

REQUEST FORMULATION AMONG SMALL HOLDER FARMERS: A PRELIMINARY STUDY IN SOME SELECTED SUBURB COMMUNITIES OF ACCRA, GHANA

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ABSTRACT

Request formulation is a common characteristics of humans and have been studied in most communities in Ghana. However, research on the nature of request formulation among small holder farmers is limited in some suburb communities of Accra including Abokobi, Michel Camp, Teshie and La. This study investigated the nature of request formulation among small holder farmers in these communities. The study employed qualitative approach and descriptive research design. Self-reported data were collected from 20 small holder farmers using interview. The data was analyzed using thematic content analytical procedure. The results of the study revealed that small holder farmers in the suburb communities of Accra used varied forms of request formulations in their work places. These comprised imperative, interrogative and declarative moods. The study further found that in all requests made by small holder farmers in the studied communities, there are compliances that follow immediately. The study recommends that request formulation among small holder farmers should be enhanced since it promotes harmonious relationship among these groups of people in all endeavors where communication is relevant.

Keywords: Small holder farmers, request formulation, Suburbs communities, Accra, Ghana.

INTRODUCTION

Human beings and language cannot be separated from each other in society. The human species created by God as a social beings uses language as a form or a medium of communication. Everyone knows and understands language as an effective medium to express ideas and thoughts. By using language, they reveal their ideas, express their happiness and sadness, make a joke with others, give information, command someone to do something, influence someone and etc. In this way, many forms of expressions are used and this varies from language to language, and tribe to tribe. For example in Ghana there are so many languages and Ga is one of them, besides Akan, Ewe, Fante and other languages. The Gas are the smallest group of people out of the sixteen regions of Ghana (Huang, J Ding 2016). They form fishing and small holder farming communities along the coast of Accra. The language they speak is Ga. Farming is done on both large and small scale basis. The land on which they farm are leased so they have to share the produce into a certain percentage and part given to the land owner(s). If the land is too big, they hire laborers who work by day for a fee or they work with their own children (Huang, J Ding 2016).

The people of Accra are Ga's who form a small population of the entire nation. They are small group of people found on the south-eastern part of Ghana and along the coast of Accra - the capital city of Ghana. They are made up of literates, illiterates and semi-literates. The Ga language belongs to the New Kwa section of the Niger Congo Language Family. Their closest Linguistic neighbors are the Dangme and their language is classified under the Nyo sub group

of New Kwa (Williamson 1989). Being coastal people, their major occupation is fishing. A few of them however do vegetable farming for their livelihood.

Ghana's agriculture predominantly consists of small-holder farmers, constituting about 90% of Ghanaian farmers (AgSSIP, 2005). Small holder farmers in Ghana have been around for more than a century (AgSSIP, 2005). In Accra for example, many small holder farmers farm at home; several studies have estimated that half of Accra's residents have small "enclosed-space" backyard farms or gardens, a number similar to many other African cities (AgSSIP, 2005). Though urban farming was not as common here before the 1970s, in 1972 the government launched a program called Operation Feed Yourself to encourage Ghana's urban population to cultivate their private land, in part to ameliorate the economic crisis that was devastating the country. Though the program is now defunct, it left a legacy of family gardens in urban areas. Furthermore, many individuals in Accra's today, particularly those living in its suburbs, still prefer to have small to medium backyard gardens to cater for their domestic foodstuff needs. Small scale farming has driven Ghana's economic growth in recent years and remains the primary way most average Ghanaians earn their living, especially the poor.

Being small holder farmers, the people of Ga exhibit several forms of request formulation. Request formulation is an expression or act of asking an addressee to do something for the hearer. Trosborg (1995) defines a request as an illocutionary act whereby a speaker (requester) conveys to a hearer (requestee) that he/she wants the requestee to perform an act which is very beneficial for him/her. The act may be a request for non- verbal activity, i.e. a request for good and services; and a request for an object, an action or some kind of services, i.e. a request for information. A request is somehow more polite than an order since a request is believed as asking somebody to do something than telling somebody to do something.

