

CrossMark



The Position of Bono Dialect in Presumable Future in Atebubu Municipality in Ghana

Adu David Tuffour

Department of Languages,
Atebubu College of Education
Email: adutuffourdavid@gmail.com

This article is published by Royallite Global, P. O. Box 26454-Nairobi 00504 Kenya in the:

Research Journal in African Languages

Volume 1, Issue 1, 2020

© 2020 The Author(s)

This open access article is distributed under a Creative Commons Attribution (CC-BY) 4.0 license.

Article Information

Submitted: 20th September 2019

Accepted: 5th October 2019

Published: 24th January 2020

Conflict of Interest: No potential conflict of interest was reported by the author

Funding: None

Additional information is available at the end of the article



<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>

Abstract

This paper is a study into the position of Bono language in Atebubu community. The purpose was to find out the domains in which Bono dialect is used and also based on it to identify the phase in which the language can be placed, as far as the marked bilingualism model is concerned. Data collected for this study was analyzed using both quantitative and qualitative methods. The results proved that mostly the youth, aged between eighteen and forty five and children between the ages of eleven and seventeen do not speak the language in various domains. This is because, they see more prestige in speaking Asante Twi than Bono which is their local dialect. The theoretical framework used for the analysis were causality theory. Finally, based on the findings, it was identified that Bono dialect can be placed in phase three of the five phases that show the extinction processes and based on this, it was declared that the Bono dialect is gradually being abandoned in favour of Asante Twi.

Keywords: Bono language, language, Twi



Research Journal in African Languages
Full Terms & Conditions of access and use can be found at:
<https://royalliteglobal.com/index.php/african-languages>



1.0 Introduction

Since creation, language has always been a medium of communication is a code that one cannot do way with; Apart from being a means of communicating our thoughts and feelings language frames friendships, cultural ties and economic relationships of communities, nations and even human beings as well. (Baker, 2008; Brokhorst-Heng, 1999 & Fishman, 1994) Atebubu is one of the Municipal capital of Bono East Region. The town occupied by three different tribes; the Bono who are the natives, the Asante and Hausa. The Bono's in Atebubu have their own unique culture that makes them different from any other tribe in Ghana. They practice by using their Bono dialect, while the Asante's also practice theirs usually using Asante Twi. However, Asante Twi has become the lingua franca of the entire municipality because of that is the medium through which all socioeconomic activities are undertaken. Most of the villages that surrounding the town are occupied by Konkonbas and Dagaabas who are in the Zongo community. Hence, the language choice used for trade at the market is Asante Twi. Also, at churches, funerals and other public places and social gatherings it is the use of Asante Twi is common denominator. Since Bono language is not documented and hence not studied in school, children from that community go to school to study Asante Twi. Also, children from the Asante community have been enrolled in schools in the Bono community, and they make friends with them, so they all use Asante Twi to interact with one another, during recreation. As a result of these factors, the Bono community has now become diaglossic. Apart from home and making of libation or deep cultural practice, all other activities been education commerce and politics all is done by Asante Twi. As children from Bono grow, they adopt the Asante Twi as their second language. Another factor is inter-tribal marriages, higher education and some economic factors have caused most of the youth to either move from Bono community to stay among the Asantes within the town or have migrated entirely from Atebubu to different districts nearby or to other regions. As the 'Marked bilingualism mode' propounded by Batibo (1992, 1997) makes an assumption that language shift can take place when there is a state of bilingualism; and also, Kulick (1997) suggests that daily interactions attitude towards language and change can contribute to a shift in language and culture, the factors enumerated above shows that there is the possibility that the position of Bono dialect in Atebubu may face some threats or may endanger. This is because, most of the indigenous or natives have become bilingual with Bono being their first language and Asante their second language. In view of this, I have taken it upon myself to investigate the situation to find out the position of

the Bono language; whether it is been maintained or is progressively being abandoned by the people themselves.

