẽ* 'red', *xé* 'white', and so on, are exclusively adjectives in Ewe.

Even with this factor noted, the general findings indicated in the tables above broadly agree with those made by other researchers in language contact situations where one of the two languages is socially or economically dominant.

## 10. Conclusion

This study has investigated language contact phenomena between Kabiye and Ewe, through a sociolinguistic analysis of C-S within the Kabiye speech community in Togo. The historical status and the instrumental value of Ewe in the ‘market place’ (Calvet 1992) have led Kabiye speakers to increasingly borrow from and code-switch into Ewe. Increase in Kabiye-Ewe bilingualism has become prevalent among Kabiye speakers due to the prestige and socioeconomic pressure carried by Ewe, as well as its interethnic use as a lingua franca and language of wider communication.

I have shown that that even though Kabiye and Ewe are similar in certain respects, they are also different in key core grammar areas. Kabiye has a robust noun class system that Ewe does not have. In Kabiye, nouns and adjectives must always agree according to noun class. Hence, unlike some African noun class languages (e.g. Bantu languages), Kabiye noun class plays a crucial role in distinguishing borrowed items from switched or inserted items, particularly nouns. Furthermore, it has been shown that unlike Ewe inserted nouns and verbs, Ewe inserted adjectives do not take class affixes.

As the use of Ewe in the Kabiye community increases, the question remains whether Kabiye will be threatened by the popularity of Ewe. Future research in the domains of language use and language attitudes within the Kabiye community can help to address this important question.

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# Selected Proceedings of the 37th Annual Conference on African Linguistics

edited by Doris L. Payne and Jaime Peña

Cascadilla Proceedings Project Somerville, MA 2007

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