Request formulation can be seen in any type of conversation, whether the interlocutors are educated or not, looking at education here can be fun because we have the classroom education gotten from books and the education gotten from the home which is cultural and traditional. Both ways, learners are expected to be linguistically competent. Here, forms of addresses like nicknames or pronouns or endearment terms can be used. Request formulation is a common characteristic of small-scale farmers in Accra. Requests can be made through indirect speech acts. If a statement with an intonation that looks like a question is not answered but rather acted upon, it is seen as a perfect answer to a request – as in, "could you move over a bit?" in this request, you do not expect your Interlocutor to answer, though he or she may do so, by just performing the action. Mostly, requests are made indirectly. Generally, requests cannot be dealt with fully without mentioning address forms. These are very important because they have a direct link to requests. Agbedor (2000), citing Brown and Gil (1960), talks of power relations. That is they are guided by such social indicators as age, caste, race and occupation. This exists between parent and child, boss and subordinates, teacher and pupil, farmers and fishermen. It can also be between adult to adult, adult to child, child to child or child to adult. In this wise a speaker may have power over the addressee or vice versa.

Power relations can be transferred into the making of requests. Among the Gas, a requester who is older, say, a parent has the power to frame the request in any form. If the requestee is a minor he or she is obliged to react positively or answer positively. The parent may use polite words by adding expressions like please, (ofaine) even to a minor. Sometimes, some requests can be made rudely, especially, in boss-subordinate relationships or even in parent child relationships, as well as among farmers. In making requests, the way we address people is very important. The question is: how do we go about it? We can address our interlocutors by their

day names, appellations, first names, titles only, titles and last names. Agbedor (2000) states that social status, social distance, age, power, formality and rank also affect requests formulation in many forms. All these come under power (status) and solidarity (intimacy).

As in the case of address forms, request formulation can come together with some para-linguistic features and pragmatic particles like loud pitch to project certain effects; requests, however, cannot; because among the Gas, it is not the best to make any form of request with a loud pitch. For example, when one goes to the money lender or a relative or even a friend to borrow money, it is with a somber or a humble attitude that the request is made. Sometimes it is even made in low or hushed tones. It has been stated above that all languages employ different forms of putting up requests, though they all arrive at the same end of soliciting assistance. For some, request is an imposition. For others it is a face threatening act. For some, it is a normal daily affair.

Politeness in request making is another characteristic amongst the Ga. Politeness serves to diminish potential threats in the continual interactive balancing of one's own and others face. In other words, speakers seem to weaken face threatening acts by using a series of strategies called politeness. One of these strategies is the use of indirect speech acts. According to Brown and Levinson (1987) the notion of face is universal. By this, they mean that every language community have a system of politeness but the details of the system vary because face is related to the most fundamental cultural ideas about the nature of social persona, honour and virtue, shame and redemption and thus to religious concepts.

In many languages, when formulating a small request, one will tend to use language that stresses in-group membership and social similarity. When making a request that is somewhat big, one uses the language of formal politeness (indirect speech acts, hedges, apologies for intrusion) and finally when making the sort of request that it is doubtful one should make at all, one tends to use indirect expressions (implicatures). Implicatures is a term derived from the work of the philosopher Grice (1988) and now frequently used in Linguistics as part of the study of conversational structure. Conversational implicatures refer to the implications which can be deduced from the form of an utterance to the basis of certain co-operative principles which govern the efficiency and normal acceptability of conversations. For example, "there is some chalk on the floor" means "you ought to pick it up"; that is to say, the relationship between language and logical expression and the conditions which affect the appropriateness of utterances. There are also ways by which a speaker can signal a wish not to impose. These are hedging devices that reduce the strength of an utterance and since this goes for the request too, it is very appropriate. According to Holmes (1996), these devices are aimed at reducing the imposition experienced by the person that the directive is addressed to.

Politeness in speech is described in terms of positive and negative FACE (Brown and Levinson- 1978) respectively, that is, the idea of pondering to the other's desire to be liked and admired and not to suffer imposition. Both forms according to Brown's study of the Tzeltal language (1980), are used more frequently by women, whether in mixed or single-sex pairs. This suggests for Brown a greater sensitivity in women than have men to the face needs of others. In short, women are to all intents and purposes largely politer than men. However, negative face politeness can be potentially viewed as weak language because of its associated hedges and tag questions. Yule (1996) also talks of politeness as ways of being tactful, modest and nice to other people.