2.0 Problem Statement

A lot of studies have gone into language shift and language maintenance. J. N. Akpanglo-Nartey and R. A. Akapanglo-Nartey (2012) investigated some endangered languages, focusing on Efutu and Ga- Damgbe; Boafo (2002) did a study on sociolinguistics survey of the Awutu-Efutu language area while Agyekum (2010) worked on international Language Shift where people are abandoning their native language in favour of English Language and intra- national Language Shift where people are abandoning their indigenous or native languages in favour of another Ghanaian Language that is attaining a lingua franca status. Meanwhile, Bono community in Atebubu Municipality of the Bono East Region of Ghana, which has become a bilingual speech community, has not seen any similar research concerning the position of the Bono language. Whether the people are maintaining their language or abandoning it in favour of Asante Twi is not known. Hence this work to examine the position of Bono dialect in Atebubu Municipality.

3.0 Literature Review

3.1.1 Language maintenance

“Language maintenance is a situation in which language maintains its vitality, even under pressure” (Batibo, 2004, p. 102). According to him, in a situation of language shift, there has been a strong resistance from the minor language to the pressures from the dominant language. This has been possible because, transmission of L1 to the children is active and perfect. There is a stable diglossic situation and the functions of L1 and L2 remain unchanged. Baker (2011), establishes that, in language maintenance, there is a relative language stability in the number and distribution of its speakers its proficient usage by children and adults and its retention in specific domains (for example, home, school, religious activities). Bernrabah, (2004) posits that language maintenance is continuous use of the mother tongue, regardless of the cultural pressures from a more prestigious or politically more dominant languages. This mean that language maintenance should be firmly positioned regardless of external, political, socio cultural, economical pressure. Auburgur (1990), based on the fact that language is said to be maintained when it is able to maintain its vitality even under pressure from a dominant language, and then comes out with models. He proposes five (5) factors that assist to maintain and sustain

proficiency in a minority language where speakers are confronted by dominant language. These are:

- A strict diglossic use of both the minority and dominant language.
- There should be an emotional attachment to the minority language to its use.
- The orality of the minority language must be backed by a written mode.
- The minority language must be sustained through a successful learning level of proficiency.
- Reinforcement must be done by other speakers of the language from the main source.

In reality, Auburgur is trying to maintain the fact that minority language needs constant speaking in all areas so as to maintain the language. It can be from the old to the new generation of backing it with written mode to enhance the maintenance of the language. Lucas (2002), attests to the fact that, efforts made by inside agents and outside institution as well as authorities to preserve a language or a dialect constituting a particular communities, depends on how often the local vernacular is used. He explains that there are factors which influence both language shift and maintenance and such is called, linguistic ideologies. According to him, speakers monitor their speech and their idea contact with each other by face- to- face interactions within a philosophical movement that describes the formal structure of their language. Fishman, (2007) states, that language maintenance and language shift is concerned with the relationship between change or stability in a habitual language use and ongoing psychological, social and culture processes. In reality, Fishman means that, if some speakers of a language stay in contact, and constantly use a language, it is most likely to maintain the language, however, when it deviates then a replacement sets in.

Fasold, (1990) cited in Nigel that language maintenance and shift is said to be double sides and the stronger language is numerically stronger as speakers are concerned, but in some cases, the majority of languages are spoken by dominant elite, may in fact be the first of the minority. This power differential may be either perceived or real with regards to language group. Lee (2009), also claims that a community's awareness of language and its responsible to its endangered language situation is a fundamental factor that will determine the future of its language. Again she says that there are other issues from the minority community's perspective that influence priorities. It indicates that the believe system of the community and the socio- political

context of intergroup relationship in a country are interlinking factors that determine language maintenance and competing priorities and its language status and intergroup relationship in the country. Fishman (1991) with the assertion that, in order to maintain an ethnic language, it must be enforced at home and in the community. Edwards (1992) mentions that language maintenance and loss broadly involves the status of policies, planning, attitude and intentions of both the state and the minority language community. When the above are observed, language is likely to be maintained. It could be understood from the above definitions and explanations that a language may come under several threats as a result of pressure from dominant and a more prestigious language, where there is a diglossia. However, when the minority language is able to maintain its vitality, that is when speakers continue to use the language in all domains, and keep on transmitting it to their young ones, this language will continue to be maintained.