In linguistics, however, the concept of ‘face’ (p. 134)—one’s public self-image- is the emotional and social sense of self that everyone has and expects everyone to recognize. We also talk of Face Threatening Acts (FTA’S) that is when we say something that represents a threat to another person’s self-image. There is also what is termed as Face Saving Acts (FSA) where question forms in indirect speech acts removes assumption of social power and this makes a request less threatening to another person’s self-image. There are two types of face, a negative face- the need to be independent and have freedom from imposition and a positive face -where there is the need to be connected to belong, be a member of a group. Japanese use language to reinforce emotional ties that bind all together to forge social harmony. Ambiguity and indirectness are highly prized linguistic features among the Japanese. Children were taught to respond positively to requests or overtures regardless of their own individual feelings – an emphasis on Japanese norms of empathy for others and overall social harmony (Clancy, 1986).

According to Odonkor (2001), the choice of words and linguistic forms used in the formulation of requests are determined by social factors such as age, status, power, degree of familiarity between participants. He argued that indirect speech acts are accepted as down toners and that the above mentioned mitigators show politeness. He found descriptive labels such as *migbogbohekalɔ* – my spouse (in Ga), an endearment term which shows or expresses admiration and also enhances positive face. It is worth mentioning that requests have been looked at locally in Dangme. Though he did not look at that of the small scale farmers, his work enhanced this research because, the researcher got insight into mitigators, hedges and boosters and how small scale farmers formulate their requests. *This study focuses on request formulation among small scale farmers in some selected communities in the suburbs of greater Accra.*

Materials and Methods

This study was community based cross sectional survey which sought to investigate the *requests formulation among small holder farmers in some selected communities (Abokobi, Michel Camp, Teshie and La) in the suburbs of Accra.* Qualitative research designs was employed. Qualitative research involves collecting and analyzing non-numerical data, (text, video or audio) to understand concepts, opinions or experiences. It can also be used to gather in-depth insights into a problem. Qualitative approach was used and it was followed by descriptive research design. Because this research was done in the community, the places used for this work was Abokobi, Teshie, La and Michel Camp. Twenty (20) small holder farmers comprising 10 male and 10 female formed the sample size. All these people had the ability to communicate well and could therefore make requests. Purposive sampling procedures was therefore used to select the sample. The ages of the respondents ranged between 20 to 35 years. The participants were a mixture of literates and semi-literates and school dropouts.

Data was collected using interview. The instrument reliability and validity were tested after initial development through extensive literature review, discussions with experts and colleagues as well as test-retest method. The interview was conducted with 20 small holder farmers purposively selected from 4 communities comprising Abokobi, Teshie, La and Michel Camp all in the suburb of Accra. The study participants were encouraged to provide detailed answers to the items on the interview guide. This design allows the researchers to create a rich, thick description of the data. Each interview session lasted between 20-30 minutes and was audiotaped. The interview sections were later transcribed for analysis. Ethical issues such as consent for photographing, audio recording of participants’ voices and opportunity to opt out of the survey, was strictly adhered to throughout the data collection periods. The data was collected between August and September 2019.

Data Analysis

The focus on qualitative data (text) rather than on numbers is the most important feature of qualitative analysis. The data collected using the interview was analyzed using thematic content analysis procedure. Applying this procedure, the audiotaped self-reported data collected from the 20 small scale farmers using interview were first transcribed verbatim into Microsoft words and then analyzed against thematic content. Relevant illustrative quotes that reflected group opinions and views on requests formulations were identified and used to support the detailed descriptive analyses of the final themes. The Ga and English versions of the data collected were presented side by side, with the former presented first followed by the latter. The researcher also used knowledge of the social background and the cultural conventions of the participants to analyze the data collected. The data was then described using disposition (mood) and clause types. The meaning of a texts, was then negotiated and validated among the study participants and community of interpreters. This was done to the extent that some agreement was reached about meaning of request formulation among the participants at a particular time and place.

Results

A request according to (Trosborg, 1995) is an illocutionary act whereby a speaker conveys to a hearer that he/she wants the hearer to perform an act which is for the benefit of the speaker. The phenomena of requests formulation in this study happened in small holder farms. The results of the interview on requests formulation among the small holder farmers are presented in Table 1 below.

Table 1: The transcribed results of the interview on requests formulation among the small holder farmers in Ga and their interpretations in English.

Description of Abbreviations

SG-Singular

NEG-Negative

QUE- Question

PL-Plural

EMP-Emphatic

REQUEST FORMULATION IN GA	MANIFEST ANALYSIS (What study participants said with nothing assumed about it)	INTERPRETIVE ANALYSIS (What study participants meant by the responses- what was inferred or implied by the responses)
<i>Transcribed Requests Made by Small Holder Farmers-Group 1</i>		
<i>Oshwie ameo 'e no nu?</i>	<i>You SG pour tomato the top water?</i>	<i>Have you watered the tomato?</i>
<i>Kenteŋi enyie otao?</i>	<i>Basket's how many you SG want.</i>	<i>How many baskets do you want?</i>
<i>Kenteŋi enyie otao?</i>	<i>Basket's how many you SG want.</i>	<i>How many baskets do you want?</i>
<i>Kenteŋi enyie otao?</i>	<i>Basket's how many you SG want.</i>	<i>How many baskets do you want?</i>
<i>Negbe nyemami yoo?</i>	<i>Where you PL mother is?</i>	<i>Where is your mother?</i>
<i>Nuumo 'ebe sebei nee amedarako?</i>	<i>Old man QUE gardeneggs these they are not big?</i>	<i>Oldman, these garden eggs are not big enough.</i>

<i>Abele'ε kotokui enyie ona?</i>	<i>Maize the, saks how many you SG got.</i>	<i>How many sacks of maize have you got?</i>
<i>Otseko sebe ηmene, aloo eta momo?</i>	<i>You SG pluck NEG garden egg today, or it finished already.</i>	<i>Haven't you harvested garden eggs today or it's already finished?</i>
<i>Namε ke nibii'ε baaya jara le nε?</i>	<i>Who and things the will go market the on?</i>	<i>Who will take the foodstuffs to the market?</i>
Transcribed Requests Made by Small Holder Farmers-Group 2		
<i>Faa naa amεε nu ye hewε obaaba mra. (Proverb in request formulation)</i>	<i>Proverb in request formulation. River front they wait water at so you SG will come early.</i>	<i>Proverb in request formulation. Since you need it, you must come early.</i>
<i>Keji obi yaje shi ni epila'a obaamε emli da</i>	<i>If your child goes play and she get hurt hold her first.</i>	<i>If your child gets hurt, you take care of him first (before punishment).</i>
<i>Mahe kεmi</i>	<i>I will buy kenkey</i>	<i>I will buy kenkey</i>
<i>Mahe shitε daa'a eko</i>	<i>I will buy pepper drink the sum.</i>	<i>I will buy some of the pepper drink.</i>
<i>Ni nii'ε gbee shi'ε owieεε</i>	<i>When thing the fall down the you SG did not speak.</i>	<i>When the thing fell down you kept quiet.</i>
<i>Bo hu oowie pii tsε</i>	<i>You too you SG talk plenty much.</i>	<i>You are talking too much.</i>
<i>Kεfee'ε ηhie gboε bo ye wiemε mli ee!</i>	<i>At times my face dies you in speaking. (EMP).</i>	<i>I accord you respect when I am speaking with you</i>
<i>Nyεkeyaa, mε fεε mε fiofio</i>	<i>You PL take go everyone small.</i>	<i>Take it away; everyone will get a little portion.</i>
<i>KεemεTsaatey akε eha mi faif</i>	<i>Tell name of person that he give me five.</i>	<i>Tell Tsaatey to give me five cedis.</i>
<i>Kwε! daa'a nyekpaa numε ee.-</i>	<i>Hey! drink the you PL stop drinking EMP</i>	<i>Hey! you must stop drinking.</i>
<i>Nyεtsia nyemaa shi ee</i>	<i>You PL pull you PL put down EMP.</i>	<i>Pull it down.</i>
<i>Nnane shi edε la ko ni jeeε shwεmε</i>	<i>My leg under it hot some EMP not play.</i>	<i>The sand under my feet is so.</i>
<i>Ha maha bo sidii ohai enyε nuumo'ε</i>	<i>Let me give you SG cedis hundred two oldman.</i>	<i>My father, your price is too high.</i>
<i>Mami, fetilaiza ni akeshwie nibii'ε anε jara wa</i>	<i>Woman fertilizer which it pour things the price high.</i>	<i>Woman, the cost of fertilizer is high.</i>
<i>Ofaine afti nεε ntεooo sebe</i>	<i>Please year this I nurse NEG garden egg.</i>	<i>I did not nurse gardeneggs this year please.</i>
<i>Awo ofaine sidii oha eshεεε !</i>	<i>Mother please, cedis hundred it reach NEG</i>	<i>Mother please hundred cedis is not enough.</i>
<i>Yaahu akofii'ε ashishi</i>	<i>Go weed mounds around</i>	<i>Go and weed around the mounds</i>
<i>Naa, ke shitε ene aya shikpaa</i>	<i>Name of girl, with pepper this go hawk</i>	<i>Naa, go and sell this pepper.</i>
<i>Buamε jwei fεε naa ni osha</i>	<i>Gather grass all mouth and you SG burn.</i>	<i>Gather all the grass and burn.</i>
<i>Kε jatsui'ε ayamamε gbe'ε he</i>	<i>Take loads the go put roadside the it.</i>	<i>Put the loads by the roadside</i>