4.0 Factors that help in maintaining language:

There are many factors that help in maintaining language, among which are domain factors, geographical concentration and ethnic identity.

4.1 Domain factors

Fishman, (1991) indicates that language can be maintained through several domains based on speakers' choices. The domains include home, friends, neighbors, community, religion, education and the media. Holmes (2013) establishes that the minority language is likely to be maintained and preserved by its speakers if it is used in multiple domains.

4.2 Geographical concentration

Research has justified that, geographical concentration of community language in a particular area can be very helpful for language maintenance. (Fishman, 1991, Clyne 2005 & Holmes 2013). Fishman (1991) indicates that community languages were better well maintained by minority groups who were more concentrated within certain geographical areas than those that were dispersed. According to Holmes (2013), Chinese who were living in China towns in the USA, were likely to maintain the Chinese Language than those who had left China – town areas.

4.3 Ethnic Identity

Fishman (1989), posits that, the minority language is an important tool for expressing cultural heritage and ethnic identity. Cavallaro (2005) also explains that language is the

key factor representing ethnic identity in multilingual and multicultural contexts. Fishman (1991) identifies a strong connection between language and identity as he establishes that when a language is destroyed. The root of an ethnic identity will also be destroyed. That is, when a language is lost the identity of the speakers of that language will also be destroyed. Because one is always identify by the language or the code he / she uses.

4.4 Language Shift

Batibo (2004), explains language shift as the situation where speakers abandon their language willingly or under pressure, in favour of another language, which then takes over as their means of communication and socialization. Ostler (2004) states that, language shift is a social phenomenon, and in this phenomenon, one language replaces another in a given society. In this situation the new language is adopted as a result of contact with another language community. He identifies language as a phenomenon which may be unplanned, and often unexplained. Maya (2009) attests, to the fact that, when a speech community through a contact situation, becomes bilingual and gradually stops using one of its two languages in favour of the other, then it means that there is a language shift. According to him, language shift is influenced by such factors as: speaker's attitude towards their language and the domains of the language use in the community. According to Fishman (1991) language maintenance must involve intergenerational transmission of the language. If intergenerational transmission of a language ceases, it can be said that speakers have shifted to another language. Kulick (1997) makes us understand that daily interaction with speakers of different languages, poor attitude towards a speaker's language, children, change and personhood can contribute to a shift in language and culture, which is beyond understanding and control of the people. According Agyekum (2010) there is international language shift where people abandon their native language in favour of English language and there is intra- national language shift where people abandon their indigenous language in favour of other Ghanaian language that is attaining a lingua franca status. The later is exactly what is happening in Atebubu Municipality. Akpanglo- Nartey and Akpanglo – Nartey (2012), establish that the rate at which a language shift and ultimately becomes endangered depends on the amount of pressure or attraction from the second language, and that the more pressure exerted on the L1 the faster the rete of shift. On the other hand, the more attractive L2 is to the L1 community the faster the shift. It can be understood from the concept made by the above authorities about language shift that before a speech community can shift from their indigenous language to the use of a another language, the there is a state of bilingualism. In this

situation, the indigenous language becomes a minority language while the contact language that bring about the bilingualism becomes a prestigious language. When this happens, the prestigious language will look more powerful and attractive to the speakers as they may not be able to withstand the pressures that it brings to the minority language. As a result, they end up shifting from using their indigenous language to use the prestigious language.

5.0 Marked bilingualism model

This is a model that was used to analyze the data that was collected for this study. It was propounded by Batibo (1992, 1997), following his language survey in Tanzania and Bostwane. This model is based on the assumption that;

- ✚ Language shift can only take place when there is a state of bilingualism.
- ✚ There must be a significant differences of prestige and status between the two language.
- ✚ The rate of language shift depends on the amount of pressure (or attraction) from the dominant language on one hand and the degree of resistance from minority language of the other hand.

The model further postulates five phase that a language goes through on its way to extinction as its speakers shift progressively to the other language.