<i>Yaahu akofii'ε ashishi</i>	<i>Go weed mounds around. Go and weed around the mounds.</i>	<i>Go and weed around the mounds.</i>
<i>Naa, ke shitε ene aya shikpaa</i>	<i>Name of girl, with pepper this go hawk</i>	<i>Naa, go and sell this pepper.</i>
<i>Mami, fetilaiza ni akeshwie nibii'ε anε jara wa.</i>	<i>Woman, fertilizer which it pour things the price high;</i>	<i>Woman, the cost of fertilizer is high.</i>
<i>Ofaine afi nεε nteoo sebe</i>	<i>Please year this I nurse NEG gardenegg</i>	<i>I did not nurse gardenegg this year please.</i>
<i>Awo ofaine sidii oha eshεε!</i>	<i>Mother please, cedis hundred it reach NEG</i>	<i>Mother please hundred cedis is not enough</i>
<i>Oshwie ameo'ε nε nu?</i>	<i>You SG pour tomato the top water?</i>	<i>Have you watered the tomato?</i>
<i>Kenteji enyie otao?</i>	<i>Basket's how many you SG want</i>	<i>How many baskets do you want?</i>
<i>Ataa Oko, enyie okε nha?</i>	<i>Name of person, how much you SG said I should give?</i>	<i>How much do you say I should give, Ataa Oko?</i>
<i>Ke ene fata he'ε, kenteji enyie owo?</i>	<i>If this add it the, baskets how many you SG fill?</i>	<i>In addition to this basket, how many altogether have you filled?</i>
<i>Nεgbenyemami yεε?</i>	<i>Where you PL mother is? Where is your mother?</i>	<i>Where you PL mother is? Where is your mother?</i>
<i>Nuumo'ε be sebei nε amedarako?</i>	<i>Old man QUE garden eggs these they are not big?</i>	<i>Old man, these garden eggs are not big enough</i>
<i>Abele'ε kotokui enyie ona?</i>	<i>Maize the, sacks how many you SG got</i>	<i>How many sacks of maize have you got?</i>
<i>Otseko sebe ηmene, aloo eta momo?</i>	<i>You SG pluck (NEG) garden egg today, or it finished already.</i>	<i>Haven't you harvested garden eggs today or it's already finished?</i>
<i>Otseko sebe ηmene, aloo eta momo?</i>	<i>You SG pluck (NEG) garden egg today, or it finished already.</i>	<i>Haven't you harvested garden eggs today or it's already finished?</i>
<i>Namε ke nibii'εbaaya jara le nε?</i>	<i>Who and things the will go market the on?</i>	<i>Who will take the foodstuffs to the market?</i>

DISCUSSION

This study investigated the *request formulation among small holder farmers in some selected communities in the suburbs of Accra*. The study found varied forms of request formulations among small scale farmers in the studied communities-Abokobi, Michel Camp, Teshie and La.