Below are the phases:

Phase one: Relative monolingualism

- Speakers of a language are monolingual.
- They use their language in all domains.
- They are conservative, rural, and are not exposed to education, migration nor urban life.

Phase two: Bilingual with L1 predominance

- Here, L2 which is more prestigious language encroaches on L1.
- There is a diaglossic situation in which L2 is used in higher public functions; for inter-ethnic interaction, trade and local administration, etc.
- L1 is used in intra- ethnic interaction, and family life. It is used in most domains.
- There are instances of code- switching, but interference and borrowing from L2 are minimal.

Phase three: Bilingualism with L2 predominance

- L2 is the primary language in the stage.

- L2 increasingly takes over the place of L1, because it is used in all the domains that previously belonged to L1
- L2 gains a great prestige over L1, and the people become more at ease in speaking it.
- There the use of L2 in some family interactions.
- L1 is restricted to family and cultural activities.

Phase four: Restricted use of L1.

- Function of L1 has reduced in this stage because the speakers have lost the ability to use it in its original form.
- Only the aged are able to speak and are familiar with the linguistics form as original used.
- In this stage, all irregular forms of the language tend to be regularized, and syntactic rules are reduced.
- However, the speakers of that speech community have their personal names and their ethnic names retained.

Phase five: L1 as a substratum

- L2 replaces L1 because its predominance becomes great.
- L1 is no more used in the speech community.
- L1 is described as dead, although some of its ethnonym and its traditions are maintained.

A language may find itself in any of the stages described above as a result of the speakers coming into contact with other languages. The stage in which the language finds itself determines its position.

Research Methodology

I used a mixed method that is both qualitative and quantitative methods for this study. For the quantitative, some figures were needed to be compared. Qualitative was also used to determine the peoples' attitude towards Bono dialect base on the responses given. Both the quantitative and the qualitative helped me to determine the position of the Bono dialect, as far as the marked bilingualism model is concerned.

Data Collection Tools

The tool used for collecting data for this study were interview and questionnaire. On the 28th day of December, 2019 to 1st day of January, 2020 I went and conducted an interview at Atebubu in the Bono community. I recorded all the responses and later transcribed

them for the analysis. One hundred and twenty participants were used as interviewees to collect the data. They were put into group, and in each group members gave their opinions to each interview question. A day later, I distributed one hundred and twenty questionnaire to members of SDA church, during church service. It was a day of service and for that matter they were present in their numbers. The questionnaire was answered and was given back to me. Six days later I was at mosque during Friday prayers and distributed the other one hundred and twenty questionnaire I picked them after the prayers. I later went back and transcribed them and analyze the responses.

Table 1 **Sample size**

Gender	Number of respondents
Males	60
Females	60
Total	120

Table 2: **Distribution of sample by age group**

Age	Number of Respondents
Children (11-17yrs)	40
Youth (18-45yrs)	40
Aged (46-90yrs)	40
Total	120

Table 3: **Distribution of the sample by occupation and other category**

Occupation	Number of Respondents
Teachers	10
Students	20
House wives	15
Drivers	10
Civil Servants	10
Shop Owners	10
Retired Educationist	10
Migrants	10
Farmers	15
Traders	10

Total	120
--------------	-----

The data was collected in different settings with the help of town folks belonging to the Bono community Zongo community, Bono community and Low cost community. The questions were categorized under different areas based on proficiency, and attitudes around the use of the dialect.

Language Proficiency

Table 4: Age

Age	Number of respondents	Percentage (%)
Children (11 -17)	(40) 30	(100) 75
Youth (18 – 45)	(40) 35	(100) 87.5
Aged (46 – 80)	(40)40	(100) 100
Total	(120)105	(100) 87.5

The table above shows out of the total number of 120 respondents that represent the age groups of the people of the Bono community, 87.5% can speak the Bono dialect very well. This is encouraging.

Table 5: **Those who speak Bono dialect at home**

Bono spoken at home	Number of respondents	Percentage (%)
Yes	98	81.7
No	22	18.3
Total	120	100

Table 6: **Those speak Bono dialect as they live outside Bono community.**

Those who speak Bono outside Bono community	Number of respondents	Percentage (%)
Yes	15	12.5
No	105	87.5
Total	120	100

Table 7: **Those who speak Bono with their spouses**

Those who speak Bono with their spouses	Number of respondents	Percentage (%)
Yes	23	19.2
No	97	80.8
Total	120	100

Table 8: **Those who speak Bono dialect with their children.**

Those who speak Bono with their children	Number of respondents	Percentage (%)
Yes	26	21.7
No	94	78.3
Total	120	100

Table 9: **Those who speak Bono dialect with their workers in their farm.**

Those who speak Bono with their workers in their farm	Number of respondents	Percentage (%)
Yes	8	6.7
No	112	93.3
Total	120	100

Table 10: **Dialect used at work place, at market place and at social functions.**

Language used at work place.	Number of respondents	Percentage (%)
Bono	17	14.2
Asante Twi	103	85.8
Total	120	100

Table 11 Dialect used at market place

Language used at market place	Number of respondents	Percentages (%)
Bono dialect	12	10
Asante Twi dialect	108	90
Total	120	100

Table 12 Dialect used at social function.

Language used at social functions	Number of respondents	Percentages (%)
Bono dialect	09	7.5
Asante Twi dialect	111	92.5
Total	120	100

From the above tables, it was cleared that from table 5, that out of the 120 respondents 98 respondent Yes and 22 respondent No to whether they speak Bono dialect at home or not. This shows that, the home is the domain that the language is largely spoken or used. From table 6, the number of respondents who answered Yes to whether those who live outside the Bono community as a result of migration speak the language or not are 15 representing 12.5% out of 120 answered Yes, whilst 105 representing 87.5% answered No. In tables 7 and 8, the question was asked whether the speakers of Bono speak the dialect with their spouses and their children respectively or not the finding were almost the same. Table 7. 23 representing 19.2% answered Yes whilst 97 representing 80.8% answered No. With Table 8. there was significant changed of results. 26 representing 21.7% answered Yes whilst 94 representing 78.3% answered No to the question posed. Table 9, when we talk about the lives of Atebubu the question was associated with predominant people farmers. Wanted to find out the language or code used during their farming activities with their workers 8 representing 6.7% answered Yes whilst 112 representing 93.3% answered No. Table 10, shows that only 17 out of 120 respondents 14.2% said that they speak Bono at their work places. 103 respondents that represent 85.8% said they speak Asante Twi with their colleagues at their work places. Table 11 shows that only 12 out of 120 respondents which is 10% said that they speak Bono dialect at the market places. 108 represent 90% respondents said they speak Asante Twi dialect with their customers during their interactions in the market. Another positive environment complementing the negative indicators of Bono dialect. Table 12 shows that

only 09 out of 120 respondents indicating 7.5% said that they speak Bono dialect at the social functions. 111 respondents out of 120 which is 92.5% said they speak Asante Twi dialect at social functions. This means that intar – national language which is Asante Twi dialect is putting pressure on the contact language to shift.

The analysis above shows that although the people of Atebubu Bono speak their dialect. The home is the only domain that they speak the language. This is because, Asante Twi seems to have dominated in the speech community and it has become the second dialect of the people of Bono. There are some of the natives who have got married to their spouses who speak Asante Twi and other languages, and there are others who have migrated from the community to live in different towns where Asante Twi and other languages are spoken. As a result of this contact, most of them speak Asante Twi with their spouses and even their children at home as they live outside Bono community. In order to get the real picture of how Bono dialect is performing, interview was conducted to seek the opinions from the people of Bono in Atebubu and was analyzed qualitatively. As mentioned earlier. Three areas of the Municipal were used Zongo line, Bono line and Low cost. In each area, different categories of respondents were interviewed. Children between the ages of 11- 17, Youth between the ages of 18 – 45 and the aged between the ages of 46-90 were engaged to respond to the questions. The responses were coded in relation to the research questions in correlation with the purpose or the objective of the study.