The small holder farmers have a way of formulating their requests which is not so different from that of other farmers. Their requests formulation has been put into three different distinct moods: imperative, interrogative and declarative. The slight difference is that, their moods are not accompanied with screaming or insults and also that they know about face threats so they avoid it. There are different scenes of the data in all three moods for the small holder farmers. These are: when they were preparing their farm; when they were transplanting nursed seeds; when they were weeding around and when harvesting for the market. The places of work largely influenced their language, the farmer is in the bush where there is serenity, and there is nothing there that would make him shout. The farmer at a certain stage relaxes, he only goes to the farm to take a look at how the crops are fairing, remove a few weeds here and there, sleep a little and go home. The farmer does not have a crowd with him most of the time even

at harvest time. A small scale farmer, who practices subsistence farming and who has farmhands does not even have to shout orders all the time. He has the chance to go round the farmhands and give instructions or even call the workers together to give instructions. Even when it comes to requests, he thinks of impositions and makes polite requests.

The study also found that various moods including interrogative, declarative and imperative are used by the small holder farmers in their request making.

Interrogative Mood

An interrogative mood is a form of a verb that is applied to ask questions. Some of the small scale farmers are either young men, middle aged men or older men. Some work with their family, others with relatives or friends. The request:

'oshwie ameo 'ε nɔ nu?' (Have you watered the tomatoes?),

The farmer was on the farm with his daughters, and while busy doing something, he requested one of the daughters to water the plants. This was in a question form but it was emphatic so compliance was not difficult for the girl.

In another instance this farmer has harvested his crops and got a prospective buyer. He had three basketfuls of tomatoes and apparently, the buyer (a woman) needs more than that. So he asks her but in the form of a request because if the woman wants more and he is able to provide. So, he puts the request form in the interrogative mood:

'kenteŋ `i enyie otao?' ; (how many baskets do you need?)

The name of the recipient or buyer was not mentioned here, because the seller and buyer were standing face to face so there was no need for calling the buyer by name. The request was neither rude nor polite.

'kenteŋ `i' 'baskets'

A plural noun which is the object of the statement is in the subject position. When everything is ready, they have to talk about the price. The farmer does not want to run at a loss, so he mentions his final price and the woman had to beat it down again but the farmer was adamant so she finally asks:

'enyie okεε `ŋha?' (How much did you say I should give?)

Preceded with an honorific or endearment term 'Ataa Oko'. (A man's name). When the buyer who is a woman made her request, she added a hedge unlike the man who spoke without any booster. 'Oko' is the man's name, and 'ataa' (father) makes it more polite.

A woman, who goes to buy foodstuffs from the farmers direct from the farm, went to one of her customers, to buy garden eggs. She got some, but the farmer being a little greedy, wanted to add some that were not very matured, but the woman would not agree. She says in a request form:

'sebei enε be amɛdaraaa? (These garden eggs are not big).

She did not want to run at a loss for selling smaller garden-eggs. Because women are known to be more polite than men, Holmes (1996) the buyer used an honorific term:

'nuumo'ε (old man) to avoid imposition.

This same woman earlier on when she got to the farm, wanted to know whether she will get some to buy but, not seeing anything, she asks, 'did you not pluck any today, or someone has been ahead of me?

'aloo ohɔɔ momo?'

Aloo' (or) is a conjunction in Ga, and it does not start a sentence in the language, but in this interaction it is allowed because it is a continuation of an earlier conversation.

Declarative Mood

The declarative mood involves statements but at the same time act like requests (Searle 1969). This study found that various small holder farmers have different ways of formulating their requests. The woman customer, who went to see this farmer to buy some foodstuffs, had to beat the price of the items. The farmer does not want the customer to cheat him, as they usually do, so the price he finally gave did not go down well with the woman. She could have asked for a price reduction but preferred this other way of requesting and said,

'Jara ni owo'ε ye `ɲwei tsɔ' (meaning the price you gave is too high).

And as usual because she is a woman and knows about face threatening, she used the hedge which is also an endearment term.

'ɲtse' (meaning my father) 'Jara' (price).

This has more than one meaning-it could mean 'market' and also 'price'. In this context it is price that is in use. Then, the customer herself gives a price she thinks is good for her. Here she uses an honorific term:

'nuumo'ε'. (Oldman).

The farmer also requests for a higher price by saying:

'Awo ofaine sidii oha esheεε!' (Mother, please, hundred thousand cedis is not enough).

Interestingly but not surprisingly, he also uses an endearment term.

'awo' (mother).

In another farm, a customer who sells nursed pepper (these farmers do not only sell harvested crops, some also nurse pepper, tomato or garden-egg seeds for sale) went to buy, after the normal exchange of formalities, the farmer did not wait for the woman to say what her mission is went ahead to tell her:

'ofaine afi neε ntεooo shitɔ' O (Please, this year I did not nurse pepper).