Analysis of research question one (1)

Is Bono language used in all domains by its speakers of Atebubu?

Responses to the interview questions revealed that, it is not in all domains that the language is used. Most of the respondents made it known that the language is mostly used only at home by those living in the community. On the other hand, those who are married to non- natives of Bono do not speak the language at home, let alone to speak it with their children. This is because their spouses are unable to speak it not understands it. So in order to have a good communication or interaction at home, they are compelled to speak Asante Twi. With those who have migrated to other places outside the town they do not use it at all at home. Outside the home while some aged said they use the Bono dialect, most of the children and the youth said they do not use it outside. Below are some of the responses to the interview questions;

Aged 1: "An instrument used to define any human being is language. But not some body's language. This means that my dialect is my heritage and I need to preserve it so I speak

it. I am proud of mu dialect". (Speaking in Bono language :(akade[a b[de da nnipa biao adi ne ne kasa na mmom ny[nipa foror] kasa. Yei kyer[s[m'ani gye me kasa he ho yie]firi s[]som bo mam nti w]s[s[meb] ho bane).

I know that our language is our heritage so, why should we stop speaking it?

Aged 2. I don't think it is good to speak Asante Twi at the expense of our Bono dialect. I will never stop speaking it.

Some children and youth 3: But some of the children and the youth who are schooling responded that they do not speak the language when they are outside their homes. This is because most of their friends who are the native speakers of Asante Twi cannot speak the Bono dialect. The interesting aspect of the situation is that Asante Twi speakers understand Bono but cannot speak it. According to some of them their friends who are Asantes tease them when they speak Bono dialect.

Youth 1: "When I am at home, I speak the Bono dialect with my siblings and my parents but anytime I am out from home with friends I speak Asante Twi".

Youth (a parent) "I live in Tamale so Asante Twi and Dabgani are the local language that my children speak. Therefore, I don't speak Bono with them. It is only when I come for visit or funerals that I speak Bono with my parents after all Asante Twi is dominant Ghanaian language now".

Youth 3: (a Student) "I don't speak Bono dialect at all because I can't speak it well and I don't want to make mistakes in communication. I have lived in the boarding house for all my school life so is Asante Twi and English that is been used on campus. Again, nobody will be willing to speak Bono dialect with you even if you want to".

Youth 4 (a parent) "Oh! I lost interest in speaking it since infancy I remember very well when I was a young boy we used to live with some Asante Twi speakers in the same house. Anytime I tried to speak Bono dialect with my siblings they would start teasing laughing at me".

A Trader: For me once I am a trader I use both Bono and Asante Twi but use Asante Twi more than Bono. Because most of my business partners speak Asante Twi and English. Apart from that in the market, Asante Twi is the language that is used to persuade customers. In fact that language is my business language hardly to hear somebody speaking Bono dialect in the process of bargaining.

Child: I speak Bono dialect with my parents only at home. At school I speak Asante Twi with my friends because the rules and regulation of the school does not permit the speaking of Bono. This is because anytime I speak Bono dialect in school my friends would

ask *“Kasa b[n nso ne no?”* Meaning: *what type of dialect is that? Whenever I hear this, I become embarrassed and feel reluctant to continue speaking it.*

Drivers: *We work all day with passengers to their destinations. So we speak Asante Twi more than Bono. It is just the few hours that we spend at home that we speak Bono dialect. They went on to establish that because of the nature of their work, they are more fluent in Asante Twi than in Bono dialect.*

Teachers; *We our work defined the language we should use. In school the medium of instruction is English and Asante Twi is subject taught no place for Bono dialect therefore, it will be difficult if not impossible for us to use Bono dialect in place of Asante Twi. I in particular don't remember the last time I use Bono dialect in my interaction.*

The second research question sought **to find out the respondents opinions about how they see the position of the Bono dialect.** Most of the responses that came was that, from the look of what is going on they think that the language is gradually getting lost.

Aged: *“I know a time will come that our language may get lost. We the aged will die and go but the youth who are to transmit the language into the next generation or their children have decided not to speak it”.*

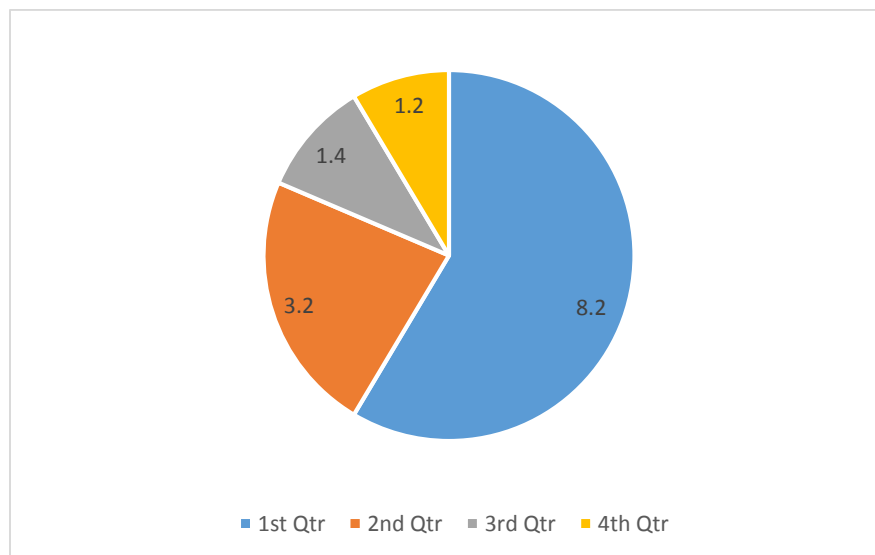
Youth *“I wish I could speak the Bono dialect. But since I cannot speak it how can I help my siblings to speak it? Now all my siblings do not speaking the dialect, I know it will affect all my descendants. Indeed our dialect is getting lost”.*

Fishman (1991) In general, success in the revival of a threatened language depends on a number of factors. A language can only be revived if it has not yet reached a point of no return. Fishman devised a vitality scale, which he named GILD (graded intergenerational disruption scale). According to this scale, the level of vitality of a language can be measured in terms of the age group in which a language is still spoken. If a language is still spoken by those of child – bearing age (say, 20-45), the chances of the parents passing the language on to the children is high as long as the parents are encouraged or given incentive to do so. But if the language is only spoken by those of non- child – bearing age (60 and above) the chances would be that even if encouraged or given an incentive, parents would not be able to pass it on to their children as only the old people speak the language. Bono dialect in Atebubu was in support of the later but not the former. The analysis of the respondents answers clearly indicated that, the youth don't speak the dialect and the parents do use the language only at home.

Discussions and conclusion

From the data analyzed above it could be seen that Bono dialect spoken in the Bono speech community of Atebubu is facing some threats. This is as result of the fact that this community shares boundaries with Asantes who are Asante Twi speakers in the same town Atebubu. This has made the members of Bono speech community bilingual with Asante Twi which is their L2 predominant. Hence the only domain in which Bono dialect is used is the home. Asante Twi is used in performing all social activities within the community, including all business transaction. The pie chart below tells us the division of the various languages in Atebubu Municipality and also give direction of the position of the Bono dialect in Atebubu speech community. The chart represents the native speakers only. Asante Twi, Bono, Hausa and other Languages.

- 1ST Qtr
- 2nd Qtr
- 3RD Qtr
- 4th Qtr.



The position of the Bono dialect in Atebubu Municipality is the 4th Qtr. The 2nd Qtr is Hausa and the 3rd Qtr is the other dialects apart from the dialect mention above. The 1st Qtr is the Asante Twi. This is extent to which the Bono language is been used in its own land. It is enough justification to say that there is a complete shift of Bono dialect in Atebubu Municipality. And if care is not taking this phenomenon can lead to language death.