Imperative Mood

According to Searle (1969), imperative mood expresses order and at the same time acts as request. It has also been stated that the farmers were recorded during different stages in their work. In this instance the farmer has weeded his farm and gathered the grass and needed to

burn it, he is not the only person working and it could be that he was so tired so he requests one of his children to put fire to the gathered grass. This he expressed as:

'Buamɔ jwei fɛɛ naa ni osha' (put all this rubbish together and burn)

This request starts with a verb-the name that will take the subject position has been omitted, the subject of the sentence was represented by the second person pronoun 'o' together with the verb 'sha' at the end of the statement. The request was immediately complied with. Agyekum (2005).

The next scene was in another farmland where the farmer (the father) has finished harvesting and the kids have finished packing the baskets and sacks. Once the kids were around, he requests one of them to cart the foodstuffs to the way side to look for a car to cart them to the market. In their order of a request, the children have no difficulty complying. He formulated the request as:

'Kɛ jatsui'ɛ ayamam gbɛ' lɛ he' (take these loads to the roadside).

These farmers do subsistence farming, (planting different crops in the same farm). This farmer has some yam planted in the farm, for this particular crop it is best planted on mounds. It is around these mounds that a farmer requests his farmhand to clear around it. He did not have to use any boosters at all when it comes to people below, then he asks one of his girls to take the pepper to go and sell. This he expressed as

'Naa, kɛ shitɔ enɛ aya shikpaa' (endearment term, please go and sell this pepper).

He has separated those that he will sell to his customers already but he needs money for other things so the child has to go and sell.

Compliances

According to Odonkor (2001; & Agyekum, 2005), the use of honorific terms, endearment terms, boosters, hedges and mitigators and even address forms when employed, help in winning compliance or sympathy in requests. This study found that in all requests made, there were compliances from each party. When these farmers make the requests in any of the moods, compliance follows, sometimes immediately, as in:

'Namɔ oshio dade'ɛ ohaa?' (Who are you leaving the iron for)?

The gentleman being talked to, will not go and do something else and come before picking the iron bar up. He does so immediately, because he has picked some of the things and left the iron bar. Compliances are not always positive; there are negative compliances as well. According to (Agyekum 2005) in negative compliances to request, the listener might choose not to talk or react; he or she may shake the head to mean no. The listener might leave the scene showing negative compliance or the listener might remain adamant. Sometimes a listener can politely say no to a request implying negative compliance Odonkor, 2001).

Further, the study also discovered that from the younger to the older, small holder farmers avoid the use of rude way in making their request. They have knowledge of hedges and endearment terms and they used them freely. Agbedor (2006). The current study expands existing literature on the requests formulation among small holder farmers in the study

communities in the suburbs of Accra. Furthermore, the results presented here include the opinions and views of small holder farmers themselves and show comparable ratings of request formulations amongst the small holder farmers and their customers.

CONCLUSION

The study found varied forms of request formulations among small holder farmers in the studied communities-Abokobi, Michel Camp, Teshie and La. These comprised imperative, interrogative and declarative moods. The study further found that in all requests made by small holder farmers in the studied communities, there are compliances that follow immediately. Requests cannot be done away with for as long as there is language and people continue to communicate. The study also discovered that every group of people use requests in their day to day conversations. Little children, young ones, teens, adults, elderly: educated and illiterate alike make use of requests to achieve their purpose. The study concludes that among the Ga, request formulation fosters harmonious relationship among them, particularly, the small holder farmers in all endeavors.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The study therefore recommends that small holder farmers utilize the appropriate request formulation to further enhance greater relationship among them. The study further recommends that since request making is an integral part of communications among human beings, other researchers should consider this area and find out how requests are formulated in other aspects of the Ga language. Among all the local languages spoken in the country, the Ga constitutes the minority. Progress can be made in expanding and keeping the Ga language from dying besides educating the masses. This will help enhance the Ga language.

Conflicts of Interest: The author declares no conflict of interest.

Acknowledgment

The author is grateful to the small holder farmers in the selected communities for their contributions to the success of this study. The author is equally grateful to Saviour Adjibolosoo for supporting with the content analysis and the editing of the entire manuscript.

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