Although the aged are trying to maintain the language, youth and children are rather shifting from it. It was realized that most of the youth live elsewhere outside the Bono

community and they do not speak the language to their children. Workers including drivers who are native of the community do not do any interaction with their native language outside their homes. So it could be seen from the analysis that since the youth and the children who are capable of transmitting the dialect to the generation unborn are rather not speaking the dialect, then it means that the Bono dialect has no future. National language policies may help to preserve or maintain a language or a dialect if they support some practical or utilitarian use of a language. However, in order for a national language policy to be useful in language maintenance, it must be implemented. Thus, although the Ghana government is yet to instituted a supportive language policy that promotes all indigenous languages to national language status, Bono dialect speakers should used code switching as a prudent method to work against the death of their dialect.

Based on the “Marked bilingualism model” the Bono dialect in Atebubu Bono speech community is progressively shifting and it can be placed in phase three of the stages. This is because, it has been clearly seen from the data that Asante Twi which is L2 is being used frequently, taking over most of the domains that used to belong to L1 Bono dialect. Bono dialect is now restricted to family activities. Also, Asante Twi which is L2 has gained a strong prestige over Bono dialect, and it seems the Bono speakers feel more at ease in speaking Asante Twi, especially when they are outside their homes than speaking Bono dialect. According to Auburger’s (1990) proficiency resistance model, such stability can only result if there is a strict diglossic situation, a written mode of the minority language, strong emotional attachment by the speakers, a normal intertransmission of the language and regular reinforcement by in- migration. In more recent years a number of international organizations and non- governmental groups have shown concern over the global trend to language shift and death. Indeed Bono dialect spoken by the people of Atebubu speech community has shifted and need particular attention to avoid language death.

References

- Agyekum, K (2010). *Language shift: A case study of Ghana*. Retrieved from <http://www.researchgate.com>
- Akpanglo-Nartey, J. N. and Akpanglo- Nartey, R. A. (2012). *Some Endangered Language of Ghana*. Retrieved from www.wojakugh.com
- Batibo, H. M. (2004) *Language Shift and Death*, The handbook of sociolinguistic. London: Blackwell Publishing
- Baker, C. (2011). *Foundation of Bilingual Education and Bilingualism*, 5th Edition S.I Multilingual matters.
- Benrabah, M. (2004). *Languages and Politics in Ageria*, Nationalism and Ethnic Politics. Retrieved from <https://www.tandfonline.com>
- Bokhorst-Heng, W. (1999). *Language is more than a language*, Singapore. National University of Singapore, Centre for Advanced studies.
- Cavallro, F. (2005). Language Maintenance Revisited: An Australian Perspectives. *The Journal of the national Association of bilingual Education*, 29(3)
- Clyne, M. (2005). *Australia's Language potential*, Sydney: University of New Wales Press.
- Edward, J (1992). *Maintenance and Loss Towards a Typology of Minority Language Situations*.
- Fasold, R. F. (1990). *The sociolinguistics of society*. Basil Blackwell.
- Fishman, J. (1991) *Reversing Language Shift: Theoretical and Empirical Foundation of Assistance to Threatened Languages*. Clevedon: Multilingual Matters.
- Fishman, J. (1989). *Language and Ethnicity in Minority Sociolinguistic perspective*. Clevedon: Multilingual Matters.
- Holmes, J. (2013). *An introduction to sociolinguistics*. 4th Edition, New York Pearson.
- Jagodic, D. (2011). *Between Language Maintenance and shift: The sloveinan Italy Today and Tomorrow*, Sloven Research Institute. Date Retrieved 11th December, 2019
- Kulick, D. (1997). *Language shift and culture Reproduction*: UK: Cambridge University Press.
- Lee, E. (2009). *Language Maintenance and Competing Priorities at Portuguese Settlement*. Malacca Sunway University. Retrieved from <https://books.google.com.gh>
- Maya, R. (2009) *Language Shift and Speech Community: Sociolinguistic change in Garifuna Community in Belize*. <https://resipotory.upenn.edu/dissertation/>. Com.
- Panwels, A. (2016). *Language Maintenance and shift*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Poh, K. (1972). *Akuapem handbook*. Accra: Ghana Publishing Company.